

There Comes a Time

by Michael L. Brown

Michael L. Brown's sermon calls believers to recognize the urgent moral battles of our time and to act as the conscience of society with courage and compassion.

Duration: 59:37

Scripture: Matthew 5:13-14, Matthew 5:16, Matthew 6:33, Mark 9:50, Luke 14:34, John 13:34-35

Topics: "Obedience"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on a debate he had with Professor Bart Ehrman on the Bible and suffering. He emphasizes the importance of being a light in the world by doing good deeds and showing acts of mercy and kindness. The speaker highlights the need to help the poor, the hurting, and the needy, and acknowledges the efforts made by the church in reaching out to communities. He encourages the audience to seek God's guidance in understanding where the battle is raging and what their role is as God's people in society. The sermon concludes with a reminder of Jesus' words to his disciples, emphasizing their role as the salt of the earth and the moral conscience and preservative of society.

Transcript

Lord, we love you. I thank you for your people. We desire to please you.

We desire to do your will. We desire, Father, to live our lives in such a way that glorifies you. I pray that you would stir us.

I pray that you would speak to us. I pray that you would shake us. I pray that you would awaken us.

I pray that you would give us ears to hear what your Spirit is saying, Father. May there be the sounding of an alarm that resonates in each of our hearts. May fire step up to its divine calling and destiny in this hour.

In Jesus' name, Amen. Friday night, I spoke a basic message about leaving our first love. Gave a call to turn back to God.

Gave ways to look at our lives to see if we have, in fact, abandoned, left our first love. Last night, we preached on the need for the power of the Holy Spirit. Asked, where is the power of the Gospel and the power of the Spirit? Today, I want to speak something that rallies us and calls us together.

Something of urgent importance. Something that I'm quite sure is a word from the Lord, not just for us at FIRE, but for believers all over America. So if you need a title, the title is, There Comes a Time.

Many of you know this verse from 1 Chronicles 12, verse 32, because I've used it often in preaching. In the account there in 1 Chronicles 12, it mentions the mighty men who joined David when he was in Hebron to help bring the kingdom into his hands. These were warriors.

These were battle-tested people. And when you read the account beginning a few verses earlier, it talks about the weaponry they carried. It talks about their skill in battle.

One after another after another. Some large numbers. And then, verse 32, there's this little group, and if you'll notice, it doesn't mention their weaponry, and it doesn't mention that they're battle-tested.

It says something else about them, but I'm quite convinced that in a real way, they were the most important part of the whole group. Men of Issachar, who understood the times and knew what Israel should do. 200 chiefs with all their relatives under their command.

I have no interest in abstract Bible prophecy and people trying to match headlines in the news with scriptures in the Bible just for some kind of fascination. I have no interest in that. I have no interest in prophetic speculation.

I'm interested in knowing what time is it and what are we supposed to do as God's people? What's happening in the world and what is our divine assignment in this generation? Depending on when you live, depending on where you live, depending on the setting in which God places you, there are distinct things that He gives us to do. What time is it? What is the urgent word? What is the urgent matter? What is it that we must give our attention to? And if we don't, we will be failing in God's purposes for this hour. In particular, those of us here at FIRE.

Now, if you've heard me preach about anti-Semitism in church history, you've heard me speak of some of the ugly things that Martin Luther said centuries ago. He also said some wonderful things, and I want to read to you his words. Martin Luther said this over 500 years ago, If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that little point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not confessing Christ, however boldly I may be professing Christ.

Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all battlefields beside is merely flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point. There are times when God's people must rise up. There are times when we must stand.

There are issues that rise up in a culture. There are things that happen in a time in society, and we can be busy on a hundred other fronts, but if we neglect that front, we're being disobedient to God. We are missing the point of the battle.

Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proved, and to be steady on all battlefields beside is merely flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point. And I want to remind you of the words of another Martin Luther. Martin Luther King, as we ask the question in a moment, number one, where is the battle raging? Where is this battle that's raging that we must give attention to? Are there specific things right now in this generation that we cannot miss, that we cannot let slide by? And if we do, we'll find ourselves accountable before God.

Where is the battle raging, number one? And number two, what are we called to do? What is our function as God's people in society in a given generation, in a given time? I remind you of what Jesus said to his disciples, and if we quote these words every Sunday and every day of the week until we die, it won't be too many times. This is Jesus speaking to his people, his disciples, to us, to you, to me. He could walk in here right now and look at all of us and say these words to each of us here that are his followers.

You are the salt of the earth. You are the moral conscience of the society. You are the moral preservative of the society.

I was doing an interview with a fellow the other day that was involved with getting the C.S. Lewis Narnia books onto the big screen, and at the end of the day, I made the comment that the problem in our society is not the presence of darkness, but it's the absence of light. I don't expect the world to be godly. It doesn't trouble me that sinners sin, or it troubles me for them.

I want them to know God. I want them to be forgiven and to repent, but I don't expect sinners to do good things. I don't expect godless producers to put out godly movies.

The problem in our society is not the presence of darkness. It's the absence of light. The problem is not that the world has no conscience.

It's that the church is not bringing a conscience. You, Jesus says to us, his disciples are the salt of the earth, but if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It's no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled by man. If we no longer have our distinctiveness, if we no longer have an example that's different than the world, if we no longer are holy counterculture people going against the grain of the society, what good are we? Jesus says this, you are the light of the world.

A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead, they put it on a stand and it gives light to everyone in the house.

In the same way, let your light shine before men that they may see your good deeds and praise your father in heaven. There's the aspect of light which comes down to doing good, acts of mercy, acts of kindness, feeding the poor, helping those in need, and that needs to be continually an expression of who we are. It's an expression of God's heart for the poor, for the hurting, for the needy, and if you look at what fire is doing around the world, by God's grace, we have been strong in this and there's been much outreach even in our communities here.

Some may not be aware, but there's consistent work to minister to the poor and the hurting here and around the world. There's another aspect of light. Paul speaks of it in Ephesians 5. It's that light exposes darkness.

That's why people hate the light, because it exposes sin, because it makes them uncomfortable. That's why when the light shines, we want to hide it and we want to run from it if we're in sin. It is part of our function to be salt.

It is part of our function to be light, and I appreciate the way Martin Luther King expressed this years ago. The church must be reminded, he said, that it is not the master or the servant of the state, but rather the conscience of the state. It must be the guide and the critic of the state, never its tool.

Look, we have been so shattered and blasted and shaken by scandal after scandal among leaders. One corrupt leader after another exposed shameful things in the body taking place that we're glad just to be as good as the world these days. We just want to stay out of the gossip columns for a little while.

It's shameful. It's painful. It's something that should get us on our face repenting corporately, because that's not just people out there.

That's us. The fact is, we should be living lives that are so different because we've been transformed by the Lord, because the word of God lives in us, that the difference in our lives makes the unsaved uneasy, that it brings conviction to them so that they want to find out about our God and they want to find out what they must do to be saved. That's supposed to be our function in the society, the conscience of the state.

It's difficult to be the conscience of the state when we drink in the media and drink in Hollywood and drink in TV and drink in internet and drink in videos and drink in all this other stuff more than we drink in the word. It's hard for us to be conscience, but that's our calling. Look at what King said.

If the church does not recapture its prophetic zeal, it will become an irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority. You tell me if that's not a description of much of the Church of America. An irrelevant social club without moral or spiritual authority.

And what we try to do is attract numbers of people to come to a Sunday meeting and we think that that's the gospel. If that Sunday meeting or that Saturday meeting or whenever it is does not impact the lives of the people, so we go out and impact the world, that's not the gospel. Let me read one other quote that's relevant that King wrote in his letter from a Birmingham jail.

He said there was a time when the church was very powerful. It was during that period when the early Christians rejoiced, when they were deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed in. In those days, the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion, it was a thermostat that transformed the morals of society.

Wherever the early Christians entered a town, the power structure got disturbed and immediately sought to convict them for being disturbers of the peace and outside agitators. But they went on with the conviction that they were a colony of heaven and had to obey God rather than man. They were small in number, but big in commitment.

Come on, read the book of Acts. Wherever the believers went, things shook. There was either revival or riot or both.

And it's not because they were obnoxious troublemakers, it's because they were light bearers and truth bearers and full of the spirit and the kingdom of God was coming in conflict with the kingdom of darkness. King continues, they were too God intoxicated to be astronomically intimidated. They brought to an end such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contest.

Things are different now. The contemporary church is often a weak and effectual voice with an uncertain sound. It is so often the art supporter of the status quo.

I was looking at some journal entries I'd spotted a couple nights ago, about 10, 11 years back, and I'd written down the words, how I hate white collar Christianity. How I hate Christianity within four walls. This tame home and garden religion that doesn't threaten the kingdom of darkness at all.

This nice smile that keeps everybody happy, finds out what people like and tries to cater to it. That's the gospel today in America. And friends, that's not the gospel.

It may have some elements of truth that may have believers in the midst of it, but that's not the gospel in accordance with scripture. It calls us to deny ourselves, take up the cross, follow Jesus. Following Jesus 101 is I give my life for the gospel.

That's not the advanced class for the super saints. That's where it's supposed to start. I remind you when I was with my friend Yesuponim doing baptisms as we do every year in India for 17 years, that as people are baptized, as they're making a public profession of faith, he asked them in Telugu and the language of that state in India, are you willing to follow Jesus even to the point of death? Are you willing to follow him by life or death just to get baptized, just getting started? People aren't serious on that level.

You don't belong. We have a task in front of us. Our calling is to be salt and light, but where is the battle raging? What is the critical issue that we must give attention to? I know many of you at FIRE will immediately resonate with what I'm saying.

I know many of you will know where I'm going. I know others, especially if you're newer or don't know me at all, may take offense or may misunderstand. I have no problem if you take offense after you hear me.

That's between you and God. If you curse me, hate me after you hear me, that's between you and God. If you differ with me after you hear me, that's between you and God, but at least hear me.

At least let me present what I'm going to present and don't hear something I'm not saying. It's the most remarkable thing that the moment I'll touch on the subjects we're about to touch on, people hear everything except what I'm saying, and they'll tell the pastor afterwards. They'll show me the emails that come in.

The people are furious with me. They said, brother, you weren't saying that at all. So if you're going to get mad, get mad for a good reason.

Yeah, we're out of time, isn't it? We got to go to the next service now? Sorry. King said this, far from being disturbed by the presence of the church, the power structure of the average community is consoled by the church's silent and often vocal sanction of things as they are. Talk about it.

Wow. You can read about 15 books that I had written up until 2004, 2005, and if you read those books, you'll find a lot, those that are spiritual life oriented, those that are not dealing with Jewish issues and things that are dealing with repentance in the church and so on. You'll find a lot about sin in our midst.

You'll find a lot about heterosexual sin. You'll find a lot about sexual sin that we need to repent of when we're talking about moral issues in the society. You will not find must mention at all, maybe a few lines total in all the books that has anything to do with homosexuality.

What I'm about to talk to you about, what I'm about to bring your attention to, is not something that I've majored on through the years. This is not an area of ministry that God had primarily called me to get involved with. I don't come out of this background.

This is not something that was high on my attention or radar until we got here and God began to speak to me. After others that had been involved in ministry here invited some of our folks to attend the local gay

pride parade, and it was after that that God began to speak to me. We had known things were issues in our society, but God had not laid them on my heart in terms of my specific mandate.

Question, where is God calling us to take a stand? January 2005, this word came to my heart. It had been burning in me through 2004. I had a prayer vigil in front of the Supreme Court with Lou Engel and others standing for pro-life.

God spoke this word to me, reach out and resist. It was January of 2005. Reach out and resist, meaning reach out to those that identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, reach out to them with compassion.

If that's you, if that's a family member, I want to announce as loudly and clearly as I can that Jesus died for people with same-sex attraction, the same as he died for heterosexuals, and that the love of God is poured out on this entire world, and that no one is rejected by who they are. The door is open for salvation, healing, redemption, forgiveness for all. Reach out to the homosexual community with compassion, resist gay activism with courage.

I want to present to you today that the greatest challenge lying before us as believers, the point of battle that Luther spoke about, the point where we must take a stand, the point where we must be awakened and become the moral conscience of society, is this very area, the area of gay activism. You may think, oh come on, Mike, you've lost it. You've got a good ministry to Jewish people and revival, and you've got this good radio show and these other things that, you know, you teach at seminaries.

You've lost it. You've become this foaming at the mouth fundamentalist. Just give me a couple minutes.

Let me share a couple things with you. Let me tell you what's happening, because some of us have no idea what's happening in society, and others have been so bombarded by what's happening in society, we've already lost our moral courage. We've already capitulated.

I mean, you have to remember that it's been several years now since it was a big announcement that a major southern Baptist church here in Charlotte began ordaining practicing homosexuals into clergy. Began ordaining them into ministry. That was a headline several years ago.

How many of you went to the grocery store in the last week, checked in, checked out, looked right at that magazine cover with Elton John and his partner. Elton has a baby, and you hardly even realized it, noticed it. Went to the store and said, what in the world is this? This affects our kids.

This affects our kids. This is present Los Angeles school policy. Gender identity refers to one's understanding, interest, outlook, and feelings about whether one is female or male or both or neither, regardless of one's biological sex.

That's official school policy. That's the most insane statement you'll ever read, and it's official school policy. Official school policy in San Francisco schools, restroom accessibility, students shall have access to the restroom that corresponds to their gender identity exclusively and consistently at school.

So Johnny is convinced he's Jane. That's how he dresses. That's how he goes to school.

He uses the girl's locker room. He uses the girl's bathroom. This is reality, friends.

This is happening all over the place on our watch. Oh, if we had been there in the days of slavery, we would have done something. Oh, we'd been there.

Oh, we would have done. We were there in Nazi Germany. We would have done something.

Folks took a stand for Jews and others in Nazi Germany. They could be tortured, likely killed, suffer horrors for them and their family. We take a stand today.

Maybe somebody gets mad at us, and that's too much. Here, the riddle homophobia scale, which is used in some high schools now as a way to test for homophobic attitudes. Homophobic attitudes now include repulsion, pity, tolerance, and acceptance.

According to the homophobia scale now, if you are tolerant and accepting, you are a homophobe. This is what's expected. These are positive levels of attitude, support, admiration, appreciation, nurturance.

You must support homosexuality, admire it, appreciate, and nurture it. This is taught in the schools. And I was preaching about some of these themes in Florida a few weeks ago.

A pastor wanted me to address this. And I was talking about some of these things. And at the end of this message, I'm going to talk to you practically about things that we can do and that God is calling us to do.

But first, I need to sound the alarm. After the message, a man came up to me from England. He said, I pre-ordered five of your books, which I'll tell you about later.

I pre-ordered five of your books. He said, I've come from England six years ago. It's already all over England.

I said, oh, yeah, I address it in one chapter. I talk about religious rights and freedoms being taken away and street preachers being arrested and you name it. Old folks' homes being told they have to introduce homosexual teaching and stuff like that.

On and on. I said, oh, it's in the book. He said, I came from England six years ago.

He said, I've got to get this book out to people because I don't want what's happening in England to happen here. And I see it happening. He told me about his 13-year-old daughter coming home from school one day and she had sex ed material that she had brought home.

He started flipping through it. I cannot repeat to you what he told me she was learning at 13 years old. And he went to the school and talked about it.

They said, well, no, that's up to the headmaster's discretion. How about children's readers? Some of you know I bought every one of these I could just to show what's out there. I got a stack of these.

Book after book, two daddies and me. A tale of two daddies. Daddy's roommate.

Heather has two mommies. Oh, the old classic. Mama, excuse me, mommy, mama and me.

Daddy, papa and me. Here's from one of the books. There's much to learn.

I'm off to school. My daddies walk with me. It's so cool.

How about this? One dad, two dads, brown dad, blue dads. The dedication of the book says to Jacob, who has only one mom and one dad, but don't feel sorry for him. They're both great parents.

Think if he could have had two dads instead of just one. How about this book? Oh, the things mommies do. What could be better than having two? I'll give you an answer to that.

Oh, my mommies bring me glee. What could be better than having three? I mean, why not? Look, don't worry about it. Don't worry about the fact that kids are being raised that are guaranteed to never have a mother or never have a father.

Don't let that trouble you. Don't let that trouble you that gender itself is under attack. Don't worry about it.

After all, we had a nice service. Praise the Lord. After all, your own family's healthy.

Praise the Lord. After all, you tithed and got a financial miracle this week. Praise the Lord.

It doesn't matter. Society's going to hell around us. And Jesus is coming back pretty soon, so we'll all be out of here anyhow.

I remember hearing about 40 years ago. How about this coloring book? Girls will be boys, will be girls. This is a description of the book, the antithesis of the Dick and Jane coloring book.

This is a funny, playful, and provocative deconstruction of traditional gender roles. The activist authors use drawings as well as images taken from old children's books to show how completely silly and unnecessary most common gender assumptions are. There is an attack on the very foundations of human society, which is male, female, moms, dads, family, everything under assault.

The last page of King and King. Yes, those are two boys kissing. A children's reader.

Many reports of parents calling the school shocked when their first grader, first grader, comes home. Oh, what did you learn in school? Oh, we learned about King and King. The queen tells the prince he's going to be king soon, and he needs to get married.

So he surveys all of the kingdom, all the girls, all the ladies, and finally finds another prince. And the two of them get married and live happily ever after. In fact, I have the book that's the sequel to this.

King and King on their honeymoon. What's a children's version? This is the last page of the book. We have become so desensitized.

We have become so numbed. We have so lost our conscience in our sense of right and wrong. We don't want to sound like intolerant bigots that we forget how perverse this is.

The scary thing is we can talk about some of this in some circles, and people are like, so what's so bad about that? That's how far we've lost our conscience. By the way, I recently did a TV show for a friend of mine with a major international ministry and a major international TV show. He was burdened about these issues and asked me to come on and do the show.

But of course, we knew we can't air this in Canada. Can't air it in Canada. Would not get by the censors.

Those of you that think, well, I'm safe because I'm homeschooling. I'm safe because my kids are in Christian school. Watch and see what's coming.

If we don't speak up now, we're not going to have the right to teach what we want to teach our kids in the home. And there are parts of America already where parents have been brought to court over these

issues, teaching their kids at home. The GLSEN Lunchbox stands for Gay Lesbian Straight Education Network, used in elementary schools, nicely packaged.

I didn't bring in all this stuff with me to show you, but it's got all the exercises. Here's what you teach kids, elementary school, different lessons. One of the lessons is called this, getting in touch with your inner tranny.

This is to help participants better understand and personally relate to the breadth of issues around gender identity and expression. In other words, you're going to ask little kids, hey, are you called boy? Sometimes you don't really feel like a boy. Maybe you're really transgender.

Maybe you're a boy in a girl's body or a girl in a boy's body. And this is an exercise to help people get in touch with their inner transgender identity used in our schools. And what might surprise you is it may be used in a school right here that your kids are in.

You say, surely not here. All right, one of our gals, I've had her talk about this many times when she shared it with me, Heather. Heather was teaching in a preschool here in Charlotte for four-year-olds.

Four-year-olds in Charlotte, is that close enough to home? She was not allowed to address the kids as boys and girls, since that would be making a gender distinction. Right here in Charlotte, at a highly rated preschool, and some of those books I mentioned, they were on the reading list to read to the kids. You drop your kid off for nursery school or for preschool, you don't know what they're getting.

Of course, Heather just didn't read those books. Come on, this is a few years old. This news now, New York Times reported this.

Park Day School in Oakland, California, teachers are taught a gender-neutral vocabulary and are urged to line up students by sneaker color rather than by gender. Quote, Tom Little, the school's director, we're careful not to create a situation where students are being boxed in. We allow them to move back and forth until something feels right.

I spoke back in May in Burke, North Carolina, so what's maybe an hour, a quarter, hour and a half from here. Concerned pastors had asked me to come in and talk about these things on a Tuesday night. In fact, Saturday, February 5th, for those that are interested, want to take the trip to Burke, there's an all-day seminar talking about these issues, talking about practical ways where the church can minister to people in need, people hurting, people struggling, and why these issues are important, and testimonies from people who've come out of homosexuality by the grace and power of God.

Saturday, February 5th. So I do this teaching, talk about some of these issues, woman testifies that had come out of lesbianism, shares her story. Afterwards, different leaders start to come up to me privately, secretly.

Yeah, we've got this problem with our young people. Three kids now have identified this game. We don't quite know how to deal with it.

Different ones come out privately to tell me what's going on, as if it's a shameful thing you can't talk about openly. One pastor tells me this. This is rural North Carolina.

He says, you know, my daughter's got a good friend, another girl, loves softball. Burke, North Carolina. Loves softball.

She just quit the girls softball team. Why? Because she was the only non-lesbian on the team. Don't worry about it.

Maybe you're into football and the Super Bowl's coming soon. I mean, that's what really matters. Don't worry about these petty little things, that a whole generation's being picked off, that moral foundations are being completely undermined, that we're losing all sense of right and wrong, and that a plague of sexual destruction is coming in the church.

Don't sweat it. After all, there's a coupon for a discount at the restaurant. Look, I'm just talking straight that most of us are so caught up with daily life and just maintaining and being happy at the fact that the moral fiber of our society is crumbling all around us hardly matters.

I mean, look, there's hardly a day that goes by where this is not in the news, being issues having to do with same-sex marriage, being issues having to do with homosexual men and women serving openly in the military, being issues having to do with employment discrimination things. Look, it's touching businesses right in our own community here at FIRE. The courts ruled in Massachusetts that it's more important to teach the children diversity than to honor the requests of the parents.

There's the famous case, David and Tanya Parker, their little boy goes to school, kindergarten, first grade, comes home with a children's reader who's in a family, and some of the options, you know, two moms, two dads. They go to speak to the school and say, hey, if this is going to happen, we need to be alerted so we can pull our kids out. The school makes clear, no, we're not going to do that, plus same-sex marriage is legal in Massachusetts.

Ends up going all the way to appeals court. The Supreme Court has refused to hear it, so this is where it stands. The court made a ridiculous ruling and said it is more important to teach diversity, meaning homosexual values, et cetera, more important to teach diversity than to honor the requests of the parents.

And then when another dad, Sean Lannan, wrote in about his first grader and said, I want to be notified before these things are taught, they said, you must be new to town or you don't know about the court rulings. It's already the law in parts of England now where parents, Muslim, Christian parents, go to pull their kids out. You may have like a whole gay emphasis month at the schools and they want to pull the kid out just for one especially offensive week.

They are told you are not allowed to and there will be an academic punishment if you pull your kid out. As some gay activists have said, there is no other side of the story. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said this, the ultimate test of a moral society is the kind of world that it leaves to its children.

This is happening on our watch. Come on, how many of you caught the news at the end of last year that if you're applying for a passport, you're a foreigner, you're applying for a passport, they change where it says moms and dads to parent A and parent B. And then because they knew that there'd be an uproar from some circles, they left in the option that it could be mom or dad, there could be parent A, parent B. You already have that in birth certificates in Spain, progenitor A, progenitor B because there may not be a mom or a dad. There are now marriages, so-called marriages in America, say two ladies and they have been pronounced bride and broom.

You said it's idiocy. Yeah, but it's happening on our watch. Listen, if you can destroy marriage, if you can destroy male-female identity, everything is up for grabs.

How about this? Two dads with a difference. You say, okay, what is, these are two gay men with a baby. No, those are two women who now identify as men, take hormones.

That's why one of the guys has a goatee. That's the baby. As one of the guys said, my boyfriend is the mother of my child, and both of us are women who are living as men, and a kid's being raised in that environment.

Ah, don't worry about it. There's a story that, well, June 2007 in the Village Voice cover story there, but this picture, queer in the crib. We're talking about the overthrowing of male and female.

Newsweek, August 16th, 2010, just a few months ago, Newsweek. Are we facing a genderless future? A small but growing number of people are rejecting being labeled male or female. From a university professor, Barb Burge, herself a lesbian, teaching social workers in England, the social construct of dividing humans into male and female is oppressive and should be rejected altogether.

Challenging oppressive gender structures and making gender rights a priority are critical steps toward universal freedom from punishment for gender nonconformity. Gender is the enemy. Someone sent me an email the other day about the gender caste system.

Look, I've got books on undoing gender and bending gender and blurring gender and eradicating gender and multiplying gender happening on our watch. How about this, Newsweek, July 2009, polyamory, the next sexual revolution. That means having multiple loving partners without being married, but families with several husbands, wives together.

Newsweek said there are at least half million such families in America now. Traditionalists, get ready because here it comes. Oh, how about this, Time Magazine, April 2007, should incest be legal? Look, it was just last month that a Columbia University professor was arrested for having a three-year affair with his older daughter, consensual affair with his grown daughter.

And people posting on the Columbia website said, well, what's the problem? It's two adults just doing what they want to do. It's love. What's wrong with it? Their lawyer said, yeah, academically, we agree incest is wrong, but if it's okay for homosexuals to do what they do in private, why can't two adults that are related do the same thing in private? We've lost our moral bearings entirely.

I'm quoting these things just to say this is just out there discussion. You talk to your average person, it's like, well, what's the problem? And the media is certainly complicit with this. 1989, Marshall Kirk and Hunter Madsen, two social scientists trained gay activists called for the conversion of the average American's emotions, mind, and will through a planned psychological attack in the form of propaganda fed to the nation via the media.

It has happened. Film critic Michael Medved said this, a Martian gathering evidence about American society simply by monitoring our television would certainly assume that there are more gay people in America than there are evangelical Christians. And to expand on this, the Martian would also conclude that gay people were, with rare and no exception, incredibly nice, family-oriented, creative, and considerate, while evangelical Christians were all mean-spirited, judgmental, dull, greedy, and hypocritical.

Yeah, I don't watch these programs either. So I read up on them, and I documented what was what in the media chapter in my book. It's mind-boggling what kids are watching, what kids are seeing day in, day out, little children, teenagers, inundated with, reinforced in the schools, and then reinforced from pulpits in compromise across America.

Michael Kinsley, Time Magazine, said this, the debate of 14 years ago about gays in the military seems almost quaint. Kids grow up today with gay friends, gay parents, gay parents of friends, gay friends of parents. Kids are also exposed constantly to an entertainment culture in which gays are not merely accepted, but in some ways dominant.

You rarely see a reality show without a gay cast member, while Rosie O'Donnell is a coveted free agent, and Ellen DeGeneres is America's sweetheart. Quiet gay revolution. I mean, I could mention movie themes to you.

I'm not much of a movie goer. I've seen a couple, probably in the last five years, gone to movies. It doesn't make me holy or saintly, but to me, there's just too much trash out there.

I'd be going regularly. But, you know, I read up on enough things to stay on topic with this stuff. I could list names of movies that have come out.

Have you heard about this? Heard about this? Either you heard about it, didn't even think twice, or you haven't heard about it. Major gay themed, one after another. We don't even blink anymore.

It's the norm. And the moment you say, you know, you know, I really think the best thing is like for a kid to have a mom and a dad, you're considered a hate-filled bigot. Intolerant.

I don't have time to get into this, but Big Brother is watching. I could tell you about pastors being arrested, and street preachers being silenced, and college professors being fired, and students being kicked out of programs, and photographers being fined, and doctors being sued, all because they did not embrace and affirm gay activism. How many of you know who Crystal Dixon is? A couple hands.

Crystal Dixon is a black woman, and I mention her in particular because you'd think that there would be more sensitivity to discrimination against a black person in America because of our history. Crystal Dixon was an associate vice president of human resources at the University of Toledo. Christian woman.

There was an editorial in her local newspaper, and the editor compared skin color to sexual orientation, and she took issue with that. She wrote her own editorial on her own time, and they printed her letter to the editor as an op-ed piece, where she made clear that you have to have love for everyone, and God's love for everyone, and yet she took issue with the comparison between skin color and sexual orientation, and laid out what her views were. She was fired from the university.

Fired from the university for writing an editorial that skin color is not the same as sexual orientation, and that people who have homosexual orientation can change. Fired by the university. To this day, still not reinstated.

How many of you know who Julia Ward is? Ah, another black woman. She was in grad school in the counseling program at a university in Michigan, and as part of the counseling assignments, you actually do counseling of people. She was asked to counsel someone in a homosexual relationship, and said she'd gladly counsel them, but she could not affirm the relationship, and they wanted her to affirm the

relationship and counsel, so she said to a professor, what do I do? Professor said, well, just refer the counseling to someone else to do.

She did that. She was kicked out of the university. Kicked out of the university.

She had to sit before a tribunal that challenged her. She's a mature godly woman, but she had to sit before a tribunal. The same things happen with college freshmen.

They didn't want to write a paper on a certain subject and affirm homosexual activism, or didn't want to go on with some kind of public charade. Kicked out of programs. I mean, you're talking about today, a guy's working at a Brookstone appliance place, you know, the gadget place.

He's got a supervisor that particular day. Lady happens to mention she's about to get married, go on her honeymoon. Guy asks, so what's the guy's name? Oh, it's not a guy.

It's a girl. She's lesbian. She keeps bringing it up over the day.

He finally says, you know, I don't accept that, or I don't agree with that. He gets fired. Listen, if we had 20 straight Sundays, for me to give you examples just in this area, for an hour a Sunday, for 20 straight Sundays, we wouldn't barely begin the subject.

Everywhere. This is a word I'm getting out to pastors and leaders wherever I can. Speak now or forever hold your peace.

You've heard that in the old days at weddings. Speak now or forever hold your peace. The day is nearing where we will not be able to say from the pulpit that God can change someone from anything, including sexual orientation, that God can deliver someone from homosexual orientation.

The day is coming when we will not be allowed to say from the pulpit homosexual practice is sin, just like adulterous practice is sin, and fornication is sin, and drunkenness is sin. Homosexual practice is sin. The day is coming where we won't be allowed to speak it without consequences.

Pastors and leaders think, well, if we just, we don't get involved in the politically hot button issues, it'll just go away. No, we are about to be silenced, and for the most part, we've given up our voice. I'm going to encourage you in a moment that this is a wake-up call.

God starts moving on me. Six years ago, to write a book, A Queer Thing Happened to America. I felt that was the right title.

I felt that's what the Lord gave me. We came up with the subtitle later on, what a long, strange trip it's been. It has a double meaning for some that go back to my generation.

I start writing this book. I know God wants to use it to have an impact. I've spent on and off over the last five, six years researching, working on it, and nobody's willing to touch it, which meant that we could come up with our own cover.

So this is the cover of the book, if you haven't seen it. It's a little dark here, but you can see a picture on the way out. So check this out.

A nationally known conservative leader writes to a friend of mine, book publishing is a difficult business now, and no media is willing to promote a book that opposes homosexuality. Economic self-interest is going to make it very tough for a publisher to say yes. There was no one that's willing to touch my book.

Conservative publisher writes to me personally, there would be a very concrete, though difficult to measure financial penalty to pay for publishing your book. Practically speaking, it could actually destroy the firm. You can't even take issue.

Best-selling conservative author wrote, honestly, there's no New York publisher who'll touch this manuscript. Now, you have to understand, every email I got like this, I got more and more excited. Yes, praise God, we've nailed it.

God is my witness. That's why I've got these emails say, yes. How about this one from the head of a New York City publicity firm? Unfortunately, he spoke with his team, and he doesn't have anyone willing to take on Dr. Brown's book.

A distributor said, we'd like you to talk to a publicist. I said, well, I'm not sure if I want to work with them. Well, let's talk.

We talked it through a major firm in New York City. They can't find anyone in their whole organization willing to touch it. This is how they make their money, by publicizing books.

No one's willing to touch it. Another publishing insider writes to us, I'd be better off burning the money in my fireplace. The economics of publishing a book like this are bleak.

I never worked with an agent in my life to get a book out. I've had no problem, for the most part, getting these books published and out. So we get hooked up with one of the biggest, probably the biggest Christian literary agent in America, works with the biggest authors, gets some big advances.

They farm this out to different publishers, and this is what happens. Secular publishers, Christian publishers, most thought the material was too controversial, all felt the title would need to be changed. Here God's speaking to me to write a book that'll awaken the conscience of the nation, that God will use to have some supernatural effect.

It's crazy to think in the natural, there's zero hope in me, there's total hope in God, and I can't even get anyone to publish it. I remember where I was in a hotel room when I got that email, ministering somewhere, that email came in, I remember punching the air, yes, praise God. In fact, you know what we did? We took all those comments, that's on the back of the book.

We've got every anti-endorsement of why this book won't sell and nobody can touch it on the back of the book. Come on. We had to start our own publishing company.

We named it Equal Time Books. So there, look, here's the reality. A revolution's already here.

A cultural revolution on our watch. Who knows what it's going to look like in another few years? Who knows when we're going to have the same censorship that exists in Canada or England here? This is the progression. Gay activists came out of the closet 40 years ago.

Wow, they thought they were fighting for what's right, for equality, tolerance for their rights. Trust me, I've read enough of the literature, I've shed enough tears feeling pain for their situation and the struggles. Who

can imagine, you know, this is who I am and I can't change, I'm raised in a religious home, God must hate me.

The struggles people go through, through their view, this is no different, it's just another variation of heterosexuality, what does it matter? I understand the motivation. Say it's profoundly wrong, off-base, destructive. Gay activists came out of the closet 40 years ago.

Then they began to demand their rights, then they demanded that conservative Christians recognize those rights, now they're trying to take away our rights, next they want to put us in the closet. One of my attorney friends said, oh, one more step, they were arrested, we're going to be arrested. The battle is raging here.

I have no question whatsoever that this is the critical moral issue we must address. The pro-life issue, the destruction of innocent babies in the womb is always before us, but by God's grace people have caught onto that and there's even a gradual change in public opinion, some gradual shifts as more and more people are awakening to the reality of the horror. There are horrific issues, human trafficking, that's just a massive horror.

There are always issues of injustice in the courts, issues of gangs in the inner city, all kinds of issues that are facing our society. And of course, rampant, no-fault divorce in heterosexual families in the church is terribly destructive. And if we didn't open that door, these doors wouldn't be open.

That's why we always have to repent first. But the difference with this is it is marching into our streets and parading. The difference with this is it is in our school systems, from preschool into college campuses, into seminaries.

I didn't get into queer theology and all of that today. The difference is it's in the business world. The difference is it's in the courts.

The difference is it's coming your way, like it or not. And it affects the very foundations of society. And it's the area where people have lost their voice.

So let me give you this exhortation and then what you can do and we will dismiss on time. Fact is it's not too late. I know it's not too late because God is on the throne.

That's sufficient. And nothing is too hard for him. I know it's not too late because of a burden God gave me and because of burdens he's given others.

And it's not for nothing. It's not just to say, well, we tried. We gave it a shot.

No, I believe that God is going to bring awakening. And as I go out and address these issues, I'm finding more and more leaders there at their wits end. They don't know what to do.

And if someone will stand up and speak, they'll back them. Or if someone will give them practical strategy, they'll get involved. I believe the tide can be turned, but there's a price to pay.

So let me encourage you with these words. Titus Branzma, martyred by the Nazis, said, those who want to win the world for Christ must have the courage to come into conflict with it. Oh, yes, with grace and love and compassion, but we are called to conflict with a godless world.

Gandhi also killed. What did he say? A reformer has to sail, not with the current. Very often he has to go against it, even though it may cost him his life.

I want you to understand something, fire community. This is part of our calling. Now, it may not be the main issue to everybody here.

It may not be the main thing the Lord's laying on your heart, but you must recognize the weight of this issue and you must recognize this is part of our congregational calling, and that means there will be reproach for the gospel and reproach for standing up for what's right. Just a reality check for you. Shown this picture before.

It's a Muslim man. Those up closer can see he has no arms. He's just been baptized in Pakistan.

His arms were chopped off because he converted to Christianity. After having his arms chopped off by Muslims, he then went and got baptized. Just for those of us who think persecution in America is someone says something nasty to you on your Facebook page.

No, that's not persecution. Matthew 5, 10 through 12, blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.

Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Acts 5, 41, the apostles left the Sanhedrin rejoicing because they had been counted worthy of suffering disgrace for the name. Revelation 12, 11, and they conquered him, the devil, by the blood of the lamb, by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

James B. Taylor, words I'd often quote to our grads at graduation service, the world may frown, Satan may rage, but go on, live for God. May I die in the field of battle. Missionary C.T. Studd, let the victors when they come, when the forts of folly fall, find thy body near the wall.

Okay, here's what we can do. Number one, I'm asking every one of you to go to God and ask Him to lay His burden on your heart. To the extent I'm speaking truth, to the extent I'm bringing a prophetic word, to the extent I'm sounding the alarm, the extent that this is the place right now where the battle is raging and we must take a stand, ask God to lay that on your heart.

If what I'm speaking is truth, ask Him to lay it on your heart. Let me say again, this may not be the main thing God speaks to you about or burdens you with or calls you to act on, but it is something that is important to us here at FIRE and part of our calling, loving God, building community, changing the world. People are looking to us, other ministries right here in Charlotte, to see what can be done nationally.

That's the first thing. Second thing, we are raising up a house of prayer. Our friend Lou Angle's been deeply burdened to help with this, felt a calling to stand with us to see a house of prayer raised up right here in Charlotte that will tackle these issues 24-7.

The only thing of its kind anywhere in the world because we understand without supernatural backing in God, nothing's going to happen. So that's the goal, 24-7 prayer, praying for God's mercy to be poured out in the homosexual community for salvation, deliverance, healing, transformation in an unprecedented way. Praying for righteousness to rise, praying for churches to get their voice, praying for our own foundations

and family to be restored, praying for the turning of the tide of gay activism.

Right now, we're gathering on Thursday nights. Brett, just stand up for a moment, please. Brett and Amy Richter are helping spearhead this, give this guidance.

We need folks, Thursday night is where we're starting, but we're going to have many, many other slots filled until ultimately, by God's grace, there's an army praying 24-7. But we're not going to stretch to do it, we're going one step at a time. On the way out, stop by my book table in the back and see Brett.

We need musicians, worship leaders, worshipers, and people of prayer, and people that just care. You don't have to be specially gifted, you just have to care and have a burden. Lou Angle will be visiting with us in a couple of weeks and we'll have some meetings with Lou, don't know the nature of them yet, to help push this forward.

But it's time, I'm telling you, it's time, God's at work, something's about to burst. So on the way out, if you have a burden to pray into these things, if you want to be someone that leads in worship and goes before us in intercession in different ways, musician, see Brett on the way out, all right? You're not making a commitment to do anything by seeing him, just give him your contact info. Two more things and I'm done.

Every one of you that can, buy a copy of my book, A Queer Thing Happened to America. Here's why we need your help. This book ended up, it's a hard cover, it's \$27.99, which is actually a cheap price because it's a 700 page book, 1,500 end notes documenting every syllable of what we said.

You say, I can't read that much. Don't worry, you pick any chapter, it's like several books in one, pick any chapter that interests you. Any one chapter will rock your world.

Trust me, any one chapter in the book will rock your world and you'll come running back and saying, I had no idea, what can I do? We need as many as possible to pre-order a copy of the book for \$25 on the way out at our book table. Buy multiple copies if you want. Our way of saying thank you is to give you this two-hour DVD of a debate I had with Professor Bart Ehrman on the Bible and suffering at Ohio State last year.

It's like a \$15 DVD. Our thank you to you is to give you this, okay? So it's a tremendous deal on top of it and I say that as a Jew. And we have a few of these sheets left.

This is a cover of the book and the table of contents on the back so you can pray. But the reason we need your help is because we are pushing in a whole bunch of ways, which is my last point. We are developing a queerthing.com, our website, which is going to have a call to action on it.

At the end of the book, further resources. We say, okay, you want to get involved. What can I do in the schools? What can I do on the media thing? What can I do in the college campus? What can I do in the place of business? We are working with someone that for years had this very position within Dobson's ministry and he's working with us to come up with lists of practical steps that you can take.

Every area we touch on in the book, church issues, issues I want to change, I don't know what to do. We need help just to fund that and as we get more orders for the book that's going to help fund this work as well. So every one of you that's able on the way out, stop, make a sacrifice if you need to.

As soon as the book's out, which is about five weeks from now, we'll get the copy to you. If you don't live here, we'll ship it to you free. Otherwise, we'll be bringing them in.

That'll be quite a Sunday when we come in with the stacks of these books and pray for them. And then every one of you, there'll be areas where you can get involved. Okay, I want to do something.

What next? We're going to have this all listed. We're going to have all practical steps they can take and within five, we know there may be 10, 20, 30, 50, 70 that God raises up with a special commission to act on. So if you embrace what I'm saying and are willing to take a stand with us for righteousness, you don't know what this means and what it will cost, but you believe what I'm saying is true and you believe we need to take a stand.

If you feel solidarity with these words already, no condemnation if you don't, but if you feel solidarity with these words already, I want you to stand with me and we will pray. Thank you for open hearts, minds, and ears. The messages from the last two nights will also be of help to you.

So remember on the way out, see Brett about the house of prayer. Purchase a copy of the book if you're able. We got a hundred or more people, a couple hundred today.

That'll be tremendous. Father, here we are, your people. You work through the weak things, the foolish things.

Lord, you work through the cross, through sacrificial love. You work through us serving. So we say, here we are.

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