

# The Church and The End Times Apostasy

by Steve Gallagher

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*This sermon delves into the theme of apostasy in the end times church, emphasizing the need to renounce self, carry the cross daily, and closely follow Christ. It highlights the division caused by the cross, separating true believers from apostate Christians who deny the power of God's transformative work. The speaker urges listeners to consider their allegiance and devotion, pointing out the persecution that may arise from the apostate church and the importance of living a godly life focused on Christ.*

**Scripture:** Luke 9:23, 1 Corinthians 1:18, 2 Timothy 3:4, Joel 2:13, Proverbs 4:23

**Topics:** "Apostasy", "True Discipleship"

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## Description

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## Transcript

Very sobering theme for the conference this year and Brother David, thank you for bringing the presence of the Lord. Just, you know, when you are a gifted and anointed worship leader, the Lord can use you to accomplish that. And brother, it's Bart, right? Brett, sorry.

That was awesome. That really, you got it. You really grabbed the spirit of what this conference should be about.

Thank you for doing that. Brother grew out this conference nine months ago or whenever it was. He decided that this year he was going to assign different subjects for each of the speakers to cover.

So, you know, it's kind of become a burden of my own to talk about the apostasy that is upon us. And so I suppose it's for that reason that he asked me to open the conference and to talk about the apostasy of the end times church and how that relates to persecution. And it does relate and it will relate.

And I'll share a little bit more about that later. But what I want to do here tonight is I'm going to do my utmost in one short message to define the apostasy, maybe in a way that you've never heard before. And so when you leave here tonight, my hope is that you will have a better comprehension of what we are facing in the church today and not just in the United States.

It is, you know, I hate to say it, but in large part we have exported an apostate message around the world. When you go into different nations and you minister there, you know, I haven't been in a closed country like Brother Brett, but I've been in plenty of countries and ministered and you can feel that same deadness in many of these other churches that has come in there through what has been exported from America. I hate to say it because I'm an American through and through.

And we have done, the Lord has used this country to do wonderful things down through the years. Excuse me. So tonight I'm going to be in Luke chapter 9, but it's going to take me a few minutes to get there.

So just so you know, I won't be there for a little bit because I want to lay a foundation, first of all, and the title of my message tonight is The Great Divider. I'm going to do something that I never do as a speaker. I'm going to tell you what my message is right up front.

The Great Divider is the title and what The Great Divider is, is the cross. The cross of Calvary is The Great Divider. Now, you know, if you were following the political scene, you understand that there is a division in our political landscape in the United States.

We have red states, we have blue states, we have sold out Democrats and sold out Republicans and so on, you know. And there is a clear-cut separation, really, in this country in a lot of ways. And I want to tell you that there is a separation within the American church as well.

It's very much like, you know, what we see on the political landscape, but it's not always so easily discernible. You know, we don't walk around with badges and say, you know, I'm a sold-out, blood-bought, saint of the living God, and I'm living my life on the narrow path, and I'm going all the way with Jesus. And others have a badge that says, well, I'm kind of a compromiser, and I'm living on the broad way, and I'm just kind of doing my own thing and going to church on Sunday.

We don't have badges like that. In fact, it's very difficult to discern wheat from tares. We're all mixed together.

We all attend evangelical churches. We all speak Christianese. We all refrain from obvious outward sins.

We all stand against abortion, pornography, and homosexual marriage. And we all hold to the orthodox teachings of scripture. So, just because we call ourselves Christian does not necessarily mean that we're in the same boat together.

And that's what I'm hoping to be able to articulate a little bit tonight. There really are two distinct groups in the church. And when I say church, I mean that loosely, you understand, not scripturally.

You know, there is a group of people who believe because they have said the sinner's prayer, and because they have acclimated themselves to the evangelical movement, because they know how to do the Christian thing, and because they have been spiritually enlightened, you know, they have come into the recognition that there is an unseen realm, that there is a God. But dear ones, can I just remind all of us that the devils believe and shudder. There is something more to the Christian life than just having a mental assent to what the Bible says.

It takes more than that. That isn't the whole picture of what faith is. Because saving faith also means obedience to God.

And I could take you through scripture, and I don't have time to do that tonight. But I could show you story after story after story in the scriptures of people who knew there was a God, who even spoke to God, and yet ended up on the wrong side of the fence. Why? For one simple reason.

Because they would not submit their will to God, to God's authority. And that is what the cross is all about. It's a divider.

It's a divider between those who will submit to God and obey him, and those who won't. Those who want to just, you know, take Christianity on their own terms. Paul recognized this, and you know, one of the things that he said, and this was this particular comment came from 1 Corinthians 1. He said, for the word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to those of us who are being saved, it is the power of God.

There again, we see those two groups. They're all hearing the word of God, you see. They're all hearers of the word of God.

But there's a difference between these two groups. One group is perishing. Why? Because there's something about the word of the cross that they resist, and they reject, and they ignore, and they try to get away from.

The very word of the cross that could save their soul, it repels them for a reason. But there's these others. Call it the remnant, whatever you want to call it.

Call it true believers, saints of God. You know, I don't care what term you put to this group of people, but they are in the process of being saved. And when they hear the word of the cross, to them, it is the power of God.

What does that mean, the power of God to them, the word of the cross? Well, I'll share a little bit more about that in a few minutes. But you know, the point is that they're all hearing the message. Some are embracing and accepting and going that path, and others aren't.

That's what the great divider is. You know, wheat and tares look a lot alike. Unless you are a farmer and you really know the deal and you know what you're talking about and all that, you could look at a field and you wouldn't be able to tell one from the other, especially when they're young shoots.

They look practically identical. But you know, a trained scientist, on the other hand, could take a stock of each one of those and put them under a microscope and he can see, oh, this one's nothing like that one. You know, the complete composition of this stock is completely and utterly different than this other one.

And that's the way the Lord is. When he sees us, we may be oblivious to those around us. Their spiritual condition, what's really going on inside them.

We may not comprehend it, but I promise you the all seeing eye of God is very aware of the composition of our nature. He knows the reality of our hearts. And if we have come to the cross and submitted to him or not, he understands that.

He knows those who are his. One of the ways that we can tell, you know, well, am I in, you know, these kind of sermons tend to freak some of us out, you know, and afterwards you, well, am I really saved? And that, you know, that's not an altogether bad thing, but one of the things that we can tell is by the reaction

that we have to the word of the cross. And I am getting to the word of the cross.

Okay, that's where we're headed, but I'm still trying to lay a foundation here of these two groups. True believers are tenderhearted toward the conviction of the Holy Spirit. True believers, you know, when the Lord speaks to them, they have a ear to hear God's voice.

They don't have to be beat with a baseball bat to understand that some things are not right for Christians to do and so on. But pseudo-Christians, apostate Christians do not know the voice of the shepherd. And so, you know, they'll go along with the outward rules and regulations that we've kind of contrived in the church, in the evangelical movement.

We have our own set of rules, you know, things that we're supposed to do and not do and all that. They'll go along with that, as long as it doesn't really demand anything inwardly inside them. True believers mourn when they fail the Lord.

But pseudo-Christians justify, minimize, and blame shep. I'm trying to just kind of lay out some, here's some differences, you know. True believers want to be led and governed by God in every area of their lives.

Pseudo-Christians want to govern their own lives and make their own decisions. You know, it's, there's a difference. True believers feel uncomfortable in worldly atmospheres.

They don't feel right in it. You know, in a, well, there's a lot of different examples I could give, but just places or just even bringing the atmosphere of the world in your home, you know, through television and stuff like that, just, you know, a pseudo-believer can sit and watch television by the hour and not have a single qualm about it. But a true believer feels this isn't right, you know.

It's not that you would never watch a show, but there's just something inside you, that would be the Holy Spirit, that is tugging at you and making you feel like this isn't right. I shouldn't be watching this kind of stuff, or I shouldn't be spending so much time in front of this television set. I should not be taking my heart, which is the most precious part of my being, and laying it out there for the spirit of this world to pollute and corrupt as he will.

A true believer understands that. You understand, I'm not mad at you, right? I'm just a little intense at times. Pseudo-Christians feel perfectly at home in worldly atmospheres, and they want all they can get, really.

I mean, that's the truth of it. True believers see God as the source and fount of all life. He is the creator, the entire universe, the billions of planets out there, and so on.

True believers understand that God created it all. He is the all-consuming power, the almighty. Pseudo-believers see God as an add-on to their lives.

Dear ones, can I just remind us all that we cannot put God in the position to be an add-on to our lives. You can take dead religion and make that an add-on to your life, but you cannot make the almighty an add-on to your life, to your American little thing that you do. You know, another one of the passages that really talks about the apostate church is 2 Timothy 3, you know, and it's a whole section in there where Paul just came under a powerful prophetic anointing as he sat in prison in Rome, and just all of a sudden, he could see off into the distance and see this end times church.

It must have broke his heart, because all around him, he's seeing the kind of believers that brother Brett was just talking about. They were around him. He's watching them be tortured.

He's watching them be thrown to the lions, and but then, you know, in the midst of that chaotic, hellish setting, the Lord comes over his mind as he's writing this final letter to Timothy, and he just gets a sight of this end times church, this apostate church, and one of the things he said, and I think, you know, as far as I'm concerned, this is probably the most defining statement of apostate Christians that there is in scripture. He said, these people would be lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power. Now, there's that word power again, you know, whereas before those of us who embrace the word of the cross, we see it, whatever it is, and I haven't really got into it yet, but whatever the word of the cross is, we see it as the very power of God, and I'll tell you one part of it.

It is the word of God able to penetrate your heart and to expose sinful attitudes and motives, things that aren't right, things that are going on inside of you that the Lord is not pleased with. The word of the cross can cut right through all of it, bone and marrow, and show it for what it is, and that is the power of God, but pseudo-Christians, apostate Christians, want nothing to do with that. They deny.

They put up a roadblock. Anytime the Holy Spirit comes in and starts bringing a convicting message, they want to go somewhere else. You don't see them in the kind of churches that preach these kind of messages, that's for sure.

That's not where they want to be. They're not going to read those kind of books. They're going to avoid those kind of scriptures and stories and scripture and stuff, or they'll make it just something, you know, just pass over it lightly.

They're not interested in that. They deny the power of God. They stop the power of God from going inside of them and dealing with them.

They hinder the Holy Spirit. They quench the Holy Spirit. I said it somewhere, actually it's probably in my book, that the only real difference between a pagan and an apostate Christian is a form of godliness.

That's the only difference, because inwardly they're the same. Inwardly, a pagan lives for the things of this world. Inwardly, a pagan is only really concerned about the temporal life in which he lives here in this world.

And an apostate Christian is pretty much the same way. Inwardly, that's what his life is all about. Inwardly, that's what drives his heart.

That's what leads him through life. Yes, he'll go to church. He doesn't want to go to hell.

He believes in God and he doesn't want to go to hell. But the reality of his heart is that he lives for the things of this world. Y'all are so quiet in here.

I'm not sure how to take that. I'm not going to worry about it. I'm just going to do what I was brought in here to do and let the other guys clean up the mess tomorrow.

I do want to just touch on this inward life for a minute because it's so important. Let me kind of paint a picture for you. You know, if I was to look at a person's inward life, I think this is pretty close to the way it

is.

Let's say it's like a deep well. And at the top of that well would be your intellect. You know, your imagination, your powers of reason, your five senses, and so on.

You know, just where you think and you operate. And you know, it's your operating system if you want to relate it to a computer. And so that's your intellect, your mind at the top.

And then just below that is your emotional level. You know, it's your happiness or sadness or if you're enthusiastic or moody. And you know, if you like some things and dislike other things, that's your emotional life.

And it's a little bit deeper, maybe, than your mental. But deep, deeper than either of those is your heart. Your heart is the core of who you are as a person.

And you could really, I think this is true, I think you could take the word will and you could practically interchange the two. Because your heart determines what you will do in life, where you want to go, what you want to do, what you are living for. It's your will.

That's the very core of who you are. That's where life's decisions are made. Now, you know, the spiritual life occurs first and foremost in the heart.

Everything about Christianity begins in the heart and then goes out to the rest of us, you know, and affects us. I'm going to read just something I wrote somewhere. The important position the heart occupies within a person can be seen in Scripture.

People are told to rend their hearts in Joel 2. Seek God with all their hearts in Psalm 119 and pour out their hearts before him in Psalm 62. We're told of those who deceive their own hearts in James 1. Backslide in heart in Proverbs 14. Spurn reproof in their hearts in Proverbs 5 and regard wickedness in their hearts in Psalm 66.

It's no wonder then that we are admonished to keep thy heart with all diligence for out of it flow the issues of life, Proverbs 4. Surely it is true the inward thought and the heart of a man are deep. Psalm 64. Now, I want to say this, that people are led by their desires.

Whatever you do in life, you do it because you desire to do it for the most part, you know. I mean, even if you're doing something you don't really want to do, but you're doing it because there's something else you're going to get out of it, obviously, you know. And we're led forth through life by our desires.

So these different levels of the human being reflect, I've got a point in telling you all this, I know it seems like a rabbit trail, but I want to make a point here. Cerebral Christians, I'll say it that way, tend to be drawn to preachers and teachers that can present all kinds of interesting facts about scripture, you know. And there's a place for teachers like that.

I tend to be a little on that side. And there's nothing wrong with that, okay. So some people are drawn to that kind of teaching or preaching.

Other people, emotionally minded or emotionally based Christians, are more drawn to preachers who can really stir them up, you know, or make them weep and so on. You know, emotionally driven Christians are going to be drawn to those kind of preachers. Both of those things are fine, except one thing, it's got to go

deeper than that.

It's got to go down into your heart. We need preachers in this day and age, not more gifted speakers, not greater orators, not people who can, you know, just tug at our emotions or teach us powerfully wonderful truths about scripture. We need preachers who have been to the cross themselves, who know how to reach our hearts down into the depth of our being and grab ahold of us there.

That's what the church needs in this day and age. But what we have in the apostate church is a lot of people calling themselves Christians who are living at this surface level, either drawn to just simply intellectual arguments or drawn to emotionally stirring messages. Now, I'm going to say it again just so you don't come up to me afterwards and say, well, what's wrong? You know, it's okay.

Those things are okay. All right. There's a place for that.

But more importantly, we've got to go deeper. We've got to go deeper. You know, if you haven't been to Calvary, you're not going to be interested in messages about Calvary.

The cross is the great divider. The cross will cut in to who you are as a person and demand full allegiance to Jesus Christ. Paul said the word of the cross, the word of the cross.

So I want to talk about that for just a couple of minutes. I'm going to read this passage that Brother David read a little bit ago out of Luke 9, starting with verse 23. This is in the Phillips translation.

Then he spoke to them all. If anyone wants to follow in my footsteps, I want to just stop for one second. I want to just tell you that that word once is the same word in the Greek as will.

Will. I am willing or I am unwilling. You know, it's that word, God's will.

It's that word is what is here. Will and desire are the same in the Greek. But let me continue on.

If anyone wants to or wills to follow in my footsteps, he must give up all right to himself, carry his cross every day and keep close behind me. For the man who wants or wills to save his life in this world, I'll say, will lose it. But the man who loses his life for my sake, as we have already heard about, that martyr spirit as the man, but the man who loses his life for my sake will save it.

For what is the use of a man gaining the whole world if he loses or forfeits his own soul? All right, so there's three keys, three responsibilities. I don't know what you call it, but it makes a nice three point message, you know, so that's why I broke it up this way. So there's three parts to this that I want to just touch on real briefly.

Number one is the person must give up all right to himself. He must give up all right to himself. Now, this is one of these, I love reading the Bible in different translations and paraphrases.

I like to see what everyone says because, you know, I tend to get stuck. I use the New American Standard usually, but I tend to get stuck in ruts with what the Bible says and I like to color things up, you know, and just get a better, a fresher sense of things. So I want you to hear this phrase.

It's amazing the variations of this one phrase in different translations. The Good News Bible says you must forget yourself. That's pretty good, you know, that kind of hits it.

The Living Bible says you must put aside or the person put aside his own desires and conveniences. The Knox Bible says let him renounce self. Wiest said let him disregard his own interests.

Ask yourselves if this really represents your life. The New English Bible, he must leave self behind. Man, that, I love that.

You know, the picture in my mind is this is a brother who is walking on the narrow path like John Bunyan really painted beautifully in Pilgrim's Progress. Heading up, you know, it's like a sheep's path going up the side of a mountain. He's going somewhere and he's leaving self behind.

New Living Translation, you must turn from your selfish ways. And the Amplifier, of course, always has to try to get it all into one, you know. He says let him deny himself, disown himself, forget, lose sight of himself and his own interests.

Refusing, give up himself. I think you get the picture. Now, you know, the reality is none of us live in that, right? None of us live in that all the time, but there's something to that.

There is this thing called self that we all, you know, that it's who we are in our fallen nature and it's been developed over the years and hardened and so on. And then when you come to the cross, you understand when I say come to the cross, I'm not talking about just raising your hand, coming to an altar call, saying the sinner's prayer. Sometimes that's when it happens.

But most people that I've met who've been to the cross, it's something that happens later on, you know, after they've played the Christian game for a while. But anyway, when you've been to the cross, your self-life is dealt a real blow. It doesn't mean that all of a sudden you become selfless.

No, not hardly. You know, that's what the whole sanctification process is up that narrow path. That's what that's all about is as you pursue Jesus Christ, the Lord is able to work on you and change you and mold you and transform you.

But when you come to the cross, something dramatic happens inside you inwardly. And I want to say this as much as the false teachers of our day de-emphasize and ignore and minimize the need of repentance. That is what the cross is all about.

And I don't understand. I mean, if anything should tell us this condition of the church today, all you have to do is look back at the message that Jesus Christ preached, that Paul preached, that John the Baptist preached. It was all repentance.

The New Testament begins with the words, you must repent. And practically the last thing Jesus Christ says to the Laodicean churches, be zealous and repent. Repentance has to play, not just a part, you know, when you first originally have that interaction with the Lord, but it should be a part of our regular life.

Because I guarantee you one thing, at least for me, it's been this way. Your self-life, it's like there's this, it's like this cement agent in it. And if it has its way over time, it's going to just, your heart is going to get harder and harder.

You're going to get into ruts, religious ruts. God is going to seem a million miles away. The word of God is going to feel dead to you.



You know, that's the way we tend to go. And that's why we need regular encounters with the Holy Spirit. Amen? Because, you know, the Lord will come in and the Lord will occasionally just give that self a new blow.

I want to just read something out of my book. Let me just mention this for a second, okay? These two books, this was the book I wrote some years back, Intoxicated with Babylon, The Seduction of God's People in the Last Days. And we've sold tens of thousands of these.

And this was a follow-up book to this one called Standing Firm Through the Great Apostasy. And I want to just mention to you, these books sell for \$14 apiece. And believe me, we don't have a problem selling them.

But we wanted to do something special for this conference. So we have a table back there and you can buy both of these books for \$12 while you're here. And those of you by webcast, if you will write to us at [eternalweight.com](http://eternalweight.com), info at [eternalweight.com](http://eternalweight.com), within one week we will make sure that you get that same deal if you're interested, okay? So look, I'm not here to sell books.

But I know the message in this book and both of these books. And if you feel like you like Pastor Steve's preaching and you just haven't been abused enough, then buy these books and we'll complete the process. But let me just read this here.

A person cannot and will not follow Christ until he has renounced his allegiance to self. As long as self reigns in his heart, as long as he is primarily devoted to self, he will repeatedly prove himself to be a traitor to Christ's kingdom. And that's true.

Where are you at, dear ones? Where are you at? Your self life must come under the cross. Now, my assumption is I'm preaching to the choir to some degree that many of you have had your encounter with the cross. You are living your lives on the narrow path.

I don't doubt that most of you are there, okay? I believe that. Why else would you come out here on a Friday night? But I do believe that there's probably some within the sound of my voice that you're still playing around on the fringes. God is calling you.

He's calling you tonight, softly and tenderly. He's calling you to himself to lay it all down once and for all. No more excuses.

No more fooling around. Lay it down. The first great divider is how the cross attacks our self-life.

And that's what Paul said these apostate Christians were unwilling to experience. All right, number two, the person must carry his cross every day. You know, if you've been to the cross and you've renounced your self-life, you gladly will live your life on the narrow path.

That's where you feel at home. You know, it's not that it's always easy. No one's saying it is.

It's not that you always do it perfectly or that you're always, you know, perfectly in the middle of that narrow path. But that's the flow of your life. That's the burden of your life.

That's the the desire of your heart. But if all you have been through is the broad gate, then you're not going to feel comfortable on the narrow path. You're not going to want anything to do with carrying a cross, really.

I'm going to read another section out of this book because it just, it just says it so well, you know. I'll let you decide. The fundamental difference between a true and false believer lies in the question of loyalty.

Is he devoted to Christ or to himself? When it comes right down to it, is he going to look out for number one or will his primary loyalties be to Christ? Will he do his own will or that of God? Will he love self or will he love the Lord? Being born again means the person is converted from a self-centered existence to one which is becoming increasingly Christ-centered. The reason many Christians cringe when they are asked to sacrifice for the sake of others is that nothing has happened within them to compel them to get outside of themselves. They see carrying a cross as an uninvited intrusion upon their lives.

In their heart of hearts, their true devotion is reserved for the world system that caters to their flesh. Man, that's good writing. I'm only kidding.

You're not laughing at my jokes anymore, so I better quit. Such people do not want to deny self, they want to live for self. They do not want to say no to the flesh, they want to say yes to it.

They do not want to pick up their cross, they want to avoid it. Where did they get the idea that they could live for self, disdain the cross, and still claim to be followers of Christ? Where'd that idea come from? Enemies of the cross that are in our church today, that's where that comes from. You know, when Jesus talks about carrying the cross, there is an element to it that represents the sorrows that we face because of our Christian life, and the sacrifices we have to make, and maybe, yes, even suffering.

And when Paul was comparing apostate Christians with true believers, he said, indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, as we have already heard. But you know, you can take that even further, if I could say it in a different way. All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will face rejection, while apostate Christians will be accepted.

And all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will continually have to say no to themselves, while others are continually saying yes to themselves. And all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will pay a price for being a Christian, while others don't. There's a price involved with true Christianity.

All right, number three, the person must follow closely behind Christ. You know, the word follow is repeated here, and I think the Lord was emphasizing it. To follow means that we desire him, we are led by our desires, and there's something in us that is compelled towards Jesus Christ.

We see a beauty in this person that attracts us, that is bigger than all the trinkets that the world offers. It's something that is so unspeakably beautiful, that we find ourselves following Christ. And you know, these brothers and sisters in this country Brett was talking about, it's not that they are brave souls, and that we're not, they just have gotten a greater sight of Jesus Christ, because they're not all encumbered with the world.

They have a fresh, clear sight of the Lord, and that's all they're doing, is they're following him. And yes, they're going to pay a price for it occasionally, but it doesn't matter, because they see the Lord. To follow him means that we identify with him, we identify with his kingdom, we identify with his way of life, we identify with his thinking, his value system, his cause.

You know what happens? Our will becomes absorbed in his. That's what it means to be the bride of Christ. You are joining your life to your husband.

It's not this American idea, where two people just kind of practically shack up together with a, you know, a certificate saying they're married, and everything's equal, and it's not like that. The wife in biblical times subjected her life to her husband, and she lived her life to, you know, in a certain way, in a good way, a positive way, to obey him. And his responsibility was to cover her and take care of her.

And Jesus does that. He is the best husband that has ever lived. To follow him means to imitate him.

You just are watching him. And how he does life, that's how you want to do life. There's something so beautiful in it that it compels you to follow him.

All right, now I'm going to wrap this up, and I want to try to tie this in with the conference a little bit more. I can tell you this. I want to just say it.

I can tell you this from a lot of experience, that the first place true believers are going to face persecution is from the apostate church, because we are an embarrassment to them. We are an embarrassment to them. And yes, the world has their own persecution, you know, and I could easily go off into a whole message about that, you know, and the things that are happening even in our country right now, they're just tightening the noose.

But I want to tell you something. It's going to be the religious system in America that turns on true believers first. And dear ones, we have to know what it means to live underneath the cross of Jesus.

And if we do, trust me. Brother Brett, if you're living your life, and I believe just by the way you spoke, I could just hear it in your voice. If you're living your life on the narrow path, you don't have to worry about when persecution comes.

God's grace will take you through, brother, and you will do the right thing. You don't have to work it up or anything like that. He's going to give you everything you need to go through triumphantly, not cowering, triumphantly.

Who cares if we lose some of our things? Where are you a hundred years from now? And what do those things mean then? That's the day I'm living for, dear ones, because I know I've gotten a little bit of a sight of what awaits me in that land of bliss. That's where I want my heart to be. That's where my citizenship is.

And if I find myself on the enemy's ground right now, behind the lines, or in a foreign country, so to speak, and I have to pay some kind of a price for that, well, so be it, because my life is not all about this world system and this temporal life time. Praise God, we've got something greater than that, something more powerful, something more awesome. And you know what? It's forever.

It's forever. It's forever. This life is temporal.

It's short. Before you know it, we're like a vapor and we're gone. Our life is over, good or bad, you know? I once said to one of my friends who's a real, really into good food, you know, from New York, everyone from New York's into food.

I don't know what the deal is, but I said, you know the difference between a good meal and a bad meal? He said, no, what? He's waiting for some profound thing. I said, about five minutes, about five minutes. Dear ones, let me tell you something, before we know it, this is over.

And the only thing that's going to count is what we have in Jesus Christ. That's all that's going to matter. The godly character that he has been able to establish inside of us during our stay on this earth.

Will we be soldiers of the cross or will we be cowering, you know, cowards, just afraid to lose something and all wrapped up in this earthly world? That's the choice, that's the decision we have to all face. No sermon, no conference is going to accomplish that for you. That's something that each one of us must work through for ourselves.

We've got to decide, is it going to be self or is it going to be Christ? And you know, I want to tell you, no one who has ever gone down the narrow path and reached that final day on their timeline, not one single one of them, look back at their past years of service and toil and suffering with regret. Not one, but fools do. Because fools live for now.

Everything's now. How I feel now, what feeds my flesh now, how this makes me feel now, what I get out of it now. If that's all your life is, dear one, you have one empty existence.

Call yourself Christian, go to church, but if that's the way you're living your life, you are headed for destruction. But God's got something so much better for you. He loves us.

He loves us. And that's why he has conferences like this, to bring uncomfortable, disturbing truths to us, to cause his people to stop this mad course that we have in our American lives, to just stop and reflect for a few minutes on what are we doing? What are we doing? I want to close in a prayer, and Brother David, I'm so glad you stayed. Can you lead us in a little bit of worship? You'll know what to do.

I'm going to pray, but I'm thinking that, you know, even as Brother David leads us in worship, and Frank's going to come up, right, you're going to come up real quick and say a couple things. What I want to do is, I want to ask us to, let's keep this a sanctuary. You know, you can go out there and fellowship, praise the Lord, we need fellowship.

We really do. Like-minded saints need that time of fellowship. But let's keep this a sanctuary for God.

And I want to invite you to spend time just contemplating your life with the Lord, considering what the theme of this conference is, my message, or whatever may have been said in there. Consider these things, dear ones. Lord, I thank you that what you offer us is incomparable.

There's just nothing this world offers begins to even compare, Lord. And I know your people often forget, even saints who are trying, sincerely trying to do the right thing. We often forget, Lord.

We lose sight. The enemy is constantly dangling the world in front of our eyes, and we get off track sometimes. But I thank you, Lord, that you've given us the gift of repentance, that all we have to do is turn to you and say, Lord, I'm wrong.

I've been going the wrong direction lately, or whatever. Or maybe even, Lord, there are those within the sound of my voice who know. When I was speaking, and when I was talking about those who haven't been to the cross, they could identify with the things I was saying.

Dear God, please pull them over the line tonight. Please pull them over the line. Lord, even as the angels did in Sodom, just drugged Lot and his family out of the city before the destruction came.

Pull them over the line into your kingdom once and for all, I pray. You know how to do that better than any preacher, Lord. And I just pray this entire conference.

Lord, I pray for every session tomorrow. Please come here with a mighty anointing tomorrow for each of the speakers. Bless these dear men.

Anoint them, God. And use this conference for all of us, Lord. In Jesus Christ's name and for his sake, amen.

Brother Frank, before you leave.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/kyduRxG5zkw.mp4>

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