

When God Doesn't Listen

by Francis Chan

Francis Chan emphasizes the seriousness of God's commands and the importance of sincere prayer in a believer's life.

Duration: 51:31

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 5:9

Topics: "Repentance And Forgiveness", "Church Unity"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance and purging sin from our lives to experience God's blessings and favor. It highlights the need for unity and purity within the church, addressing the impact of individual sin on the entire body. The speaker urges for genuine confession, repentance, and seeking God's forgiveness to align with His will and experience His presence and favor in prayer.

Transcript

This morning before the first service, Matt Moore came up to me and he just says, hey, you ready for this? And I said, I'm really not. I'm just not, I'm not, I'm not there. I'm looking at these passages.

I said, I'm reading these passages and reviewing my notes this morning. And I said, I realize God is a lot more serious about this than I am. God is a lot more serious about himself than I am.

He's a lot more serious about this topic than I am. I go, I'm just not there. And I go, my struggle is most people would look at me and say, wow, he's extreme.

And I'm reading the scriptures and going, man, no, no, no. Look at what God's, I'm not even there yet. I don't even know if I'm, I'm, I'm, I'm as serious.

And, and I'm, I'm concerned about that because I don't want to be in this middle ground, you know, kind of in between God and where the culture is. I want to stand where he is and say, no, this is what God says. And I want all that boldness.

I want to say everything he does, but I'm looking at the scriptures and going, wow, he's, he's really serious about this. It's, it's, it's to use the words of a gal from our church. One time after I preached this message, it was just a couple of months ago, I preached a message that was pretty intense.

Remember that one? And, and, and, and I saw her at the gym and, and she's just like, you know, and you know, she was, she, and here were her words. She just, she goes, man, you got, you got to keep saying it like that. She goes, because, because my God don't play.

I thought, wow, that's good. That's good. My God don't play.

So that's the title of my sermon now. Um, it's, but, but haven't you noticed it? Like even in our readings in first John, I mean, when you read it, he doesn't mess around. He just says, look, I don't care if you say that, you know, me, if you don't obey my commands, you're a liar.

Like, wow, really? Is you, you can't love the things of the world and also have the love of the father in you. Really? Wait, wait, you can't, you can't say you love God. If you hate your brother, whom you see, if you hate someone else here, you don't love God.

It's like, wow, really? Well, you, you can't keep going on sinning. If you're really a believer, you're not a real believer. Then it's like, wow.

It's like, he just lays it out and he's so serious. He just lays this thing out. I mean, haven't you noticed that? That's why I go, man, I, I've had a weird view of God.

That's why last week I was saying, let's just start all over and let's just, this is good. What does the Bible say? Let's take it literally because I'm reading it this morning. Again, I'm going, he's a lot more serious about himself than I am about him.

And so as we wrapped up the first John and hopefully you've been reading that daily this month, what I'd like, I'd like to challenge you to do is read through the book of Luke every week. It's, it's 24 chapters. And so if you read four chapters a day, you know, you'll get it, you'll get it done in six days.

And this way, if you miss a day, you're okay. But, but it's, it's, it's, what I'd love you to do is when you read the book of Luke though, forget that, you know, if you grew up in church, Sunday school, church background, just forget it all. And just read the book of Luke.

Like it's the first time you've ever heard about Jesus. And I challenge you to take his words literally rather than before you get all these church goers saying, well, Jesus didn't really mean that. He didn't really mean this.

He didn't really, just read it and go, maybe he really means this. And what would my life look like if I took this literally? Because I think we've really messed with the scriptures in our church culture where we, we, we change things. We soften things to our liking rather than going, what did he say? Let's just take it.

And let's read through the book of Luke this week and let's fellowship over, let's talk about it. Let's get into it. Because I, I just, like I said, I, I just have a very serious concern that, you know, after reading 1 John over and over again, reading some of these passages this week, just going, man, are we missing it? Because God is pretty serious about what it means to follow him.

It's like this. Okay. Last week I did something that I thought I would never do in my life.

I went to a NASCAR race and I'm just not into NASCAR. Don't, don't clap because I'm not into it. And no, I know some of you guys are, but I just didn't get it.

You know, I don't, I don't get the thrill or whatever, but, but several of the racers, you know, the drivers had, were reading my book and doing a Bible study. So they invited me out to the race and said I could sit in the pits, you know, you know, right where they're changing the tires, you know, and, and on. I thought, oh, that, you know, if I'm going to experience it, that's the way to do it.

And people go, oh, who are the drivers? Like, I don't know their names. Rick, you know, it's just, and so, so I go and, and, you know, you're sitting there in the pits and, and, and, you know, and, and, you know, the guys, you know, I'm taking a tire off, you know, pouring gas in and it was fun. I got to admit, it was a good time, you know, the, the sound, the rush and, you know, trying to understand it all.

It was just, it was a good time. Now I, I won't go back unless, unless I get to sit in the pit again, you know, because that was pretty cool. In fact, I go, you know, next time I want to be, I want to help, you know, almost because I sat there with the headphones like I was doing something, you know, and I go, I go, but I want to, you know, maybe I can be the guy that slaps the car, you know, like, wouldn't that be fun? You know, the, you know, right after the pit stop, the guy always runs, he goes, you know, like, I can do that, you know, let me do that.

Okay, if you do that, I'll come again, you know, let, let me do that part, but if one of you invites me and says, hey, you know, you want to go to the NASCAR race and sit in the grandstand with everyone else, you know, it's not like I'm going to run home and grab my wife, Peter, and head out with you. I, I just go, I don't know, I'm not that into it. So would you call me a NASCAR fan? No, okay, thank you.

No, you know, I'll go if everything's just right, you know, the way I like it, but I'm not going to sacrifice or keep up. I don't know who won today or yesterday or if they raced. I don't care, and, and, and, and I, and I say that because when I look at the, when I look at church in America, there's so many of you, let's face it, you'll only participate if everything's just right.

You got to have the right speaker, the right music, the right people, you got to have the right programs, the right time of day, can't be too long, there better be something good going on for the kids over there. You know, you better have something at the church where I can just find people who are exactly like me, whose personalities I enjoy, and I'll fellowship with them. Everything's got to be just right for you, and I'm looking in the scriptures, I'm going, man, these guys would do anything, these followers of Jesus, these fans of Jesus, and you just got to wonder, are we just playing a game here? You know, is this the real thing? That's why I'm going, let's start all over.

Let's start all over like we did last week and go, okay, who is this God that we talk about? Who is this being that we talk about? He's pretty intense, and this idea of fearing God means really fearing God, and this idea of following Him is seriously following Him, no matter what the cost, and, and that's why I even showed the video last week and going, man, this is the way people follow around the world, and I understand, you know, we found that had some comments this week about some of the clips might not have been from Christian persecution, and it was a different type of person. The point was is, man, we've got, we've got people around the world that are really suffering, and many of them are suffering for the sake of Christ and for His namesake, and we've got to be in prayer for them, and, and hopefully it's a visual, it's a picture. You go, wow, that person is that intense? That's why if I see the guy that's got every stat and knows the drivers and, you know, who knows every race, I go, okay, that, there's an NASCAR fan there.

I'm not. I'm just there if everything's set up right, and I get special treatment, and, and, and sometimes when you see the real thing and real believers, you go, wow, that person would give up anything for Jesus, and you go, I don't think I'm the real thing. I don't know if I get it.

You know, we're starting off this week, today, today we're kicking off a week of prayer, like of intense prayer, of just really encourage you to really be focused on prayer this week, and, and with that, I, I think back to how I was raised in the church, and when people would tell me to pray, they go, just, just start talking, just say whatever you want to say, and when I read the Scriptures, I don't, I don't see that so much. I, I don't see that. Ecclesiastes tells us, guard yourself as you approach God.

Don't be quick. Don't be hasty to say anything with your mouth. This is, in fact, and definitely don't start making these vows before God, like, God, I promise I'll never, because God's going to hold you to that.

It's, it's, you don't just start opening your mouth and saying careless words before God. When you pray, there's, there's, there's, there's thought behind it. You think about who you're speaking to, and what you want to say to I mean, I understand it's a relationship, but if we've gone too far in, in this sloppiness, the other thing that, because I don't want us to waste a bunch of time.

See, because some of you, you could pray all week and God not hear a word you say. Do you realize that? No one ever told me that. They said, just start talking, but they never told me that sometimes God doesn't listen to you, and so you're wasting your time.

You're wasting a whole day. You're wasting a whole week, a month. Some of you guys have wasted hours, and hours, and hours praying in such a way that God's, God's actually disgusted by some of the prayers.

At least that's what the Bible teaches. We, uh, I, I had a guy a while back who's, who just said, he goes, you know, my wife and I haven't been getting along, and this, this thing just isn't right. He goes, I, I just, he goes, and I got this job opportunity somewhere else, and so I'm going to leave my wife and my family, and I'm going to go, would you just pray for me that I would just have a great new start, and I go, you got to be kidding me right now.

I'm not praying for you. I, I go, I go, God's not going to listen to that. I, I, I go, look at what first Peter says.

First Peter 3, uh, verse somewhere. First Peter 3, 7. First Peter 3, 7 says, husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way. Show honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered, so that your prayers will not be hindered.

He says, husbands, treat your wives. Why? Oh, because, because she's, you know, she's not as strong as you. You're going to push her, and he goes, no.

Instead, you treat her as this precious vase, this precious vessel. You protect her. You love her.

You honor her. You value her. Why? So that your prayers won't be hindered.

You understand that's my daughter, God's saying, and you better treat her the right way, or I'm not going to listen to you. And, and I go, and now you're asking me to bless you leaving your wife? There's no way. I'm not praying for you.

There's a, not too long ago, you know, we asked for prayer for healing, and someone says, I need some healing. We're like, great, great. I'm glad you have the faith.

You know, James 5 says, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you can be healed. And I said, so do you have anything you need to confess? And he goes, no, you know, it was a little business thing. I think I got that fixed, and, and there's a little thing here, but I got that fixed.

No, no, I'm good. I've confessed everything. And we're, before we're out, hey, well, you know, I'm living with this girl.

That's a little problem. I said, and you claim to be a Christian. She claims to be a Christian, and you guys sleeping around? He goes, yeah, and you're not married? No.

I go, let me ask you something. If you were sleeping with one of my daughters at a wedlock, would you have the nerve to come up to me, face me, and ask for a favor? He goes, well, I never thought of it that way. I go, you're with a daughter of God, and now you're going to approach, and you want me to come with you? I said, man, you, you, you repent, and God's a forgiving God.

He's an awesome Father. He'll forgive you, but there's no way. There's no way I can pray for that.

God's not going to listen to that. Why pray? James 4 verse 3 says, you ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your own passions, on your passions. You see what this, this verse says is, why don't, why don't you get any answers? Why don't you receive? He goes, because you ask in the wrong way.

You don't ask the right way, you're not going to get answered. He goes, see, and in this case, he says, you're, you're, you're using it to spend it on your own passions. You're not concerned about the things of God.

It's all about you. I mean, understand, we were created for Him. We're created to do something.

I'm a created being, that, that holy God that we talked about last, you know, week, where Isaiah said, here I am, send me. That's what we're supposed to be out about. It's about, okay, what do you want? What do you want for me? He goes, but you guys are asking for stuff just for yourself.

It's all selfish for your own passions. He goes, God's not going to give you those things. James chapter 1 verse 6, he says this, but let him ask in faith with no doubting.

For the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. That person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord. He's a double-minded man, unstable in all of his ways.

So he says, when you pray, if you're going to pray and you're going to doubt the whole time, you doubt anyone's listening up there, he goes, just don't waste your time. He goes, don't, don't, don't suppose that you're going to receive anything from the Lord. You know, let me just, let me, let me just break from this for one second and say, I don't know that I'm trying to think through what I'm about to say here and make sure I'm not exaggerating, but I really don't know that, that there's anything I enjoy more than answered prayer.

You know what I mean? When you ask for something specific and then it's answered and it's answered supernaturally and you know, there's no way that was coincidence. Isn't that an awesome feeling? And,

and what it is, it's, it's knowing that I just spoke to God. He heard me and He did what He, what I asked for.

That's insane. I just spoke to God and God heard me. I know He heard me because that could not have been a coincidence.

And you just walk away going, I just spoke to God. I just spoke to God and He heard me. It's, there's nothing like that.

You know how sometimes you'll, you'll, you'll say, oh, I got to meet this person. Who would be, you know, I talked to God, like the creator, like you're breathing right now because of Him. He made the world.

I said something to Him. He goes, Francis, I heard you and watch what I do now. And I'm just telling you, there's nothing like that.

I want you all to experience. I want you all to get that. You know, this prayer thing isn't about, oh, let's do this.

You know, as Christians, we're supposed to pray. I'm telling you, there's nothing like just knowing that God hears me. I remember talking to a gal who's not even a follower of Christ.

And I was talking to her, you know, a month or two ago and just going, gosh, let me just tell you, you know, here's some things that have happened in my life. And she was just like, wow. And she goes, and probably the greatest thing is just the fact that you know someone's listening to you.

Like it's not all the blessings. It's not even the answers. It's just the rush of someone listens to you up there.

I go, exactly. You nailed it. You know how much security there is in that? When you pray and you just go, He's doing everything I ask and beyond what I can imagine.

I can't even believe He answered it that way. I would never have thought of it that way. That was so good.

And you just, it's just this comfortable, it's this peace of everything's right because God of the universe hears my prayers. What else are you going to ask for? You know, Isaiah chapter 58. In Isaiah chapter 58, you have these people who were praying.

They were even fasting. So they were, they weren't even eating because they were praying. And they come before God and, you know, and some of them are even, you know, they would strip themselves of their normal clothes and wear this sackcloth and ashes and throw dust over their heads and not eat and really suffer as they cry out to God.

And what God says to them, He goes, is that what I wanted? He goes, is such the fast that I choose a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I choose? To loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house when you see the naked, to cover him and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? Then shall your light break forth like the dawn and your healing shall spring up speedily. Your righteousness shall go before you. The glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard.

Then you shall call and the Lord will answer. You shall cry and he will say, here I am. If you take away the yoke from your midst and the pointing of the finger and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noon day.

God says, what, you think you're going to bow before me and go, ooh, look how humble I am. And I'm going to listen to your prayers. Is that what I asked for? Is what I asked for is to go out and find the people in need and take care of them, share your home with other people, share your stuff with other people.

You do that. He goes, then when you cry out to me, I'll go, here I am. I go, I love that.

I love that. But it's conditional. That's why I go, I don't want to have a week of fasting and prayer if all we're going to do is fast and pray.

He says, I want you to be the people that I've called you to be. I want you to be givers. And I believe that's why God's hand has been on this church, is because we're trying to care for the people who are in need.

And that's why I've seen the hand of God in some of your lives. Why? Because you live for those people. And so it's not about praying more.

Sometimes it's just about praying, you know, the prayer of a righteous person that's powerful and effective, because an unrighteous person can pray all day and hear nothing. But a person who pours himself out for the hungry, for the afflicted, the moment they say, hey God, can you help me with this? Yeah, here I am. It's a beautiful, beautiful passage.

But here's one that, if your Bible's turned to Joshua chapter seven, pretty interesting passage. This is one of the ones I was really wrestling with. It caused me to wonder, am I as serious about God's commands and purity as he is? And the answer is definitely not.

Joshua chapter seven, verse one, it says, the people of Israel broke faith in regard to the devoted things. For Achan, the son of Carmi, son of Zabdi, son of Zerah of the tribe of Judah, took some of the devoted things, and the anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel. Okay, what's it talking about? What's he talking about? This guy named Achan, there were these certain areas where God said, just destroy the place and, you know, destroy everything in there.

Take these certain items, just give them to the Lord. Don't touch them. Don't, you know, don't mess with them.

But one of the guys saw some things in Jericho and he, I'm gonna take some, and he hid some of the stuff. He took some of the spoils from this defeat and he hid them for himself. And it says, the anger of the Lord burned against the people of Israel.

Wait, so God got mad at everyone because of one guy? Yeah, I mean, when you read on, you know, they're about to go to war now. No one knows about Achan and what he stole and what he hid. And then in verse four, they're about to go to war, you know, and they're going to Ai.

And it says, about 3,000 men went up there from the people and they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai killed about 36 of their men and chased them before the gate as far as Shebrem and struck them at the descent. And the hearts of the people melted and became as water.

Then Joshua tore his clothes and fell, fell to the earth on his face before the ark of the Lord until evening. He and the elders of Israel, they put dust on their heads. And Joshua says, alas, oh Lord, why have you brought this people over the Jordan at all? To give us into the hands of the Amorites, to destroy us? Would that we had been content to dwell beyond the Jordan.

Oh Lord, what can I say? When Israel has turned their back before their enemies, for the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the earth will hear of it and will surround us and they're going to cut off our name from the earth. And what will you do for your great name? Verse 10, the Lord said to Joshua, get up. Why have you fallen on your face? Israel has sinned.

They have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them. And they have taken some of the devoted things. They have stolen and lied and put them among their own belongings.

Therefore, the people of Israel cannot stand before their enemies. They turn their backs before their enemies because they have become devoted for destruction. I will be with you no more unless you destroy the devoted things from among you.

Get up, consecrate the people and say, consecrate yourselves tomorrow. For thus says the Lord God of Israel, there are devoted things in your midst, O Israel. You cannot stand before your enemies until you take away the devoted things from among you.

So Joshua, he's crying, he's praying, he's fasting. The elders are fasting, praying and going, God, what in the world? How did we lose? We never lose. You're our God.

And now you turned your back on us. And God says, get up, Joshua. You know why I turned my back on you? It's because someone sinned.

Someone took some of those things that I told you guys not to take. Wait, someone? One person? And you're going to punish all of Israel? You notice that? God says, now you're going to be destroyed because you didn't listen to me. And God says, you know, you better find that guy and deal with it.

Get him out of your midst so I can bless you again. And sure enough, if you look in verse 20, it says, and Achan answered Joshua, I did it. I've sinned against the Lord God of Israel is what I did.

When I saw among the spoil, he starts explaining, he goes, they're hidden in my tent. And so Joshua, and they go, they find all this stuff in his tent. And in verse 25, it says, Joshua said, why did you bring trouble on us? The Lord brings trouble on you today.

And all Israel stoned him with stones and they burned them with fire and stoned them with stones. And they raised over him a heap of stones that remains to this day. Then the Lord turned from his burning anger.

Therefore, to this day, the name of that place is called the Valley of Achor. So what did they do? They found this guy and they stoned him to death, burned him up, covered him up and said, God, are we good now? And God says, yeah. And then they go the next day and God says, I'll be with you in battle now.

Now, some of you hear that story and I know what you're thinking. That's not fair, right? I mean, 36 people died because of the sin of some other guy. Face it.

That doesn't seem fair to you, does it? Okay, you tell them. You know, I'm just saying when I look at that, that again, there's one of the passages where I go, I'm not as serious about this as you are, God. You wanted a purity amongst your people.

So much so that when this one guy did this, because the people of Israel weren't on top of it and trying to figure this out, they were all punished for it. And yet the moment you got that sin out of the camp, you put your blessing right back on these people again. It's a pretty intense passage.

But God does that. You see, this is the thing is how serious are we about the purity of the church? In New Testament, remember Acts chapter 5? Acts chapter 5, Ananias and Sapphira. You know, they come before the apostles and think about the sin here.

Because here's a couple, they sold some land, they sold some property and laid the money. They didn't have to do that. They brought the money to the church and said, hey, here's the money.

And the apostles go, is it all the money? And they go, yeah. But they were lying. They kept back a little bit and both of them are struck dead by the Lord.

Like they just collapsed. And then the Bible says, and great fear seized the whole church and all who heard of it. Yeah.

Can you imagine? I mean, it'd be like if I had Bill and Kathleen and I said, hey, you guys come up here. I want to ask you something. And I want you to tell me the whole truth.

And then you both just kind of alter the truth a little bit. You fell over dead. Then I said, hey, Ron, you come up here and tell me the truth.

You'll probably tell me the truth. There would be like this. Okay.

I understand now. Okay. I don't, my God, don't play.

This is the real thing, you guys. And I know this bothers some of you. You go, wait, he can't have such a high standard.

And that's why you have a problem with hell. You have a problem with any of his punishments. You have a problem with him flooding the earth.

But he says, no, no, no, you don't understand. I asked you to live a certain way. I gave you my spirit to empower you to live a certain way.

And yet you refuse. It's some serious stuff. But the thing is, is it's interesting because even when I tell you that story about Joshua and the army that was going to purge the land, you know, there's times like, you know, like the flood, right? When God does it himself, forget it.

You know what? I'm going to save Noah, everyone else, I'll destroy you. Sodom and Gomorrah, you know what? Get out of here. I'm going to destroy.

Fire's going to come down from heaven. But there's other times when he says, you know what? I'm going to use you, Joshua. You lead this army and you take these people out of there because I'm so disgusted by their sin.

And in the New Testament, he has times when he says, you know what? That sin's so gross to me. I'm going to just, I'm going to strike them dead right now. And there's other times when he says, now I want you as the church to join with me in this.

And there are times when he asks us to purge the evil out. Just like he tells Joshua, you know what? You and all Israel, you need to partake of this taking out of this evil or purging the evil. So you're the ones that are going to stone Achan to death.

And it's a little different in Matthew. It's a little different in the New Testament, but in a lot of ways it isn't. God is serious about removing the evil from his church.

In Matthew chapter 18, Jesus gives us some specific instructions. Matthew 18 verse 15, he says, if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault. Okay, so that's different.

He doesn't say stone him to death. He says, go tell him his fault between you and him alone. And if he listens to you, you've gained your brother.

Okay, game over. The story's over. If someone sins against you, you go one-on-one.

Don't tell me. Don't tell anyone. Just go talk to that person.

Confront them on their sin. And if they say, you know what? You're right. That's wrong.

I'm going to change. He goes, great. You won.

You won your brother over. But then he says, if he doesn't listen, take one or two others along with you. And remember, these are, this is the command of God.

God we talked about last week, this is what he tells us to do. He goes, if that one, he doesn't listen to the one person, take one or two others along with you that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. So if he didn't listen to you, let's say he rejects you.

He goes, bring a couple people with you and all talk to this person in love. And it says, if they listen to you, you win. You did it.

You brought the person back. You got them out of their sin. And then he says, if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church.

And if he refuses to listen, even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. He goes, if he doesn't listen, when the people of God confront them on this issue, he goes, you got to get them out of there. You can't let that person stay and be a part of you.

The Corinthians didn't obey this. And God confronts that in first Corinthians chapter five. First Corinthians five, starting in verse one, God says, it's actually reported that there's sexual immorality among you and of a kind that's not even tolerated among the pagans.

A man has his father's wife and you're arrogant. Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. For although I am absent in the body, listen to this, I am present in spirit.

And as if present, I have already pronounced judgment on the one who did such a thing. When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus, and my spirit is present with the power of our Lord Jesus, you

are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Don't miss that last part.

Why? So that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. Deliver him over to Satan. What's he talking about? Hand someone over to Satan? This is the exact same terminology.

Remember when I taught Romans chapter one and it talked about how the people just kept going toward their sin and they exchanged the glory of God for these other things. And it says, so therefore God gave them over to these passions. God gave them over to a depraved mind.

It was God letting go and going, if that's what you want, here, you can have it. Go, I'm done. It's the same word here.

Paul says, hand this person over. Same word. Give them over.

Give them over to Satan. You see, if they don't want to live the way God wants them to, he goes, let them live the way Satan wants them to. Give them over to Satan.

See, and the hope is, is that person will be, you know, enjoying their sin, but understand they have no fellowship with God, no fellowship with the believers anymore. And it's for that person to go, I don't like this. I miss those days when I felt right with the people of God and before God.

And the hope is, is that there's this destruction of the flesh where they come to the end of themselves and go, this isn't what I want. He says, and their soul will be saved. That's the goal.

That's one of the most loving things you can do. One of the most harmful things you can do is befriend that person and say, oh no, it's okay. It's okay.

It's okay. It's like, no, it's not okay. God's taken his hand off of them and you need to stand with God and say, you know what, I'm not doing this to you.

I'm just joining God in what he's already done. He's handed you over and I hand you over also. In fact, he goes on in verse nine.

He says, I wrote to you in my letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. He goes, not at all. Meaning the sexual immoral of this world or the greedy and swindlers or idolaters.

Since then you need to go out of the world. But now I'm writing you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother. If he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard or swindler, not even to eat with such a one.

For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge? God judges those outside. Purge the evil person from among you. Okay, this is something that we were taught wrong, a lot of us.

Not supposed to judge, not supposed to judge. What does it say? Aren't you supposed to judge? Yes, those that are inside the church who were not supposed to judge are those who don't call themselves Christians. And for too long the church has got it backwards.

We keep judging, oh the evil world out there, the evil world out there. And God says, stop that. He goes, I didn't ask you to judge them.

I asked you to look in your midst and get serious about the purity of the church and get those people out of there. The people who call themselves brothers or sisters. Because I don't want someone taking the name of Christ, Christian, and living that way.

He goes, and you shouldn't want that either. He goes, purge that person, get that person out of there. Titus chapter 3 verse 10.

As for a person who stirs up division after warning him once and then twice have nothing more to do with him, knowing that such a person is warped and sinful and he is self-condemned. He goes, the people in the church that try to divide us, he goes, you got to warn them. You know, give them a chance.

It's kind of like a Matthew 18. Confront them in love. Warn them again.

Say, you know, you did it. What is this? Why do you keep trying to divide us and break us up? And he goes, and after a while, he goes, just have nothing to do with them. You got to get it out.

You got to purge it. And I know this is not a popular doctrine. And I know there are many people who are listening to this who say, well, I don't agree with what he did in the book of Joshua.

I don't agree with, I don't see why you would ever disassociate with someone and not even eat with them. And understand this too. Again, we're talking about people who call themselves Christians.

Some of you guys here, you're visiting. You know, you're checking things out. And I'm so glad you're here.

Man, and what you do in your own time, that's your business. You know what? I'm not going to get in your face and say, I think you drank too much last night. Or hey, I saw you over here, over there.

It doesn't matter. You do what you want. Now, I'm just glad you're here and you're checking things out.

But if you call yourself Christian, if you call yourself a brother, and if people out there, you're telling them, oh, yeah, I'm a part of Cornerstone Church. And yet you're holding on to things, sin that you refuse to let go of. We need to get you out of here.

But it's for your good too, but also for our good, because you understand it's not just about you. You hurt us. I mean, isn't it true that if I were an ongoing sin right now, I would hurt the church.

When you got baptized, it wasn't just about you. You joined a family here. And that's why even, you know, today I'm going, God, you know, show me.

Is there something in me? Because I don't want to, I don't want to mess things up for you. Yeah, you know, I'm selfish and I think about me and I want to be right before God. But there's another side of this, and especially in my position where I go, man, I can't mess around because if I'm wrong before God, I take other people with me.

And that's true of you also. You affect the body. You know, and I don't know, I'm weird, but, you know, I was reading that story of Aachen and I noticed this video, Aachen, Aachen, that's spelled A-C-H-A-N, a Chan.

And I thought, I don't know, it just hit me, you know, and I thought, wow, maybe there's, you know, it's a Chan sin that could affect the camp. And I go, I gotta take that seriously. I know that's weird.

That's just the way I think. And I just go, I gotta take that seriously. My sin can have an impact on your life, and your sin can have an impact on us, and your sin could impact our prayers.

Do you understand this prayer thing is not just about you and God. A lot of you guys know the Lord's Prayer. What's the first word of the Lord's Prayer? You ever notice that? Our.

Even the Lord's Prayer was something that was meant for us as a group of people to come before God and pray together. I know some of you guys prayed it individually. Some of you guys prayed it as a punishment, you know, but Jesus says, here's how you pray.

Our, our Father. It's us. It's about us.

It's always been about us. Do you understand that? When you got baptized, you became a part of us. In the Old Testament, it wasn't about just Achan sin.

Ah, Achan, that idiot. No, Achan was a part of Israel. And so God took his hand off of Israel as a whole because of the sin of this individual, because he was a part of a bigger entity.

In the New Testament, he says, we now, like it or not, we're brother and sister. We're family. And, and, and, and there ought to be a love that, that, that, that is between you and I, where we care for one another, where my stuff's your stuff.

And we really live like family. And when we pray, we come together as a body. And, you know, that's why we're like, come on, you know, you gotta, you gotta know your brothers and sisters, even your own neighborhood, take communion with them, pray together, care for one another, let the world see something different because unity is weird.

Unity is weird. Unity is, is something that the world doesn't see. They, they see everyone ditches each other.

Whenever someone bugs them, they're gone. They're out of there. But unity, no, that's a different thing.

And it's unity of purpose. It's like, let's show them something different and together let's pray. But, but you guys, we can't do that if we're all living double lives, if we're holding stuff back.

You guys, I, I want us to have a powerful, powerful week of prayer. But that happens when we first repent and realize that our sin affects more than us. It affects the whole camp.

It affects the whole church. Having said that, the elders have been wrestling for the last couple of months with an issue. And it's not lightly that I bring it up today.

It's with a lot of prayer, a lot of love, a lot of concern. But as we look at Matthew 18, as we look at 1 Corinthians 5, as we look at Titus 3, we, we say we have to do this publicly with a former member of our church who was our, one of the pastor's wives. We told you about, and what we, we walk through with him and there's been repentance.

There's been a, a working through, a wrestling through with some issues. But with his wife, she has said that she will not forgive him. She's chosen not to forgive him of this.

She has chosen to file for divorce and has no biblical grounds for filing for divorce. And so we've confronted her on this. She's been involved in another appropriate, in an inappropriate relationship.

And then as we've gone to her in love, and we've taken two or three have gone together in love, but her response is to slander those two and three that would come to her. And the Bible talks about warning the divisive person. And because of the public nature of her position as one of our pastor's wives, and also because of the divisive nature of her sin, as she's trying to divide everyone and say, oh, you know what those elders and, you know, my husband and everything else, and trying to make, we had to make it a public thing.

And I understand we've prayed for this long and hard, and we did as elders, we were obedient to first Corinthians five. And as an elder board, there was a point when we got in an elder meeting after all of us in absolute agreement, after a lot of prayer and talking letters, emails, conversations with her, begging her, loving her, giving her more attention than anyone else in the church. Finally, we said, you know, God's taken his hand off of her.

And at the elder meeting, we prayed and said, God, we now deliver her over to Satan. And understand how difficult that was, because that's just not an easy thing to do. But the hope is that as God has taken his hand, protective hand off of her, and as the church now has taken its protective hand over her, off of her, the hope is now she says, you know, okay, go see how you like it.

And hope, the hope is, is that that would destroy you. And there'd be a destruction of the flesh that would make you come running back. So that your soul would be saved, because that's what matters.

We're talking about eternal things. And I understand this is a, it's a difficult thing to do. But before the Lord, we felt like, gosh, this is the most loving thing we could do for a person.

It's the most biblical thing we can do. And so it's with a heavy heart that I announced that to you. And so we've taken the position that the moment you repent, you know, get back together with your husband, because divorce is a serious issue.

Then the moment you decide to come back, we'll, we'll welcome you with loving arms, with open arms. I go, but until then, we can't talk to you, eat with you, associate with you, unless you just want to say you're no longer calling yourself a Christian. Now, what I don't want you to do is get so wrapped up in that one issue that you don't take the log out of your own eye, and in your own life.

This message is about you. It's about me. It's about us, and wanting the hand of God to bless us.

Wanting to be like the nation of Israel, that we purge that sin, and God's blessings fall upon us again. And I want to have an amazing week of prayer. I want to have an amazing month, year of prayer.

I just want to know that God listens to us, and His favor is on us. And so we do our best to obey these different passages, and go, okay, we aren't going to care for the poor. I mean, it becomes natural to us anyways as believers, doesn't it? You know, and we're going to purge the sin out of our lives, which is another thing that's natural for us as believers.

We don't want this in our lives, and so we get it out. And so what I want us to do is, I thought, we've got to kick off the week of prayer with repentance. Otherwise, why would He even listen to us? It's when we humble ourselves, and seek His face.

It's when we humble of ourselves, we turn from our wicked ways, and seek His face. Then He's going to listen to us. And come on, I don't think anyone's fooled in this room.

We know there's a bunch of lies in here, and it affects you. It's killing you, but it's also killing us. And yet, haven't you had those times when you finally just got it out? And you finally just fell on your face, bawling your eyes out, and go, I know this is wrong before God.

I've tried to defend it. I've tried to rationalize it. I just know it's wrong.

God, I'm sorry, and I'm ready to give it up. What a great thing. Then it's like Isaiah.

Remember last week, where he says, I'm dead. And God goes, no, you're not. Let me forgive you.

Let me cleanse you. That's what I want you to leave with. And maybe some of you in this room, you're going, I'm not ready for that.

Then let me just beg you not to call yourself a Christian. And certainly don't tell people, oh, I'm a member at Cornerstone. I mean, either just say, no, I haven't decided to follow Christ yet.

But if you're going to keep holding on to your sin, man, if you're not a believer, that's fine. Keep coming. But if you're going to call yourself a Christian, please either just confess the sin, get it out of your life, or don't come back here until you're ready to do that, because you're killing us.

And this in no way is about us screwing up. I screw up. I screw up every day.

I sin every day. But afterwards, it's like, oh, that was wrong. I got to walk away from that.

That's part of life. That's part of the sanctification process. I'm talking about the person that's holding on and saying, no, I'm not giving this up yet.

I'm saying either give up Christ or give up your sin. But you can't have both. And I think I've shown that pretty clearly through the scriptures.

And so let's just spend some time, you guys. I'm not here to judge in the sense of condemning anyone. But I am here to judge the church.

I have to. I'm called to do that. But it's for your good.

I mean, that's what you signed up for. That's what you wanted. But the greatest thing is when we can just do it on our own and come before God and come clean.

I don't want to have a bunch of spies checking out your life. That's not what this is about. It's about you just coming clean and saying, here it is, God.

I'm hurting this church. I'm hurting myself. I'm hurting your reputation.

And I need to change from that. So the worst team is going to come up. And as they play and as we sing, some of you, I encourage you right now, just spend some time confessing.

I did this this morning. Just, God, is there anything in me because I don't want to hurt them or your name. Let me just get it out of there.

Let me get it out of there. Purge it out of me. And the forgiveness of God is a good thing.

This peace of God is a good thing. If you need to pray with someone, I'm going to have some of the pastors and elders. They'll be up here by the prayer room.

But the rest of you, if you just want to pray quietly before yourself and just start confessing things before God, if you feel like kneeling, if you feel like getting down on the front here and getting on your knees and crying and whatever you want to do, just come before God and be honest with it. Is God serious about this? And I so want what I was talking about those times when it's just, I know God hears us because we've made things right with Him. If you want to get baptized today, then come up and talk to one of the elders.

Maybe this is the time when you go, wow, they're serious. I want to be a part of a group like that. That was cool.

The first service, one of the guys that got baptized, go, wow, you guys are serious about God. Now I want to be a part. That's awesome.

It's awesome. But if that's you, then at any time during the worship, come and pray with someone. We'll baptize you today.

Let's just spend some time before the Lord right now. Just bow your heads and just start confessing things to Him. If you confess your sins, He's faithful and just to forgive you of all sin and cleanse you from all unrighteousness.

So just start confessing.

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

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/francis-chan/when-god-doesnt-listen/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

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

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

www.sermonindex.net