

Getting Back to Basics: Genuine Repentance

by Robert Wurtz II

The sermon emphasizes the critical need for genuine repentance in the face of societal decline and the dangers of pride that hinder this essential step towards salvation.

Duration: 43:51

Scripture: Romans 1:19

Topics: "Genuine Repentance", "Eternal Damnation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of returning to the basics of Christianity in a generation that is becoming increasingly wicked. He highlights the rebellion against even the smallest truths as a reason for eternal damnation. The preacher also mentions various events and messages that God is using to get America's attention and bring about repentance. He concludes by emphasizing the need to follow the right path in life, as we will end up where the person we are following is headed.

Transcript

We are continuing in a study that I started this year entitled Getting Back to Basics. And if there was ever a time or a generation that really needed to just get back to the basics of Christianity, it is this generation. We have sit by this year and watched all sorts of maddening things beginning to take place in our nation and around the world.

The world is on a fast track to destruction and America is getting wicked by the day. You don't really have to be a preacher or a pastor or a Sunday school teacher to find that observation. As a matter of fact, we are beginning to see God begin to birth in the hearts of a lot of people a message of repentance and various means with which to see our nation and its people turning back to God.

Mel Gibson just recently, God had put on his heart over these last few years to do the Passion movie. And I do not believe that it is by accident that God did that. I believe that God is sending America a message and the world a message to recognize the hour in which we are living and to see how far we are drifting away from God.

There was a man on I-70 I heard even just this last week that was carrying his cross on the shoulder of the road down the highway causing rush hour traffic, I think it was Friday, to back way up toting his cross down the road. And when you begin to see God moving in the lives of people to do such radical things, it is high time I think for us to really take notice. It is high time for us to see because what you are starting to

see is you are starting to see things that happened back in the Old Testament when the prophets of old would begin to try to do things to get the attention of the people.

And they would be very radical things indeed because the hearts of the people had gotten hard. But what I would like to do this morning is place a context around the story of the cross and to cause it as it were in the hearts of people to begin to make sense. How many of you in here if you wouldn't mind raising your hand have seen the Passion movie? Several, several people in here have seen that movie.

And when you begin to watch that show you begin to wonder is it really that devastating that Christ would go through these things upon the cross. And the fact is we know historically from the biblical accounts that it was. And many people walked out of those movie theaters wondering why was such a thing necessary? Why was it important for him to die upon the cross? What is the context in which this has happened? And God has placed on my heart this morning to continue in our series and actually to start a sub-series within Getting Back to Basics entitled Genuine Repentance.

Genuine Repentance. If you'd like to follow in your notes you're more than welcome to do so or you can just listen along. The first step in being truly born again is repentance.

The word repent is the first word of the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Bible said repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It is the first necessary step that everyone must make in order to be saved.

Jesus said that we must repent. The importance of this one subject cannot be overstated. As a person who has not genuinely repented is yet in their sins and they are under the wrath of God.

When you begin to see the various portions of the passion you begin to understand knowing that why it was important for Christ to die for our sins in the fashion in which he did. As we begin this study of genuine repentance I purpose to show what repentance is and what repentance is not. We will explore the subject of repentance in such a way as to ensure that all who participate in this study will have a clear understanding as to whether they have genuinely repented or not.

We will discover if the repentance of our lives has been total or selective, permanent or temporary. Repentance is a very important subject. We will examine the motives and the fruits of repentance and we'll probe into whether repentance that we exhibit towards God is biblical and therefore acceptable in God's sight.

See there are a lot of times when we come to the Lord and we would just say Lord forgive me of my sins and we're not really changed. And this is not at all what biblical repentance is. We will further explain that there is a limit to the amount of sin that God allows a person or a nation before judgment comes to the utmost.

Did you realize that? You do not have to be again a preacher to realize that this nation is under the immediate judgment of God. Amen? It is under the immediate judgment of God. At any given moment God could judge our nation in a way that you couldn't conceive of.

I remember when I was a young child and many of you I see here today we all went to Sunday school together. I remember being taught about what it was going to be like in the last days. How iniquity would so abound that the love of many would wax cold.

That we would see things happen in our nation that we never thought was even possible. And we're seeing these things taking place even in greater magnitude than it was preached before our very eyes. This is a consistent teaching that is there is a limit to sin in a nation or a people's life.

It is a consistent teaching in scripture that will be quite new for most Christians but has existed since the book of Genesis. We'll talk about that in just a minute. Let me give you just a brief definition of what the word repentance means.

The word repent means to change your mind. It means to change your mind. It's no different than changing your mind about any subject that once you find the truth out you see it in a different light.

We have to change our mind about our sin in our life in which we are living. What happens is God will bring us to a place to where he will show us what our life is, what our sin is through his eyes. So we will see it as it is.

And he offers us an option. He says, will you love your sin now seeing it as I see it or will you hate your sin? And it's at this crossroads that we all reach where we decide whether or not we are truly going to be born again or not. The word repent means to change your mind towards sin.

You go from loving your sin to hating your sin. To being attracted to your sin to being repulsed by sin. How many of you have vegetables you don't like? We all do, don't we? I was thinking about this this morning.

You know when I was a little boy, my dad was the type of dad that he was like, now kids, you're going to sit here at the table and you're going to eat all of this. And I was like, eat all of this? There's broccoli, asparagus. There's carrots.

There's all kind of different things. There's spinach, you know, make you almost gag, at least for me. But we had a fortunate circumstance.

We had a half and half German shepherd. And he liked to eat of the crumbs that fell from his master's table. And while we would be eating, we would just kind of be slipping the food down to him.

And it would get to the point to where our plate looked like we had ate a pretty good amount. And dad would show mercy on us and let us go up, you know, and watch TV. There was a problem.

A few times, the dog got a little bit sick. Huh? He would get sick. And he would regurgitate those vegetables onto the floor.

And I remember how sick that made me feel when I seen that. Not only did it make me almost gag to eat certain of these vegetables, but when I seen that, it really made me want to gag. Huh? And you know what? God is telling us that that's how he wants us to view sin.

Not only does he want us to, when we see it, almost make us want to gag, but when we see it destroying people's lives, it really makes us see it in a true light. The Bible talks about the dog has turned to his own vomit again, and the sow that was washed to its wallowing again, or the pig in its mud all over again. See, God wants us to view our sin like we view the types of foods or whatever in our life that we utterly hate.

The single greatest obstacle under your second section to genuine repentance is pride. Human beings, by and large, simply refuse to humble themselves before God. We hate to do that, don't we? We hate to humble ourselves.

We refuse to be humbled. I know when I was in high school, one of the worst things you could possibly do is embarrass a kid because you had a fight on your hands. See, people don't like to be humbled.

Pride, in fact, is at the very root of iniquity itself. Pride creates a refusal to submit to anyone, and repentance requires that we submit ourselves unto God. The pride of a person's heart can so blind them that they would be successfully able to ignore the continual warnings of an infinitely powerful God and, in turn, ignore his perfect wrath.

You know, you can turn on the television, and you could think, man, what is this world coming to? Man, we really need to straighten up. We need to turn this thing around. But the question is, will the pride that's in our hearts keep us from going ahead and turning around in our own personal lives? True repentance requires brokenness before God and an agreement with Him that we have, in fact, sinned against Him.

It requires that we examine ourselves to discover the very depths of our wickedness in the sight of God. This is an act that pride utterly rejects. See, pride is going to destroy more people than any other sin because we utterly refuse to humble ourselves before God.

This is the true essence of hardness of hearts. Every time God convicts us of sin and leads to genuine repentance and a person refuses to repent, the chances are lessened that they will ever repent. Did you know that? It's lessened.

Every time God calls and we don't answer, the chances are less that we will ever answer His call. As this happens on an ongoing basis, it becomes less and less likely that the person in their pride will ever repent. While at the same time, pride tells the person that they can repent when they get ready.

How many times do we think that? We think, you know what, I will repent before the Lord when I get ready. This is the delusion that has won millions of souls into hell. It is the apex of pride to believe in our heart that we can repent before a holy God when we get ready.

Because you know what? Scripture tells us very clearly that we can only come to the Lord when He's drawing us. Only when the Father draws us can we come. We don't just wake up one morning and say, you know what, I think I'm going to repent this morning.

We can only come when God draws us. God responds to such behavior by hardening the person's heart when they reject the gospel message. It's the same thing that happened unto Pharaoh.

You see, Pharaoh had been given opportunity after opportunity after opportunity to repent. But he just got harder and harder and harder. He rejected God and rejected God and rejected God until he was ultimately destroyed.

Most people do not consider themselves to be proud. They don't. Most people don't.

If I were to take a poll in this room, most people would say, oh absolutely, I'm not proud. But this is also a delusion. Any amount of pride that is sufficient to keep a person from humbling themselves before God is sufficient to warrant God's eternal wrath.

So you don't have to be the most proud individual like Pharaoh on the earth. All you need is enough pride to keep you from humbling yourself before God. Second page, top section.

The wrath of God is revealed. Now we're going to begin to put the whole passion into a context. Let's put it into a context this morning.

So it'll all make sense. Because it needs to make sense. Because so many times people go away and they think, well what does all that mean? Why all the blood? Why all of the beating? Why was this necessary? The wrath of God is revealed, top section.

The book of Genesis tells us how everything began. The book of Revelation tells us how everything is going to end. But the book of Romans tells us how we can be spared from God's wrath.

We need to know that. You know, if there's a book on earth that we need to have in our possession, it's the Bible. And if there's one we really need to familiarize ourselves with, it is the book of Romans.

Because it tells us how to be in a right standing with God. The book begins by informing us that God's wrath is revealed from heaven against all people who suppress the truth by their sinfulness. No matter who the person is, listen, no matter who you are, you have a certain amount of knowledge of God that we are accountable to God for and the way we handle it.

It doesn't make a difference who you are. You have a certain amount of knowledge of God. Jesus sums this up when he says, And here's where I want to key in.

That is Luke 12, 47 and 48. This is a description, watch this, Did you hear what I said? It's based exclusively on how much we knew about God and what we did with what we knew. How much light was shined upon our path and how much we were willing to walk in what we knew to walk in.

That is how we will be judged in the judgment. The more we are aware of concerning God, the more we will be accountable for. Second section, without excuse.

You see, there's no such thing as being born an atheist. It's impossible. There's a Hebrew word in the Old Testament, You know this passage where it says, You know that passage, right? That Hebrew word is nabal.

It means to wilt. In other words, it was once alive, but it wilted. Why do things wilt? No light and no water.

The Bible talks about the word of God is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path. The Bible talks about the Holy Spirit would be in our bellies as rivers of living water, that spake he of the Spirit. When you take those two things away, we begin to wilt and wilt and wilt until we become, as the Hebrew word nabal means, you have said in your heart, there is no God.

Everyone is born knowing there is a God. Romans 1, 19-21 For the truth about God, this is the New Living Translation, is known to them instinctively. God has put this knowledge in their hearts.

From the time the world was created, people have seen the earth and the sky and all that God has made. They can clearly see his invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature. So they have no excuse whatsoever for not knowing God, at least to some extent.

You know what? I've told people many times, there is no way, even if I had never become a Christian, that I could believe that this creation that I see when I look in the mirror got here by accident. It's utterly impossible. It's far too sophisticated.

I know a little bit about mechanics. I studied that. That used to be my thing.

And I realized how easy it is to make something like an engine not work. Just take one plug wire off. Just cross a few wires here and there, and it doesn't work.

But yet when you look at us and all of our intricacies, and you see how God has so formed and made us, it is utterly impossible to believe that any of this could have got here by time plus chance plus anything other than God. Everyone is born knowing there is a God. And most people, they immediately begin to suppress that knowledge.

The pagan natives who commit all sorts of wickedness are utterly without excuse before God. God will hold them accountable for the truth they know. What is that? Everyone has a conscience.

Everyone has the light of creation. And of a certainty, they will not walk in the light of their conscience or the light of nature. That's how they became so depraved and wicked as they are.

Second paragraph. This rebellion against such little truth is far more than enough to warrant ascendance of eternal damnation. How much then, and I want you to think about this so that you can understand where America is this morning.

Why is it that God put it on Mel Gibson's heart to do the passion movie? Why is it that you see a guy toting a cross down I-70 causing traffic to back up for miles till it's on the news? Why are you seeing these radical things that God is doing in people's lives to get them to try to get America's attention? I'm going to show you why right here. How much then would you suppose that the wrath of God would be revealed to those who have a Bible? That have a Bible. Natives don't have a Bible, do they? They don't have Bibles.

When you consider that only since the printing press was developed in the last 400 years, have Bibles even been available in the world to individuals or to families. There have only been Bibles available, church, in the last 400 years. Go all the way back to the time of Noah, people did not have Bibles on an individual basis.

Now you think about it. Going all the way back to Sodom and Gomorrah, they did not have Bibles. As a matter of fact, Jesus said that had Sodom and Gomorrah heard the gospel of Jesus Christ, they would have repented long ago and it would still be a city today.

Think about it. Sodom and Gomorrah would still be a city today if they would have only heard the gospel. Other nations were destroyed by God's wrath.

Jesus said they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. What is that? That is a state that you reach in such humility that you just pour contempt upon all of your pride. You put on a dress to where you look hideous before people as to try to bring as much defamation to you to exploit who you are as a sinner before God.

Jesus went on to say that because of that, these people that God judged will rise up in judgment against those who rejected repentance after hearing the gospel. Think about that for a minute. When we think about Sodom and Gomorrah, I bet you if I were to take a poll in here, you'd probably say, I bet you those people are pretty deep in hell.

Hmm? Probably think, man, them people are probably pretty near the bottom. They were some wicked people. But Jesus said they would have repented long before this if they would have just heard the gospel.

So you think about the requirement that that puts upon us, upon our nation as a whole. Last paragraph in the bottom section. So what then shall come of those who have been enlightened, literally made to see, who have tasted of heavenly things, who have received the Holy Spirit, the good word, that's the Greek word *rhema*, what's that mean? That means God spoke to you in your heart through His word.

And He applied a scripture to your life. And you knew it was God saying it to you. You knew it was Him.

You knew you weren't just reading something. You knew He was talking to you through His word. And the power or the *dunamis* of God, which is the power of God, have you ever been healed? Have you ever felt the presence of God in a service? Have you ever seen God move in some type of miraculous way in your life? You have been exposed to the powers of God and the powers of the world to come.

To whom much is given, much is required. The peril of an unrepentant person who is pagan is tremendous. But what shall we make of the impending doom and utter destruction upon those who have been thoroughly acquainted with the things of God, have familiarized themselves with Him, and yet have rejected Him as they have known Him? Say, where are we today in America? Where are we today in the church? The more we know, the more we're accountable for.

The more intimately acquainted we are with God, the more we're accountable to Him. It's a fearsome thought when you think about it. What will be the fate of those who have passed by 50,000 churches in their lifetime and yet rejected every reminder that they ought to repent? I did some numbers this morning.

I like doing statistical analysis. On the way to church this morning, I counted. I passed by 12 churches.

This was the 13th. I've got to go home past another 12 of the same churches. Now, each time I go by one of them churches, what do you think I think of? When I become an eyespot of a church, what do I think of? It's a reminder, isn't it? You see, we can go to the deepest jungles of South America.

We can go to remote regions of Canada, and they don't have churches everywhere, do they? They don't have this continuous reminder. As a matter of fact, I did some more numbers. I estimated that in an average day, just in passing by churches alone, it's at least 50 to 100 times a day that I'm reminded.

50 to 100. Do the math on that number. And in a lifetime, if I live 50 years doing that, I have passed by and been reminded of God 1 million times.

1 million times just by seeing churches. 1 million. That is a tremendous number when you think about it.

What will be the fate of those who have passed by? Let's just use the conservative number of 50,000 churches in their lifetime and yet rejected every reminder that they ought to repent. Every time they see a minister on TV or a Christian bumper sticker, every time they found that old Bible while sorting through the closet and yet tossed it up on a higher shelf to forget God. What shall be, what shall come of those who have also mocked the messengers of God and despised His Word? You know, not all preachers are perfect, are they? But it's not going to be a very good excuse when we just say, Well, I'm not going to serve the Lord because these guys are just all crooks anyways.

It may be, but it reminded you about God and your relationship with Him, which has nothing to do with that guy whatsoever. In Hebrews 10, 27 to 31, we read, Those who despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses. Just think about that, two or three witnesses, and we already have entered at least, at 50 years, one million articles of evidence.

Of how much sore punishment, suppose ye, shall it be thought worthy? Who hath trodden underfoot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace. For we know Him who hath said, Vengeance belongs unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, the Lord will judge His people.

It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. You say, why was Jesus beaten so bloody? Why was He beaten like He was? Why so much of the stripes? Why did they have to use a cat of nine tails till His bones were exposed? Why did these things happen? I'll tell you why they happened, church. Because God loved us.

He loved us and He did not want to see us end up in hell. You know what, we're going to end up wherever the person we're following is headed. It's that simple.

You may not really catch a single thing that I say this morning, but you can get this one fact. I told my kids, which are, they're little, I mean, they're not as little as they were, but even when they were little, I would say things like this. You see this car in front of me, kids? Yeah.

I see it, Dad. I said, what happens if I follow this car to where it's going? He said, well, I guess you're going to end up at his house. So I'm going to pull up in his drive, right? And that's where I'm going to park.

I'm going to go where he's going. You know what? Jesus walked by the disciples and He said to follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. Follow me as opposed to following who? The devil.

Where's the devil headed? He's headed for hell. And if we're following Him, it only stands to reason and logic we will end up where He's going. But if when Jesus passes by, He says, follow me, we turn and repent and follow Him, we'll be where He is and end up where He's going.

A very simple thing. Even a child can understand such a thing. The cup of iniquity.

The cup of iniquity. I want you to understand on a national level and on an individual level what we're going to talk about. This is something you'll never hear preached or taught.

Very rare if you ever hear it. Many people do not realize that God has placed a limit upon the amount of sin that He will allow a person or a nation to commit. He's got a limit on it, church.

The strength of this iniquity is based upon the amount of light or knowledge that the person had or the nation had in order to know to do right. The more about God that you know, the faster the cup fills up. It's that simple.

Both individual people and this nation are sinning as though there were no legal limit on sin. But every person and nation has been allotted, watch this, a measure of sin. You've been allotted a measure of sin.

I can give you at least four specific places that are taught by Jesus, Paul, and in the Old Testament that deal with this very fact. We'll only cover a couple. In Genesis 4.13, Cain tells God, My punishment is more than I can bear.

Now think about that. My punishment is more than I can bear. This is the first occurrence of this certain Hebrew word, which is here translated as punishment, but in other passages of the Bible is translated as iniquity.

It's only ever translated three times as punishment. All the others, it's translated iniquity. What's iniquity mean? It means perverseness.

It means evil. Doesn't that really define the society in which we live? It means to take things that are true and twist them. That's what it means.

That's what wickedness means. See, wickedness means to twist. Wicker furniture, you wet it down and you do what? You twist it.

Wickedness is to take a truth and twist it. That's what the devil does. He has no original truths.

He takes God's things and twists them. He takes things like love and twists it and makes lust. He takes all sorts of things and twists them.

That's wickedness. It means evil. It also means lawlessness.

Iniquity is proportional to judgment. Think about this. He said, my judgment is more than I can carry, but that word is also translated as iniquity is more than I can carry.

In other words, iniquities are like judgment debts that have to be paid. Every one of our sins have to be paid for. Did you know that? Every one.

Not one is free before a righteous God. Every single time you told a little white lie, every single time you did something you know you shouldn't have done, every time you transgressed your conscience, that is a sin that has to be forgiven. And when you think about that and you watch the passion, you begin to see what the level of punishment was required to bring forth forgiveness for our sin.

The second time it is used, this Hebrew word is Genesis 15, 16, where we read, See, Abraham was not able to go in and immediately take the land God had promised because the people's wickedness had not quite reached the level where God was going to bring judgment, dispel them from the land and usher in his people. But it was filling up. As a matter of fact, as I've done a study of the Amorites, it took some time for it to fill up.

Say, why was that? Well, chances are they wasn't progressing in their wickedness, maybe like Sodom and Gomorrah was. And they didn't have the light of the gospel or the light of God's word like other nations had. So it was a slow progression.

It wasn't fast like we've seen happen with other nations. This is because all impenitent sinners are treasuring up for themselves wrath against the day of wrath, Romans 2, 5. Impenitent means that we know to repent and we refuse to turn. Matthew Henry comments on this saying, that there is a time when people in their wickedness are ripe for judgment.

America is turning red on the vine, church. Hmm? Hear me this morning. You don't need to be a preacher to know that.

America is fastly turning red on the vine. The sins of Sodom were great before the Lord, and they were brought to ruin quickly, as also were the Jews when Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 of the current era. Did you know that after Jesus died on the cross, that nation did not last 50 more years until it was utterly annihilated? Jesus prophesied it.

You remember the passage when he said, There will not be one stone left upon another till all of it is thrown down. Think about the utter destruction that came upon them when something like one million Jews were killed for rejecting the message. Why is that? Because those who sat in darkness saw a great light, and they refused to respond.

And God brought judgment at a level that you just couldn't imagine. We know from Josephus that they plowed the temple over, or they knocked it over and plowed the ground underneath, farmed it. That's utter destruction.

The Amorites took a while for their sin to fill up, and therefore Abraham was not able to go in and possess the land just yet. Jesus told the Pharisees, Wherefore you be witnesses unto yourselves, that you are the children of them which killed the prophets. Now watch what he said.

Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. And they did. They did.

They filled it up. You serpents. He went on, he said, You generation of vipers, how will you escape the damnation of hell? Paul also used this illustration in 1 Thessalonians 2, 14-16.

For you, brethren, became followers of the churches of God, which are in Judea, or in Christ Jesus. For you also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets, and have persecuted us. And they please not God.

They are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles, that they may be saved. Watch this. To fill up their sins always.

For the wrath of God has come upon them to the uttermost. See, they weren't just not living it. They were actually suppressing it.

And they were filling up their sins. And the wrath of God was about to come upon them to the uttermost. Individuals, peoples, and nations that refused to repent are filling up their sins.

And finally, before I move on, let me just say this. I think it's worth thinking about this morning. You say, Brother, this is a very strong message.

Yes, it is. But we live in desperate times. Don't we? Don't we? Let me ask you.

I had a brother tell me one time. He said, Brother, you sit out in front of my house one day, and you told me, you said that if my neighbor's house was on fire, I would not ask permission to kick the door down and go in and try to get him out if I didn't see him coming out. He said, you wouldn't go up to the window and just say, Hey, guys, the house is on fire.

Come on out. Come on out. You wouldn't do that.

If you really loved your neighbor, you would take action to save him, wouldn't you? It's not loving your neighbor just to stand there and say, You know, guys, your house is looking a little strange. You know, you

got a slight discoloration up here on the roof. That wouldn't be love, would it? The house is on fire.

We need to scream fire. And I'm screaming fire this morning. Church, out of love.

How full, finally, is the cup? How full is the cup? As a nation, we for certain are fastly filling up the cup of iniquity as an invitation to God's wrath upon us. When 9-11 hit, people fell to their knees. And pretty soon we were talking about what we were going to do to Al-Qaeda, and literally only a couple more people than the week before showed up to church.

And I was devastated. I was devastated that this nation was brought so close to its knees and only a few more people than normal showed up to church. I was devastated.

But then it wasn't long when that fear gave way to national pride, and now we're holding hearings in Congress, figuring out who we're going to blame. Instead of saying, maybe I need to repent, maybe our nation needs to get back to God, we're going to point fingers at this group, at this group, the former president, the current president. It's got to be somebody's fault, right? Why don't we just repent? Why don't we just turn to God? I'll leave you with these questions.

Has there ever been a nation upon the face of the earth that had as much light as America, and yet showed the level of contempt as do we? There's never in my knowledge ever been even a nation that had a Bible for every household in the history of the word of God, ever. But yet still showed contempt for God's word. Have there ever been a people who have had as much knowledge of God as individuals do, and the average American, and yet continue in their sins? In America, God has made himself known on every hand.

Many sin hotspots are within eyeshot of a church or a cross. How many times have you been heading to some place that was sinful, and God was saying, don't go there, don't go there, and you pass by a church or something, or a Bible bumper sticker on the way, and God was telling you, please don't do it. Please don't do it.

If Sodom had Bibles, as does America, would they have vexed Lot from day to day with their sin? What if there was a church in every community of the city? Keep in mind, I only live over in Englewood, and I pass 12 churches on the way here. Twelve. It's about a 10-minute drive.

That's one per minute. If that's true, everywhere I drive in Kansas City, for every 30 minutes I'm on the road, I'm getting 30 reminders to repent. 30 reminders, not including bumper stickers, not including anything else that's happening.

Would they have sowed sin? What about legitimate Christian TV and radio, and an abundance of Christians? What about that? You know what? God's probably placed Christian people in your life, in all of our lives, to try to keep us on track. Amen? Sent that person, you thought, man, that's pretty weird that you come from where? And you're working here next to me? See, God's sending people, and we need to take heed. Next to the last little paragraph there.

In his book, Repentance, the First Word of the Gospel, Richard Owen Roberts asks the most riveting series of questions to both impenitent individuals and nations. He asks, he asks, have you ever considered what it would be to be under the wrath of God to the utmost? Now, this is a God who has infinite resources at his disposal. Do you have any idea how close to full your measure of personal sin is? Is it possible that it is precariously close to full at this moment? Is it possible? Is it possible that just one

more sin is all that is allotted to you? Your final sin could be your refusal to repent right now.

Finally, how much longer will God extend his hand of mercy to us as a people and a nation? How much longer can we refuse to repent? You see, I believe the Passion movie in itself takes our accountability as Americans and individuals to a whole new level before God. It takes our accountability to a whole new level before God. Many have not just read the Bible, but millions have seen the Passion of Christ and a realistic depiction of Christ's sufferings.

What level of judgment are we at based upon how much we know in comparison to a pagan native who has never even seen a Bible? Think about it. They've never even seen a Bible. But look where we are.

Could this be? Could this be? I'm not the originator of this question. I'm just borrowing it. Could this be America's final altar call? Could this be everyone's final altar call? Could it be this morning? Just by way of, I've got maybe 30 seconds, testimony.

This year has been a different year in my life, church. God has brought me to a new level of repentance before him in light of everything that was happening. In the month of January, our church canceled three Sunday services almost back to back.

That has never happened before in the history of this church. And what was God saying to me? I'll just use me. He was saying, wake up out of your slumber.

You don't know what's coming. And I took heed to that. It's my prayer this morning, church, with all the love that's in my heart, that you would hear me screaming fire and that you would see, as it were, God trying to run through the door to save you from a burning building of your sin.

You'll never regret serving God in light of eternity. But if the day comes that you have that last opportunity, be like my little boy. Told the kids we're going to go to Coolcrest.

He could be good. Little Johnny. You know Johnny.

He's a rambunctious little boy. I said, Johnny, we'll go to Coolcrest and play miniature golf if you'd be good. Started getting rambunctious, so I had to start cracking down on him.

I said, Johnny, if you act up again, I'm going to put you in the corner. And I had to put him in the corner. That don't always work too good, does it? It didn't take him very long, and he was back doing the same thing again.

You see, I was stepping up the level of judgment with each disobedient act. So finally I said, Johnny, one more time, and you're not coming to Coolcrest with Daddy and the kids. He acted up again.

And I said, Anna, call the babysitter. He jumped out of the corner, screaming, Please, Daddy, no. No, Daddy, I'll be good.

And then he ran over real fast and tried to stand up straight in the corner. It was too late.

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