

His Presence

by Michael Koulianos

Michael Koulianos emphasizes the importance of God's presence and honoring spiritual foundations in our lives and ministries.

Duration: 51:01

Scripture: 1 Kings 19:1-18, Proverbs 22:28, Matthew 22:37-38, John 15:5, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 3:6-7, 2 Timothy 1:13, Hebrews 12:1-2, James 4:10, 1 Peter 5:5-6

Topics: "Presence of God", "God's Presence", "Stewardship of Faith"

Description

Michael Koulianos emphasizes the significance of maintaining the ancient landmarks of faith and the necessity of God's presence in our lives. He draws parallels between the struggles of Elijah and the modern church, highlighting the importance of not compromising the gospel for popularity or convenience. Koulianos stresses that true ministry is rooted in a deep relationship with Jesus, and that the church must prioritize His presence above all else. He warns against the dangers of pride and the temptation to stray from foundational truths established by previous generations. Ultimately, he calls for a commitment to stewarding God's presence and ensuring that the next generation experiences an even greater glory.

Transcript

Would you take your Bibles to Proverbs 22, verse 28? And just for the sake of my voice, where's Amy Pazinski? Oh, there she is. Could you grab a mic? And then, David, could you give one to Daniel Williams as well? Amy, would you read that verse? He who sows iniquity will reap sorrow, and the rod of his anger will fall. Fail.

Sorry, did I give you the wrong verse? What verse did I give you? 22, eight. Oh, sorry, 22, 28. Okay.

Go ahead. I'm like, I must have a really different translation. Go ahead.

Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set. That's pretty clear. What version do you have there, Daniel? Would you read that? What did you read from, Amy? New King James.

Okay, read the ESV. Do not move the ancient landmark that your fathers have set. It's about the same.

Now, turn to 1 Kings 19. You go first there, Amy. Verse one? Yeah.

And Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done and how he executed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah saying, so let the gods do to me and more also if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by tomorrow about this time. And when he saw that, he arose and ran for his life and went to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a brim tree and he prayed that he might die and said, it is enough. Now, Lord, take my life for I am no better than my father's. Then as he lay and slept under a brim tree, suddenly an angel touched him and said to him, arise and eat.

Then he looked and there by his head was a cake baked on coals and a jar of water. So he ate and drank and lay down again. And the angel of the Lord came back a second time and touched him and said, arise and eat because the journey is too great for you.

So he arose and ate and drank and he went in the strength of that food 40 days and 40 nights as far as Herob in the mountain of God. And there he went into a cave and spent the night in that place and behold, the word of the Lord came to him. And he said to him, what are you doing here, Elijah? So he said, I have been very zealous for the Lord God of hosts.

For the children of Israel have forsaken your covenant, torn down your altars, and killed your prophets with the sword. I alone am left and they seek to take my life. Perfect, thank you, Amy.

Okay, perhaps you're asking what do these two scriptures have to do with one another? Let's go back to Proverbs. I want you to mark that first King's passage. And I'm gonna read to you again, Proverbs 22, verse 28.

Do not remove the ancient landmark which your fathers have set. At here at Jesus Image, we don't have the luxury of just hosting meetings that are good and palatable and extremely systematic and incredibly sanitized. Well, we do sanitize the room.

I'm speaking spiritually. But people often come to our meetings who are in really rough circumstances. Whether it's a tumor or a broken marriage or an addiction or a depression, whatever that might be, it's we are faced with many mountains that only God can cast into the sea.

Do you know what I mean by that? Whenever a house becomes filled with God's presence, the needy come. And I don't just mean the financially needy. The needy come, those who need God to step into areas that will crush them if he does not step in.

So therefore, what we don't have here is the luxury to just do anything we want, how we wanna do it, because it just seems right or seems easy. There are landmarks that have been established by our fathers that we just cannot move. We cannot move them.

One day, I was playing golf, which is always glorious. Say amen. And I was playing golf in Southern Cal, and I was in a cart, the golf cart, riding with someone I greatly respect who was in charge of one of the largest ministries in the world, if not, definitely like one of the top three or five ministries in the world.

And so I was there riding the cart, whooping him, and so I think he wanted to speak about spiritual things, not golf, because it was too hard on him to admit what was happening for five straight hours of torture for him. And he looked at me, man, this must have been like 2008 or seven, 2007. He said, the message the Lord has given you on Jesus could touch the world.

And I said, really? He goes, yeah, it could touch the whole world. And he goes, there's only one issue. You've gotta stop praying for the sick.

And at that point, I sat up, and I said, well, pastor, why do you say that? And he said, because your generation isn't into that. And I said, well, what are they into? And he said, they're into hope. They need hope.

And so this thought shot through my head. What about hope for the sick, right? And so I went back to, I was staying with my father-in-law that week, and we had, I think we were transitioning out of an apartment, so we were staying there with him, and I went and sat there in the living room, and I think he could tell I was pondering something pretty deeply, and he said, what's going on, what are you thinking about? I said, oh, nothing. And he goes, you're thinking about something.

What's bothering you? And he said, how did your golf round go with so-and-so? I said, it went well. He's like, yeah, but you're bothered, so give me the whole story. And I told him the whole story, and he sat me down, looked me in the eye, and said, you don't have a right to not minister to the sick.

And I thought, okay, we'll explain that. He said, do you really think you're stepping into what you're stepping into because you're so great? I think we need to be really careful in empowerment cultures that we don't start believing that we're the source of our breakthrough. Now, ultimately, it all flows from Jesus.

Hopefully, we've established that here. I don't know how else to be more intentional. I don't think I've preached a different message since 2006, so it's been a long time.

So hopefully, one thing we've established here is that he's our source and our everything. Would you say amen to that? Okay. But he uses people.

And the minute you stop being thankful for people, listen carefully, who have established or stewarded ancient landmarks, pride is at the other side of the door. So what can typically happen, especially in environments like this, especially in ministry school environments, who teach, as we do, spending time with Jesus and loving him is life's greatest achievement? Yes and amen. It absolutely is.

Purely loving Jesus is a greater achievement in life than filling 100 stadiums because you don't even need to be born again to fill a stadium. Let's do some Bible trivia. Was Judas part of the 70 who were sent out two by two? Okay, what did they do? Healed the sick, raised the dead, cleansed the lepers, and preached the kingdom.

So Judas raised more dead people and cleansed more lepers than anyone has in this room. And probably more than anyone we know. And how many of you are happy you're not next to Judas right now? Jesus said it's better that he were never born.

Okay. So that proves that you can do a lot of stuff for God and not love God. It's proof.

Balaam. Balaam was a sorcerer and a prophet in the same book. And that's because the gift is not the voice or the signal, the gift is the satellite dish.

That's the gift. And then when you're fallen and not walking with Jesus and don't follow the scriptures and don't have a heart for the gospel, you begin to turn that satellite dish and use it for gain. Becomes impure.

And then God stops talking to you, so you start listening to demons with the same satellite dish that you once listened to God with. That's how it works, because you become addicted to delivering detail. Is this making sense? King Saul prophesied with the school of the prophets.

He had a demon, he got around the school of the prophets and started to prophesy. So we know that functioning in prophetic power is not the tell-all. He consulted a witch.

Say amen, talk to me this morning. Okay, it was a long flight last night, I need you to encourage me. And the list goes on and on.

So that being said, loving Jesus is absolutely life's greatest achievement, and the scriptures teach that because it's the first and great commandment. And the reason it is the first and great commandment is because it's what he wants most from us. Remember, if you had a little Holy Spirit shovel while you're reading your Bible, or let's just say a scalpel, and you could remove a layer and go deeper and deeper and deeper into the scriptures, what you're gonna find as the bedrock beneath the text is his heart.

And because his heart is burning and beating with the desire to be loved and love us first, he made the first and great command the first and great command. It's God's way of saying, love me, I want it more than anything. What a precious, I'll go up, I'll go up, it's fine.

What a precious Lord. I said, what a precious Lord. So that is established, absolutely, and we're gonna teach that.

You need to be with the Lord. You need to spend, especially in this day and age, you need to spend hours and hours and hours with God. You have to store oil right now.

The bride, in a sense, is an oily bride. She has oily skin, whether you like yours or not. That's what she's like.

The fragrance is mixed with oil. That is the ointment that the Lord pours out upon us so that he smells himself upon us. Does that make sense to you? Okay.

However, however, in that place, you can start believing that it's just you and God. What I wanna say unequivocally is that it's not just us and God, that we do have a responsibility to those who've gone before us. I said we do have a responsibility to those who've gone before us.

How many of you know the name Steve Hill? Okay, he was the evangelist at the Brownsville Revival, and I went to Dallas to go see him, and I was sitting there with a couple of friends at a conference table. He was intensely fighting cancer at the time, and he looked us in the eye, and he said, gentlemen, do not change the gospel. He said, I don't wanna go to heaven, listen carefully, and have to look at Jesus and tell him why I changed the gospel.

He said, I don't wanna look at a martyr at the marriage supper of the lamb who was sawn in two and tell him that I changed the gospel so that people here would like me more. Make sense to you? He was aware that what he had stepped into was much bigger than him. He joined a procession.

He joined a symphony that was already playing. All of us here in this room, listen, are part of something that didn't start with me. I'm aware of that.

We're part of something that didn't even start with my father-in-law, didn't start with Ms. Kuhlman, that didn't start with just Amy, that didn't start with Mother Eder, it didn't start with the great Pentecostal outpouring. It started way before that. At the end of the day, it starts with Jesus.

And there are ancient landmarks we cannot move. Say amen. Amen.

Now, the reason I read that passage from 1 Kings is because Elijah understood that. A great breakthrough comes forth. The prophets of Baal are judged and killed.

The prophetic ministry was quite interesting back then. It's definitely become more friendly. Yeah.

Yeah, now we have prophetic workshops. Back then you had to pour water on altars and climb mountains and all types of stuff. But after his greatest breakthrough, I mean, fire from heaven falls visibly, and a woman filled with a devil says, I'm gonna kill you.

And this mighty prophet and man of God runs for dear life. After killing hundreds of false prophets, he's afraid of one woman who's seductive and goes with an intense, smoky eye look. To say the least, she actually did paint her eyes right before she died.

This isn't a message against eye shadow. It's just what she did. Bible says she painted her eyes and stood on the balcony.

And then she died. Yeah. And you, by the way, see that happening today.

The Lord dealing with sexual immorality. What's taking place on behalf of the unborn. This isn't, that's not a political thing.

It's just a biblical thing. When Jesus stood at the gates of hell and said the gates of hell won't prevail against the church, the church, he stood in Caesarea Philippi in front of the cave called the gate of hell. And behind him, babies were being thrown into a cave and killed.

Zeus was being worshiped. That's called the false gospel. There was another altar.

This is all right behind him. There was another altar dedicated to Caesar. That's called the worship of government.

And then there was another temple called the temple of Pan that was a temple of bestiality and sexual immorality. We're facing the same thing today. But it's amazing that Jesus doesn't get stuck in the weeds at each individual temple.

He gives them the cure all. He stands there without denying it. And here's the question, who do men say that I am? He didn't say, how do we deal with each temple? Because he knew if the answer was correct, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God, it would uproot the power of all of that.

Are you following me? And of course, Jesus has a heart for the unborn, those in the womb. That's obvious. He was in the womb.

That's how we know. Do you follow me? He touched and sanctified everything. Of course he has a heart.

For teenagers, he was one. Are you listening? That and that alone proves that God has a heart. Isn't that the truth? It's all about Jesus.

So Jesus stands there knowing that if you get him right, that everything else bows its knee. Are you getting it? Because if you see him as the Christ, the son of the living God, listen, that means a bunch of stuff. If you've been in Jesus school, I taught on this.

That means a bunch of stuff. One of the things it means is when he talks, we listen. And then once we listen, we say, yes, Lord.

You cannot be the Christ, the son of God, and be negotiated with. You don't get to be the Christ and have your people vote. You just don't.

Because the word Christ means the smeared one, the rubbed one in the Holy Spirit, who is the only one qualified to baptize in the Holy Spirit. And then the next phase of the meaning of Christ is king. You don't vote in a king.

You don't vote out a king. And he doesn't give recommendations. He summons us and gives commands.

You don't even get to walk in when you want to. That's called the Christ. You are the Christ.

Peter got that right. The son. You've become a man, the only begotten.

You are eternal. You are from the preexistent past. You are the God of John chapter one, who in the beginning is God, was with God and was God.

He's from the beginning, before time ever began. You are the son, the eternally begotten son. If he's not eternal son, the father cannot be eternal father.

I don't know why I feel the Lord right now, but he's liking this. Okay, I do know why. Sorry, Lord.

The son of the living God. He is perfect, uncreated. When you get that right, you get like a thousand other things right.

So I don't have to wake up every morning and put on my say no to drugs t-shirt. Though I should. Say no to drugs.

And I thank God for anybody who's involved in that type of ministry. But I'm just saying, a full yes to Jesus is a million no's in every direction. Does that make sense? I don't have to, I don't have a dry erase marker on my mirror in the morning that says do not divorce Jess.

Being that I'm married to him, and that that is a symbol of that great mystery according to Ephesians five, my marriage to Jess is probably the, is the loudest declaration of the gospel to my family. It's just, I don't have, I don't have a statement that says you are a mighty tither today. That's been settled.

I wrote the check, got saved, died to the desire to hold on to 10%. Because I said yes to Jesus. Is all of this landing? Okay.

Now. I wanna ask, let me get back to Elijah. So Elijah deals with this, has a great breakthrough, and fear comes in.

I've gotta imagine Elijah was tired. How many of you do your worst when you're really tired? I didn't even have to say lift your hands to the Lord. Just threw them all up.

It's just who we are. Don't trust the tired version of you. And don't make big decisions when you're tired.

Don't do it. Give God a day or two. Don't have important confrontation when you're super tired.

Because you'll make a bigger mess. Take a deep breath, give it a day, and then deal with it. Elijah's probably tired here.

She whispers, doesn't whisper, she makes a decree that I'm gonna kill you. He'd forgotten the great breakthrough, hundreds of the enemies of God killed, and he runs. And we've all been there.

We've all been there. Every year, I'm just gonna be open with you as your pastor, every year I ask myself, I'm not sure I can get through this year's event at the end of the year. Just because of the weight that comes right about now.

Because this is about the time Karla and Jess start asking me questions every day. And if you're listening, I love you, but it's the truth and you both know it. And they're needed questions.

They're needed, I get it. And they're very administrative by nature. Our team is very administrative by nature.

I can be when I need to be, but it's not my job here. My job is to pull God's presence into this room every time we gather, and I need to be filled with God every day. Without that, there's nothing to administrate.

True? You can have the most beautiful wine skin in the world if you don't have wine, it's a bagpipe. It's not a wine skin. So I have one gear with you.

Lord, I can give them nothing if you don't come. I'm gonna give my life to you coming every time we gather. And that looks like a lot of stuff.

Like today I had to wake up early and pray in the airport because I knew I'd be here. Because I wouldn't want a pastor who didn't prepare himself as an usher into God's presence. I'm just the lead usher here.

I'm not this great leader. So Elijah does do one thing right. His perspective is wrong.

He began to believe he's the only one doing it right. And I don't know if you've checked social media at times, but everyone who's posting, well, I shouldn't say everyone, many who are posting, it sounds like they believe they are the only righteous crusader on planet earth. They all think they're William Wallace.

And they, I don't know, the weird thing is is you can have an Instagram ministry now. You just go, oh, here, I'm gonna create a page. Now I'm in the ministry and I'm gonna post anything I want.

And the complex there in many cases is they believe they're the only one who understands. It's another way of saying what Elijah said. I'm the only one left.

And the Lord's really clear with Elijah. He goes, well, actually, there's 7,000 others. Not seven, an arena full of others.

The UCF arena seats 8,000. He's like, no, no, I've got an arena of others, just like you. Elijah's probably like, oh, I haven't met them yet.

No. Are you sure? Are you sure they're out there? 7,000, no, 7,000 others just like you who've not bowed their knee to Baal. But what I want you to look at, and there's a little disagreement here, but many theologians would agree with what I'm about to say.

I'm not saying it's absolutely true, but I believe it is based on what I've studied. Horeb is the same mountain, we know, that Moses met with God at. It's my opinion.

In fact, history would tell us that all of Israel knew that was the holy mountain. That was the mountain where God married them. It was the mountain where God ate with the elders.

It was the mountain where Moses anointed the entire nation with blood. It was the mountain where the law came from. It was the mountain of marriage.

It was the mountain of encounter. It was the mountain where their hero met God. And I find it incredibly interesting that Elijah runs to a cleft in the rock like his father Moses in the spirit ran.

To a cleft in the rock. Did Moses not hide in the cleft of the rock when the Lord passed by? And now Elijah, something in him tells him, do what your fathers did. Hold on to what your fathers held on to.

And you say, why are you talking about this? I'm just gonna be really open. One of the great honors in my life is to have the access to speak into environments that are wonderful. Ministries that I deeply admire.

And leaders of those ministries will ask for my thoughts and opinions. I'm 44 now. I know, I don't look it.

But I had the thought the other day as I drove down I-4. Because our land is moving forward. It's going really well.

There's progress and momentum. You know, we'll be breaking ground here soon. We're expanding, which is amazing.

I'll give you more on that. But I thought, all of this faith. And you know, faith is a gift, and faith grows, the Bible says.

And to get it to grow, you have to be intentional. You have to be in the right place. You have to sit under the scriptures.

You have to spend time with God. You have to take a risk. You have to be with people of faith.

You have to fight for a relationship to remain with people of faith. It's pricey. You have to be ridiculed and persecuted.

Children who grew up in a church or in ministry don't even sign up for it. They don't even get a vote. They're just thrust into a life of opinion.

And I was driving the other day on I-4, right up by Maitland, and I said, Lord, in 20 years, I'll be 64. Some of y'all looking at me were like, that's a spring chicken. Calm down.

For me, that feels a little older, okay? So just bear with me. And I thought, could you imagine building that grand cathedral and giving your life to the Lord's calling only to see it without the glory one day? What would it be like to walk in after giving your life to something? Now you're 80, and the next generation's running with something, and it just feels so different. He's not there anymore.

Everything else is in place, but the Lord's not there anymore. It sounds like a nightmare to me. Now here's the discouraging part.

I have never seen that done well. I'm not saying it hasn't taken place. I'm just talking about in front of me, I have never seen the next generation step into more glory than the Father who paid a price.

I'm talking about the local church, than the Father who paid a price to build that building, break that thing in. And I was gripped with the sobriety and the dependency that we all have to walk in to hear from heaven and burn. We have to burn brightly.

I mean burn brightly. Can I have 15 extra minutes this morning? Because this is a very important. I was late to my seat this morning.

That's why I'm asking for 15 more minutes, because I ran out of shirts because I slept at the airport last night, and I only had a workout shirt left, and I tried to wash my shirt in the tub and dry it. Michael Jones picked me up and drove me here from the airport, and I had my shirt out the window trying to air dry it. I called Jess, I said, babe, please bring me two shirts, because I figured one I wouldn't like.

And she forgot. So I'm all merged out here, you know. It's not my jam, but I mean I like our stuff, but I'm usually not the guy who's preaching in Jesus image gear anymore.

It's cool, though, for all of y'all who made it. I think it's beautiful. I don't know how I got there.

What was I talking about, Amy? No, no, no, way before the bathtub. Huh? Burning, burning, yeah, yeah, yeah. And this has just been on my mind.

It's been on my mind, because God is the God of covenant. God is the God of generations. He's the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Oh, I know why I said that, because that's why I'm asking for 15 extra minutes. That's why I got here a little late. I had no clothes.

He's the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And the biblical standard doesn't give us the liberty to let go of the landmarks. The biblical standard demands glory to glory.

The biblical standard, speaking of the Lord's kingdom, is ever increasing. So shall the increase, the Bible says, of his government be. And so to those of us who are part of this generation or the generation prior to me, or even one more before that, and to those who are younger than me, the only way this will go on in greater glory is that if you commit yourself to the Lord to the Lord's presence more intentionally than we have.

And so when we had Bill here a few years ago, two years ago, we had him at Jesus School, and I did a Q&A, and we talked about this. And one of the things he said I'll never forget, he said, imagine you spend all your money on your first house. Does anybody remember buying their first house? Okay, raise your hand.

All right. You went into your savings, you worked, maybe both of you worked, and you keep that house so clean, because, I mean, it's your baby. And you should keep a clean house, by the way.

We tell our students, if you're believing for a new house, start by making your bed in your apartment. He's the God of stewardship. So you do all your, I mean, the lawn is perfect.

The flowers are beautiful. The mulch is gorgeous. You know, it's got this curb appeal.

It's clean. It's wonderful. And then you decide to give it to a child.

You give it to your child, and you say, this is yours now. And your child has no job, your job, your child has never really worked for anything. And you give them freely what was precious to you, what you paid a price for.

And the analogy Bill used is then you come back, and rather than there being curb appeal, there's cracks in the driveway, and there's cracks in the concrete, and in every crack, there are weeds growing. And the outside of the house is dirty, and the inside of the house is dirty, and the paint's chipped. And as a father who built the house, and paid for it, and paid a price, you come in and go, what happened? And you know what happened.

The child had no value for what cost the parent their life to build. And so the details are less important. And God is in the details.

I said God is in the details. In a church, God is in the details. God sees the details.

God sees staff meetings, he doesn't just see services. God sees conflict resolution. God sees the retreats we take when we're weeping on the floor, worshiping rather than strategizing how to plant another campus.

God sees it. God sees a team in a church who, when their hearts are at odds, for the sake of his presence, they pull each other aside and bring it to one another. Those are the things God sees that the world doesn't see, but those are the details that God fills and blesses and endorses.

And that's how something becomes a real and living organism. And so when people walk into here, and I was just in Sacramento and then in Reading, and everywhere I go, people are grabbing me, going, we watch every week. Literally, every city I go to, we watch every week.

Or we came, and I said, well, how did you feel when you came? They all say, we can't explain what I felt when I walked through the door. It was just different. He is different, and they're feeling him.

It's so much bigger than power and gifting, though he flows in power here. That's not what they're feeling. They're feeling him.

And because he comes, it's his way of saying, listen carefully, I like it here. You're not perfect, but I like it here. I love your hearts.

God doesn't choose to fill a people in a house because of their ministry resume. He looks at what man cannot see. That's what he said, that man looks at the outward.

God looks at the heart. You string 10, 20 years of hard, costly, godly decisions together. All of a sudden, there's a construct being formed that God says, I like that.

And so I felt today by the Spirit to speak into this. The only way we don't lose who and what we have is by going after more of who and him that we love. Now that doesn't look like striving.

It doesn't look like not enjoying life. It just looks like a heart that's connected that says more, Lord, more, more, more, more. What is the price? Because here's the thing.

Here's the thing. His glory, I'm gonna try to say this the right way. His glory is so much different than gifting and anointing.

That anointing and gifting is without repentance. But his tangible presence can lift. And in a sense, he's more delicate in that way.

Because we're talking about a sensitive person. The presence of the Holy Spirit, he's entirely sacred. He's entirely other than.

He's not like us in so many ways. And once he lifts in that way, listen, I've seen many continue to be used in God-honoring lives and ministries and purpose. But once that glory lifts, his glory, I've never seen it return.

And that, I think, from a ministry standpoint, is my greatest fear. That I walk into one of these meetings and say to myself, where did he go? I'm not preaching at you. I'm preaching at me.

We're talking here as a family. The only way forward is more. Are you listening? So these are, before I pray with you, I wanna ask you a few questions that I have asked possibly, I think I may have asked this once or twice in the past, but we need to hear it again.

How much of our attention is required to steward his presence? Anybody have an answer? You're sure? You're right. I think I'm gonna get the story right. I might get some of the details wrong, but when Jen Johnson had a, I think she had just had one of her children, and she was, I think, on her way to Reading.

I might be, or on her way to Bethel Church, the church. I might be getting some of this wrong, but the generalities and foundations of the story are there. And she walked in and Bill said, how's it going? And she said, I'm just a little stressed.

It's hard to take my mom hat off and put my worship hat on. And Bill said, you should have never taken your worship hat off. Like you can worship while you're feeding a baby.

And when they're screaming in the back seat, the only way to be normal and sane is to worship. And so, if this house, listen, if this house becomes about two things, we lose the one thing. If this house becomes about three.

Now, most houses that I am connected with, there are exceptions. But when things go wrong, the common denominator I've seen is, you're about like 16th thing. We're about this, like this is the generation of initiative.

Especially Gen Z, y'all got more initiatives than you know what to do with. And you do them like with 14%, because you got 12. And you can't do 12 with, you can't do two with 100%.

You can only do one with 100%. And the way you lose the one thing is by forgetting there's only one thing. One thing is needed.

You have to believe that. So we get into all of these righteous perspectives in God's house. And we come up with all of these plans that remove our focus from the simple face of Jesus.

So we get into, here's an example. We come up with like these patterns to revive. Okay, we could say I'm about revival.

That just means you're a crazy, wild Pentecostal who's got an evangelistic heart and likes to blow on people. I'm not saying that, but that's typically how we like frame those things. And once you become more balanced and you're tired of long meetings at night, you say I'm no longer about revival.

Oh, I'm on to reformation. And then somebody says, what does that mean? You go, it just means that some of that revival stuff gets into every area of life. Okay, what does that mean? Well, it just means that society is reformed.

Okay, what does that mean? Well, that just means that everybody acts like a Christian who isn't a Christian. And then if you get really deep and you go to theological school, or you just read enough posts, or join some subscription with your daily devotion, and you listen to the one person sitting in their dorm room who hasn't put on deodorant in a month, who's a theologian, and they just looked apart, they have a coffee and black framed glasses, and super deep, right? And then at that point, you're on to transformation. And that's as deep as you can go until somebody says, define it.

And the definition, evidently, is like 12 different things. And so you say, well, what does that look like? Well, it looks like the whole world looking like the church. So when you go to Winn-Dixie, and you check out, it looks like the cashier speaking in tongues, and it looks like the guy when you're trying shoes on, instead of trying your shoes on, he washes your feet at the mall.

It's just everybody's angelic, and there are cherubs everywhere. And we forget, we get into these systems, and when they disconnect, listen, from the simplicity of Jesus, they become initiative without oil. And then we glory in the initiative and stop preaching the gospel.

That's what happens. I'm not saying those things are bad, I'm just saying, without Jesus, it's impossible. And Jesus refuses to join our team.

We don't draft him. Like, Jesus is not one of our staff members. Do you follow me? And what a generation forgets is that the only way to see this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and Christ is through the power of the Holy Spirit, and the preaching of the gospel.

It's the gospel of Jesus, and when I say the gospel, I don't mean an altar call. I mean the person of Jesus expressed in word and power by the Holy Scriptures. That's how all that happens.

Are you tracking with me? So here, here, I just wanna be really clear, we are gonna burn for him. And we will never stop worshiping him as long as I'm here. And we will never stop teaching the Scriptures, showing you Jesus in the Scriptures as long as I'm here.

And we will never stop coming to the table of the Lord as long as I'm here. And I want you to burn with that same fire. I want your homes to have the same culture.

Fathers, listen to me. Pray for your children. Last night, I had to do a healing service in Sacramento.

On the way there, I forgot. Oh my gosh, I didn't pray with the kids. I typically don't talk to a lot of people before I have to preach.

First thing I did, I got on the phone. Went through their Scriptures with them. Theo's 16, you know? I've been doing these Scriptures with him since he was six months.

Actually, since he was born, I've been reading them over him. We don't graduate from parenting and being the priests of our home. Fathers and mothers broker in a way.

They become the connection between God and the home. Get God's presence into your home. Take it seriously.

Teach the Scriptures in your home. Take communion together in your home. This thing has to burn more brightly, guys.

We have to... By the time the next generation steps in, if this flame is at this level right now, it's gotta touch the ceiling. Does this make sense to you? Joel, can you help me, bud? Do you understand what I'm fighting for? I'm fighting for a greater glory now and when God is done with us. And it's gonna require a wisdom and a price.

And the reason I know we need wisdom is because we don't have it all figured out. I just know the church is bigger than an individual. The only individual the church is not bigger than is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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