

# Walking Out Our Faith

by Jim Cymbala

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living out our Christian values and principles in our daily lives, and warns against the dangers of compromising our faith and living in sin.*

**Duration:** 40:27

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:16-21, Matthew 22:37-40, Romans 3:23, Romans 12:2, 1 Corinthians 5:6, 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

**Topics:** "Faith"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses three main topics: dealing with churchgoers who claim to be Christians but live contrary to biblical teachings, handling conflicts between Christians, and navigating marriage with an unbelieving spouse. The preacher emphasizes the importance of keeping the church aligned with Jesus' teachings and warns against being deceived by those who live immoral lifestyles. He cites 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 to highlight the types of behaviors that will prevent individuals from inheriting the kingdom of God. The sermon emphasizes the need to rely on God's Word as the ultimate authority in determining right from wrong.

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## Transcript

The name of this message, which is coming from a couple places that we read through this week, from a very difficult letter, I think it's the most difficult letter in the New Testament, except for probably Revelation, is 1 Corinthians. So let's just talk about it before we look at some verses. We're reading through the New Testament, one chapter a day.

We started, it's the New Testament, but in a different order. Starts with Luke, goes to Acts, and then after Acts, we're reading through all the epistles of Paul, as he wrote them chronologically. So we read 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and now we're in that difficult letter called 1 Corinthians.

What does Corinthians, what city does Corinthians match in the New Testament? Corinth, everybody say Corinth. Corinth is in Greece. So Paul, in his missionary journeys, he went to Corinth, and he stayed there 18 months.

And he preached the gospel, and a church was founded, and now, as his habit was, he's writing back to the church to find out not so much how they're doing, but to make some teaching corrections. Strange things about 1 Corinthians that have always stood out to me. First of all, as we're gonna see in the first passage that we read, Paul refers to a letter that we don't have.

He wrote three letters to the church at Corinth, and we don't have the first one. You're gonna see, he say, as I wrote to you earlier, well, what's that? We don't have it. Number two, he's gotten reports, not only from some of the leaders of how the church is doing, but a family in the church, which is spiritually minded, has come to him and told him of certain things going on in the church.

And now, he's gonna address those. What's very hard in 1 Corinthians is we don't know exactly what the problem was. We're not, there's some vagueness on what exactly was going on.

They knew what was going on. Paul knew what was going on. So when he refers to it, he's just assuming you guys know what I'm talking about.

But we're reading 2,000 years later, we're not exactly sure what was going on. And there seem to be some local things about dress and women and looking like a prostitute would dress, possibly, or shaving your head, or coming across as something you shouldn't be coming across as. Very complex book, very complex.

And then this is also the letter, which we'll probably get to next Sunday. We'll be reading those chapters that have the teaching, most extensive teaching in the New Testament about the charismata, the gifts of the Holy Spirit, chapters 12 and 14. In the middle of that is the famous chapter on love, 1 Corinthians 13.

So Paul is writing, and now he starts out by encouraging them, as he does in all the letters, and then he has to get down to business. Now, I'm calling this sermon Walking Out Our Faith. Walking Out Our Faith.

And here's a couple other things we're gonna learn today. Whether we're Christians or not, and what kind of Christians we are, you never discover in church. You only discover who's a real Christian and people's attitude toward Jesus and his word by the way they live, not by how they act in the church.

No, this is, I'm not saying that to make some big point. I'm just saying it that this is what's revealed in these letters. Christianity is about not lifting hands and swaying and what kind of emotion you work up for an hour or two, but it's how we live.

If Jesus doesn't affect the way we live, then we're not followers of Jesus. Then we're not born again. So what I'm about to read and some of these problems that we're gonna address, it's gonna test all of us because some of this is not gonna go the way we're used to thinking.

I'm telling you that now. Because we've all formed from our backgrounds a kind of Christianity that we're used to given the church environments that we've been around. Some of them have been good, some of them have been bad.

And with the invasion of secular thinking into the Christian church, people have made up their own Christianity. They're not gonna go by the Bible, as you're gonna see in a second. They're not going by the Bible.

They're going by, oh, I know the plans I have for you to bless you and prosper you. Yeah, I like that. I like that.

My God will supply all your needs. Yeah, sign me up for that one. I like that one.

But then when other places come that affect our lifestyle and our walk, ooh, I don't know about that. You know, that was 2,000 years ago, Pastor Simba, and so as Paul's writing, here's another interesting thing.

The inspired books of the New Testament happened as the apostles were writing corrective letters to the churches.

They didn't even know it would be in the New Testament, but God wanted us to know inspired how he wants our lives and his church to be ordered, and our reaction to these verses is gonna tell us a lot. I don't have to say anything to you. Just the way you and I react to this.

Some of us are gonna submit and say, that's right, even if I'm wrong. Others are gonna say, well, I don't know. That sounds very judgmental.

That's one of the lame excuses that people use today. That sounds very judgmental. No, I'm not judging anyone.

I'm just reading the Bible. So there's lots of problems in here. We're just handling three.

One about morality, one about fights between Christians, and number three, one about what do you do when you're married to an unbeliever? So there's a different kind of sermon. This isn't you get up and run around and shout glory. This is like God wants us to think about this and accept and understand his plan for our lives.

So the first one is about what do you do with folks who come to church and say they're Christians, but they live lifestyles that are contrary to the teaching of the Bible? What do you do with them? What do you do with them? Is there such a thing as a lifestyle contrary to the Bible? Who's to judge? And what do you do with these people? The building is a public building. People come in and they say, no, I'm a Christian. But you get this funny feeling.

Is this a Christian? I don't know. Have you ever met someone who says they're a Christian and you can't judge it, you're not God, but it doesn't ring true? Anybody ever met anybody like that? They're talking the talk, but you're going, wait a minute, is by the language they use, the way they live, something's wrong here. What's wrong here? So let's look.

We're gonna go just one by one by one and cover all three, okay? First problem, I wrote to you in my letter. What letter? We don't know. Not to associate with sexually immoral people.

Not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral or the greedy and the swindlers or the idolaters. In that case, you would have to leave this world. He had written a letter and told people, don't associate with certain kinds of people.

Why? Who you run with has an effect on you. Your posse will rub off on you. Bad company corrupts behavior and morals.

For our good, God is warning us, be careful who you run with. Their conversation, their value systems, and all of that are gonna rub off on you. You hang with them.

They took it to mean, don't hang out with immoral people and swindlers and bad people in the world. And Paul said, if that was the case, you can't even go to work. Am I right or not? You can't.

You can't play paddle ball in a park. Who knows how these guys live? Paul said, no, I didn't mean that. I didn't mean, look, those who are sexually immoral or the greedy.

Notice what's listed with immoral. Greedy. And the swindlers.

Those are people who cheat people out of money. And sometimes they can be ministers. How come no one's saying amen? I thought, is this correct or not, what I'm reading here, okay? Or idolaters.

In that case, you'd have to leave the world. In other words, he said, you misunderstood me. If we can't hang out and talk and have lunch and work in an office with people who are living these lifestyles, then you have to live as a hermit.

You gotta get out of the world. He said, no, I never meant that. Well, what did you mean? But now I'm writing to you that you must not associate with anyone who claims to be a brother or a sister but is sexually immoral or greedy.

An idolater. A slanderer. A drunkard or a swindler.

Do not even eat with such people. Oh, my, my, my. It got so quiet.

It got, how did they practice that? What church teaches that? Who believes that? Presto simbola, that sounds very judgmental. I didn't say it. It's in the word of God.

Paul said, I didn't mean don't hang out with people in the world who you work with at Macy's or public school or whatever, and whatever lifestyles they live, we try to win them to the Lord, amen? But if someone calls themselves a brother or a sister and lives that lifestyle, you don't have anything to do with them. Oh, that's so mean. No, it isn't.

It's for their good. That'll be a wake-up call for them. You can't come in here and take communion with us.

You can't sing in the choir. You can't lift up your hands and talk about the blood of Jesus while you're practicing sins that made Jesus shed his blood. No, that doesn't make any sense.

So notice how the church was kept pure. In other words, when you became a Christian, it doesn't mean you're perfect. This doesn't mean nobody ever slips or says a greedy thing or slanders someone accidentally, and then they feel convicted about it.

But if someone practices these things, that's their lifestyle. A little leaven leavens the whole loaf. If you let a little of that in and permit it, guess what? It spreads around.

How many get it? Say amen. How many are following me thus far? Lift up your hand. You say, but Pastor Mo, I never heard that preached.

I'm just telling you, we're reading through the Bible. I didn't ask for this portion of Scripture. It's just in what we read this week.

That's how the early church operated. Well, I didn't grow up that way. Well, how you grew up is irrelevant.

How I grew up, totally irrelevant. We're trying to follow the Bible. How many say amen? Are we followers of Jesus and the word of God, or are we gonna make up our own Christianity? So notice what was happening.

There was a form of shunning, which sounds very weird to us. How dare you shun someone? No, you shun them so they'll wake up and say, sorry, Bobby, I'm not eating with you. Why? Because you're living

with that woman, and she's not your wife.

And I happen to know who she's married to, and she hasn't even gotten no divorce from that one. Well, I thought you loved me. Yeah, I do love you.

That's why I'm not eating with you, because I want you to wake up and come to Jesus and get it right. You know what? I don't care if anybody here says amen. This is the word of God.

Can we put our hands together? This is the word of God. Maybe that's why that church was so powerful. Maybe that's why the Holy Spirit so blessed that early church, because instead of running a circus, it was like, no, being a Christian, coming to a church means something.

You know, about five years ago, six years ago, we had a choir applications. After they take the vocal test, Carol only had a few seats, so she just passed a few, and then there's an interview, and she does the female interviews, and then someone else does the male interview. So we ask all these questions.

Who are you? How long you been a Christian? Are you a Christian? Where do you live? Who do you live with? Where do you work? How long have you worked there? What, you've been there two months, you're out of work? What was your last job? We're searching, because we wanna make sure that the people really love Jesus and wanna live for the Lord. Not perfect. The least perfect person in the place is me.

But you gotta wanna walk in the light. How many say amen? Amen. So this guy was being interviewed, and they said, so, okay, you're from Philly, yeah.

All right, so where you live? I live on Hawthorne Street. Oh, where? Oh, between Bedford and Flatbush. Oh, yeah, that's where the pastor grew up, right around there, two blocks away, Parkside Avenue.

So who you live with? What do you mean? Who do you live with? No, no, I don't get what you mean. Okay, let's do it slow. Who do you live with? Who do you live with? What kind of question is that? Well, it's just the question we ask.

Well, look, I've sung in choirs all over Philadelphia. I've sung lead, I've made albums. That's good.

We're happy. Who do you live with? And did you know, after about three minutes of that kind of jousting, he got up and walked out and was insulted. But we told him in love, when you come back, we'll still be starting with that question.

Who do you live with? Otherwise, Christianity won't mean anything. We're gonna be making up our own stuff on the fly. And you can't be more loving than God.

God is protecting us here from things. Don't you wanna, how many wanna have peace and joy in their life? You can't have it if you're practicing things that are against the word of God. How many have found that out as a born again Christian? When you sin, you feel it.

Come on, lift your hand up high, wave it at me. When you sin, look at the choir, they know it too. In the next chapter, just to sew it up.

And this is the word of God? I don't even need to make a comment. Paul goes on to say, what business of it is mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? In other words, to run around and say how hard, bad the world is, that's not our job. You know what they're doing now out there?

That's not our job.

What is our job? Try to keep the church right. Try to keep the church right. Because it's Jesus' church.

It's Jesus' church. Then to sum it all up, or do you not know, next chapter, that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither this sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, that's sex, sexual relations outside of the marriage partner, nor men who have sex with men, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drinkers, nor slanderers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

People who live like that will not go to heaven. People who live like that, God tells us, he's giving us a warning. Don't be deceived.

People who live that lifestyle will not go to heaven. They don't know Jesus. Oh no, they do.

I've heard them sing about Jesus. They don't know Jesus. Because the next verse says, and that is what some of you were, but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the spirit of our God.

So there's the mercy of God. You used to live like that, but you were washed, you were changed. If anyone is in the Christ Jesus, they're a new creation.

You watching on the webcast, don't be deceived. Don't listen to any preacher who tells you, God is love, he just wants you to be happy, so you do anything you want. Do not believe that.

Your blood will not be on my hands. I'm telling you what the word of God says. No one who lives that way will enter the kingdom of heaven.

That's the way all of us used to live, but we've been changed. How many have been changed? Put your hands together. We've been changed and we can't go back to the mud and live there.

Do we slip sometimes? Yes, but we can't live there, impossible. It's impossible to live there. We have a new nature inside of us.

So that's how Paul handled this question of morality. Notice the sexual connotation here. Corinth was known to be a moral cesspool.

There was so much loose living that one of the names you gave to a person if they were a degenerate, low life, was yo, the guy's a Corinthian. That was how the word was used. It was so full of that kind of horrible living.

Now you gotta remember, when Paul was teaching this and when Christianity started to be preached, it was insane because in the Roman Empire, men kept their mistresses in the house, didn't meet them somewhere. They gave them a room in the house. And if the wife didn't like it, she was there to cook, have sex, make babies.

And if she didn't like it, she got the back of the guy's hand. And then he went to the mistress in the house. So the idea that sexual immorality was wrong was like you and I saying that to have a cup of coffee is wrong.

It was unknown, that was insane. When Christianity was preaching, it was like, what are you, nuts? You're saying you gotta stay with one woman? A woman with a man and that's it? That's insane. But Paul didn't care, he preached it.

Because when Jesus changes you, the lights go on. Am I right or wrong here? When Jesus changes you, the lights go on. So that doesn't need much comment, but it needs to be said, doesn't it? Because now more and more, here's the philosophy in a lot of churches.

You belong even before you're changed. You can live any lifestyle. We'll marry you to the same-sex partner.

We'll endorse anything because who's to judge? Well, listen, I agree with you. You're not to judge, I'm not to judge, but the Word of God is our judge. And the Word of God just says, do not go there.

You know what the ultimate nightmare's gonna be? Somebody wake up in hell. For eternity. And they were told by their pastor and their leaders, no, you're good, you're good to go.

No, not like Ron, my friend, Ron Olivier, who's got 24 in on a life sentence. This is an eternal sentence. And you wake up and you start swimming around in the lake of fire looking for that pastor who misled you and sold you a bill of goods.

You talk about torment. And that's why I don't wanna come across as hard or judgmental, because all we like sheep have gone astray. But there is a right and there is a wrong, and you don't decide it, and neither do I. God's Word decides it.

And all in favor say amen. Okay. Another thing was happening in this church, and this is an odd one.

This church excelled in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. And in utterance and in understanding spiritual things, but it was a carnal church. When I was growing up, if you understood the things of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit, that made you like you're really spiritual, you know.

But that's not what makes you spiritual. Living a life of love is what makes you spiritual. And for some strange reason, you can understand Bible verses and even understand the anointing of the Holy Spirit and how to move in the gifts of the Spirit and still be carnal.

And that is shown by your lack of love, and that is shown by the fact that you can't get along with other people. You're like a cactus. When someone hugs you, you stick them.

Or I stick them. And guess what was happening in this church? Let me read it to you. If any of you has a dispute with another, do you dare take it before the ungodly for judgment instead of before the Lord's people? Do you not know that the Lord's people will judge the world? We don't know exactly what that reference is.

And if you were to judge the world, are you not competent to judge trivial cases? Do you not know that we will judge angels? Another reference we're not exactly clear. How much more are the things of this life if you have disputes about such matters? Do you ask for a ruling from those whose way of life is scorned in the church? In other words, you're gonna go to judges? You're gonna sue each other? You're gonna take somebody to court? I say this to shame you. Notice, sometimes God wants us to get shamed because it'll wake us up.

I say this to shame you. Is it possible that there's nobody among you wise enough to judge a dispute between believers but instead, one brother takes another to court and this in front of unbelievers? You're fussing and fighting and suing each other in front of people who don't even know Jesus. The very fact that you have lawsuits among you means you've been completely defeated already.

Why not rather be wronged? Why not rather be cheated? Instead, you yourselves cheat and do wrong and you do this to your brothers and sisters. That was happening in the church. That's an encouragement to all pastors who sometimes face members who you know are born again but they just act crazy sometimes.

So here were Christians in the church and what were they doing? They were fussing with people and suing, taking people to court. Maybe some business deal. Maybe someone was hired to paint a house.

They didn't paint it the way you wanted. You held back the money. Then the painting guy sued you, took you to court and now unbelieving judges are looking at two Christians going at each other in court and Paul says, shame on you.

You don't take up Christian to court. You know, mark this down as the sermon that gets the least number of amens in the history of the Christian church. No, but that's good.

I totally understand because we're thinking, aren't we? Some of us are convicted maybe. It's possible to be a Christian and just have a contrary fighting spirit in you that shames Jesus Christ. And instead of settling disputes the right way, Paul says, how in the world are you going to court in front of ungodly judges? I was told by Ravi Zacharias that one of the great shames of the Christian church in India is that the churches litigate against each other, sue the pastor, pastor sues the churches, the board sues the church, church sues the board and in front of Hindu judges who, Ravi told me, they sometimes say to the Christians, can't you get along? And this is why we're preaching God is love.

So Paul says, you're shaming Jesus, fussing and fighting with each other. You know, when it comes to money, you can find out how deep somebody's Christianity is. Some people's Christianity is real good until they lose a nickel and then they are up in your grill.

How many know exactly what I'm talking about? It's all hallelujah, praise the Lord. But when it gets to money, they get ignited, they're lit. And Paul says, you know what, you're already defeated, shame on you, why not suffer loss? So the guy beats you out of \$300.

Nobody's gonna beat me out of \$300. He said, well listen, here's the only way to solve it. Can't you find somebody in the church, can't you find some pastors or deacons who can sit down with both of you and judge it and let their ruling be binding? You know what I have found out over the years? The people who have a bad attitude, they don't want the church to judge it.

I'm dealing with a case now in a church trying to help a church from being taken over by some very corrupt people. And some people in the church have sued the pastor and the legitimate board, but in the bottom, what it's all about, always follow the money. It's about money, about money, cursed, filthy money.

And by the way, how much are you taking with you when you die? How much are you taking again? I lost that. No, now it's my time to get on you. Come on, how much are you taking with you? You're taking nothing.

And Paul says, what a shame, how you shame Jesus. You sue each other, you fuss with each other, you fight with each other. So we've learned over the years, the minute someone says, no, I'm not gonna go by the ruling of the church, no, I'm gonna sue.

I'm gonna get a good lawyer and sue somebody, a Christian. Paul says, you don't do that. But pastor, I grew up and that happened, well, again, I'm giving us the word of God, very practical cases, and this tells us how your faith is gonna be walked out.

Either we're gonna wanna live like this or we're gonna say, nah, I don't like that part. I'm gonna sue. I don't believe that, it must mean something else in the Greek, I'm gonna sue.

What have we learned so far? What have we learned so far? What we've learned is you don't fellowship, not even eat a meal. There are many ministers who I see on TV. I tell my wife that privately.

I'd never eat a meal with that person because they're a swindler. They're telling people to send in money and making promises that they know are not true from the word of God. They're swindling people out of their money.

I won't eat with that person because the Bible says don't eat with anyone who's immoral, swindler, and all of that, who claims to be a believer and won't give up that lifestyle. It's unrepentant. Not broken, not repentant, no.

Go the extra mile. Love covers a multitude of sins, but no, no, no, no, not when someone practices that lifestyle. Pastor, I know a friend who says he's gonna live this lifestyle and he doesn't care what anyone says.

Then don't fight with him. Say, you know what? When Christ comes, he's gonna shake everything out and we'll find out who was wrong and who was right. But I wanna go by the word of God.

How many are with me? Say amen. Heaven and earth will pass away, but that word won't pass away. So what we know now here is that you gotta be careful.

A little leaven leavens the whole loaf. You gotta have a loving but firm guard, perimeter guard, around the church. You know, we're facing that now, aren't we, Pastor Petrie? We got all these people living together who wanna have their babies dedicated.

Or no, take premarital classes. So let me get this straight. You're living together.

We told you it's wrong. But you wanna take classes now so that you'll learn to be good husbands and wives and that God will bless your marriage. So let me get this.

You're violating God's word, you're grieving his spirit, you're crucifying Christ afresh by living that way, but you want us to help you to have a good marriage. I don't know, something doesn't ring true to that. You wanna separate? Separate, and then we'll work with you.

But we're not gonna endorse your immorality. How can we endorse that? Do you get the bind that I'm in? I said, I asked a question. Do you get the bind that I'm in? I love everybody, I want the best for everybody, but I do have to answer to God one day.

And what am I gonna do? Well, I know, but listen, if you do that, if you take that position, they're gonna leave the church and go someplace else with their tithes. Well, then what am I gonna do? I'll lose their tithes. I'll lose their tithes.

No, but the guy's a phenomenal keyboard player, too. Then we'll lose the keyboard player. I'd rather have Jesus and his blessing than all of that.

Let me say amen to that. I wanna have the favor of God, the blessing of God. We've learned also, don't take a believer to court.

And don't be fussing and fighting. And if need be, take the loss. Take one for the team.

I've taken lots of losses. I've had people get over on me. But you know what, God takes care of you.

But don't fuss and fight, because God's called us to peace. Last one. So if you're single and you're a Christian, you single, so as God works out his plan for her life, she could very well meet a Christian man, they fall in love, and they get married.

The Bible forbids her to marry an unbeliever. Don't be unequally yoked. So she's to marry a believer.

That's simple. Anybody here on the verge of marrying someone who's an unbeliever because you're insecure or lonely, please don't do it. Please, just come up, I'll pray for you at the end of the service.

God has a better plan. You're gonna break your own heart. But here's what was happening in the early church.

Two unbelievers, they're both idolaters. One gets converted. And she says to her husband, listen, husband, I'm a Christian now.

And he goes, get out of here. I don't want to know about that. I worship at the temple of Diana.

So what do you do? You're a Christian, you go to church on Sunday, this guy doesn't want to know about it. So what should you do? Some Christians were saying, you're not gonna be a Christian? Then I'm out of here. Paul says, don't do that.

Listen to what he says. To the rest I say this, I, not the Lord, the Lord never addressed this question. If any brother has a wife who is not a believer and she is willing to live with him, he must not divorce her.

And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. That means live in peace, live in tranquility, live in a normal relationship. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through the believing wife.

And the blessing of God is on him. And the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband. Otherwise your children would be unclean, but as it is, they are holy.

But if the unbeliever leaves, let it be so. The brother or the sister is not bound in such circumstances. God has called us to live in peace.

How do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband? Or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? It's the word of God, what can I tell you? So what's this mean? So this Christian woman, she's a Christian, her husband has idolized her back 2,000 years ago. He says, I don't agree with

this, Jesus. Fine, but I'm gonna support you, live with you.

No one's gonna be perfect, including the Christian wife, but they're gonna live together. And she can now show him the Christian graces of kindness and love and patience. She can try to win him to the Lord.

She can begin to pray for him. And as long as he's willing to live that way, even though they're unequally yoked, you don't break up the marriage because you're a Christian, you got saved, but your husband doesn't wanna go along, or vice versa, the wife doesn't wanna go along. So you don't divorce on those grounds.

But how about this? It's almost too terrible to even use a reference from the Middle East right now. But let's say you're a Muslim or a Hindu in India, and you're 22 years old, and you're married for three years, and you get saved, and your husband goes, what? What are you now? I'm a Christian. Oh, you're a Christian? You're a Christian? Well, guess what? Get out of here, go back to where you came from.

I don't wanna see you again, and I'm divorcing you within 24 hours. And that's the least problem that that woman could have. Sometimes it gets physical, and as we know, goes beyond physical into life-threatening situations.

So now what's that woman to do? She's 22 years old, husband just walked out on her. Nobody can come to her and say, gotta stay single the rest of your life. Why? Because you were married.

I know I was married, but the guy walked out on me. I don't know, just trust God. No, that's easy for you to say.

You're married with four kids. I'm now unmarried, what am I to do? I'm in no man's land. Paul says the believer is not under bondage.

They can remarry, they're not sinning, because they've been walked out on by the unbeliever who was not content to live with them. As long as the unbeliever is content to live with them, they're to be living there in peace and harmony and try to win them to the Lord. I saw a woman 25 years ago who walked into her house and their husband was in bed with another guy.

He almost had a breakdown, had children. He said, I'm out of here. She was going to a legalistic church that didn't understand scripture or didn't see God's plan for these situations.

He took off and lived in the West Coast near San Francisco, and there she was, I think one child maybe, one child, and lonely, starting to get tempted, despair, depression. Some guys in the church would come up to her. Could I take you out for lunch, the leaders in the church? You don't go out with anybody, you're married.

No, I'm not married, the guy walked out on me, divorced me. You're still married in God's sight. Once you're married, you're always married, it never ends.

Well, thank you very much, Pastor. I really appreciate the kind word. She almost totally disintegrated.

God knows that things can get hard in life sometimes, can't they? And he makes a provision here. There's such a thing as an innocent person. And when the unbeliever departs, let them depart.

The believer is not under bondage. Now, you can't get crafty and make up for a problem that drives the unbeliever away. Yeah, you're from Brooklyn.

I knew you were thinking that way. I knew that, I could tell that about two minutes ago. I knew I could feel that coming.

No, no, we've had some of those cases too. And it's investigated carefully by the leadership of any Christian church. Because you can drive a husband away and then say, see, the unbeliever departed.

Yeah, you didn't cook for him for 18 months. I would probably leave too. Here's the last word.

But God has called us to peace. Do you know what? If you don't have peace, it's not even worth living. Peace inside because you're walking in the light and the blood of Jesus cleanses us every day from our sins.

But at least we want to do what's right. Oh, that peace is worth more than a million dollars. Not fussing and fighting with people.

Are you fussing with someone today? You got a big vendetta going on against somebody. Just let it go. God has called us to peace.

What a terrible testimony is when Christians fight. How many would be happy if you never had another fight in the rest of your life? Lift up your hand. No more fighting, much less with a believer.

And in our marriages, no matter how many, how difficult situations can become, let's say things and do things that make for peace. Peace. Peace.

Can we close our eyes together? God, I've tried to teach your word as you gave us your word with the light that you've given us to see it. I know I have bumped into mental constructs and thoughts that are even against your word, but so be it. The servant of the Lord is not supposed to be popular.

He's supposed to be faithful. Take away from anybody's mind, Lord, any kind of wrong attitude in me because I have not spoken this to judge anyone. I've tried to teach your word.

Help us to guard the integrity of the Christian church. If we see somebody being deceived, help us to warn them. And if they just get stubborn and say, I don't care what anyone says, God, help us to obey your word, protect others in the body of Christ from being contaminated and drawn into things that are not good.

Help us to remember this is not all about sexuality, greed, swindlers, slanderers. Help us not to sin with our bodies or our tongues or anything else, but help us to glorify you with our bodies. We pray, God, that there'll be peace among all the believers.

Take fighting and suing and arguments and contention and anger away from all of us, even to the point, Lord, of suffering loss, if need be. So we lose, but we win because if we obey you, we win. Even if someone else says you're a loser, we win.

Lastly, Lord, whoever might be facing what situation in their marriage, give us grace. Help us to shine like a light, be salt and light to an unbelieving spouse. Help us never to be the cause of the disruption.

And that's hard, God. Give extra grace to everyone here who's married to an unbeliever. Give extra grace, Lord.

But thank you for reminding us that Christianity is not seen in church, it's seen in the way we live. It's not the talk, it's the walk. By your grace, help us to live lives that are pleasing to you.

Lord, for those watching me on the webcast, I pray that this message will be liberating, freeing for people who have been trapped by the lies of the enemy. We love you, Jesus. Here's how I wanna dismiss the meeting.

Everybody stand. All the brothers, walk over to five or six brothers, give them a hug and say something good to them. All the ladies in the church, Sopranos, Altos, behind me.

Ladies in the balcony, hug somebody. Tell them I love you with the love of the Lord.

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