

The Cross-Centered Life Q&a 2

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer emphasizes the necessity of knowing God and the dangers of modern methodologies in ministry during his Q&A session.

Duration: 1:12:54

Scripture: Psalm 27:8, Ezekiel 22:30, Matthew 28:19-20, Acts 1:8, Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 1:27, 2 Timothy 2:15

Topics: "Cross of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher addresses the issue of society becoming hard and individuals developing a hard spirit. He specifically focuses on young girls, emphasizing the importance of innocence and softness. The preacher also discusses the influence of media and the need to guard one's heart from worldly influences. He shares personal examples of how he avoids worldly distractions and emphasizes the importance of renewing one's mind in the Word of God.

Transcript

...mission of the church, so we're missional, because we do these things in a group, and... I had to ask you that because I really don't understand all these terms that these people are using. I think all of it is just the last gasps of a dying corpse. I think it is a lot of either scholars or little boys playing missions.

I don't have time to entertain all their little theories and all their new gimmicks and gadgetries to doing missions. The fact of the matter is, look at the early church. They were fully convinced of the resurrected Christ.

They were filled with the Holy Spirit, and they were obedient to the Word. They gave themselves to copious amounts of individual and corporate prayer. All the theories and fads and programs and methodologies and strategies that are used in the world today cannot replace that.

The world is going to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ through men and women who know their God. I would go to some of these people, and I would sit down, and the first thing I would ask them is, sit down and share with me your systematic theology. Most would not be able to.

Sit down and share with me what it means that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. Tell me how a man is born again. Talk to me about the evangelical graces of repentance and faith.

Talk to me about how many hours you spend in prayer a day. Talk to me about your meditation and study of God's Word. Talk to me about your nightwatches in which you are crying out for greater and greater manifestations and outpourings of the Holy Spirit upon yourself and your ministry.

When you get through telling me all that, then I'll talk to you about the word missional. The Spirit of God must direct the Church of God. You cannot get a new concept or some sort of program or vision or catchphrase or word to substitute men and women who know their God and dwell in His presence.

Much of this, not all of it, but much of it is just, it's like little boys playing army. When I was called into the ministry, a preacher, I've never met another like him. Never met a man so filled with the Holy Spirit and so powerful.

His word came not with eloquence, but with power. He looked at me when I told him God had called me. And when he looked at me, he disintegrated me.

It's like he could look right through me. He was a jovial person. He could be even a fun person.

But when his eyes narrowed and he looked at you, it's like he looked right through you. And he said, boy, can you be alone? And I thought when he said that, that it meant, you know, I would preach the truth and no one would like me and I would be alone. Would I be willing to do that? That's not what he meant.

What he meant was this. While everyone else was running around with all their little methodologies and strategies and key phrases, could you dwell alone with God in the secret place? He said, that's where men of God are born. I think that's the problem with just about everything you see that has to do with evangelism and missions today.

We would rather invent strategies and words like missional. You don't need a word like missional. You need a word like biblical.

What did the Church of Acts do? And so you can't accomplish it by inventing a word and trying to rally people around that word. You can't make the Church of Acts happen. You have to cry out to God that the spirit of God would fall upon his people.

But that may require hours a day of prayer. Repentance of sin. Listen, the Christian life and the Christian ministry is a supernatural endeavor.

It cannot happen through mere men. It has to happen through men and women who are filled with the Holy Spirit and who know their God and know his presence. I don't like any of those kind of terms.

I don't. What was your next question? Anyone else? Question? Alright, let's go all the way down there. What are your views on Christian rap and Christian rock? Lecrae and Tripoli are both friends of mine.

Now you really think I'm cool, don't you? But I consider it an honor for them to be my friends, not because they're rappers, but because they really seek to be men of God. And they are. They walk in integrity.

But if they were here right now, they would tell you what they do is extremely dangerous. Chylan also, a great theologian, he would tell you. Extremely dangerous.

You see, the flesh is a very dangerous foe. And the flesh gets excited so easily. And when I've gone and been with either of these men and watched them, talked to them before and after, counseled them, I know

their heart and I know that a lot of people who go and listen to them are genuine and sincere and enjoy their music.

There is a lot of truth. As a matter of fact, there's more truth in most of their songs than there is in most preaching. As a matter of fact, their rapping is more like preaching than music.

But at the same time, you'll see other people who are gathered there who are carnal, wicked, and sensual, and who don't have a clue about what those men are all about. Now, with me, I stand up behind a pulpit. I'm just an old guy.

There isn't a whole lot to get excited about. But when you've got music and, as he says, you know, that bass is just thumping, then you can really get out of hand. If you're listening to rap music, Christian rock and all this kind of stuff, more than you're reading the Word, pretty much write it down.

You're an immature believer. You can't live on that stuff. I would say that a great many of these rappers and these other musicians, Christian pop, Christian rock, they should not be.

They're not in the ministry. I've known, I could name off to you, some of the big ones that I've seen, talked to. And they need to leave whatever they call of a ministry behind.

And they probably would if they could cross over. They probably would. Young people, it's amazing to me.

Now, I love music. I have sensed that every night here, there's been more freedom each night. But I want to tell you something.

Let's take all of these songs and sing them. I'm not saying do this, but it's just an example. Take all these songs and sing them without any guitar, drums, any music whatsoever.

And just sing the words. And if you do not get as excited and passionate with just the words, then it tells me your emotion for Jesus is coming out of music and not the truth of the song. Okay? Here's something that is kind of dangerous to tell you, because maybe some of you aren't even old enough to understand it.

Godly, godly people who fear the Lord, who know His presence, they have a lot of freedom. Immature people don't have quite as much freedom. You see, a person who has been cast down in the presence of God, covering his head and trembling, when he gets up and dances before the Lord, I guarantee you, it's in holiness.

But some person who knows nothing of the holiness of God, nothing of the attributes of God, and hears a song and gets all excited and starts moving around, who knows what's going on. I always want to be gracious. And I love some of those men.

I truly do. And I appreciate a lot of their songs. But I also constantly warn them.

There is great danger. Just because of the way it's presented. The way it's presented.

Listen to me. Those of you who want to be singers and have a band and lead music and all this stuff, do you realize that God killed two music directors in Leviticus 10? He burned them alive. If you write a book on the attributes of God, do you know where probably 65% of all your biblical information, do you know where it's going to come from? Maybe even more, maybe 75% of all your verses are going to come from? The book of Psalms.

Almost when you write a book on the attributes of God, almost all your verses come out of the only hymn book in the Bible. The only song book in the Bible. That tells me the guy who wrote those songs was a theologian.

Maybe the best one in the entire Bible. So if you want to write songs, maybe you ought to be a theologian. Really? Do you know everybody is a theologian? Everybody in this room is a theologian.

It's just some of you are really bad at it. If you're going to lead worship, it's my opinion that the person who leads worship in the church should be at least as holy as the one preaching. Because worship according to Ephesians and Colossians is didactic.

It has a purpose and that purpose is also teaching. Teaching truth through music. Martin Luther believed that maybe the Reformation was carried on further by the hymns that people sang rather than even the preaching.

You can sing heresy as well as preach it. And so if you say, man, I want to I want to have a Christian group band or something. OK.

Read Grudem. Read some Edwards. Go throughout the entire Scripture, surveying every verse and text you can find with regard to the attributes of God.

Become a sound theologian and then pick up your guitar. And that'll help all of us from going astray and worship. OK, next question.

OK, John, what do you think about the concept that people read the books of the world and watch the entertainment of the world in order to better understand the culture in which they live and connect and witness to it? There's some truth in that. There's some truth in what they say. It's very difficult for me.

I live something of a cloistered life. I am. I'm preaching to churches, preaching to Christians, or I'm preaching on the street.

And no one wants to get near me. So I live a pretty cloistered life. How am I supposed to find out what's going on in my culture? When I look at the prophets, they knew they knew everything that was going on in their culture.

They did. They knew about the murders. They knew about the the corruption in business.

They knew about the immorality. They were able to point it out clearly. They were able to speak to their generation.

But now here's what you need to see. I am a man who is studying the word of God. I'm forty nine years old.

And for some reason, it seems apparent that God has given me a ministry to speak to my culture. I sometimes I will read news reports. I will look at magazines.

Sometimes there may even be a movie or something that doesn't have anything in it that would violate scripture or conscience in the sense of defiling me that will tell me something about my culture and I will take a look at it. But that is a lot different from a group from a teenager who just wants to see Iron Man 2. OK. There's a big difference between the two things.

Most young people who are in the church. I don't see how they could ever be holy. I honestly don't.

Because most are not renewing their mind every day in the word of God. I mean, you're not. You're just not.

And when you do, it's five, ten minutes or check off something in a discipleship booklet. So you're spending less than a few minutes every day renewing your mind in the word of God. And yet you're living 16 hours in your day and your mind is being bombarded with everything worldly.

And then it's absolutely astounding to me what even seminary students in good seminaries will watch and what they'll read. I mean, it's just it's an abomination. It's an abomination.

You must guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life. There's a difference between a 49 year old preacher who speaks to his culture, reading World Magazine. Are you going out and watching some video clip from Britney Spears? Sometimes things will come out that are necessary to see.

I remember when The Passion came out. I finally saw the thing. Why? I wanted to see what did people think about.

Christ's gospel, when what dreams may come came out a film about a man who dies and goes to heaven and then goes to hell. I wanted to see what is my culture's view on heaven and hell. And it was very enlightening.

It helped me address and understand certain issues. But listen to me, unless I absolutely have to, I won't go to a mall. I have probably been to a mall in the last 10 years, maybe three times.

I won't go to a mall. Why? I want to be holy. The place is not only defiled in the sense that now the pornography is put all over the windows of each little shop.

But there is a defiling spirit. The spirit that is within the teenagers that walk around there, and especially the girls, is violent and an animal. I'm not going to take my boys there.

And some of you love going there all the time, and then you wonder why you can't be holy. Leonard Ravenhill gave me a tract many years ago, sent it to me when he knew I was struggling. And the tract simply said, others can, you cannot.

If I want to be a man who knows God and has a sense of his power, there are things I cannot do. Now maybe you can in your freedom, but I cannot. You see, part of being holy is that a man is shut up to God.

And sometimes it feels like I'm watching everybody else live their lives through a window. They're over there and I'm over on the other side. But that's one of the prices.

You see these guys who invent all these words like missional and all these different theories and everything. It's what you have to do when you want to do Christian things. But you neither know or have the power and presence of God in your life.

You have to write little books and theories and follow them. And pretty soon the word missional will disappear from the Christian scene like all the other words. And a new word will take its place when that one doesn't work.

Just like the thousands of programs in the Southern Baptist Convention. The things that are going to change the world and never do. So you've got to get something else.

The next PhD student who writes a paper on how to do missions, well, let's use that. Let's go with that. No, my friend.

Be very careful of media. Be terrified of media. And listen, I know that many of you are given to media.

You play video games that are so violent. If you were truly sensitive to the Holy Spirit, you would know the moment you saw the first scene, the Spirit would be so grieved in you that you would throw up. But you've become hardened and you can play them.

You see somebody on a video game, he shoots people and his chest blows open. I have wrapped my arms around a man whose chest was blown open. Trying to use my own hands and my chest to keep the bullet wounds closed while blood is covering my entire body.

You have no idea what you're doing when you play those games. You see, you're from a culture that's so desensitized. Everything you watch that is wrong is going to harden your heart.

And then eventually, pornography and other things. We've even redefined pornography. Do you know when you go through a mall, and you see those big posters that are on a window of a certain store that sells things to young ladies? Do you know when I was a young person, that was pornography.

Now, little boys walk through there and gape at it. Our society has become hard. Many of you have become hard.

Do you know some of you have a spirit to you? Well, everyone does. That can be discerned. No little young teenage girl ought to have a hard spirit.

They ought to be innocent and soft. Undefined. Girls, let me share something with you.

There is a sense in which you should be, as we say in Spanish, una inocentona. You should be an innocent. You shouldn't even know about 75% of the things you know.

Because those bad things you know, they make your face hard. It's etched into your face. Media can kill you.

Okay, next question. How do you fight off pride as much as you're known in all the YouTubes, and how do you personally fight that? My wife beats me every day. Next question.

Listen, a good illustration. I was preaching one time, and I was asked to preach on the Old Testament. And I got up in the pulpit.

I was going to take a text from Ezekiel. And I looked over to my right. And there sat Dr. Mugliar, a Hebrew scholar from India.

Who is also more mature than I am and far more godly than I am. And I was almost ashamed to be up there. The more nobler, the more godly man was seated.

And I was standing to teach someone who did not. He has forgotten more about the Old Testament than I know. God uses the ignoble and the weak, the unwise.

I know what I am. I'm not John Piper or John MacArthur. I'm a guy with one famous sermon.

That got me kicked out. You see, ministry and even you being used is not a sign that you are godly or holy. You don't know what I'm really like.

How would you find that out? How would you find out what I'm really like? Go home and watch me love my wife. And it's humbling. It's not hard to jump up on a park bench after the terrorists have blown it up and there's still smoke all over the place.

It's not hard to jump up on a park bench and start proclaiming the gospel. What's hard is to love the person closest to you. And when you do that, you begin to see all your failures.

All your failures. And when I struggle to read the word of God, I was tired this morning. I mean, I didn't get to bed until like midnight.

I was counseling and stuff. And then I got in a midnight go-kart death match with a brother here. I'm getting old because he beat me.

And I even cheated. And he still beat me. Tonight, midnight, you're mine.

I'm not going to be able to preach this afternoon because I'm taking my go-kart to a mechanic. Don't let your children out on the streets at midnight because it's going to look like Mad Max world out there tonight. I really didn't want to get up.

And I had to sit there for a minute and struggle to get my Bible and get it open. Just like you. You see, there are no such things as a great man of God.

There are only tiny, little, weak, pitiful men of a great and a merciful God. That's all there is. And when you start believing the hype about yourself, you're doomed.

You're doomed. I hope that I'm a sincere man. And I hope that I am a true Israelite in whom there is no guile.

But that's all. There are no great men. There are no great men.

OK, next question. I see that hand. OK, so I basically lived in a Christian family my whole life.

So as a little kid, I thought that I was a Christian. I didn't really understand. But now since I'm older, I'm not.

I'm kind of scared because whenever I'm older, I die. I go to hell. And I thought that I was a Christian my whole life.

I just want to know if I am or if I am. I don't know how to. You want to know what? What was the last part? Like, I basically lived in a Christian family my entire life.

And I thought that I was saved. And I'm not sure if I am. OK, that's the fact that you're sitting here right now.

And you're not sure that you're a Christian. That is a gift from God. That is a gift from God.

Because there are probably some here today who believe they're Christians and they're not. Now, you're at a place where you're not sure. Is that correct? You're just not sure.

OK, now there's any time you're traveling down the right road. There are ditches on both sides. One is to just say, oh, of course, I'm saved.

Why am I letting this bother me? And try to convince yourself that you are. That's wrong. The other ditch, the other extreme, is when you think that the only way you can know you're a Christian is if you have all these Christian virtues in you that not even maybe mature believers have all the time.

So you can be too lenient with yourself or you can be too strict. I would be more than happy to sit with you and another brother and sister, a woman and a man, like if your parents are here or whatever, and talk to you about this matter. Here's the things that you need to know.

Do you truly want to be saved? Then know this. You can be. Everybody who wants to be saved can be saved.

Now, here's something else that's very encouraging. Most people don't want to be saved, OK? Now, so if you're sitting there and you want to be saved, it's because God has already begun a work in you. Do you understand me so far? Now, here's the neat thing.

He who begins a work in a person always finishes it. So now you've got the confidence of I want to be saved. And the Bible says anybody who wants to be saved can be saved.

And I am a radically depraved sinner who normally would hate God, but I'm not hating God. As a matter of fact, I want God and I want to be saved. So God must already be working in me.

And if God's already working in me, he promised to finish the work he began. I'm telling you, you've got a lot going for you right now. OK, now God says, seek me.

But he doesn't just say, seek me and and maybe I'll let you find me. He says, seek me and you will find me. Come to me.

I will not cast you out. Now, did you see Chronicles of Narnia? All right, you know that last part, which is my favorite line. Aslan, it's the end of the movie and he's taking off down the beach and Lucy saying, oh, I'm going to miss him and I wish he would come back.

And Mr. Thomas says, well, after all, he's not a tame lion. OK, now, I don't know if you know this, but God is not at our beckon call. He's not a tame lion.

Now, he says to you, little Lucy, seek me. You will find me. Call on me.

I will answer you. Come to me. I will not cast you out.

But little Lucy. It's my prerogative to decide when I come. And I may test you.

Will you keep calling until I do? Will you keep seeking me until I come to you? You seek him. You will find him. You will.

Now, if you want to talk later on. OK, we'll talk for hours. OK.

Just because this is important. Don't leave here without getting some counsel in the matter, because I can't. I need to talk to you and hear you and go to scripture with you.

And we can't do that in this great big group. OK. All right.

Now, don't don't you get out of here without talking to me, because I will hunt you down. What is your name? Madison. All right.

I want the group to pray for Madison through the day as well. Over here. What are your views on divorce? It's really, really bad.

Boy. Divorce. You're always hearing people say today that there's as much divorce in the church as outside of the church.

There's much, you know, worldliness in the church is outside of the church and all that type of thing. That's not true. It's not true.

The problem is we're calling something the church. That's not the church. The main problem with the rampant divorce and evangelicalism is not that Christians get divorced as much as non-Christians.

The problem is most of the evangelicals that call themselves Christians are not Christians. And if people started getting converted, we would have a lot less divorce. Now, secondly, I'm not saying that divorce can't happen to a Christian.

I'm not saying that. I'm just saying that the rampant divorce that's everywhere, 50 percent or whatever it is. The first issue is we've got the gospel wrong in America.

And we're passing people through a simple creed. And if they say yes, we're declaring them saved. We're trying to disciple goats and make them into sheep.

When in order for a goat to become a sheep, he has to be supernaturally transformed. So we would have a lot less trouble with divorce if preachers preached the gospel. But even Christians can go through a time of struggle now and can get divorced.

And it's a horrible, terrible thing. Now, let me say before I go on, let me say something else. Whenever two people are thinking about getting a divorce, a lot of people will use the cliché.

Well, if they're thinking about a divorce, there's problems on both sides. You know, both people are messed up. Who told you that? That's not necessarily true.

It can be true. And maybe oftentimes it's true. But it doesn't mean what you're saying all the time is true.

That's just not true. That every time there's a conflict, it's both people's fault. Then Jesus was a sinner because he got in conflict with the Pharisees.

I mean, some sincere Christians get left because their spouse doesn't want to follow the Lord. You see, so it's not always both parties are guilty if there's a divorce coming on. Now, here's some of the problems with regard to divorce.

A lot of people go to very large churches where they are not really pastored. You see, or they're pastored by their small group leader who's not a pastor. But here's the problem.

God gave us pastors and he gave requirements for those pastors in 1st Timothy 3, Titus 1. And pastors are to have these qualifications because these are the qualifications necessary to pastor people. But most people really aren't being pastored by pastors. That's why one of the problems with youth.

The youth have been removed from the elders and turned over to a 21-year-old. The children have been removed from the elders and turned over to a well-meaning older lady, possibly. No, the church is to be cared for by elders and pastors.

You see that? All right. If a pastor is truly looking at his people and is fellowshiping with his people, he will begin quickly to discern a problem. Oftentimes, divorce occurs because the problem is not discerned early enough and it's spread like cancer.

OK, second of all, one of the reasons for divorce in the church is because church discipline is not practiced. And one of the reasons why people who are divorced are left by a spouse spend the rest of their life with the big D hanging over their head is because church discipline is not practiced. Here's something that would be done in a biblical church.

Let's say a couple comes. We start noticing there's problems. We go to them or they come to us.

And both of them say, we're getting a divorce. We just can't do this anymore. Well, the first thing that I'm going to do is I'm going to begin to ask them about their conversion.

And I'm going to begin to study their lives with them. Because the first possibility is them knowing that God hates divorce, that it is a heinous crime. It makes me doubt.

Are they truly Christian? But let's say that after going through, we find out they are truly Christian or at least one of them is. But there is a root of bitterness that has sprung up that has defiled them. OK, so I look at both of them and say, look, I go through Scripture and I say, you cannot get a divorce.

You cannot. We need to work through this. I take them through text after text.

Maybe other elders are there also. And let's say that the woman, she says, you're right, Pastor. I can't do this.

You're right. I see the truth of Scripture. I can't do this.

I'm willing to work it out. And the husband looks at me and says, who do you think you are? You don't run my life. I want to get a divorce.

I'll get a divorce. I say, sir, at this moment, you may be showing yourself to be an unbeliever. And if you continue in this path, you will be disciplined in this church.

I don't care about your discipline. So we dismiss and elders go back to this man several times. The woman is now broken and she's wanting to restore her marriage.

And this man just keeps in his rebellion. And finally, what happens? They divorce. He's put out of the church.

But not only is he put out of the church, she's brought before the church because the church has the power to bind and to lose. And the church makes this declaration. This sister has been divorced.

Her husband has disregarded every admonition from Scripture and has been put out of this church and is to be considered an unbeliever. This woman, upon hearing the word of God, she came into conformity to the word of God and the church. She has been broken.

She has been studying Scripture. She has submitted to everything that we have put before her. She shows all the evidence of a believer in right standing with God.

She is to be given the full and right hand of Christian fellowship. She is to be honored in this church as an obedient Christian. And if we hear anybody casting any dispersion upon her for what has happened, they will be brought before the elders.

She is loosed. She is free. She is to be honored as a believer in this church.

You see, here's one of the problems. Because church is not, are not practicing discipline, we have all sorts of maladies. And one of the great reasons for all the divorce in the church is the lack of church discipline.

So we have divorced people who run wild and we have people that have been left behind that always live in the shadow of divorce. The church ought to bind those who have left and are in disobedience and cast them out and treat them as a Gentile. And the one who continues on in that marriage, the one who continues on in submission to the word of God, ought to be honored.

We set one free and we bind the other. But since that's not done, divorce is rampant. So there's two things, the preaching of the gospel.

And an idea of what true conversion is and the practice of biblical discipleship and biblical discipline. OK, next question. Do you think you change people's lives whenever you're preaching and think and you make them want to urge to become a Christian? Do you think you do that? One time, I think it was D.L. Moody.

Correct me if I'm wrong. It was D.L. Moody walking down the streets of Chicago and this drunk came up to him. And said, just this totally bold faced drunk says, D.L. Moody, D.L. Moody, I was in one of your meetings.

You know, I'm I'm one of your disciples or something like that. D.L. Moody said, yeah, you're one of my disciples, but you're not Christ's disciple. That's what kind of disciple I would produce right there.

Now, anytime. Now, listen, especially those of you who are maybe young and in the ministry and going in the ministry. Do you know when Jesus told Peter, cast your net and Peter cast the net, it filled up with fish and he pulled it in.

What happened to Peter? He collapsed. He disintegrated. He was ashamed.

He was ashamed when that happened. And he turns around and he looks at Christ and he says, depart from me, Lord, I am a sinful man. And what he's basically saying is, Lord, this was now understand my language.

It's basically he's thinking this way. Lord, this is wrong. You picked the wrong man.

This this should not have happened at my hands. It should not have been my hand that was on the net. It should have been someone else.

You must not know who I am. I shouldn't have been able to see this miracle. Anytime a preacher preaches and God either edifies his people or saves the loss, that should be the attitude of the preacher.

Lord, this is wrong. You shouldn't have used someone like me to have this sort of thing happen. I should not have been allowed to have put my hand to that net.

And this is to show you something glorious, because the scripture is just unity. It's all just written by God. Look at this.

You know, Isaiah six in the year King Uzziah died. I saw so the Lord high and lifted up his train, filled the temple above and stood the seraphim, each one having six wings to he covered his face with two. He covered his feet with two.

He did fly and one cried unto the other. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts. The whole earth is full of his glory.

And the post, the door moved at the voice of him who cried. The house was filled with smoke, then said, I woe is me for I'm undone. For I'm a man of unclean lips and I dwell among the people of unclean lips.

John chapter 12 tells us that Isaiah was looking at the son of God, that the one seated upon that throne was the son of God. You see, God created the world through his son. He sustains the world through his son.

He reveals himself through his son. He saves the world through his son. He'll judge the world through his son.

The one that Isaiah saw was the son. Now, Isaiah sees the glory of the son. He falls down.

He's broken into a million pieces. He cries out. He pronounces a death sentence on himself.

Actually, he curses himself. He says, I'm an unclean man. And then the Lord looks at him and says.

Who will go for me? Who can I send who will go for me? God commissions Isaiah. Guess what? The same thing happens in the New Testament. The son of God tells Peter, throw your net.

He throws his net. It fills up with fish and the glory of the son is revealed. Peter, like Isaiah, falls down, disintegrated and broken.

And just like Isaiah says, I'm undone. Depart from me. Get away from me.

I'm I'm wretched. I'm a man of unclean lips. And just like the son of God commissioned Isaiah, the son of God now looks at Peter and says, I will make you a fisher of men.

So it's always broken, useless men made useful. What's your thought on the military and Christians and listening in the military? Good question. Yeah, that's a very good question.

There was a time when the military. There was a statement in the military. An officer and a gentleman that an officer could be punished.

For not being a gentleman, an officer could be punished for any form of immorality, just like everything else in our culture that's gone on the wayside. To go into the military can be extremely dangerous because

it not only is known for its immorality, it boasts of its immorality. But.

God can call a man to go into that. He can. We need Christians everywhere and.

You should not go into the military because just because you're tough, just because you want to fight. Believe you me. No matter how tough you are.

When that first bomb explodes, you'll be so afraid you'll puke on yourself. It's a horrible thing. You look down, you have the blood of other people all over your clothes.

War is hell, but a fine man. Filled with character, filled with the Holy Spirit, a godly man called to go into the military could be a powerful tool in the hands of God. If God calls you to go to the military, go.

But before you go, you must be a mature man. Who can stand before God alone? God told Jeremiah, Jeremiah. If you can't run with the footmen, how are you going to run with horses? And what he said, Jeremiah, if you're weakening now.

In the midst of these small trials. What is it going to be like when the big trials come? How are you going to be able to stand? You will face terrible trials. The other soldiers will mock you.

That's why if you go, you must be more noble. You must be more courageous. You must be faster.

You must be stronger. You must work harder. You must be cleaner.

But you can have a great impact. I mean, I live very close to VMI and Stonewall Jackson and all those types of men. It's a it's a great.

I take my sons there. My little boys. They need to see men with shoulders and chests.

They need to see men who will throw themselves on a hand grenade and wrap themselves around it. And blow their body up to save their company. Military men can provide a great, great example of evil and of good.

And it'll be a hard road to follow. Be strong. Act like a man.

And do everything you do in love. Next question. I know throughout the Bible it talks about how the power of the tongue is and how it can speak life and death.

And I was wondering what your personal interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14 was. And if you believe that speaking in tongues is still used today. Now, come on, give me a hard question.

Now, there are going to be godly men who disagree with me. Especially on the nuances of these things. When I read the old, old writers.

They had a lot more freedom to talk about the fullness of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and gifts. Because they were not confronted in their day with the thing, with the extreme charismatic movement that we have. Okay.

Now, Baptists are reactionary. When they see heresy, they react against it. But sometimes they fall into heresy on the other side.

You know, there's someone who will look at the charismatic movement. People like the, you know, arch heretic, Benny Hinn and other people like that. And they'll realize all that is false.

But then they'll go so far the other way that they no longer even believe in the Holy Spirit. Or if they do, it's just a doctrinal issue. There's no sense of experience.

There are people who are just their whole life is experience, false experiences. And they have no grounding in the word. And so, you know, some Christians look at that and they go over here and they get in the word and they have no experience.

The Holy Spirit, it is impossible to live the Christian life without the Holy Spirit. We should be constantly praying for greater and greater manifestations of the spirit, outpourings of the spirit. Our lives should be supernatural.

Now, when it comes to tongues, the big issue that everybody says is, are they for today or are they not? And everybody says that's the question. And some say, yes, they are. And others say, no, they're not.

I don't think that's the question. I don't think that's the problem. I think the problem is this.

For example, theologically, I will not say, even though men godlier than I would disagree with me, theologically or doctrinally, I do not say that tongues have ceased. All right, so everybody thinks, oh, man, he believes in tongues. No, hold it.

I just don't think that's the issue. When I go to the text, I cannot, you know, I see the arguments and stuff, but I can't say that I can say in my conscience that these things have ceased. But here's what I do do.

I look at what tongues are in the scriptures and I don't see them anywhere today. What I see in the scriptures as being tongues, and I compare that to people who say they speak in tongues, I see something completely different. So see, some people are cessationists.

That means they believe tongues have ceased. I kind of call myself a practical cessationist in the sense that I do not say those things have ceased. I've seen God heal people.

You know, but have I seen a man who had the gift of healing? No. Have I? Have I? Here's what I think. I believe tongues in the book of Acts.

Every time it occurs, it is a it is a real phonetic language. It is. It's a real phonetic language.

And those are the only examples of tongues we have, and they're real phonetic languages. And when they occurred, everybody knew something supernatural was going on. I mean, if I just sit here and repeat over and over, I think she wrote a Honda.

I think she wrote a Honda. There's nothing supernatural about that. But if a man walks in from Uzbekistan and I begin to talk to him the gospel.

In his dialect. Everybody's going to know something's going on. All right.

I believe that they were always. And I don't see that today. Now, I've heard on the fringe of missions where the gospel was entering in.

Even in modern times, godly Baptist and Presbyterian missionaries will tell you that strange things occurred. But so that's the way I look at it. All you have to do.

Now, if you say tongues and all that have ceased, you know, and you've got your theological reasons, your doctrinal reasons for that. You know, I know godly men, men that that have mentored me that I love who believe that. But in my conscience, where I am looking at Scripture.

I don't say that, but I do say this. Define the gifts and you'll see that these supernatural manifestations. And you will find that ninety five percent, at least of the people who say they've done them and have them.

It's a total contradiction to what the Bible says. So stay. Just compare it to the word.

Now, some people will look at 1st Corinthians and say, but there's a tongue of angels. You know, 1st Corinthians 13. That's not what he's saying.

He could be using hyperbole there. I mean, you know, if I said, if I was as big as a house, I wouldn't fight you.

It doesn't mean I'm as big as a house. And Paul says, if I speak in the tongues of angels, but have not love, that doesn't mean that there are men who speak in the tongues of angels. And the fact that they say in 1st Corinthians 14, well, you know, it's an unknown tongue there.

No one understands him. And in the book of Acts, when they spoke, everyone understood them. But in 1st Corinthians, they speak and no one understands.

So it's a different kind of tongue. No, no one understands because no one spoke the language there that he was speaking. And there was no interpreter to interpret it.

You see. And so I guess that's what I think in a nutshell. OK, Paul, we've got one last question back here and another question.

If I start waving, that means time. All right. My question is, in addition to having a love for hard work, what would be your recommendation to become the true man of Christ? In addition to what? A love for hard work.

Are you talking about in view of marriage? He said just in general. OK. What? And I say this in a really kind of bold way.

I hope it's not too bold. But what is the difference between a man of God and a boy of God? Is it just knowledge? I mean, there are guys who graduate from seminary that man, they, you know, they've memorized Calvin backwards. They know all kinds of stuff.

They're Greek scholars. But does that make them a man of God? No, it doesn't. It doesn't not make them a man of God.

It'd be wonderful to have all those things and all those giftings. We must never forget that the Christian life is supernatural and it has to do with a relationship with God. A mature man of God has knowledge.

He has knowledge. But the knowledge is not an end in itself. It's a means.

It's a means to a vital relationship with God. Vital, living, empowering. This relationship.

Must be real and in a sense, have a wind of supernatural or eternity to it. These types of things are developed through being alone with God. Studying scripture.

Not just to know more than some other pastor or to preach better, but to know God, to know who he is, to know what he desires and prayer, prayer, prayer, prayer. I would say that one of the things I've tried to look at men and women of God down through history that have been used. And it's hard to find a lot of common denominators in their life.

But if I had to pick a few, one would be. They had an exalted high view of God. They recognized their utter dependency upon the supernatural power of God.

And they lived a life of prayer. They lived a life of prayer. I want to tell you some people who write about Spurgeon and talk about Spurgeon.

When they get to heaven, they better avoid Spurgeon because Spurgeon is going to be very angry with them. It seems like every time I hear someone talk about Spurgeon, they talk about his great mind. Now, he had one.

They talked about his great dedication and endurance that he could do so much. They missed it entirely. I don't care how smart you are.

And I don't care how much endurance, physical endurance you have. You cannot do what Spurgeon did. You cannot.

Now, he was exceptionally gifted and raised up to do things that I most certainly cannot do. But it was not because he was smart. It was the fullness, the anointing, the power of the Holy Spirit.

Someone said to Spurgeon, you do more than one man. He said, I am more than one man. It is Christ within me.

This is a supernatural endeavor. This is prophetic. It's not inventing words like missional and writing little books about the new way to do church.

It's one man or woman who knows God, knows his word, and filled with the spirit of the living God. And the spirit of the living God blows through their life and things happen. They pray.

And mountains are plucked up and cast into the sea. Just let me go on with this. This one part.

OK, just real quick. Let me. The more you cut yourself off.

From the arm of the flesh. The more you will see. God.

Read the autobiography of George Mueller. Heart cry. Our mission.

You notice the first night I got up and they were taking up an offering and I got up and basically said, look, don't give to us. Years ago when I was a boy in the Lord. Someone gave me the book by George Mueller.

It is the little one, the little biography, the autobiography of George Mueller. It's on my desk. The pages are all yellow.

They're tore up. Other than the scriptures, it is the most influential book in my life. When we started heart cry, we said we would not raise support.

We would not tell people if we had needs. We would not prod or manipulate God's people. If this ministry is of God, God will be the patron and support it.

If it's not of God, it will fall and it should fall. The main purpose of heart cry, even though we have missionaries all over the world, is not primarily having missionaries all over the world. But it is documenting that God answers prayer.

December 31st, nine o'clock in the morning. The last day of the year. Heart cry has a deficit of one hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

That doesn't mean we're in debt. It means with that year, because we decided that Asia needed to be one to Christ. We extended ourselves so much that we burned up one hundred and fifty thousand dollars on missionaries and took our surplus.

Anything that we had and we threw it towards Asia and a few other things. So I'm sitting there. It's nine o'clock in the morning.

It's the last day of the year. And I'm studying the scriptures and praying. No one knows we have a deficit except a few of the staff, a few of the board members.

And they don't even know at that moment how much it is. I'm sitting there and I'm praying. I mean, you got nine o'clock.

You got what? Fifteen hours or so. At ten o'clock, Kevin Height comes into my room and he's kind of teary eyed. I said, Kevin, what's what's wrong? He said, this just came in the mail.

I said, what? How did anybody know? I said, what came in the mail? He goes, someone just sent sixty thousand dollars. So we we got on our knees. We thank God.

And I went back to my studies. But an hour and a half later, Kevin came in. It's crying.

So, Kevin, what's wrong? He said. Someone. Just sent one hundred thousand dollars.

Great. Got down, we prayed, we wept, went back to my study. About two o'clock.

Someone just sent sixty thousand dollars. I said, I know. He said, no, someone else.

Came back a half an hour later, almost insane. I looked at PayPal. There's fifty thousand dollars that's just been sent.

At the end of the day, there was three hundred and twenty six thousand dollars that came in. No one knew. God doesn't need even three hundred and sixty five days.

He doesn't need ten days. He doesn't need five days. He doesn't even need a day.

He says, behold, I come quickly. That means he will wait and wait and wait. But when he rises up from the throne, it's done quickly.

Over the years, I can tell you how that has happened over and over and no one knew. God answers prayer. Believe God for great things.

I think young people and I know I got to finish, but I think this. It's the way I've lived my life and all the reformed guys, they can go get in a fight if they want. But this is this is true.

God has decreed everything before the foundation of the world. And we have not because we ask not. And when I look at God and say, God, what can we do about the nations? Maybe I'm crazy.

But I always hear. What do you want to do about them? What can you believe me for God? Young person, you ask him, God, what do you want to do with my life? What can you believe me for when I was about twenty seven years old? Been doing missions. Twenty eight.

I came back from the field, wore out, broken, sick. Came back for a few months just to be with my mom and rest, go to the doctor. And I went to a church.

They had a question and answer. They were asking questions about Peru. And right at the end, I'll never get a little redheaded boy.

He gets up and he goes to the microphone. He goes, Mr. Washer. And I said, yes, I couldn't believe I was twenty eight.

They started calling me Mr. Washer because Mr. Washer, he goes, what are you going to do after you win everybody in Peru? And everybody in the church laughed except me and that boy. I said, well, after we win everybody in Peru, I guess we'll have to go to another country, won't we? He's worthy to be believed. The more you cut yourself off from all these little methodologies and calling out to men all the time to help you in some endeavor.

You cut yourself off from the arm of the flesh and look only to God and you'll see miracles. But it's only with your back up against the Red Sea that waters are going to split around you. All right.

God bless you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/24/SID24041.mp3>

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