

# Pray, Read, Witness

by Jose Muniz

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of living out our faith in our daily lives to be effective witnesses for Christ and to overcome hypocrisy in the church.*

**Duration:** 1:02:48

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 28:13, Matthew 28:19-20, Romans 10:17, Ephesians 6:17, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, 2 Timothy 2:15, Hebrews 4:12, James 1:22, 1 Peter 3:15

**Topics:** "Bible Study", "Personal Witness"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of reading the Bible and spending time in prayer to strengthen one's faith and witness effectively. It highlights the need for Christians to be diligent in studying God's Word, confessing sins, and seeking God's guidance through prayer. The speaker urges the congregation to prioritize reading the Bible daily, aligning their lives with God's teachings, and being bold in sharing the Gospel with others.

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## Transcript

Till I was 19 years old, I went to church nine times. Just picture that. Some of you guys been nine times to church this past couple of weeks.

Nine times. Three times was for funerals. One of them was, I guess it might have been my dad's aunt.

She was like real old. And I remember being four or five years old, but I was in the church. The second one was my uncle.

He got, he worked with the Mexican Mafia and he got gunned down when I was about 14. And then when I was about 17, my great-grandmother. So that's three times I've been to church.

The other six times I was in church, it's called breaking and entering. You guys know what that is? Where you break through the door and through the window and you steal their stuff. And that was it.

So I, what I see, I come in as an outsider coming into the church and I started checking everything out. And I'm like, well, wait a minute. What's, what's the deal with this guy? I read, I was at the mall this past Saturday.

And I ran into a guy, the very first Bible study I ever went to, this man was there. And he'd been in church all his life. Still in church.

He's about 50, 51 years old. And he was also a state trooper, but he's already retired. And he came up to me and, and this was just this past Saturday.

And he said, hi, I hadn't seen him in about a year or so. And he said, you know, man, me and Cindy is splitting up. And I thought, man, that sucks.

You know, 24 years together, been in church. I went to Bible studies at their house and now they're splitting up. And I'm like, man, how can that be? You know, these guys, you know, Christian, they go to church, they went to church every Sunday, every Wednesday.

And now look what's happening. So then I look around, and I noticed that in today's society, in the church, if you're a young person, that means about 75, 80, 85% of you guys sitting right here, you're going to fall away from God, you know, according to the statistics. And the reason that I find these things out is because not from just statistics, but actually from people that you run into.

And to me, it's such a sad thing that that's going on in the church. You know, the divorce rate is about the same. You know, it doesn't matter if you're in church or out of church.

And of course, Tim said a while ago that only 2% of Christians actually share their faith. And to me, if you're not sharing your faith, you're following the wrong Jesus. And I'm going to read something from the scripture, it's found in the Gospel of Mark, the first chapter, you can turn there if you have your Bible.

If you don't have a Bible, I recommend that you bring it with you where every time you come to church. As a matter of fact, I'll read this first. And I'll share a lot of little things with you that that I want you to think about.

In in the first chapter, verse 14, it says, Now, after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. Notice what Jesus was doing. He came into Galilee, and he was preaching the gospel and saying the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand.

Repent ye and believe the gospel. Now, as he walked by the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, his brother casting a net into into the sea, for they were fishers, they were fishermen. And Jesus said unto them, Come ye after me, and I will make you to become fishers of men.

And straightaway, they forsook their nets and followed him. Okay, notice what he just told them. He said, Come and follow after me.

And I will make you fishers of men. Now, when Jesus walked across my path, I was a drug dealer. That's what I was doing.

As a drug dealer, I was breaking all the laws, I was all jacked up. And when Jesus came up to me, he said, Come and follow me. And you know what he did? He made me a fisher of men.

Now, every single person that follows Jesus, the Jesus of the Bible, he is going to make him a fisher of men. He's gonna, that's what he does. Every single one of them.

Now, I know there's a lot of excuses and a lot of reasons in the church today. One of the main ones that I hear all the time is, well, I don't have the gift of evangelism. And really, that is nowhere to be found in the scripture.

As a matter of fact, Jesus says, Come after me, and I will make you a fisher of men. That's for everybody. And you know, I am reading out of the King James, it uses the word ye.

You know, ye, Y-E. That means all of y'all. And he was talking to a couple of guys, but he said, both of you come.

It doesn't say you come, it says both of you guys come. So he's, he's everybody that's going to follow Christ. That's what he's going to do.

Now, I keep going back, and I'm thinking, okay, I see all these people, Christians, you know, they, they're, they're falling away, they don't want to witness that they want to go bowling and doing all the fun things all the time. But to me, that's actually boring. You know, if you want to do something fun, you have to go out and preach the gospel.

I mean, it does not get any better than that. But to in order to convince somebody, first, they have to come to Christ. And then when you when you come to Christ, He's going to make you a fisherman.

You don't, you don't come as a fisherman. He makes you. That's what he does.

He makes you. So you were doing something else. Maybe you're an adulterer, you're a fornicator, you're a liar, you're a thief, a dope head, whatever you was doing in life.

And everybody's got a testimony of where they were, what they were doing, when Jesus crossed their path. And he said, Hey, come and follow me. And the ones that listen, guess what happens? He makes some fishers of men.

You know, in the book of Proverbs, it says, the righteous are bold as a lion. So who in here is righteous? All of us, right? That's what the word says that the righteous are bold as a lion. And we've been made God's righteousness through the blood of Christ.

Amen. So we're all righteous. Well, then why aren't, why isn't everybody bold? You know, does it mean that you're not righteous? Because if you are righteous, and been made righteous, and you're in Christ, and you've been saved, and you accepted Jesus, and you repented, and you got baptized, and you still a coward? You still afraid? He's what's the deal? What's going on? You know, there's going to come a time and the time is now, where there's going to be a lot of fakeness in the church.

I was on Sixth Street, not too long ago, they had the Texas Relays. And I handed this guy a gospel track. And he took it out of my hand, and he looked at it, looked at it, he said, Ah, it's about Jesus.

He took it and he ripped it in a couple of pieces. And then he just dropped it and he laughed. He said, I don't go to church because there's a bunch of hypocrites in the church.

And I thought, well, I agree with you. But you know what, man, I'm not one of those hypocrites. And then he said, Well, there's a bunch of hypocrites.

That's why I quit going five years ago. I said, Oh, oh, man, look around you, dude. Look around.

Look at all these people laughing, smiling, and man, they're having the time of their life now. And the guy was looking, he looked to the sides. I said, Now, tell me something, man.

Do you really believe that these people are all happy? You know what I think, man? I believe they're all a bunch of hypocrites. Look at them. You think that's the way they're going to be when they get to the house? Yeah, yeah.

How about you, man? How about you? Are you a hypocrite, too? And then he just he bowed his head and he walked away. The Holy Spirit jacked him up. Yeah.

That's good, man. Well, that's what I'm going to use there. Then 45 minutes later, somebody taps me on the shoulder and I turned around and it was that same guy.

He said, Man, can I talk to you? I said, Sure. Yeah. He said, Man, I went to the bar.

I bought me a beer. And man, I couldn't finish it. You know, man, it's I need to talk to you.

So I got to share with this guy for about half an hour about the gospel of Jesus Christ. And he had been raised in church all his life. But he was being a hypocrite in the church.

And then he was a hypocrite in the world. And see, in the world, everybody's a hypocrite. Everybody.

Point at one. They're not happy. They got a smile on their face.

And that's what we're going to encounter tomorrow or even tonight, maybe. But we as the body of Christ, as people who are in church, we need to live out a godly, holy, righteous life. And my main emphasis is how is it at home? Yeah.

You know, because I've had hundreds and hundreds and thousands of people coming out with us handing out tracts, handing out tracts. And yet, you know, it's a good thing. But when they go home, they're arguing, they're fussing, they're fighting, they're watching things they shouldn't be.

You know, it's it's a totally different person from the guys handing out tracts and and the guy that's at home, you know, arguing with his wife or yelling at his kids or being disobedient to the parents. Hypocrite, hypocrite. And we don't want to be that, you know, because there's too many of them already.

Several years ago, I was I was at one of the high schools. And this young lady, she goes to our church. And she was a she was a junior in high school.

And she asked me, she said, Jose, I want to come out with you. I said, well, get permission from your parents. And if they say yes, you know, that's fine.

And, you know, she lived with her dad. Her dad's a police officer. And they'd been divorced.

Her parents were divorced. And so the dad okayed it. I said, Sure, come on.

So we went and picked her up, me and my wife, Amy. And we went to the mall and and we stood there. And I asked her, I said, Okay, Anna, what are we doing here? So we're gonna preach the gospel.

Okay, let's do it. So I stood there and then somebody walked by us. Excuse me, sir, could I ask you a question? And the guy's like, Sure.

So man, if you died right now, where would you be going? Heaven or hell? Real simple question, you know, and you don't have to get real into theological, you just ask them a simple question. And the guy's like, Well, you know, probably heaven. And then of course, then you start going through using the law, bringing the law in and bringing other things in from the scriptures.

And man, he just shut down. And he's like, you know, we talked for about five minutes. And that was it.

He moved on. Well, then, as we're talking to two young kids come up, you know, they were in Anna's class. And they came over there and talk to her.

And you know, we were, you know, about from here to that speaker apart. And I could overhear her conversation. Hey, what are you doing, girl? You know, it's all just hanging out.

Oh, just hanging out. So then after they talked for a few minutes, you know, I stepped over there a little bit closer. I said, Hey, Anna, what are we what are we doing here today? Oh, preaching the gospel.

Oh, yeah, that's what we're doing. Okay. So then I came back over here and I stopped a couple of more people and she'd get close to hear the conversation.

And then, you know, talk to a few more people and they they kind of went through. And then here comes another couple of guys. Hey, Anna, what are you doing? You know, oh, just hanging out.

You know, Saturday, there's nothing to do. You know, we're just hanging out. And then then they asked her, who are you with? All by myself.

And she didn't want to say who I'm with this guy. So she lied to him. So then after they got done talking for about 10 minutes, I went over there.

Hey, Anna, what are we doing here today? And she just started crying. And I put my hand on her shoulder. So you okay? So I said, let's let's talk.

So we went sat down on said, Well, you know, the way that I that I am at school. I'm a hypocrite. I can't I can't tell these kids that I'm here sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ, because the way I live, it doesn't match Christianity.

And it was like, so we got to talk, you know, for 45 minutes, me and my wife ministered to her and totally that day on the bench. She got things right with God. You know, right there on the bench.

She came out to witness that she found out that she really wasn't walking. So in today's church, you know, we have to examine ourselves. You know, we have to judge ourselves, examine ourselves, we got to do all this stuff every day, you know, and man, my wife keeps me accountable.

But you know, more than anything, God keeps me accountable. The Holy Spirit keeps me accountable. Because we need to live holy.

We need to live righteous. And you know, a lot of people they don't witness some some of the times, mainly is because they don't know. But the other times because they don't the way they live.

They don't want to go out there in public, especially in their own town. That's why they do missions and go over to Mexico. Nobody knows them over there.

That's why they go to Africa and Ireland. Heck, who knows you over there? Everybody thinks you're such a saint. So they don't want to go knock on the neighbor's door.

You know, they don't want to go pass out tracts, you know, in the school and at work and share. No, why? They don't even want people come over to their house. It's a sad thing.

Why? Because of the way they live. You know, it's a few years ago, you know, I think, see you at the pole. Didn't it start somewhere around here? I'm in the neighborhood.

Well, you know, one of our kids, you know, they do that, I think, in every school in America now, just about. Well, a few years ago, it must have been about eight years ago, one of the kids in the youth group, you know, he came up to me and he said, Hey, man, I want you to come with me to see you at the pole. And I knew what it was.

I heard about it. But I acted like I didn't know. I said, Well, what's that, man? I said, Well, you know, it's this day, you know, and it's a Wednesday.

And when all the all the kids come and we're going to pray and we're going to have donuts and orange juice and we're going to pray for our teachers and students. And, you know, it's going to be good. They're going to have some music playing the guitar.

We're going to worship God. And I looked at him, his name's Andrew. I looked at him, I said, Nah, I don't want to do that.

I think see you at the pole sucks, man. And I walked away from him and he stood there. He said, Jose, but we're going to pray.

I said, Yeah, one day out of the year. What kind of Christians are you, man? It's all you can do, pray one day out of the year. That's it.

You're going to show at the flagpole one day out of the whole year, one day. That's almost as bad as the National Day of Prayer. And then I walked off and then he followed me and he said, Hey, Jose, wait, wait, wait.

I stopped and said, Yeah. He said, Man, you know what? I'm going to go to school. And I'm going to go pray the first day at school at the flagpole.

Will you come with me? I said, Sure. So I went with him the first day of school. We stood by the flagpole.

We prayed for about 15 minutes. That guy went to the flagpole every single day, his freshman year, sophomore, junior, senior, every single day. Now, that's see you at the pole.

And you know what? It changed the whole, the way he saw prayer at the pole. You know, because you know who shows up at the pole? Religious people show up at the pole. You'll never see them at church.

There's people that, Man, dude, you're a Christian, dude. You know, man, the way you talk and aren't you the one, you know, that screwed so-and-so? And you broke up with so-and-so. Now you're with so-and-so.

Yeah, but the guys, they're praying. To who? You know, that's why the church doesn't have power behind it. Because of the lifestyle that they live.

They don't want to talk about it. They don't want to say anything. You know, I was at a, when Christian concerts were good, years ago, nobody has altar calls anymore.

They just, you know, it's all about love. And I went to this concert, and it was Rich Mullins. And I was there, and I'm like, I looked through, it's like, dude, that guy works with me.

That dude was the dirtiest mouth in the whole, you know, there was about 30 guys. Like, dude, I just, so I walked over there. I said, hey, man, what are you doing? And he tried to avoid me.

He said, oh, my wife, you know, she wanted me to come. And I said, oh. So then, I left it like that.

I didn't want to put no pressure on him. I was going to wait until we go to work to do that. So then we, Monday morning, we're at work.

I said, hey, man, wasn't that concert awesome, dude? In front of everybody, we're washing our hands at break. Man, did that, man, I love the way that guy, that song, you know, Our God is an Awesome God. Man, that was awesome.

So all the guys look at this dude. Dude, you were at that concert? Boom, on the spot. On the spot.

That guy, for the whole rest of the time he was working there, he never said another dirty joke. Well, I put a little pressure on him. But you know what? Fake.

He went to church every Sunday. We come to find out. His wife was a strong Christian, but he was just a hypocrite.

In our class. And they were good looking. As a matter of fact, I lusted after them all the period long.

And I would be checking them out. They'd be dissecting worms and lizards and, you know, doing experiments with fruits. And see how many, how long it'd take to mold.

And I'm just there checking it out. I'm having these thoughts. Oh, man.

And they were really nice to me. Real kind. Real friendly.

And, you know, they even had brought me a cake on my birthday. And I'm like, man, these girls are so sweet. Now, if they'd only just let me, you know, get to them, they'd be really sweet.

But, I'm like, years later, I got kicked out of school and, you know, didn't see them anymore. Fifty, sixteen years later, I run into one of them. Her name was Nikki.

And, man, she was hot, man. She was a cheerleader. And I ran into her at the mall.

I said, hey, Nikki. And, you know, now, you know, she had a couple of kids, you know, and had like a three or four year old. And then had like a seven year old.

And I said, Jose, oh my God. And she came over there and hugged me. And, you know, so we start talking.

I said, hey. And I knew she went to church. I knew that.

I said, hey, Nikki. Remember when we were in school and we shared a few stories? I said, remember when I got kicked out of school because I was, you know, I got busted because I was tripping on acid in math class? And she said, yeah. I said, man, remember, remember how I was on my way to hell? Did you know that I was going to hell? And she just kind of, all of a sudden it went from being happy, you know, but she hadn't seen me in years to, man.

I said, Nikki, why didn't you tell me anything? Man, you were the nicest person in the whole school to me. Nicest person. I mean, I remember when you brought me that cake for my birthday.

Man, you did, you helped me do my homework. Man, you were so kind and nice. But yet, you never invited me to church.

You never told me anything about Jesus. What's the deal, Nikki? I thought we were friends. What happened? I just started weeping.

And she hugged me and she said, I am so sorry. She's still going to church. Her and her husband.

Didn't say anything. Why is it that people are so embarrassed to talk about Jesus? They can talk about anything else. Sports, weather.

They can talk trash about the teachers, about sports, anything. But Jesus, you got to be kidding. That's for the church.

I don't want to tell anybody. You know, let them find out. Well, what if I would have died? Because you know what? There were several people that were in that class.

As a matter of fact, I can think of two of them. That are dead right now. And one of them was on a motorcycle.

And he ran off the road and got killed. He went to hell. The dude who used to hang out with me.

He's a pothead, drug addict. Sinner to the max. Nobody told him.

And then this other guy got killed in a bad drug deal. You know, dealing drugs. How saved is that? Down.

Why? This girl had all the answers. She knew about Jesus. But she never said a word.

Well, you know, we're coming into a time in Christianity. In a time in the world where the church is just a weakling. You know why people hate the church? Because of the hypocrisy in the church.

So it's up to us. To pass out tracts and preaching the gospel. But we also have to be preaching the gospel at home.

We also have to be living this gospel at home. Because if we're just doing this over here. And then, you know, go here.

And you're jacking around and just being a hypocrite. Man, what kind of power is that? There's no anointing on it. You know, people can pass out tracts all the time.

But I want to pass out a tract with anointing on it. From God's spirit on it. You know, where sometimes you just say a couple of words.

And it jacks them up. And you're like, man, they come back to you. You know, a few weeks ago.

We were down on 6th Street in Austin. And there was a guy standing next to me. Mexican guy.

And he was, you know, I could touch him. And he stood there. And so I was keeping an eye on him.

Because he might want to mug me or stab me. I don't know what he's going to do. And I tried to, you know, like smile at him.

And every time I'd look, he'd turn away. So then I walked a few steps away. And he'd get closer to me.

And then after about half an hour. You know, he tapped me on the shoulder. I turned around.

He said, hey, man. I like what y'all are doing. As a matter of fact, man, I like the way you guys are doing it.

You know, man, you're just sharing the gospel. It's awesome, you know. As a matter of fact, I'd like for you guys to come to my restaurant.

I've got a restaurant down here on 6th Street. And man, it's on the house. I said, sure.

So I went over there. And about 12.30, you know, we never leave the street. You know, we stay there until the horses come out.

On 6th Street. And that means that the cops on horseback, you know, they kicked everybody off the street. And so, but I felt, you know, by the spirit of God, you need to go over there.

So we went over there. And this guy is, we went to his restaurant. He sat us down.

And he said, hey, man, there's a menu. Get whatever you want. I said, oh, cool.

You know, I'll take some fajitas, you know. And I mean, everybody on the team got something. And we ate.

We got done. I said, man, we really appreciate it. He said, oh, wait, wait, wait.

Before you leave, I want to talk to you right quick. So he met us at the door. He was behind the bar.

We went over to the door. And he starts telling me, guys, I used to be a pastor of the fastest growing Hispanic church in Austin, Texas. And in two weeks, I lost my church.

I lost my wife. I lost my kids. I lost everything.

He didn't tell us what happened. I really didn't care. It was none of my business.

And as he was saying that, he just started weeping. And he said, will you please pray for me? And you know what God told me? This guy's still a pastor. I didn't take that away from him.

He walked away from it. So we laid our hands on him, prayed for him. And then, as we were praying, God just gave us some words for him.

Man, totally. When we got done praying, he hugged every one of us. We went on back to 6th Street and Trinity.

30 minutes later, that guy shows up. It was about 1.30. He shows up and I look back and he's over here talking to some guy. I'm like, man, that's a trip.

He had a stack of tracts that we left on the counter. He brought them with him. He's passing out tracts.

He didn't last too long. He started talking to this one dude. And I'd look back and he's like in his face, like preaching the gospel.

And then I look back and he's like, calm down. Then I look back, he's got his hand on his shoulder. Then I look back a few minutes later, the guy that he's talking to is crying.

I look back again, he's crying with him. I look back again, they're hugging each other. And then, he tapped me on the back and said, I'd like to introduce you to Mr. Rocky, new brother in the Lord.

And I thought, man, isn't this amazing? You know what? That is more fun than anything you can do on a Friday night, Saturday, any night. And that guy, he came and they exchanged phone numbers. Well, I go back a couple of weeks later and Pastor James, as we call him, he said, hey man, guess what happened? You know that guy Rocky that got saved the other night? Well man, his fiance came to church with me.

And him. And she got saved too. As a matter of fact, they're talking about getting married and they're living together.

They kind of split up for now. Saved. Why? Just because we were on the street.

Handed out a piece of paper that says Jesus, Jesus, Jesus on it. Now, what are you going to do with your time? You know, you can go and just blow it big time. And you know, how many verses have I read? Just a couple, just a few.

You know, and you know, I'd read more, but you know, heck, that's enough. Because that's, that's about how many verses most Christians read throughout the week. Man, that's crazy.

No, you know what? Did you know? I want you to be honest. I'm not going to make you raise your hand. How many of you in here, don't raise your hand, is going to go up inside, have read the Bible one time in your lifetime? One time.

One time. I'm not talking about 50. Once.

You know how many people that I run into? I was speaking at a youth thing. 700 youth. 700.

And I said, okay, guys, everybody, stand up. And man, it took them, I gave them, you know, about 30, 45 seconds for everybody to get up. Stand up.

Say, okay, if you've read your Bible one time, stay standing up. Everybody else, sit down. Everybody sat down.

Including all the youth ministers, youth pastors, sponsors, everybody in that whole room. Christians never read the Bible one time. And then they want to go over there and preach it? They want to go over there and tell people, hey, yeah, you need to believe in this book.

I haven't read it yet, but I heard it's good. Now, if you want to know why people are hypocrites, why people fall away, why people are so jacked up, is because they don't read the Word of God. You know, it says in Psalms, thy word have I hid in my heart, so that I might not sin against thee.

They sin all the time. Why? They don't got no word in them. The devil comes after them, and what do they do? They hide behind the shield of faith.

They ain't got the sword of the Spirit. They forgot that's the most important thing they got. So I recommend it very highly.

Read the Word. Get into the Word. Meditate the Word.

Listen to the Word. You know, we have no excuse. If you can't read, you can buy CDs.

They got it on cassette tape. I mean, they will hook you up. We've been hooked up to have the Word in us, around us all the time.

But I guarantee you the most, most, most, most neglected thing in today's Christianity is the Word of God. I promise you. Everywhere I've been going, I asked people.

I had a 54-year-old man approach me in tears. He said, man, I've been in church 54 years, and I haven't read my Bible yet. Oh, people read the Bible all the time.

Psalms and Proverbs. As a matter of fact, 75% of the people that I ask, hey man, so what are you reading today? Psalms. 75%.

You know, the Muslims, by the time they're 6, 7, 8 years old, they read the Koran several times through. Someone can quote you chunks at a time, books at a time. And in Christianity, by the time a teenager grows up, graduates from high school at 18, goes off to UT, or Texas A&M, or one of these universities, they haven't even read the four Gospels.

And then we expect them to stand their ground? We expect them to be strong? Man, go out there and get them. With what? They got the armor, but no weapon. You know, when Jesus got tempted in the wilderness, he just quoted a few verses.

It is written. From Deuteronomy and Exodus. It is written.

So when the temptation comes, oh, for God so loved the world, hey, that's only going to get you so far. Come on, man. Oh, it says what? For God so loved the world, I can do all things.

You know, that verse, that's a favorite for the youth. And you know what? That's what I see from being an outsider. Like, man, they're all jacked up.

Man, you know what? I had a conversation with my brothers. They all have kids. I said, hey, man, what are you teaching your kids? He said, well, you know, they go to church.

I said, man, you need to make your kids read the Bible. He said, man, you can't tell us what to do. You ain't even got kids, man.

I said, hey, man, neither did Jesus. Hey, man, I'm just telling you. He said, but man, you don't understand.

It's different. It's different, man, it's different. I said, no, it's not different.

I said, look. How about if your kid, you know, are you giving them a choice about taking a shower? Do they really have to brush their teeth, man? Nah, let them skip a few days, man. How about homework, man? You know, when they come in, what's the first question you ask? Hey, you got any homework? Well, don't ask them that no more.

Now, oh, so it is important to brush your teeth, to take a shower. It's important that you do your homework. It's important, huh? But the Word of God isn't.

Give them a choice. If they want to read it, they can read it. But if they don't, they don't.

You know what? That's the downfall of the church today. That's why there's no boldness, there's no anointing, there's no nothing. Because they don't even read the Bible anymore.

You know, I believe every Christian, every Christian should be reading their Bible at least one time a year. At the very minimum. And if you're going to be out on the street, on the front line, man, you better read it more than that.

You know, I was out on the street with one of the teams in Austin. And we were, there was this one guy and everybody was talking to him. And he was a Muslim.

And I kind of stepped in and overheard the conversation that they were having. The Muslim quotes something out of Deuteronomy. And I had just read it like two, three weeks ago.

And then he said, I read it the other day, he read it. And then the other guy that was witnessing to him, he said, I don't know, I don't think that's in there. The Christian didn't know it was in there.

And I was like, and I didn't want to embarrass the brother, so I told the Muslim, what are you talking about? Go ahead, man, keep on. Isn't that sad? Now, I know some of you guys are just starting out, but you know what, if you want to be effective on the front line, you better take the word, you better read the word, you better meditate the word, you better think it, breathe it, you better be coughing it up. Because when you go on the street and you're disarmed, and not just to witness, for your wife, for your work, all the choices you make, decisions you make, all these things, you know, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word, every word, from Genesis to Revelation.

All of a sudden, we're like, ah, don't jack with the Old Testament. Why not? You know, and you know, this is the way I see it. You know, Leviticus and Numbers and Deuteronomy, to the Christian world, that's like broccoli.

It is. You know, it's like, man, you know, it's like it stinks. Proverbs, salt mass, dessert.

Ah, man, I could eat this all day. The Epistles, hamburger, fries, steak, you know, but they don't jack with this other stuff over here. But you know, I believe every Christian should be on a plan.

You should be, you should have something going where you read something consistently every day. Every single day. You don't miss a, do you miss a meal? You know, heck, you don't do that, right? And you know, today, I see Christians, they skip meals all the time, spiritually speaking.

They're walking around, they're all defeated. I talked, this dude, 20 years in church, Christian. I said, hey man, how's it going, dude? He said, man, you know, I'm here, man, just hanging on.

Well, man, Jesus didn't come so we could hang on. Man, He came so we could be more than conquerors. More than.

But that's why they drag it around. They have no interest in the Word. They ain't been taught that.

The Bible's not that important now. They throw you this book and that book. Man, go to the bookstore.

Man, they got books on every topic you can think of. Christian dating, all kinds of Christian stuff. And then way over in the corner, they got the very Word of God.

Over there. They got all flavors. You know, they made it as easy as the ABCs and they still don't read it.

How sad is that? Now, then they come out on the street or they're facing temptation or they got problems at home or they're going through this. What do they do? They got to call the pastor. You know, because he reads the Bible.

You know. Oh, pastor, I don't know what to do. Oh, man, we got the same book.

You know, when I was in school, I knew how to flunk. I flunked everything. I would have flunked lunch if they graded it.

I flunked everything. You know what? I said in school, they give you... This is what I do. I take my piece of paper, you know, pull out my pen and sign my name.

And then I would make a little zero with a sad face. I graded my own paper. I was done.

Never read the books. Never read any of the textbooks. I flunked everything.

Everything was flunked. Why? I didn't study. I didn't read the books.

And today, I see Christians or people who go to church, they're passing in life. They got a nice house, nice cars, nice everything. But, man, they're over there arguing with their wife and their husband and, ah, you know, the hell with you and you two and, you know.

And then they're driving to church. They drive in the... Hey, praise the Lord, brother. You know, hey, everything's cool.

They're flunking in life. Why? They don't read the book. They don't read the book.

So, I recommend it very highly. You know what? Do two things. Spend time in prayer.

Talk to God. And then, let God talk to you. Right here through His Word.

Now, you do those two things. You don't have to worry about evangelism. It's going to come out.

You hang out with Jesus, you know, and then you're going to be telling other people what He's done, what He's doing, what He's going to do, and what He wants to do for them. But, if you're not in the Word, man, forget it. You're going to have a hard time in this life.

So, what... I brought a little sheet of paper. Actually, I'll show you mine. And you don't have to take one of these.

But I brought some just in case. Here's a ticket. I got this ticket a few weeks ago for passing out tracts in San Antonio.

It's a little piece of paper like this. It's a plan. You know, if you don't got a plan, you ain't going to do jack.

And sometimes even with a plan. But you know what I like about these little papers? It just keeps you accountable. And you start in Genesis and then you just check it off.

Underline it. And you know what? When you open your Bible and you only got... It's been two months down the road, you have this little piece of paper and you only checked off like three or four little lines. Guess what that's going to do? I don't have to be there telling you you need to read.

Nobody else. It'll jack you up just a piece of paper. Oh man, I ain't been reading.

Man, huh? Man, why am I thinking that? How come I'm struggling with temptation? Why am I thinking all this perverted stuff? And why am I lusting after this girl that's out here helping as a witness? Why? There's no Word. There's no Word. The Word will flush all kinds of crap out.

I guarantee you. But you know what? If you still got it, you ain't putting the Word in. So it's still there.

And you know, on the outside everything looks cool just because you show up in church. But when you go home, it's a different story. So, I brought some.

I want you guys to take some and read the Word. Spend some time in prayer. You know, those two things are the weakest area in the church.

Those two right there. And you know what? If you pray a lot and you read a lot, guess what's gonna come out of you? Out of the abundance of the heart. But you know, there's nothing coming out because there's nothing in the heart but just all kinds of jacked up stuff.

You know, the first prayer meeting I went to was five hours long. Five hours. I'd been saved three days.

I mean, here I am. I'm a junkie, drug addict, drug dealer and all. I'm hanging out with a 70-year-old man that invites me to a prayer meeting with him and two other old men.

They were 50 years older than me. So I go in there and everybody, we had a cup of coffee and they're talking about old school stuff, you know, ancient stuff. And I'm just hanging out.

I got this zeal, this fire, man, I want to do whatever it takes. And then they start, okay, well let's go talk to the Lord, you know, and they were all like, even the way they said that was holy. And all of a sudden I see one old man, he's like taking his time getting down on his knees, you know, he's 70 years old.

The other one was like 76 and the other one was, I don't know how old that dude was. And they go down to their knees and I remember they start praying. Well, you know what? I start praying.

God, help me. Thank you for saving me. Thank you for delivering me.

In Jesus name, amen. So I, you know, I got off my knees, backed up against the wall and I waited. You know, I was done in about a minute and a half.

So I looked at my watch and man, it's 15 minutes later. I said, man. Looked at my watch again, it's 30 minutes later.

Now I'm ticked. Looked at my watch, 45 minutes later. They're still over there praying and talking to God and I mean, they're bringing it down.

Now I'm thinking, man. They need to shut the hell up. I'm tired of this.

I'm ready to get out of here. What are they doing? Hey, you know what? I was three days old, okay? Three days old. Three days.

I want you to get it, you know. Oh man, how can you say that? Oh hey, I just got saved. You know what? There's people that have been in church that long, 20, 30 years and they'll say that right now if they go for 45 minutes.

I'm like, oh man. But you know, they can sit at the movies for two hours. Two and a half hours.

They can sit there, eat some popcorn, suck on a pickle, praise God. But we can't talk to God. We don't have time to read His Word.

We're busy. Don't you understand, man? We're busy. We gotta pay the bills.

We gotta get the boat and this. Man, that's why the church don't have no power. It's weak.

It's weak. And you know what? What's important in life, you make time for it. And you know what? If in the last month, you've read your Bible two, three times, it's not that important.

The Word of God is not that important. Because if it was, you'd be doing something about it. You would.

Oh man, I can't spend five hours in prayer. Of course you can't, because you gotta talk to everybody else except God. Man, you're on your cell phone.

Man, hey. Man, driving down the highway this way from Abilene, I counted the people that I passed, or they passed me. I counted.

I lost. I quit counting after 20. On the cell phone.

And man, they had a conversation going. Talked to everybody, but God, I ain't got time to pray. You know, they do one of those religious prayers when you're still in bed.

Oh God. I don't want to go to work. Oh, I don't want to get out of bed.

Man, I didn't get enough rest. And that's the prayer. Much less praying for the people you told you were going to pray for.

You know what? I learned some things hanging out with those old men. Now, please pray and read your Bible. Pray and read your Bible.

And you know what? If you really are Christian, you're going to do those two things. And I don't know, you know, in the church nowadays, they don't teach that no more, hardly. I'm not saying that about this church, but in general, they don't tell you, hey, you better be reading the Word.

You know, when the guys on our team, I made it mandatory. You want to come out, you better be reading the Word, buddy. You know, you want to come out here and preach the Gospel, you don't even know where the Gospel is.

You know? And you want to come share it? Dude, I can't. And then when I did that, they got mad at me. They quit.

Can you imagine? They quit. It's like, okay, yeah, man, I want to. There was a handful that stuck around.

They've already read the Bible twice. One guy's going on for the third time. You know what? Yeah, well, you know, it sounds legalistic, you know.

Hey, call it what you will, but they're reading the Bible. It might be legalistic to the people that don't want to do it. Oh, man, I don't want to depend.

You know, I just like to study one verse and spend two months in it. Yeah, right. I hear that all the time.

Hey, man, read 10, 15 chapters and then study your verse. Make time for it. You know, I told my wife, you know what I want to do in life? I want to pray.

I want to read. I want to fast. And I want to witness.

That's it. I don't want nothing else. That's all I want to do for the rest of my life.

And you know what? I'm enjoying it. Vacation? For what? I got 52 days vacation every year. I rest every Sunday.

You know, we're over there preaching the law and we got to follow it too. We got to do it. We got to apply it to ourselves.

So, I got a few copies of these. I want you guys to consider it. Think about it.

Please read the Bible. It's God's Word. You know, and when I said that, you know, how many times you read the Bible? You know what? Man, if your hand went up in here, man, come on.

You know, don't be raising your hand when people ask you about that. That's a very important book we got in our hands. And we need to not only read it, but apply it.

And how do we know what to apply if we don't even know what's in there? It's like, whoa, is that wrong? Well, hey, read it, man. That's why people are asking questions. How far can I go? Is this wrong? Is that a sin? Well, man, read it.

It'll tell you. And you know what? Most of you guys are more smarter than me. You know, I got kicked out of school when I was a freshman.

My reading skills was about 4th or 5th grade. And, but you know what? Something that I was taught that it was very important to read the Bible. And my pastor told me, hey, man, you read this book.

It's going to change your life. It's going to bless you. It's going to encourage you.

It's going to challenge you. It's going to convict you. It's going to do all these things.

But you know what? If you don't read it, it ain't going to do nothing for you. So let's not just keep it on the shelf. Because then when you go out on the street and you're ready to preach the gospel, man, the Holy Spirit is going to be pulling all kinds of stuff.

Man, you're going to get somebody and you're going to be hitting them from every direction you can imagine. Verses that you don't even know where they're at. They're just coming out.

But you know, if you got a lot, a lot comes out. If you got a little, a little comes out. So it's all up to you.

It's a choice. I'm going to have these back here in the back. Please come and get one if you want one.

I got two different kinds. One that takes you to the Bible once a year and one that takes you to the Bible twice a year. And you know what? You don't have to do Jack.

You don't have to read nothing. But you know, if you want to be effective, man, you got to know what you're talking about. I'll share this with you.

I was on 6th Street and I handed this guy a gospel track. And he looked at it and he read for about 15 seconds. Ah, Christianity, huh? And he held the track up like this.

And he asked me this question. You're a Christian? I said, yes, sir. You read your Bible before? I said, oh yeah, several times through.

He said, okay, we can talk. He said, I've read the Bible three times. Atheist.

I've read the Bible three times. It ain't done nothing for me, but I don't like to talk to people if they don't read what they're talking about. I was like, man, I'm glad I read the Bible.

But you know, from all the things that we talked about, all the things that we said, man, if God put something on your heart that you're doing or you're not doing and you want God, hey God, you know what? I'm sorry, but man, I've been screwing up this. I've been doing that. You know, let's take some time and pray.

You know, let's take time to confess some things to the Lord. Let's take some time to, hey God, you know what? Man, I've never read the Bible. I'm sorry.

I've been in church all my life. Man, God, I'm sorry, but man, you know, that's me. That's me.

Oh man, I'm a bad example. I'm a hypocrite. I do things at home I shouldn't be doing.

Man, you know, you don't want to go like that on the street. Yeah, you want to go prepared. You want to be clean.

That's why when we go to the boot camps, it's an hour of prayer before you go out. Why? So you can get, man, you better get right. I want to pray right quick.

You talk to God, whatever you need to tell Him. Lord, I just want to thank You, Father, for everybody that's here. And God, as we go out this weekend, God, we want to be right before You.

And God, right now, Lord, whatever it is, and we all know, we all know what it is that we need to confess. We all know what we need to get rid of. Lord, we want to do that right now.

I don't want to be holding onto this, God, on the street. I don't want to be holding onto this, God, when I go home tonight. God, I don't want to hold onto this at all.

It's been on me too long. God, I want to get rid of it. And Lord, I know that the only way is if You give me the strength.

God, I need Your grace. I need Your mercy right now, God. Help me, please.

Help me, Lord. Get rid of this. I repent from it, Lord.

I turn from it, God. I despise it. I don't want it anymore.

God, I pray for the young people that are here tonight. God, I don't know what's going on in their life. I pray, God, that You would just continue, Lord, to show them things, to open things up for them, to open their minds, their understanding.

God, give us all a hunger and a desire to spend time with You. On our knees, on our faces, before You, God, every single day. And God, right now, if our schedules don't permit that, God, help us to adjust.

Help us, God, to kick things out that are not that important. Help us, Lord. Help us to manage our time, the time that You've given us.

Help us, Lord, to manage it right. Help us to be good stewards, Lord, because Your Word says that we need to redeem the time because the days are evil. So, Lord, whatever is just there and it's unfruitful, God, would You just point those things out to us right now.

God, if we could sit in front of the TV for two, three hours. Oh, Lord, help us. Help us, Lord.

I thank You, Lord. I speak a blessing over this weekend. God, lead us and guide us, God, as we go.

I pray, God, for all the people that we're going to witness to this weekend. God, prepare those hearts, Lord, right now. As we speak, God, You know every person we're going to talk to, every person that's going to take a track, every person that's going to reject a track, You know them all, Lord, by name.

God, we pray for those people right now. And we pray, God, a blessing over this whole weekend. God, blessing over the leaders, blessing over everybody that's going to participate.

I pray, God, that You would replace fear with boldness. Boldness, Lord. That's who You've called us to be.

Bold as a lion. God, that's what we're asking right now. Lord, You've cleansed us.

You've washed us. You've shed Your blood. You've made us more than conquerors.

And God, let us walk on the street that way with confidence, knowing that You're with us, You're in us, and You're leading the way. Thank You so much, God. I thank You for all my brothers and sisters.

I thank You, God, for the time that we have and the fellowship that we're having. God, that we'll continue, Lord, to encourage one another, challenge one another, and sharpen each other. And it's all for Your glory, Lord.

It's all to lift You up, Lord. Help us, God. We ask You, Lord, all these things in agreement right now, Lord.

We're in agreement. All these things, God, that we need to lay aside. God, everything.

We're in agreement with each other. And God, You said that if any two agree on anything, God, that You would do it. And Lord, right now, freedom, let it come.

Liberty, let it come, Lord, in our lives, in our hearts, in our thoughts, in everything that has to do with us, Lord, so we can live holy and righteous and pure, not just before You, but before our brothers and sisters and before the lost. Thank You, Lord. We ask You in the name of Jesus.

Amen. Amen. Thank You, Lord.

Thank you all. That don't get you excited. That don't get you excited.

Your exciter's broke. So, praise the Lord. I really, I gotta confess, man, that was a beautiful exhortation from the Word, man.

And I'm gonna take one of these and be the first to repent because, praise the Lord, I went to Bible college three years ago and it was mandatory that you read through the Bible, but I've been saved for nine years and I had never read through the Bible completely. And I had, you know, in school they made you and they gave you, you know, X amount of days and it was similar to this, but, but boy, I agree, man, the Church is weak. We need to get into the Word and so I'm gonna be the first to take it.

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