

Kirk Cameron Testimony

by Kirk Cameron

Kirk Cameron shares his personal testimony of coming to an understanding of Jesus Christ and the importance of repentance and faith in living a new life.

Duration: 1:10:22

Scripture: Exodus 20:7-8, Exodus 20:12-13, Exodus 20:17, Psalm 19:7, Romans 3:19

Topics: "Testimony"

Description

The video begins with the speaker introducing a gospel track that serves as an icebreaker and a tool for sharing the gospel message. He explains how the track uses an optical illusion to engage people in conversation and then transitions to the topic of judgment day. He emphasizes that God will expose all hidden things and judge every work, whether good or evil. The speaker then poses the question of whether we would be found innocent or guilty if judged by the Ten Commandments, highlighting the fact that all people would be guilty. He concludes by urging listeners to read and obey the Bible, as it is perfect and has the power to convert souls.

Transcript

Now, I know that there's probably some of you who didn't know that I was coming this morning, and you're looking at me, and you're thinking, wait a minute, I came to church this morning, I'm here to hear a sermon from a pastor, and you give me Mike Seaver. What's this all, what kind of a wacky church is this? Well, I promise you, I'm really not Mike Seaver, I'm Kirk Cameron, we just look an awful lot alike, and we, uh, we love the same woman. And we actually married the same woman.

Now, I'm not Mormon, if any of you think that's where I'm headed. It's just that I married the same girl that Mike Seaver married on the show. And she's here with me today, with my little babies up there in the audience.

And I came here this morning to share something with you that is the most important thing in my life, and that is Jesus Christ. Who He is, and what He has done for me, and for you. And I want to talk with you about how I came to an understanding of that.

I grew up in a house where we didn't go to church, and I didn't believe in God. I was a devout atheist, for years. And when I was about ten years old, I started working in the entertainment industry.

When I was fourteen, I got a part on this new television series called Growing Pains. And within three years, it was a top ten show. And all of my dreams were coming true.

I was doing things I never thought I would be able to do. Robin Leach from Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous was calling to have me be on his show. And I was flying around the world and making more money than I ever thought I'd make.

I got to go to all these great parties. I was famous. I was hanging out with actors and actresses, musicians, driving cool cars.

If there was something that I wanted, I could have it. I could buy it. And it was great.

But after a while, the newness of all that stuff started to wear off. And if you could see me on the inside, you'd see that the way I really felt was very empty. Even though I had everything going on on the outside that would make you think I was the happiest guy in the world.

And like I said, I never believed in God. And so when a friend of mine started talking to me about God, I wasn't interested in listening. I wasn't interested in joining a church or becoming religious.

And he explained to me, no, I'm talking about a God who made you, who loves you. And the fact is, is that you will go through your life being rich and famous. And deep down inside, you'll know that there is still something wrong.

And I couldn't figure out how he knew that I was feeling that way. And so I went to church with him. And the pastor opened up the Bible and explained some things to me.

He said that there is a God who made you and He knows your name. He knows everything about you and He made you to know Him. He said there's something that separates you from God and it's called sin.

And he explained that sin was a stubborn, selfish streak that runs deep through the heart of every person and shows up when we lie and when we steal. When we're selfish and do things we know we shouldn't do. We think we're better than other people.

And most of all, when we make ourselves out to be more important than God. And as he was saying this, it was getting straight through to me. And I was thinking, man, I'm guilty of those things.

I do think I'm better than other people because of my success and who I am. And I've ignored God and made myself my own God. And I do know that something's wrong.

Maybe this has something to do with it. And he explained to me that God hates sin and God will punish sin in a place called hell. And everyone who sins will go there.

But that God loves us and He doesn't want us to go there and He provided a way for us to be forgiven. By sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer and die on a cross. And that if we would repent of our sins and put our faith in Jesus Christ, trust Him to save us, that He would forgive us of every sin we've ever committed.

Save us from hell and take us to be with Him in heaven when we die. And I left the church that day blown away. I had never heard that before.

And I was hoping with all my heart that that was true. But I didn't know. And after about two months of wondering and asking questions, I knew it was time for me to make a decision.

I had to get off the fence and decide what I was going to do with this message about Jesus. And I prayed for the first time. It was the clumsiest prayer anyone's ever prayed.

I just said, God, if You're there, would You please show me? If You're real, I've got to know. I am so sorry for ignoring You and for sinning against You. Would You please forgive me? And when I opened my eyes, it wasn't like I saw visions or bells ringing in my ears or anything like that.

But I had a sense that God heard me, even though I had never believed in Him before. God heard me. And I knew that I wanted to live my life for God and no longer for me.

And I began reading my Bible and learning about Jesus and about God's love for me and how He saved me. And I started to feel different inside because of that. And that started the best thing that has ever happened in my life.

And that is an understanding of who God is and a personal relationship with this God that loved me so much. And I can honestly tell you that of all the things I've ever done, of all the people that I've ever met, and the places that I've gone to, absolutely nothing compares to knowing Jesus Christ. And since then, I've been reading my Bible a lot because I want to understand more about God.

And I want to live more the way that He made me to live for Him. And I've come across some verses that frankly have made me lose sleep. They're really frightening, scary verses.

And Jesus said some things that have really made me think hard about the validity of my faith. And I want to share them with you and ask you to listen carefully to what Jesus said. Jesus was talking to His followers and He said, Enter by the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction.

And there are many who go in by it, because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life. And there are few who find it. Then He said, Not everyone who says to Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven.

But he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name and cast out demons in Your name, in Jesus' name, and done many wonders in Jesus' name? And then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.

Do you hear what Jesus is saying? He's not talking about the non-Christians out there. He's talking about people who call themselves Christians and do things in Jesus' name and think that they're in. And they're sure they're going to heaven.

And Jesus is going to say to many, and many in this room, Depart from Me, I never knew you. You who practice lawlessness. That's heavy.

I don't want any of you to be in that group. I don't know you personally, but I care about you and I don't want you to be in that group. And I don't want to be in that group.

So who decides who goes to heaven and who doesn't? It's not going to be me and it's not going to be you. There's only one judge and that's God. And He has given us something that acts like a mirror so that we can see ourselves for our true colors.

And know what that day will be like when we face God. Have we kept His laws or are we workers of lawlessness? That mirror He's given us is called the Ten Commandments. I want to open up just a couple of the Ten Commandments with you this morning and ask you to look at them with me.

Lift the lid of your heart and see what's really inside. Whether you're a Christian or not. Let me ask you the first question.

It's the Ninth Commandment. It's really easy. Has anyone here ever told a lie? I have.

Can you just raise your hands? Now, I see a few of you have not raised your hands. Are you saying to the rest of us that you've never told a lie? So, what does that make you? A liar. That's right.

Have you ever stolen anything? Even if it's small? From little. From work. From school.

The value of it is irrelevant. So, what does that make you? A thief. The Seventh Commandment is you shall not commit adultery.

But Jesus said, whoever looks at a woman or a man to lust after them has committed adultery with them already in their heart. Have you ever done that? That includes lusting after your boyfriend or girlfriend. Sex before marriage.

If you said yes to those three questions, then by your own admission, you are a lying thief and an adulterer at heart. Have you ever thought about that? And that's only three of the Ten Commandments. Have you ever taken God's name in vain? If you have, that's called blasphemy.

God says He will not hold him guiltless who takes the name of the Lord in vain. Think about it this way. God doesn't just judge our actions.

He also says He will judge our thoughts. Imagine if I could take a high-tech computer chip and put it behind your ear that monitored all of your thoughts. 24-7 for six months.

And then I took them and we viewed them up on this big screen in this church. In front of your wife or your husband, your children, the congregation and your pastor. How would you feel? I would want to run and hide.

But that's exactly what's going to happen on judgment day when God says He will expose everything that is hidden, bring everything out of darkness, the secrets of people's hearts, and expose them, bring them into the light, and bring every work to judgment whether it is good or evil. So if God judges you by the Ten Commandments, will you be found to be innocent or guilty? Think about that. If we're honest, we will be found guilty.

And the Bible says that all liars will have their part in the lake of fire. Neither the sexually immoral, nor adulterers, nor thieves will inherit the kingdom of God to those. Jesus will say, depart from me, you who practice lawlessness.

If God gives us justice, you and I are not headed for heaven. We're headed for hell. The Bible says that God is a God of love and a God of mercy.

And that's true. And He has demonstrated His love and His mercy toward you and me by providing a way for us to be forgiven and to escape the punishment and the wrath of God. He sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer and die on a cross.

To pay the price for our sin. Picture a criminal guilty of serious crimes. And the judge says you're guilty, all the evidence is out.

What do you have to say for yourself? And he says, well, I don't have anything to say for myself. But I'm hoping you'll let me go. The judge can't let him go.

If he's a good judge, he has to see that justice is served and that that man is punished for what he's done. Or until that man's fine is paid, he will not be set free. But if someone comes in and pays the fine for that man, then the judge can release him on the grounds that someone has paid his fine.

And the Bible says that's exactly what God did for us. God became a man, Jesus Christ, and He suffered and died to pay our fine. The Bible says God demonstrates His own love toward us and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

When Jesus hung on the cross, that was God saying to the world, I love you. And then three days later, He rose from the grave. And He conquered death and He broke the power of sin.

And the Bible says, Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus, the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. If the Son has set you free, you are free indeed. Are you free? Are you free from your sin? You already know that telling God you're a good person is not going to work.

Saying that you're a Christian or that you're a member of a church is not going to work. There's only one way to be set free from your sin. And God offers it to every person in this room.

You must humble yourself before God, repent of your sins, and trust in Jesus Christ alone to save you. What does it mean to repent? To repent means to confess your sin and turn away from it. Don't hide it.

Don't pretend like it's not there. Be honest because God sees the truth. Say, God, I'm sorry for my sin.

I'm guilty and I know it. Will you please forgive me? And turn away from your sin once and for all. The Bible says we're headed this way toward sin.

He says turn away from your sin and head toward God. And live your life on His terms the way He wants you to. Never turning back to that sin again.

And put your faith in Jesus Christ alone. When Jesus said, have faith in Me, He didn't mean just believe. Just believe in Me.

He meant trust Me with all your heart. The same way you would trust a parachute if you were jumping out of a plane at 25,000 feet. If you knew you had to jump and I handed you a parachute, would you just leave it in your lap? And believe in it? It wouldn't do you any good.

What do you have to do? You have to put it on. And that's what the Bible says. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And you will be saved. Do you understand what I'm saying this morning? There will be no pretenders in heaven. You need to come clean before God and receive the gift of eternal life and forgiveness that He offers you.

Isn't it true that you could die today? Tonight? It is so important that you get right with God as soon as possible. Because if you die in your sins and you have not gotten right with God, His wrath still abides on you. And there's no second chance.

If you feel God speaking to you this morning, whether you've gone to church your whole life or whether you're here for the first time, and you sense that you want to get right with God and be forgiven of your sins and live a new life for Jesus Christ because of what He did for you, I'd like to ask you to be courageous. Just raise your hand. God bless you and you.

If there's anybody else here who wants to raise your hand, but you're afraid to because of what other people think of you, you're more concerned with the approval of men than you are with the approval of God. And you fear man more than you fear God. That's going to get you into trouble.

Jesus says, do not fear man who can kill the body and after that do no more, but I will show you who you should fear. Fear Him who after killing the body has power to throw you into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear Him.

If you want to get right with God, I want to ask you right now to close your eyes and confess your sin to Him. Right where you are, close your eyes. Tell God you're sorry for your sin.

And be specific if you can. Ask Him to forgive you. Oh God, I thank You so much for everybody in this room this morning.

I thank You that You love us so much that You sent Your Son Jesus to die on a cross for us. Thank You for loving us who don't deserve Your love. You pay such a high price to save us.

Please help us to obey You. Help us to turn away from the sin that we know is in our heart. Give us a new heart.

Fill us with Your Spirit and make us new people. And thank You for Jesus. Amen.

If what I'm saying here this morning has really made sense to you, the next thing to do is to get out your Bible. Maybe you've already had it out week after week. But really start to read it and obey what you read.

That's the evidence of a heart that truly surrendered to God. It's your willingness to obey Him. Jesus said, if you love Me, you will obey Me.

And God will make you a new creature. About six months ago, I read a book that helped me to see my heart for what it really was. And it has deepened my faith and my love for the cross like never before.

And it was written by Ray Comfort who was up here before me. And I want him to share with you what he shared with me in that book. Thank you.

Would you like to open your Bibles at Romans 3, verse 19, please? Romans 3, verse 19. We've been asked to produce a video that will go to 60,000 churches worldwide. So, I trust you'll be patient with me.

I'm going to repeat some of the things that Kirk mentioned in his word. And he'll be back after I've spoken to share a few words with you. In the late 70s, God very graciously opened an itinerant ministry to me.

As I began to travel, I found that I had access to church growth records and found to my horror that something like 80, even 90% of those making a decision for Christ were falling away from the faith. That is, modern evangelism with its methods was creating 80 to 90, what we erroneously call backsliders with every 100 decisions for Christ. Let me make it more real for you.

In 1991, a major denomination in the U.S. was able to obtain 294,000 decisions for Christ. That is, in one year, 294,000 decisions. Unfortunately, they could only find 14,000 in fellowship.

That means they couldn't account for 280,000 of their decisions. And this is normal, modern evangelistic results from local churches right up to large crusades. I began to make it a matter of urgent prayer and studied the gospel proclamation of men like Spurgeon, Wesley, Moody, and others that God used down through the ages.

And I found they used a principle which is almost entirely neglected by modern evangelism. I began teaching that principle and was eventually invited to base our ministry in Southern California by Pastor Gary Ansdell specifically to bring this teaching to the church in the United States. Things were very quiet for the first three years until we received a call from Bill Gothard in Chicago.

He had seen the teaching on video. And he flew me to San Jose in Northern California where I shared the teaching with a thousand pastors. He put it on video, and in that year shared the video with 30,000 pastors.

The same year, David Wilkerson called from New York. He had been listening to the teaching in his car, called me on his car phone, and immediately flew me 3,000 miles from L.A. to New York to share the one-hour teaching with his church. He considered it to be that important.

And recently I heard of a pastor who had listened to the one-hour audio tape 250 times. I'd be happy if you listened just once. The Bible tells us in Psalm 19, verse 7, the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul.

What is it that the Bible says is perfect and actually converts the soul? Well, Scripture makes it very clear. The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. And to illustrate the function of God's law, let's just look for a few moments at civil law.

Imagine if I said to you, I've got some great news for you today. This is good news. Someone just paid a \$25,000 speeding fine on your behalf.

You'd probably react by saying, what are you talking about? It doesn't make sense. I don't have a \$25,000 speeding fine. My good news wouldn't be good news to you.

It would seem foolishness. But more than that, it would be offensive to you because I'm insinuating you've broken the law when you don't think you have. But if I was to put it this way, it may make more sense.

On your way to the meeting today, the law clocked you going 55 miles an hour through an area set aside for a blind children's convention. There were 10 clear warning signs stating that 15 miles an hour was the maximum speed, but you went straight through at 55 miles an hour. What you did was extremely dangerous.

It's a \$25,000 fine. The law is about to take its course when someone you don't even know stepped in and paid the fine for you. You are very fortunate.

Can you see that telling you precisely what you've done wrong first actually makes the good news make sense? If I don't bring clear instruction you've violated the law, then the good news will seem foolishness, will seem offensive. But once you understand you've broken that law, then that good news becomes good news indeed. Now in the same way, if I approach an impenitent sinner, someone whose understanding has darkened, and say, Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins, it'll be foolishness to him and offensive to him.

Foolishness, because it won't make sense. The Bible says that the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness. And offensive, because I'm insinuating he's a sinner when he doesn't think he is.

As far as he's concerned, there are plenty of people far worse than him. But if I take the time to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, it may make more sense. If I take the time to open up the divine law, the ten commandments, and show the sinner precisely what he's done wrong, that he has offended God by transgressing his law, then when he becomes, as James says, convinced of the law as a transgressor, the good news of the fine being paid for will not be foolishness, it will not be offensive, it will be the power of God unto salvation.

Now with those few thoughts in mind, by way of introduction, let's now look at Romans 3, verse 19, and we'll look at some of the functions of God's law for humanity. Now we know that whatever whatsoever things the law says, it says to them who are under the law that every mouth may be stopped and all the world may become guilty before God. So one function of God's law is to stop a sinner's mouth, to stop him justifying himself and saying, I'm not a bad person, there's plenty of people worse than me.

No, the law stops the mouth of justification and leaves the whole world, not just the Jews, but the whole world, guilty before God. Next verse. Therefore, by the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

God's law actually tells us what sin is. 1 John 3, verse 4 says, sin is transgression of the law. Romans 7, verse 7, Paul says, what shall we say then? Is the law sin? And then Paul says, God forbid.

He said, no, I had not known sin, but by the law. Paul says, I didn't know what sin was until the law told me. In Galatians 3, 24, wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.

So another function of God's law is to act as a schoolmaster to bring us to Jesus Christ that we might be justified through faith in his blood. God's law acts as a mirror. When you and I got up this morning, one of the first things we did was go to the mirror.

Why did we do that? Well, we wanted to see what damage had been done during the night. And when we see an outstanding hairstyle, a pale face and puffy eyes, we think, man, I better clean up before I go public. So we go from the mirror to the water to wash.

Well, God's law is like a mirror. When we look into the perfect law of liberty, we should say, whoa, where all is an unclean thing and all our righteous deeds are as filthy rags. And once we see ourselves in truth, we go from the mirror of the law to the water of the blood of Christ to wash.

The law is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. God's law doesn't help us. It just leaves us helpless.

It doesn't justify us. It just leaves us guilty before the judgment bar of a holy God. And the tragedy of modern evangelism is that around the turn of the last century, when the church forsook the law in its capacity to drive sinners to the cross, modern evangelism had to find another reason for sinners to respond to the gospel.

And the issue that modern evangelism chose was the issue of life enhancement. The gospel degenerated into Jesus Christ will give you peace, joy, love, fulfillment, and lasting happiness. Now to illustrate the unscriptural nature of this very popular teaching, I'd like you to listen very carefully to this following anecdote because the essence of what I'm saying pivots on this particular point, so please listen very carefully.

Two men are seated in a plane. The first is given a parachute and told to put it on as it would improve his flight. He's a little skeptical at first as he can't see how wearing a parachute in a plane could possibly improve the flight.

After a time, he decides to experiment and see if the claim is true. As he puts it on, he notices the weight of it upon his shoulders and he finds that he has difficulty in sitting upright. However, he consoles himself with the fact he was told the parachute would improve the flight, so he decides to give the thing a little time.

As he waits, he notices that some of the other passengers are laughing at him because he's wearing a parachute in a plane. He begins to feel somewhat humiliated. As they begin to point and laugh at him, he can stand it no longer.

He slinks in his seat, unstraps the parachute, and throws it to the floor. Disillusionment and bitterness fill his heart because as far as he was concerned, he was told an outright lie. The second man is given a parachute, but listen to what he is told.

He's told to put it on because at any moment he'd be jumping 25,000 feet out of the plane. He gratefully puts the parachute on. He doesn't notice the weight it puts on his shoulders, nor that he can't sit upright.

His mind is consumed with the thought of what would happen to him if he jumped without that parachute. Now let's analyze the motive and the result of each passenger's experience. The first man's motive for putting the parachute on was solely to improve his flight.

The result of his experience was that he was humiliated by the passengers, he was disillusioned, and somewhat embittered against those who gave him the parachute. As far as he's concerned, it'll be a long time before anyone gets one of those things on his back again. The second man put the parachute on solely to escape the jump to come.

And because of his knowledge of what would happen to him without it, he has a deep-rooted joy and peaceless heart knowing that he's safe from shore death. This knowledge gives him the ability to

withstand the mockery of the other passengers. His attitude to those who gave him the parachute is one of heartfelt gratitude.

Now listen to what the modern gospel says. It says, Put on the Lord Jesus Christ who'll give you love, joy, peace, fulfillment, and lasting happiness. In other words, Jesus will improve your flight.

So the sinner responds and in an experimental fashion puts on the Savior to see if the claims are true. And what does he get? The promise, temptation, tribulation, and persecution. The other passengers mock him.

So what does he do? He takes off the Lord Jesus Christ. He's offended for the word's sake. He's disillusioned and somewhat embittered.

And quite rightly so. He was promised peace, joy, love, fulfillment, and lasting happiness and all he got were trials and humiliation. His bitterness is directed at those that gave him the so-called good news.

His latter end becomes worse than the first. Another inoculated and bitter backslider. Saints, instead of preaching that Jesus improves the flight, we should be warning the passengers that they're going to have to jump out of the plane.

But it's appointed a man once to die and after this the judgment. And when a sinner understands the horrific consequences of breaking God's law, he will flee to the Savior solely to escape the wrath that's to come. And if we are true and faithful witnesses, that's what we'll be preaching.

That there is wrath to come. That God commands all men everywhere to repent. Why? Because he has appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness.

You see, the issue isn't one of happiness. It's one of righteousness. It doesn't matter how happy a sinner is.

How much he's enjoying the pleasures of sin for a season without the righteousness of Christ, he'll perish on the day of wrath. The Bible says riches profit not on the day of wrath but righteousness delivers from death. Peace and joy are legitimate fruits of salvation.

But it's not legitimate to use these fruits as a draw card for salvation. If we continue to do so, sinners will respond with an impure motive, lacking repentance. Now can you remember why the second passenger had joy and peace in his heart? It was because he knew that parachute was going to save him from sure death.

And as a believer, I have, as the Apostle Paul says, joy and peace in believing because I know that the righteousness of Christ is going to deliver me from the wrath that's to come. Now with that thought in mind, let's take a close look at an incident on board the plane. We have a brand new flight attendant.

It's her first day. She's carrying a tray of boiling hot coffee. She wants to leave an impression on the passengers, and she certainly does.

Because as she's walking down the aisle, she trips over someone's foot and spills that boiling hot coffee all over the lap of our second passenger. Now what's his reaction as that boiling liquid hits his tender flesh? Does he go, man, that hurt. He does.

He feels the pain. But then does he rip the parachute from his shoulders, throw it on the floor and say, that stupid parachute. No.

Why should he? He didn't put the parachute on for a better flight. He put it on to save him from the jump to come. If anything, the hot coffee incident causes them to cling tighter to the parachute and even look forward to the jump.

If you and I have put on the Lord Jesus Christ the biblical motive to flee from the wrath that's to come, when tribulation strikes, when the flight gets bumpy, we won't get angry at God. We won't lose our joy or peace. Why should we? We didn't come to Jesus for a happy lifestyle.

We came to flee from the wrath that's to come. And if anything, tribulation drives a true Christian, a true believer, closer to the Savior. And sadly, we have literally molded suits of professing Christians who lose their joy and peace when the flight gets bumpy.

Why? They're the product of a man-centered gospel. They came lacking repentance, without which you cannot be saved. I was in Australia some time ago.

Australia is a small island off the coast of New Zealand. And by the way, they are different countries. They're a thousand miles apart.

We even speak differently. Australians talk more like this, don't they, mate? They put their head down crocodiles' mouths and very strange things. I was in Australia for the meeting.

I preached sin, law, righteousness, holiness, judgment, repentance and hell. I wasn't exactly crushed by the amount of people who want to give their hearts to Jesus. In fact, the air went very tense.

After the meeting, they said, there's a young guy down the back who wants to give his life to Jesus. I went down the back and found a teenage lad who could not pray the sinner's prayer because he was weeping so profusely. Now for me, it was so refreshing because for many years, I suffered from the disease of evangelical frustration.

I so wanted sinners to respond to the gospel, I unwittingly preached a man-centered message, the essence of which was this. You'll never find true peace without Jesus Christ. There's a God-shaped vacuum in your heart only God can fill.

I'd preach Christ crucified. I'd preach repentance. A sinner would respond at the altar.

I'd open an eye and say, oh no, this guy wants to give his life to Jesus and there's an 80% chance he's going to backslide and I'm tired of creating backsliders so I better make sure he really means it. So I went down the back and I said, he better be sincere. So I'd approach the poor guy in a Gestapo spirit.

I'd walk up and say, what do you want? He'd say, I'm here to become a Christian. I'd say, do you mean it? He'd say, yeah. I'd say, do you really mean it? He'd say, yeah, I reckon.

He'd say, okay, I'll pray with you, but you better mean it from your heart. He'd say, alright, okay. I'd say, you repeat this prayer sincerely after me from your heart and really mean it from your heart sincerely and make sure you mean it from your heart sincerely and really mean it from your heart sincerely.

Oh God, I'm a sinner. And I'd watch him and he'd say, oh God, I'm a sinner. And I'd say, man, why isn't there a visible sign of contrition? There's no outward evidence the guy is inwardly sorry for his sins.

If I could have seen his motive, I would have seen that he was 100% sincere. He really did mean his decision with all his heart. He really sincerely wanted to give this Jesus thing a go to see if he'd get a buzz from it.

He had tried sex, drugs, terrorism, alcohol. Why not give this Christian life a go to see if it's as good as all these Christians say it is? He wasn't fleeing from the wrath that was to come because I hadn't told him there was wrath to come. There was a glaring omission from my message.

He wasn't broken in contrition because the poor guy didn't know what sin was. Remember what Paul said? I had not known sin but by the law. How can a man repent if he doesn't know what sin is? Any so-called repentance would be merely what I call horizontal repentance.

He's coming because he's lied to men. He's stolen from men. But when David sinned with Bathsheba and broke all ten of the ten commandments, when he coveted his neighbor's wife, lived a lie, stole his neighbor's wife, committed adultery, committed murder, dishonored his parents and thus dishonored God, he didn't say I've sinned against man.

He said against you and you only by sinning have you sustained on this evil in your sight. When Joseph was tempted sexually, he said how can I do this thing and sin against God? The prodigal son said I have sinned against heaven. Paul preached repentance towards God and the Bible says godly sorrow works from penance.

And when a man doesn't understand that his sin is primarily vertical and not exercise biblical repentance, it will be superficial, experimental and horizontal. And when tribulation, temptation, persecution comes, he'll fall away for the word's sake. 1 Timothy chapter 1 verse 8 says this, but we know that the law is good if anyone uses it lawfully for the purpose for which it was designed.

God's law is good if it's used lawfully for the purpose for which it was designed. What was it designed for? The following verse tells us the law was not made for a righteous man but for sinners. It even lists the sinners whom it was designed for the purpose for which it was designed.

It lists the sinners whom it was designed whom it was designed for the purpose It lists the sinners whom it was designed for the purpose for which it was designed. It lists the sinners for the purpose It lists the sinners whom it was designed for the purpose for which it was designed. It lists the sinners devout Jews from every nation under heaven.

So when Peter stood up to preach, he didn't preach wrath, judgment, law, righteousness, holiness. No, these were godly Jews who ate, drank, and slept God's law. They knew the holiness of God, the righteousness of God, the justice of God.

The law was a schoolmaster. It taught them. They knew that sin was exceedingly sinful.

They knew the law works wrath. So when Peter stood up, he merely told them the good news of the fine being paid for them. And they were pricked in their heart and cried out, men and brethren, what shall we do? What must we do? The law was a schoolmaster to bring them to Christ.

Same with Nathaniel, a godly Jew. Same with Nicodemus, a godly Jew. The law is good if it is used lawfully.

If you want to bring a Muslim to Christ, give them the law of Moses. Muslims accept Moses as a prophet. So give them the law of Moses.

They accept Jesus as a prophet. So open up the law with the words of Jesus. The Bible says of Jesus, it would magnify the law and make it honorable.

Isaiah 42, verse 21. And that's what Jesus did on the Sermon on the Mount. He brought the spiritual nature of the law of God.

Show them they desperately need a Savior. Someone who can wash away their sins against a holy God. Don't try and convince a Muslim that Jesus is God.

Why? You don't need to do that. Because of the fact that Jesus said the Father does that. Jesus said to Peter, who do men say that I am? And Peter said, I am the Savior of the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And Jesus said, Blessed are you, Peter, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. Our job is just to give the word of God faithfully. To open up those commandments and show them their need of a Savior.

Their desperate need of a Savior. Think of the woman caught in the act of adultery. She had violated the seventh of the ten commandments.

She found herself between a rock and a hard place. They were going to stone her to death. Her only avenue of escape was to fling herself at the feet of the Son of God.

She was condemned. And that's the function of God's law. You say, but you can't go around condemning sinners.

Saints, they're already condemned. John 3 verse 18 says, He that believes not is condemned already. All the law does is reveal to him his true state.

It's like this. Ladies, if you've got a wooden table in your living room, you dust down your wooden table. It's dust free.

It's clean. Then you draw back the curtains and let in the early morning sunlight. What do you see on the table? Dust.

What do you see in the air? Dust. Did the light create the dust? No, the light merely exposed the dust. And when you and I take the time to draw back the curtains of the Holy of Holies and let the light of God's law shine upon a sinner's heart, all that happens is that he sees himself in truth.

The commandment is a lamp and the law is light. That's why Paul says, By the commandment, sin became exceedingly sinful. In other words, it was the law that showed Paul sin and it's true light.

Now, it may be beneficial today if I share with you how I witness on a one-to-one basis. I'm a very, very firm believer in biblical evangelism. I would never go up to someone and say, Jesus loves you.

Why? Because it's not biblical. There's no precedent for it whatsoever in scripture. I wouldn't even go up to a stranger and say, Excuse me, I'd like to talk to you about Jesus Christ.

You see, if you're in a deep sleep and I wanted to awaken you, I wouldn't use a flashlight in your eyes. That's going to offend you. I'd use a light dimmer.

I'd be very gentle. And the Bible says, The servant of the Lord must be gentle to all men. So, first the natural, then the spiritual.

Why? Because the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God, neither can he know them, their foolishness to him because they're spiritually understood. And I believe our biblical precedent for personal witnessing is in John chapter 4. When Jesus spoke with a woman at the well, he spoke to her of something she could understand, water. Then he swung to the spiritual.

Then he brought conviction using the law of God, specifically the Ten Commandments, and then he revealed himself to her. He witnessed to her. This is how I make my approach.

And you're going to like this. This is deep and powerful. I walk up to them and say, How you doing? Do you like that? It's a little different than the usual.

Take, for instance, the Titanic collectible. This one goes down well. It's a great icebreaker.

I like to identify with teenage girls and say, Look on the ship, you can see Leonard at a cappuccino having a cup of coffee. It says, Titanic collectible on the back, number 242. So when I give it to people, I say, Hold on to it.

It's a collectible. It'll be worth a lot of money in a hundred years. People say, It'll be dead in a hundred years.

I say, Read the back, then it'll tell you what to do. This one's very popular. This is a wallet with money sticking out the top and inside are credit cards and opens again to reveal the gospel message.

This one is called The Wallet. I thought of that name. Now let me teach you how to give it out.

I've got a six weeks training course with that one. So I've seen people steal that. I've got letters from free people their cars are broken into.

I think Stalin was a wallet. And this one's a good one. This is my favorite.

This is called 101 of the World's Funniest One-Liners. On the front, it's got a guy skydiving. It says, If at first you don't succeed, don't try skydiving.

It's got to make sense. On the back, it's got one-liners. Open it up, it's got one-liners.

All through, and there's an editorial with the gospel message. The reason I like this is because it's got a lot of getaway time. You give it to someone, you've got ten minutes to get away before you even know it's a gospel track.

But this one is a great icebreaker. It's a curved illusion track. Let me use my pull-book models to show you how they work.

Which looks longer to you, pink or blue? Someone tell me. Pink. Isn't that cool? It's an optical illusion.

They're exactly the same size. So here we have a gentleman who's friendly. He's just asked about my well-being, so I feel at liberty to make an approach.

So I just say to him, Hey, check this out. Have you seen this? Look. Which looks longer, pink or blue? He says, the blue, obviously.

I said, look at that. He said, oh, the pink. The blue.

The pink. He says, man, what are you doing in my brain? I said, they're the same size. You can have that.

He says, hey, thanks a lot. Pink, blue, blue. He says, oh, I appreciate that.

Thanks. I said, I've got another gift for you. And I put my hand in my pocket and I get out a penny with the Ten Commandments pressed into it.

Now, it's legal to do this in the U.S. So, if you hit a penny with a hammer facing coinage, if you press the Ten Commandments into it, art. We've got a machine that does this. The machine was very expensive, but I guess it's been worth every penny.

So, I give it to him. I say, here's, this is for you. He says, what is it? I said, it's a penny with the Ten Commandments on it.

Now, all I'm doing is putting out a feel to see if he's open to spiritual things. And most people say, oh, ten on a penny. Well, that's great.

See, he's not offended by the Ten Commandments. So, you think you've kept the Ten Commandments. He says, yeah, yeah, pretty much, you haven't killed anyone.

Yet. So, I just say, let's go through them. Have you ever told a lie? He says, ah, yeah.

I say, what does that make you? He says, a sinner. I say, no, more specifically, what does it make you? He says, well, man, I'm not a liar. I say, how many lies do you have to tell to be a liar? Ten and a bell rings.

Isn't it true? You tell one lie, it makes you a liar. He says, ah, yeah, you're right. I say, what are you? He says, a liar.

I say, have you ever stolen something? He says, no, no, no. come on, you've just admitted to me you're a liar. I say, have you ever stolen something, even if it's small? He says, ah, yeah.

I say, what does that make you? He says, a thief. I say, now Jesus said, whoever looks upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her in his heart. Have you ever done that? He says, yeah, plenty of times.

I say, what's your name? He says, John. He says, John, by your own admission, you're a lying, thieving, adulterer at heart. You've got to face God on judgment day.

I've only looked at three of the ten commandments. Folks, those commandments, when we look at them in truth, when we look in that mirror, it's not a pretty sight. The first is, I am the Lord your God, and you shall have no other gods before me.

That means God, our creator, commands that he be the focal point of our affections. We are commanded to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, and to love our neighbor as much as we love ourselves, to a point where our love for mom and dad, brother and sister, and our own life seems like hatred compared to the love that we have for the God who gave those loved ones to us. And the Bible says there's none that seek after God.

No one can say, Yah, I've kept the first of the ten commandments. The second is, you should not make yourself a graven image. You should not make a God to suit yourself either with your hands or with your mind.

Will one say, my God isn't a God of wrath and judgment. My God's a God of love and mercy. He would never create hell.

Well if someone says that, do you agree with them? Say, you're right. Your God would never create hell because he couldn't. He doesn't exist.

He's a figment of your imagination, a place of imagery. You've shaped a God to suit yourself. You've created a God in your own image.

You've said, I'm the potty, you're the clay, and you've made a God to suit your sins. It's called idolatry. There is one God.

You've said, I'm the Lord, I change not. And the Bible warns, idolaters will not inherit the kingdom of God. You should not take the name of the Lord your God in vain, for the Lord will not hold him guiltless if he takes his name in vain.

I can't believe that anyone would even think of using their creator's holy name as a cuss word to express disgust. Jesus said, every idle word a man speaks, he'll give an account to rob him the day of judgment. How much more blasphemy.

The fourth, remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. As a non-Christian, I went for 22 years knowing that God had given me life, and never once saying, God, what do you require of me? One day in seven, I violated that commandment. The fifth, honor your father and mother.

I blew that in my teenage years. Just an attitude. And the Bible says, rebellion is as a sin of witchcraft.

The sixth, you think you'll be safe from that one, you shall not kill. But Jesus said, if you get angry without cause, you're in danger of judgment. The Bible warns, whoever hates his brother is a murderer.

Look to the seventh, eighth, and ninth, and the 10th, as you shall not covet. And who of us can say, I've never desired something belonging to somebody else. All of us are guilty.

There's not a good, righteous person on the face of the earth. So I say, God was to judge you by this standard on the day of judgment. Do you think you'd be innocent or guilty? And he says, well, man, I'd be guilty.

I said, would you go to heaven or hell? And the usual answer is heaven. I say, why is that? Is it you believe that God is good, and he'll overlook your sins? He said, yeah, that's it. God's good, and he'll overlook my sins.

I said, well, try that in a court of law. You've committed rape and murder. And the judge says, you're guilty.

All the evidence is in it. You and him need to say before I pass sentence, and you say, ah, yes, judge, I believe you're a good man, and you'll just forget about all this justice stuff, and let me go. The judge would probably say, you're right about one thing.

I am a good man. And because of my goodness, I'm going to see that you're punished. And the very thing that sinners are hoping will save them on the day of judgment, the goodness of God will be the very thing that will condemn them.

Because if God is good, he must by nature punish murderers, rapists, thieves, liars, fornicators, blasphemers, and sin wherever it's found, and all those who have lived contrary to the inner light that God has given to every man, and sealed without excuse on the day of judgment, because God has given us a conscience. The Bible tells us, this work of his law is written in our heart. The conscience will bear witness.

And some of you are probably thinking, man, I could never walk up to a complete stranger and say, excuse me, you're a lying, thieving adulterer at heart. Well, neither could I. Neither would I, but just using biblical principles, motivated by love and gentleness, I've drawn a confession of sin from him. And after doing that with over a thousand people on a one-to-one basis, only one person out of that thousand, more than a thousand, has been offended.

And he was a psychologist in Northern California, so it's not really counted. But why wouldn't people get offended with such harsh words? Simply because the work of the law is written on their heart. The conscience bears witness.

The word conscience means with knowledge. Con is with. Science is knowledge.

So when we lie, lust, steal, fornicate, blaspheme, we do it with knowledge that it's wrong. God has given light to every man. So on the day of judgment, we'll be without excuse.

So now he has knowledge, which the law has taught him. He can understand that he has sinned against God. That he has offended God.

That he's an enemy of God and his mind through wicked works. That God's wrath abides upon him. He's by nature a child of wrath.

But every time he sins, he is storing up wrath that will be revealed on the day of judgment. He can see that he's weighed in the balance of eternal justice and found wanting. And now he can understand why Jesus died.

To redeem us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us. For God so loved the world that he gave us only begotten son. That whoever believes or trusts in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

Folks, it's as simple as this. We broke God's law, and Jesus paid our fine. And all who repent and trust in him receive remission of sins.

Their case is dismissed. Because of his death and resurrection, through lack of evidence. The Bible now says, there is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

For a number of years I've gone to the local courts, in town here opposite my ministry, and given out gospel tracts to people who are standing in line. They're standing in line to pay misdemeanor fines. It's usually between 40 and often 100 people, lined up there, different people, more walks of life, waiting to see the judge.

So each morning I get my tracts, I walk to the front of the line, turn around and say, Good morning. Make sure you get one of these and read it thoroughly. And everybody takes one.

Because they think it's got something to do with their court case. And it has. They have violated God's law, they have to face the holy God on the day of judgment.

The judge of the universe. They're guilty. But the judge is rich in mercy and he's made provision, he's paid the fine for them.

If they'll be honest and repent and trust in him, then their case can be dismissed. I went into the courtrooms for about three months, and gave out tracts to people who were sitting in the waiting rooms. One day a security guard came up to me and says, You can't do this anymore.

I said, Why not? He says, The city met last night and just passed a law stating that you can't do this anymore. So I went back to giving out to the line. One day a police officer came up to me and very firmly says, You can't do this here.

If you want to give these out, do it on the sidewalk. I said, This is public domain. It's my First Amendment right.

He said, Look, people are dropping these things in the courtrooms. If you keep giving them out, I'll cite you for littering. I said, Cite them for littering.

Fair enough, they were doing the littering. He says, If you want to do this, do it on the sidewalk. I said, I am an American citizen.

This is public domain. This is my First Amendment right. And he went and walked off.

Now folks, the moment you get right with God through Jesus Christ, you become a citizen of heaven. You become a citizen of the kingdom. And the law cannot touch you.

The wrath of the law cannot come near you. There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. D.L. Moody said, The law can only chase a man to Calvary.

No further. In Acts 28-23, the Bible says of the apostle Paul, And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging, to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading him concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. So what did the apostle Paul do? He persuaded them concerning Jesus.

And as Christians, that's our job. We're to turn people to Jesus. Because neither is there salvation in any other.

There is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved. He is the way, the truth, and the life. No man comes to the Father but by Him.

Whoever transgresses and abides not on the doctrine of Christ has not God. So as Christians, we want to persuade people concerning Jesus. How did Paul do it? Both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets.

How do you persuade someone out of the prophets? Well, you may have done it. You've got someone who's a skeptic, doesn't believe the Bible, just show them the prophecies in Matthew 24, Luke 21. 2 Timothy chapter 3. Show them how the words of Jesus parallel history before it came into being.

And a man who didn't believe the scriptures will look at the prophecies and say, Whoa, this book must be supernatural in origin. So when you persuade someone out of the prophets, you speak to the intellect and create faith in the word of God. But when you speak out of the law of Moses, you speak directly to the conscience and bring the knowledge of sin.

And Paul did so both out of the law of Moses and out of the prophets. So folks, use God's law when you share your faith. Show people they desperately need a savior.

According to Bill Bright of Campus Crusade for Christ, only 2% of believers in America regularly share their faith in Christ with others. 2%. That means 98% of the body of Christ is not sharing their faith on a regular basis.

They can't say, well, the apostle Paul, for me to live as Christ. The reason I'm living is to be a witness of Christ. And I think one reason people are fearful is they're not being equipped.

If I pushed you into the heat of modern warfare with a feather duster, you're not going to be very courageous. But if I issued you with 10 great cannons, those very weapons would give you courage. And when you stand behind those commandments, courage will fill your heart.

I guarantee you that. So don't be afraid. I've only been beaten up twice as a Christian.

It's been 30 years I've preached open air in really heavy places and only twice preached open air. Thousands of times. Only twice I've been beaten up.

Both times it was by women. I don't have a problem with the fear of men. My problem is with the fear of women.

But folks, both times I think it was my fault. My mouth ran away without having anything to do with the brain. One time I was preaching.

This woman stepped into the crowd. She looked at me and she used language so bad it would make your eyebrows curl. I mean, it was really bad language.

I said, Madam, can you watch your language? There are ladies present. She said, I am a lady. I said, Madam, you may be a woman, but you're not a lady.

With that, she came rushing at me like a bat out of heaven to confirm what I'd said. And as she was beating me up, I thought, this isn't the normal way a lady fights. I mean, a woman doesn't... She wasn't... She was... She got in six punches before my team pulled her off.

And then she said, let me get my handbag. They let her go and she got in a good kidney punch. It took two weeks for the bruising to go.

But I was able to keep preaching. She doubled my crowds. She can come back any time she wants.

The second time I'd just finished opening a preaching, a woman came up. She said, I don't like what you blankety-blank said. Very bad language.

And I said, Madam, sounds like there's some demons in there. Oh, man. And she went... across my face.

And then the mouth didn't stop. I said, any more of that come from it? And she went... and my lip... made my lip bleed. The tongue is a world of inequity, James says.

No man can control the tongue. And I confirm that fact. But folks, if you use the law lawfully, if you share those commandments, not in a condemnatory spirit, but in love and gentleness, and say to people, which I always say when I'm witnessing, I'm telling you these things because I care about you.

I don't even know you. I don't want you to go to hell. God doesn't want you to go to hell.

You don't want to go to hell. And if it's done in love and gentleness, you'll find people will say things like, I really appreciate you talking to me like this. They'll say things like, I've never heard it put like this before.

So, if you think this teaching is important, there are two books that I can recommend that can help you. One is called Revival's Golden Key, published by Bridge Logos. The other one is The Evidence Bible.

Same publisher as The Evidence Bible, commended by Franklin Graham, Josh McDowell, and D. James Kennedy. In study, these principles can help you share your faith. Charles Spurgeon said, we must school and train ourselves to deal personally with the unconverted.

We must not excuse ourselves, but force ourselves to the irksome task until it becomes easy. Another way you can school yourself is on our website, RayComfort.com, you can freely, without charge, listen to a 16 tape series that will equip you on how to share your faith. In closing, let me share these words with you from John Wesley.

He said this regarding the law. Therefore, I cannot spare the law one moment, no more than I can spare Christ. Seeing I now want it as much to keep me to Christ as I ever wanted it to bring me to Him.

So what is Wesley saying? I mean, I thought the law can't help us any longer. Well, it has no condemnatory aspect to it. I mean, we're free from its demands, but what the law does is help us keep at the foot of the cross.

What keeps me to the foot of the cross? It's my fear of God. It's the thought that God is to be feared. Jesus said, Fear not him who has power to kill your body afterwards can do no more, but fear him who has power to kill your body and cast your soul into hell.

Fear him. What produces the fear of the Lord? It's knowledge from the law. It's the knowledge that God sees lust as adultery, hatred as murder.

One fib, a white lie. The Bible says, All lies are their part in the lake of fire. So the law keeps me at the foot of the cross.

Therefore, it is precious to me. And I can say with David, Oh, how I love you, Lord, is my meditation all the day. And with Paul, I delight in the law of God after the inward man.

And then Wesley said, Otherwise, this evil heart of unbelief would immediately depart from the living God. Indeed, each is continually sending me to the other, the Lord of Christ, and Christ to the law. Let's bear in prayer as we close, shall we? Father, we thank you for your word, which is filled with exceeding great and precious promises.

Thank you for the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ, the image of God. Thank you. Thank you.

You didn't leave us in the shadow of death. To them that sat in the shadow of death, a light has sprung up. Father, firstly, we pray for those who have never found a place of biblical repentance.

We pray this day, in the quietness of their heart, they'll confess their sins to you and put their trust in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. And Father, we pray for the rest of us as Christians, that you will help us to be true and faithful. That we will not adulterate the word of God, but we will preach it in the full gospel of God.

Help us to be free forever from the cursed fear of man, that we might further your will on earth. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Just ask Kirk to come up just for a moment, and he'll share just a little bit about it, the book that we have for you. Thank you. Boy, that's so important, isn't it? After 14 years of being a Christian, I had never understood the use of the law in helping someone to understand what sin is and why they need Jesus.

I was at my house the last couple of days, and there was someone there that was doing some work, construction work on our house, and I shared these principles with this guy who had a deep sense of hatred for the religion he was brought up with, and hated all the guilt and all this. And I shared with him the things that Ray is talking about, looking into the Ten Commandments. After about an hour, he was basically asking me if he could have a Bible.

And I gave him my Bible, and I gave him this booklet here called Save Yourself Some Pain that Ray wrote. And it's a short little booklet that really underlines the things that you've heard this morning. So I encourage you to pick some of these up in the back and take them with you.

They're out on the book table. And Ray and I will be out there as well. Thanks again for coming this morning.

God bless you.

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