

Crazy Christians (Full message)

by Steve Gallagher

This sermon emphasizes the importance of immersing oneself in the Word of God to combat deception and spiritual lawlessness. It warns against false teachings and urges humility, surrender, and a hunger for God's truth to experience transformation and freedom. The speaker highlights the need to confront sin, spend quality time in Scripture, and allow God's Word to reshape thinking and values amidst the challenges of the present age.

Scripture: 2 Thessalonians 2:9, Amos 8:11, Proverbs 3:5, Psalm 119:105, James 4:7, Hebrews 4:12, 1 Peter 5:8, Matthew 7:24, Ephesians 6:10

Topics: "The Power of Scripture", "Combating Deception"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of immersing oneself in the Word of God to combat deception and spiritual lawlessness. It warns against false teachings and urges humility, surrender, and a hunger for God's truth to experience transformation and freedom. The speaker highlights the need to confront sin, spend quality time in Scripture, and allow God's Word to reshape thinking and values amidst the challenges of the present age.

Transcript

Last week, before Luke spoke, I got up here and shared some verses out of Matthew 11. And I touched on that one verse, I think I started my little talk with that one verse, it says, the violent shall take the kingdom by force, right? And I said something to the effect that, you know, when you have been hit with the truth of the Word of God, it's like being hit with a sledgehammer, and that the Word of God comes in and exposes what's inside of you for what you really are. And long before I confronted Pastor Ed or whoever did 14 years ago, 15 years ago, I had been confronted by the Word of God.

And it absolutely devastated me when I really saw the reality of who Steve Gallagher as a person is. And this guy that came with his pastor and basically either blew off or was offended by Pastor Ed's sort of light confrontation of him, and where he's at. You know, all I can tell you is this, this is one of the things that separates the men from the boys.

This is one of the things that separates those who get it and whose lives are changed, and those who don't. You either accept the truth about yourself, humble yourself, and let the Lord speak into your heart and into your life and show you what you are, or you are going to stay in your sin. Because the reason I'm saying that is because before repentance can happen, you've got to see what you're like.

You're not going to repent if you are telling yourself nothing but nice platitudes about yourself and convincing yourself of how godly you are and what a great guy you are and all of that. It's not true. And the sooner you come to that realization, the sooner you can start getting on the path to freedom, real freedom.

Well anyway, you know, over the years, over the last 35 years, I have spent minimum an hour a day in the Word of God. Some days, hours and hours. And you know, maybe you think, well you're a preacher, you know, you of course make sense that you would spend time in the Word every day, but let me just tell you, I'm a preacher, it's the other way around.

I don't spend time in the Word because I'm a preacher, I'm a preacher because I was spending time in the Word of God before. Because my life was completely revolutionized by the Lord through the Holy Scriptures. And so all these years I've spent time in the Word of God, I could probably count on two hands the number of mornings I didn't spend at least an hour in the Word of God.

And again, just like Pastor Ed said, I'm not boasting, I'm just telling you, this is what I desperately needed. And you know, I desperately need the Word of God today. I need it 10 years from now.

I will need the Word of God all the way throughout my journey on earth. I am a sinner and I need the Word of God because if I don't have a regular infusion of it into this corrupted mind, I will slide back into old thinking and it won't be pretty. I can tell you that much.

So all these years I've spent all this time in the Word, you know, and six years ago I was doing a study in the book of Revelation. I've done it, man, at least a half a dozen major studies of the book and this is one of them. And while I was going through it, the Lord spoke to me one morning.

And when I say He spoke to me, I mean He put it, He impressed a thought on my heart, okay? And that thought, you know, after it went through my particular filters, me being from California, came out this way. Christians are crazy if they don't immerse themselves in the Word of God now while they can. And that's my message, Crazy Christians.

That's the title. And so, you know, I gave that message here six years ago and, I don't know, a week or two ago I felt kind of led by the Lord to go back to that message. And so I've been kind of chewing on it, thinking about it, and something hit me over the last week, you know, that I've, let me say it this way, for 34 years I have been harping on the need to spend time in the Word of God because it was what changed my life.

And so I, all these years since Pure Life began, I've been telling men, you need to spend time in Scripture. If you don't start spending time in Scripture, I'm not telling you it will change your life today, but if you don't start spending time in Scripture, six months from now you're going to be the same guy you are today. You know, so I've been saying those things for all these years.

But, you know, during the last week, something started kind of dawning on me. Yeah, you need to spend time in Scripture, but the way you approach the Scriptures is of enormous importance. And I think I've kind of missed that over the years, or at least I haven't emphasized it like I maybe should have, because you have to come to the Word of God humbly.

And I want to give a little backdrop to that, so if you can just bear with me for a little history lesson here for a minute. And I'm not claiming to be an expert on this, okay? I know enough about it so I can at least give you a sense of it. For hundreds of years, the enemy used the Catholic Church system to keep the Word of

God away from people, right? We all basically know that.

If you watch any of you know, movies, Christian movies of the Reformation people, you know the truth of that. And so God used Martin Luther and others behind him to open up the Word to the common folk. Wow, what a tremendous thing that was! People were living in complete darkness, and all of a sudden the light of Scripture is there for them to partake of.

Awesome! Tremendous thing in the history of mankind. You can't overstate it, really. But on the heels of that, just like the enemy always does, every time God comes in, the enemy's behind him.

And he came in this time, okay, so he had managed to squelch the Word, to keep it away from the people. And by the way, he's done that in the last century through communism, too, right? He kept people from the Word of God. They would burn the Bibles, and bar it, and ban it, and all that.

So that's one of his tactics. But another tactic that he uses is to cast doubt on it. Hath God said? I mean, that one goes all the way back, right? Are you guys with me? You're not acting like you're really with me this morning.

Are you just like bored to tears? All right, I got one fan here. He and Hunter back there. Hunter's like just right on the edge of his seat back there.

All right, so the devil comes in, and he starts using, really was on the heels of the Reformation, it began, but it reached its height in the second half of the 1800s with the higher criticism movement. And that was largely, really, in Germany when it really reached its height. But then it went from there, leaked out of there, and got into England and America.

And this was really unfortunate because in the late 1800s in England, there was a tremendous spiritual move. I mean, Charles Spurgeon, man, I could just go through the list of all the men of God, of the great missionaries that we hear about, you know, Hudson Taylor, George Mueller with the orphans. There was just a great move of God in the second half of the 19th century.

All right, so that was going on. But then at the same time, the enemy is casting doubt on the Word of God. So you basically had two divergent pathways for the approach of Scripture in seminaries that were happening at that time.

So you had men like Spurgeon and these others who had been tremendously affected personally by the Word of God. And then you had men who had not been affected by the Word of God, and were approaching it with this higher criticism mindset. All right, so, you know, the higher criticism, it began like this.

Basically, their attitude was that the Bible should be examined with the same kind of critical thought as any ancient text. That's how it began. Maybe it was, you know, kind of an innocent thought at the beginning.

I don't know, but the devil's the one that authored it. And basically, the worst of these people, the most famous of these higher criticism teachers were unbelievers. They didn't believe that this was the inerrant Word of God.

They didn't believe in supernatural, the supernatural events depicted and told about in the Word of God. They didn't believe that. Their mindset was this, that some Scripture is probably true, most of it is most

certainly doubtful, and much of it is positively spurious.

Man, wow, how can any mortal say that about the Word of God? But that was their mindset. All right, now fast forward, let's say to the 70s, and the evangelical movement started emerging, largely out of the Jesus movement that shook the whole country in the 60s and early 70s, and that's when I got saved. And the evangelical movement started changing.

And so, let me put it this way. I'm trying to get this thing down as quickly as I can to where you can kind of track with where I'm headed. Now, all these years later, we basically have four, just think of it like four, different veins or ways of approaching the Word of God by preachers.

And let me just go over these real quick. First of all, there's the higher critic, and that is still very much alive today, and you see it in the liberal denominations for sure, but it's also gotten into the evangelical movement through the emergent church, the emergent movement, and all of that. It's the same thing.

It's the same devilish mindset with a new face. Hath God said? That's the whole thing behind it, trying to cast doubt on the Word of God. So there's that group.

Then I'm going to say the other extreme, and I couldn't figure out exactly how to say this in the right way, but I'm going to say it this way. Those who interpret Scripture... What's the word? My mind just went blank. Wouldn't you know it, right in the middle of my message.

I'm just going to say they look at Scripture from a spiritual standpoint, but it's... Man, that's frustrating. I can't think of how to say it. Subjectively, thank you.

Whoever said that, it was me. And let me give a real positive example of this. Rex Andrews.

How many of you appreciate the Mercy Studies? Yeah, that is completely subjective though. Rex Andrews did not go through seminary, but he had a tremendous encounter with God back in the 20s. I mean, when you come into the presence of God like he did, I mean, it completely changes you.

And so he could take a subject like mercy, chesed, in Scripture and really bring out tremendous revelations out of it. He's on the positive side. You know, the thing with people in this side of things who are subjective, it can either be really good or it can be really bad, so you have to be careful there, okay? The third group I'm going to call the historical critical approach.

I don't know if that's the exact right way to say it. They have rejected the cynical unbelief of higher criticism except that they've held on to one important aspect of it, and that is this. They also believe that the Word of God should be approached with an intellectual examination.

Their examination lies outside of and is not dependent upon their personal walk with God. And while they can offer helpful historical and textual information, let me just stop there for a second. Here is an example of what I'm talking about.

This is the Expositors Bible Commentary. Now, this is one volume. There's probably at least a half a dozen just for the New Testament.

I've read and studied just about the entire thing, okay? So I use this, and I like it because it gives me some really valuable information about Scripture, about the biblical times, and so on. It's important for me as a preacher. But I never feel challenged as I study this.

Never. I don't think I've ever been challenged spiritually. I don't think I've ever been fed spiritually by this.

It never gives me the sense that the author has really experienced the life of Scripture, you know, that he's ever really experienced having God come in and just completely overthrow his whole mindset and lifestyle. I never get that sense studying this. Now, I grabbed this from the main house.

This is Matthew Henry's commentary. Matthew Henry, I'm just going to use him as an example of the fourth group, and that is the spiritually-minded commentator or the spiritually-minded scholar, meaning he's got an understanding of Scripture. So he's not totally, what, subjective.

He's got a solid background in the Word of God, but he's also been deeply impacted by the Spirit of God. And so when he writes his commentary, you're going to get the sense of both. You're going to get the kind of the academic, some of that, but mostly you're going to get, you're going to hear from a man who has been on his face before the Lord, someone who knows what it means to be disciplined by God, someone who knows what it means to be corrected and to go through real repentance and have the sinful attitudes in his heart dealt with by the Lord.

There's, I can name many, Adam Clark, Spurgeon, Alexander McLaren, Jameson Fawcett Brown, maybe A.W. Tozer would be kind of like maybe one of my favorites, a man who has both and really walks with the Lord. So here's what I want to say. I'm trying to get to my message, and this has taken a lot longer than I expected.

Some of you guys in here, before it's over with, you are going to walk more closely to the Lord, I believe, than men like the seminarians who have approached the scripture from an intellectual standpoint. Because the only truth that has any real value is truth that has been worked into your soul by going through the processes of the Holy Spirit. And some of you are in the midst of that right now.

I ran into Chris yesterday, Denny's and his family, a lovely family back there. And I said to him, I can't remember exactly how I said it, but something to the effect that what he's going through now is, you know, it's painful. It's hard what you guys go through here.

It's like just the Holy Spirit just comes in through the Word of God and just starts carving out chunks of your self-life, right? Is that what's happening for you? And it's a hard thing to go through. But man, the value of it. Man, you're coming into real life through this process of death.

I hope you understand that. It's not just a matter of trying to, you know, whatever. This ain't going so good.

I'm going to get back on track with what I said before. Christians are crazy if they don't immerse themselves in the Word of God while they can. And why do I say that? You know, I told you earlier when I came up with this message six years ago, I was in this deep study of Revelation.

Maybe my mind was partly clouded by that in a sense, because when you get into the book of Revelation, you can't help but see that things are going to go downhill in the end times. And that's happening around us all the time now. Deception is greater than it has ever been.

The time to be completely impacted by the Word of God has never been so needful as it is today. And, you know, what's happening is that the Lord is giving the enemy more latitude. And, you know, it's all part of His plan for the end times.

He's in control. God's in control. But He is letting the leash out on the enemy because He's going to bring everything to a head before it's over with.

And you will either be fully on board with God, completely repentant, humbled before Him, walking humbly with Him, or you're going to be on the other side. And that's where things are headed. And Scripture is very clear about that.

And so we must be spiritually fortified. It's just desperately important that we are spiritually fortified so that we can withstand the great deceptions that are coming on this earth. You know, when Paul predicted that the last days would be perilous, he wasn't talking about violence or persecution or destructive weather or any of that stuff.

He wasn't even talking about the plagues, the seals, you know, the bowls of judgment. That's not what he was talking about. He was talking about the spiritual atmosphere of selfism that would become so pervasive in the church that masses of professing Christians would find that they had no defense against the enemy's lies and seductions.

And you better take that serious, man, I'm telling you. It is... Golly, I feel like I go on and on about this all the time. The peril isn't to our bodies, the peril is to our souls.

And there needs to be the fear of God within us. If you don't have the fear of God, then what's going to happen is you'll be like that guy that Pastor Ed talked to. You'll just blow off, you know, your need to take these things seriously.

You'll blow off the need to allow the Lord to deal with you, and you'll just find a way to justify yourself and get out of it. In fact, I've heard, I mean, you know, I don't know who's who in the residential program, and I just hear little things in our staff morning prayer times, but one of these guys was talking the other day about one of you, and I don't know who you are, okay? But just digging your heels in, just will not humble yourself before the Lord, before your counselor, before anybody. And, you know, guys, man, you're only doing it to your own destruction.

That's all I can tell you. That's all I can tell you. I don't, let me just read this.

I'm going to read 2 Thessalonians 2 out of the Phillips translation just because, yeah, he just really nailed it in some ways. Starting with verse 3, the whole context, I'm going to read this whole thing because I'm not going to go over all this, but it's going to establish the atmosphere of what Paul was going through, or what he was in when he wrote these words. That day, meaning when the Lord returns, will not come before there arises a definite rejection of God and the appearance of the lawless man.

He is the product of all that leads to death, and he sets himself up in opposition to every religion. He himself takes his seat in the temple of God to show that he really claims to be God. I expect you remember now how I talked about this when I was with you.

Verse 6, you will probably also remember how I used to talk about, quote, a restraining power, which would operate until the time should come for the emergence of this man. Evil is already insidiously at work, but its activities are restricted until what I have called the restraining power of God is removed. When that happens, the lawless man will be plainly seen, though the truth of the Lord Jesus spells his doom, and the radiance of the coming of the Lord Jesus will be his utter destruction.

Verse 9, the lawless man is produced by the spirit of evil and armed with all the force, wonders, and signs that falsehood can devise. To those involved in this dying world, he will come with evil's undiluted power to deceive, for they have refused to love the truth which could have saved them. God sends them, therefore, the full force of evil's delusion so that they put their faith in an utter fraud and meet the inevitable judgment of all who have refused to believe the truth and who have made evil their playfellow.

Man, that, yeah, wow is right, and all I can say is this is why you better love the truth and love the truth about yourself and let God deal with you through his word, the truth of his word. You know, when did I say that? I guess it was Friday with the staff. I was talking about the Antichrist and these ridiculous end time movies, and you know, they always make this huge thing about the Antichrist, the man, and what I've always said is the man is nothing.

He's not important. He's just some demon-possessed man that the enemy's going to be able to use to accomplish his purposes. What is of importance is the enormity of the spirit of Antichrist, the spirit of the world that is going to usher this man into power.

That spirit is what is affecting all of us at some level or another, and that's what we need to be very, very concerned about. It's so important that we are sandbagging our lives with truth. All right, so let me just go over quickly three reasons why it's so important that we get the truth of Scripture strongly established within us, and again, you know, it's not enough to just read the Bible, and it's not enough to study it academically.

You've got to let it get into you and affect you, and I'll just give you three reasons why. Because of where things are headed in the church culture of our day, we need the Word of God because we're coming into a time of great spiritual lawlessness, and you know Jesus said it, um, the love of many. Many means most.

The love of most will grow cold. Why? Anybody know? Because lawlessness will increase. He's not talking about out there in the world.

He is talking about in the church. So Paul touched on it here in 2 Thessalonians 2. He said, for the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains will do so until he is taken out of the way.

Paul calls the Antichrist the lawless one and the man of lawlessness, but then he mentions the mystery of lawlessness, and this is a very enigmatic and, uh, yeah, just a really, um, profound concept to consider. You know, there's a number of mysteries mentioned in the New Testament. There's the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven.

There's the mysteries of the mystery of Christ and the church, the mystery of the gospel, mystery of the faith. There's mystery of Babylon the Great in Revelation 17. So here he presents another mystery, the mystery of lawlessness.

The mystery of lawlessness is a subtle power at work in our hearts where no one can see what's happening. It's an unseen spiritual influence that is continually, relentlessly driving home the attitude that outward of obedience to a few biblical principles is good enough that we don't really need to submit our decisions and plans to God, that we can live independently from God, that God's grace will cover us so long as we don't quit going to church. That's the main thing.

It's a mindset that has taken hold in the church and become entrenched in the church, and it's very powerful, you know, and ministers, wherever they're at, you know, maybe they've never really allowed

God to deal with them, and so they're just up giving little sermons, information sermons, infomercials, you know, now it's become like you can't go over 30 minutes because people get up and leave. You know what I say? See you later, man. You know, I'm sorry that you don't really love the Word of God, but I'm going to sit here and I'm going to preach it for an hour, and if we were like we should be, you know, in places like Africa and so on, they want the Word for two and three hours.

In China, they want it for six or seven hours. They're starved for truth. But anyway, so, you know, ministers, they're faced with people who don't want to be told, just like Pastor Ed.

I don't know what the pastor was like who was with this man. Maybe he's one of these, you know, appeasing sort of pastors, super diplomatic, don't offend anyone in the church no matter what. That's the most important thing, most important rule of successful pastoring in their minds.

So maybe he just appeases the guy and comforted him all the way home because his ego was devastated by Pastor Ed or something. I don't know. But, you know, there are those types.

But then there's also sincere pastors who have to walk on eggshells so careful because people will just outright vote them out of their church if they say anything wrong. Are you guys with me? You sure are being awfully quiet this morning. Let me put it this way.

The deception in the church isn't so much in what is said, it's what is left out. That is really most of the deception in the church is what is no longer taught, like repentance, the need to repent, the need to humble yourself, the need to separate from the world, the need to deal with sin in your life, the need, you know, just those kinds of things. Man, you just can't hardly hear confronting messages anymore in the church.

Let me just read, you know, some quotes here real quick. And these would be from men, godly men who lived in the late 1800s. Albert Barnes said, the mystery of iniquity seems here to refer to some hidden or concealed depravity, some form of sin, which was working secretly and silently, and which had not yet developed itself.

Any secret sources of iniquity in the church, anything that tended to corrupt its doctrines and to destroy the simplicity of the faith of the gospel would correspond with the meaning of the word. Now, I'm telling you, these men who lived 100, 150 years ago, you read some of the things they wrote about the apostasy, they absolutely nailed it, even though they lived way before that time would come upon us. The thing that we live in right now, they saw it through their spiritual eyes, and it was vague, and they couldn't quite say it, but they had it.

I mean, they had the gist of it. Adam Clark said, there is a system of corrupt doctrine which will lead to the general apostasy already in existence, but it is a mystery. It is as yet hidden.

It dare not show itself because of that which hinders it. Yeah, and that's exactly what I was saying before, that the Lord is starting to let the enemy have his way, and it's all part of his plan, so it's okay, but that's what's happening. One of the pulpit commentators said this, even at the time the apostle wrote, the seeds of apostasy were already sown.

The leaven of lawlessness was fermenting inside Christianity. The foundations of a false Christianity were being laid. This was written in the 1880s, and guys, you are witnessing it right now in the church.

It's coming to fruit now. All right, second thing. We need the word of God because we're coming into a time of a famine of the word from the Lord.

That comes out of the book of Amos, but it's also mentioned in judges when the word of the Lord was rare, the same kind of concept. Now, it's very likely before it's over the Bible will be banned. It's been that way.

It's that way in China right now. I mean, what those believers are suffering in China is unbelievable, and also in Muslim countries. They're suffering now.

Your Christian brothers and sisters can't get their hands on a Bible, so we may come to a time when we can't even find the Bible, but I don't tend to think it's a lack of Bibles that we deal with today. At least in America, it's a lack of interest. It's a lack of interest.

It's a lack of hunger. When you're talking about famine, you're talking about starvation, and people can starve in one of two ways. I mean, there's just no food to be found, and so Ethiopia or wherever, people are starving because there's just no food, but there's also another kind of starvation.

If you get sick, if you get really sick to where you have no appetite, you just won't go eat. You know, you may force yourself, but you don't want to, and that's more like what we're experiencing today. There is a spiritual disease that has run rampant throughout the body of Christ, and it's worldliness is what it is.

It has deadened our hunger for the things of God. You know, in communist countries, I don't know if they still do this, but back in the 50s and 60s, they did. You would have, let's say, a godly minister that they've thrown in prison.

He's in a cell by himself, and they have, they pipe in brain, the whole idea was to brainwash Christians, so they would pipe in propaganda, and it would go on and on and on loud, 24-7, talking about all the, you know, trying to dispel the trustworthiness of scripture, all the reasons why you can't trust Christianity, all the reasons why Christianity is false, and also talking about all the glories of communism, and these poor men and women of God would have to sit under that for hour after hour after hour, and I'm sure they were crying out to God, Lord, please keep this junk out of my mind, and I'm sure the Lord did help them. We face the same kind of relentless message in our culture, but it's because we are so plugged into the world's information outlets, and the bait that Satan uses is entertainment. He's gotten Christians so addicted to entertainment that they can't conceive of life without it, and he's using that as the Trojan's horse, that he's getting his deception into the church, and getting our minds off of the Word of God, and the truth of the Word of God, and getting it on the value system of cosmos, of this world system.

The difference between us and the believers in those communist countries is they saw the atheistic communism for what it was, their enemy. The difference is we see the world as our friend. You know, they braced themselves against what they were hearing, and we let it all flow in, just completely oblivious to the way it's affecting us, and the more it affects us, the less discerning we become.

You know, my fear is that many so-called Christians will so immerse themselves in the mindset of the world that they won't be able to find their way back out, and you guys have a tremendous opportunity in this place to find your way back out. Paul said the Antichrist, and I'll just say the spirit that possesses him, would come with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved, and as I've said, people don't mind little infomercial sermons. Just tell me about, you know, what the culture was like, and tell me what the textual, you know, grammar means,

and just tell me these little nice little tidbits, but don't start confronting me about my sin, or whatever, and you know, the reality is humans hate to hear the truth about themselves.

They do not want to be told. The reality is, guys, the only way you're ever going to acquire a love for the truth is, first of all, to humble yourself and embrace the truth that God is expressing to you about yourself and where you're at, and to spend a lot of time in this, because this will restructure your thinking. It will restructure your thinking if you'll spend time in it.

It has the power to alter your perspectives, to change your values, and to create new attitudes within you, but you've got to spend time in it, and you have to approach it with a humble heart, not academically in your mind, but in your heart. All right, number three. I'm trying to get through this.

We need the Word of God because we're coming into a time of great deception, just as scripture has told us, and Paul says it right here, with all the deception of wickedness, etc. For this reason, God will send upon them. God will send upon them.

Man, that should terrify us. What's wrong with us? He's talking about right now. God will send upon them a deluding influence so they will believe what is false.

Man, man, I'm telling you, you better get, how do I say it, start looking at what the Bible actually says, and get all your predisposed doctrinal systems filters out of your mind, and just read it for what it says. It's the only thing we can trust. Basically, what Paul is saying is God's going to give you what you want.

If you want to be deceived, He's going to let you have that in abundance. And right now, the greatest deception in the church that the enemy is spreading is that we can immerse ourselves in the world and still go to heaven. We don't really have to obey God.

We don't really have to walk in the Spirit. As long as we go to church and call ourselves Christians, that's all that really matters. But you know, the deception has been pretty much underground, but now it's starting to break out.

And I don't like to name names. I really try to shy away from it, but I've gotten to the place lately where, you know, it's getting so bad, I just feel like, whatever, I just have to say what I believe. I don't like doing it.

You know, I just, I'm really, there's a part of me that cringes at the thought of saying something about someone, even if I'm pretty sure I've got all the evidence and I can see it, I'm still hesitant publicly to name names and say, but I just, what are we going to do? I mean, someone's got to start saying the truth. I know there's others out there who are, so don't, you know, I'm not meaning like I'm the big voice of God on earth today or something. Joel Osteen.

Joel Osteen, from everything that I can see, is a false teacher. He's a liar. And I'm going to, I'm going to call him the voice of positivism.

He's a polished version of Kenneth Copeland, who brought, you know, really brought the whole prosperity message, the whole name it and claim it thing into the church in the seventies. And, you know, Joel Osteen is just a pretty depth version of the same thing. And you guys need to hear this.

And I don't know if any of you are from this background. I apologize for offending you. I don't mean to be that way, but you do need to really look at what scripture says.

The prosperity movement, as far as I'm concerned, is a self-centered, world-loving, temporal-minded gospel, false gospel. The message, it pedals right out of Joel Osteen's book. Your best life is now.

Man, what a thing to say. You're representing God Almighty, the eternal being, to temporal people, and you're telling them that the best life they can have is right now on this earth. But you know what? If that man doesn't repent and change his ways, then that book is exactly right, at least about his life.

Because the best he's ever going to experience is what he's enjoying right now, with his palace house and all his cars and all that stuff. Because when he stands before God, things are going to go downhill very quickly for him. I think you'd be better off reading books some guy wrote, *The Time of Your Life and Light of Eternity*.

Now that's a man who won't lie to you. Rob Bell, another liar. I'm going to call him the voice of relevance.

You know, he's part of the whole emergent church that's come out that is, as I said before, it's just another form of the same higher criticism. It's just taken on a new cultural form in America. I'm sorry if I'm offending you guys, you know, any of you, but you do need to hear these truths.

Young people love guys like Rob Bell because they speak their language. They talk openly about the failures of the religious system we have in America, much of which is true. Emergent leaders have a knack for connecting with disillusioned young people.

But instead of leading them into a submitted life with God, instead of leading them back into the ancient paths that take you into something, the reality of God and the kingdom of God, instead of leading them that way, they're leading them into a lawlessness, a rebellious mindset. They're leading them into questioning everything about the Word of God. That this takes second place to cultural relevance.

When I was, well, I did a thing about Rob Bell, a video that's on the internet, and I was kind of studying up on him a little bit, and I ran across what this one blogger said. He said, Bell's favorite tactic when backed up against a wall is to redirect the question back at the questioner. Very disingenuous.

I would respect him more if he would just come right out and admit what he believes, however heretical it may be. Either he doesn't know what he believes, in which case he shouldn't be preaching or writing books about it, or he doesn't have the courage of his beliefs. And that is true about all these emergent leaders.

And I was watching a video clip of Brian McLaren. Is that his name, Brian McLaren? He gave like a, I want to say 10 minutes, I can't remember. It's been a few years since I saw it.

But the question was, is homosexuality sinful? And he gave like a 10-minute talk. It was like listening to a politician. And at the end of it, it's like, he's nothing but a bunch of gobbledygook.

He didn't say anything. You couldn't pin him to the wall on anything he said. And you know, that's the way they want it, because they don't want to be criticized.

They want everybody to love them. That's one of the common denominators with false teachers. They want everyone to love them, and they want worldly success.

You know, for myself, well, no, let me just mention a third one. This one's, from what I can tell, Rick Warren is also peddling a false gospel. I'll call him the voice of reason.

You know, he can go on CNN and spin out just smooth as silk his version of the gospel. And the world loves to hear him. No wonder he's behind this ecumenical, whatever you call it, movement, because he can schmooze with popes or anyone else.

He doesn't care. And the reason why the world loves him is because he speaks their language. And you know, he, Bill Heibel, some of these other seeker-sensitive preachers who have built up these mega churches with thousands of people coming to their churches.

How have they done that? By preaching against sin? Their whole line of thinking is to make the church a safe place where anybody can feel comfortable. Well, let me tell you something. Jesus Christ did make sinners comfortable.

He confronted them in their sin. Yes, he loved them. He was a friend of sinners.

It's true. But he was there for one reason, to save their souls from sin. You guys are being so quiet this morning.

Worry me. No, not too much. Osgin has said this, when mega church pastors seek to mold a message to their, quote, market, and he's referring directly to Rick Warren there, of constituent needs, their preaching omits key components.

Gone are the hard sayings of Jesus. Gone is the teaching on sin, self-denial, sacrifice, suffering, judgment, and hell. With all its need-meeting emphases, there's little in the church growth movement that stands crosswise to the world.

He nailed it. That's exactly right. You know, I would rather tell the people the whole truth than to water it down so I can be successful in the world's eyes.

I'd rather bring a negative message, if it means telling people what they need to hear, than to promote some Pollyanna form of Christianity. I'd rather come across as irrelevant than to plant one single thought of uncertainty about the veracity of God's Word. I would rather count myself among all the saints down through the ages who have been hated and persecuted for the sake of Christ than to bring the message the world considers reasonable.

Men, we are watching prophecy unfold right now. I hope you realize the reality of that. You know, I've just got to cut things down now.

I mean, I need to bring it to a conclusion. You say that, but not everyone feels that way. We live in dangerous times.

Spiritual perils surround us like a pack of wolves, and we need the fear of the Lord. Listen, if we will subject ourselves to the authority of God's Word, we won't be part of that mass of lawless Christians who will find themselves on the wrong side in the end. If we will allow the truth of the Word of God to penetrate our hearts, God will transform us from the inside out.

If we will spend quality time soaking in the Word of God, we will find ourselves sufficiently fortified against the heresies that are dominating our culture. This Word is an anchor into God's mind. It's an anchor into His perspectives.

It's an anchor into His values. You know, our feelings will fluctuate. Our feelings are all over the place sometimes.

That's why we so desperately need the Word of God as an anchor that we are attached to. So I'll end with what I began with. You're crazy if you're not immersing yourself in the Word of God, because we're coming into a time that that is what will get you through.

It's the only thing that's going to get you through. Let's pray. Lord, I just don't have words strong enough to say.

How precious Your Word is. As Pastor Ed said, I say the exact same thing. It is Your Word that brought reason into my soul.

My mind was so driven by lust for the things of this world. I was just practically insane in my pursuits for carnal things. And it was Your Word, it was Your Word that told me the truth about who I was, what my character was.

It was Your Word that taught me the truth, and it was Your Word that got into me as I spent hours and hours and hours in it. It was Your Word that completely rebuilt my whole thinking apparatus. It's Your Word that has kept me on course all these many years.

It's Your Word, as Pastor Ed pointed out, that is settled in heaven forever. I need it desperately. And I pray, Lord, that You establish that conviction in every heart that's here today, that people will approach it with a humble heart and a hungry spirit, that they will spend time in it, soaking in it, studying it, memorizing it, and let it transform them from the inside out.

Bless everyone who's here today and everyone who may watch this later. Bless them, Lord. In Jesus' name, amen.

I just want to say something real quick. There were people in Germany before Hitler came to power who saw where Hitler would take the nation. Economists, philosophers, theologians, they knew what was behind the man.

And there were, most Germans could not see it. And most Germans would not see it because they wanted what Hitler was offering. And all you're hearing today is from a man who has spent hundreds and thousands of hours trying to understand what is behind the spirit of the world and where it is taking us.

And I understand that many of you don't see it and haven't seen it, but the Lord will extricate you from that spirit if you will spend time in His word. And that's what has to happen. So that's all that's going on is a man telling you, here is what's coming down the road and here is your way out.

And the question is, do you want out? That's the only question. All right, God bless you guys. In a very short time, my life spiraled completely out of control.

The whole time I've been looking at pornography, the longer I looked at it, it began to get progressively worse. I couldn't really explain what it was, but I was instantly addicted. You cannot take steps down a path and avoid arriving at the destination.

God wants your heart. Satan wants your heart. Whoever has your heart will control you.

Every time you sin, your desire for the things of God dies a little bit. Your faith dies a little bit. Your desire to be free dies a little bit.

And with it, the hope to get free. So how do we win this war and emerge with the victory that Christ has earned for us? What's missing is God's power to transform a person. For God to come in and do a work to set us free up of something that has taken hold in our lives, that we have allowed in there, requires surrender.

The Lord was able to show me that, yes, I can set you free from this. And hope for me was actually within reach. It was something I've never felt before.

I don't care what kind of sexual sin you're involved in. I don't care how bound up you are. If you will sincerely apply the principles that are in that book, God will absolutely set you free.

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

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/steve-gallagher/crazy-christians-full-message/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net