

Don't Be One Through Whom Satan Infiltrates the Church

by Santosh Poonen

This sermon emphasizes the necessity of knowing both the Scriptures and the power of God, as highlighted by Jesus' rebuke to the Pharisees. The speaker encourages the congregation to memorize key Bible verses and to engage deeply with God's Word, stressing that mere knowledge without experience of God's power leads to spiritual error. He warns against the dangers of complacency and the infiltration of worldly influences within the church, urging members to remain vigilant and united in their faith. The importance of prayer, fellowship, and personal accountability is underscored, with a call to seek God's power actively in their lives.

Scripture: Matthew 22:29, Joshua 1:8, Hebrews 2:6, Exodus 14:14, Ephesians 4:1-3, Proverbs 14:1, Acts 2:42, 1 Corinthians 11:3-6, 2 Timothy 3:16-17, Romans 12:2

Topics: "Scripture Knowledge", "Power of God"

Description

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Transcript

Morning family. I was challenged afresh just by listening to the memory verses. Jesus told the Pharisees, they came to him with a very complicated question and they didn't get the answer they were looking for.

He said, you're wrong. If you turn that briefly, Matthew 22, verse 29. By the way, just a note about our verses that I've shared before and is worth sharing again, is that we have intentionally chosen key phrases in the verse so that everybody can memorize it.

These verses are actually used by many churches that we're in fellowship with across the world, most of whom, for most of whom English is not their first language. But yet they have a desire to memorize it in English or perhaps in some cases it's been translated to other languages. And if you can memorize more, that's great.

But it's set to be a small enough quantity that I believe that not one of us should not be able to memorize it. Even the children, I love that they do it. Sometimes their verses are longer than ours, but they do such a great job.

Good job, children. But it's always a good habit. I want us to get in the habit, I would like us to get in the habit of going to the verse every week.

You know, after this week, sometime today, this week, go to Joshua 1 verse 8 and read that verse, read the verses before and after, read that chapter, ask God to speak to you. Children, do that also. You'll really get the benefit of this.

But at least now you'll know where that phrase is, that key phrase, what is man that you are, that you remember him, Hebrews 2 verse 6. You'll remember that. Yeah, I can go there and see what was he talking about? He's talking about why would the Father send Jesus for unimportant man? He didn't make a way of salvation for the angels that fell. He didn't have to make a way of salvation for Adam and Eve and Santosh that fell, but he did.

What is man? What am I that you remembered me? That's there and here in Matthew 22, Jesus says, you are wrong. I like that. That's I think the 1977 at ASV.

My translation says you're mistaken. I like you are wrong. You know how in some game shows they have wrong answer.

That's this. Did you have an week this week, dear friends? Red buzzer, wrong answer. You did if you didn't know both the scriptures and the power of God.

It's plain and simple. If you didn't know the word of God and the power of God in some way this week, then you got a wrong answer. Doesn't matter if, oh, nothing bad happened, I guess.

Yeah, things went along fine. But it's here in our Bibles that you were wrong this week if you didn't know the scriptures and the power of God, which is why we want to emphasize that our children and all of us should know the scriptures and we should know the power of God. Every prayer we should pray as a church should be, Lord, give me your power.

Don't want it just to be doctrine scripture that we know. That's good. That's one leg.

The other leg is, Lord, I want to know your power. You are wrong because you don't know the scriptures or the power of God. And you could have studied the law like they did.

I mean, these people spent more time studying the law than Peter and James and John and Thomas. Where did Peter have time to study God's word? He was out there fishing, probably not very smart in school. And he didn't even have an audio Bible back then.

It was just like, okay, I got to sit and listen to the preachers, the rabbi read it on Saturday in the synagogue and then go back. But somehow, Peter got it and the experts who spent their whole life studying the law didn't get it. God looks at the heart and if you have a heart and you find that you don't have enough time really because of the busy schedule, but you have a little bit of time, give what you can, dear brothers, dear sisters, dear children.

I know many of you have busy school schedules already. Give what you can to God, to his word. And then when you're walking through the hallways in your classroom or on the playground or on your way to school or you're falling asleep at night, say, Lord, I want to know your power.

Otherwise this whole week will be a waste. I will have got all the wrong answers when it comes to eternity. Even if I got all the right answers when it comes to this earth, give me your power.

I don't want to get to the end of my life and God say, your whole life was wrong because you didn't know the scriptures or the power of God. This is our passion as a church. This must be it, to know the word of God and to know his power.

Nothing you hear in this church should ever condemn you. If we preach the higher standard and you find that the standard is getting higher, it's because God is showing us more from his word, that he's more holy, more pure, more loving, more full of peace, more one. The father and son of the Holy Spirit are more united than we ever thought.

And as the standard keeps getting higher, it shouldn't discourage you, even if you feel like it's getting further away from you. If you're not growing as fast as the revelation of God that we're seeing in the church, you follow what I mean? We're hearing, seeing more, oh wow, God's even higher. The ocean of his love that we just sang about is even bigger than I thought.

His holiness, the standard of his holiness is so big that even sinless cherubims cover their faces. You read that in Isaiah 6, the cherubims who have never sinned, they cover their faces because God is so holy, saying holy, holy, holy. And as we see that and you find, oh Lord, I need to catch up, don't be discouraged.

But take it seriously. If you find that that gap between what you've been shown in the word of God through the teaching of his word and what you're actually experiencing is getting wider, don't let it go. Don't let year after year go by and that gap keep getting wider.

Ask God for his power that will lift you up. According to the measure of the revelation of his word, he will lift you up. If he showed it to you in his word, he wants you to experience it.

This is so important, dear friends, dear brothers and sisters and children at RLCF, is so important. I really believe that our biggest danger is that we will continue to hear more and more truth and see more and more of who God really is. And we'll listen to more verse by verse and foundational biblical truths and through the Bible and what all that Jesus taught.

We'll know more but remain the same powerless life. Let it never be that way. So take courage, be of good cheer.

We ended our Wednesday meeting saying lift up your head. God is good. He will do it.

If he showed it to you, he wants to do it and he will do it. Believe him for that. Exodus 14 verse 14 is a very dear verse to my heart and I'm glad, I don't know who picked it, but one of the elders picked that verse and it's a wonderful way to start the year.

The Lord will fight for you if you remain silent. And if you wonder why there haven't been more victories in your life in this last week or the last month or you look back on 2023 and say, Lord, I was defeated more than I should have been. I didn't have victory as much as I should have over my moods, over lust, over the

use of my tongue in gossip or evil speaking or in the love of money, in jealousy.

I didn't have that kind of victory, Lord. It ought to be pretty clear. You weren't silent enough.

If you were more silent, if you were slower to speak and quicker to listen, maybe you would have had more victory. I believe you would have. So the Lord will fight for you if you keep silent.

But it became a an anchor in my life five years ago when we went through what we went through as a church. And initially, my response when all kinds of things were being thrown our way and my way was to respond and defend myself and say, come on, you guys know me. Is that really what you've seen in the 10 years that I've been here? And I defended myself and I found no fruit in that.

One day, a dear brother, not here, far away, sent me this text, says the Lord will fight for you if you keep silent. And it became an anchor. And I've held on to that.

And anytime I face a situation, which still happens to this day, where people send things at us or accuse us of things or try to gather people to them to say, no, Santosh is like this, Brother Zach's like that, RLCF is like that, stay away from them. I'll tell you what I do. I go to Exodus 14 verse 14 and say, Lord, let me never move from this place.

I refuse to open my mouth. I put my face in the dust and I say I'm a nothing. Lord, you fight for me.

And oh, I can still remember the day. I don't remember the date, actually, but I remember what that moment when that verse became a fortress in my life. 2018, it was in August or so.

And oh, it has helped me so much, dear brothers and sisters. Why am I sharing that? Because the word of God must become his power in us. Like we heard, you are wrong because you know neither the word of God nor the power of God.

So if you're missing either, then you're going to get it wrong. It's no point knowing Exodus 14 verse 14 says something if you're not experienced the power of it in your life. And I thank God with all of my heart that he brings trials in my life, in our lives.

He brings difficulties. He brings squeezings and unexplainable things where I know he could change that situation in a moment. He is almighty God.

But I thank God that he hasn't changed my circumstances sometimes because it has turned the word of God into his power in my life. It has turned that fire that he's put me through has roasted that uncooked chicken to make it edible. You see why God wants you still in the oven? You see why God still has the flame going in some trial in your life, in some circumstance in your because he wants you to get the answer right at the end of your life, knowing both his word and his power.

I welcome trials. I welcome doubts and uncertainties and being uncertain. I welcome the fogs in my life where I'm not sure what's going on and why it's going on that way because I say, Lord, you're going to prove that what I have read, believed and taught is actually going to be something real in me.

That that picture of the delicious food, that delicious looking chicken is actually going to be something I can eat. Are you tired, dear brothers and sisters? I don't know if you relate to this. Are you tired of just looking at a delicious meal and not being able to eat it? Going to a restaurant and looking at that, oh wow, that coconut curry would be so good.

If only I could almost taste it. The picture looks so good. You come here on Sundays and hear the preaching and you listen to teachings during the week and you hear and you read something in God's word.

It says, wow, if only that I could actually taste that. Then cry out to God. Don't let go of him.

Say, Lord, I've been looking at pictures all these years and I haven't experienced your powers. No wonder I have bad moods all the time. I don't have control over my tongue.

I don't have control over my eyes. I still love money. I'm still jealous of others.

I'm still grumbling and complaining. God wants you to have a reality of life. Just be silent.

He'll fight for you. Cry out to him. Let your cry be to him, not to any person.

Never defend yourself. Let's be a church like that. Think about it.

If people would be like, man, as much as we speak about even our enemies, those who speak evil about us, imagine if they could know, you know what? We do. They'll have to acknowledge. We speak evil about others.

We try to grab people away from this church like they did five years ago and still try, I think, away from this church by being friendly and inviting you to their house and all that. But they never seem to fight back because we're not here to hold on to things. If you're here and you don't feel like you should be here, I think the best thing is to go where you want to be.

Honestly, I'm not here to convince you to stay here or, oh, we might lose you. I'll tell you, brothers and sisters, I used to be like that. I can remember the time when I first became an elder in this church.

And we were small enough at that time, very small, much smaller than we are today. If even one family decided they were going to leave the church, it was just like, whoa, man, it's going to be even more empty. And that would bother me.

And over a period of time and finally through what happened in 2018, he cured me of that. Where it doesn't matter who comes and goes, I want that having God having shown us the way, God having shown us the truth, we only want people who are 100% want to be here. That's it.

Who are here because they're out here out of obedience to God, not because I convinced them, oh, you should be here, this is a great church, or how can I keep you happy and so you'll stay? Why do you want to leave? No, don't leave. We make it difficult to join the church and easy to leave. We'll roll out the red carpet for you to leave.

That's, I'm not saying that facetiously or jokingly. That's really how it is. Jesus made it easy for people to leave him by the way he preached and difficult if you really wanted to follow him.

When people came, he said, hey, this is a tough life. I don't think you want to be here. This is a narrow gate.

And after that, there's a narrow way. It's not just one moment of squeezing and then a comfortable life. It's a lifetime of denying yourself and taking up your cross every day.

Do you want that? And then when people wanted to leave, he looked at the others who are left and says, you also want to leave? Here's a red carpet if you want to leave. Now, I'm not preaching at any of you, please understand. I'm not saying any of you should leave, but let's be a church that we're not trying to hold people.

We're not going to go to other churches and steal sheep and saying, hey, come, let me win you over to our side. Leave that church, come to our church. This is going on in Christendom and we must be a witness, a different witness that there's one church in Loveland at least, or even if it's not in the state of Colorado, perhaps that they're not begging you to come to their church.

They're saying, go fall on your face before God. Let Jesus show himself to you. Take up your cross, get to know Jesus.

And if he tells you to come here, then come. But if he hasn't told you to come, go. There's other churches that can be nice to you.

They'll invite you to their house. They'll, they have better programs than we have, maybe more comfortable chairs, music's better. It may be even their preaching will tickle your ears a little bit better.

But if you are here because you're seeking God and you want a simple, pure devotion to him, you don't want any reputation here on this earth. You don't want any name. Then if the Lord lays it on your heart to be here, this is the place to be.

Then you're here out of obedience to him, not because we convinced you that this is a good church. We sometimes have people who write to us saying, we're thinking about moving here. And some of you have ended up here that way.

Praise the Lord for that. But you can all testify. We did not roll out a red carpet.

We didn't say, oh, we'll find a house for you to stay or we'll find you a job or this and that. Here, come, we'll make it easy for you. I'll tell you why.

Those of us, I believe all of us who have moved here, we've had to do it through difficulty, through uncertainty, through seeking the Lord and say, Lord, if you don't open the door, I don't want the door that Santos opened or RLCF opened. I want the door that you opened. Because what that does is it strengthens our spiritual legs.

And I'll tell you, when I moved here, there was no, you know, nobody offered me a job. I stood the risk of losing my job that I had in California. I said, Lord, I don't care what I do.

I could, I'll do anything. Just give me enough to provide for my family. If they don't let me keep my job, I believe you're leaving me here.

And we came here, right? You didn't, uh, you know, I just let the elders here at that time know that we were moving and that was it. But you know what happened through that time for Megan and I, it was just us. Um, we were pregnant with Olivia at the time.

We built some spiritual legs. God built some spiritual legs in us through us having to struggle and find a place to stay and find and go through uncertainties about whether he wanted us here. We came here and the church was a mess.

There was already division going on in 2007 when we moved here and it was like, Lord, what do we do? But that experience strengthened our legs of faith so much that trial strengthened our legs of faith so much that later on as the trials got more difficult and more intense things happened in our lives, we were able to stand and not just get toppled over. And I'm jealous with the jealousy of God that I shouldn't rob somebody else of that same experience by making it easy for them. Say, hey, come.

Yeah, we can make it comfortable life for you. I want you to have spiritual legs. We want you as elders to develop your own spiritual legs.

And that can only happen through trial, through God miraculously opening a door for you as opposed to somebody making your life easy. When Jesus alone can carry our burden, we stop relying on men. When we get to the place where only Jesus can carry my burden, then I say, Lord, it doesn't matter because otherwise if I'm leaning on somebody else to carry my burden, then when that person decides, you know what, I don't want to be close to you anymore.

I'm leaving. Then all of a sudden I'm like, wow, man, you were helping me carry my burden. And the problem wasn't that that person left.

It's that I was relying on that person to carry my burden in some way. Cursed is the man who puts his trust in the arm of flesh. You read all the way in the old covenant.

There's a curse on somebody who, if you have a relationship with somebody that you're depending on them in some way, in a human way, some boss maybe, or some other relative or friend or something like that, you're depending on them in an earthly way. There's a curse on you. It's no wonder life is frustrating.

But when you get to the point where you say, I don't have to tell anybody else, I must tell Jesus all of my trials. He is a faithful, compassionate friend. He'll never leave me or forsake me.

He promised it. And let him be true and every man a liar. When we get to that place where Jesus is the only one holding my burden up, then I can link arms with you, my brother, you, my sister, you fellow children.

We can link arms together because Jesus is the one holding up our burden. And then we can say, though all the world forsake me, we sang that song. Even if I'm the only one, if everybody else that was linking arms with you one day falls away, and you show up this in this room, I think I've said this before, and you find I'm the only one here.

RLCF is just me now. Then what? You say, Lord Jesus, you're here. And I tell you more and more, I long that the one thing that identifies this church is not who is here, which human being is here, but that Jesus is here.

And if Jesus is not here, and I'm here, brothers, sisters, leave. Go where he is. I don't mind saying that.

By God's grace, it won't be the case that I, because that's what I want. I want Jesus to be here. Every part of my being, every morning, every Sunday when I come here, I say, Lord Jesus, I don't want to come here to the meeting.

I know I'm supposed to speak or that, but if you're not coming, then where are you going, Lord? That's where, let's have the meeting there. I'll text you guys. Jesus is actually going somewhere else.

Let's meet there. But he's here, brothers and sisters. I believe with all my heart he's here.

That's what makes me love this church. You all are wonderful people. I love you all so much.

But it's because Jesus is here that I love you all so much. And let's always fight. Let's always with everything within us say, Lord, preserve us in this zeal full of wisdom and love like we sing in that song where Jesus is the glory in our midst.

You know, the churches decline and are destroyed not by outside attacks. That's why whenever I hear people are speaking evil of us or somebody else is spreading some rumors about us, I'm not afraid of it. I hope you're not.

History has proven that the more the devil attacks the church from the outside through persecution and false story rumors and blasphemy and all that, it's just strengthened the church. The church got stronger. The more Nero seemed to persecute the church and that angered him.

And it angers the devil that when he brings outward attacks at us, it doesn't crush us. It angered the devil that the more he they whipped Jesus on the day he died, the more they beat him and push the crown of thorns, the more just divine nature flowed out of him. The more the look towards those soldiers was one of love and compassion.

Forgive them, father. They don't know what they're doing. The devil hated it that that's what came out of Jesus.

The more he beat him and crushed him and killed him. Ultimately, the same is true about the church. The more the devil is persecuted, the church to outward attack, the stronger it has become.

I remember hearing the story of, um, uh, churches in Romania, um, pastors in Romania many years ago after the iron curtain fell and the doors were open in the early nineties. And I think I heard the story through David Wilkerson when he visited there and it had been some years after things had opened up and these older pastors who are sort of the older generation, as it were, who'd been through communist persecution and seen how that only purified the church and their times of fellowship, even if it meant they could only do it for a few minutes and worried about who's going to come in and kill them were so precious because Jesus was there. And they said, brother David, you know, since things have opened up, we find Jesus is not here.

We have freedom. And the Western gospel of prosperity and ease has crept into the Romanian churches. Now we wish we could go back to the days.

We wish the iron curtain hadn't fallen. We would be a purer church. I'm paraphrasing a little bit what they said, but I've never forgotten that.

They said, Lord, what are we like in Loveland, Colorado? There's no police waiting outside to see who all came to this meeting. They're going to follow you and keep track on you. You're going to have to register with them.

They're going to keep track of how much money you have and all that. You won't get that promotion because you came to RLCF instead of the state-run church. We're not in that place right today like they were in the early days in Romania.

But is the passion for the Lord here in our midst like it was for them? Can we live in this way as if we are a persecuted church where we say, Lord, you know, the persecuted church, they didn't have time for, oh, somebody else is speaking evil of me or this person left the church or why didn't that person come to the meeting today? No, their lives were at stake. Jesus was the only thing to them and they were willing to die for him. Like the early church in the first century.

Even Christendom, it's kind of hip and cool to talk about going back to first century Christianity. Do we really want first century Christianity? Honestly? RLCF? Do we want that? Where they had to run from caves to caves and then you find out, hey, elder Peter's not here. He was killed yesterday.

Crucified. Who's next? Jesus is here. I want that.

I want first century Christianity. But let's know what we're really asking for. Where these other things, oh, somebody said something evil about me.

Somebody didn't treat me right. That driver cut me off on the street. I didn't get the promotion.

I missed that deal or I don't have this thing. I wish I had a nicer house or a better car. This, this sort of thing.

We're not ready for first century Christianity if that's what's occupying our mind. So the devil has always known that the way he will destroy churches is through infiltration, through sneaking in, bringing corruption inside the church. If he can get the church to decay from the inside, he will succeed.

Never succeed from the outside. What will preserve RLCF? Not that the name matters. RLCF, the name will die at some point either.

I hope it dies when the Lord leaves this church because the name means nothing. But certainly it'll die when Jesus comes. There will be no RLCF in heaven.

I hope you know that. We will all be one body, the body of Jesus Christ, the head. He will get all the glory and the honor.

None of us will take any of it. But what will destroy this church is corruption and infiltration. If the devil can get in somehow, come in somehow and infiltrate the church, that will destroy the church.

If you look at the book of Revelation in chapters two and three, you'll see that the rebuke and the correction that Jesus had for the churches, for the churches that had decayed and become corrupt, which was five of the seven churches, was all because of things on the inside. You read about the church in Ephesus. They left their first love.

The first part of chapter two, beginning in verse 12, you read about Pergamon. They were a church that was compromising and there was immorality within the church, not outside. Within the church, corruption and immorality crept in, destroyed that church.

You read then about Thyatira. There's a woman in that church who's leading people astray, false doctrine and other forms of immorality. Inside the church, not a woman attacking from outside.

This is in the time of certainly the Roman Empire. And it wasn't Nero that was destroying the church. It was the woman in the middle of the church who had the spirit of Jezebel that destroyed the church in

Thyatira.

Sardis, they had a name. Oh, this is the church to go to, living church. Oh, their music's great, the preaching's great and all that.

But God said, I know everybody else around you, even the so-called spiritually minded people, think that you're a living church. You're dead. Sardis, last church was Laodicea.

They were lukewarm. Yeah, not really on fire for God, but not completely lost my salvation in between. That was the worst church of them all.

Where are you today, your brother, your sister? Maybe it's not the spirit of Jezebel. Maybe it's not some of the other things, but are you lukewarm? Can you say that is the testimony of life that it's not 100% zeal for Jesus Christ and his church? You have a conflicted interest. You have an interest in something in the world along with Jesus.

You have some earthly goal that's distracting you from being useful to God's kingdom. This is the church in Laodicea. And that's how God will destroy RLCF as well.

If the corruption and love for something else can creep in. Why don't you think the devil has already tried to destroy this church through persecution? We haven't faced really any persecution. I mean, there are people who left this church who said we're being persecuted.

They're making us wear a mask. Are you serious? That's persecution. Read the history.

Read Martyr's Mirror. Read Fox's Book of Martyrs. You saw it in Christendom.

We're being persecuted and dragged into jail because you don't wear a mask. They haven't read church history. That's the problem.

And why do you think the devil hasn't tried to... Do you believe that the devil wants to destroy RLCF? Oh, he does. Because he knows our motives are pure. I believe it.

Why hasn't he tried to persecute this church then? He could easily get the authorities to round us up and lock us up in jail. Do whatever. We can't meet anymore.

Why hasn't he tried that? Because he knows it won't work. That will strengthen the church. What can he get in? A little bit of love of self, love of money, a little bit of getting offended at somebody else and something else.

You're not happy with this. You're a little bit disgruntled, a little bit of jealous, this and that. The church that Jesus commended, you know what he has to say about them? Look at Smyrna, for example.

Revelation 2 verse 9. I know that you're facing tribulation. I know that you are poor, but you're rich. Jesus adds in parentheses.

Everybody else thinks, oh, that poor church, man. Don't go to that church. They don't have any money.

It's kind of like nothing going on there. Go to this other church. Lots of activity, lots of fun, friends, and all that stuff.

But Smyrna, you know, wouldn't recommend that church, really. God says, I would recommend. They're rich.

They have spiritual riches that nobody else knows about. And the blasphemy by those who say they are Jews, or you would say today, the blasphemy by those who say they are Christians. This was a good church.

So, the devil knows that he can't win by attacking us from the outside, but he'll be able to win by infiltrating. And our responsibility as elders is to be watchmen, to get up on the tower like a watchman, saying, hey, there's trouble coming. It's trying to get in.

That horse that looks innocent has got soldiers inside of it. You know the story of the Trojan horse in Troy, the battle. These soldiers snuck into a wooden horse, and the horse looked very innocent.

Oh, nice little horsey. Come, horsey. Come in.

And the next thing you know, inside of it are these soldiers that destroyed the city. It's not even a biblical story, but it's got a biblical lesson to it. Watch out for the horses, the wooden horses that have soldiers inside.

Don't let it in. That's a responsibility for all of you in your own personal lives, in your thought life, in your marriage, with your children. And for us as elders, where God has given us the shepherding care of this church, that's our responsibility to watch out for the Trojan horses that are trying to come in.

Watch out for the carbon monoxide that you can't even smell or detect or taste that could be coming in through some pipe. Why do we have carbon monoxide detectors? Because you can't smell it, can't taste it. You could die peacefully in your sleep from carbon monoxide poisoning.

That's why all your homes, the law requires that you have it. Why should we have our carbon monoxide detectors on? And you know, recently, all of them started malfunctioning. The batteries, I think the life span for that is three years or something.

Thank God for that. I wouldn't have thought about it. Time to replace the carbon monoxide batteries.

Otherwise, you could die. It's there, but it's dead. Where's your carbon monoxide detector, brothers, sisters, when it comes to your thought life? When you read the news, is your carbon monoxide detector on? Say no.

Don't read any more of that. Don't turn that page. Don't go to that website.

Oh, carbon monoxide detector. I can't let that into my house. It'll kill me.

We must do that over our lives, our marriages, our homes and us elders. It's our responsibility to do that for the church, to be watchmen, to know what is the spirit in this person that's coming into the church, being nice and friendly and saying, hey, I want to be, I want to join this church. Sense, is there a spirit in there? Is it a wolf spirit in sheep's clothing? Paul warned the church in Ephesus in Acts 20 that the time would come because he was a watchman.

He had his carbon monoxide detector on in the church. And for the three years that he was there, carbon monoxide couldn't come in. Wolves couldn't come in because Paul was there.

And then he said, I'm leaving now. You're saying goodbye to me. Now you all under shepherds, elders who have I've appointed.

He's, you know what Paul, sadly, it's sad that he just says, I don't know if your carbon monoxide detectors are working. That's what he's telling the elders. I'm going to leave, but maybe it'll work for a few days, a few weeks, a few months, but then somebody will come up and cozy up to you and say, hey, let's be friends and turn off your carbon monoxide detector.

You won't check the batteries every now and then. Read that in Acts 20. He says, I fear wolves will come in, devour the sheep, they'll infiltrate.

So our goal, our prayer as elders, when we meet, when we praise constantly this Lord, you keep us as watchmen, preserve our lives, help us to stay true to the truths that we've heard and true to you, Lord Jesus. But keep our carbon monoxide detectors alert for the church to say, husbands and wives, I hope you do that. Pray together when you pray, say, Lord, keep our detectors on, keep our discernment alerts working so that we discern this movie that the kids want to watch or this interaction that my child has on the soccer field or in the school, if you send them to school or with a neighbor or whatever.

Discern, discern, discern and do it together as husbands and wives. If your spouse is not a believer or not walking with the Lord, you can do it on your own. God will strengthen you.

Start Ephesians chapter four. I pray that our church will be united in these things. I'm done with trying to find a unity that's based on anything else, whether it's even that we like each other, we are hospitable to each other, we invite each other to our homes.

I think we're done with that. We still invite each other to our homes, by the way. We still want to be hospitable, but that's not the basis of our unity.

And we're done with even unity on the basis of whose teachings influence us the more. Brother Zach, CFC teachings, those are the ones that we find are closest to the New Testament from what we can tell, but our unity is not even based on that. It's based on those, that knowledge of the word becoming power in us.

Others, you're wrong. If you don't have both the scriptures and the power, you're wrong. And our unity is on the basis of getting the right answer, knowing both the word of God and his power, every one of us.

Ephesians chapter four, we begin reading verse one. Paul says, I beseech you walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called. In the first three chapters, he presents, you can say, you know, Ephesians is nicely divided into two halves.

The first three is talking about the foundational aspects of doctrine. You can say teaching, excuse me, the, the calling that you have, um, and your, your position in Christ, that you're seated with him in heavenly places. You read about that in these chapters made alive in Christ in chapter two and all that.

Then he says, listen, I taught you all this, you know, the scriptures now, but now you need to know the power. Now walk in a manner, let both legs be equally strong. Walk in a manner, let your right leg length be corresponding to the left leg length, left leg length.

Um, where you've heard all this teaching, but you've only got half of that in the power side. You're going to walk with a limb. You can't run, need a crutch.

You need a wheelchair or something like that. You need your helpless. You'll stumble and fall all the time.

He says, now walk in a manner worthy or corresponding to the calling that you receive. Verse three, what does that look like here? He's going to talk about unity with all the truth that you have heard in this church. Has it resulted in a deeper desire for unity with your spouse, unity with your children and unity with brothers and sisters in the church.

If not, you're going to walk with a limb. Even if it's a little bit shorter, you know, you can have a leg that's even a half inch shorter and you're going to notice it when you walk. You're going to have a lean on one side, be diligent, being diligent to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

This is what it means to walk in a manner worthy or corresponding to the teaching that we have received. And you skip down to verse 12, you know, he talks about here, he talks about the gifts God, Jesus ascended and he sent apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers. For what purpose? Why are there elders? Why are there teachers? Why are there apostles, prophets, et cetera.

Verse 12, to equip all the saints or read it as all the members of the church. The reason we have elders, the reason we have some with certain gifts and other in some areas and other gifts and other areas is to strengthen and to empower. There's that word power again, that second leg to make powerful.

Everybody, all, every member of the church must be equipped, made powerful in every member of the church. The teachings that we all have received the same are, we all hear the same sermons. We all listen, mostly the same teaching.

But for all of us, that second leg must correspond to it. That's why I sometimes said this may not be the best church to attend. If you're interested in your, your leg only growing up to this point, then you need to find a church that only teaches up to that point.

Then you'll actually walk. Your legs may be shorter, but at least you won't be crippled. At least you won't walk with a limb.

But if you come to RLCF where we're seeking to know all of God's truth and you you're satisfied with a half truth experience, half power experience, this is not the church for you, for your own benefit. We're not trying to chase anybody away. It was just, you'll be miserable.

You'll, you'll, you'll just constantly be tortured because the power is not corresponding to the teaching. The life is not corresponding to the teaching. My, I fear, I have a fear that membership in RLCF can sort of become a ticket.

Or you say, I've got a ticket. I'm a member of RLCF. And somehow you think that that will hold good standing at the end of your life.

Lord, I was a member of RLCF. Here's my ticket. Yeah.

Such and such a date. I was formally welcomed in the church and broke bread for the first time. And yeah, I was a member of RLCF and that becomes a ticket.

It's not a ticket, dear brothers and sisters, the power of God, the resurrection power of Jesus Christ alone is your ticket. And really then if you have that, it doesn't matter if you're sitting in RLCF or not. Do you have that ticket that both legs are corresponding that you seeking to know all of God's truth and you're

experiencing all of it.

And those legs are growing correspondingly. So that's my fear. And you continue reading.

He talks about things like, you know, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature, which belongs to the fullness of Christ. So there, he's talking about being patient. Do you have a power in your, in your life that allows you, that empowers you to be patient with somebody else who hasn't received, come to the same level of faith and maturity that you have? Perhaps your children.

When you see disobedience in your children, do you have the patience as a father or mother to look back and say, man, I don't remember how long it's taking me to obey God. How long it took me to learn obedience when I was their age. Let me be patient with them.

Let me not be so quick to judge them and get angry at them and discipline them. Let me pause for a moment and say, what about the impatience in me? What about the disobedience in me? And then you, what about a brother or sister in the church where you see somebody's not, you know, they're half-hearted, they're lazy in their Christian life, things like that. Learn patience, learn to be patient with your spouse, learn to be patient with your children, learn to be patient with your brothers and sisters in the church, recognizing that all of us are at different stages.

And if you're a little bit ahead of somebody else in some area, don't look down on them. Remember you came through that same path. You were there once upon a time, not so long ago.

And if you are proud, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall. And you end up worse than the person that you despise. That's what will happen.

Verse 14 talks about don't remain a child. We are not to be children anymore. How long have you been a member of RLCI? Are you still a child when it comes to the things of heaven? Don't get any revelation from God personally.

The word of God is still just, I don't know, I didn't get it. Need the elder or brother Zach's message to explain this to me. Yeah, it starts there.

That's what children are. But if you've been here for some time and been listening to the truth, we ought to be teachers by now, Paul says. Some of you ought to be teachers by now.

Not saying all of you should be teachers, but certainly it should have come to the place where God is speaking to you and you're getting revelation from his word directly. Personal revelation from the Holy Spirit. Not remaining as children.

Otherwise, he says, you get tossed by every wind of doctrine. There's so many waves of doctrine these days. So many waves of doctrine.

Recently it has become popular as this whole deliverance ministry, teaching that Christians can have demons and we're going to deliver you from the demon of lust and deliver you from the demon of this and demon of that. I hope none of you are deceived by that. I hope not.

False doctrine, teaching, healing through deliverance and all these things. So don't be tossed around by every wind of doctrine. A child is what? Somebody who still has short legs.

I'm not trying to be funny. There are people who have disabilities. In the earthly life, you can't blame them for it.

In the spiritual life, if your legs have not grown in length, you're to blame. I'm to blame if my legs as a 40-year-old Christian or 50-year-old Christian are still four-year-old legs. That means I haven't grown spiritually.

I haven't taken it seriously. I haven't had a burden to know God's word and to experience this power correspondingly. So even if your legs are the same size but they haven't grown according to how long you've been listening to the teaching, there's a problem.

Not to remain children carried around by every wind of doctrine and verse 15. These are all different aspects of growing in unity in the church, preserving the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace. Be truthful in love.

He says, you know, some translations say speaking the truth in love. The literal word there is actually being truthful. So yes, part of it is speaking, but it's also being truthful.

That means you're not walking in hypocrisy. That you're not pretending to be somebody and give an impression in the church that you're such and such a spiritual person, but secretly, you know, you're living in hypocritical sin. Don't be discouraged.

I started out by saying there's no condemnation, no discouragement in the true church of Jesus Christ. I am encouraging us and exhorting us, your church family, that we can come up higher. We can take an honest look at ourselves and instead of just patting ourselves on the back with the RLCF ticket, which is not a ticket, like I said, we can go on our face before God and say, Lord, I have to be honest with you.

For as many years as I've been in this church, my life doesn't correspond to the teaching. Let this be the last day that that happens. Set it right, Lord.

Give me your Holy Spirit. Pour out your spirit within me so that the experience of my life will correspond to the church that I'm sitting in and what I'm taught. Be truthful in love.

It means you're walking in the light as Jesus is in the light and on the basis of that, you have fellowship with your wife, with your husband, with your children, with other brothers and sisters in the church. Be truthful. Just be honest.

No pretense. Imagine if Jesus can look down from heaven and see RLCF, they may have a lot of problems, but at least they're an honest group of people. Oh, that delight his heart so much.

It would solve all of our problems, really. We're a good church then that God can look down from heaven and say, they may not be very mature. They may not know all the doctrines.

They may not have everything figured out, but they're honest. They love the truth about themselves and they're honest enough to say, Lord, I don't deserve to be in this church. I feel like that often.

I'm an elder in this church. I don't even deserve to be here. Help me, Lord.

Give me the power that corresponds to the life and keep me in this church to preserve my life in that spirit of broken humility and dependence on you. Being truthful without hypocrisy. I'll tell you, if you're truthful,

you will never ever gossip about somebody else in the church.

It'll deal with gossip completely. Why? Because you're being honest about yourself and you honestly love that person. You can never spread a rumor or say something evil about somebody else if you actually love them.

And if somebody comes to you and says, hey, what's going on with this and what's going on with him or what's going on with her, you say, I love that person too much to say anything to you. I mean it when I say I love. Verse 16, he says, and here I'd like to give twofold exhortation before I close.

One to the men and other to the women, to the brothers and the sisters. Brothers, verse 16, from whom the whole body being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. And we'll start with an exhortation for us men.

Here he's talking about the growth that comes through the joints. The growth that comes through the joints. What's the joint? There's a joint between my forearm and my upper arm.

This part of my arm and this part of my arm. Often you may think about this part growing, this muscle and these bones and everything in here must grow. And in here people go to the gym and work out to strengthen their biceps, their forearms, leg muscles, all that.

But if this joint wasn't working, if I couldn't bend my arm as strong as things get in the other parts of my body, I'm still helpless. Imagine trying to pick up a glass of water to drink. You can't bend your arm.

Is it possible? I can't. No. This is what it's like in many churches where, yeah, we're growing, I'm taking care of my life, getting victory over sin, taking care of my family, but no fellowship with others in the church.

No interest even to have fellowship. No bending. No yielding.

No saying, I'll give preference to you in honor, brother. I'll give preference to you in honor, sister. That's what causes the bending.

The joints, that which every joint supplies in brothers is so important for us to take care of that in our relationships within the church. Another thing to think about, there's a phrase that they use in Christianity, sheep stealers. People who go around, pastors who go to other churches, make friends, or they get to know people who are visiting another church, say, come over to our church.

Or people go to other churches to steal sheep from their church, come to our church. The reason that goes on in churches is because these sheep are out there on the outskirts, or think of it like a brick in a building. You know how, not impossible, but how really, really, really difficult it would be to steal a brick out of this building.

This building is built quite a bit from brick, from what I know. And how difficult is it? It's almost impossible. It's going to take you a long time of chipping, chipping, chipping, to take one brick out.

Why? Because it's integrated into the building. But when they were building this building, I'm sure at some point there was a pile of bricks lying outside that they were using to integrate into the building. And if one of those bricks says, you know what? I'm happy here.

What do you mean? You're going to put me in there next to this other brick, and you're going to confine me a little bit? It's going to be uncomfortable. You're going to put some water around me and some cement, and then there's going to be a brick on top of me, and then another brick on top, and you're going to put the roof on top of it? No, thanks. I'm fine here just being in a little pile where I've got my own independence.

That's the brick that will get stolen. And the reason that in our church, we're not worried about sheep stealing is this, that we're trying to get everybody integrated into the body, where it's impossible. If you're integrated into the body, it's impossible for somebody else to steal you and join their church.

If you did get stolen, it's because you were sitting as a brick on the outside. You didn't come in. I meant to send this earlier, but I don't know if you could pull up.

Jade, maybe you can help also there. In the shared folder, I had a little document under sermon slides. It's a little link to a YouTube video.

Just a few seconds, while you're pulling that up, I'll talk about that. But there is a safety in the herd. I thought the children would like this.

I forgot to have you pull it up earlier. But there's a safety in being in the herd, being close, being knit to others in the body of Christ. There's a safety.

So what it is there is a document which has just a link to a YouTube link. You just click on that link, and then you pull it up, and maybe you'll need the sound as well. If it doesn't work, don't worry about it.

I'll continue. But it's the outlier, the brick that's off there by itself that is likely to fall away. And if you're continuously seeking to be integrated into the body of Christ, and I believe men, for us as heads of our homes, it starts there.

We must fight to preserve unity among our families. If you sense that a little bit of, and wives too, if you sense that there's something coming on, some friction between somebody in your family and somebody in another family in the church, watch over it. Be diligent to preserve the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.

Don't let that fester. Don't let that develop into anything that will bring division. And I remember some years ago when I first came to RLCF, reading a book by a man named Jim Simola, who's a pastor of the church in Brooklyn, Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir.

Much respect for that brother. And he wrote a book called Fresh Wind, Fresh Fire. I encourage you to read that.

It's a very, very challenging book. And in that book, he talked about when he moved to Brooklyn with his wife, and their music, the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir has won Grammys and all that, but I believe, personally, I think that they're a very God-honoring Christian group, church choir. The words are really meaningful.

They sing it in a reverential way that's very uplifting. I love the Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir music. His wife was the one that God used.

Tremendous gift with music that she had, and the ability to create music in an encouraging, uplifting way. But he said when he moved there, the church just had a couple dozen people in the church. They were meeting in this old building in Brooklyn, in a very crime-ravaged area.

And they were meeting there. There was just a handful of people. People would come on Sunday, even different people would come.

But the prayer meetings that they had, it was on Tuesdays for them, were very... Yeah, you can just have it there ready. If you're able to click the link, I had it started at a specific time, actually. And he said very early on when he started in that ministry, the Lord showed him that the Tuesday prayer meetings would be the barometer, that's the term he used, the barometer of the church.

The barometer of the church would be the Tuesday prayer meetings. And that was 2007. We had just moved here.

And I remember one of the first prayer meetings we had, none of you were here at that time. I came and there was just, I think, like one other person or two other people here. And I just read that chapter.

And I said, the prayer of my heart then was, Lord, will you make this weekday meeting the foundation of the church? Let it be the barometer of this church. How is RLCF doing? Take a look at the weekday meetings. Take a look at what happens in those meetings.

And it became a burden. And I, after I was not an elder at that time, after I became an elder, I stressed that if you really consider yourself a member of this church, you will prove it by how committed you are to the weekday meetings. Because you read in Acts chapter 2, I want you to see that verse, Acts chapter 2, after the Holy Spirit had come and filled them, and then Peter preaches on the day of Pentecost, and then many were added to their midst, many repented, and many were baptized.

And then what happened? Then the church now is born. And now it's not just quote-unquote revival meetings and large masses of people coming. Now it's everyday Christianity, walking with Jesus, taking up your cross every day.

And so what did that look like? Verse 42, Acts 2 verse 42, these disciples who had now decided we're going to follow Jesus, he was building into a church. This church, this is the first church, were continually devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching. That's why we have Bible studies.

And to fellowship. That's why we interact with each other. We stick around.

We're not in a hurry to leave on Sunday because we want to have fellowship with each other. The breaking of bread and prayer. And the real, you know, I see especially the apostles' teaching and to prayer, especially the prayer meetings that we have on the weekdays and on Saturday mornings.

I want to say it plainly, dear brothers, dear sisters, if you don't, I'm not saying that we're going to start taking attendance or anything like that, but if those meetings aren't important to you, if there isn't a desire within you, Lord, I want to be united with this church in the teaching that we receive and the prayers that we pray. I don't want it just to be, oh, I'm praying for you, brother. Thanks for sharing a prayer request.

I want to do it together with my brothers. I want to do it together with my sisters. If those meetings where we dig into God's word and we hear sound teaching, and then we share together like we do on

Wednesdays and the prayer meetings that we have, whether it's on weekdays or Saturdays, if those aren't important to you, I want to say, honestly, I don't know if this is the right church for you.

I'm not trying to chase you away. I want you to experience the knowledge of God's word and the power of it. And the only way that can happen is if you see, if you allow yourself to be integrated into the body, play that.

Can you play this? It's never safe for a baby to be alone in the gang lands of Botswana. The hunters of the Savannah are always on the lookout for their next victim and the weak and defenseless are top of their hit list. Luckily, when you're part of this gang, someone always has your back.

Generations of experience have taught these elephants how to deal with troublesome cats. This lioness will have to try her luck elsewhere. The baby elephant is six months old.

Thanks to the love and protection of her herd. Be integrated into the body of Christ. You might be that, you know, maybe you think, well, I'm the dad of the home, but there may be a circumstance where you will be like that baby elephant, where you're in a place of vulnerability.

Something's not happening right. Maybe your boss yelled at you at work and something else is going on in the home. Maybe you're facing a trial with one of your children or something else is going on.

And in that moment, spiritually, you're the baby elephant. There's safety in the church. There's safety in the church.

And I'll say it plainly. I believe, I agree with brother Jim Simola, that the barometer of RLCF will be our weekly meetings, our prayer meetings, our Bible studies. And if you want to be a part of that, you want to contribute to the health, to the fervency, to the fire of this church, make it your ambition.

Make it your goal, dear brothers, dear sisters, to be integrated, to prioritize those meetings, to set aside that time, to set aside all hangups or feelings or whatever you might feel about it and come and honestly say, brother, father, Lord, you've called me to be a part of this church. I'm committing myself to that, to contributing to the barometer. Barometer means really just the pressure.

How much pressure can this church exert in the spiritual realm? Thermometer is like that. What's the temperature of this church? How much authority does this have? The test is not what we have on Sundays, dear brothers. And we have always fought that, that we should never be a Sunday church people.

We're an everyday church people. We're integrated with each other's lives. We're connected with each other.

We can't always be here every day. That's fine. But when we set aside meetings, be here.

And when we don't have meetings planned, pray, be one in the spirit with every brother, take on the burdens of others in prayer and intercede for them. This is the only way to preserve unity, the volume, unity of the spirit and bond of peace. I want to also mention an exhortation for sisters.

Proverbs chapter 14, verse one. To me, it's interesting that the Bible uses women as an example in this context. Proverbs 14, verse one.

The wise woman builds her house. There's the wise man who builds his house you read about in Matthew seven. This is the wise woman builds her house.

And then it says, but the foolish woman tears it down brick by brick. The literal word is with her own hands, brick by brick. This is infiltration.

You start to pull out bricks from the wall. It's interesting that Bible talks about women doing it. It's also interesting that consistently in the New Testament, you see that women are more prone to gossip.

The exhortation for women, when it comes to gossip, is always addressing women. It doesn't mean men don't gossip. I've met plenty of men who gossip.

I probably, I'm sure I've gossiped in my life as well. I repented of it or don't have anything to do with it. But the propensity, the tendency for gossip is with women.

And that's why the scriptures warn us. And men take it to heart as well. If you're a gossiper, take it to heart, deal with it radically.

You will destroy your life. And I've heard of churches and seen churches that have been destroyed through women who gossip. I've seen churches almost get destroyed, but thankfully there were watchmen who said, no, we're not going to allow that here.

We're going to deal with gossip seriously. We must deal with it seriously. Dear brothers, dear sisters, check your own heart.

See, gossip is one of those things that we're not, we don't have like a, you know, a wire tap on you. We're going to always pay attention. Are they gossiping about us? No, the Holy Spirit will do that for us.

And if you engage in gossip, the time will come when it will be exposed and it will be dealt with radically. That's just for the safety of the church and for your own good. But don't let it come to that.

Judge yourself and say, is it necessary for me to ask that or inquire about that? You know, if we've, in a church like ours where we're vulnerable and we share things about each other and what's going on in our lives, the reality, that's the way we care about each other. We're protecting the herd and we share that. But it has saddened me that on multiple occasions, not just one, I've discovered that some of that that was shared here was broadcast to other people as a prayer request.

Oh, please pray for this person in our church is going through this. What was the need for that? Some private information that somebody else was going through or somebody else's child was going through, you broadcast as a prayer request, please pray for so-and-so. You know what that does? That person's immediately curious to say, what's really going on? And this is happening in churches all over the world.

Let it never happen here. Otherwise we will destroy the church. And sisters, you have a tremendous responsibility here.

A foolish woman will tear down her house brick by brick. By God's grace, you will never tear down RLCF because we have elders here that speak against sin seriously. You'll destroy your own life by that gossip.

If somebody comes to you and gossips, and years ago, again, I think most of you were not here at that time. Somebody came to Megan and said, you know what your problem is? We can't come and gossip to

you. That when we come and try to say something, you put an end to the conversation right there.

Yeah, that's a good problem to have. Let's be known that if anybody comes to us, sisters, take this to heart and asks for any information and say, I'm sorry, you won't get it from me. You have to go to another church down the road and let it be not be that they can go to some other sister in the church and get the information they want to get.

It's happening in churches around the world. Let's guard the doors. It's carbon monoxide.

It's carbon monoxide. You'll destroy your life. I've seen it happen over and over again.

I tell you, by God's grace, I don't say this arrogantly, you will not destroy this church and you won't destroy the person you gossip about. You'll destroy your own life. It's a carbon monoxide vent.

It's coming right into your living room. And as much as you homeschool your children and make sure they watch certain oddly good movies, you've got this carbon monoxide vent that's just spewing it through the way you use your tongue. Watch over them.

Let it be that the gossip ends when the moment they talk to you and then they learn their lesson. I can't go to that person and gossip. Man, it should be like that as well.

You know, this whole thing about prayer requests is such a deception on the devil. And if you've done it before, I'll tell you, don't be discouraged. Don't be condemned.

I want to say that again. Repent before God. If you know that you've gossiped about somebody, start by telling your wife or your husband with whom you gossiped and who else you shared about it that you sin.

Call it sin. Call it murder. And God will set you free from it.

If you have a tendency to gossip, easily gossip, take it seriously. Be done with it. And then go and set it right with a person about whom you gossiped.

And who knows where else it's spread by then. Maybe you can't do much about it, but deal with it. Take it radically serious, dear brother and sisters.

I want to say one more thing about sisters. You know, if there's one single act that the New Testament teaches us, that by which we manifest the glory of God in our meetings. Let's turn to First Corinthians chapter 11.

I was trying to think about this. Is there anything that I can think of where God says, this is how you manifest the glory of God in the church. There may be others.

I can't think of one, but the one thing I immediately think of is what it says in First Corinthians 11, when women cover their head when they pray and prophesy. And when men don't cover their heads when they pray and prophesy. First Corinthians 11, we in verse three, I want you to know, understand that Christ is the head of every man.

The man is the head of a woman and God is the head of Christ. And immediately when you say, well, what's this hierarchy business? Aren't we all equally valuable? Yes, but it says Christ himself is under God. God is the head of Christ.

Is Christ God? Yes, he is God. And yet Christ has chosen to place himself in that place and father, you stay up there. I'm good being under you.

This is the mystery that Christendom has lost. And with the women's liberation movement and all the other stuff that's come in here to say, no, get that thing off my head. A hundred years ago in this country, almost every church, women wore head covers, either a hat or some sort of veil.

The devils come in and infiltrated the churches. It's cultural. You know, it was really, somehow it was good for 1900 years, but all of a sudden for the last 100 years, it's, it's only cultural for the church in Corinth.

It's a life of the devil, but it goes on to say it was for every man who has something on his head while praying or prophesying disgraces his head. But every woman who has her head uncovered while praying or prophesying disgraces her head for she is one in the same as the woman whose head is shaved and goes on to talk about the glory of Christ, the glory of God in the church. And I've been meditating on it the last week or so that of all the ways that the Bible, the New Testament teaches us by which the glory of God is manifest in the church, he says, sisters, when you put that veil over your head, when you're praying or prophesying, the glory of God comes into your church.

Men, when you sit here with your head uncovered, it's not that you're better. No, God has given the tremendous privilege, responsibility to sisters to be, to, to do that physical act that brings the glory of God into the church. I'm not here to judge anybody.

I'm not here to make it a law or to do it legalistically. There are people who teach that legalistic, but I say, this is why we do it. I've heard of many people who have left this church.

We would cover their heads when they sat in this church, but the moment they went to another church, they went away. They didn't cover it anymore. So I say, well, you were just doing it because you wanted a ticket, an RLCF ticket that says, okay, yeah, cover it while I'm here.

One of the things that attracted me to Megan in the early days before I married her was I heard that she went to a church meeting where she was the only one wearing a head cover. Everybody else was there and they preached about how cults will tell you to cover your head while she was sitting in that meeting. I said, that's the woman I want to marry.

I'm sorry, Megan, didn't mean to embarrass you with that, but not to glorify anybody, but simply, is it real? Do you see why we cover our heads? Do you care about the glory of God in the church? Is that why you cover your head? Man, is that why you don't wear a hat? Is it because you want the glory of God in this church? And to say, Lord, let it never be that anything in here will, that I will be the means by which the spirit of the world infiltrates into this church, whether it's gossip or the spirit of rebellion, whether the joint's not working, that I fail to take responsibility to ensure that the joints are working. Let's be such a church, brothers and sisters. I know I spoke for quite a while, but I had a burden on my heart.

I believe it's from the Lord. If you take what the Lord confirms in your heart, then let's press on. Let's take courage.

The time is short. I guarantee you, if you weren't integrated, and if you don't want to be integrated in this church, I said, go somewhere where you can be, where you can unite a hundred percent with the vision of the church. But if you choose to stay here, do it with all your heart.

Otherwise you will regret it. Jesus will come one day and you'll look back with regret and say, man, I had the chance and I was hung up about this, or didn't feel like it, or I was too lazy, or let it not be any of those excuses. God loves us.

Jesus took the ultimate sacrifice and there's no sacrifice, Jim Elliot said, that's so great compared to the sacrifice that Jesus made for you. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/hK8CjPWsOm4.mp4>

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