

# Biblical Courtship Session #1: Introduction to Biblical Courtship

by Paul Washer

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*Biblical courtship is the alternative to recreational dating, and it requires submitting to God's authority and studying His Word to know His will for our lives.*

**Duration:** 1:03:24

**Scripture:** Isaiah 1:4

**Topics:** "Courtship"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of knowing and studying the Word of God. He encourages young people to prioritize their time in the Bible rather than being consumed by other distractions like the internet and media. The preacher also shares his personal experience as a father, highlighting the limited window of time parents have to teach their children and the need for relying on the sufficiency of God's Word in guiding them. He warns against the influence of the culture and emphasizes the importance of living a godly and pleasing life to God. The sermon references passages from Isaiah to illustrate the sinful state of the nation and the need for repentance.

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## Transcript

Well, hello. Today we're going to be talking about biblical courtship. And the reason why I'm doing this is, well, there are several reasons.

The main one is that we need to live our lives according to the Word of God and not according to the standards of this world. Also, I just have a great burden for young people, for young men and young women that they would walk in godliness. And not just in godliness, but that they would walk in joy.

Because what we need to understand is that godliness, true godliness, will produce joy in our lives. And it brings so many blessings where sin simply destroys. It destroys everything that is beautiful, everything that is exceptional in our lives.

So we need to learn with regard to relationships, as young men and young women, that we must walk in godliness. We must discover what the will of God is, and we must walk in it by the power of the Holy Spirit. I guess I have a special burden for this, because until I was converted when I was 21 years old, and prior to that time, I lived in a very ungodly manner and did a lot of ungodly things.

And I still bear today the scars for many of the things that I've done, although I've been pardoned. It doesn't always remove the effects of your sin. I don't want you, as a young person, to experience the hardships of the sinner.

What you need to understand is that the way of the sinner is not a way of joy. It is a way of hardship. And ultimately, it's a way of death.

Now, one of the things that young people have to deal with, probably more than anything, is the temptation with regard to immorality, sexual immorality. We live in a culture that's literally filled with the perversion of all the good things that God has given us. We're going to talk about biblical courtship.

Now, before I say anything about this, I need to make a disclaimer. There are a lot of books out there on courtship, and many of them are very good. But some of them, and some views of courtship, I think, are extreme.

People pulling principles out of verses that really that's not the purpose of the text. Building this huge, almost legalistic idea of what you have to do in order to be biblical in seeking a mate. And I don't think that in the Scriptures we have this full-blown course of how to find a mate.

But I do think that in the Scriptures we have wonderful principles, general principles, with regard to godliness, with regard to relationships, that we can follow. And those things will keep us from harm. And they will help us discern the will of God with regard to a wife or a husband.

Now, to start off, I'm saying here that courtship is simply the biblical alternative to one of the most destructive practices in our Western culture. And what is that? Well, a thing that I refer to as recreational dating. You say, well, what is recreational dating? Well, it's dating.

I don't want to be trite, but dating for fun. Dating with no purpose. Dating to receive certain things from a person of the opposite sex outside of the proper context of marriage.

It's entering into relationships in a frivolous manner, only to entertain oneself, only to have a good time, but not thinking so much about the will of God and not thinking about the welfare of the person with whom we have that relationship. Not thinking about the future and God's plan for our life. And so, recreational dating, I don't need to say a whole lot about it, because even secular authorities realize the dangers of it, the things that have happened to our culture.

We are not wild animals driven by instinct. We are not those who go out and seek all sorts of mates. We are believers in Jesus Christ.

Our hearts have been changed. We believe that God has a plan for our life. We believe that even the very hairs of our head, they're numbered.

We also believe that God has a specific plan, a specific mate, a specific wife or a specific husband for us. And we ought to be willing to wait for that. It shouldn't be a thing of bondage, but it should be something that we do with great expectation, a time of preparation, a time of usefulness in our singleness until God brings that person into our lives.

Now, I want to start off by talking about a few things that I think are really important. First of all, plowing fertile ground for the teaching. We have to understand, before we even get started, what kind of people

that we are in our culture.

What are the great influences in our culture today? And instead of just going to media and pointing out all kinds of things, I'd rather go to the Scriptures and just allow the Lord to speak to us through what He's written. We must be aware of our present reality as a people. First of all, let's look at Judges 17.6. It said, In those days there was no king in Israel.

Every man did what was right in his own eyes. Now, you say, well, how does that have anything to do with us? Because we don't have a king. Well, the idea here, the main principle is more general than that.

We could say it in this way. In those days there was no authority in Israel. And because there was no authority, every man did what was right in his own eyes.

It's not so much the question of a king as it is authority. And with regard to the Christian life, it's not just any authority, but the authority of God. Now, how do we know what is authoritative? How do we know what God's will is? Well, we don't, praise the Lord, we don't have to go to a prophet.

We can go directly to His Word. His Word is inspired. Now, if we are going to have God's authority in our lives, we must have God's Word in our lives.

Now, authority is kind of a big issue today. I'm almost 50 years old. And so I grew up, at least in part, in the time of kind of the hippie culture.

And there was a real popular t-shirt years and years ago. I remember when it first came out, it was question authority. And now we have almost a generation of people who all they know is that authority is bad.

That you ought to question it. That it's wrong. That somehow you are wiser than any authority out there.

Not realizing that if you think that, you've become your own authority. And that's not good. Now, I want us to think about some things that are very, very important.

Well, let me give you an illustration. I have done a lot of things in my life. A lot of pretty wild things.

Been in very, very dangerous places in urban settings. Very, very dangerous places in the jungle. And during the time of social unrest and civil war in Peru and everything else.

And been through all kinds of dangerous things. And I've come out pretty much whole. Now, how did I do that? Well, in the jungle, I have been in places where very few people have ever been.

How did I survive? It wasn't because I am Bear Grylls. It wasn't because I am Indiana Jones. As a matter of fact, you leave me in the jungle by myself for a few days, I'm probably not going to last very long.

Well, how is it then that I was able to go into so many wild places and survive? Authority. Authority. When I was in the jungle, I was with the Agwaduna tribe.

They were born in the jungle. They lived all their life in the jungle. They knew everything they needed to do to survive in the jungle.

So how did I survive in the jungle? I did everything they told me to do. I submitted to their authority. I have a friend in Peru who was a terrible, terrible criminal before he was converted.

He was in one of the worst prisons in the world. As a matter of fact, his name is Carlos Santisana. And he was like one of the fighting mixed martial art boxing competition in the worst prison in just about South America.

I mean, he's a tough guy. Well, when he got out of prison and was converted, he and I would go into some very dangerous places in the inner city of Lima. Now, by myself, I wouldn't have survived a minute.

But I was with him. Everyone knew him. Everyone was still scared of him.

And he had more street smarts than just about anybody that I've ever known. And so as long as I was with him, and as long as I did what he told me to do, I was OK. So you see, here's what I want you to see about authority.

You've been told that authority will cramp your life, that authority will cramp your lifestyle. That's just not true. Authority expands your lifestyle.

Because I have submitted to authority, I've been able to do things and go places I never would have been able to go to. Or at least if I went to them, I wouldn't have survived. You see, authority can be a good thing.

Now, you have to make a choice. You can submit to God's authority or you can do what is right in your own eyes. There's a popular saying that, you know, live and learn.

That's exactly the first, that is the first lie that Satan told Adam and Eve. God told them not to eat of the tree. Basically, what God was teaching is learn and live.

Do what I tell you. You don't have to experience it. Just do what I tell you.

If I say it's good, it's good. If I say it's bad, it's bad. Trust me on this.

And then Satan comes along and says, no. He says, man, you've got to experience this to know whether or not it's right or wrong. You need to live and learn.

That's what you've been told, young man. That's what you've been told, young woman, all your life. You've got to experience it.

You've got to taste. You just can't take authority as something of a standard or a norm or a truth to follow. Now, even though many of you who are listening to this, you believe the Bible is the word of God.

You must realize that there's still, because of your culture, there's this tendency in you to still do what is right in your own eyes. And you need to fight against that. You see, I like to put it this way.

Wisdom was not born with me and wisdom will not die with me. It simply will not. You are not born wise.

You are not born knowing what you ought to do. And even though after your heart has been regenerated and you've been taught of God, it's not that just at that moment when you were born again, you were filled with all knowledge. It is a process.

It is a thing that you need to obtain. You need to study God's word. But now before you're going to be really be motivated to study God's word, you've got to realize you have a need to study his word.

And you say, well, why? If you are convinced, if you are convinced that you don't know what you're doing, if you will humble yourself and admit, I do not know what I am doing, then you will be more motivated, more greatly motivated to go to God's word. Because we do know that God knows what he is doing. Now, with the question of authority, there's something very important that I want you to see.

Authority is a question of faith. When you do what is right in your own eyes, you are not believing God. You are at least saying in your own heart that you know more than he does or he is not trustworthy.

That is a great sin against him. You see, doing what is right in your own eyes is not just some small sin that has nothing to do with the character of God. It has everything to do with the character of God.

The more you're trusting in self, the more you're saying, I'm not going to trust God. I can do this on my own or even worse. God is wrong in what he is saying.

Listen, young person, I don't want to offend you, but you need to know something. You're not near as smart as you think you are. You're not.

And as you grow older, you're going to see that. But you're going to see that because of all the scars in your life. Because you would not listen.

Don't be that way. Don't be as a mule who has to have a bit put in his mouth. Don't be as a person, a fool who has to be beaten and beaten and beaten before they will discover what is right.

Trust God. If you have been born again, if you have trusted God with regard to salvation, with regard to your eternal well-being, can you not trust him here on Earth? Do not follow your culture. Do not follow the whims of your flesh.

Do not follow what is right in your own eyes. Follow God through his word. Now, it says, in those days, there was no king.

There was no authority. And every man did what is right in his own eyes. You just have to look a little bit.

It's dangerous. You have to be careful. But to look at any sort of media today, whether it be the six o'clock news or some popular show on television, you see that this is exactly the culture in which we live.

That everyone is doing what is right in their own eyes. And that ought to scare you because you do not live on an island and what they are doing influences you. Especially, especially if you're a young person like most young people today who's all caught up in media, Internet, communication, all these different things.

You are being influenced. And that is why I'd recommend for some of you, you know, get off Facebook and get in the word of God. Stop watching television and start studying God's word, reading good books.

If you're if you're awake 16 hours a day as a young person, I don't know if you're awake that much, but as a young person, if you're awake 16 hours a day. Those 16 hours you are being bombarded by the world. You understand that? Especially today, again, because you're so connected with every media source.

You're being bombarded by the world. Your friends around you, even people in the church, even the lost people with which you come in contact. You're being influenced.

Therefore, you must know, hey, hold it. I am really in danger of doing what is right in my own eyes. As a matter of fact, there are probably some things that I am doing.

It's only right in my own eyes and actually contradicts the word of God. Listen again, I'm much older than you are. But do you know, I realize that in my life there are still areas that I am blind to.

Just totally blind where I'm doing things that I think is right. But actually is not right. It's very humbling.

Now, after all these years of following Christ, I can confess that to you. Then how much more should you be concerned, young person, that possibly you're doing what is right in your own eyes and not doing what the word of God says? Let's go on. Let's look at another verse.

In Hosea 4, 6, it says, My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge, because you have rejected knowledge. I also will reject you from being my priests since you have forgotten the law of your God. I also will forget your children.

Now, the first thing I want you to see is my people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. It's true. It's just one of the greatest truths today.

Is that even though there's all kinds of stuff on the Internet, even though there's Bible conferences for this, that and everything else, by and large, if you were to compare, for example, the Christian, the modern evangelical in the West, to, let's say, the Puritan believers of days long past, you would see that our knowledge of the word of God is scarce. And many of the things we think we know is not even true. You need the knowledge of God.

You must begin realizing, I do not know what I'm doing. You must realize that you need the word of God. Let me give you an illustration.

You know, David said that the word of God was like a lamp to his feet, a light to his path. I want you to imagine that you're in a large room, maybe the size of a gymnasium. And all throughout that gymnasium or that room, there are landmines planted on different planks of the floor.

And all you have to do is step in the right place and you will end your life. Now, let's realize, let's think that there are hundreds of these things planted on that gym floor. And you're over in the corner and someone says, come here.

Now, if you don't know those landmines are there, you foolishly are just going to walk across that floor. And what's going to happen? Well, you're probably going to blow up. You're a fool.

You have no knowledge of the dangers that are in front of you. But now let's say that you've been informed. That you have been informed that you are standing in a corner.

You've got to cross the gymnasium. And the whole floor is just lined with mines that you cannot see. Now, what's going to happen? Well, if you're a reasonable person, you're going to be paralyzed with fear.

You have no idea where they are and you don't know what to do. You cannot participate in life any longer. You're just stuck in the corner until you're taken home to eternity.

You're paralyzed. But now let's look at it in a different way. The landmines are there.

It's still as dangerous as ever. But you have a map in your hands. An accurate floor plan.

Something that tells you exactly where the dangers are. And tells you exactly how to avoid them. It tells you, look, two steps forward, stop.

Three steps to your right, stop. Go forward again, five steps. And you're able to maneuver yourself through the dangers that are in that gym floor.

In the same way, we are in a dangerous, dangerous place. And it's not just about losing your life. It's about losing your soul.

Now, if you don't recognize those dangers are there, you are, again, you know, let's be friends. You are a biblical fool. You are.

But if you realize those dangers are there and it paralyzes you, that's no good either. What you've got to do is realize you were made to cross that floor. You were made to participate in life.

You were made to do things. But God has also given you knowledge through his word. In order to avoid many of the dangers in this life that are going to confront you.

They are going to do it. But you can learn how to maneuver. Also, it's not just about maneuvering.

It's not just about principles. Here's something that's very important that I want you to get. We live in a day in Christianity where, you know, a lot of people teach on principles for this and principles for that.

And many of those principles are biblical and they're very good. But you can get all the principles and still miss the main issue. And that is this.

The knowledge, not just how to live. That's secondary. But the knowledge of God.

I find that over the years, my life is more controlled by what I know about the character and working of God than by principles. You see, it's not just there's a principle that I ought to be holy because it will benefit my life. No, the idea is I know who God is.

I know that God is holy and I'm to be holy as he is to be holy. I know that what God has done for me in the person of Jesus Christ and that in itself motivates me to be what God wants me to be and to do what God wants me to do. You see, you need a knowledge of principle, but you also and most importantly, you need a knowledge of God and the workings of God.

You know, wealthy men should not boast in their wealth and wise men shouldn't boast in their wisdom and strong men shouldn't boast in their strength. What we should boast in is our knowledge of God. That we know him, that he is a righteous God whose whose ways are perfect.

OK, so listen, young people, you study all sorts of things, you read all sorts of things. You're always on the Internet doing things. I just wish you would spend that time in the word of God.

You know, since we're filming this, I can just ramble. But as a father, and this will be good maybe for some parents who are watching as a father, you know, I look at the amount of time I have just this tiny window of, let's say, 18 years or so. And in which I can teach my children.

And, you know, when I first became a father, man, I was looking for every every kind of book to help me and study manual and things I could go through with my children. And and but every time I would take some material and start studying it with my children, you know, I would always have this fear that there's something missing. You know, there's something they need that I'm not giving them.

And one day I just took the whole thing and just put it to the side. And I said, there's only one perfect book. If I can give them that book, then I know nothing will be missing.

And so I just dedicated myself as a father to just sitting with my children and doing line by line exposition in the Scriptures, talking to them, laughing with them all in the context of Scripture. Everything that I'm going to give them is Scripture. Because I know if I do that, they'll have what they need.

Young person, it's the same way for you. Please listen to me. You need the knowledge of Scripture.

You need to be memorizing it, reading it, you know, talk about courtship. But if you learn a few principles about courtship and you don't know the Scriptures, this isn't going to help you a bit. And if you know a whole bunch of principles out of Scripture and you don't know God, you don't know Christ, it's not going to help you a bit.

And get in the Bible, saturate your life with the Scriptures. If I have any regrets, and I do, I mean, all men who sin have regrets. It's that I've been so busy, you know, with my life, you know, running from jungle to mountain and back and forth and wanting to win the world for Christ.

I suppose that's a good thing. But if I had spent more time in the word and more time in prayer. I would be a better servant of Christ today.

All right. He says, my people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge. And then he says, because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being my priest.

You want to be useful to God. You want to be a minister. And I don't just mean in the technical sense of a pastor or an elder or an evangelist, but all of us are called to be ministers.

You want to be a useful minister of God, then you must have the knowledge of God. He says here, because you rejected knowledge, I will also reject you from being my priest, from being my minister. You know, young people, there's so much counsel out there today.

And a lot of it is just so filled up with worldly stuff. It's unbelievable. I mean, you know, Freud has more prominence, I think, sometimes than Jesus Christ, even among those who claim to be Christians.

But here's what I want you to see. When you open up your mouth to give counsel to someone, to help someone, the word of God better come out. Because really, your opinions and even your experiences are not everything they need.

They need the word of God. And you need the word of God to be a minister in Christ's name. You need the word of God to maneuver through this dangerous world.

You need the word of God. You need the word of God. Now, he says, I will also reject you from being my priest.

Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children. Now, I just want to take a general principle from this, and it's very sad. But it's true, and it's a reality that I think we all can see.

My father was not a Christian, and he did not spend any time with me teaching me the word of God. So basically, when I became a Christian at 21, I was nothing more than a pagan. I went to Sunday schools, but there I just mainly painted pictures of Noah's Ark, I guess.

And so I became, I entered into adulthood, at least with regard to age, with almost no knowledge of God. Now, how much was my father taught the word of God by his father? And we can just go on down the line, and we see that most young men, even those who are Christians, even those who may even come from a Christian family, have not really had the knowledge of God handed down to them. They've been sent to Sunday school, they've been sent to youth groups, things like that.

Much of it just entertainment based, doing things to interest carnal children. But few young people have been disciplined by their parents. I mean, truly, where the father is sitting there and he's hours a week, he's pouring into his children, teaching them the word of God.

Because of that, one generation gives its ignorance to another generation, which gives its ignorance to another generation. And as knowledge decreases, ignorance increases. So that you get to the point where even, you know, let's say 75 years ago, a secular, an unregenerate secular man knew more about biblical ethics than someone who's a Christian today.

We have a loss of the knowledge of God. Now, we can't use that as an excuse. For example, if you're a young man, you're listening to this and you say, my father didn't disciple me.

He didn't teach me. I know nothing about manhood. Sorry, that's not an excuse.

It's not an excuse. Yes, the road will be more difficult for you. Yes, there are many things that you need to learn now that you didn't learn when you were six.

But it's still not an excuse. Also, you need to recognize, young man or young woman, that you have been born again by a sovereign God. He can work.

He will work in your life. If you will dedicate yourself to the study of God's word. If you will acknowledge that you do not know and you cry out to him for wisdom, he will give it to you.

Even though you've been in this long process of generation after generation of people who did not communicate the word of God to their children. You can still be mighty in the scriptures. You can still be a wise man or a wise woman.

And this chain of ignorance after ignorance after ignorance, it can stop with you. If you're a young man and you're sitting there and you say, look, I want to know the Lord. I want to do what's right.

Then get in his word and realize that that chain of ignorance is going to stop with you. You're going to be the first one who's going to turn this thing around in the power of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of God. And you're going to with all your heart, all your mind, all your soul.

You're going to see to it that the generation that follows you is at least going to know the word of God and is not going to suffer from the results of ignorance. See, you've got a great thing going here. I mean, you can be a world changer, a family changer.

You can change a lot of things, but it's going to require a lot of work, a lot of work, getting in the word of God prayerfully, crying out to God. But know this. He's promised to help you and he's promised to do more in you than you could ever ask or think.

But we need the knowledge of God because present day. Isaiah said that he was a man of unclean lips and he dwells among the people of unclean lips. We can say the same thing, but we can add this.

We are men who do not know and we dwell among the people who do not know. But it can change. It can change.

It can start with you. And young person, I want you to realize something. What you do right now in your life is not only going to impact your generation, it's going to impact other generations that follow.

I have gained so much benefit from generations that have preceded me, from older men that have disciplined me and from men like Spurgeon, Martyn Lloyd-Jones, the Puritans, Jonathan Edwards, others. You see, what you do, you investing in your life now will impact the world to come. What you do now will impact your children, will impact your future wife, will impact everything.

You see, you're responsible. But it's a wonderful thing. You think about the sphere of influence you can have if you will just sell yourself out for Christ and dedicate yourself to being a man of God, knowing his word.

Well, let's go on. I want to look at another passage. It's in Isaiah chapter one, verses four and six.

Now, listen to this. It's very, very sad. A last sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly.

They have abandoned the Lord. They have despised the holy one of Israel. They have turned away from him.

Now, it says, where will you be stricken again as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint from the sole of the foot even to the head. There is nothing sound in it. Only bruises, welts and raw wounds not pressed out or bandaged, not softened with oil.

Boy, if that if that is not a description of our culture, it's just absolutely astounding. It's terrifying. It's very, very sad.

Breaks our hearts. But it's true. Now, let's just look at this.

A sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly. Now, is that not us? Do we not here in the West? And even if you're looking at this from the third world, you have to say the same thing. We are a sinful nation.

There is no Christian nation on this planet. We are in a sinful nation. And we've got to realize we should not be proud.

We should not think that we live in the midst of all of this. And yet it has had no effect on us. We should be constantly looking for ways in which this sinful nation in which we live, whether it's the United States, England, France or Portugal, this sinful nation in which we live is having an impact some way upon our life.

How is that? But the scary thing is that it also influences the way in which we even look at the Scriptures. We can have a tendency to interpret the Scriptures based upon our cultures, the sinful nation in which we live. Now, it says, alas, sinful nation, people weighed down with iniquity.

Here again, we go to this. Guys, sin is not fun. Sin does not bring with it blessing.

Even lost people who do not know the Lord, who give themselves to sin in an unusual way. They are weighed down by it and eventually destroyed. You know, sometimes I hear preachers go, Boy, I tell you what, sin is fun, but it'll destroy you.

Well, it'll destroy you. But I'm not sure a Christian ought to be saying things like sin is fun. You know, as Christians, we struggle against sin.

We struggle with sin and we do sin and we are capable of falling. But even in the midst of our sin, we quickly discover it's not fun. Not only does it destroy us, it's nauseating.

For a person who has truly been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, sin is no fun. It's no fun. It will weigh you down.

It will destroy you. Now, when we talk about relationships, when sin enters into that relationship that you want to cultivate with that person of the opposite sex, when sin enters in, it will not bless the relationship. It will not bring happiness to the relationship.

It will weigh it down and even destroy it. Now, he says, offspring of evildoers, sons who act corruptly. Now, that's an encouraging statement.

But there's a sense in which it's true in many ways. First of all, I realized something. I inherited the fallenness of my father, Adam.

And that's something that has to be combated. It is combated by Christ through Calvary, through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. But even though I am born again, there is something that remains in me that's called the flesh, that battles against the Spirit.

It battles against righteousness. I must constantly fight against this thing that is within me. It doesn't define me.

I am a saint. I am a child of God. I'm a son of the living God.

I am recreated in the image of God. I am a new creature. That defines me.

But I can't deny that there is this thing left in me, this residue of evil, this thing called the flesh that battles against me. And I must fight it. Also, though, I must realize that as I inherited from Adam a corrupt nature, so my children have inherited a corrupt nature from me.

That is why I'm so passionate about preaching the gospel to them, because the gospel is the only way that is going to be overcome. And as they come to know Christ, for them to know the word. You see, here's what you need to understand.

We are a fallen, broken people. Some people say, well, Christianity is just a crutch for the weak. Absolutely right.

It is. Problem is, we don't realize everybody's weak. You see, we start off in a very bad way, dead in our trespasses and sins.

Even after we become Christians, there is still a great struggle. And this just even increases our awareness of our need for God and for God's word and for God's power. Again, it tells us also that we don't know what's right in our own eyes, but that we must be instructed by the spirit of God through God's word.

Now, he says here, they have abandoned the Lord. They have despised the Holy One of Israel. They have turned away from him.

Now, I want you to think about something. They have abandoned the Lord and they have turned away from him. But sandwiched in between those two things is they have despised the Holy One.

Now, when I think about abandoning the Lord, that's bad. When I think about turning away from the Lord, well, that's bad, too. But there's something that seems even more terrifying, more horrible about this.

They have despised the Holy One. Now, I want you. I want you in Christ to be filled with joy and I want you to know who you are and everything else.

And I want you to prosper in every good thing that God has done in your life. But I also want you to realize how terrible sin is and how terrible it is to sin. To sin is to abandon the Lord.

It is to forsake him. But to sin is also to despise him. Also, I want you to realize something.

You know, we've been talking about wisdom to lead us through this life. I want you to realize that to take your counsel or the counsel of your culture over God's counsel is to despise him. It is to despise him.

Now, let me also say this, I think is very, very important. Do you believe, do you honestly believe that that God's word is the inspired word of God? You say, well, yes, I do, Brother Paul. OK, that's half the battle.

Now we've got to fight the other half of the battle. And if you don't win this one, the first battle doesn't matter. What is that? Not only must we believe that the scriptures are inspired.

We must believe that the scriptures are sufficient. That everything we need for this life to be righteous and godly and to prosper in the will of God in this life is found in the scriptures. Do you believe that? You say, yes, I do.

OK, now here's the kicker. Do you practice that? Do you practice it? Let's just look at an example. Many of you who are listening to this right now, you've already probably gone out on dates and all sorts of things.

And I'm sure that many of you have tried to do it in a godly fashion. But have you gone through God's word? I mean, from cover to cover, looking for how you should do that. What does God say? Are there principles to guide me through this process? You see, we can say that we believe in the sufficiency of scripture.

But if we don't practice it with regard to your finances, do you just try to be pretty frugal? Or have you looked through scripture to discover how God wants you to do finances? Young person, let's look at something else. Your clothing. You say, man, this is in fashion.

OK, but is it in fashion with God? Did you go into God's word? Not just your own heart, not just to other Christian friends. Have you gone into God's word to discover what God wants? If you haven't, then maybe you don't believe as much as you think you do in the sufficiency of scripture. Is it sufficient to direct us? And you say, well, Brother Paul, I don't see a whole lot of specific things.

There may not be a whole lot of specific things. For example, it doesn't tell you how long your dress should be. It doesn't tell you whether or not you can wear pants or this or that.

But it does tell you many things about godliness, holiness, decency, modesty, simplicity, the dangers of sensuality and luxury. Do you see? We're not talking about legalism here. We're talking about eternal truths that will help you walk in this life in a manner that's pleasing to God.

OK, one thing I've got to warn you about in these sessions that we're going to do is I have a tendency to run a lot of rabbits. And but I guess it's it's my camera. So I can I can do that if I want.

All right. Well, let's let's keep looking. He says, where will you be stricken again as you continue in your rebellion? The whole head is sick and the whole heart is faint from the sole of the foot, even to the head.

There is nothing sound in it. Only bruises, welts and raw wounds, not pressed out or bandaged, not softened with oil. Wow.

That's just a description, not just of our economy, but of about everything in our nation today. In our culture, all around the world. And rather than look to God for an answer, we just keep pressing on to destruction.

We're like a bunch of foolish people dressed up in clown suits, banging loud cymbals and all marching in a line right off of a cliff. While God stands there all day long holding out his hands to an obstinate people. There is so much hurt in our lives that are that is caused by sin.

Now, I am not at all. I hate what's called the prosperity gospel and all these different things. I'm not saying that Christians should never suffer.

As a matter of fact, many of many of my dear friends have suffered greatly for the cause of Christ. There are many things that we will have to suffer even in our Western culture if we truly follow Christ. But I want you to know, folks, there is so many things that we suffer.

I mean, horrible things. And they're not the result of piety. They're the result of our sin and many times sin that results from a lack of knowledge.

That we're driven more by the attitudes and whims and opinions of our culture than we are the word of God. You know, young people, one of the reasons why I'm making this film is I just don't want you to suffer. Unless it's for the cause of Christ.

I don't want you to suffer because of sin. You know, I wish that you would learn a healthy dose of fear. I wish that maybe even you were brought into some circumstance where you came so close to danger but didn't go over.

Why? So that you would know this is always a possibility. We do so much out of ignorance that harms us in a great way. I remember when my boy, Ian, when he was about four years old, I took him down in this place.

It's kind of a backwater, swampy area where I used to hunt and play as a little boy. I can't believe my parents would let me run out there all day with a gun, being as young as I was. But I used to hunt back there and I wanted to take my boy with me and just let him run around.

The backwater was up and so it was pretty swampy. A lot of good things to find like snakes and turtles and other kinds of animals. And I said, now Ian, you get right beside me.

You just stay right beside me and you'll be okay. Because there's some really big water moccasins in this swamp. And we were wading out in the water and things.

But he was a bold little guy and he kept getting ahead of me and ahead of me and ahead of me. And I kept saying, now Ian, come back, come back, come back. And he didn't.

I mean, he just wanted to be, you know, I don't know. He just wanted to be the great hunter. He wanted to show Dad that he wasn't afraid.

And so one time he kept going. It was getting darker. And he kept going.

And I thought, okay, young man, here's a lesson that it's going to pain the heart of your father to give you. But you're going to get it. And so when he started off ahead, I just got behind a big cypress tree.

And I let him go. I kept him in my eye, made sure that no coyote would come in and grab him or something like that. But I kept him in my eye.

And he kept walking. And then he turned around. And it was kind of getting dark, getting a little spooky.

The herons were starting to call. And they make a noise that sounds something like a dinosaur. And he started getting scared.

And he goes, Dad. And I just stayed there behind the tree. And he said, Dad.

And then I waited until his eyes started getting a little bit red. He was about to cry. He was really afraid.

And he goes, Dad. And I stepped out behind the tree. And I said, here I am.

And he said, I thought you lost me. And I said, no, son, I did not lose you. But you lost me.

You were disobedient. And you had to learn. You had to be afraid.

Because if you're going to come out here and go into all these different places with Dad, you've got to realize that some of these places aren't very safe. And you're really going to get hurt if you don't follow authority. Now, here's what I want you to see.

Something very important. We see a whole lot of bad stuff going on here. I mean, they're getting stricken.

They're getting beat. Their whole head is sick. Their heart is faint.

There's nothing sound in them from the top of their head to the bottom of their feet. Now, a lot of preachers will tell you that that this has happened just simply. It's the consequence of their sin.

You know, they've done something that was wrong. That was dangerous. And because of that, they got hurt.

But that's just the way things happen in a fallen world. And God didn't have anything to do with it. Well, there's some truth in that statement sometimes.

But that statement basically is heretical. I want you to know if you're a believer. It's going to be God who strikes you sometimes.

It's going to be God who scourges you sometimes. And it's not because His attitude toward you has changed or His love has diminished. No, that was fixed at Calvary.

It's because He does love you. He's going to discipline you. He's going to do it.

As a matter of fact, if you can wander into sin and there is no discipline from God, it is evidence according to Hebrews 12 that you're not even a believer. Did you know that? One of the greatest manifestations of God's love toward His children is what? His discipline. Remember He says, Jacob I loved and Esau I hated? Well, that's true.

But if you look at those two persons in the Bible, you begin to ask yourself a question. Well, you know, God promised a lot of things even for Esau, and He fulfilled all of them. As a matter of fact, Esau was so blessed by God that when Jacob came back over into the promised land, he didn't even need Jacob's gift.

So how is it that God loved Jacob and demonstrated His wrath towards Esau? Well, here's the answer. God let Esau be Esau. We don't see any case in the Scriptures where God is disciplining Esau, where God is working to change Esau, where God is intervening in his life.

No, Esau just went on being Esau. But what do we see in Jacob? I mean, how does God's love manifest in Jacob? Well, it manifests in this way. Well, as my mom used to say, He beat that boy to death.

He did. I mean, He disciplined Jacob in every turn of his life, so that when Jacob came back into the promised land, folks, he was limping. He was limping.

You know, I've had both hips replaced, and my wife always reminds me, if I wasn't as disobedient as Jacob, God wouldn't have had to touch my hips and make me limp. And she said, you know, I'm even two times worse than Jacob. He only had to touch one of Jacob's hips, and he had to touch both of mine.

I don't know how much truth is in that, but I do know this. God has disciplined me in my life several times. It's always been because of His love, and it's always led to my good.

If you are a believer, if you truly belong to Christ, you're not your own. And He is going to take a hold of you. He is.

And man, sometimes, honestly, it would be better to get in a bear fight. A bear would be much easier to handle. I love what C.S. Lewis says.

He's not a tame lion. He's dangerous. He's not safe.

But he is good. One of the markings, I think, of at least the old men of God that I used to know, is they looked like men who had been mauled by God. And I only hope that happens to you.

That you might be conformed to the image of Christ, and that you might glow with Him. All right, well, let's go on. We must be convinced.

First, I said we must be aware of our present reality as a people. Then I say we must be convinced that the entirety of our lives must abound to the glory of God and be submitted to God's revealed will. We must be convinced of that.

I mean, if you're not, you might just shut off YouTube or whatever you're looking at and stop. You must be convinced that this is a foundational principle in the Christian life. Do you see that? We must be convinced that the entirety of our lives must abound to the glory of God.

Don't you want that? Don't you want that to happen in your life? And if you say, well, I'm not really sure, you're in danger. And if you say definitely not, as the old timers used to say, you need to get saved. Because the Christian realizes, look, everything about me is for him.

And I want it to be that way. And I'm happy when it's that way. And I'm only sad and disgusted when it's not that way.

You say, well, I want to be that way. Yeah, I know. I hear you singing it and all those songs.

But if it's going to be a reality in your life, it's going to take some time. And it's going to take you being in God's Word. And it's going to take you praying, seeking God that these things might become realities.

Now, let's look at some beautiful verses that I just really like. 1 Corinthians 10:31 Whether then you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. I mean, listen, if the most menial tasks in our lives are to be done for the glory of God, how much more the great and important things in our lives like finding a mate, marriage, family, where you're going to work, where you're going to live.

All these things are decided by what will most glorify God. And we're here today and throughout this teaching series. It's not just about, oh, I want to learn a bunch of principles so I can have my best life now.

No. I want to learn how to glorify God. I want to do that.

Brings me joy. Satisfaction. So whatever you do, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

A friend of mine asked T.W. Hunt one time, just a wonderful man of God and a man of prayer, asked him, how much did Jesus eat? That's an unusual question, but I guess it's a good one. How much did Jesus eat? And T.W. Hunt kind of took a deep breath and thought about it for a second and then he said, well, Jesus ate until if he took one more bite, it would have been sin. He lived to the glory of God.

He did everything, even eating for the glory of God. And that's the way that you and I should be. You know, guys, I have had a good life.

A really good life. But like I said, there's some regrets. I have never regretted giving it all, if I've ever done that.

I have never regretted doing that. I have never regretted obeying. But I have regretted so many times when I have not obeyed and when I've kept stuff for myself and kept me for myself.

It's nauseating. Listen, you don't want to be a nauseous old man. You want to live for His glory and you want to do this thing of courtship and marriage and all of this for His glory.

Because in the end, even if you suffer terribly and nothing turns out the way you had hoped, you'll have the joy of knowing that you lived your life for the glory of God. That's all that matters. That's all that matters.

Because here's something real important. I'm not telling you that if you do all these principles, you're going to get the greatest wife or greatest husband in the world and have the greatest marriage and everything's going to go perfect. No.

Not at all. I'm telling you these things so that with your decisions and your actions, you can glorify God. Because there are many people that have made many godly decisions and done many godly things and the result has not been joy in the sense of everything came out perfectly as they had hoped.

Their joy came from the fact that they glorified God with the life that they lived, the decisions they made and the way they acted. You may try to obey God in absolutely everything and then marry a person who is extremely difficult in your life. It may even hinder your ministry.

But here's what you need to understand. God is all sovereign and God knows what you need to be conformed to the image of Christ. You see, the greatest thing in your life, contrary to popular opinion, is not having a big successful ministry.

The most important thing to God in your life is to conform you to the image of Christ and He will do whatever is necessary to do that. Now, what do you want? What do you want? Everything your way or do you want to be conformed to the image of Christ? Now, in 2 Corinthians 10.5, Paul says, we are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised against the knowledge of God and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. Now, if there ever was a day when there are opinions and ideas inside evangelicalism, inside Christianity, and outside in the world, ideas that are contrary to the Word of God, it is today.

I mean, Christianity itself is filled with all sorts of ideas, doctrines, all sorts of things being taught that are actually contrary to the Word of God. And they need to be destroyed by you. Not that you would attack the person, but that when you hear it, you would know enough of the Word of God to destroy that argument.

To say, no, it's not true. That's not the way I should think. That's not the way I ought to live.

And you need to bring everything in your life, not just your actions, not just your decisions, but every thought into obedience to the will of Christ. Boy, that's a tough one. It's very tough.

And I haven't attained that. I don't know anyone who has. But what do we do? We lay behind us what is behind us and we press on, we press on to be more biblical and more biblical and more biblical, more pleasing to God, more God-glorifying.

Now, in 2 Timothy 3, 16, 17, and that's where we'll finish for today, it says, All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be equipped for every good work. What we have here is what I've been saying throughout this whole time teaching is that we must believe in two things and both those things are found here, that the Scriptures are inspired, that they are the infallible, completely, totally trustworthy Word of God, but not just that, that they're sufficient. They are sufficient for everything in the Christian life.

I don't need to hire a marketing strategist to tell me how I ought to start a church. I don't need someone to come in from secular psychology and tell me how to think. I don't need to even borrow their ideas.

I don't need the culture to tell me how to dress or to tell me the things about which I should approve and the things about which I should reject. I need the Word of God to govern my life. Now, one thing that I want to say before we leave here is this.

The Word of God is not synonymous with some preacher on a video. God has raised up some preachers today that have been a great blessing in my life, but they are not synonymous with the Word of God and they are not substitutes for the Word of God. You must study the Word of God, not just books that contain the Word of God, not just books that treat subjects that deal with the Word of God.

You must study the Word of God. You must do that. I beg you.

If you get nothing from this video today, nothing at all, except one thing, I'll be happy. That your life, your Christian life, is dependent, utterly and totally dependent upon the Word of God and the empowering of Christ through the Holy Spirit. Alright, well, you say, we didn't talk a whole lot about biblical courtship.

Well, I can't just isolate one thing. You see, your ability to enter into a courtship, a relationship, biblically, depends on you being biblical in a lot of things, not just one. You want to be a whole person.

So we need the Word of God permeating every aspect of your life. Alright, well, God bless you. Have a great day.

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