

Show Me in the Bible Where I Can't Do That?

by Tim Conway

The sermon emphasizes the importance of living a life guided by the principles of the Kingdom of God, rather than by a list of rules and laws.

Duration: 54:56

Scripture: Ephesians 4:17, Philippians 3:8

Topics: "Christian Living", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of living a Christian life beyond just following a list of rules, focusing on the deeper aspects of holiness, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Spirit. It challenges the legalistic mindset of constantly seeking permission and highlights the need to seek God's will, please Him, and reflect His character in all aspects of life.

Transcript

Perhaps you've caught a little bit of this if you've been with us in our Sunday service the last two Sundays. You might have picked up a little bit of this. It's kind of come across.

And being alive, being raised up with Christ, we're really going to get into it this week. Just being seated in the heavenly places with Christ. This whole perspective on living the Christian's life.

And as I made mention, maybe some of you are far more aware than I am. You probably are. Any of you that have Facebook.

I don't have a Facebook account, except whatever you see there was created by James. I don't have anything to do with it. I never look at it.

I don't know what's on it. If material gets added, it's not me doing it. It's somebody else.

But I know that our elders recently have become aware just of a situation of professing Christians, watching a movie that in my estimation is absolutely inappropriate for a professing Christian. And some of you may be aware of what's being called the New Calvinism or this Neo-Calvinism or this young, restless, reformed bunch. I don't know how much you folks here, some of you young people, I don't know how much you even know about that movement.

How much you actually identify with that movement. But one of the things that I saw, it was months ago, but I saw where John Piper was addressing this New Calvinism. And one of the things that he feared about it was that it is breeding antinomianism.

Just a license for lawlessness. Just a license for sin. This really seems to be abounding.

These guys like to talk election. They like to talk predestination and talk all about the different high and lofty doctrines of Calvinism. But they seem to be really lacking when it comes to holiness.

And anyways, like I say, our elders became aware of some professing Christians and there was comment going back and forth on the Internet about this and about the appropriateness. Well, let me just tell you, I know from my wife used to bring up this website called Plugged In where you can basically dissect any movie as far as the content, explicit content, language, sex, violence, occultic things, anything like that. The movie that I have in mind here, Plugged In, says it has 50 F-words, 40 S-words.

God's name is misused repeatedly. Assorted other indecent language, sex, violence, occult, hypnotist. Plugged In sizes up this movie by saying it is bloody and profane.

And in the past, we've actually had situations where some of the communication back and forth has been about music. People listening to music that's got profanity or these worldly rap guys. And this kind of discussion seems to come up where whether it's music, whether it's something people are watching on TV, whether it's something people are being exposed to on the Internet or movies people are going to.

And one of the things that came out is in this discussion that I heard firsthand is show me in the Bible where it says I can't do that. And, okay, we look at that and we say as Christians, well, shouldn't our life be guided by Scripture? Absolutely. I want everybody to totally understand I in no way am downplaying the importance of Scripture in the life of a Christian.

Not at all. In fact, I want to emphasize the necessity of Scripture to point out what's really important in the Christian life. When somebody comes along and says you want to talk to them about some activity in their life, brother, you want to jump over here? Do you know we can talk to people about different things in their life that don't seem appropriate, seem out of place, seem unfitting, seem worldly, seem indecent, seem profane.

And people want to say, show me in the Bible where it says that. It's like, show me the rules. Show me the law.

That kind of living of the Christian life is what I want to attack that. I want to deal with that. I want to address that.

Because to live your life that way is really to miss it. That's not living the Christian life according to New Testament principles. It's something else.

In fact, it's a manifestation of legalism. It's a manifestation of people who want a list of rules and show me the rule that says I can do that or can't do that. It's basically always asking the question, what's permissible? How close to the line can I live and still be a Christian? How much of the world can I bring in? What's wrong with that? What's wrong with drinking? What's wrong with the thing is today, marijuana? Or show me in the Bible where it says that.

Show me in the Bible where it says I'm supposed to evangelize. Show me the rule. Brethren, living your life that way is a manifestation of nothing less than legalism.

It's simply wanting to be under a code of laws, a code of ethics, a list of rules, and you need your whole life guided by that. Show me the rule. There's just something about that.

When I hear that kind of language, sometimes I'm amazed. And I'm not the only one. Listen to this.

Now, I know this quote isn't exactly along the line of what I'm talking about right now, but it's close. It's got some parallels. Listen to this.

This is John Piper speaking actually about a quote that he got from J.I. Packer. Just hang with me here. There's a connection.

You'll see it. Piper says this, In the church, we've developed all kinds of Christ-coded remedies that are shallow and short-lived. We are not, by and large, the deeply grounded saints that some of our forefathers were.

J.I. Packer compares the old English Puritans who lived and suffered from 1550 to 1700 with the Redwoods of California. They were giants whose roots were incredibly deep in the Bible and whose branches reached to the heavens and whose trunks were so strong and durable they could endure forest fires that scar them but don't kill them. Packer says affluence seems for the past generation to be making dwarfs and deadheads of us all.

You see, that's what I don't want. I don't want a room full of dwarfs and deadheads. Brethren, if regeneration is real and it's the work of Almighty God and He has actually taken people and made new creations out of them, and if indeed, like we're going to see on Sunday, we're seated in heavenly places with Christ, if that is true of us, why are there not more Redwoods today? Why deadheads? Anyway, we do not have the patience to sink the roots of hospitality and brotherly kindness and authentic love in the deep rock of Romans 6-8.

See, Piper was preaching through those chapters at the time that he said this. We want to jump straight from the justification to the practical application of chapter 12. Just give us a list.

The reason he goes to 12, the reason he's talking 5 and 12 is because 5 deals with justification by faith. We have peace through God if you think about 5-1. Our sins are forgiven based on the merits of what Jesus Christ did.

Just tell me about my redemption. Tell me about my forgiveness. And then take me to the list of rules, which there are some lists of things, if you remember, if you think, when you get 10-12 verses into Romans 12, you begin to get a list of various things that come at us.

And he's saying, that's how most people want to live. Tell me I'm forgiven. Now give me the list of things so I can basically live my life that way.

Do this, don't do that, and just live our lives. But see, the thing that Piper's hitting at is that's what makes for shallow Christians. Tell me my sins are forgiven.

Give me the list of things to do. That's not how we live the Christian life. Just give us a list.

Tell us what to do. But the Puritans were different. They looked at the book of Romans and saw that life is built another way.

Being a sage, being a redwood, being unshakable in storm and useful in times of indescribable suffering, that does not come quickly or easily. Romans is not two chapters long. It's 16 chapters long.

It does not skip from chapter 5 to 12. It leads us deep down into the roots of godliness so that when we come up, we're not people with lists. You see, that's the thing.

That's what's so amazing to me is when people say, show me in the Bible where I shouldn't do that. You see, that's what you want to say to them. Have you never read Romans 6-8? Have you never plunged down in the depths of sin no longer has dominion? Eternal life is at the end of I've died to sin.

I'm a slave to God. I'm now bearing this fruit on the sanctification. The end of all of this is eternal life.

I'm not married to the law anymore. I'm married to Christ and there's freedom. That freedom is a license to sin.

A freedom to serve God. It's going through the depths of that kind of teaching before you ever get to any sort of lists. It says it leads us down deep into the roots of godliness so that when we come up, we're not people with lists.

But people with unshakeable life and strength and holiness and wisdom and love. Now listen to another Piper quote. This is Piper, I believe it's when he did his, I may be wrong on this, but I believe this comes from when he did his biographical sketch of C.S. Lewis.

And he was actually talking about as a young Christian trying to sort things out and he got exposure to C.S. Lewis. And look, there's much that Lewis says, does, did, believed. I would not stand by at all, but here's what Piper said.

Somehow there had been awakened in me a passion for the essence and the main point of life. The ethical question whether something is permissible. You see, that's what he was dealing with.

As a young Christian, this idea of asking that question all the time, just looking at something and saying, is it permissible? Faded in relationship to the question, what is the main thing, the essential thing? The thought of building a life around minimal morality or minimal significance, a life defined by the question, what is permissible? Felt almost disgusting to me. I didn't want a minimal life. I didn't want to live on the outskirts of reality.

I wanted to understand the main thing about life and pursue it. Now, I know I've been quoting Piper. We're going to get to Scripture now.

But brethren, if you think about it, just think about the arguments of the epistles or the way Jesus, when He had opportunity to pull His disciples aside and He began teaching them. Where in the world do you ever find just a list of ethics? A list of morality? Christianity in the New Testament is not just a list of rules. Show me in the Bible where it says I can do that.

I'm always looking for what's permissible. That's dismal, horrible kind of religion. Here's what Scripture says as we're thinking about the book of Romans.

You know what's interesting? When you get to Romans 14, and what do we all know Romans 14 for? What jumps out at you as being one of the key characteristics of Romans 14? Romans 14 is where it says it talks to us about having differences. Right? Some eat. Some don't eat.

Some observe the day. Some don't observe the day. Well, isn't that interesting? Let's just think right there.

Is that a list of rules? Actually, that's Paul telling people, you know what? That guy over there can do it. That guy over there can't do it. She can eat.

She doesn't eat. No list of rules. There's much bigger things than a list of rules.

Isn't that right? And see, when he gets done with it, you know what he says? He says the kingdom of God is not all about eating and drinking. What's that? That's rules. It's not about a list of rules as to whether I can drink alcohol or not.

That's not how you live your life. It's not simply, is it permissible for a Christian to drink wine? After all, Jesus Christ, look what He did over there at the wedding. That's not how you live.

Yes, we take those things into consideration. We look at them. But as we live out our life, the question we're not always asking is is it permissible? Can I eat? Can I not eat? Yes, there are verses that say that if you forbid people to eat, it's demonic doctrine.

There are those that come along and say you can't eat, you can't marry. We know there's demon doctrine out there. We need to be able to distinguish between them.

But brethren, can't you hear Paul here? He's saying to the Romans there's bigger issues than rules around eating and drinking. That's not the issue. The Kingdom of God is about righteousness.

What else? It's about peace. It's about joy in the Holy Spirit. You see, joy in the Holy Spirit.

I just had a meeting not too long before the Bible study tonight. And one of the sisters was telling me about a season in her life where she lacked assurance. And she told me right off she'd grieved the Spirit.

She knew it. Joy in the Holy Spirit. See, those are the kind of questions to be asking.

Is this going to bring any shadow between me and the Lord? Because I don't want it. You see, it's not is it permissible. I feel like Piper.

That kind of thinking, it's disgusting for a Christian to even think on that level. Or professing Christian. I mean, in the end, what we're going to find is many people who talk that way, the reason they talk that way is because they're under the law.

And that's how people under the law think. That's how slaves think. The slave is always thinking.

See, the slave doesn't enjoy what the Master tells him to do. But he's always aware of the law. Of the rules.

Because if he doesn't do the rule, what's going to happen? He's going to get punished. He's going to get whipped. He's going to get beat.

He's going to get his leg chopped off. You do what the Master says or there's consequences. And so you're always mindful of the rules.

That is to be under the law. That's just a life that's guided by. The legalist is absorbed with rules rather than with God.

Rather than with his fellow man in true holiness. Life is viewed as primarily what I do. It's breaking all my actions down.

The do's. The don'ts. The particular actions.

All in terms of is it permissible? Is it not? Versus the Kingdom of God is about righteousness. It's about what pleases the King. Is He righteousness? That's the character of the King.

The Kingdom of God. That's the character of the King Himself. What is the character of God? How can I be like Him? What does Peter say? Does Peter not call us to be holy? Why? Be ye holy.

Why? What's the argument? Come on, folks. Now let's be aggressive. What was it? Yeah, it's you shall be holy for I am holy.

Listen to Ephesians 4. Ephesians 4.17 and following. We're going to come to this in our studies. But you know what? Paul comes along and he says, you shouldn't walk like Gentiles any longer.

You shouldn't act like them. You shouldn't live your lives that way. Walk like the Gentiles do in the futility of their mind.

He basically breaks down how they live. They're alienated from the life of God. They're living in all this sensuality.

What's the reason? Because Jesus Christ gave you a list of do's and don'ts. You know what he says? That is not the way you learned Christ. Assuming that you have learned Him.

Isn't that interesting? He attacks that on the end. You see, that's the issue. How did you learn Christ? Let me ask you this.

I would just ask you all this. When you do something with your life, how did you learn Christ? I mean, that's the kind of question that needs to be going through your mind. You know what I learned about Him? I learned when I get to the book of Acts, He came and He went about doing good.

You know what's amazing to me? What you think about this. You all know what's happening out there in social media and what the discussions are about far more than I do. Let me ask you a question.

The people who it seems like are constantly trying to... I mean, they're legalists. Show them a rule. That's how they talk all the time.

Show me a rule for that. Show me a rule for that. Is that who you want for a husband or wife? I want you to hug me.

Show me a rule for that. Look, if you start to even contemplate that on that level, a wife says, I want my husband to hold me, and the husband says, show me a rule for that. You don't want a husband like that.

Can you see how God would be absolutely disgusted with that kind of life? Listen, there is a huge difference between morality and holiness. This idea of just basically living your life according to some moral code. Show me where it says that.

Show me where I have to do that. Like this argument against evangelism. People who say, show me in the Bible.

Back in William Carey's day, that was a big thing. They wanted to downplay the Great Commission as though it was only for the apostles. Carey came along and said, he used numerous arguments, but his main one being, look, the promise is that Christ will be with us to the end of the age.

Doesn't that mean that our responsibility to go to all the nations is a responsibility that lasts as long as the promise does? Certainly so. But look, let me just ask this. It's the old, if you have the cure for cancer, and the world all around you is dying of cancer, show me a rule where it says I have to go share the remedy with everybody else.

You see, that's what the legalist does. Show me the law. Show me the rule.

I don't care if the rest of the world goes to hell. You see what's operating there? The kingdom is not about a list of rules. It's Jesus saying, love one another the way I loved you.

Now, I know that's among Christians, but we have a responsibility to love our neighbor as ourself out there in this world. If I have the remedy to save people's souls from hell, am I going to sit there and debate? And show me in the Bible where I have to go do that. It's like, what is wrong with you? Something is wrong with that person.

Just like somebody is wrong with a person that can come out of a movie with 50 F-bombs dropped in the middle of it. Show me in the Bible where I can't do that. It's like, seriously? Let me ask you guys a question.

If you were in the worst part of this city, this is a rather tame city compared to, let's talk St. Louis or Detroit or Chicago. You imagine you're in one of the worst parts of one of those cities. You're in an alley and you see four guys.

All you can see is their silhouette from the street light behind them. They're walking down the alley towards you and they're huge. Would it comfort you more to know that they've just come out of a Bible study or that all four of them just came out of a movie where 50 F-bombs were dropped? Which would make you feel more comfortable walking down that alley? There's testimony issues.

Let me ask you this. The guy who's always arguing about why he doesn't have a biblical responsibility to evangelize or just questions like that. Show me in the Bible where I'm supposed to do that.

If you were sick at the end of your life and you need to be cared for by somebody, is that the kind of person you want caring for you? Show me in the Bible where it says that. That doesn't produce righteousness and peace and joy and love. You know what does that? Learning of Jesus.

Jesus said, learn of me. He said, take my yoke. He said, learn of me.

You see, that's where Paul's coming from. That's not the way you learn Jesus Christ. Oh brethren, think with me here.

Many of you know from Brother Charles' book about the story of Evangeline Booth, William Booth, Salvation Army, his daughter. You know the story if you've read the book. Perhaps some of you know it beyond there.

Where they were bringing the woman. Prisoner. Guards carrying her.

There's Evangeline standing off to the side. How can I reach this woman? Suddenly, she just steps out there and kisses the woman on the cheek. Show me a law that says you have to do that.

There's no law. There's no rule. I can tell you if I'm at the end of my life, and you're saying, who do you want to care for you? The person who could go watch filthy, bloody, profane, God's name dragged through the mud movies, sex, and want to defend their right to go watch it.

You're at the end of your life. You want that person to care for you or Evangeline Booth? Brethren, it speaks volumes. There is a kind of New Testament Christianity.

Do you learn from Christ that going to movies like that, would He do it? Look, if you say, yes, I believe He would, then you have a different Christ than the one I have. What I have isn't the issue. That's a different Christ than the one here.

And here's the problem with people like that. They go through their life constantly asking what's permissible, rather than, what can I do? You see, when I hear about the fact that we're supposed to let our good works be seen before men, they might glorify our Father in heaven, or like Peter says, glorify God in the day of visitation. Again, it's got to do with them seeing our good works, Jesus saying the works I did, you will do, believer, greater works.

You see, one of the things is people that are always asking, where's the line? Where's the minimal line? What's permissible? What can I get away with? Show me in the Bible where it says that. You know what people like that are not doing? All they're doing is walking through life constrained by legalistic codes. And they're not people who just freely fly on the wings of an eagle to do good.

Brethren, the life of a Christian is not just, show me where I can't do that. It's thinking about, I met with a couple today who were telling me about their desires to help, care for inner city kids. Again, I ask you, you're 89 years old, a family member, somebody from the church, somebody's going to take care of you.

You want it to be the person who is thinking, how can I care for children? Versus living their life, I can go to that movie, show me in the Bible where it says I can't. What kind of Christianity do you all want? What kind of person would you want caring for you? What kind of person would you want to meet in that alley? Righteousness, peace, joy in the Holy Spirit. Morality, it's always concerned with specific actions where holiness is a life picture.

Am I being conformed to the image of God? Am I being conformed to the image of Christ? Is true righteousness all of my life? Is it there? Brethren, everything in the legalist's mind just gets boiled down to individual actions. Is it permissible? Is it right? Is it wrong? Give me a rule. Give me rules.

Give me rules. You see, that's what Packer was saying about the Puritans. Their lives are buried deep.

It's kind of like the doctrines we're going through in Ephesians. You notice, this is not a list of rules. What we're dealing with is Paul saying to Christians, as you live your life, live in the reality, alive with Christ,

raised up with Christ, seated with Christ, in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus.

That's the reality. We're living life on another plane with a whole other... I mean, we're going to look at texts that tie in over to Colossians, but you're setting your minds on things above where Christ is seated. You're living on another plane.

You're living in another realm. You're outside of just this minimal morality mentality. Jesus Christ... Brethren, don't you see when you come to the New Testament and you find the legalists, we're always like, hey, hey, put down your bedding.

What do you think you're doing? It's the Sabbath. Not permissible to do that. You see, we can look and we can say, yeah, how did David eat the show bread which he was not supposed to eat? Because brethren, that right there goes to the heart of the matter.

Paul made as strong a case as anybody in the Scriptures that you should pay those who minister the Gospel. And yet, he was the first one to say to the Corinthians and to the Thessalonians, I'm not going to take anything. Wait.

You set down a law. Don't muzzle the ox. That's the law.

You better pay me. That's not how we live. You see, you miss it.

You miss it. If you don't recognize that Jesus let the adulteress walk, you say, hey, wait a second. The law said stone her.

Or he healed on the Sabbath. Or he let his disciples pick grain, rub them in their hands and eat. Or he told the lame to pick up their bedding and walk.

They were breaking the rules. But you see, you miss it if you just live your life. You see, if you're just constrained by rules, you don't get it.

Jesus looked at those Pharisees and he said, that's exactly your problem. They're all about rules. And all rules do is they leave you on the surface.

This thin veneer of morality. That's all it is. Because in the heart, it's a person under the law.

Because in the heart, they really don't want to do it. They just keep in the rule because they're afraid of the punishment. They're afraid of the consequences.

If they don't do it, they're just trapped in there. Rather than standing back and saying, look, I want mercy, not sacrifice. That's all the rule keeping is.

It's sacrifice. If you could prove to that person, like you go over to Ephesians 5 and you say, look, filthiness, crude jesting, it's not appropriate. Oh, okay, you showed me the rule.

Okay, the movie that I wanted to go see, now I can't because I've got a law. That is such the wrong way. The wrong way.

Brethren, don't you find the Apostle Paul, think of Philipians 3. The Apostle Paul, when he was lost, religious, moral, it's all about the rules. Well, I was circumcised on the right day. According to the rule.

I mean, when it came to the law, I dotted every I, I crossed every T, I was right on. I was blameless. Give me a rule, I was right there.

I kept them. But what happens once he's saved? You see how his attitude changed? What does he say then? Oh, that I might know Him and the power of His resurrection. Look, we live our lives.

We do things. But it's not a matter of a list of right and wrong. Just like for Romans 14.

Could I in a certain circumstance drink wine? It's not just the rule. Paul's looking back and he's looking at how this affects people. How your decisions are a reflection of God Himself.

How it reflects what you've been taught of Christ. How it reflects righteousness. How it reflects peace.

How it reflects joy in the Holy Spirit. It's just living on an entirely higher plane. It's got to do with what does God think? What's His will? What's going to be pleasing? What's going to bring His smile? It's living on that level.

It's not wanting companions. Listen, you know the Bible talks about bad companionship corrupts good manners. And you could go to the Proverbs and you could find, you want to be wise? Walk with the wise.

You want to be a fool? Walk with fools. You know what? It's almost like with the invention of electricity, we don't define companions the right way anymore. It's like I read a story one time about a family that let an old man, some old man moved into their house, and he sat over in the corner and he was filthy.

He was lewd. He used God's name in vain. He just did graphic things.

And the whole gist of the story was that old man sitting in the corner doing all those things and being tolerated by the family was a picture of the television. And the thing is, it's almost like we have come to the place where we think that a person isn't a companion if a TV screen or a computer screen separates us. That's not true.

What is a companion? This has to do with the idea of people that we surround ourselves with. People who we allow to influence us. You may not have a person come into your house, but you may expose yourself on the internet to people that end up influencing you, people that end up saying things, people that end up injecting a worldview into your mind, people that end up being a worldly example, people that do things that the truth is, people that say things.

Listen, there was a reason why way before movies, way before TV, way before internet, you put people out of the church. Anybody remember what one of those reasons was? Little Levin? Levin's the whole lump? It's amazing how now with all of our electronic apparatuses, we allow people to influence us that church discipline was meant to eradicate from our lives, or right decisions about companionship were meant to eradicate from our lives. You start asking yourself, do you think you can sit in front of a movie with sex, a horror movie, with graphic language, God defamed, absolutely unchristian values, worldly perspectives, and that you're going to be uninfluenced? Is that the way you learn Christ? Now Christ, here's what I learned from Christ, that if I have the opportunity to find people like that, and to seek to be the one that's the aggressor, to seek to be the one on the offensive, to seek to be the one who goes to the sick, bringing the message of the doctor, then that's good.

Eating with publicans and sinners, tax collectors, that's good. When we're the one setting the agenda, when we're going in to bring light, but you know the problem is, TVs, movie screens, internet, internet I guess you have some ability to communicate back and forth, but typically you don't have that. You don't go to the movie to positively influence the actors.

And so look, I'm not saying that there aren't, I, many of you know, I mean just every Sunday afternoon, I'm watching, I got all ten dispatches from the front in here, and I just go through them. It keeps my missionary juices flowing, and very often Friday nights, I love to watch the Q&A times, Ligonier, often times Piper, or Sproul, MacArthur, different men. There's things that can be tremendously profitable.

There can be things that can be tremendously profitable to bring the family together. You can watch certain documentaries on nature, I mean you can see God's handiwork, and get a perspective on some things in this world that just blow your mind and cause you to think bigger views of God. But you see, you're evaluating everything from that perspective.

Is this going to cause me to worship God? To see God as bigger? Is this going to cause me to walk more holy? Is this going to cause me to learn of Christ? Is this going to somehow help me in my run? Or is this going to impact my joy in the Holy Spirit? This idea, brethren, what's permissive? Oh, if you've been saved by the blood of Christ, you can't get away from it. It's like every book in our Bible just calls us to recognize we ought to be living on another plane, and we've got the power to live on that higher plane. This idea of just walking around all the time, being guided by a list of rules.

You don't need a list of rules for the refrigerator. No more than if you get married, you need a list of rules how to treat your wife. Don't beat your wife.

Kiss wife in mourning. Say goodbye when you leave. I mean, your wife would be appalled at that.

And listen, don't try to construct God differently. God created relationships between man and woman, between us, as a reflection of a greater relationship. He wants our heart.

He wants our passions. He wants us to do things from love. He wants us to be spontaneous.

It doesn't mean there isn't a place for thinking. It doesn't mean there isn't a place for studying Scripture. It doesn't mean there isn't a place to let the light of Scripture shine and to be moved and motivated by the Spirit of God through it.

But brethren, living a life where righteousness becomes the spontaneous reaction and imitating Christ and walking because we love and we delight in Him and we appreciate our friendship, our relationship with Him. You read that first John, we're walking in the light. We have fellowship.

When you get to the place where you appreciate fellowship and you want to fast, not because there's a law, not because Jesus said when you fast, that means it's a law, got to do the law, got to do it. When the church fasts quarterly, got to do it. No, it's when you look and you say, Lord, I just want to clear all the food out because I need You, Lord.

I need You. I feel like there's a dryness. I feel like a shadow has come between us.

I feel like, Lord, I want to quicken. Lord, I want You to draw near. Brethren, you know that is what pleases the Lord.

When it's all mechanical, when it's all rule keeping, that is not pleasing to Him. That is ugly religion. That is legalism.

Legalists are always concerned with the rules, not with God, not with loving their fellow man. They're concerned with the rules. Show me the rule to keep.

Rule keeping, rule keeping, rule keeping. Oh, brethren, I know that there are laws in Scripture. I know that.

But you know as well as I do, if you just let your mind go, you know. Jesus came along and He said, look, I know you had a law that said not to commit adultery. But look, it's way beyond that.

It's way beyond that. It's learning of Jesus. How do you learn Jesus? Oh, He was pure.

He wasn't rude to women. He was kind to them. He treated them with the utmost of respect.

He revealed Himself to Mary first when He was risen. There He was. She thought He was the gardener.

They were gathered around the cross. He took care of His mother. John, behold your mother.

I mean, you just watch the way He dealt with women. It's not a rule. It's not constantly living a rule.

If I look at this, and I'm living in fear of the penalty. See, slaves live in fear of the penalty all the time. It's purity fleeing youthful lusts.

It's wanting to stay pure. It's wanting to be holy. It's not wanting these things to impact my life because I don't want to lose sight of God's face.

I don't want to lose power. There's a power to do good. There's an enabling.

The Spirit of God quickens us. The Spirit of God gives gifts. The Spirit of God gives grace.

The Spirit of God empowers us. I don't want to lose that. Quenching's the Spirit.

You've got grieving the Spirit. That's the idea of a person that's grieved. That's more the relationship.

Quenching is more the power, the fire, the light. I don't want that. And brethren, when we fail, when we fall, when we do things, He's faithful and just to forgive us.

Scripture says so. And there's a place to run back to Him and not to hesitate. But so often, brethren, we need to live in the reality of that.

That we're justified and that we have free access to Him all the time and we can run back. But we know that grievance in our own heart of having offended Him, losing sight of Him. Just, I mean, you know what Peter went through after denying the Lord.

In seasons, if we quench the Spirit, we can't find Him and things grow. You remember how it was with Christian when he lost his scroll? He's just cursing himself. I had to walk the same ground three times that I only needed to walk once.

Why? Because of his foolishness. He went to sleep there at the top of the hill of difficulty and the style that was made for the rest of the weary pilgrim. But he fell asleep there and he had to walk the same ground three times.

You see, it's just, it's stuff like, it's living with a bigger picture. I don't want to keep walking the same ground over and over. I don't want to fall backwards.

I don't want to lose ground. I don't want to lose his smile. I don't want to lose his fellowship.

I don't want to lose his sense of his love. I don't want to lose any of his power. I don't want that.

I want righteousness. I want it to be overflowing. I want to be moving upward and upward and upward.

I want to see him more. Oh, that I might know him. Driven like that.

As I just mentioned on Sunday, living like the psalmist with a heart that pants after God like the deer is panting after the water. You see, when we live like that, it's, if you look up eyeball to eyeball with God, I just have to believe, people who can listen to foul, filthy music and watch dirtbag movies, are they on their knees before they go? Are they asking the Lord, help and guide me to do the most holy things today? Help me to be like Evangeline Booth. Help me to look for opportunities where I can love somebody, where I could plant a kiss.

I want to have the grace to know when to kiss a woman on the cheek, and when it's inappropriate, and what the kindest thing to do, and have the right words to speak. My wife said when we got in a discussion about this, she said, you know what? She said, I think that there are just some of God's people who don't know what it's like to actually have holiness in their life and live in the power of that. I'm probably not saying it exactly how she said it, but she said it something like that.

And I think there's a reality there. I think we have some, whether they're just professing Christians or whether they're just immature ones, they just don't know what it is to really experience the power of God that comes with a truly holy life, a consistently holy life. It's like once you've tasted certain things in the Christian life, once you've tasted that the Lord is good, you don't want to go back.

You don't want to go back. You don't only not want to go back to how it was when you were lost. You don't want to go back to how it was when you were a less mature Christian.

You want more comments. You want to open it up for any kind of discussion.

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