

# What's Wrong With the Gospel? Part 2

by Keith Green

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*Keith Green emphasizes the importance of the missing parts of the gospel, including the fear of God, the judgment seat of Christ, and the necessity of repentance, in order to understand the true nature of salvation.*

**Duration:** 57:20

**Scripture:** Ezekiel 36:22-32, Matthew 5:48, Acts 2:41-47, Acts 4:31-35, James 2:19

**Topics:** "True Repentance", "Genuine Conversion"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the shortcomings of the modern gospel, highlighting the focus on self-centeredness, shallow conversions, and a bargain-like approach to salvation. It emphasizes the need for true repentance, a deeper understanding of God's holiness, and a shift from seeking personal blessings to honoring and serving God. The importance of genuine conversion, humility, and devotion to God's teachings is underscored through comparisons with the early church in Acts.

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## Transcript

In our last session, we got as far as... We didn't get to the fear of God and the judgment seat of Christ. That's what we're going to start with. Just by way of reminder and review, we've already gone through three or four of the removed parts of the gospel.

We're going through what's wrong with the gospel, section one, the missing parts. We've talked about the blood of Jesus, the cross of Jesus, the threatened terrors of hell, and the guilt of sinners. We didn't really go over the guilt of sinners that much, just to... That's what leads to the threatened terrors of hell, is the guilt of sinners.

We really need to not, as we said, look at them as poor, misfortunate, misguided souls, unfortunate, misguided souls, but as people who have offended God. That's the guilt of sinners. We talked about the law, the rich young ruler, and how his case would not be the case for today, but his case was a case that Jesus pointed to his sin.

Today, we would point exclusively to Jesus without pointing out why he needed Jesus. That's like going into a hospital and all of a sudden, the guy takes his scalp out and says, well, you need an operation. He starts operating on you.

First, they have to counsel with you, sit down, explain why you need an operation. Maybe you need a second opinion. And God never rushes anybody into a decision, ever.

Although, we Christians and evangelists and so on are so excited to see people saved, either for wrong motives, like we want to report how many numbers of people got saved in our newsletter or whatever, or possibly for right motives. We're just so excited. We don't want to see anybody get away that will pull a fish in before they're really hooked and they'll fall off eventually.

You ever heard about the guy that planted his garden and went out every day and dug up his seeds to see if they were growing? Didn't get much fruit from that. In our zeal or in our misguidedness, we cannot go ahead of the Lord in the plan for salvation. God was so patient with me.

Two years, he waited. Well, he waited my whole life, but I prayed to him in 73 and almost two years to the date, I got saved. I surrendered.

He didn't push me. He didn't send people along to prod me. He waited.

He waited till I was ready. Can you imagine if you went up to some girl and took her by the neck and said, you're going to be my wife? Took her by the collar. I love you.

I love you. You better marry me or I'll knock your head off. God doesn't do that, but we Christians, man, we just, we punch people out for Christ.

I used to do that when I was a brand new Christian. Just say the prayer. Just say the prayer.

Jesus never did that. Somebody wasn't ready. He left them alone.

Today, evangelists would think that was stupid. That doesn't mean he became unconcerned. Remember when the rich young ruler went away, Jesus wept.

No, his heart went with him, but he didn't stop and say, you know, wait a minute, I've got a special deal for you. Salvation at a discount rate today. Okay.

The fear of God and the judgment seat of Christ. These two things have been removed from the gospel. Of course, you understand why the fear of God has been removed because the God that we believe in isn't awesome anymore.

Instead of the awesome majesty of Jehovah, today, the Lord is presented as sort of an ice cream man, Santa Claus, and the church is the candy store where you can get every good of your heart desires. Jesus himself is portrayed as a sweetie pie. So good, so loving, so forgiving, and so gentle that you can almost hear the preacher whisper, aw, he wouldn't hurt a fly.

But what happened to, it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God, or the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. At the bottom of the page, under footnote 10, you will see just a few of the scriptures on the fear of God, and these are the heavy ones. I didn't put in, I mean, that's not every scripture.

I didn't just go through my strong concordance. I read every single one of these things and only picked, I'd say, about a third of them that was in the concordance because these are the ones that you never hear preached on today. You just don't.

You know, I always, I give a test, a comparison test sometimes in concert. I said, you realize the church loves to preach on the scriptures that are nice and are easily swallowed and feel good as they go down. They love the hot fudge of the scriptures.

But man, the ones that got bones and grizzle and, you know, they're hard to swallow, the liver and onions of scripture, you know, they don't like that. Say, how many of you have ever heard a sermon on this scripture? Those who endure to the end shall be saved. And usually out of maybe 5,000 people, maybe five people raise their hand.

Now to show you that the gospel is being manipulated, the Bible is being torn apart and they're placing the good stuff on the plate and the other stuff they're throwing out to the birds. How many of you ever heard a sermon on this scripture? God loves a cheerful giver. Almost everybody raises their hand.

I said, which one of those statements are more true than the other? You know, aren't they both just as true? Then why do we choose the second one? Because the church loves fearful givers more than they love faithful endurers. They're looking more for the financial security rather than the true eternal security. They're looking more for financial stability rather than spiritual stability.

Because if your church is financially stable, we'll deal with the spirit later. But let's get to the meat of the problem. We need money.

Sound familiar? The wise new editors of modern preaching rhetoric have conveniently wiped out every reference to the almighty severity while emphasizing only his kindness. This they do, ignoring the balanced biblical view of Paul. Behold, then, the kindness and severity of our God.

Two-edged sword, folks. The gospel definitely has a balm of love. It has a sweet, honey-like, loving substance that God pours in before he applies his razor blade to cut out the cancer.

And afterwards, too. And in the midst of, sure, the love of the gospel, the love and mercy is the weightier thing of the law. I agree.

In my blindness, I have been guilty in the past of overlooking that because the other had been so misplaced and so abused and so overlooked that I would overlook the other to make my point. And I don't want to play the game on the other side of the fence. Yes, the grace of God is the most wonderful thing that he's ever done for me.

But I can tell you this. It's better for somebody to be afraid that they're not saved than truly be and for somebody to think they are saved than truly aren't. Everybody is so afraid that you're going to condemn somebody into thinking they're not saved.

Well, that is a sorry state. I've seen people that are really Christians that are under condo. Condo bondo.

They're walking around, they're afraid of their shadow and are terrorized of God. That's a bad state to be in. But if they're authentically saved, I would still rather have that than to walk around going, hallelujah, praise God, I'm a Christian.

And inside you're a ravening wolf and you've never been converted at all. And you have all kinds of security, but it's false security. It's better to have a bad marriage than to commit adultery.

It's better to have a bad marriage, to have a marriage that's lots of friction than to commit fornication. It's better to have a commitment that you're having trouble keeping than to just enjoy the pleasures of sex with no commitment. It's better to have a salvation that you're doubting than to have no salvation that you're sure of.

Don't you agree? You've got something at least. You've got something to work on. You've got something to be assured of.

The other thing is made out of cotton candy. You put it in your mouth and it just melts and turns to nothing except a nice little sweet taste that doesn't do anything for you. Repentance.

This is one of the things removed from the gospel. Repentance is necessary for forgiveness. It is always amazing how the church could have evolved to such a state as it is in now with such clear, direct teaching from the Lord Jesus as to what is necessary to be right with God.

Please read the first five verses of the 13th chapter of Luke. I better do that. Luke 13.

Now on the same occasion, there were some present who reported to him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered and said to them, Do you suppose that these Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this horrible fate? I tell you no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Or do you suppose that those 18 on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? I tell you no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

When he says you will all likewise perish, that doesn't mean that you will perish with a tower falling on you. It doesn't mean you will perish with Pilate mingling your blood. It means you will die in your sins the way they died in their sins.

And they didn't die in their sins because they were worse sinners than you. They died in their sins because that was the time God took their souls. Remember when God said to that rich guy who was building bigger barns, he said, You fool, tonight your soul will be required of you.

There comes a time for everybody when God takes out the sickle and says, Well, let's pick this one. Please read the first five verses of the 13th chapter of Luke. Here Jesus is told the news about some Galileans who were executed by the Romans.

He then says, Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Using another example, he then repeats the same exact sentence. I cannot conceive of conversion without repentance.

And yet today that's what's being preached. You can be saved, but you don't need to repent. God's already forgiven you.

A friend of mine, a famous preacher says that people are coming forward to the altar and they're not receiving forgiveness, they're forgiving themselves. Because if you don't repent, you cannot be forgiven. Jesus says, Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

That's the truth. So when you get out of the altar and the preacher says, Now you can have forgiveness. Just believe what Peter said.

Repent and believe. Now we just scratched that out. That's too hard to explain.

We don't have the time. We've got all these big campaigns. And we've got to reach 40 million people this week.

So just take out the repent part, because you have to explain that. The believe part is really easy, because people believe in astrology, and they believe in tarot cards, and they believe in Ronald Reagan, or they believe in Ronald Barrett. So tell them to believe in Jesus.

Just have them replace all their other idols with him. Put him on a pedestal and then go to heaven. That's not our computer game.

I cannot conceive of conversion without repentance. The teachings of Jesus and the faith. Repentance is not merely being sorry.

It's not just being sorry. That is only conviction. Repentance is not merely a change of heart and a change of mind.

It is a change of action. Of course, it is a change of heart and mind, but then produces a change of action. God requires that if we are sincerely convinced that sin is wrong, then we will turn from it to God and commit ourselves to not take part in sinful deeds any longer.

God blesses such decisions and commitments with abundant grace, and it is by that grace that we can fulfill the desires of the Spirit within us. It's like a partnership, folks. God can't forgive you until you see you need forgiveness and are willing to turn from your sin.

Then God, through the Holy Spirit, will help you to turn and will bless your decision. You take a step toward God, he'll take 20 toward you. That's the way it was.

We'll get to this first. Let's read the last verse in this part here, and we'll go back. It is true that without God loving us first, we could not be saved.

He made the first move, he always does, but he will not do what he requires of the sinner himself to do, and that is to repent. In other words, God made the first move. He gave us Jesus before we were even born.

Jesus died. Do you realize that God has done everything that he possibly can to save the whole world? The work is finished. Jesus said it's finished.

It's done. It's like a husband who gives his wife shampoo and a shower and clean clothes and soap and hairbrush and says, Dear, here's all your tools. Be ready.

I'm coming back tonight. We're going to the ball or whatever. Be ready.

We're going to a wedding. She sits there and she ain't ready. He comes back and says, Why aren't you ready? She says, Well, you didn't help me.

I gave you wisdom. I gave you the tools and I gave you a mind and so on and so forth. Why aren't you ready? Jesus gave us his blood.

He gave us the cross. He gave us forgiveness available to us upon repentance and faith. There's nothing more God can do except woo us.

Come on, come on, come on. I can't walk for my little boy. I can coax him.

I can pick him up when he falls, but I can't walk for him. I can tell him when he makes the wrong decision, but I can't make the right decision for him. Let's go back and read that other verse.

But because there is so little real conviction of sin brought about by the preaching of our modern gospel, we cannot truly require repentance anymore. This is very important. Let's read that again.

Because there is so little real conviction brought about by the preaching of our modern gospel, we cannot truly require repentance anymore. If we did, no one would come forward at all. Because remember what produces conviction? The law.

What makes people want to repent? Conviction. If we don't preach the law, people aren't convicted. If they're not convicted, they've got nothing to repent for.

If they have nothing to repent for, they can't be converted. Therefore, we have to invent a whole new system based on gooey, sticky, kindly preaching that doesn't produce repentance and I don't believe really produces salvation. If we did, no one would come forward at all.

For repentance is easy to him who sees how ugly and horrible sin is. But repentance is impossible where the law does not convince the sinner of his wicked heart, compelling him to turn from his sin into the arms of a waiting, compassionate God. You see that all these removed parts of the gospel are connected.

In God's wisdom, every aspect of the appointed way of salvation is irreplaceable. You take out one car from a train and the rest of it just stays in the station. They all follow the other.

Okay, God's sorrow and broken heart over sin. Now this is, I think, the most neglected part of the biblical gospel. I don't think it's the most important part of the neglected part.

I think that most likely repentance and the cross and the blood is the most important parts that are usually neglected, but this is universally neglected. Nobody preaches about a tearful, sorrowful God. I don't think I've ever heard one sermon in my whole life in the traditional church or from a TV or radio preacher on this subject in my whole life.

In the church I got saved and I never heard one sermon on it. The first person I ever heard that talked about this was a guy named Winky Prattney. Then I went to the Bible and I started reading other people and I went, where have these preachers been? Don't they see that God is broken hearted over sin? God's sorrow and broken heart over sin.

The picture of God as presented today by evangelists is that of an optimist, a positive thinking good old boy who lives in heaven high above the trouble on earth where everything is rosy and the skies are not cloudy all day. Why, how could anything bother the living God? He isn't really troubled by all this mess down here. He has everything under control.

But again, the Bible paints a different picture of our King. Just look at Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, Luke 19, 41, or the pleadings of God with the nation Israel through the prophets Isaiah or Ezekiel. This God, the one in the Bible, is continually striving with men through his spirit.

It says in Proverbs, the eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the evil and the good. That means that God, now dig this, you imagine this, God saw every rape committed today. He saw it, according to

that scripture, that his eyes are in every place.

He saw every murder, every person that starved to death, every pornographic film and book, every abused and battered child, every teenage prostitute, every wife that was beaten, every person that was mutilated in some death or torment camp in the eastern countries or the Russian bloc, or anywhere where they're tormenting people, whether it be in Uganda or Cambodia or anywhere else. He was right there watching it and saying and doing nothing outwardly, but inwardly, I believe bursting, bursting at the scene. How can anyone believe that he sees this and does not grieve? Now, what I usually ask Christians is, do you think God sees all the wickedness? They invent some really stupid doctrines.

People just, well, God doesn't really look upon sin. You know, I don't know where they come up with that. The Bible specifically says, God, the eyes of the Lord are in every place watching the good and the evil.

How much more black and white and explicit can you get about his view of the world? Isn't God everywhere at once? Doesn't he see everything? Isn't he the all-knowing and the all-seeing God? Then how can we be so numbskulled to believe that he overlooks the sin in the world? Oh boy. Of course God can grieve. Doesn't the Bible implore us not to grieve the Holy Spirit of God? You see, God is the most hurt and dishonored being in the universe.

He could stop all this mess and all this perversion and crime and corruption at any time he wished, but he doesn't. And every one of you right now I know are saying, why doesn't he? Sometimes I say that, God, why don't you just step on the stage and say, the play is over? That's what, that's what he says. When the author walks on stage, the play is over.

He cannot intervene in the world affairs until he says, that's enough, curtain closed. When he comes in, when he intervenes, the play is over. Everybody's got to go home to heaven or hell.

The judgment begins. He can't intervene on this earth in any magnificent way except when Jesus came. And when he comes again, without declaring all the rules, null and void, all the people taking part in the earth must stop and give account.

He can't just come in to one instance and say, hey, you know, you're bad. Because who does God love more than anybody else? Nobody. God doesn't love anybody more than he loves anybody else.

He's no respecter of persons. I believe he loves every man, woman, and child in the face of the earth with the same fatherly loving heart as you would if you had five children. You might have a special child, one that you're hoping will do great things.

You might have one that you like to look at more because they might be prettier. But you won't love any one of them anymore. You won't care about their eternal destiny any more than each one.

And the reason I'm saying that is because people go, well, why didn't God intervene when Maggie had her accident or when my mother had cancer? Because why should he intervene when your mother had cancer when there were other mothers that had cancer? Now, he will intervene when his people ask him to, but that is according to the rules. Ask and you shall receive. Knock and the doors will be open.

Seek and you shall find. That's part of the rules. Part of the rules is if you're a believer and you ask, God then has the ability to intervene.

But if you don't, then God must sit back and wait for the judgment or if something is totally coming against his plan, then maybe he might be able to intervene. But that's when the people are praying, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. The spirit of that prayer is God intervene, intervene, intervene.

Help Reagan make good decisions. Help the Russians, keep the Russians from coming against Israel for a little longer. Whatever you might want to pray as God leads you to intercede.

Very rarely in history that I can even think of will God ever intercede in anybody's life without somebody asking him to. Either the person himself or the prayers of a good old mother or grandmother. Remember Paul? God appeared to him on the road to Damascus, right? Do you think God was just walking along one day and said, hey, there's a guy, hey man, he's really a rotten sinner.

Look what he's doing to my church. I think I'll appear to him. What was the teaching of Jesus? Love your enemy, bless those that curse you, pray for them who spitefully use you.

Don't you think that the early church following the teaching of Jesus was lifting up Paul who was the greatest breather of threats and murder against the church every day saying, God, save this guy, save him, God. Convert this madman. Turn this maniac around for you.

Look what he can do for you. He's brilliant. He's zealous.

He's purely following what he believes is right. God, turn him around. When God answered their prayer, they wouldn't believe it.

They wouldn't even associate with him. I believe Paul was converted as a direct answer to prayer from the early church, following the command of Jesus to pray for them who persecuted them. I really don't think God ever intervenes, even though he loves.

Nothing can stop his love. I don't think he intervenes without the church asking. And that ought to spur us on to a little bit more of a prayer life, I think.

Let your petitions be made known before the Lord. You see, God is the most hurt and dishonored being in the universe. He could stop all this mess, all this perversion and crime and corruption anytime he wishes, but he doesn't.

Why? Because he waits for the souls of men and women. Regard the patience of our Lord to be salvation. Peter said, but the church, which doesn't have a millionth of the compassion that God has, has turned around and created a God in its own image and likeness.

That's a heavy statement. A carefree, cheerful, above it all God, just like the church. And then the church has conveniently removed from the gospel, it presents all references to the pain and sorrow in God's heart.

The church doesn't want a God who's grieved with sin, because then this God would be grieved with their sin. And he is. So if you don't, you know what? I've always said this, that if you can't get the kind of counsel you want at one church, you'll go to another church until you find it.

It's true. A stubborn, rebellious, hearted person will go from ministry to ministry, from preacher to preacher, from counselor to counselor, until they find the person that'll tell them what they want to hear. And believe

it or not, Christians and denominations and groups of Christians will go from doctrine to doctrine, theological school of thought to theological school of thought, until they find the pattern and the package of beliefs and doctrines and sliced up scripture, pasted together, that fits what they need from God.

There's a story of this preacher. He's a famous preacher in many circles today. I'm not going to mention his name or give you any hints.

And the guy has been recently preaching what's called ultimate reconciliation. It's a heretical doctrine that teaches that eventually everyone will go to heaven. It's kind of like a Protestant purgatory, that at the judgment, people will go to heaven and people will go to hell, but hell will burn away their sins, purge them away, and eventually, because a loving God would never send people to hell forever, according to this series of doctrines, then they will go to heaven.

It has just come out in the past six months, and this guy has bothered a lot of people. He's a loving, loving guy, and he's bothered an awful lot of people with this doctrine. It just came out that he's been having homosexual encounters with some of the young students that he studies under.

For 20 years, he's been having it. He's hated it. He's confessed it to his wife.

He's tried to repent and get over it, but he's still conducting it. He's just been asked to step down from the ministry. Of course he believed in ultimate reconciliation.

Of course he believed that hell wouldn't be forever, because he needed a hell like that, because he was living in hell now, and he couldn't bear to believe in a hell that the Bible taught about that would last for eternity. So he, in his sickness and his sin, was turned over to a deceptive mind who believed eluding influences and a wrong doctrine, and found a doctrine that would give him comfort in his sin. Rather than turn and repent, he could say, well, I'd like to turn and repent, but I don't really need to because I'll just go through that Protestant purgatory, burn away some sin, and I get to go to heaven anyway like everybody else.

Hallelujah. Praise God. It's true.

I believe it's true. Well, it's not. You can bet your Bible that whenever somebody believes false doctrines, it's because they need to believe that false doctrine to have false peace, to avoid the cross, to avoid the sword of the Lord.

Whenever they develop, even the stupid divorce doctrines that are going on in the church. Doesn't matter if you don't get along with your wife, it's okay, God forgives you anyway, blah, blah, blah. The abortion doctrines that are going on in the church, well, in some cases it's okay.

Believe me, if my wife got raped and got pregnant, it wouldn't be easy. I would almost wish at that case that abortion was all right with God. Sure, I would.

If Bethany was 11 years old and got raped and got pregnant, I would wish that abortion was okay. I'd love the easy way out. Anybody would, but that doesn't mean we should take the easy way out.

Even Jesus asked God to make it easier on him when it came to the cross. Can you let this come, if there's any way possible? I don't want to go through this. That's only human.

That's only natural to want to get out of suffering, but it's wrong to avoid the suffering that God has called you to. Okay. The next thing that's been removed from the modern gospel is the necessity of holiness to please God.

Hebrew says, without holiness, no one shall see the Lord. The actual quote in the, is, without sanctification, no one shall see the Lord. The word sanctification and holiness are interchangeable.

The reason I don't use the word sanctification is because nobody but a theology student really knows what it means. It means to be set apart for God's service, to be cleansed, to be pure. It is true that Jesus commands us to be perfect.

In Matthew 5.48, it is also true that you most likely have never met a perfect person, nor do you probably ever expect to be perfect yourself. Nevertheless, we still have those uncomfortable words of the Lord, be perfect as your heavenly father is perfect. Now, because of our dilemma in finding ourselves to be such nonskulls and seeing the demands of Jesus, we have invented some pretty interesting and crazy doctrines.

Some Christians have said, well, when God looks at us, he doesn't really see us anymore. He sees Jesus instead. And when there's ever sin in our hearts, if God should happen to be looking at the wrong moment, he'll see a smiling face of Jesus there instead of seeing our sin.

So God sees me as holy, even though I'm not, but well, I really am, or well, you know what I mean. I don't happen to believe that God is that easily fooled, not even by Christians. And that's the doctrine I was talking about before.

The guy doesn't see sin, and especially, they've, you know, remember I told you in another study that little children see things graphically. They see things three-dimensionally. They see, when you say Jesus came into my heart, they see a little Valentine with a door on it, you know, and they see, you know, Jesus going, and shutting the door.

That's the way kids are. Well, we're all kids, you know that. We're all kids that grew up a little bit and we're trying to play the adult game.

And that's what happens to old people when they go senile, they just quit trying to play the game. Really, it's true. It's true.

Kids are, you adults, we were up there and on the computer, somebody had, they put a monopoly game. Okay. And all the kids and all the guys on Sunday were sitting around playing Monopoly on the computer and they were all into it, you know, and I walked in there and I said, man, isn't it amazing how people never outgrow liking to play games? I mean, their games might get a little more complicated to match their mind, hopefully, but nobody dislikes a challenge of trying to get more points than the other guy.

You might be hard for you to see the disciples playing touch football, but, you know, I think that God put it in the heart of man to have recreation and frolic and have a exercise and enjoy each other's company out in the sunshine or behind the computer board. But people are kids. They're just children and they see things like this.

Well, they hear these doctrines about Jesus lives in your heart. Okay. Now he doesn't live in the thing that pumps blood.

You know, that's not your heart. Your heart is your spirit or your will or the place where you live. Okay.

So Jesus lives in your spirit through the Holy Spirit. That's the correct doctrinal way to say how Jesus comes into you through the Holy Ghost. Holy Ghost indwells at your temple.

Okay. And they say, well, Jesus is there now. So when I sin, God looks at me and they see this kind of like big Jesus cardboard thing, you know, and, and, and, oh, yes, Jesus.

And you're behind the cardboard, you know, do whatever you want to do. Well, that's not true. The eyes of the Lord are in all places, watching the good and the evil.

Don't think that God's blind. He ain't blind. He's ready to forgive you.

Once he does forgive you, he says he doesn't remember your sins anymore. He has the, the magnificent power that we don't have in our own selves to erase his memory of our sins. But I believe that God definitely can see us when we blow it.

I think it's a, it's an unbiblical doctrine, believe he doesn't. Now that doesn't mean that he accounts us or holds us accountable for sins that we either do, that we, that we do, we fall and we, and we get back up and we say, God, we, instead of saying, God, you didn't see that. So I don't have to repent for it.

See, if you don't think he sees it, why repent? Is that stupid, that doctrine? When you fall, it says we have an advocate. An advocate is not a blind man. An advocate, Jesus, is our, is our lawyer.

He stands before God. And if Satan accused us, he said, look at Keith. He's, see that Christian, look at that in his heart.

Look at that reaction he had. Listen to the way he talked to that person. Jesus can go, dad, he's mine.

He belongs to me. Let me deal with him. It isn't, don't worry, dad, he is mine.

And you don't have to worry about it, because like, it doesn't matter what he does, because he's mine. That's not true. We belong to Christ and Christ is our sanctifier.

He's our sanctification. He wants to cleanse us. It doesn't mean, it isn't imputed righteousness.

It's imparted righteousness. Imputed means you're not really righteous, but God considers you righteous. Imparted is you're not really righteous, but God wants to make you righteous.

There's a difference between making us and making believe that we're righteous. You know, God, well, he's a good kid, you know. Gee, look at Keith, he's doing really good.

Dum-dums for Christ. Okay. Another stranger than true doctrine is that blessed refuge of backsliders called the carnal Christian.

I had fun writing this. In this example of Pretzellogic, we are led to believe that any believer who isn't really walking with the Lord at the present time and is indulging in the things of the world and the lust of the flesh can still be considered a Christian, but not a Christian of the first class. No, no.

A Christian of the second class. Find that in the Bible. A carnal Christian.

Here we have a case of the believer who doesn't believe. Oh, he still believes in quotes that God is God and that there is a heaven and a hell and so on, but don't forget the devil believes all these things too, according to James 2.19. And he's not going to heaven. He knows all the right things to say to convince granny and the pastor and his Christian friends that he's still hanging in there.

He even sort of believes it himself. Seems he's got everybody fooled. Everybody that is, except God.

The Bible is clear that if we say we have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. It's what we practice that proves who we serve. Today, possibly the greatest insult to the gospel has been the almost total neglect of the preaching of holiness for the Christian.

Jesus doesn't want to make believe that we're holy. He wants to impart his holiness to us by the Holy spirit. But because people are not being driven to the cross, convicted by his lot or penance and real rebirth, then we have to spend hours in our seminaries trying to find suitable, complicated ways to explain away the obvious meanings of scripture.

Let's do the scriptural twist around and around and up and down. And it goes like this to all this. You might be saying, but what about all the people getting saved by the efforts of good men and ministries out there? They're not preaching the way you say they should.

And they still have Congress. Well, the immediate answer to that question is the people are not getting saved because of their messages. They're getting saved in spite of them.

But unfortunately, according to recent statistics, it is estimated. Let's stop there. They're getting saved in spite of them.

If you're a hunter and there's 4 million deer out there, you can put on a blindfold and start shooting and you're bound to hit something. You can pick out the Bible and start preaching this and this. And Judas went out and hanged himself and all this stuff.

And every now and then, because it's the word of God, you're going to come on something that gives you some life. Plus, I believe that the people who get saved under that man, be paying, be preaching are people who God has already been doing a work in. It's like a fish that's just jumping out of the water.

Catch me, catch me. You know, I believe that it's fruit that's just waiting to fall off the tree. It's like the guy going by the pear tree and the pear's about to fall off.

And he goes, I wish I had, you know, wow, man, look what I picked. He didn't pick it at all. It fell off the tree into his hand.

Do you understand what I'm talking about? I believe that God called them to be farmers and they need to learn how to plow their fields and fertilize and prune and cultivate. And even if they don't do that, they're bound to pick something out there. There'll be some wild berries or something they can pick and go, look what we made.

Look what we've got. Look at the fruit of our ministry. Now you look at the people that are on the earth today, the 4 billion people.

When was the last time you heard of 3000 people actually getting saved? Really? Well, 3000 in those days was probably about one-tenth the whole population of the city. There wasn't even a billion people on

the earth when Jesus walked. And when thousands and thousands and thousands got saved, that's when the Holy Spirit was moving.

Today, you know, 500 people got saved a year and 10 people got saved here. And who knows if they're really saved. We're going to get to that in a minute.

And we think, man, it's the second Pentecost. If a real revival ever broke out on this earth, there wouldn't be a church big enough to hold even the ushers meeting. But we are, our vision is so small.

I don't expect to change the world through my crusade. I expect it to maybe just make a little bit of an inroad into the lost community. I'm only one man.

I can only do so much. God isn't waiting for, you know, Charles Finney to rise from the dead. He's not waiting for your pastor to go door to door.

He's waiting for every one of you, every Christian in the world to get alive so that they can save the people around them. If that happened, the whole world would at least have a chance to get saved and have a chance to be confronted with the gospel. As I said before, these good men and ministries, so-called, are having fruit only because there's so much fruit out there, they're bound to have something.

Not because of what's the preaching. And because this Bible, you know, even the cults, even the cults, when they use a little bit of this truth, get results. The Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses and the Moonies, they quote from the same book that you and I love.

And that's power, man. That is power. This has got power in it.

You take a scripture, even twist it, it still works somewhat to entice somebody, to draw them. That's why the devil quoted scripture to Jesus. He didn't bring out the Bhagavad Gita, the Quran.

He brought out the Bible. He knew if the only way to trick God is with his own word, he didn't succeed, hallelujah. But unfortunately, according to recent statistics, it is estimated that up to 97% of the people who make decisions for Christ, through most large evangelistic crusades, do not even attend church regularly five years later.

And as you can probably well know, attending church regularly does not guarantee that one is a true believer. But leaving statistics behind, let us take a closer look at what kind of converts today's gospel usually produces. Okay, what's specifically wrong with our modern gospel? One, it's me-centered instead of Christ-centered.

First and foremost, it is the gospel that appeals to the selfish. Instead of honoring God, it places the sinner in the center of God's love and plan. But the Bible places Jesus at the center of God's plan, not the sinner.

That doesn't need any explanation. One of the most well-known phrases of modern evangelism is, God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life. But the sober biblical truth that needs to be presented to the sinner's mind is, you have made yourself an enemy of God.

And in your present state of rebellion, there is absolutely no hope for you. Now, I'm not saying that that's the way you're supposed to preach. I'm saying that that's the truth that they need to come up with when you're done preaching.

It says that the biblical truth that needs to be presented to the sinner's mind, when you're done preaching to a sinner, they need to realize that they have offended the living God. Not that you're supposed to say, hey, you rotten criminal man, you better repent. That's not love.

And I'm not trying to say that you should be haughty or condemnatory. You're supposed to be real, truthful. You're supposed to let them know their position.

They're in trouble. They're in danger. Why? Because they've offended God and He's willing to forgive them.

He's offering them clemency, but they must repent. They must see that sin is ugly. No matter how good it feels, it's ugly.

In fact, God's plan for the sinner at this point in his life is to separate him forever from his presence in hell. That's a fact. People need to know that.

However unpopular or unlovely that may sound, it is the only truth and reality about anyone who is an enemy of God through sin. The whole line of reasoning in our modern gospel continues on and on in this mistaken way. Quote, sin has separated you from God and his wonderful plan for your life.

Jesus came and died on the cross so that you may experience his wonderful plan for your life. You must accept Jesus now so that you will not miss out on his wonderful plan for your life. That's the way the gospel of today goes.

Word for word. You, you, you, you. It's all for you.

I'm not sorry to say this, but Jesus did it all in obedience for his father's glory. Not for you. He did it for his father.

And his father did it because the world was created for his pleasure. Not for our pleasure, for his pleasure. And if we serve him, then we have pleasure.

We share his pleasure. We share his love. We share his life.

That's all I want. That's all I want. I don't want my life.

I don't want my pleasure. I want his pleasure because that's the only thing that's ever going to make me happy. The only way you're ever going to get anything from God is to give him yourself.

And that's not why you should give him yourself. You should give him yourself because you belong to him. It's that simple.

And when somebody is where they belong, they feel peaceful. They feel joyful. A child is much more happy when they're obedient.

They really are. We have three little ones. When they're disobedient and you don't deal with it, they become very unhappy.

If you deal with it, they may cry a little bit, but they settle down and they're at peak because they're right where they're supposed to be. Of course, it infinitely benefits those who love, serve, and honor him. But that was a secondary consideration, not the primary one.

By the way, that Ezekiel 36, 22 to 32, when you get home, read it. That says it better than I'm going to. Real quick.

I just read one part of that. Ezekiel 36. Right after Jeremiah.

Ezekiel 36. I'm just going to read one part of this. Therefore say to the house of Israel, Ezekiel, thus says the Lord God, it is not for your sake, O house of Israel, that I am about to act, but for my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you went.

And I will vindicate the holiness of my great name, which has been profaned. Then he goes on. What he says he's going to do, he's going to take them from the nations and he'll sprinkle clean water on them and remove their filthiness.

He'll give them a new heart, put a new spirit within them. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a soft heart. I will put my spirit within you.

Sounds like salvation to me, doesn't it? If this ain't salvation, nothing is. I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will be careful to observe my ordinances. And you will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers.

Moreover, I will save you from all your uncleanness and I will call for the grain and multiply it and will not bring a famine on you. I'll multiply the fruit, the produce of the field. Then you will remember your evil ways and your deeds that were not good.

And you will hate yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and your abominations. I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Lord God. Let it be known to you, be ashamed and confounded for your ways, O house of Israel." Now, if that doesn't curl your hair, nothing will.

Good, it did for me. I mean, when I first found that scripture, I couldn't believe it. What? You didn't do it for me? He did it for you? All right.

But anything God does for himself benefits those that are part of his family. When I support my family, I get to eat too, but it benefits my family. When I teach the Bible to my family, I get blessed, but so does my family.

Anything God does for himself is good for his family. He's not selfish, but he cares for his own. Okay.

After that, Ezekiel 36, if people come to Jesus mainly to get a blessing or only to get forgiveness, they will ultimately be disappointed. But if they come to give him their lives in honor and worship, then they will truly have forgiveness and joy more than they could ever imagine. Okay, what else is wrong with our modern gospel? It's shallow, cheap, and offered as a bargain.

Our gospel reduces the good news to a, come and get it while you can sale. Okay. We make every effort to take all the bones out and everything that might offend someone might make them hesitate or put off their decision.

Jesus didn't do this. He never lowered their requirements for anyone. One had to be completely sincere, totally humble, having counted the cost, willing to leave everything, family and property, count all things lost so that they might gain Christ.

Philippians three, when that same rich young ruler went away, sad for he had many possessions. Jesus didn't go running after him shouting, Hey, wait a minute. Let's talk this thing over.

It isn't as bad as it might sound. Maybe I was a little too harsh. Maybe we're so eager to see the converts to publish how many got saved at our last meeting or concert and the bulletins to our supporters that we'll do anything to rush someone into a decision before he's had a chance to really make one.

The problem is if you have to rush him into it, he probably will change his mind later anyway. Don't forget about that. 97%.

For as a friend of mine says, if somebody can talk them into it, somebody can talk them out of it. You know who that was? That's a Martha Ravenhill. She had a 15 year old son.

They were at Bethany fellowship and he was going to Bible school there. And, uh, no, I'm sorry. He was just going to high school.

He was 15. And one of the elders came up to her one night and said, do you realize that your son hasn't had a born again experience yet? And she said in her, in her, in her Irish accent, I'll thank you to leave my boy alone. If somebody can talk him into it, somebody can talk him out of it.

Leave him alone. That is the wisest thing that I've ever heard a mother say about her child. And that guy's a missionary in New Zealand today.

That very same year he got saved. And, uh, if we could only learn that sure where to encourage, sure where to create an example, sure we ought to preach the gospel and tell somebody they're lost. Never try to talk them into making the actual decision though.

Talk them, don't talk them, but encourage them into giving their hearts to God, turning from their sin. But there is no rubber stamp USDA choice saved Christian thing that you can pop on somebody's forehead. That is so ugly mass producing them for Christ.

You know, they all come out like this, you know, all Christians out of the cookie cutter mold. It's sick. We can't mass produce Christian.

They must grow like Oak trees, slowly, one of a kind, all different from the other. Salvation is shown as a barter trade. This is one of the results of the modern gospel instead of the result of obedience by faith.

We offer forgiveness of sin like Monty Hall and let's make good deal. I've even heard you give Jesus your sin and they'll give you salvation in return. No one in the Bible ever thought so low of the grace of God to talk about the gift of eternal life.

Like it was for trade. It is a gift. You can't earn it.

You can't buy it. You can't give anything in return for it. How it must defend the Holy spirit to hear people talk of his Jesus.

So another thing wrong is that it produces selfish blessed and feelings oriented converts. Going back to that last thing, never talk to somebody like they're making a deal with God. Don't ever let anybody have that concept.

You know, well, you give Jesus your sin and he'll give you salvation or, you know, um, don't worry. He'll, he'll save your mother or, you know, hey, look, you can't make a deal with God. He's already offered you everything that you could ever want.

Don't, it's just like somebody coming up to you, some rich uncle and saying, I'm leaving everything to you. It's all yours. And then you say, well, uh, all right, then I'll give you this in return for it.

You know, how can I give you, um, here's a vibe. There's no risks about it. God wants to himself.

What else is there? You, all you need to do is to want to have him and get rid of everything that gets in your way from having him. And you've got him. It produces selfish blast and feelings oriented converts.

Anyone who has made the belief, he becomes a Christian under such preaching will never bring forth the true fruits of a real convert. He will remain just as selfish as he always was. Only now his selfishness will take on a religious form.

If he wants something for himself, he will say he has a burden. See, I've got a burden to get married. I've got a burden to go talk to that blonde chick over there.

I've got a burden for blondes all over. Or he will say it's the desire of my heart. It's the desire of my heart to be rich and famous.

God said he'd give me the desire of my heart. So why can't I be rich and famous? Or some other religious sounding phrase like that. He will pray selfishly desiring blessings for himself.

And even if he does pray for others, it usually will be for selfish reasons. Oh God, save my mother so she quits nagging me. Save my husband so that I can go preach to the lot so he doesn't bother me about going to Sunday school.

Save the car dealer on the corner so I can get a better deal on that car that's on the lot. Or whatever. I mean, there are people that actually pray like that.

For any reason but save them, God, they're lost and they're hurting you. And their souls are lost, God, and you love that person. There's nothing worse than praying for the wrong motive.

After all, when he accepted the Lord, he was told how much Jesus wanted to bless him and how much God had stored up for his account, and how the Bible was like a big checkbook full of promises just waiting to be cashed. I've heard that terrible rap. Such a person always seeks to feel good about himself, his own church, his own pastor, etc.

His whole world is built on feeling blessed. He was never shown how he was created to bless God. God was not created to bless him.

God was not created. As you can see, the converts described above are not like those pictured in the book of Acts, when the church was new and the fire was hot. Take a look at Acts 2, 2.41-47 and 4.31-35, and you will see the tender spirit of love and the mighty spirit of power that prevailed among the brethren in those early days.

I believe that one of the great reasons that everyone kept feeling a sense of awe was because they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and prayer. I believe that Peter and the others

made every effort to convey the whole message of the gospel when they preached and taught, and that is why the Spirit of God could anoint and bless the new converts so powerfully. God always anoints the truth.

That's the end of Section 1. In the next installment, we're going to look at the things that God hates. We're going to look at all the things that God hates, the things that the church and Christians have tried to replace, the things they've removed. Like the Pharisees.

Remember the Pharisees? They were always trying to replace what they couldn't have in the law. They were trying to have prayer. Oh God, bless me, the righteous man, but not that guy over there, you know, not that miserable tax gatherer.

They were trying to replace real prayer with phony prayer. How about real giving, godly giving? Here come the Pharisees, right there, big check, \$1,000 for the temple, you know. They always tried to replace godly things with selfish things, and they tried to replace the holy temple of God with a merchandise mart, with all kinds of products, with little bumper stickers and so on.

Oops, I'm giving it away. Okay, so we'll see you next time. Now he's fading out.

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