

# I Don't Want to Be Right!

by Ralph Sexton

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*Ralph Sexton's sermon emphasizes the urgent need for personal accountability to God, the sacredness of marriage, and the importance of spiritual leadership within families to combat the decline of faith in society.*

**Duration:** 32:41

**Scripture:** Jeremiah 5:3-31, Matthew 6:33, Romans 6:23

**Topics:** "Parental Responsibility", "Repentance"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher expresses concern about the state of the world and the impact it has on children. He emphasizes the importance of parents setting a good example for their children by living according to the teachings of the Bible. The preacher acknowledges that no one is perfect, but believes that through repentance and the power of God, lives can be changed and relationships can be restored. He also highlights the need for individuals to be accountable for how they have used their time and energy, both in their relationship with Jesus and in their roles as husbands and wives. The sermon concludes with a warning that attachment to worldly pleasures and sins can lead to judgment and the withholding of good things from God.

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## Transcript

Since September, my heart has been heavy and burdened. And if you've been here Sunday morning and Sunday night and Wednesday nights, you have detected that concern, that burden. I believe that you are a generation of people in this auditorium that at any moment could hear the sounding of the trumpet of God.

I really do believe that. I am convinced intellectually and spiritually that Jesus could come at any moment. I also am convinced intellectually and spiritually that I have to give an account to God when that trumpet sounds on how I've spent my life and what I've invested my time and energy in.

I'm going to be held accountable. I'm going to be held accountable in my relationship to Jesus. He's going to look me in the eye and he's going to say, Ralph, what have you done with the salvation that I gave you? I died that your sins could be forgiven.

What have you done with that eternal salvation I died for? Secondly, I'm going to be held accountable as my position as a husband. According to the word of God, I am the high priest of my home. God's not going to start with Musette when he talks to our family.

He's going to start with me. And he's going to say, Ralph, how have you led your wife? Have you encouraged her to serve me? Have you been a stumbling block to your wife with your attitude, with your response to her, your tenderness to her? How have you led her in causing her to love me? I'm going to be held accountable. He's going to hold me accountable as the father of my children.

He's not going to start with Beverly or Mark or Kent. He's going to come to me and he's going to say, these three human beings are on this earth because of you. How have you influenced your children to love me? I'm going to be held accountable.

He's going to turn to Musette. She's the heart of our home. And when God made the man the head of the home, he made the woman the heart of the home.

That's not a relationship of one up on the other. God said, and the two shall become one. How could I be unkind to her? She is me.

How could I lord over her? She is me. God's trying to get us to understand that there's a love relationship when he talks about that he is the bride and we're the bridegroom. There's something very special about our relationship with our marriages, our homes, and our children.

No wonder the devil attacks marriage. No wonder the devil comes against the home. No wonder the devil tries to isolate members of a family because if he can fracture the family unit, then he's a long ways towards hurting the cause of Christ.

On Wednesday night, I dealt with this passage of Scripture in Genesis. If you want to turn to it in Genesis 20 and verse 3, just to refresh your memory. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night and said to him, Behold, thou art but a what? Dead man.

For the woman which thou hast taken, for she is a man's wife. God was talking about how important, back here in Genesis chapter 20, he's talking about how important marriage is and the sacredness of marriage. Abraham, out of fear, lied to the king.

Sarah, out of fear, lied to the king. God went to the king and he said, Look, Sarah is not available for you. She belongs to another man.

And that story is given there in that chapter so we would understand how important God shows to you and to me this relationship is between a man and his wife, the wife and her husband. The sacredness of marriage. Hebrews 13, 4 talks about the marriage bed.

Wednesday night, we dealt with the subject while the children and the teens were in the other building. We talked about the marriage bed and the sexual activity of a husband and a wife and that God put a fence around the marriage bed. God didn't say it was wrong for men and women to be together.

He said it's wrong when you go outside your marriage vow and you live the life of an adulterer or a fornicator if you're a single adult. And he said, if you break the rules and you leave this marriage relationship, the wages of sin is death. Then we talked about the source of that adultery in Matthew 5. This morning, I want you to turn in the Old Testament to Jeremiah 5. If you have your Schofield Study Bible, it's page 777.

Jeremiah 5. And I'm going to read at verse 3. O LORD, are not thine eyes upon the truth? Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved. Thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction. They have made their faces harder than a rock, and they have refused to return.

They have refused to return. Skip over, if you would, with me to verse 23 in this same chapter. Jeremiah 5 and verse 23.

But this people have a revolting and a rebellious what? A revolting and a rebellious heart. They are revolted and gone. Neither say they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God.

If I, as a minister of the gospel, had to summarize one serious symptom of our society, it would be this symptom. We've lost the fear of God off of America. Church is just a social activity in most communities.

There's not a fear of God on our land. There's not a reverence of the things of God. And people talk and act like they'll never meet God.

I'll do what I want to do. I don't have to worry about it. There's no fear of God.

You say, well, I don't want to serve a God. I have to fear. That's not what we're talking about.

There's a respect and fear of God. God's not sitting up in heaven with a giant club getting ready to hit me in the head just because I do or say the wrong thing. He is a God of love.

But He, because He is a God of love, is to be revered, respected, and feared because of His power, His position, and His authority. Look at this part of the verse. Neither say they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God.

Verse 25. Notice what happens. Your iniquities have turned away these things.

And your sins have withholding good things from you. God's warning us that we can get in trouble and we can be judged because if we become more attached to our pleasures and our will and our iniquities, then you say, but Brother Ralph, you don't understand. God's blessed me.

I've got more than I've ever had in my life. I've got more money, more things. I've got the best car I've ever owned.

I'm living in the best house. That's true. But God's saying that there's so much more.

There's so much more. And the many good things are being held back because we refuse to go all the way and surrender to this great God that we love and serve. We have yet to imagine what God could do through a church family, one church family.

I'm not talking to the other 100 Baptist churches in Buncombe County. I'm talking to this church. What could God do with one church that's sold out to God and say, God, not our will, but Thy will be done? God, we're going to kneel down, clean us up, search us out, change us by Your might and power.

Look at verse 26. Now, this is the part I have trouble with, but I'm going to read it anyway. For among, what are the next two words? My people.

For among my people. He didn't say the world. He didn't say the crowd out there partying or living.

He said among my people. That means we have to have a soul searching. We talked in Sunday school this morning about examining ourselves.

Look what the book says. For among my people are found wicked men. They lay wait.

As he that set us snares, they set a trap. They catch men. What's God saying? God's saying that when someone backslides and someone breaks fellowship, they always trap someone else.

The first way you can spot someone's not living right with God is they become critical, they become cynical, and the next thing you know, they're pulling back someone else and they're backing them off their walk with God. That's how quickly that begins to happen. Notice what it says in verse 27.

As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of what? Deceit. That's trickery. That's snares.

It looks like it's okay, but it's not okay. It's a trick. Now, I want you to go with me to the last verse in this chapter.

Verse 31. That's my text verse today. Verse 31.

The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their own means. And my people love to have it so. So what will you do in the end thereof? The phrase that jumped out at me in this study was this one phrase.

My people love to have it so. I thought about what Jeremiah the great prophet was teaching and preaching. The battle for morals that were going on in his culture and society.

He's concerned about the spiritual well-being of those who follow God. And he's talking about wickedness in high places. Sin has invaded the house of God.

My people are caught up. My people have lost the edge off their sword. They're tempted.

They're being wooed in by sin and ungodliness. And he's saying, here's what tears me up. Not even all the preachers are standing true.

They're playing games at the house of God. They're more interested in being re-elected to serve another term at that church. They're more interested in a parsonage and a paycheck and a pension than the presence and the power of God.

He said, we've got a danger there. We've got a danger in spiritual leadership being bought off by popularity and comfort and ease in the house of Zion. And so he said, now I go to the body that belongs to God and I'm saying, my people, you need to know that there's sin even in the house of God.

It's easy to backslide. You've just got to get cold and careless. How many of us here today know someone that used to walk with God? Maybe even testified they were going to sing for God or preach for God or they were going to work in the youth ministry or teach in the Awana ministry or they were going to do something for God.

They were going to be, if nothing but a place of service, maybe singing in the choir or a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord or working in the nursery or a greeter in the parking lot. And here we are a year later and they're not even in church. Do we doubt that they were ever saved? No, I really believe they were

saved.

But where are they today? Why is their chair empty? Why is their relationship with God in turmoil? Why are they out of church? Why do they no longer read their Bible? Why do they no longer pray? God said, My people. God said, Have you noticed what God's trying to put through this study in Jeremiah? He said, You can sit in church Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night and the choir can sing biblical truths. We can hear testimony about biblical truths.

The pastor can read the Word of God and we can almost say, You know what? Maybe that's true. I'll just roll the dice. I'll just take my chances.

I'm going to do what I want to do. Forget what God wants me to do. I'm going to do what I want to do.

Hey, He's up in heaven. I'm here on earth. I've got my own set of problems.

I've got my own set of circumstances. And I'm going to make my own set of rules. I'll handle my life.

God, You sit on the shelf. If I ever need You, I'll whistle. I wouldn't say that.

You don't have to say it. We're living it. We're doing it.

Because we go to church and the poor pastor, he's trying to exhort you to serve God. He's preaching his heart out. He's studying, getting a burden that's crushing him on the inside.

And the family of faith just goes, Okay, so what? I'll take my chances. Maybe he's going to judge me even. But I believe I can handle the judgment.

And what we reduce ourselves into thinking and saying is, You know what, God? I don't want to be right. I'm going to do it my way. I'm very intelligent.

I'm very smart. I've got my act together. I'll do it my way.

God, sorry about you and your old set of rules. Look what the book says. The prophets prophesy falsely.

And my priests bear rules. The priests bear rules by their means. And then this next phrase in verse 31.

And my people love to have it so. You say, well, it's not that bad, Pastor. Well, what did we just read in verse 26 of this same chapter? It says, For among, what? My people are found wicked men.

Verse 27. Their houses are full of deceit. There's wickedness there.

And we say, oh Lord, no, not us. Yep, God's saying, you're tricking yourself. It's easy to lie to yourself and make excuses.

But you know what? I'll explain it to God when I get to heaven. I've got an unusual set of circumstances. Well, God's never going to go against His own Word.

And God's never going to excuse sin. You say, well, Brother Ralph, you don't understand. My wife, she doesn't understand me.

And I've met this beautiful Christian lady at work. And she does understand me. And so I'm putting my attention on her.

I call her. I talk to her. I email her.

I text her. And we're just soulmates. Yes, and that's just sin.

God doesn't have two sets of rules. God wants you to know it's serious when we infringe upon our marriage relationships. It affects the whole atmosphere of this church.

Your disobedience to God causes the whole church to suffer the displeasure of a holy God. We can grieve the Holy Spirit. He's a tender heart.

The Bible says houses are full of deceit. That's when I lie to myself. You lie to yourself.

Jeremiah 5.3 says, Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved. Verse 3 continues, They have refused to receive correction. God walked by your house.

He took a little switch off the tree and gave you a little switch on the ledge and said, Look, that stings. Doesn't that sting? Pay attention. You need to get your house in order.

You need to get your home in order. You need to get your marriage in order. You need to get your children in order.

Don't let me come back by here. How many times has God spoken to us about our lack of prayer, our lack of commitment? How many in this church are committed desperately to Sunday morning, but you're not committed to Sunday night? Well, I'm a spiritual person. I study.

I will have a walk with God. I don't have to be in that building. No, you don't have to be in this building.

But your influence needs to be in this building. You need to be letting other people let you live and see that you believe that the local church is for the home, the family, and the marriage, and that we've made that commitment, and I'm going to lead my family in the service of the King. It's not a convenience thing.

Verse 3 continued, They refused to receive the correction. They made their faces harder than a rock. They have refused to return.

Some of you walk in the building and without realizing it, I'm begging you this morning to allow the Holy Ghost of God to speak to you and to convict you, but you sit in this auditorium and I preach, and your whole mindset is this, when you walk in, I don't care what He says. I don't care what story He tells. I don't care how He illustrates it.

I'm not going to no altar. I'm not going to do that. If He thinks I'm going to get out of my seat and go up there and kneel down, He's wrong.

And what the Bible says, that's in the Bible. He said they have set their faces harder than a rock. They didn't care what Jeremiah taught.

They didn't care what God said. They set their faces. You preach what you want to preach.

I'm not going to listen to it. You get through it. You get it off your chest.

And you'll feel better. And we'll go home and we'll watch a little NASCAR. We'll watch some football.

We're going to have a cookout and watch a World Series tonight. And we're going to live for us. And you just have church all you want to, preacher.

We're going to take care of us. Verse 6 says, The transgressions are many. Their backslidings are increased.

Verse 7 is the part that scares me. Because it talks about the children being affected. Mom and Daddy, you can rebel.

You can be hard-hearted. You can set your face. But your planting seed in your children's lives at 50 years of preaching will never change.

Because they saw Daddy sit there. They saw Mama sit there. If you'll look at Jeremiah 5 and verse number 7, How shall I pardon thee for this? God asks the question, Why should I even forgive you? Thy children have forsaken me.

I can remember in this church, when the teenagers and the young adults were so broken-hearted and tender for God, that you didn't want to hardly hang around them, because you would be convicted of your own lack of prayer life. But when the Mamas and the Daddies get cold, the Mamas and Daddies go to the material things of this world, then we just take our kids and we toss them out there to the world and say, Won't you raise my babies for me? Won't you let Hollywood raise your children? Huh? Let Eminem raise your little boy. Let Madonna raise your little girl.

Let Britney Spears be their hero and heroine. Huh? Let Hollywood movies form their values. Their children have forsaken me, and have sworn by them that are no gods.

When I fed them, when I fed them to the full, you think how God has blessed this place, not only with a beautiful sanctuary, but you think how God has blessed our houses. Clothes we wear, cars we drive, food we eat. We're living like no other people on planet Earth, and we don't give God the time of day.

Then they committed adultery, and assembled themselves by troops in the harlot's houses. They were as fed horses in the morning, every one named after his neighbor's wife. God said in verse 9, Shall I not visit for these things? God's asking Trinity the question.

He said, If you think you can live loose and lustful, you think you can go even to the house of God, and look over your neighbor's fence and say, Hey, I might want to be with that man. I might want to be with that one. God said, Don't you think I ought to visit your house? God may not come to me.

He may not come to Musette. He might go to one of my children to get me if I go back in to sin. You say, Well, why would He do that? Your kids are innocent.

Well, if the kids are innocent, and they're serving God and loving God, then God might deal with me through the innocent in my life. God's trying to get us to quit playing church. Do you understand that? This nation's in trouble.

I fear for the physical and spiritual safety of your children if we don't have revival. Where are they going to go where anything's right and wrong? Most of the churches, God love them, the pastors are so intimidated they can't even preach about sin because that bunch of backslidden carnal crowd will vote them out. Where are they going to go hear the truth? You say, Well, we've had a meeting about you.

Well, have another one. Bless God. I'm going to tell you something.

The world wants the Bible to shut up and not tell the truth. If you love your children, you'll love a man that will love them enough to read the Bible to them and weep and cry over the soul of your own base and beg God not to let the marriages break up in the house of the Lord, that there'll be men and women of character and courage and say, Oh, by God's help, God, my flesh is weak, but by your help, God, I will serve you with my heart, soul, mind, and body. Is there a perfect man in this building? No, not one.

Is there a perfect woman in this building? No, not one. Are we all found guilty in the eyes of a three times holy God? Yes, we are. Is there mercy and grace for the repentant heart? Yes, there is.

Can old things pass away? Yes, they can. Can all things become new through the power of God? Yes, they can. Can lives change? Can the marriages be healed? Yes, they can.

Can homes be restored? Can love be restored? Yes, they can. How do you know? I'm looking at them all over this building, people that the devil tried to destroy, homes he tried to rip apart, lives he tried to devastate with the power of sin, and in the middle of that hell, here comes God to change the circumstance. What a God and what a Savior.

I am a trophy of God's amazing grace. I do not deserve to go to heaven. The way I lived and my attitude and what I was in, I should have already been in a devil's hell.

But on the way to hell, God's amazing grace stepped in the roadway of ruin and engulfed me with love and grace and mercy and allowed me the privilege of looking up to a holy God and saying, God, I'm sorry. Forgive me. I do want to serve you.

Then I can turn around and look over my shoulder and there come my sons and my daughter serving God. And I look behind them and there's my grandbaby serving God. And I can get on the other side and go, whoo! Hallelujah! This family circle will never be broken.

We'll be together with God forever and forever and forever. You say, well, you shouldn't be so emotional. How can you love and not have emotion? You can't take emotion out of love any more than you can take the motion out of the ocean.

God loved me. God saved me. I love Him.

He loves me. And I am challenged today by the Word of God to say I want to draw nigh to you, God. I want to search myself.

I don't want to live in resistance and rebellion. I don't want to be found guilty of not paying attention when God's talking. I don't want to be found guilty of saying, God, I'm not going to listen.

Don't tell me, God. No, no, no, no. Don't tell me, God.

I don't want to hear Him preach. No, no. Don't let me hear that song.

No, no, no. No, no. I don't want to hear that Scripture.

No, no, no. That's why this society cannot be quiet. We have to have a headphone.

We have to have a CD player, radio player, television. We've got to have noise coming out of the computer. We can't stand silence.

And the reason is silence makes you think what's living on the inside. I don't want to know the truth, the power of Thy Holy Word. Verse 23 in this chapter says, This people hath a revolting and a rebellious heart.

And you know what we say? We say, I don't want to be right. Do you remember many years ago there was an old country song? I think it was Barbara Mandrell. And she had a song, If loving you is wrong, I don't want to be right.

I remember I was driving back from preaching one night and I was flipping through the channels on the radio and I heard that song. And I never have gotten away from that concept of a woman saying, If that's wrong, I don't want to be right. If my parents don't like it, I don't want my parents, I don't want to be right.

If God thinks that's wrong, I don't want to be right. I want what I want. And I'm going to do what I want to do and I don't care who I hurt in doing it because I'm going to take care of my wants.

And what we do without realizing it is we look in the face of a holy God that died for us through His Son Jesus Christ and we say, I'm going to live my life. You just get out of my way. And if I have to be judged, I'll handle that when it comes.

The problem with that is you don't know what's coming. You've never had pain until you experience the pain of chastisement. You've never had a correction until you have God's correction.

Your worst nightmare can't even go there. And the reason it will be so severe is because you and I know better. God doesn't judge us on the size of the sin.

Sin, sin. It's on the amount of light we've received. That's where we get in trouble.

Every head bowed.

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