

Betrayed With a Kiss

by Eric Ludy

Eric Ludy's sermon warns against the betrayal of truth within the church and the rise of false teachings that undermine the Word of God.

Duration: 1:24:05

Scripture: Matthew 26:48, Ephesians 6:12

Topics: "Spiritual Warfare", "Discernment"

Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of standing firm in the truth of Jesus Christ amidst challenges and deceptions in the world. It emphasizes the need for discernment, spiritual alertness, and reliance on the Word of God as our ultimate weapon against spiritual battles and deceptions within the church. The message calls for a revival of self-control, biblical foundation, and a deep commitment to God's truth in the face of modern societal pressures and compromises.

Transcript

Well, good morning. Let's pray. Father, I pray that you would make my ankles strong, my legs sturdy, plant me upon your rock, and I will not be moved.

I pray that the truth of Jesus Christ would be represented effectively and well. And I pray that the immaturities and the weaknesses that I still bear would not hinder your truth from coming forth with power and authority today. Lord, your church is under siege.

It's under siege from within, and I pray that you would raise up the truth in our midst, that you would illuminate, that you would open our eyes, as sheep, to know what has drawn us to the shepherd and what has drawn us away from the shepherd. Precious Lord, you deserve the glory, and I pray that you would get it this morning. It's in the precious name of our King that we pray.

Amen. When Leslie and I had a contract with a publisher, a book publisher, and we were bought out by another publisher. It was one of the big dogs bought us out, and then that was bought out by another publisher, which was then bought out by another publisher.

So as a result, you're going to have a tough time figuring out who in the world I'm talking about here. But we were bought out, and so we were being wined and dined into this new atmosphere, and they were wanting us to get familiar with them, them to get familiar with us. And I remember one of the VPs made it

very clear in one of the conference calls.

Okay, let's get something straight. Yes, we are a Christian publishing house, but we exist to make money. So therefore, I don't want any of your Holy Spirit inspired works.

We want works that will sell. And I said, well, at least you're honest about it. I want you to realize we live in a Christian culture that is not as it seems.

Leslie and I have 18 published books. We know the inside of the system, and for the most part, I don't say much about it because it's not edifying. Unless something's edifying, I really don't care to talk about it.

But there is a conspiracy in our midst to undermine our confidence in the Word of God. The fact that this has even gotten in to the evangelical publishing system makes me mad. But what we do about it is what matters to me.

So welcome to this message. Betrayed with a Kiss. The Conspiracy of the Modern Prophets.

Most people don't usually know what I'm about to talk about. There's only three people on our staff that usually know the message. And this one got leaked out to a few people.

And so I actually was getting emails before today praying for courage for me. I think I need courage every week, but for whatever reason, this week I must need extra courage because I have people out there praying for me. So now I know that doesn't sound like a very positive title.

This message isn't necessarily fun, but you know when you focus on truth, it is exhilarating. The Word of God is right. Now this all started, and the reason this message even popped out this week, because this message has been in me for years, but it came out this week.

There was something that dislodged it. And that is, I think it was Jade who came across a video, a new book is coming out by Rob Bell called Love Wins. And then she showed it to Annie, and then Annie forwarded it to the staff.

And she says, have you guys seen this? And I'm not a guy who tries to follow Rob Bell. Rob Bell is one of the best-selling authors, probably has the fastest growing church in America out in Grand Rapids. And he has massive sway over the Christian world today in America and around the globe.

And this new book called Love Wins was just a trailer, sort of a teaser, so you could buy your advanced copy. And long and short, I was so upset over this crazy book that I know nothing more about but a trailer. But long and short, it's basically universalism, every road leads to God, hell will be empty.

Okay, what is the use of Jesus Christ? Well, I'm sure it'll be explained. It's Jesus Christ that's emptied hell. And I'm also sure, because I know the tactic of the emergent movement, and that is when the book comes out, Rob Bell will be very clear to say he's not a universalist.

However, everything he will teach is universalism. There's only one way to Jesus Christ, I'm sorry, there's only one way to the Father, and that's through Jesus Christ, only one way. We believe the word of God here.

Some of the things I'm gonna say may seem a little narrow-minded, some of them may sound a little closed-minded, but I'll explain exactly what it is that we're teaching today. It's not narrow-minded and it's

not closed-minded. This title, Betrayed with a Kiss, there is this scene that most of us are familiar with in the Garden of Gethsemane when Jesus is betrayed into the hands of sinners.

And one of his closest, one of the ones that has been living in his very midst, actually comes up and feigns intimacy and love and tenderness towards him. Just because he can show an outward demonstration of softness and endearment and kinship does not mean that his intention and his motive is pure. He is betraying the Son of Man for money.

And unfortunately, that's what we see happening today. The second, the subtitle, we usually don't give subtitles, but we have a doozy of one today. The Conspiracy, which obviously is indicating the fact that something is purposeful.

The Conspiracy of the Modern Prophets, this comes from a scripture in Ezekiel. It doesn't say modern in it though. Luke 22, so let's get right down to it.

Then Jesus said to them, so it says, then he said to them, he's speaking to his disciples Peter, James, and John, who have fallen asleep. He's asked them to stay awake three times. They cannot stay awake.

Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation. We need to be awake. We need to be sharp, lest we enter into temptation.

And while he was still speaking, behold a multitude. And he who was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before him and drew near to Jesus to kiss him. Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss? When those around him saw what was going to happen, so this is Peter, James, and John.

When those around him saw what was going to happen, listen to their question. They said to him, Lord, shall we strike with the sword? Just laying a foundation, because as we go through this, you're going to first of all probably feel like you've been sleeping, number one. And then your response will be, Lord, shall we strike with the sword? Okay, so just laying a foundation here.

How in the world do we respond to some of the things that you're about to hear? Ezekiel 22, 23 through 31. The conspiracy of her prophets in her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey. They have devoured the people.

Let me stop there for a second. You'll notice I made the conspiracy of her prophets large. Israel, in a time of desperate need where truth has fallen in the streets and judgment has been turned away backwards.

Israel is in a desperate situation, and God is making it clear through his prophet Ezekiel, look what has happened to my people. And that is because they're men of God. The ones that represent Jehovah in their midst have conspired in their midst.

I had a conversation with one of the VPs of Thomas Nelson at Agoni right down the road, and he was talking about their strategy to win over the conservative Christian booksellers, because there are a lot of ma-pa booksellers, there are a lot of Christian bookstores that are still conservative. And when Donald Miller's book Blue Light Jazz came out, they refused to accept it. They wouldn't carry that.

It was profane. So their strategy, spoken from the VP himself straight across the table to me, was, well, what we did is we went to the big box stores, Borders, Barnes & Nobles, all the big box, and we proved its sales rate, and we knew that they would have to take it, because they can't, they can't compete in the

marketplace if they can't sell the Christian books that are selling. And this is what he said, sure enough, they caved.

It's a conspiracy. This is purposeful. They know that it's not received by the conservative agenda.

So, because of money, there is a motivation. Thomas Nelson is not the worst perpetrator. Zondervan.

These are the biggest Bible publishers in America today. We trust them. Zondervan, good household name.

Zondervan, if you go to their website, they will see featured authors. Well, they're all their conservative authors. They are the biggest host of the emergent church movement in America.

They put more money behind it than anyone. Almost everything emergent, except for what Thomas Nelson sponsors through Donald Miller and some of Brian McClaren's stuff, is Zondervan. Yet, we trust them.

And yet, what they are spitting out is detrimental to the very Word of God that they supposedly represent. Thomas Nelson, who is your other trusted publisher, has now released The Voice, which is an emergent Bible. Basically, the equivalent of a paraphrase written by Donald Miller himself.

A Bible, treated as a Bible. This is not a Bible. This is something that undermines the Bible.

This is a conspiracy. In her midst is like a roaring lion tearing the prey they have devoured people. Her priests have not distinguished between the holy and unholy, nor have they made known the difference between the unclean and the clean.

Her princes in her midst are like wolves, tearing the prey to shed blood, to destroy people, and to get dishonest gain. Her prophets plastered them with untempered mortar, seeing false visions and divining lies for them, saying, listen to this, Thus says the Lord God, when the Lord had not spoken. Listen to the conclusion of this in Ezekiel.

So I sought for a man among them who would make a wall and stand in the gap before me on behalf of the land. Why? Why would there be needed a man? Why would someone need to fill a gap? Because the very ones that represent Jehovah are conspiring against him and against the people. That I should not destroy it, but I found no one.

Therefore I've poured out my indignation on them. I've consumed them with the fire of my wrath, and I've recompensed their deeds on their own heads. Wrath came because there was no man who stood.

This is the statement of religious history throughout the ages. You have an enemy. He's known by various names.

He starts out a serpent, Lucifer, Satan, the devil. His agenda is to destroy the Word of God, the Word of God in text, the Word of God in seed, all throughout the history of the Hebrew nation, and the Word of God in person, and the Word of God in you. Same agenda, 6,000 years of it.

He is not stopping. It's the same purpose, the same end game. Undermine the truth.

God did find a man who did make a wall, and who did stand in the gap, and his name is Jesus. God himself said, if there is no man, I will be that man. And he stood in the gap, and guess what? The indignation, the wrath of God was poured out upon his head.

How dare we trample upon the blood of the covenant by taking advantage of the blood of Jesus, and then going right back to where they were then? We have a wall to protect us, and to protect the Word of God in us, the Word of God in this generation. Let us wield it, because we have Jesus, and may we not let truth fall in the streets again. Matthew 7, this is Jesus speaking.

Beware of false prophets which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. It's a very difficult message to give in our modern day, because most of you don't believe that false prophets exist. Or if they do, they're Muhammad, or there's something to do with Mormonism.

They come from in our midst, and they are in sheep's clothing, which means they look like sheep. When Judas is betrayed with a kiss, he is feigning an intimacy with Jesus. But we know, if you read the Gospels, that he had issues with Jesus the whole way, and he was constantly questioning the work of Jesus.

He had an agenda, and it was a flesh agenda. It was a self-agenda. Mark them.

In Romans 16, Paul says, Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. So we have Paul saying, mark them.

In other words, let us know, let us be able to tell the sheep, beware. That one over there, wolf. That's a wolf wearing a sheep outfit.

Wolf. It's creating offenses to the doctrine. It is literally creating a disturbance of how we look at the Word of God.

It is creating a belittling of our confidence in the Word of God. And then this is what he says in Philippians, the Philippian church. Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have for us an example.

So mark those who are disturbing the Gospel. We mark them. We need to know who is representing it, and who is walking the narrow way, and who is disturbing and attempting to create an attraction to the broad way.

For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things. Both scriptures are extremely similar. We need to be sharp.

We need to be discerning. Here we have a generation we're not allowed to mark anything. That's judgmental.

I mean, could you imagine if we did that in the security lines at the airport? You can't do that. Talk about politically incorrect. Well, it's crept into the church.

We're not allowed to say, well, you know what, that's actually opposite of what the Word of God says. Well, that's your opinion. You can't be judgmental and say that that's wrong.

Everyone can have their own opinion about what the Word of God says. The Word of God says one thing. It doesn't say 20 things.

It doesn't say 2,000 things. It says one. God doesn't stutter.

He knows what he's saying, and it's up to us to get our ridiculous postmodern junk out of the way, the cultural entrappings, the social sensibilities, and the political correctness out of the way, so we can allow God just to speak straight to us. He says it, and he means it, and he's meant it for 6,000 years, ever since it began. He knows what he's doing, and he's not caught off guard with our culture, saying, oh, no, what am I going to do with this culture? Oh, no, I guess we need to change the Word.

The enemy deserves a little credit. I don't usually make slides like this. However, he's done a pretty good job, I have to admit.

So I'm going to admit it, but then I'm going to hit him in the teeth. The brilliance of sneaking liberal thinking into the modern conservative church, that's an impossibility. How could you ever do that? You know what? I was in a radio interview the other day out in Massachusetts, and the man said, isn't it true that the emergent church is dead? It's an interesting statement, because I've written, I wrote on the emergent church in my book, *The Bravehearted Gospel*, I don't know, three or four years ago, and there's this article that came out a few years ago.

I had a few guys forward it to me. It's like, yeah, the emergent church is dead. The emergent church, who cares what you call something? The satanic agenda to undermine the church today is not dead, and I guarantee you, the voices, by the way, that make up the emergent church are selling just as well as they did before.

So whether you call it the emergent church anymore, it's ridiculous to say it's dead. The younger generation, the collegiate generation, is buying these books in droves. Donald Miller, Rob Bell, Brian McLaren, in droves.

Millions of copies. The entire next generation of Christian leadership is being defined by these men. Dead? Hmm.

That's as much a strategy as anything else. We're dead. Oh, we're harmless now.

We don't have an agenda anymore. Yeah, we must have lost. Oh, yeah, right.

They're shaping the entirety of the Christian world. Every publisher knows this. I was approached by a publisher a few years ago before *The Bravehearted Gospel* was written.

They asked me if I could write an emergent book. I said, hmm, I don't know if you know who you're talking to. See, I'm young.

I was mid-30s at the time. If you're mid-30s and you're a Christian leader, you're emergent. It just goes with the territory because you've grown up disillusioned with the religious system.

The word of God has been proven to not work because no one can live it. And so now we have a crisis. And so everyone is beginning to come up with justifications and a rewriting of what Christianity is.

This didn't work. Let's rewrite it, as Rob Bell says. Repaint it.

Re-image it. So they're changing all the words to mean something new. And I'm dead serious when I say this.

I don't necessarily want to encourage you to go out and study it. However, this is serious business. I'm not going to write an emergent book.

I'll write a book that will speak straight, and if that's what the younger generation is wanting, I can do that. That's The Bravehearted Gospel, not exactly what they were looking for. The brilliance of sneaking liberal thinking into the modern conservative church.

Can't tell you how many pastors, conservative pastors, are sponsoring this message into our culture. Max Lucado was at a Thomas Nelson banquet a few years ago. Brian McLaren spoke at it.

Donald Miller spoke at it. Max Lucado spoke at it. Max Lucado, good old safe Max Lucado.

His favorite author is Donald Miller. This is not unusual. There is a massive movement in the conservative realm towards emergent thinking, because it's what brings in the people.

If you stand by your old stodgy guard, and you actually have the audacity to keep speaking that old archaic message, repent. Your church is going to dwindle. When you stay up with the times, we need to be fashionable.

We need to be hip. We need to be cool. The emergent church knows how to do that.

So whether you call it the emergent church anymore or not, it's the same exact thing. Same exact lie. Still floating around.

No one kicked it out. Leonard Ravenhill, one of my favorite quotes. My Lord is insulted, and his church slid, and believe me, under this double injury I smart.

The church has many adversaries. Can my sword sleep than in my hand? Never. That's just to kick it off.

I haven't gotten into the message yet. I'm just warming you guys up. The crafty voice.

Calling into question the obvious truth, beckoning a more generous understanding of the clear command. The Bible speaks clearly. Most of us just don't like to acknowledge that.

It says things, and it says things more poignantly and more straightforward than we prefer to have them. I don't think he actually could mean that, though, because that would cause all sorts of problems. I mean, that would offend people.

Uh-huh. God says it exactly the way he intends to say it. Guess what? He intends it to last from generation to generation, too, which means the way he said it was meant to be read that way today.

And he doesn't care about your flesh and your sensibilities and all those things. Those are your enemy within. You want to be freed for Jesus Christ? You let your social sensibilities and that flesh, that craving to be protected and about you.

Hey, I'm offended by that. That needs to die. You take God at his word, and you say, God, if this is what you said, I submit to it.

Offend me all you want, God. You're right. I'm wrong.

This crafty voice, calling into question the obvious truth, beckoning a more generous command, understanding of the more generous understanding of the clear command. We need to be a little more generous here. I mean, that's a little too narrow of an opinion.

We need to be a little more broad-minded. This is what you'll hear everywhere you turn now. Okay, this is a famous quote from many thousands of years ago.

You'll notice it sounds very similar to the quotes that you'll hear today in many Christian books. Did God really say that? The serpent. Uh-huh.

He's the one that coined that phrase. So let's dig a little deeper. Genesis 3-1.

Now, the serpent was more subtle, which subtle means cunning, shrewd, and crafty, than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said? Now, let's look at the different translations of how they deal with this one quote of the serpent. Hath God said? King James Version.

Has God indeed said? New King James Version. Did you hear the British accent I gave to that one? Did God really say? NIV. Did God actually say? ESV.

Indeed, has God said? NASV. Did God say? RSV. Is it true that God has said? Young's.

That is the message that is being perpetrated in and amongst the body of Christ today. Let us tag it and mark it. If you ever hear that voice directed to the Word of God, you know where it comes from.

Now, the serpent was more subtle, cunning, shrewd, and crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, yea, hath God said? Has God indeed said? Did God really say? Did God actually say? Indeed, has God said? Did God say? Is it true that God has said? Okay? Just get familiar with this. Start to warm up to this.

This is the problem. The basis of belief. The Word of God is the Word of God.

I know that sounds sort of obvious to you, but I want you to realize these men are saying the Word of God is the Word of men. Who wrote it, after all? Yeah, who wrote the Book of Luke? Luke. Aha.

You're saying it with your own mouth. But you're saying the Book of Luke, the book written by Luke, is written by God? No, you need to be a little more broad-minded and generous here, Eric. Your limited, narrow perspective on this and your ignorance is showing through.

You see, when a man writes a book, a man writes a book. Now, God, see, we think highly of this book that Luke wrote. And God obviously thinks highly of it to include it in this whole thing.

But it's a book written by a man endorsed by God. God says, this is good stuff, but it's written by men. No.

I mean, I could say yes, but no. It is the Word of God. God carried these men along, whether they knew it or not.

And he had an agenda for every word, and he canonized it. And when you understand canon, I have a whole teaching at Ellerslie called Canon. If you need to get your hands on it after this message, do.

We'll make it available somehow, someway, to show how the Word of God has been constructed and built throughout the ages. And it's not accidental. It didn't just somehow come together.

It was not voted on in 300 AD. One day they just go, okay, we need to come up with a vote. It was understood by the church for those 300 years.

Everyone knew it. They formalized it. Why? Because it was under siege.

And other people were saying, but what about the Book of Judas? What about this book? What about this book? They said, let us clarify. We all know the answer to this, but because the enemy seems hell-bent on trying to create question of what is the Word of God and what isn't, we'll define it. It's not that a whole bunch of great headed men in 300 AD came together and said, you know what? Let's pick some books.

It's ridiculous. The Word of God is the Word of God, and guess what? It cannot lie. This is the basis of our belief.

It cannot lie, did God say. No. Get that voice out of here.

My God has spoken. And if he says, do not eat of the tree, and that serpent goes, wow, you need to be a little more broad-minded here. Get thee behind me, Satan.

My God has spoken. He didn't stutter. He cannot lie.

For this cause also, thank we God without ceasing, because when he received the Word of God, which he heard of us, he received it not as the Word of men, but as it is in truth, the Word of God, which effectually works also in you that believe. Hebrews 6, 17 through 19 says, wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath that by two immutable things, which means unchanging things, which are the great promises declared in an oath given by God to seal the deal, in which it was impossible for God to lie. Did you see that? It is impossible for God to lie.

He has promised, he has sealed it with an oath, and he cannot lie. Therefore you have a rock to stand on. We might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us, which hope we have as an anchor of the soul.

You will not be moved. You stand on the Word of God. You do not need to be shaken by this voice.

God spoke, and it was God that spoke. It was not mere men. It was God that spoke through men, just like God spoke through Jesus, and demonstrated, though Jesus was 100% man, he was also 100% God.

And if you have good doctrine, that's the conclusion you come to. Jesus was God, and yet he was also man. Welcome to the 100% God.

And this is the anchor of our soul, both sure and steadfast, in which entered into the veil, into that within the veil. God is not a man that he should lie. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? The strength of Israel will not lie.

Let God be true, but every man a liar, as it is written, that thou might be justified in thy sayings, and might overcome when thou art judged. Okay, now I'm making a point here, and that is that our God can be trusted. Do you believe the Word of God is the Word of men? Because if you do, your foundation will fail

you when the winds and the rains beat against your house.

You want to build upon a rock? Then you take God at his Word. The Word of God is the Word of God, and the Word of God is as God is. It cannot lie.

So therefore, when you have those foundation points, you are not shaken. If we believe not, yet he abides faithful. He cannot deny himself.

In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began. You starting to get the point here? Okay, I've probably said it enough, so let's move on. The appeal of the open mind.

If I was going to give you an option between a closed mind, a narrow mind, and an open mind, I know which one you'd choose. If, you know, they were set out on a table before you, well, who wants a closed mind? That's, it's despicable to have a closed mind. A narrow mind? Oh, I don't want to be a narrow-minded person.

We want an open mind out of those three. The appeal of the open mind. It appears more reasonable, more generous, more accepting, more hospitable, more socially correct.

I mean, Gandhi had some wonderful things to say. Oh, the emerging church loves Gandhi. They don't care about Hudson Taylor, George Miller, Charles Spurgeon.

Oh, but Gandhi. I mean, you guys are closed-minded. You're not entertaining what Gandhi had to say.

You know, Muhammad, if you listen closely to his teachings, he actually said some wonderful things. Sure, some of the Islamic movements afterwards have distorted a little of it, but you know what? Muhammad had some good things to say. Let's be open-minded about this.

Isn't that reasonable? This is, it's a generous way of looking at life. If you want to live in peace and harmony with those around you, we need to be generous towards those thoughts. If they have good things to say, then let's entertain them, and let's bring them in.

Let's be hospitable to them. An open mind is door-open policy. Come on in.

Oh, you have a thought too? Come on in. Absolutely. Make yourself at home.

Why don't you roost on my kitchen table? Sure. I can see you every morning when I wake up instead of a vase of flowers. This is the open mind.

Three mind options of today. The closed mind, the narrow mind, the open mind. Like I said, every single one of us is predisposed to pick the open mind.

Now, some of you are thinking, you haven't given me any other options here. I'm not exactly that intrigued by your open mind option, but do I have to choose between closed mind and narrow-minded? Well, what else is there? Let's walk through these. The closed mind, this is the reason most of us don't want to be this, is a mind that ignorantly and belligerently dismisses and excludes actual facts from having any say in the formation of his or her reality.

They don't want to hear it. You know, here they are walking over a cliff, and it's like, hey, by the way, gravity is in effect, and if you walk over a cliff, you fall to the bottom of the cliff. I don't want to hear it.

Okay, it's a closed mind. Anything that would obstruct their narrow view, their closed view, they have a little subsystem, and they don't want to hear outside of it. This is, you know, a fantastic environment for cults to foster from having any say in the formation of his or her reality.

A mind not open to reasonable discussion, not open for the business of discussing truth. Well, who wants to be that? It's ridiculous. Okay, let's look at a narrow mind.

A mind that strictly filters all fact and information through an individual's or small small group of individuals, small finite human worldview and experience. A mind unable to break out of traditional religious and or cultural moorings to accept that truth is bigger than what can be comprehended by a singular person or closed off group of people. And so you have your little group that has always grown up in, you know, this little part of the world, and they've never seen outside of it, and everything they hear is built through their grid.

They have a limited experience, a limited understanding of how the world works, and a narrow mind always reasons through just a little slight worldview. Who defined the worldview? They did. It was through their experience that they defined it.

A narrow mind is extremely dangerous. However, out of our options here, because this is the third one, a mind that is reasonable and judicious with facts. I mean, this is so attractive.

Desirous to learn, accepting of all, ever ready to consider new and novel thoughts. A mind hospitable to all notions, whether true or false. A mind open to anything and everything.

Eager to chew on ideas never before considered. Huh, that's fascinating. Maybe we've had it wrong for 2,000 years.

Maybe, I saw a book on the shelf the other day. Paul was not a Christian. That's actually now released.

Paul was not a Christian. That's a fascinating thought. Come on in, new thought.

Let's entertain it. Paul was not a Christian. He defines the entirety of Christianity.

It's absolutely ridiculous. Anyone that would possibly even think it reasonable. Okay, let me give you the option for us Christians.

We're not to be closed-minded. We're not to be narrow-minded. We're not to be open-minded.

I know that sounds terrible to say we're not open-minded. We are open-minded to one thing, to God. And how are we open-minded to God? To His Word.

We are seemingly closed to the world, because they'll say, you're closed-minded. No. You're narrow-minded.

No, it's not our own experience, our own little band of, you know, our little group that has come up with a filter. Our filter is the Word of God. It's God's worldview, and He knows more than everyone else.

He's the one that created the heavens and the earth. Don't you think His worldview is a pretty good one to reason through? If you're going to have a filter, that's about as good a one as you could get. That's Christianity.

It's fidelity and faithfulness to one. I do not have an open marriage, for instance. I have a marriage that is closed off to any other invasive force.

Anything else that would try and get in, I don't share and say, oh, come on in. I am exclusive to my wife. And you would say, well, that's good.

That's right. And that's what it means to be exclusive to Jesus Christ. His Word is our guide.

And anything that would attempt to contradict it, undermine it, is kept outside the house. It might sound closed, and it might sound narrow. Actually, it's life and life abundant.

So here's the canon mind, a mind given wholly to God, implicitly trusting God's definition of reality, exclusively devoted to God's opinion and command, closed to all thoughts, ideas, or philosophies that would lead the mind to another take on reality. The canon mind is a mind built on God's Word as if it were, in fact, the Word of God. The canon mind is built upon the rock-like conviction that God's Word is the perfect revelation of fact.

It cannot lie and is 100% truth. And the canon mind knows that God intends His Word to be comprehended by His saints. That's, by the way, that's a huge thing, because the emergent movement doesn't believe that the Word of God can actually be comprehended.

But it's meant to be comprehended by His saints, understood by His saints, and lived out by His saints. The canon mind is not open to any thought, notion, or definition of reality that is not 100% concurrent with the revelation of God's Word. Call me what you want.

Call me closed-minded. Call me narrow-minded. That's the mind I esteem.

That's the way Eric Lurie has chosen to be. If it doesn't align with the Word of God, it's out. Yes, and I'm not emergent.

Act 17. Listen to this. This is the canon mind.

Those, these, those of Berea, okay, there's a place called Berea that Paul went to, and then he was in Thessalonica, talking to those in Thessalonica, talking about those in Thessalonica, sorry. These, those of Berea, were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind. So it sounds like they're open, aren't they? All readiness, they'll receive it.

Open. Come on in. Give us the Word of God.

However, and search the scriptures daily whether those things were so. So how did they test it? They received the Word, and then they test it against the Word. The Word is their guide.

The Word is established, and every thought that comes in, every new thought, tested against the Word of God. This mind is guarded. We take every thought captive to the will of Christ Jesus.

Every thought, by the way, not just the thoughts that sound harmful, every thought captive to the will of Christ Jesus. How are we supposed to know the will of Christ Jesus? That's right, unless we have the will of Christ Jesus revealed to us, and it is revealed to us in the Word of God. The pneuma effect.

You guys ever heard of pneuma videos? It's hard to be a Christian today without knowing about pneuma videos. Well, I don't want to assume a conspiratorial nature on behalf of Rob Bell. However, there is a conspiracy behind this pneuma video movement, and we could say it comes from Satan himself, because the pneuma videos in and of themselves are fluff.

Okay, there's some offensive things in there, but they're light, they're delicate, it's artistic is what it is. Now, Christian ideas, Christian terminology, packaged with artistic brilliance. We respond to artistry today.

If someone can package it well, well, they must know the truth then, too. Well, it's a terrible flow of logic, by the way. However, pneuma videos are done extremely well, and they are in almost every evangelical church across this country.

Now, follow this, okay? Here's the strategy. This is the pneuma effect, following the pneuma success. First, let's build trust.

Gain the confidences of the evangelical church leadership by posing as a stable Christian voice. I'm on your side. I want to help you accomplish in your congregation, in your youth, exactly what you're wanting to accomplish.

Well, you know what? Pastors are working hard these days. Youth pastors are searching for a material. Pneuma to the rescue.

Pneuma comes in, they have 24 different videos, and instead of a pastor having to come up with an entire message, he's able to show a video and then have a discussion or a comment time on it. This is easy, and the students love it. The congregations love it.

Instead of a pastor just getting up and yammering like I'm doing, he can show a video. How much easier is that? Build trust. Two, subtly weaken the old moorings.

Impose new philosophies into the modern stream of Christian thought via published books. Okay, pneuma, fairly bland, fairly fluff-like. But now a trust has been gained, right? Hey, did you know that Rob Bell came out with a book? He's me, the guy that's the pneuma video guy? Oh yeah, I bet the book is good.

I bet the book says other things that we would like to hear. Well, beware, the book undermines the entire historical roots of Christianity. So, be watchful.

This is dangerous stuff, but trust was built. Three, repaint truth. That's actually the term that Rob Bell uses.

Repainting the Christian faith. Leverage the confidences gained to sink the church into error and question the biblical authority. Now, whether Rob Bell isn't doing this intentionally, he may just think he's right.

Okay, his newfangled thinking, his novel thoughts are correct, because he's convinced himself into that corner. Maybe. However, there is an enemy behind this, and the enemy has been behind this exact process from the beginning.

How do the prophets in a country become the ones that are killing the people? How do the priests become the ones that are trusted by the people, yet they are taking advantage of the people? How does this happen? This way, there's a trust that is naturally there, and then they take advantage of that trust. The gush of postmodern mush, a pseudo-intellectualism that roosts high above the Bible, looking down with a

compassionate gaze upon the notions of the archaic text. By the way, those that represent the postmodern gospel, and I'm not going to go into a lot, I know this is a heavy message for some of you, like, oh dear God, what did I come to today? Postmodernism has overtaken the church of Jesus Christ today.

It does not demand logic, and so as a result, you can have two contradictory thoughts coexist, and that's why these men can literally undermine something and say, well, I don't know that I believe in the virgin birth, but I esteem the virgin birth because I'm an orthodox Christian. What? How in the world can you say both things? Well, it's a pseudo-intellectualism, which means it's a fake intellectualism. These guys think they're smart, but their minds are not built on the Word of God, so as a result, there's no way I'm going to call it true intellect.

A pseudo-intellectualism that roosts high above the Bible. They're above the Bible, looking down on it as if they can survey and critique it however they choose, but they have a compassionate gaze as they do. Oh, poor thing.

This Bible sure has gone through a lot of hard times. It's just so misunderstood today, the poor text of Scripture. You know, God means well, but I think He needs me to help Him along in this generation to sort of clarify His heart, and so as a result, they take a position above the Word of God with a compassionate gaze to help along the limping, archaic text.

Your position on the Word defines your response to the Word. If you're above the Word, it defines how you respond to it. Okay, so look at the three positions.

You can come at it from above, which is the way I just described it, the pseudo-intellectual in the emergent movement, so that you can critique, correct, and contour it to meet your sensibilities. It's like, well, I understand our culture, God, and I realize, you know, you make some harsh statements about homosexuality here, but I don't think you realize what you're getting yourself into. If you want to be attractive to anyone in this culture, you can't take that hard line.

The way you talk about women here is very misunderstood in our culture, so we're going to have to gender-neutralize this Bible, and so that's what Zondervan did. They created the gender-neutral Bible, because this is going to offend women. Well, it offends men, too, when you do that, and I'm not saying that I have to know that God is a man.

He just is. When Jesus came to this earth, He was a man, plain and simple. I don't need to defend it.

God was a man when He came to this earth, when He took on bodily form. That does not mean a diminishment of femininity. It just means He was a man.

He was the last Adam. The first Adam failed. The last Adam succeeded in rescuing his bride.

Well, how do you think I feel about being the bride of Christ? Should I say, no, we're the groom of Christ? You know, to defend my masculinity, I'm not going to be the bride. I could be offended, too. It's ridiculous.

I'm sick and tired of this reasoning. It's something to stick in the trash. Equal to it.

Okay, so you could be above it, but what about the equal to it? It's like, here's the Bible, and here you are. Put your arm around it. You esteem it as good.

You treat it as a friend. You bask in its kind phrases. I love that phrase.

Psalms 23. It's one of my favorites. But ignore its call to give up all.

It's just a buddy. Buddies can't command you what to do. Buddies can encourage you and do nice things for you, but hey, it's equal with you.

If you're equal with the Bible, if you're just sort of standing, you're not above it. You're not critiquing. It's good.

You like your buddy, but you don't listen and heed its commands. It does not have lordship over your life. Below it.

Believe it with unquestioning fervor. Reckon it with unwavering faith, and bend to it with loyal, worshipful devotion. Most people, when they see that list, would say, oh, I don't like this word control.

I don't like this. That sounds cult-like. Okay, so God's running a cult.

Call Christianity whatever you want. God rules in Christianity. God bought our bodies with the price of his blood, and we have unyielding devotion unto our God.

Unreticent. Unequivocal. We give ourselves to our God.

We say, take us. Have us. Because you're right.

If you say you want us, and if you say you bought us, if you say that we must be mastered by something, either sin or you, I choose you. We'll be mastered. You choose your master.

The bizarre conclusions of those roosting above. The uncrucified conclusions of fleshly reasoning. Rob Bell brings out this notion of brickianity, and he says those that create like a hard-line fact out of truth, out of the word of God, he calls it brickianity.

It's hard. It's like always a wall and a resistance, but we want to reason. We want to bring up new thoughts, but we have this brick wall in front of us, okay, and he mocks it.

And so he offers something different, and that is that truth is far more, instead of being all hard and unmoving, truth is springy. It's like the springs of a trampoline. This is what he says in his book Velvet Elvis, which was the book that overtook the Christian world after his success because of his NUMA videos.

And then when Velvet Elvis came out, this book shot to the bestseller list. It has sold many, many copies, and he proposes that truth is springy. It's like the springs on a trampoline, and whoever jumps on it, depending on their weight, defines how deep the springs stretch.

So springs stretch, or truth stretches, to fit you, your unique needs, your unique demands. Okay, doesn't that sound reasonable? Oh, what a nice truth this is, you know, that it can sort of meet me as an individual, and it stretches to contour to every unique generation. You know, we have a generation where we're offended by certain things, and so as a result, the truth can stretch to adapt around our unique demands, for instance, on the issues of homosexuality.

You know, in a previous generation, maybe they weren't offended, but today, there's just a lot of people, because of their DNA, they're born homosexuals. And so we need to stretch the truth to meet them. Okay,

that's what he's proposing.

And how he proposes this, is he goes back and uses a lot of rabbinical types of things. He's always talking about the Jewish culture and the Hebrew culture, and as a result, it sounds very believable. It's like, wow, he knows more about it than I do.

So there's a statement where Jesus says to his disciples that he's given them the keys to the kingdom, and what they loose will be loosed in heaven, what they loose on earth will be loosed in heaven, what they bind on earth will be bound in heaven. And so of course, since none of us have a clue what that means, he injects his opinion on the matter, and that's what I'm going to emphasize, his opinion, which is, did God really say? That's one big key that he's sticking in the lock right here. Here's what he proposes.

God has given us the key of the kingdom, us as a church, and in every generation, we are responsible to take that key and to stick it in the text of scripture, and to turn it so that we can make scripture malleable to our current generation. We can change scripture to mean what it needs to mean today, so that Christianity will be effective. Isn't that our end goal? Our end goal is the glory of Jesus Christ, implicit trust in Jesus Christ.

He has his children. They are proposing that we can change the word of God to fit what it needs to say today. Is the word of God changeable? Does the word of God alter? It's a fascinating question.

Evolution of truth. They believe, Brian McLaren presses this one very heavily, that truth is constantly changing, so therefore, we need to realize that God is always adapting his truth to meet the current culture in which we are. I mean, of course, you believe in evolution.

That's a basic understanding now, right? Because it's been taught in the school systems your entire life. So, because now we believe evolution without any facts, we can also understand that God evolves, and his word is evolving. I mean, this was written.

Some of these things were written thousands of years ago. Are we actually going to chuckle chuckle, believe that it's accurate, and reasonable, and effective for today without us being able to consider the fact that culture has changed? See, God is love, and that hasn't changed, but how he expresses his love is now new today. Brian McLaren actually has a line in his book, *A Generous Orthodoxy*, where he's describing two gods, God A and God B, and in God A, he describes all these characteristics that are very distasteful of God.

God is judgmental. God is a God of wrath. God is a disciplinarian.

God, everything that would be classified as the, oh, I don't know if I like that, and then he describes God B, kind, oh, I love God B, and he says, I choose God B. Hey, Mr. McLaren, you don't have a choice in who God is. You have no business attempting to define God. God has already defined himself, and whether you like it or not, he is who he is, whether you believe he is or not.

Our opinion on the issues of God means giddy squat in heaven. We either adapt to who God is, or we find ourselves in a very miserable place someday in the future. God is right.

Let every man be a liar who would attempt to define the realities of our God. I personally couldn't serve a God who would do that. Brian McLaren spends a lot of time talking about the Old Testament, and how if God hasn't changed, then we have serious problems today, because how in the world are we supposed to

explain all these terrible things that God did in the Old Testament? He wiped out entire people groups.

How could we possibly, if we can't say that our God has changed, how can we be Christians? How can we represent this? You know that it's just a simple fact that God is who he is, whether we like it or not, and we submit to him even if he was a bad God. Why? Because he's God, and he gets what he's after, and that's just a fact, right? Now there also is another layering fact, and that is he is revealed in the Word of God as being perfect, upright, good, perfect in his justice, perfect in his mercies. So whatever God is being defined here in the Old Testament, by the way he's the same God yesterday and today and forever, he hasn't altered.

So if you don't like him in the Old Testament, you're not going to like him now or in the future. Same God. You don't change him.

He changes you. The open mind is more honest, and it's more humble. You know, these men are very humble in their approach.

It's like, I don't know that I'm right. That's what they'll say. I don't know that I'm right, but here's my thoughts on the matter.

And it's very studious, and it has the glasses on the end of the nose, and it's very gentle and caring. Let's enter into a conversation, and let's discuss things here. I don't know if I'm right, but here's some thoughts.

Yeah, their thoughts just happen to be one big, did God really say? Yeah, and here's another thought for him. I'm not sure if it's right, but did God really say that either? And here's another thought for you, just to consider, I don't know if I'm right, but did God really say? We have a serpent in sheep's clothing, and it's very dangerous. Believe in the record.

He that believes on the Son of God has the witness in him, he that believes not God has made him a liar. Did you see that line? He that believes not God has made him a liar, because he believes not the record that God gave of his son. God gave us a record.

This is fact. I cannot lie. I've given you a record.

Do you believe it? If you don't, you're calling God a liar. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. The return of the canon mind.

We have a choice, but it's not a matter of who we will bow down to, but when. You know that you may not like the fact that every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, but it's going to happen. You see, God is going to get what he came to that cross to purchase, and we can stand in defiance of that and critique God and come above him and say, I don't like your method.

Who are we to challenge God's method? Who are we? Even the cherubim, which could rule entire worlds single-handedly, move like lightning when they speak. Their voice sounds like mighty rushing waters. They have a brilliance that's at least a million times yours, and even they submit to God and do only that which God is doing.

Who are we that we would critique the Son of God, that we would critique his word? We have a choice, but it's not a matter of who we will bow down to, but when. Wherefore God also has highly exalted him, speaking of Jesus, and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every

knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Where is the flaw? Is it in God, or is it in us? Is God flawed? I know where you guys are typically coming from.

It's a question for more than even us. What, where does the problem lie? You don't like God's method. You don't like how things have turned out.

Hey, there's sickness and dying and disease in this world. God's responsible. I couldn't serve a God like that.

Where's the flaw? Is it in God, or is it in us? Behold, in this thou art not just. This is Elihu of Berakel speaking to Job. Now remember Job has gone through some rather difficult times come Job chapter 33.

His life has been completely brought low. His wife has said curse God and die, but instead he fell down and worshiped. However, Job still struggled because he continued to defend his righteousness.

He said, look, look, I've lived right. This is not appropriate behavior for God to wield against me. And Elihu rises up.

I will answer thee that God is greater than man. Why do thou strive against him? Far be it from God. Listen to this argument.

Far be it from God that he should do wickedness, and from the Almighty that he should commit iniquity. Yea, surely God will not do wickedly. Neither will the Almighty pervert judgment.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out. He is excellent in power and in judgment, and in plenty of justice. He will not afflict.

Let me read that again, just in case you missed it. He will not afflict. Men do therefore fear him.

He respects not any that are wise of heart, any that roost above the word, any that critique it from above. It says, he respects not any that are wise of heart. Their books may sell well, he's not buying them.

Is it our position to critique God, to question his ways? Okay, brace yourself for this one, because that's what God told Job to do. Some of you might know what I'm about to unleash on you here. Do you remember God coming down and speaking to Job? Well, let him speak to us.

Okay, this is a combination. When you see dot, dot, dots, you'll see it's combining with another thing, because this is one long thing, multiple chapters long. So I streamlined it for you, because otherwise you'd be sitting here a long time.

This is good. Then the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind, and said, who is this that darkens counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man, for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where was thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Declare if thou has understanding, who has laid the measures thereof, if thou knows, or who has stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? Or who laid the cornerstone thereof, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it break forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? Hast thou entered into the springs of the sea, or hast thou walked in the search of the depth? Have the gates of death been opened unto thee, or hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death? Hast thou perceived the breadth of the earth? Declare if thou knows it all.

Hast thou entered into the treasures of the snow, or hast thou seen the treasures of the hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war? Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades, or loose the bands of Orion? Canst thou lift up thy voice to the clouds, that abundance of waters may cover thee? Canst thou send lightnings, that they may go, and say unto thee, here we are. Who hath put wisdom in the inward parts, or who hath given understanding to the heart? Who can number the clouds in wisdom, or who can stay the bottles of heaven? Who provides for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God? They wander for lack of meat. Shall he that contends with the Almighty instruct him? Let me read that line again.

Shall he that contends with the Almighty instruct him? Are we giving God instruction? God, you should have done this different. Shall the one that contends with the Almighty instruct him? He that reproves God, let him answer it. Wilt thou also disannul my judgment? Wilt thou condemn me, that thou may be righteous? I'm fine, God.

I'm the way I ought to be. You're the one that's wrong. You defend your righteousness and condemn God.

The fact that this is even allowed into the Christian world, not just the liberal side, it's always been there. The conservative Bible-believing churches have now begun to imbibe this poison. Wilt thou condemn me, that thou may be righteous? Hast thou an arm like God, or canst thou thunder with a voice like him? Deck thyself now with majesty and excellency, and array thyself with glory and beauty.

Cast abroad the rage of thy wrath, and behold every one that is proud, and abase him. Look on every one that is proud, and bring him low, and tread down the wicked in their place. Hide them in the dust together, and bind their faces in secret.

Then will I also confess unto thee, that thine own right hand can save thee. Demonstrate thy beauty and glory. Array yourself like God.

Then he will acknowledge that you can save yourself with your own righteousness. Do it. Try it.

We can't. We are humbled before the realities that he is God, and we are not. Is truth evolving? Does God adapt to the culture, to the political correctness of our times? For I am the Lord, I change not.

Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed. You know what? God's actually saying here? It's not just that he doesn't change. You want to know why you're not consumed? Because I don't change.

I keep my covenant. You want to know why you're still alive right now? It's because I change not. Don't try and change me.

I do not change. Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and forever. By the way, Jesus Christ is the Word of God.

You know who created the heavens and the earth? The Word of God. Jesus has always been around. He didn't just come into existence 2,000 years ago.

He's God, and he's the same yesterday, today, and forever. Every good gift and perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness. In other words, there's no variation in him.

He doesn't change and alter. It's like, oh, it's Monday. Monday, God is a little mean.

Tuesday, he starts to get a little nice. There's no variableness in him, neither shadow of turning. In other words, if you see God's shadow, it will not move.

There's no shadow, no evidence that there's been any alteration in our God throughout eternity. He does not change. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.

The Word of God is stable. The Word of God isn't going anywhere. The Word of God is right.

We build our life upon it, as the builder upon a foundation, upon a stone. Is this all about our choice, our wishes, our sensibilities? What kind of Christianity do you want? How would you like your God to be? What kind of church would you like to go to? Is this about our choice, our wishes, our sensibilities? Do we define God's nature? Do we define the way we want life with God to be? Is it on your terms? It's a good question, because somehow we have begun to believe that it is, but that isn't Christianity. Christianity is on God's terms, and God's terms have been revealed in His Word, and we submit to it.

We come below it, and we say, you're right. Change me to fit you. Alter me.

If I'm wrong, show me so that I can please you by being as I ought to be in you. So the question is, is it about our choice? You have not chosen me, says God. I have chosen you.

You have hope because your God chose you. It's nothing to do with your choice. It has to do with His choice.

He has chosen you and given you an opportunity. We love Him. Why? Because He first loved us.

He's the initiator. We aren't the wise ones here saying, you know what? I think I'd like a little God in my life. He stirs in us.

It's called convenient grace. He moves upon our soul and warms us, and suddenly our eyes can begin to see and behold the realities of the living God. We are living in death.

There is nothing inside of you that would ever be attracted to God Almighty controlling your life. Nothing. And yet there are some of you that have walked from death unto life, where now you see God, and you've yielded your life to Him, and you're happy.

Where'd that come from? It came from God. Do you critique God? Do you choose God? Is it us declaring what we want, or is it God saying, I want you? Herein is love. Not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Okay, good question for our times. Is truth springy? Does truth adapt and flex around us, or are we supposed to adapt and flex around God? Is truth adapting to your body weight, to your personal baggage in your life? You have a really difficult life, and so does truth stretch to meet you in an extra special way? God meets us all in the exact point we need to be met. He meets us at the cross.

All of us. Same way, because our issues are all the same. They have different nuances to them, different names to it.

It's all sin. We have a problem, and that is we are controlled by the flesh. We are controlled by the principle of sin, and we cannot get out.

Is truth springy? Leslie and I have gone up to Estes Park for, I don't know, about 10 or more years now, and there's this rock at Lily Lake. Some of the students have seen it. I don't know if it was pointed out to you, because I wasn't with you on that trip, but it's this huge rock at the very top of the crest, when you walk it up, and then you walk back down, and we always get all these pictures up there.

It's interesting. In 10 years, that rock has never changed. Now, you could say, well, it's only been 10 years.

Okay, I think it's safe to say, in the last 100 years, it hasn't changed. I also think it's safe to say, in the past 1,000 years, it hasn't changed. Now, someone could have taken, you know, some type of jackhammer to it and tried to chip something out of it.

That rock doesn't change. You know that every year, that rock, if it was thinking straight and it was working on its marketing plan, because if rocks like to be climbed on, then a rock should have some kind of marketing plan here. It's like, hey, people, what do you want? What kind of rock are you looking to climb on this year? All right, I'm going to do my best to shift and to do a little, you know, shape-shifting for you, so that I'm a little more appealing, because this generation is new.

It's different. Rocks don't change. They do not adapt.

So, Rob Bell can call Christianity brickianity, you know, stiff religionists. You know, I don't like stiff religionists any more than Rob Bell does. I want believers living and vibrant.

However, we stand upon something very stiff, and it is not movable. It does not stretch, depending on who we are. It is called the rock, and it does not change to adapt around our sensibilities.

We change our sensibilities to adapt around it. If you want to climb on the rock, you climb on the rock the way it's been for 6,000 years, for all eternity. It has never changed.

God does not change. He is the rock. His way is perfect, for all his ways are judgment.

A God of truth and without iniquity. Just and right is he. The Lord is my rock, the God of my rock.

In him will I trust. Who is a rock save our God? Exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation. The rock of Israel spoke to me.

I love that last line, because we're used to the first lines in there, you know, the 2 Samuel 22, which is also the same as Psalm 18. God is a rock. Well, guess what? That's supposed to be good news to you.

When you come inside of a rock, you're safe. Why? Because the rock doesn't pick up and move. It's stationary.

It doesn't alter, and things can't get through a rock. You're secure in a rock, because it doesn't change. Listen to this last line.

The rock of Israel spoke to me. Okay, I'm going to build on that. In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not anything made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men.

The word was made flesh. God spoke. It was made flesh.

The word, the very annunciation, the very expression, the very nature of God, which is what a word is. When I give my word, I'm giving my reputation. I'm putting it all on the line.

Everything that Eric is, my character, is invested in my word, and that word became flesh. The rock of Israel spoke to us, and the word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. Therefore, whosoever hears these sayings of mine and does them, I will like him and unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock, and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat upon that house, and it fell not.

Why? For it was founded upon a rock. Who is this rock? Who is this rock? And did all drink the same spiritual drink, speaking of the Israelites in the wilderness, for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and then Paul lowers the boom, and that rock was Christ. Jesus is the law of God made flesh.

He's the histories of Israel made flesh. He's the proverbs of God made flesh. All the prophecies, all the sacrifices, the temple, the Sabbath rest made flesh.

He's the full enunciation of God made flesh. He's the rock upon which we stand and upon which we build. The text and the person, inerrant, without flaw.

And I say, Church of Jesus Christ, fix your feet upon Jesus, and forsake that voice that says, did he really say? Yes, he did, and we will not be moved. When the winds and the rains come against us, do not build upon sand. Sand is a rock that has been beaten into little small pieces, and then the pieces that are wanted are taken.

You have a foundation, but it is unstable because it is not Jesus. It is the parts of God that you esteemed according to your own sensibilities, and you built for yourself a foundation of your own accord and your own wit and wisdom, and it will fail you. What is the proper response of the believer? This is Job's response, not a bad one.

Then Job answered the Lord and said, I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withheld from thee. Who is he that hides counsel without knowledge? Therefore have I uttered things that I understood not. Boy, that sounds like us.

We have uttered things that we understood not. Things too wonderful for us, which we knew not. Then Job continues, I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eyes see thee.

Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes. It's not just the hearing of the ear. We need to behold the living God.

When you know your God, you know that he's able to keep our feet from falling. You know that this God is able to construct a revelation and then to preserve the revelation for all time. Is this too hard for God? Because we have a lot of voices that are saying, oh, how in the world is that supposed to work? Can you name any other piece of literature that has been stayed and stable and unaltered throughout thousands of years? Yeah, you can't, can you? Because it's not supernatural.

We're talking about the word of God. He will overcome when he is judged. For what if some did not believe? Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? So what if, what if people don't believe that God is able? What if they don't believe that he's who he says he is? Will that make the merit and the efficacy and the ability of God neutralized? Let God be true, but every man a liar.

As it is written, that thou might be justified in thy sayings and might overcome when thou art judged. If there was a tribunal set up and a bar of justice set up and we attempted to condemn God, he will be justified at such a tribunal and we will end up being nullified and we will end up being found to be the idiot in the scene. Shall we strike with the sword? Remember this from the very beginning? Then Jesus said to them, why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation.

And while he was still speaking, behold a multitude. And he was called Judas, one of the twelve, went before him and drew near to Jesus to kiss him. But Jesus said to him, Judas, are you betraying the son of man with a kiss? When those around him saw what was going to happen, they said to him, Lord, shall we strike with the sword? What I've described to you is the leaders in the church of Jesus Christ today, I've only given you a little snapshot, have leaned in to kiss the cheek of Jesus Christ.

And it looks so tender and so many of us feel a difficult time knowing how to respond to this because well, they seem to really love Jesus. Do you see the multitude? Do you see that they're betraying the son of man into the hands of sinners? But we're dull in our senses. Why? Because we've been sleeping.

We have not been alert in this time. The church of Jesus Christ has been in a slumber. Awaken us, Lord Jesus, so that we can see.

Because the son of man has been betrayed afresh into the hands of sinners. I have a message this semester I teach on translations. And I also have a message I talk about biblical pedigree.

The history of the word of God. How many men and women have died to preserve dots and tittles? And in one generation, ours, they are overhauling the entirety of the Bible. The entirety.

Men and women for ages and generations have died to preserve every last word. The entire Jewish nation for thousands of years preserved the word of God and said we will die rather than you altering one word. And in our generation, they're altering the whole thing.

And we are sleeping. This is our watch. And the wolves are in the sheep pen.

I know they look like sheep. We need to mark them, and we need to understand how this battle works. So we're turning to our God right now, and we're saying, Lord, shall we strike with the sword? One of the things I was praying before we launched into this message was, God, I need to speak sharply, but not of the flesh.

I don't want to start swinging a sword of the flesh. I want to speak sharply harnessed by the Spirit of God. I want to speak truth.

I'm not against men. I don't mind encountering these men. I don't mind talking about these men.

I would be perfectly pleasant. However, I wouldn't back down on the truth. Our battle is not against Rob Bell, Brian McLaren, Donald Miller, just to name a few.

And the reason I named them is because they're basically the kingpins of these messages. Our battle isn't against them. It's against what's puppeteering them.

They could be genuine. They might not know what they are doing. However, the enemy does know what he's doing because it's his business to do this.

Did God really say that? Can we really be certain about this? It's always undermining the certainty, the rock-like substance of Jesus Christ. When you mess with the text of Scripture, you mess with the person of Jesus Christ. You cannot mess with the text of Scripture without implying that Jesus Christ, who is the Word, become flesh.

In some diminishing way, you are hurting Jesus. I was going to give a lot of illustrations. I was going to have them speak for themselves, and I came to this as my conclusion.

No, I do not want to give this microphone to their voice. I had a quote of Rob Bell talking about the virgin birth, and he says he believes the virgin birth. However, he goes through this whole process of creating the argument that could be used for someone who doesn't believe the virgin birth.

It is so calculated and so dangerous because he's literally sponsoring doubt in the virgin birth. You know, if you remove the virgin birth, this is no small thing. You know that the canonicity of Jesus is called into question.

If Jesus is not proven to be the perfect match with all the prophecy of the Old Testament in perfect harmony, you know that he could be stoned as a false prophet. You remove the virgin birth, you remove the integrity of the Messiahship of Jesus Christ. We don't mess with these things.

These are fighting words. Someone may not know what they are doing to the Word of God today. That doesn't mean we stand by and say, well, they're at least sincere.

We still must mark it, and we say, that's dangerous. That's that voice. That's the voice.

Don't heed that voice. The appeal of the open mind is strong. This book that's about to come out, it's called Love Wins.

I mean, I was going to show the video, and I decided, you know what? I'm not going to give him a voice in our midst. Why would I let him promote that here? However, there's part of me that wanted you to see it. It's universalism.

It's a direct question to the integrity of the scripture on the point of hell and judgment. Do you think I'm a huge fan of people going to hell? I'd love to change these things according to my sensibilities. This would be a lot better.

And if you want to hear my take on hell, you can listen to a pink ribbons and a bloody cross. I forewarn you, it's somewhat politically incorrect. God speaks, and he doesn't stutter.

It's our job to believe him. It's that simple. He said it.

We may not fully understand it, but we believe it. Why would you believe that? Because God said it. He cannot lie.

It's his word. We have canon minds, minds that are groomed by the word of God, and not by social sensibilities. You may be a bit offended by God.

You better come to God and make that right, because God cannot do wickedness. He is upright in all matters. He does not afflict.

He is perfect in his judgment. Our God will be justified in the end. You may not understand how all this drama works, but don't listen to the enemy's take on it.

The enemy is always questioning the person of God and his motives. What was he saying to Eve? Look at God. He's trying to rule you with an iron hand.

You don't need to submit to that. Eat of this fruit. He doesn't want you to know that you'll be as he is.

That's the bait of the serpent. Don't follow it. It's self-exaltation that he's after, because he knows when you exalt self, you are imprisoned in the power of sin.

But he knows when self is debased, Jesus Christ can gain access to what he purchased on that cross. This is about dying to self, not exalting self, not preserving self, not about self-esteem, about self-denial, so that Jesus Christ can gain what is rightfully his. You want to know? I'm the happiest guy you'll ever meet, because I agree with the word of God.

It doesn't make me miserable. It makes me happy. I love Jesus.

I love serving God. I trust implicitly his character, and he is good. He is good, and every question that can possibly be laid at him, any accusation, he will overcome all judgment that has been laid at his feet, every last one.

We are going to bow our knee. Let's bend it now. Let's bend it now.

We are going to confess that he is Lord. Let's confess it now, and let him rescue us. Let him change us.

Let him purge us. Let him purify us. Let him set our feet upon a rock and make us strong.

Fill us with love, joy, peace, patience, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control to live this life as we ought to live it. Father, should we draw a sword? The answer is yes, but it's the sword of the Spirit, the word of God that we draw. Our weaponry is not like earthly weaponry.

Our weaponry is born of heaven. We do not fight this in the flesh. We do not fight this in the natural.

We do have a natural obligation, and we will deal with this in the natural, but our fight is first and foremost with the puppeteers, with the principalities and powers that are wielding their agenda and their conspiratorial efforts against the church of Jesus Christ today. They've always been against you, and Lord Jesus, they still are, and they're also against those of us that side with you. Make your church strong, and may we esteem the word of God.

May we see it clearly, and may we build our lives upon it for you, for your glory, for your honor, and for your praise. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/cRkQfvupNI4.mp4>

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