

Ruled by God in the Inward Life

by Steve Gallagher

This sermon delves into the significance of the day the Lord delivered the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel at Mount Sinai, emphasizing the awe-inspiring encounter that left them trembling in fear. It highlights the importance of spiritual preparation to meet with God and the foundational role of the Torah in understanding God's word. The sermon also addresses the concept of lawlessness, describing it as a matter of heart attitude and rebellion against God's authority, leading to sinful behavior. It emphasizes the transformation that occurs when one surrenders to God's will, allowing righteousness to prevail in their life.

Scripture: Psalms 68:6, Proverbs 10:24, 1 Samuel 12:15, Matthew 7:21, 1 John 3:4, Romans 6:6, Romans 8:1

Topics: "Divine Encounter", "Transformation through Surrender"

Description

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Transcript

Arguably the greatest day in the history of the Jewish people occurred about 3,500 years ago. It was the day that the Lord came to the children of Israel at the foot of Mount Sinai and spoke the Ten Commandments into those people in such a powerful and overwhelming way that they cried out to Moses to make him stop because it was too overwhelming. You guys saw the Moses movie, right? And they had that part in there, which actually I thought they did a pretty good job of depicting what those people experienced that day.

They didn't do so good as Moses, although, what's his name? Ben Kingsley, yeah. Ben Kingsley, he did it. He really did a beautiful job of expressing the joy that Moses must have felt when he would go up on the mountain with the Lord, just inexpressible.

I can't tell you how many times I've experienced that thing that he somehow, he's an actor, okay? He's a professional, he knows how to, he doesn't know the Lord as far as I know, but he got it, man. And he expressed that joy of hearing the Lord speak and of being with the Lord and hearing his word. But the reality of that day was something different because the writer of Hebrews said, this is in the Passion

translation, the astounding phenomena Moses witnessed caused him to shudder with fear and he could only say, I am trembling in terror.

That was more the reality of what Moses experienced that day. But leading up to that took three days of careful preparation of the people for them to be spiritually prepared to receive the word of God. What we take so flippantly as if it's nothing, we go to a church, we hear the pastor preach in one ear, out the other, can't wait to get home and watch the football game.

I mean, that's pretty much the attitude of many people. And that's why we have you guys sit in silence. What you do with your silent time here in the chapel before the service is between you and the Lord.

But the whole idea of it is to prepare your heart to meet with the Almighty. It's a tremendous privilege. The reality was that there were millions of people living at that time on earth in spiritual bondage and terrible darkness.

And that day that the Lord spoke the word to his people, the Jewish people. I mean, if we could envision, you know, this planet engulfed in darkness, such thick spiritual darkness that hardly anything could penetrate it. And then all of a sudden out of the heavenlies, like a lightning bolt, just an explosion of truth coming straight from the throne of Almighty God in heaven.

That's not nearly dramatic enough of what actually happened that day. That particular day they received the Ten Commandments, but they were actually at Mount Sinai for about a year. And there were many other laws and regulations and statutes and commandments and precepts and so on that were added to that.

And it was rounding out the Torah. As Brother Nate accurately said it last week, the Torah was a tremendous revelation. Do you understand? Before that, there was no written word of God.

We take it for granted, you know, but before that there was nothing written. We take the Torah for granted. You know, it's like, well, that was the Old Testament.

That doesn't really apply to me. I'm a New Testament Christian, you know, or I'm a believer in the New Testament. So that does, you know, okay, that was back then.

No, listen, the Torah was the foundation of all of the word of God. It all was built precept upon precept, line upon line. It all started with those first five books of the Pentateuch, the law that the Pentateuch encompassed.

That's where it all started. The word Torah is used 219 times in the Old Testament, and it's surprisingly evenly distributed throughout the four sections of the Old Testament. 55 times in the Pentateuch, 64 times in historical narrative books, 48 times in the wisdom books, and 47 times in the prophets.

And it's interesting though, the book of Judges does not have that word in there one single time. And the last phrase of that book kind of says it all. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Guys, that kind of describes the way your life was up to the time you got here. In spite of the fact you sat in church, you did what was right in your own eyes. I did too at one time.

And as Brother Nate brought up last week, the word Torah really just literally means instruction or teaching. And so it's used in different ways in the scripture. It can mean just the Pentateuch, the first five

books.

Sometimes it's used that way. Sometimes it's used as instruction. Sometimes it's referring to the entire Old Testament.

But let me just boil it down to this. It was really a revelation from God about how to approach a holy God and how to live with each other. I mean, that's really kind of, you know, maybe a definition of it.

And one day the Lord said that he was going to give the people a new covenant. He said, I will put my law within them. And on their heart, I will write it and I will be their God and they shall be my people.

And you know, you will know if you belong to God, if his Torah, his law is inscribed in your heart and defines who you are as a person, whether people are looking or not. Last week, Nate talked about the Psalm One Man. Was that the title? I don't think that was the title.

That was a good title though. It would have been. Too bad you blew that one.

So I want to talk about the opposite of that today. I want to talk, describe someone who doesn't really care that much about the law. Someone who really prefers that God doesn't impose his laws on his life.

Someone who wants to have his own way. So what I want to talk about is lawlessness. And there is a word in the Greek, it's anomos.

Anomos is the word for law in Greek. Ah is the same, we would say un or non, you know. Non-lawful, you know, that sort of thing.

But it's really describing an atmosphere of what goes on inside of a person. Let me read what Watchman Nee wrote. Now he, actually he didn't write this.

This was in a series of teachings he was giving his people in the early 50s, right before the communists arrested him. He said, sinning is a matter of conduct, but lawlessness is a matter of heart attitude. This present age is characterized by lawlessness.

The world is full of the sin of lawlessness, and soon the son of lawlessness shall appear. We are 70 years closer to that than he was. Authority in the world is being increasingly undermined until at the end all authorities will be overthrown.

Can anyone say Antifa? And lawlessness shall rule. Writer of Hebrews speaking of the Lord said, you have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness. The Lord hates the attitude in people's hearts that says nobody tells me what to do.

He hates that. It's diametrically opposed to his kingdom. So lawlessness is a state of mind.

It's the attitude that what I want is the only thing that really matters. I mean, that is exactly pretty much what we just heard, isn't it? Anybody hear that? You know, when I ask a question, it kind of goes up at the end of the sentence. That means you're supposed to respond.

What do you teach these people? I leave for six months and the place is falling apart. Lawlessness comes out of, out of, you know, like Jesus said, and I'm kind of winging it here, the wise man, what's he do? Out of the abundance the heart speaks. Is that what you said? Now you're just staring at me.

You see how people are, you know. Gave you an opportunity to shine. The scribe, the scribe, he brings out treasures.

Come on, Mark. Old and new. Okay, that's, that'll do.

Not getting much help here this morning. Lawlessness comes out. You know, if that's the atmosphere going on inside you, it is going to come out of you in different ways.

It just is. So I'm going to just narrow it down to three ways. The first one is this.

Self-will is an expression of lawlessness. Self-will is an expression of lawlessness. And we know, you probably hear this 15 times while you're here in the program.

Right at the end of the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 7, 21, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, in other words, identifies themselves with the Lord as a follower of his, but not all of them will enter the kingdom of heaven. But he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven will enter. And then he describes people in ministry.

Multitudes of people in ministry, maybe. I don't know. I think he starts with the word many.

Many means a lot, right? Many doesn't mean a few. It means a lot. Thank you.

Glad you agree. Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name cast out demons and in your name perform many miracles? Didn't we say, didn't we do those things, Lord? You know, it's inexplicable. I cannot understand how it's possible, but I know it's true.

Some of the biggest names in the church won't be in heaven. You know why? Because they're in self-will. They've never come under the will of God.

And yet God uses them. I don't understand that. I only know that it's true.

Don't be so impressed by the size of ministries, men. Look for a man's character. Look at his character.

Get underneath. Find out what kind of a man he truly is. This is what Jesus will say to these men.

I pity them. I truly do. I'm not like gleefully saying these things.

Breaks my heart, but I've been around enough. You know, for 35 years, I have hobnobbed with a lot of famous Christian men and women. I mean, I don't know where they all sit.

I'm not saying that. I just know that, I'll just leave it alone. He's going to say, I never knew you.

Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness. And that lawlessness is defined in verse 21. They did not do the will of God.

They were in self-will, full of self-ambition, motivated, driven by self-desire. What they wanted. Self-will comes from a lawless heart.

And you know, I prepared that Bible study for our half day of prayer. What was it called? God's will and man's will. Yeah.

And different, you know, passages and so on. And I don't know if you picked it up. I didn't put a definition in there, but the same Greek word, phalo, is used for will, is also used for desire.

Did you pick that up when you were going through it? Did anybody look at it? I underlined it so you get it, okay? It's the same word, because your will is the same as your desire. It's the same thing. Your will is the functioning part of your being that makes the decision what you desire.

I don't know. I didn't think that one through. I should have thought it through better.

But it's the same thing. So Jesus said, if anyone wishes to come after me, if anyone wills to come after me, let him what? Deny himself. He could have said, you know, let him deny his self-life.

Let him deny his will. It would all been the same. Now let me just real quick tell you kind of how this works as far as I understand it.

You have to come to a place where there is a consecration of your will to God. That's what you heard Nate share. You come to a place where you finally say, not my will but thine, as Jordan shared.

You've got to come to that place, man. Man, if that does not happen for you here, I pity you. I don't know what hope there is for you.

What hope? If you can be sequestered away for nine months in a godly place, and the Lord's pleading with you and imploring you week after week, and you won't bow your knee to him here, what hope do you have of doing it out there in that lawless culture we live in? It's Romans 6. You become baptized in the will of God, and sin no longer has dominion over you, and you're headed for Romans 8. But I'm just telling you from experience, so please understand, it takes a long time before you make it to Romans 8. There's the battle of Romans 7 in there. Man, that was some powerful stuff in there. I don't know why you didn't break out in applause right when I said that.

But it's true. There has to be that consecration of your will. But even once you've made that consecration, you still just go through a period of time where you're just kind of all over the place, and sometimes you're doing the will of God, and sometimes you're out of it, and you're trying to find it and figure it out.

You sin, you fail, you get back up, you go back on. There is some struggle going on there. I'm not talking about habitual sin.

I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about lapses and failures and getting out of whack and stuff like that. That's Romans 7. That's what Paul was describing.

But you get to that place where, man, the Lord steps in. Man, I don't know what to say. But I understand all three of those places.

I do. You come to a place where your will is conquered by the Lord. It's an awesome thing.

All right, number two. Rebellion is an expression of lawlessness. You know, the kingdom of God has an authority structure in it.

You understand that? The kingdom of God is all built on authority. And I'm not going to get into it here this morning, but it's there. And to rebel against authority, that's the way of Satan's kingdom.

That's not the way of God's kingdom, because God has an authority structure. These words are kind of almost synonymous, lawlessness and rebellion, but not really, because lawlessness means your inward life, your heart has not been conquered and subdued by the Holy Spirit. And so out of that lawlessness emerges prideful thinking and attitudes like rebellion to authority.

Rebellion's a major theme of the Old Testament, but really the most, I don't know, in one sense, I want to say the most egregious example of it is these very people that received the law that day at the foot of Mount Sinai. Those people who were tremendously blessed, they never got it. And, you know, there's a two-year period there from the time they crossed the Red Sea until you get to Numbers 14.

Actually, it goes to Numbers 20. If you really want to, this is something that's really an awesome thing. You can go to your Bible and right above Numbers 20, put a line there and just say, what do you say? 38 years ends right here.

So what I'm saying is they were there for 40 years, right, in the wilderness. There was a two-year period that goes from when they crossed the Red Sea, which is Exodus 14, up to through Numbers 19. And there's about 15 chapters interspersed through laws and stuff in there that tells the story, but that all happened in two years.

That's what I'm trying to say. Okay, I'm struggling this morning. And, you know, obviously we can't go through 15 chapters, but what we can do is Psalm 78 grasps the essence of it.

And so I'm just going to, all I'm going to do really is I'm going to read some verses that really show what these people were in during that two-year period. Psalm 78, verse 8, he's talking about, this is the psalmist speaking, you know, don't be like your fathers, okay, that sort of a thing. A stubborn and rebellious generation, a generation that did not prepare its heart and whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Man, that is, wow, what a thing to be said about you. Verse 10, they did not keep the covenant of God and refused to walk in his, what? Law. Verse 17, yet they still continued to sin against him, to rebel against the Most High in the desert.

Verse 37, for their heart was not steadfast toward him, nor were they faithful in his covenant. Verse 40, how often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert. Again and again they tempted God or God and pained the Holy One of Israel.

In verse 56, yet they tempted and rebelled against the Most High God and did not keep his testimonies, but turned back and acted treacherously. That sums up those people who died in the wilderness because of disobedience, because of unbelief. Because of their rebellious attitude.

You know, in Numbers 14, the Lord just, man, you can just feel his pain. You know, I know a little bit about it, having been in this place for 30 years. And you pour your heart out to people, and it goes on for month after month after month, and they just snub their nose at you and at what you represent.

But think of how the Lord feels when people treat him that way. And I'll tell you what, there comes a day, my spirit will not strive with man forever. There comes a day when a person crosses a line, I don't know what that line is, only the Lord knows.

But once they cross that line, it is over. And he said, that's it to Moses. These people will die in the wilderness.

And he says that like, I think it's nine more times in Scripture, that statement. This is how much this meant to the Lord, that he had this group of people, you know, maybe a million people, whatever it was, he had them all together, completely separated from all the heathens. I can really work in their lives now, like you guys are here.

I can work in their lives now. Hoping, wanting, desiring with all his heart to draw them to himself. They rejected him and rebelled against him, wanted no part of it.

They did not want to be ruled inside. That was my story as well. The only difference is, I came to my senses eventually.

Number three, sinful behavior is an expression of lawlessness. You can turn to 1 John 3, and I want to go over some, this passage, 1 John 3 verses 4 through 9 is really a description of lawlessness. The book of 1 John, this little epistle was written for, John had a purpose, and he says it, I think it's in the fifth chapter.

He said, well, I honestly don't remember exactly how he said it, but it's something, I'm telling, I'm writing this epistle so you will know. That's what he says in there. I don't know if I can, oh yeah, 513, these things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

He's trying to show them how to recognize a true believer from a false Christian. Someone who says, Lord, Lord, but is not ruled inwardly by the Holy Spirit. So, again, lawlessness is just a lack of God's law being written in a person's heart.

And before I get into this, let me just point out to you the absolutes in this passage. Verse 3, everyone. Verse 4, everyone.

Verse 6, no one. Verse 8, whoever. Verse 9, no one.

Okay, these are absolute statements. So let's go through this real quick. Verse 4, everyone who makes a practice of sinning also practices lawlessness.

Sin is lawlessness. The voice, paraphrase, says everyone who lives a life of habitual sin is living in moral anarchy. That's what sin is, moral anarchy.

I remember that. I remember moral anarchy where lust, perversion just dominated my thinking and my heart, my desires, what I did in life. Moral anarchy going on inside me.

Another paraphrase says all who indulge in a sinful life are dangerously lawless for sin is a major disruption of God's order. That's well expressed also. You know, he's talking mostly about habitual sin right here.

He's going to get some other stuff here in a minute, but when you're living in self-rule, basically everything you do in life is a sin. You know, when you're in self-will, you go to the store. You make the decision to go to the store.

You're in sin. I don't know how to theologically work that out. It just sounds pretty good.

I'm pretty sure it's true. Verse 5, you know that he appeared in order to take away sins and in him there is no sin. Man, and you know what else? There is no excuse.

Jesus came to this earth to take away sins, to destroy the works of the enemy, as we'll read here in a minute. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who abides in him.

How many? None. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

Practicing sin is absolutely inconsistent with abiding in the Lord. It's opposed to the knowledge of God. You can't be loyal and be one with the Lord.

It's not possible. It's an impossibility. And you know, by the way, all this is written in present tense.

We're describing continuous ongoing activity, okay? Every Christian sins on occasion. I sin on occasion. There's some times, you know, whatever.

I sin. I have a bad thought about Mark or something. He irritates me at times.

I'm just joking. You know, true believers occasionally sin, but they don't live in it. They're not dominated by it.

They're not in a flow of sin in their lives. You know, the best way to know where you're at with all this is how you react. You know, the reaction that occurs within you when you do sin.

I'll tell you when the change happened in my life, when my wife knew that I was a different person, was when I committed a sin, I was devastated. I'm talking about falling back into sexual sin because there was a period there when I first came back to the Lord where, when I'm saying falling, I'm talking about pornography. I'm not talking about another person.

But when I would run across it, get into it, whatever, there was a period of time there. It was happening every now and then. And I would be devastated when it happened.

Devastated. And I would immediately tell my wife. And those two things tell you where you're at, really, when you sin.

You don't immediately go into damage control, justifying yourself, blame shifting, minimizing what you did. That's what sinful people do. That's what lawless people do.

They're just playing the game of Christianity and trying to get by and hold on to their sin at the same time. Verse 7. Little children, let no one deceive you. Let no one deceive you.

Does that mean that there's a chance that perhaps you could be deceived? Let no one, no one, I don't care what their name is, whoever you mostly emulate or wish to emulate or the person that you think the highest of, whatever. Let no one, including Steve Gallagher, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous as he is righteous.

Now, let me just tell you, there is something that wormed its way into the church about 100 years ago, I guess, or maybe it was longer than that ago, came in through these godless theologians. And in their mind, they had it all figured out with their human logic. They approached scripture with human logic as if this was nothing more than a book in a college or something.

And, you know, there is such a thing as imputed righteousness. When you are truly born again, the righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed to you. What that means is his grace covers you when you have those occasional sins, okay? But they took it beyond that.

This is what theologians do, people who live their Christian life in their head. This is what they do. They overthink things.

And they took it beyond it, and they took this whole concept of being judicially imputed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. They take it beyond what the Lord meant it to be, and they get it to the place to where it's so twisted and corrupted of a doctrine that it's nothing but antinomianism, anti-law. I'm born again.

I've got the righteousness of Jesus Christ has been imputed to me. It doesn't matter what I do. I'm saved and going to heaven.

If you belong to a church that preaches that, please run. Get out of that church because you are being lied to. Is that straight enough talk from Pastor Steve? Guys, I'm only going to tell you the truth there.

I don't, you know, it's the great thing about not being the pastor of a church. I don't get voted in and voted out. So I can say what I need to say.

Praise God. You can come to a place where they can still, they don't have to walk on eggshells and be diplomatic and make sure that everyone loves them and wants to keep them. I love you with the love of God.

Enough to tell you the truth. Some people won't like me for that. You know, I don't know what to say to that.

I have to be faithful and true to the Lord. Verse eight, whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil. Now, let me just be careful.

I was going to say, let me just change that a little. Let me explain it a little. That'd be better.

I think really what he's saying is still in the kingdom of darkness. I think you could just say it like that. In other words, we're not talking about someone who's in the practice of sinning is full of demons or something.

It's not necessarily that. It's just that they haven't crossed over yet. That's all he's saying.

I wish he would have been a little more diplomatic about it, but you know. Whoever makes a practice of sin is of the devil. For the devil has been sinning from the beginning.

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. Praise God. Praise God.

Let me read what Matthew Henry says about these people. His sinful nature is inspired by and agreeable and pleasing to the devil. And he belongs to the party and interest in kingdom of the devil.

The devil has designed and endeavored to ruin the work of God in this world. The Son of God has undertaken the holy war against him. He came into our world and was manifested in our flesh that he might conquer him and dissolve his works.

Sin will he loosen and dissolve more and more till he has quite destroyed it. Let not us serve or indulge what the Son of God came to destroy. That's why his name is Matthew Henry, because he writes stuff like that.

Verse 9. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. There it is again. How many? No one who is born of God makes a practice of sinning.

For God's, here's why. Because God's seed abides in him. And he cannot keep on sinning because he's been born of God.

Man, you know, when you really make that surrender and that consecration to the Lord, your nature changes. It's no longer self in control where you kind of struggle with sin and issues and stuff. And because self is still in control.

So therefore, when you do sin, you start justifying yourself and minimizing it. And that's what self does. That's what the fallen nature does.

But when you come to the Lord and you make that consecration to the Lord, and you are converted to Jesus Christ, truly, Paul said it this way, if anyone's in Christ, he's a new creature. Behold, all things become new. It's a whole new life.

That's what God brought you here for, is to give you a whole new life. A whole new life, a whole new way of doing life. That old lawless mindset is gone.

And in its place, you become the guy that he was talking about last week, who delights in the law, loves the law, wants to be in it, meaning reading it, and studying it, and just getting it all into him, himself. And you know, when that happens, that law creates a structure inside. But back to what he said here, this person is born of God, cannot keep on sinning.

Listen to what the Pope at Commentary said, blessed inability, blessed inability. That's a blessed life. Nate was talking about last week, at least one aspect of it, blessed inability.

Listen, guys, can you imagine? Unable to keep on sinning. How many would like that? Unable to keep on sinning. Cannot be sinning or living a life out of harmony with God's will and word.

Cannot. Why? Because in the new product of God's spirit, the principle of righteousness is so active that his sinning life is entirely out of the question. Virtue is so strong that it expels its opposite.

And then he gives some examples here. An honest servant cannot steal. Cannot.

It just can't. Cannot steal. A faithful husband cannot be unfaithful.

Not possible. Now, here is an awesome thing. 140 years ago, when this was written, this guy had Carla Buch in his mind.

So this is a shout out to Carla Buch. You listening, Carla? You better be. One passionately fond of accuracy cannot be systematically inaccurate.

Is that Carla Buch or what? I love that because, you know, I totally get that. I get that thinking and it's like, that's describing someone who's truly born again, cannot continue and live in sin. No more than you could

get Carla to go in with the books and just start having a flippant attitude and, oh, if I made some mistakes, so what, you know? Can you imagine Carla having that attitude? I can't.

That's why she's our accountant. So also, a child of God cannot be opposed to his father's will simply because the product of the new birth is a child who will will as his father wills. Into errors of judgment he may fall.

By sudden gusts of temptation he may be overtaken and so surprised into a fault. But from sin, from the sin of living alien to God, he was delivered once and forever when by the change in his nature he was born again. Wow, that's so awesome.

All right, so I'm wrapping it up now. Let me just give you a couple of things to think about on a practical level. Get the Word of God inside of you guys.

Get it into you. You know, they may come, they take those Bibles from us and all you will have to rely on is your memory and what, you know, what you got inside of you. Get the Word of God inside of you while you can and obey the Word.

Live it out. Keep it. Observe it.

Make it your life and find God's particular will for your life. And when I'm talking about his will, I'm not just saying, okay, kind of obey the scriptures. He's got a master's design for your life, something you are perfectly suited for, suited to.

And he's got a plan for you. Figure it out. And you figure it out by prayer.

He'll show it to you. And in this process, if you haven't yet, you know, crossed that line, don't worry. In this process, as you do these things, one day you'll have that experience that Nate had down at the end of the ridge.

The Lord will make sure it happens if you start showing that you care and that you desire it. You can't make it happen yourself, but you can show a willing heart and someone who desires it, you can do that. Now listen, you're going to be going home at some point.

And when you get there, you have a tremendous opportunity to live that whole new life. But there's also the old rut waiting for you. And that old rut wants to put you right back in to the lifestyle and the thinking and the mindset and all that that you had before you came here.

Make sure that you allow God to do his work in you while you're here. All right, I've got three verses I'm going to just read. They're not really... Let me just read them.

They're just very good, and I didn't want to miss this opportunity to share them. Psalm 68, 6. God makes a home for the lonely. He leads out the prisoners into prosperity.

Only the rebellious dwell in a parched land. That existence is hopefully what brought you here, a thirst for a new life, a thirst for the living waters. Proverbs 10.24, this is in the Passion translation.

The lawless are haunted by their fears, and what they dread will come upon them. Man, don't let that be spoken of you. Don't let that be you.

And lastly, 1 Samuel 12, 15. If you will not listen to the voice of the Lord, but rebel against the command of the Lord, then the hand of the Lord will be against you. You don't want to leave here that way, men.

And I've seen too many who have. I've seen too many who have, who left here full of pride, full of rebellion, and when they got out there, everything went wrong. They couldn't wait to get back to their sin.

They got tired of this place and all the hardships of it, whatever. Couldn't wait to get back to where they could have what they wanted, and they got it until it came out of their nostrils. Let me just pray for you guys.

Lord, I thank you for the powerful truths of your word that you have given us. Thank you, Lord. I thank you for that testimony we heard earlier, just so real.

It's real to me because I know, because I watched that testimony unfold, how you took a prideful, prideful to the point of delusion, young guy in his 20s came in here, and just through the work of the Holy Spirit, you brought him to the depths of despair and saved his soul there, and have transformed him. And I think of every one of these men who are in this program now. Nate was one time sitting out there in one of those chairs.

Pastor Ed was sitting out there in one of those chairs at one time. Jordan was, struggling through the same struggles and fears and concerns, and am I really changing, and is anything really happening? Having all those same mental struggles, but trying to do the right thing, heeding the voice of the Lord, responding to it. And now we see a little bit further down the road, what you, the beautiful creations that you have crafted for people who would respond to you, and allow you to rule their inner life.

So beautiful, Lord, your work in men's hearts, and I pray that you will do that in every one of the hearts of these men that are here today. Please touch them and affect them and impact them. For your kingdom's sake, for your name's sake, in Jesus' name, amen.

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