

Weapons of Warfare

by Dean Taylor

Transcript

Thank God for God so loved us and loves me too. Love so unending, I'll sing thy praises. God loves His children, loves even me.

He sent the Savior, the blessed Redeemer. He sent the Savior to set me free. Love so unending, I'll sing thy praises.

God loves His children, loves even me. Mercy, He made me well, mercy mine. Love so unending, I'll sing thy praises.

God loves His children, loves even me. Glory shall last. Love so unending, I'll sing thy praises.

God loves His children, loves even me. Number 206. Sometimes it feels dark, but I am very grateful for the light that comes streaming across the shadowy night.

206. Veil and darkness do not lay, waiting for the promised day. While across the shadowy night, streaming the flood of glorious light, Heav'nly voices chanting them, Peace on earth, goodwill to men's lives.

Up from death's dark bed arise, Voices of love, words of men who seek relief. Now our darkness fears again, Peace on earth, goodwill to men. Shine upon our world, break the gloom our souls with love and light.

Send thy blessed word again, Peace on earth, goodwill to men. Alright, good to be with you all again tonight. We have a good evening planned, so I'm excited about that.

First we'll have Daniel Latt share, and then Marlon Stolfus will have the children's class. We'll take an offering, and then we'll hear from Brother Dean. Good evening, I am very excited to be here tonight.

I've really been enjoying your talks. Dean and the devotionals have been amazing, and the children's lessons also really good. It's just going together really well.

Since it's Winter Bible School, and I'm a teacher, I'm going to follow my normal school format, which is about 10% review, about 50% content. Sometimes I go a little long with the content. And then about 40% application or homework.

So we need to start with review. The first thing I'm going to review is I'm going to ask questions on the devotionals. And then the children's lesson, I'm going to need children to answer for that.

And then Dean, I'll let you review yours like you normally do. So first I'm going to start with the devotionals, and anyone can answer it. But Sunday night, Sam Stolzer spoke.

And what was the title, or what did he refer God to in that, in his talk? Can someone shout it out? Alpha and Omega, amen, yes. He's forever. Monday night, Ira spoke, and what was that night? The Chief Shepherd, good.

Tuesday night was, what was that? The Bread of Life, yes, yes. And now for the children's topics, I need someone at least under 20, and I'm very good at cold calling because I'm a teacher. I can cold call if I need to.

So 20 and under. The first night, who was it, and what was it about? Actually, just tell me what it was about. Yes, light of the world, he brought up his flashlight and everyone could see him.

The second night, do you need a hint? He brought up a gun, if that helps anything. The second night, anybody? All right, pants, what was that? No, the second night it was, what was that? Yeah, Mark. It was, yes, the Bible was sharper than any two-edged sword.

Remember? He brought up a gun. And then the third night was Andy. He came up in a blue coat.

One of the children again. Maybe I'll pick one of my students. Alana, do you remember? Yeah? And do you remember what it was about? Cheerful obedience, right? Remember the smiley face that came up and 100%? Yes.

All right, thank you. It's a great way to start because it gets everyone involved and everyone is paying attention. I feel a little bit nervous being up here because I am at least four times to five times younger than some of the people sitting on this bench here.

So they have a lot more life experience than me. But I think if anyone can learn anything from anyone, if they humble themselves and look, let the Holy Spirit lead them. So I'm going to speak on Revelation 5. Apparently, that is Dean's favorite passage.

And I'm going to speak about the line of the tribe of Judah. This is a symbol of Jesus. But before I turn to Revelation, I'm going to turn to Genesis 49.

Because this is actually fulfillment of prophecy. Genesis 49 verse 8. It goes like this. I'll just start by reading it.

Give you some time to turn there. And this is Jacob. He's talking to his sons and giving them blessings.

And when he got to Judah, he said this. Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise. Thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies.

Thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp or a cub. From the prey, my son, thou art gone up.

He stooped down, he crouched as a lion, and as an old lion, who shall rouse him? Who shall rouse him up? The scepter shall never depart from thee, Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet. Until Shiloh come, and unto him shall the gathering of the people be. And I want to stop there.

So this is a prophecy that the scepter shall never depart from Judah. And the Jews expected this to happen. And then we know that David was from the line of Judah.

And the kingdom split, and Rehoboam and Jeroboam went off. And the line followed. The two of the twelve tribes obeyed.

Rehoboam, I think it is. I might get them mixed up. Either way, two of them obeyed.

And then they called themselves Judah. And the capital was Jerusalem. And then we know that eventually David's line was lost.

And they were conquered by the Babylonians. And the Jews awaited the return of a Messiah to come as a lion and a king to sit on the throne. And the Jews still wait for that.

And in Revelation 5, it speaks of the time that both the Jews will recognize Jesus as the Messiah. And we will also, again, recognize Jesus as the Messiah. So Revelation 5, you can turn there.

And I want to start in verse 1. And I saw at the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof? And no man in heaven nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon. And this is John writing.

At least that's what we think. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. Now, I don't know what your translation says, but some translations say that John cried out with a loud wailing.

And in some other translations, it said he wept and wept. It makes it very clear that he was in strong anguish. And I picture him falling on the floor and weeping.

This is kind of crazy. Probably one of the most dramatic scenes ever in the history of the earth. Or will be in the history of the earth.

No one can open the book. Is Christianity a lie? Is that what John was thinking? No one could open it. And then.

And then. And there was great rejoicing in that moment. And I'm sure John, I picture him lying on the ground with his face down, weeping.

And the elder says, the lion of the tribe of Judah. I'm sure John pictured a majestic lion. And we know the passage before that, it talks about a lion with wings.

And so it's probably this majestic being that John pictured. And as he was standing up, he probably was figuring he would see a lion on the throne. And let's think about what a lion is and how it compares to Jesus.

A lion is bold, right? Sort of and majestic. It's the king of all the animals. If you would describe a king with any word or any animal, what would it be? Probably a lion, right? Everyone fears the lion.

And the lion is afraid of nothing. Isaiah 31.4, I'm taking this out of context. But it's what the Bible says about lions.

So it can work in this situation. For thus the Lord said to me, as a lion or a young lion growls over his prey. And when a band of shepherds is called out against him, he is not terrified by their shouting or daunted by their noise.

So the lion is not afraid of anything. What a perfect example for Jesus, right? Jesus is the lion of the tribe of Judah. But John was imagining this as he's coming up from the ground from weeping.

He's imagining to see this lion sitting on the throne. But what does he see? Instead, let's read in verse 6. And I beheld, and lo, in the midst of the throne of the four beasts and in the midst of the elders stood a lamb as it had been slain. The paradox in that is amazing, right? A lamb instead of a lion.

Having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God. And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne. And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the lamb.

Having every one of them harps and golden veils full of odors, which are the prayer of the saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals. For Thou was slain and hast redeemed us to God by the blood out of every kindred and the tongue in every people and every nation.

And Thou hast made unto us our gods and kings, priests, and we shall reign on the earth. So instead of a lion, he saw a lamb as it had been slain. Complete opposite in some cases.

But it's not. I think this moment hit John harder than ever before. But the Messiah, so I think it just hit John.

It's going to hit all the Jews when they see this too. The Messiah is a majestic lion. But he appeared as a lamb.

On earth he came as a lamb. Jesus is the long awaited king of the Jews. But it isn't his fierceness or force or his power that makes him worthy.

While that does make him worthy, the reason the lion has triumphed is because he is a lamb. Jesus is worthy because he was perfect and then was slain like a sheep on the altar for the sins of the world. And all of God's people say, Amen.

Amen. Yes, it's amazing. It is amazing.

So how do I apply this passage to my life? How do I apply this to my life? Well, I want you to write these three words down. Because there's an interesting study that I was reading about in the Forbes magazine. So take it or leave it.

But it's a Harvard study. And it says this. A person is 70% more likely to complete a goal if he writes it down.

So I want you to write these three words down on the paper. 42% more likely to remember if you write down notes for a test instead of using already printed ones given by the teacher. And this is interesting.

23% more likely to remember if he hand writes notes instead of types it. I have to call out Wayne Allguy. Last night when Dean put up his scar picture on the projector, I saw Wayne take a picture of it on his phone.

So I guess he was writing it down and remembering it. But he was doing himself a disservice by not writing it down, right? Well, I didn't do either. So yeah, I didn't really help out much either.

But the three words are rejoice, remember, and return. So give a little bit of space in between each because I have a little bit of homework for you as I leave. So each one, I want to come up with a sentence.

Each one, I want you to come up with a sentence too of how you can apply it to your life. So rejoice, rejoice and praise the Lord for Jesus is worthy and Jesus has come as a lamb for our sins. Remember, remember that Christ is the lion and the lamb.

Return. Get ready. The Lord is going to return as a lion of the tribe of Judah and every knee will bow.

I want to close with my favorite passage. Philippians 2, 6 to 11. Who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God.

But him made himself of no reputation and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men. And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of a cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name.

That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth. And that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Can't wait for that moment and for that day.

All right. So I have I'm going to invite the children up. So all the children come up and fill in with these two benches.

And as they're coming up, you can write your sentences using those three words. Children come up. All right.

Good evening. Who knows what this is? Anybody know what this is? This is a fishing line or something similar to a fishing line. This is for ice fishing.

So tonight we're going to go ice fishing. If we can get everything hooked up. So one thing about ice fishing is you.

How do you think we drill a hole? Come on. A clip. There we go.

You drill a hole in the ice. And then you put this hook on. And you drop it down into the ice.

We're going to pretend that this is the top of the ice. OK. We drop that down just like that.

And then we set this just like that. And then we walk away. Now, does anybody see anything wrong with this setup? Can you see my hook? Do you think I'll catch anything without any bait on there? Nope.

I won't catch anything without any bait. So we're going to put some bait on. Now, normally I like to use live minnows, but I didn't want to bring live bait in here.

So we use this tonight. So we're going to hook this up. And we're going to go fishing for bass.

So we're going to hook this up like this. And we drop it down in the ice. And that minnow is down there swimming around.

And it looks like a lie. It's swimming around just like this. And the bass comes along.

And he sees this wounded minnow that can't really get anywhere. And he says, I'm going to get an easy meal. That sound like a good idea? So he comes in there.

And he nibbles on it. Oh, by the way, I'm ice fishing. I'll be sitting over there because usually you have more of these out.

So you're waiting for it to bite. So he'll come over. And he says, I'm going to get an easy meal.

He takes a little bite. Can't find the string. Takes a little nibble.

Whoops. He's caught. Now, I'm over there.

He's not caught yet. Sorry. This lets me know that there is a fish at the other end.

He took that bite. And then he took another bite. So he's going after the easy meal.

Remember, this is a children's lesson about the Bible. So instead of being, instead of, he's going after the easy things in life. Instead of going, working with hard things.

What are some of the easiest things that you can do? Some of the hardest things that you need to do sometimes. Do you like to always make your bed in the morning? No, that's a hard thing. But you know, yes? Well, one of the hard things for us is, like, when we get home, we're not going to get home late, and the house is a mess.

We have to, like, pause, relax. It's always good at 9 o'clock. We have to pause it.

And when we get home, we have to clean up as fast as we can. It's always very exhausting. And it's hard because when we're all working together, sometimes we don't need to make time to do the same thing.

So the easy thing would be just go to bed, right? But that's what this fish did. He went after the easy thing, and he triggered this and let me know, hey, there's a fish on the end. So I quick go over, and I chuck it, and boom, I got a fish on the end.

And I quick bring it in. All right, then I take him off, and now I'm going to put it back in, and we're going to set it up again. But this time, we're going to go after a different fish.

We're going to put it down on the bottom, right on the mud for a catfish. And while I'm waiting for that catfish, actually, I need something out here. While I'm waiting for that catfish to come in, I'm going to go after a different fish.

I'm going to drill another hole in the ice, and I'm going to go after a different fish with this. Because sometimes ice fishing gets boring because nothing's happening, so you decide, you know what, I'm going to use this. Now, I'm going to go after, does anybody know what this is for? What? Actually, not this one.

Well, maybe a little bit, but this one is actually, this is a flashy thing. This one here, you drill a hole in the ice, and you drop it down in there, and then you do like this. And you make it flash around.

And I'm fishing for pike with this one, because pike like flashy things. They don't really necessarily, they get upset when this thing rattles in there, and it's jiggling around in there, and it's flashing. They actually just kind of come up and just lash out at it, because they're upset at it.

They're like, that's enough of that, I need to grab it. And when a pike gets hold of that thing, it does this, very fast, because they grab it and then they take off because they realize the mistake they made. Whoops.

And that's, for us, that is like going after the flashy things of the world. We're after the latest and greatest. We're trying to always do have the best.

Instead of focusing on Jesus, we're focusing on self. Alright, now I got the pike, so I get done pulling this one in. These things are pretty nasty, alright.

Now, remember this one here, we're trying to go for catfish. Does anyone know what a catfish does? A catfish, they like to live in the mud. So they're down there in the mud, they're minding their own business, they got their head in the mud, they're swimming around, they're sucking everything up from the bottom, and all of a sudden he comes across this little minnow, and he sticks it in his mouth, hmm, that's a good bite.

That's a trigger a little bit too quick. That's about half a good bite. So he bites a little bit harder, and all of a sudden the flag goes up.

Now I know there's something on there, so I come over and I quick jerk it, and I got another fish. This time I got a catfish off the bottom, who likes to live in the mud. And the mud is for us, is like the world.

We can choose to either follow Jesus, or we can choose to live for self, with our totally consumed, covered in mud, just going through this world, not really caring about the things of God. But which fish do you want to, which one of these fish do you want to be? You want to be the bass that goes after the easy bite, the easy fish? You want to be the pike that goes after the flashy things? Or do you want to be the catfish that goes after sucking things out of the mud? None of them. All right.

So I'm going to read three verses. So the catfish is like being in the mud. The mud is the world, that's the things that the world is trying to give us, is coming out of the mud.

And Jesus made it very clear in Luke 16, 13. He said, No servant can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. We cannot serve God and mammon.

The catfish cannot eat mud and live. I mean, and the bait. All right.

And then the bass, they like to eat the easy things. Instead of going, they saw that fish there, he saw that fish there, it can't go anywhere, so he goes up and takes a nibble. He just wants to do the easy things in

life.

He don't want to do any of the hard things. And that's very similar to Moses. Who knows the story of Moses? Everybody here know the story of Moses? Did you know that Moses was probably in line to be the next pharaoh? And what did he choose instead? Where was he for 40 years? And the writer knows for 40 years.

And in Hebrews it says, He esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt. He decided that following Jesus was worth more than staying in Egypt becoming the next pharaoh. And then the pike liked the flashy things.

You know, it's kind of fun going after the bright lights and everything that's glistening and flashing. It's pretty easy, even for myself. Sometimes I like the flashy things.

That's why I married my wife. But there's something in James. It says that pure religion and undefiled religion before God and Father exists to visit the orphans and widows in their trouble and to keep oneself unspotted from the world.

So don't be like the pike and go after the flashy things in life. All right, you may go back to your seats. Well, thank you, Marlon.

Thank you, Daniel, for sharing this evening. I think we're just learning a lot from the different lessons this week. And I appreciate the ones that have been putting their hearts into that.

Thank you so much. So welcome again to the fourth evening. Our guest speaker tonight is Dean Taylor.

Before we do that, we'd like to live a love offering for him tonight. And we're going to do that just before here. So I've asked a couple gentlemen to take the offering.

And while we do that, we're going to have a song. And Virgil, would you lead us in that song? God's good things Give heart and strength To serve the cause Of all men of God His kingdom carry Rise up, O God's church For strength unequal To rise up and make right Lift high the cross of Christ Tread where his feet have passed Brothers of the Son of Man Rise up, O men Thank you, church, for sharing in that way. And we hope we can bless you in that way, Dean and Tanya, this week.

So thank you for coming. Let's continue to pray one more evening. Tonight and tomorrow.

Tomorrow evening will be the final evening. And come back praying. And I'm sure God will bless us for it.

Dean, come forward and chair. Tanya, did I have the clicker there? Yeah. Thank you.

Well, thank you all very much again. I do really enjoy all the different children's message and the devotionals and those things. And it's a blessing also to fellowship with you all, get to reacquaint you with everyone.

And it's been tremendously a blessing to be here. Today, I sort of take a little more serious look at how we as the people of God tend to get so distracted that we sear our conscience, that we end up in more and more sin. And I'd like to look at some of the ways the Scriptures talks about that, of how we can deal with that sin and have righteousness before God.

So today, I would like to focus on the conscience. I would like to look at the weapons of our warfare. And in those, I would like to look at the helmet of salvation.

I would like to look at the conscience. And I would ask you to, as I go through these passages and I go through these different examples, to truly ask the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart. And one of the purposes that we come together for these week of meetings like this is to allow the Holy Spirit to search our hearts and we do inventory of where we are.

And if there's things that we need to take care of that we don't just go about our day. But this is why we come together, to seek the Lord and ask Him to speak to us. So today, I would like to get more into those things and looking at the weapons of our warfare and those things.

But let's start with the word of prayer. Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for the Word of God. I thank You for a conscience.

I thank You for the Holy Spirit. And I thank You for the Word of God. And Lord, I pray that You will give me inspiration today.

But Lord, I pray that according to Your promise, You would send Your Holy Spirit. And then when You send the Holy Spirit, You would, as You said, You would convict us of sin. Of righteousness and of judgment.

But God, I ask You to, You do that and let me stay out of the way as we bring these words and lift them up. In Jesus' name we pray, amen. Okay, and if I could get a water again.

Maybe somebody said, oh, here it is. There we go, thank you very much. All right, so as we looked at some of the, see if the clicker works, there we go.

As we looked at some of the different themes of warfare yesterday, this is one of the ones that really stood out to me. It's an ancient war book. If you knew the enemy, if you know the enemy and you know yourself, you need not fear the results of a hundred battles.

Really good old ancient thought on regular warfare, even more so with our spiritual warfare. Knowing yourself and knowing exact, and not deceiving yourself, particularly when it deals with sin, is something that's vitally important. So as we look at today, the spiritual warfare, I would like us to really think of those things and not to deceive ourselves, and also for us to know the enemy so that we can do proper warfare.

If you remember also from the first night, one of my favorite images is when Balaam was trying to curse Israel, that when he was trying to curse them, he had this point of saying, he has not observed iniquity in Jacob, nor has he seen wickedness in Israel. And that place of being free, do you have that tonight? Do you have that experience of being free with the Lord, that you are forgiven and you are walking in righteousness? This is what they had through faith that they came and they were able to be free, and we can have that tonight as well. So through that, not only from there, they continued to be faithful, forgiven, they were faithful, they were walking holy, sanctified, separated unto God, victorious, experiencing victory, and they seemingly untouchable by the enemy.

And so today we're going to look at those different things that are brought up, the breastplate of righteousness, particularly the helmet of salvation through the sword of the Spirit. We also did yesterday, we talked about as we look at these inventory of our life, that we are to cleanse ourselves, having those

promises that if we come out from among them and we separate ourselves unto God, not in a cloistered way, but in holiness and dedication to God, that we are to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God. So today we're going to look at that in a little detail of some things that eat at us and consume us and chip away at us to try to destroy this holiness and this cleanness with God.

So, perhaps the famous passage that deals with the spiritual army and the spiritual fighting that we have, the armor, is from Paul's letter to the Ephesians. So if you open your Bible, you can open to Ephesians chapter 5, and I'll pick it up at around verse 10. Ephesians 5, verse 10.

He says, Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. So here Paul is driving this. Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

But we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the whole armor of God that you may be able to withstand in the evil day and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

And above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one, and take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints. It's an amazingly packed passage, isn't it? But it definitely gives us the idea that the Apostle Paul did not have an understanding of Christianity, that we just go get saved somewhere and then you live this happy-go-lucky life, isn't it? This is the words of a coach to a person wanting to win the Olympics or to a general trying to get people to win the battle, even more so. It is a fight, and he's letting us know that we are at war.

And so when we look at this warning and this charge we get from the Apostle Paul, one of the phrases that we get in there is the wiles of the devil. This wiles of the devil, if you look at what the word, what are wiles? It's kind of an archaic word a little bit. And it just means the tricks or manipulations designed to deceive someone.

So he's letting us know that Satan is literally trying to trip you up, make little snares for you, and that he's given us the whole armor of God so that we can prevent ourselves from getting in this sort of a snare. And he tells us, do not be deceived. So in this life of Christianity, and we hear so many voices today, and again, there's so many different understandings of the way we look at the word of God, I'm challenged by this Scripture to do not be deceived.

This is what a born-again, walking-in-faith life should look like. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

And so are some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of God. Isn't that an amazing passage? And it's really, it has both the, it should bring us this fear that if this describes us, it doesn't matter what creeds or theologies we're claiming.

He's saying don't get deceived. We need to wake up and take a serious look. But what happened when you were washed? It took away these things.

And you were sanctified, which means to be holy. And so now longer we no longer walk like we used to walk when we were in the world. In Ephesians 2, he says this beautiful passage, perhaps one of the most tremendously wonderful passages on earth.

And he says in Ephesians 2, verse 1, and you he made alive who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom we all once conducted ourselves in the lust of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. It's a pretty bleak picture of what we are like without Christ, isn't it? That he said you were this way, you once conducted yourselves like the world and you were driven by these passions and driven by these things. But then he goes on.

But God, who was rich in mercy because of his great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ, by grace you have been saved, and raised us up together and made us set together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace and his kindness towards us in Christ Jesus. And then he repeats himself. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that, not of yourselves, it is a gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them. What I love about this passage, you get a couple things. You get very clearly of how we're saved, right? It's not from our ability.

It's not from our works. It's not from our trying in different things. He's made it very clear we were dead and he made us alive in Christ Jesus.

However, in the midst of this, he doesn't just save us in some weird theological way, some creedal way, or some... It actually makes a living change in our life. And that's beautiful. By the grace of God, he really changes us and makes us alive in him.

And I love that. I love those types of ideas. You know, I talked about in the other weeks this idea that in our life today it's so easy just to be distracted by all the amusements.

And now that we have phones and different things that are attracting us even more, do you remember the phrase from the ancient Romans? Give them enough bread and circuses and they'll never revolt. Give them enough bread and circuses and they'll never revolt. I think of this passage that Paul went on and talked about in Ephesians chapter 5. See that you walk circumspectly.

That means like really carefully. This is the description of how a Christian should live. See that you walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time because the days are evil.

Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit. I would look at this whole thing with drunk with wine and not being just into the, and to walk circumspectly and all these things, is basically don't just be empty and dizzy from all the different attractions and amusements and all the things that can happen to us.

But he wants us to walk carefully, circumspectly, and not just filled with ideas and are distracted by different foolish things. Again, the ancient bread and circuses. All we're doing is looking for the next meal or the restaurant or the things and the next entertainment, whether that's a game or a sports or whatever.

This is not the attitude, is it, of what the Apostle Paul gave us of what a Christian life should look like. He wants us to walk circumspectly and he wants to do that with us. Give them bread and circuses and they'll never revolt.

Is that the way we are living our life? Again, I'm concerned. I'm concerned that with the kind of age that we're living in, with all these distractions and gadgets and things that we have, it's searing our conscience. It's entertaining our mind and getting us away from even hearing the voice of the Lord.

I fight this all the time. With the busyness of life and the distractions that surrounds me, am I allowing the Holy Spirit to speak to me circumspectly? It's like I have to constantly fight it. Constantly.

The passage that I think of, sometimes the big question is, is it a sin? Is that a sin or is that a sin? It's really the wrong question oftentimes. This passage here in Hebrews chapter 12, it says, Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. My wife Tanya, when she was in basic training, that's right, watch out for Tanya, she was in basic training.

And when she was learning to throw grenades and shoot a machine gun and everything, she tells me a story that one day she was running on the rifle range and she had these camouflaged pants on and she had a canteen stuck in one leg pocket and her big poncho in the other. And as she was trying to run the race that they were getting onto her, you know, private run and all that, that she was running, she couldn't, she was getting tired and she realized, oh, I'm weighted down. And so she took out the canteen and took out the poncho and then she could run.

That's the kind of analogy, the military analogy that we're being given here, that even things that can weigh down on us are things that the Apostle Paul, through the Holy Spirit, is warning us we need to get rid of. So just asking the question, is it a sin, is that a sin? Well, all things are lawful, but not all things edify. And as we're running the race and we're fighting this battle, let's be careful for the constant distractions of the things that we have around us.

So, here's my particular burden. I'm just, and this is speaking to myself, speaking to the next generation, that I just feel we're so distracted that we're not able to hear, and particularly in visual sense. So I'm gonna hit heavy today, tonight, on visual sins.

And why are these visual sins, and there's so many now ways that we can get it with phones and all that, why are they so serious? Why, what is, what's happening with them? Jesus, when he spoke of the eye, and when he spoke of what we're seeing and lusting after in the visions and things like that, he brings up an interesting passage here in Luke chapter 11, verse 33. He said, The lamp of the body is the eye. Therefore when your eye is good, your whole body is full of light.

But when your eye is bad, your body also is full of darkness. Therefore take heed that the light which is in you is not darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, having no part dark, the whole body will be full of light.

And when the bright shining of the lamp gives you light. So the idea there is that if we're gonna spend our time looking at things and lusting after things that are evil, particularly wicked, it fills us in a way that's very devastating. And then in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus gives us some pretty, I don't know, terrifying analogies of how serious he's taking our visual understanding.

And look at, before I give you the verse, think of this. In that Sermon on the Mount passage in Matthew chapter 5, I'm about to read to you about our lusting in the eyes. He talks about an excavation going to the root of it, an amputation taking drastic measures, and a formation developing a proper fear of God.

And so as we're going about walking circumspectly and all these types of things, with that thought, look at the passage here in Matthew chapter 5. He takes it very seriously. You have heard that it has been said, and to those of old, you shall not commit adultery. But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

If your right eye causes you to sin, pluck it out and cast it from you. For it is more profitable for you that one of your members perish than for your whole body to be cast into hell. Now, obviously if you just cast out the right eye, you still have the left eye.

He's making a spiritual, we can see, interpretation here. But I do think he's meaning business. And I said yesterday, if your iPhone offends you, pluck it out.

And if there's something that's constantly just getting you down, then do something with it. If everyone, young people particularly, next generation people, let me ask you, if you could narrow the failures, your spiritual failures in your life down to, let's say, 80% comes from one thing, and let's say that's your phone, probably a good idea to pluck it out, get rid of that thing. This is the kind of seriousness that I think that Jesus is having here when he talks about this.

Now, I want to say this as a little disclaimer to this. I see three mistakes that I've seen in my life of people in dealing seriously with sin. One is asceticism.

Now, I've known some that even who have gone through castration, gone through terrible things of asceticism, missing all of the actual gospel teachings of the grace that God works within us, and that's wrong. I see also a hyper-pietism. Let me tell you what I mean by this.

We love to hear about salvation, and we know we want to preach a very clear salvation, and that being born again and having a clear conscience is very important to us as a people of God. However, we have to watch out that we don't, after we have those very real spiritual experiences, that we're not humble enough to realize when you need help. If you just think, well, I've had this great experience.

I'm that spiritual person that had this experience, and so I can't be having this kind of spiritual struggle. That's a lie to yourself that's going to get you in trouble. It gets you into trouble quickly.

Hyper-pietism, hyper-revivalism, if you would, you have to balance that. We still need the people of God. You still need discipleship, and you still need to be real serious with yourself when you're in trouble.

Don't lie to yourself that you're more spiritual than you are. You know, I remember if you're looking at, I was with the children, and I was talking to them about trying to get straight A's, and I was there with someone who was getting straight A's, and they were constantly studying cards and everything, all the note cards and going through all these things and everything, and I said, why is this guy so dumb that he

has to study all the time? I was being, you know, not being serious, but I was trying to get the point of one of my children to say, that's what gets the grade. It's that studying all the time.

And when we think, oh, I'll study a little bit and wonder why I don't make straight A's, it's because you're not willing to make the sacrifice. And so, you know, I don't need legalistic things such as accountability groups or flip phones or et cetera. I'm too spiritual.

Are you? Know yourself, and be careful about hyper-revivalism and hyper-pietism that we can get into. And then, of course, the other is the satanic lies, God does not see my sin. I'm just covered, and God doesn't see my sin, and I go on, and that type of thing.

And these are three mistakes for dealing serious with sin, mistakes with that. So now let me ask you this, as we look into now these kind of sins that Jesus was warning us about, the sensual kind of sins, are they worse than any other sin? I mean, in many ways we could say all sins are the same, right? But are these sensual type of sins, are they worse? And I will argue that Scripture says they're a lot worse. They're a lot worse.

And I'm going to show you some of these things why. Thessalonians 4.3, 1 Thessalonians 4.3 says it this way, For this is the will of God, your sanctification, that you should abstain from sexual immorality, that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in passions of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God. In 1 Corinthians 8.18 it says, Flee sexual immorality.

Every sin that a man does is outside the body. But he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? There's been many people debating, you know, for years about what this actually means.

What does he mean you sin this one body and the other? There's an interesting early Christian writer, Chrysostom, that says he gave the example that we're just feeling filthy. That after these type of sins people actually want to go, literally go take a bath. And there's just something defiling about it.

And so here's, I just want to give a sober warning. Yes, you can make some sort of theological arguments that sin's in this and all that, and sensual sin's worse than the others and everything. But here's the thing.

Yes, gluttony is a sin. But you don't typically have people come to you and say, Yeah, you know, when I was 12, my mother and father took me to Shady Maple. And now I'm messed up ever since.

You know what I mean? It's a sin, but there's something about this category of sin, these sensual sins, that go deep and they can mess you up. They can mess you up. And that dealing with them are very important.

And I'm worried that with the ease of the way the media and the phones and the things, that I as a father who had my first son, the internet didn't even exist, to now, you know, where things are, I don't think my generation caught up well enough with the tsunami of different things that were coming to us. It's for this next generation to figure out how to deal with this better. But I think we need to take it very seriously.

And if there's sin in this area, you need to deal with it. And you need to deal with it tonight. So, these sexual... Why are these things so bad? I believe that these kind of sins corrupt the gifts that God gives us.

It's close to something very tender and sweet in us. You know what I mean? This passage in Proverbs 5, 18-20, it says, Rejoice in the wife of your youth. Be intoxicated always in her love.

But do not get drunk on the embrace of a forbidden woman. There's something in these natural things that God gave us that are beautiful and wonderful. Even intoxicating, it says.

But when we get our mind dizzy with amusements and sensuality and these different things, it messes us up because your brain is getting confused about this very tender thing that God has given to us, right? I'm going to give you a little medical school here, alright? We'll go to medical school for just a second. In your brain, as you go through the spinal cord, comes here, you have this limbic system, and then of course your rational, your frontal lobes and all that over here. But it's in this limbic system that we have our emotions.

It's where we feel love. It's where we feel success. It's where we feel depression if we don't have different things.

Here is a more anatomical view there. And so this is important, and it's a place that God gave us, and there's so much packed into that system. It's also the place where drugs and alcohol and things play on that to mimic these beautiful things that God gave us.

God gave us these different hormones, and these different hormones play different roles to us. Dopamine and endorphins and oxytocin and serotonin, and they all have a different role to play in our moods and our things that we have, like dopamine, this completing a task, doing self-care activities, eating food, and checking your email on your phone. It can do this.

Oxytocin, mothers, when they have their babies, when you start to nurse, you are being flooded with oxytocin, and it's our care hormone. And compassion, holding hands, playing with a baby, hugging. Serotonin comes from a sense of accomplishment, a sense of things that you're going through.

And endorphin is almost like it mimics morphine, or morphine mimics endorphin, and it's the painkiller. And like if you ever have an ice headache, like you drink a Slurpee too quick or something, and you get an ice headache, and then afterwards you're like, oh, it feels sort of like almost you're a little dizzy or something. Or if you hit your finger and it hurts really bad, but then it starts to actually feel kind of good.

That's the endorphin kicking in. But these things were given to us by God, and they can be mimicked by things that are wrong. Pornography.

You can look at a scan of a brain that's on pornography and literally see those same things light up. Absolutely, it is a drug. Outbursts of wrath.

Then you get the endorphins kicking in afterwards. Eating. You get the dopamine.

Shopping. You feel like you're accomplishing things. Seriously, this can be a problem.

Taking risky behaviors, certainly alcohol, your cell phones in so many ways. Watching a movie, being lost in this different world, and all those hormones and things are kicking in. Complaining and gossip.

1 Timothy 5, 6 gives us this sobering passage. It scares me. Speaking of the widows there, but I apply it to me too.

But she who lives in pleasure is dead while she lives. And what must have been in his age and what he was even considering that? It makes me tremble. So there's something about this that's wrong.

And here's the problem when these things happen. The brain has trouble telling the difference between what is real and what is imagined. So it produces the hormones in both cases.

So you get lost in some movie. You get lost in some things or terrible pornography or all these different things. Your brain is kicking all these things up and you start to get addicted to it.

You're getting depressed again. Things are going bad at work or in the church problems or with your family or something. I just feel terrible and you start to make a habit of needing that and that literally becomes your drug just like any other drugs that we can take.

And that's just the way the brain works. So what happens then? There's another part of the physical man that is made to tell you when you messed up and you did use that in the wrong way and that's one of our weapons of our warfare. And the one that I'm going to hit on is your conscience.

Your conscience. And I want you to pay attention to how the scripture talks about your conscience. There's a story of this airline, what, Avancia Airline jet that crashed in 1984.

And apparently shortly before the accident, you know, when we got the black box out, shortly before the accident, the automatic warning was saying in English, pull up, pull up, pull up. And apparently, I Googled to look some more details on this and as the plane was going up, it was like a big, oh, canyon or something and it was going straight into a mountain. But it was foggy and he couldn't see and all that and the automatic warning was saying, pull up, pull up, pull up.

And they hear the actual pilot saying on the black box, shut up, gringo. And he turned off, watch now, he turned off the automatic warning and he crashed into the mountain. True story.

Do you get the analogy? It's the conscience that God gave humanity that's telling us warning, warning, warning. And if we start to turn this thing off, we're gonna end up crashing. We're gonna end up crashing.

So to try to bring it in a physical way, it's not like this. But if you could imagine the conscience as it were a certain part of the natural body. I'm gonna show you, it's not the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit instructs our conscience through the word of God, but it's actually something built into the natural man. All was given a conscience and I'm gonna show you the scriptures to back that up. So think of it, it's not, but think of it as like a part of the natural, the physical.

Because the way we use it and the way we train it and the way we bring it into the right place is a tool that can either help you or hurt you. 1 Corinthians 2, 11 says, who knows what is in a man but the spirit of the man? Another passage, he's talking about the, in Romans chapter two, when he's just talking about the Gentile world, the pagan world, he says, for when Gentiles who do not have the law by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves who show the works of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves, their thoughts accusing or else excusing them. So it's saying that the natural world has a conscience, that they're given this conscience to either accuse them or to say things are okay, even in a pagan way.

But you have to make a distinguishing here that our conscience is not what will judge us on judgment day. Paul makes this distinction. He says, I care very little in 1 Corinthians 4, 3, I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court.

Indeed, I do not even judge myself. My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me.

Therefore, judge nothing before the appointed time. Wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose the motives of the heart.

At that time, each will receive their praise from God. So it's a very important passage to let us know Paul takes his conscience very clear, and we need to take the conscience and the conscience of those in our fellowship and in our family very seriously, very clear, very seriously. But he lets us know that's not what's going to judge you.

You're still judged by Jesus and the Word, but the conscience is still very important. I'll show you some more of that. He also brings up ways that the conscience can be used wrong.

I'll show you this, and this is good for us to see. Acting according to conscience could actually be a sin, and it needs to be trained by the Word of God. Again, you go into a pagan culture, and they have a conscience that they should take four or five wives, or they have a conscience of doing something that we know the Word of God says is wrong, and even though they're thinking they're applying a conscience, the Word of God needs to direct them and correct them.

If the conscience is misinformed, then we seek the reasons for this misinformation. Is it misinformed because the person has been negligent in studying the Word of God? That's what happens to us when we're not doing it right. Let me give you an example here of how he talks about the conscience being exercised.

This is exactly what we need to do with the Word of God. In Hebrews 5.12, For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you, again, the first principles of the oracles of God. And you have come to need milk and not solid food.

For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. So these natural senses, this conscience, this natural part of you has to be exercised by the Word of God.

But if you're just constantly filling yourself with all the different medias and all the different things and lost in the different movies and all those different things, it's not going to look like that. It's not going to be exercised in that way. So as we look at this, and then how do we train this, and how does the conscience can be changed and altered in that thing, there's two things, there's two things that can sear your conscience.

And this is the scariest part. You can literally mess up your conscience and make it where you can no longer have that feeling and have the sense that there's something wrong. And those two things are both licentiousness, in other words just living a life of flagrant sin, and actually legalism.

Both licentiousness and legalism can sear your conscience. And let me give you an example of both. Paul says in Romans chapter 1, 21, speaking again of the pagan world, he says, For although they knew God, they neither glorified Him as God nor gave thanks to Him.

But their thinking became futile, and their foolish hearts were darkened. And although they claimed to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles. Licentiousness, or this in case, idolatry, searing their understanding.

This one in Titus warns, To the pure all things are pure. Soberly look at this. But to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure.

For even their mind and conscience are defiled. So if you're defiling yourself, if you're constantly unbelieving or defiled, it's going to sear your conscience and you're not going to be walking in the right way. But then he also says, Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times, this is 1 Timothy 4, 1, Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies and hypocrisy, and having their own conscience seared with hot irons.

He talks about another who forbid eating of meats and the marrying, taking wives and this type of a thing. The sort of asceticism again. That that can actually make a person searing their conscience.

And this is what happens. This happens a lot when people will leave a cult. You know, it's not just in physical things like not eating meats or not marrying, but even like having a cultish view on different sectarian cultish kind of view.

And if you see yourself as this one true church and you told this person now everybody out there is wrong and all that, when they leave those cults, have you ever tried to minister to someone who's left like the Jehovah's Witnesses or some sectarian group or something? It's like they're just messed up. And it's the same thing here. They've been told that things are all wrong and they get their whole conscience seared.

And I'll give you this encouragement. I know in this church and a lot of churches like this, you have a lot of people who are much more conservative coming to your church. Okay? And a lot of times they're coming and they're very happy about the freedoms that they have of being in this church and no longer being old order and everything.

I would encourage you this. Be very careful how you walk them through that. Because if you just make, yeah, that was dumb and that was dumb and that was dumb and you just sort of belittle their conscience, that some of the things they're actually still dealing with that by you just being careless with their conscience could actually cause them to stumble.

We want our conscience alive. But properly, we do need to be properly instructed in the Word of God and that needs that. But just be careful with that.

Be careful. And then, of course, if we just keep bringing garbage in, we're gonna get garbage out. Because this is what happens.

When the time arrives for your conscience to act, it will only fire out signals in keeping with the values you predominantly provided it with. So herein lies the conflict. You can say that you believe whatever you

want, but your conscience has been feeding on what you read, what you listen to, what you watch, the influence of the company you keep, and what you think about mostly.

It will show you exactly what is within yourself by responding based upon those accumulated values. And remember, your brain doesn't know hardly the difference between your movies and your life and your different things you're looking at. And all those things are doing something to your conscience and to your spirit and who you are.

So be careful with that. Paul says with his conscience, we have renounced the hidden things of shame, not walking in craftiness nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. He cared about that.

When he was with the Corinthians, remember he said, that which is not done by faith is sin. Be careful with the weaker brethren. But then in himself, his conscience was clear, and this was a part of the human that he took very seriously.

And I think it's a tool. It's a tool used for us. Not to give us a guilt trip.

I'm going to show you. We're going to end with the helmet of salvation. Only the blood of Jesus Christ can give us complete freedom in this area.

But we have to be careful that this conscience is something that's given to us. Then he also said, pray for us, in Hebrews 13, 18, for our conscience is clear, and we want to live honorably in everything we do. So let me show you if I could.

I drew a little thing here. I was trying to think of a marker board, but I didn't have a marker board, so I just kind of put, I did these circles up here. And let me show you the death spiral, the spiritual death cycle of a seared conscience.

This is your life. This is your place with God and everything. And let me show you a cycle that frequently happens when we keep falling into sin.

So you end up, and you have a sin. What happens at that moment? And I'm going to give you something that happens. So at this moment in sin, painful conviction over your sin occurs.

But then when that happens, you have a choice. Broken, you pray passionately to the Lord for forgiveness. But then grace comes with forgiveness.

But here's what I have found. It comes with very specific instructions, very specific instructions at that moment. I lean on this passage where sin abounds, grace abounds much more.

So when you sin and you're genuine asking God for healing, grace comes, but with instructions. Because this is very specific instructions. Remember this scripture in Titus.

For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us that he might redeem us from every lawless deed and purify for himself his own special people zealous for good works. This is what I have found that happens. At this moment, you're told exactly what you can do to make sure that that never, ever, ever happens again.

All the instructions are given to you by the Holy Spirit. Do you relate to this? I'll say to you, particularly, think of one of the most common sins, and I think it's getting worse and worse with the cell phone era, is pornography. So you've fallen in pornography.

You feel terrible about it. Grace comes. You cry out to God.

Grace comes. And he tells you exactly what you are to do about that problem exactly. Will you do something about it? So that's the question.

You feel the joy of forgiveness and repentance. Your sin is gone. But then you follow the instructions that the Holy Spirit gave you, or you do not.

You do not follow the instructions that he gave you. And so you think, ah, the time has gone on now. You're here.

And like, well, you entered a deadly phase, what I call, a false confidence. You feel confident. You feel confident that, you know, I'm stronger now.

I learned my lesson. And even though the Holy Spirit gave you from very specific things, you're not following it. 1 Corinthians 10, 12 says, Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

And so in here now, a little time war goes on. You've gone through this very specific instruction after you fell in sin. You now didn't do those things, which let's say, get rid of the phone, get an accountability, go talk to your pastor, be honest with your wife.

I don't care what it is. And now you're here and you start to get depressed again. You start to get kind of messed up again.

And you start to feel very tempted. And as you feel very tempted, that cycle of sin that Satan is like a cat with a mouse. And I think of the Genesis 4, 7. Sin lies at the door and his desire is for you, but you should rule over it.

And here you were thinking, I'm not even tempted anymore. This is amazing. Here you're realizing, uh-oh, I am tempted.

What are you gonna do about it? Are you gonna then go back and do those things? James says, but each one, in James 1, 14, but each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is full grown, brings forth death. The Holy Spirit reminds you at that moment, you didn't do what I told you to do.

You're hiding it. You're not true to yourself. You feel embarrassed and humiliated and you convince yourself that you are strong.

But then you're here and you're in a lot of trouble. You feel overcome by temptation. The spiritual attack is strong again.

And 1 Corinthians 10, 13 says, no temptation has overtaken you except such as common to man. But God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. But with the temptation will also make the way of escape that you may be able to bear it.

Now here's a lie that Satan tells you. Do you see any promise in that passage that you'll be strong in temptation? No. The promise is that God will give you a way of escape.

That means throwing your phone across the room, calling a pastor, calling a brother, or for ladies things, or whatever it takes you to do. You're getting serious with sin. You are in the danger zone.

You have a way of escape promised to you. He has not promised you that all this temptation will just suddenly go away or that you'll be strong or those kind of things. And you're in the danger zone and you tell yourself that you do not need legalistic means because you're a spiritual person and you can be strong and then sin.

And when this happens over and over and over again, it sears your conscience and it messes you up spiritually. It's in our churches, it's in our lives, and we have to deal with this. And it's amazing that the Holy Spirit will have long suffering with us and get us out of this cycle.

We have a way of escape if we would just take it. The cycle of sin is something we need to get out. Then finally, as we look at these things, if the Holy Spirit has convicted you of these things, there's only one thing that can completely take away this problem in our conscience.

All religions of this world have ideas of balancing sins with the good and the bad and this and the other and proper teaching and everything. It's only through Jesus Christ and the blood of Jesus Christ that we see these things completely taken away. But when you fall or if you are here tonight and you are feeling the Holy Spirit speaking specifically to you, it's not just something you suddenly, I'm going to get better or something.

I heard a preacher once, I think it was Zac Poonen once say, there's no blood for mistakes or habits or oops. There's blood for sin. Be honest with your sin.

Bring it before God and let him cleanse it. This is a precious passage. Hebrews chapter 10 puts it this way.

This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my laws into their heart and in their minds I will write them. Then he adds, and here's the important part, their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.

Hallelujah. Hallelujah. Now where the remission of these, now where there is remission of these, there is no longer an offering for sin.

Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which he consecrated for us through the veil, that is his flesh, and having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water, and let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering. Why? For he who promised is faithful. Do you get that incredible passage? This amazing thing that he has given us.

He's given us this conscience for you to wake up and to realize that the alarm's going off. Pull up. Pull up.

You're crashing. If you're repeating in sins and walking through this, this is the cure for you to come before Christ in a new and living way. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ to break your heart before God, being honest, and with a true heart and full assurance of faith, having your heart sprinkled from an evil conscience and

your bodies washed in pure water, hold this confession of your hope without wavering because he's faithful.

We mess up. He's faithful. The basis of our salvation, the basis of our Christian life, the basis of everything is in this incredible place.

Remember in the old covenant, you trembled before you came before the veil. Here we have boldness to enter because of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that is the cure for us. That's the cure.

So we go through this, and we praise them. The researchers at Stanford University, a recent study, found that positive, the areas of the brain that's critical for problem-solving and intelligent thought, damage to the hippocampus is scary because when you're complaining and griping, it actually damages you, but that your brain, when you rejoice, gratitude practices are popular for this reason, and they are reminders and mental pictures of all the good things you've experienced, and if you need a serotonin boost, the scientists say during a stressful day, take a few moments and reflect on your past achievements. That's the world, even more so, rejoice in what God has done for you because he gives us these beautiful promises.

For we were bought at a price, therefore glorify God. Glorify God with your body. That's the practical stuff, and in your spirit.

That's the worship, which are God's. This is the victorious life. These are the weapons of our warfare that are powerful.

In Lamentations, even, he said this, this I recall to my mind, therefore I have hope. The Lord's loving kindness and deed never ceases, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning.

Great is your faithfulness. The Lord is my portion, says my soul, therefore I will have hope in him. Praise God.

As we heard in the devotional today, and they overcame him. That's the enemy. And many of you, you get yourself into a tizzy listening to the enemy lie to you.

You've been redeemed. You've been saved. But you're getting yourself into a depression and listening to the voice of the enemy and listening to all those lies.

They overcame this accuser of the brethren, and Revelation tells us, by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. That means you're speaking forth of what Jesus did for you. And they did not love their lives to the death.

And he tells us in the next chapter, so the great dragon, Revelation 12, the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was cast to the earth and his angels were cast out with him. Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, now salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ have come.

For the accuser of the brethren who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down. Hallelujah. And that's it.

That's the place that we want to be in. And he observed, he did not observe iniquity in Jacob, nor has he seen wickedness in Israel. So tonight, I wanted to bring this more to a practical, a more serious.

If the Holy Spirit is speaking to your life about getting something clear, that's why we have these weeks of meeting, to do business with God. If you're here tonight and you've never surrendered your life to Jesus Christ, by all means, you can't live a life without him. It is only through the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ that you can have a clearing of that conscience.

And if you're here and you're jaded, you're cynical, and you've gone through that circle of sin so many times that there's just barely one little bit left as I preach tonight that says, yes, you didn't hear the voice of the Holy Spirit, I beg you, do business with God tonight and get that thing cleansed. Break the cycle of sin and go on to living a glorious life, a victorious life, bringing glory to Jesus Christ. Let's pray and I'll close it to you.

Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you for the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. I thank you for this thing you gave us called a conscience. I even thank you more for the Holy Spirit that comes into us and instructs us and talks to us.

And Lord, I praise and I thank you for salvation and I thank you for these things. I pray, Lord, that you would let all of us be honest today, starting with me mostly, Lord, and that we look at the things that you want to deal in our life and we can go and we can experience that forgiveness, we can experience the strengthening, we can experience all the things of the life that you want us to live as a soldier of Jesus Christ. We thank you for these words in Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. God now. Let's find of the living that we may become Christ someone, that we may become but a person to God.

We thank you for the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. that, that we are be wonderful and we should we thank you as thou art. And to the Lord unto sin alive unto thee, crucified, holy of sin and self may I be.

Open the word of grace and salvation Pour the restraints deep into my heart That every fire that shall steal thee and make thee As thou art, and serve thee forever Filled with thy spirit, lost in thy love Come to my heart Showers of grace send down from above Open the word of grace and salvation Pour the restraints deep into my heart That every fire that shall steal thee and make thee Pure as thou art.

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