

Church - Pillar and Ground of the Truth

by Wong Chin Meng

Wong Chin Meng's sermon emphasizes the church's role in upholding truth as revealed through Jesus and the Holy Spirit amidst a world often blinded to it.

Duration: 2:09:52

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, John 18:28, Romans 15:8

Topics: "Truth"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker recounts a conversation between Ravi Zacharias, a preacher, and a judge from New York. The judge points to pictures and asks Ravi if they give him a lot to think about. Ravi responds by saying that being a judge should also give the judge a lot to think about. The speaker then discusses the irony of people questioning the truth when Jesus, who is the truth, is being questioned. The sermon also touches on the failure of the church during the rise of Nazi Germany. The speaker concludes by emphasizing the importance of recognizing Jesus as the truth and allowing the Holy Spirit to apply this truth to our lives.

Transcript

In John, or the Gospel by John, just before we pray, and I'm here in John 18, the Gospel by John, and the 18th chapter of John, we'll come to a particular text, which is familiar for most of us, but we need to read it in the context of which the text is going to present to us, because it is one of the most epic encounters in the life of Jesus Christ, and in this case, this is just prior to his death on the cross, and he is being confronted not only by the religious order and the systems of his day and his time, but he was also confronted by the Caesars of Rome, and I use the word Caesars of Rome, because that's exactly what they are, Pontius Pilate is only one of the governor and political leader that the Roman Empire has under them, so all of these individuals and governors and whoever they are, they are basically the epitome of the Caesar who is in control, who is ruling in the capital Rome at that time, understand that?

So all of these governors and representatives of Rome are basically the epitome or the representation of the Caesar that was in Rome, so it has become a connotation, the word Caesar or the name Caesar, and that's where you have the name Kaiser in Germany, so they adopted the word Kaiser during the first reich, the second reich, and the third reich, anyone here know what's the reich? reich means the German word for their reign, their government, r-e-i-c-h, so Adolf Hitler pioneered the third reich, that's why they are known as the third reich, prior to that there is a first and a second, and each reich had a Kaiser, you may

have heard of Kaiser Wilhelm I or Kaiser Wilhelm II, all these were very powerful leaders at that time, so Caesar will be the word, so this is an account of an epical

encounter between Christ and Caesar, and in this case Pontius Pilate was in a sense that Caesar that he represented whoever was at that time was the Caesar in Rome, so Lord we thank you, and here we are, we seek you, we come that we ask you to bear to us, give to us, counsel us, and release into us Lord a spirit of truth, we are so needing for you to come to us in these days, even as we join our hearts together as your people, Lord we are trusting you moment by moment that you might once again give us your wisdom and your counsel, you who has indeed the spirit of truth, and you who is indeed the truth, Lord we are seeking you because we know so little of that which is indeed truth, thank you again, so give us a whole new dimension, come and let your Holy Spirit bear to us, teach us, and

communicate something from your heart to us here, we who have been subjected to not only a nature of lies, but to live Lord in an age where lie is everything, we are needing Lord such a great salvation, such a great deliverance, help us we pray, so bear your heart and your counsel to us, and we thank you for what you have began with us here, and we are trusting you even for this day, Lord for the ongoing of this world that has such intentions and such prospect for whatever that you have appointed this world for, so thank you again, so we ask of you to just make this personal to us, thank you that you are not here to give us information, you are to communicate the very nature of truth to us, because our nature is one that has been given to lies for such a long time, so we are intending

Lord to come to you and to agree with you, even when those times where having to agree with you makes it difficult for us, we still have to agree with you, to know that Lord we are so unfamiliar with truth, we are so alien, such a stranger to what truth is to us, and we live in a lie for so long in darkness until Lord, until you came, until you came and revealed Jesus to us, and so even though light has come, we are still needing you to expand and to enlarge and to give us the capacity Lord to understand truth, Lord in all of its dimension, in all of its wonder, thank you thou God of truth come to us again, we praise you, so we ask you simply Lord to come to us in your grace and be rich and be favorable to us even as you pour your heart amongst us here, for this we are grateful to you in

Jesus name, Amen.

Alright now, so the gospel by John in 18, I want to pick this up and reading in verse 28 of this chapter, and just as I am about to break in there to read this, now when Jesus left, or just before, sorry when I say Jesus left, but as Jesus was preparing in one of his final encounters or final conversation with his immediate disciples, he makes it very purposeful as I said in John 16 to introduce the comforter, the paracletos, and we dealt with that or we read in that context that Jesus told them that it was imperative, it was compulsory for him to leave, to go, because without which the comforter cannot come, and this was the first time and the only time and it was a very crucial time because this is just at the very corner or at the turn whereby he would then be given to men and then

betrayed and be taken to the cross and there to die and to accomplish the will of the Father, so I think the timing within his heart was such that he knew that this has to be spoken at this very crucial time, he didn't say it at the beginning, he didn't say it in between those three, three and a half years of his public ministry, he waited until the end because he knew that this was so crucial that it cannot be kind of taken lightly and of course the timing is also vital and what a time it was for Jesus to finally release from himself the whole coming of the Holy Spirit, and what an announcement it was and we dealt with that and he make it very

clear to them concerning the function and the nature of the Spirit that we read about that both was essential to the understanding and the

reception of the Holy Spirit, because they will receive the Spirit into their lives and upon that reception they are to discover and to understand for the rest of their lives as a church on the face of the earth that it's their privilege to know this true sight or true reality of the Spirit, one the function of the Spirit and the second the nature of the Spirit, one is without the other, so and that of course is so tempting even for myself you know to once again take this even further but our time is not concerning this, once again I say function and nature and I think as I said in my brief moments that one of the tragedy that the Charismatic and the Pentecostal Church in recent decades has failed to come into focus of not just the function of the Spirit which we have plenty in recent

times, but in so emphasizing the function of the Spirit we have actually missed the nature of the Spirit and as I said that one is without the other, you cannot exalt one and demote the other, you can't choose one and abandon the other, you can't do either one and yet not face the consequence or consequences, we've seen those consequences in all of the recent years as I said that I'm not one looking from the outside in, I'm one from the inside looking out and I've seen the tragedy that have followed so many today because of a violation and a neglect that has happened in this area of having to choose to enjoy the function of the Spirit but we have so either reject or either sometimes I would say neglect would be a better word to use and we have neglected the very nature of the Spirit and

you cannot do that and Jesus makes it very emphatic at the very close of some of the last words he ever spoke to the disciples that he makes it very very stark to these men what the nature of the Spirit is when the Spirit is come and that's why he says when he is come the Spirit is a person, the Spirit is more than an experience, the Spirit is more than a goose bump, the Spirit is more than a tongue, is more than a gift, is more than an experience, is more than a sensation, is more than a warm feelings and so on and so forth when he is, Jesus makes it once and final in that pronouncement when he is, the Spirit is a person, when he is come and who is he?

The Spirit of Truth, when he is come, that's the nature, not just the function, the function is that he is the comforter he is the paracletos, he is here to comfort, to guide, to speak, to console, to encourage, to call alongside, to help, that's the function but his nature is what? He is the Spirit of Truth who will lead you into all truth and so years later men like Paul, Peter, James, John and all of these apostles who were to be the recipient of that Holy Spirit understood it very clearly all throughout the New Testament particularly the epistles of the apostles they confirmed what Jesus in those final days of his life on earth introduced to these men concerning who the Holy Spirit is, that he is the Spirit of Truth and that's where we even found it in Paul when he wrote to Timothy that he says that the pillar and the ground of the church is none other than Truth, the church of the living God, of the church of God is indeed the pillar and the ground of the truth, so what is it that makes the very pillar and the ground of the church of Jesus Christ?

It is Truth, so Paul understood this of course in this remarkable way, this is one of the aspects of his understanding, we probably will have time, hopefully that God will give us the opportunity to indulge ourselves from some of these apostles understanding of what this truth has done for them so it's remarkable when you begin to read men like Paul and James and Peter and John and particularly Paul and John too, you find how they understood this truth to be, what this Spirit of Truth that they have now received that has come into their lives has indeed done in them and done through them alright, now when Jesus said to these men that when he the Spirit of Truth is come, you have to remember that Jesus was

talking about his own spirit because the Holy Spirit is also the spirit of Jesus so when Jesus introduced to these men that he the Spirit of Truth when he is come is going to lead you into all truth, he is essentially projecting to these men what he is in himself because what the spirit is is only because he himself is that spirit you got the point there? what the spirit is, is only because he himself is of that spirit, so if the spirit is truth, it only goes to confirm that Jesus himself is also what? the truth and of course we all know that Jesus was the one who said that when he is come he is the way, the truth and the life, not truths with an S but he is the truth or the truth, so what the spirit is in himself is only because he himself is that spirit, got the point there? now it's remarkable now we have the time here in this context in John's gospel 18, we are going to read because it has to do with the whole issue of truth that is being highlighted in this very epic encounter between Jesus and of course Pontius Pilate and between Christ and the Caesar and I tell you why I'm using this in the course of our time here together, reading in verse 28, picking up this whole account here of chapter 18 and they let Jesus from Caiaphas into the Praetorian and it was early, Praetorian means you know the governor's residence, that's where Pontius Pilate was residing and they themselves did not enter into the Praetorian so that they would not be defiled but might eat the Passover, considering all those that followed him right from Gethsemane having not arrested him and therefore Pilate went out to them and said what accusation do you bring against this man? they answered and said to him if this man were not an evildoer we would not have delivered him to you and so Pilate said to them then take him yourselves and judge him according to your law, the Jews said to him we are not permitted to put anyone to death to fulfill the word of Jesus which he spoke signifying by what kind of death he was about to die and therefore Pilate entered again into the Praetorian and summoned Jesus and said to him are you the king of the Jews?

Jesus answered are you saying this on your own initiative or did others tell you about me? so Jesus was quite precise in his question to this man because this is what Pontius Pilate asked him are you the king of the Jews? and Jesus said are you saying this on your own initiative or did others tell you about it? because the chances are not the chances precisely this was the issue because he was deserved as far as the Jews were concerned who arrested him and brought him before Pontius Pilate as far as they were concerned he was worthy to die and he must die and the punishment meted out for him was for this one crime and the crime was what? he was the king of the Jews which strangely enough he has never said it in all of his earthly life not once did Jesus ever in his public ministry ever

make that confession and was he? and is he either now or was he even prophetically the king of the Jews? of course he was because he is the son of God he is God's son he is God himself and to be God over Israel is to be king over Israel he is king over Israel and Jesus never made that statement but they understood this isn't it strange as it may be and due to his public ministry in less than three years it was obvious who he was though Jesus never in any time or point in time ever declared before these men who his true identity was except maybe among his own chosen twelve but before the nation before these people somehow it was kind of like spreading like a little you know like a mist all over the nation that this is the Messiah and for them they understood that to be the Messiah of

Israel is to be the king over Israel so this was the crime and they thought that that was worthy of death as far as they were concerned it was blasphemy and yet because of all of the pressure be it all of the political and the religious systems of that day because there were so much so many that were supporting Jesus or following Jesus and these guys these men in the hierarchy in the ecclesiastical system in the priesthood they were so backslidden they were afraid of the general consensus of the public that they would not have Jesus come to them or die through their hands just in case that you know they themselves could face the

consequence so they were smart they were using the Romans and the Roman law to get this out but not knowing that by even doing that it was to fulfill a prophecy

because the prophecy was that Jesus would die in the hands of the Gentiles he would die in the hands of another person not through his own people their own people will not have the privilege to kill him or will not be the one responsible though they will be using they will be the one introducing him to the Romans in this case to Pontius Pilate so when Jesus asked or when Jesus replied he said when to the question the Pontius Pilate asked him are you king of the Jew Jesus said are you saying this on your own initiative or did others tell you about me and Pilate answered I'm not a Jew am I and your own nation and chief priest delivered you to me what have you done is exactly what he was saying he was actually basically agreeing to the fact that he was being told privately behind the

curtains they told him they probably would have asked him he would have asked them what have you sent him for you want me to kill him you want me to pass a death sentence on him what have he done what because as far as they were concerned he is an evil doer what evil has he done and they would have probably whispered to his ears you know as a gang together he said because he called himself the king over the Jews or king of the Jews so Jesus knew that this was happening behind the curtains or behind doors Jesus answered verse 36 my kingdom is not of this world if my kingdom were of this world then my servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews but as it is my kingdom is not of this realm and therefore Pilate said to him so you are a king so you are a king

fair enough you're not king over this realm and you say by your own admission that you are king of another realm you're still a king aren't you logical isn't it Romans Roman minds Roman cleverness this is what happens to Roman philosophy that's what Rome was famous for so they knew how exactly to make the reduction so you are a king Jesus answered you say correctly that I am a king his first time isn't it virtually an admission before this great representative of the Caesar of Rome you say correctly that I am a king and for this I have been born and for this I have come into the world to testify to the truth I've come to testify to the truth that was the purpose of his kingship I've come into this world to testify to the truth and everyone who is of the truth hears my voice you notice

that very purposeful very deliberate and purposeful statement I read again here to you as if this I have been born and for this I've come into the world you would have thought that I know he would have gone on is it correctly you said that I'm a king I'm correctly I'm born I'm born here to be king over all of you he didn't he didn't dabble he didn't carry on with the whole issue of his kingship he put the very nail to the thing that has consumed him that has always been at that very heart and the center of all that he was before God and before men that was the reason why he came and that was why he was starting to move in this direction he answered it differently he didn't carry on with the issue of the kingship and yet it was connected to his kingship so you correctly say that I am the

king and then he says for this reason for this I have been born for this I have come into the world for this I've been born have I been born in order to be a king yes of course and for this reason I've come into the world to be the king over Israel king over Jew of course but then he started to put the emphasis in a whole different way to testify to the truth everyone who is of the truth hears my voice establishing it properly for the first time now before Pontius Pilate truth is a nature truth is a person I came to testify to the truth for everyone or everyone who is of the truth hears my voice he didn't say that everyone who learns truth is going to hear my voice or anyone who knows a lot about truth about teaching about ethical laws about the philosophy of what truth is or the

metaphysical aspect of what truth is is going to hear my voice he didn't say that he says that everyone who is of the truth hears my voice how many of you know that you can't hear the voice of God unless you have the nature of God the voice of God is only an affinity with one who has the nature of God only a man with the nature of God in him hears the voice of God you can't hear the voice of God when you don't have a nature that looks like God when you don't have a character that is like God you can't hear his voice that's what essentially Jesus was laying before Pontius Pilate everyone who is of the truth hears my voice truth is a nature and he that is of this truth if truth is in that man then that man will hear my voice that's exactly what he is saying and that comes one of the most

infamous statement by Pontius Pilate that has been used and coated and reverberated for the last 2000 years Pilate said to him what is truth isn't it interesting this is what Pilate said or Pilate asked what is truth Pilate said what is truth and Jesus just a while ago revealed to him who is what truth he didn't reveal he didn't tell him what is truth you see how blind this man is Pontius Pilate it's a picture of the world it's a picture of humanity it's not only a picture of Rome it's a picture of all men born on the face of the earth in all generations truth is a person truth is a nature truth is not a deduction truth is not a philosophy truth is not a human reasoning truth is not an ethical teaching truth is not a law truth is not a thing truth is a person what is truth you notice that

Jesus never answered the question because he didn't have to answer it because he said it earlier he introduces much earlier to this man for this reason I have come for this purpose I was born that I might testify to the what to the truth because what he was saying to this man is I am the truth for you it is what is truth for you it is a mental appreciation for you it is an intellectual pursuit for you it is just a fascination for you it is just a philosophical equation for you it is all of your Rome and all of your grand tour and all of your what is that the sum of all of your philosophers and all of your coming together and think about what truth is all about look at what you have become that's why you couldn't hear my voice he was not only referring to Pontius Pilate he was referring

even to his own people the Jews didn't hear his voice either because if they heard his voice because they would have knew who he was and then they would not have presented him to Pontius Pilate to be killed so this is the clash since of ancient of days what is truth versus who is truth and this will play out not only at that hour at that moment it will be played out even to the last days and we are going to see the clash of these two forces at work one in the hands of God and the other in the hands listen in the hands of the devil Satan himself threw his minions threw men like Adolf Hitler what is truth I believe you know that you can know what is truth and you don't know who is truth and we dealt with that isn't it in some of our time together the church can foreplay to want to this side

and that's what I'm going to read to you in just a short while in the account of the last in the initial years of the rise of Nazi Germany to the hands of Adolf Hitler and how the church behave herself before a nation and why the church fail and fail so sadly and so tragically in the end alright so I'm just putting this before you for a while for you to appreciate this if we can all appreciate this Pontius Pilate said or ask him what is truth so far so clear here to you so it's remarkable Jesus said this for this I have been born for this I have come into the world to testify to the truth and everyone who is of the truth hears my voice truth as a person truth as an intrinsic nature as an essential nature in him alien to men alien even to Pontius Pilate alien to even many men and women

today so I think it was Paul at the conclusion to the Romans make this remarkable statement here and again as I said this is one of the fruit of what happened to that spirit that these apostles receive and once

again these are evidence or evidences of what happened after a duration of time what this truth the reality of who God is begins to surface and begin to emerge with such understanding I'm putting my eyes on Romans and the 15th chapter Paul writing here to close now to the conclusion of this great epistle to the Roman Church he says here in Romans 15 and verse 8 for I say that Christ has become a servant to the circumcision circumcision means the Jews alright because they are called the circumcisions and Gentiles the uncircumcisions he said that Christ has become a servant to the

circumcision on behalf of the truth of God you have that? got the pointer? he is a servant to the circumcision can you imagine Paul telling all the Jews they were Jewish believers in Rome he said that's why he came that's why he was the servant of God to you circumcision you Jews listen he said that's what he came to do he said he is the servant to you who are the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God that's exactly what he came to you for to confirm the promises given to the father whatever that Jesus is to you you Jews he said this is what he is first to you truth all of your laws all of your prophets and all of that has been written concerning this coming Savior this coming Messiah what's the first thing that he would do to you when he comes to redeem you and save you is to bring

truth into you got the pointer? to bring truth that's why Jesus said I came to testify of this truth the promises given to the father and for the Gentiles and you're not missing out too because the Romans were also Gentiles not only they were Jews but they were also Gentiles and you Gentiles do what? to glorify God for his mercy as it is written quoting therefore I will give praise to you among the Gentiles and I will sing to your name and so on and so forth so Gentiles are not excluded too you are included too he said for the Gentiles to glorify God for his mercy you can only glorify God in all of his mercies because the truth that God will put in you will glorify him because there's nothing in your nature that will glorify God nothing everything about your nature and my nature is a

defiant against God is an enmity against God it will never stand a chance of glorifying God only the truth of God work into you will glorify God that's why Paul was so passionate in this whole reality when he wrote to the church at Corinth when he says that by the manifestation of the truth he used the term by the manifestation of the truth he wasn't talking about learning a lot of truth and the manifestation of truth means he is very clever in explaining doctrines and teachings no he was referring to what was coming out what life was being portrayed before men as men sees it as the world sees it does it glorify God truth as a nature isn't that remarkable in this great encounter Pontius Pilate let's read this coming back to John 18 for a while and when he had said this he went out again

to the Jews and said to them I find no guilt in him but you have a custom that I release someone for you at the Passover and do you wish then that I release for you this king of the Jews I think for him it was just a mockery for him it was like get this over with so that I can go back to my food or to my siesta or whatever you want me to release to you this king of the Jews but they all cried out again saying not this man but Barabbas he being a robber isn't it strange saints what is truth was judging who is truth who should be judging who who should be judging who here who should be questioning who who should be bowing to who who should actually be the supreme one in this too isn't it strange isn't it an irony that he who is the truth is being now questioned by men and women who just

want to know what truth is who is judging do you see the irony here you see how God in his wisdom will allow that to happen because this is the extent that God will allow men to understand the untruthfulness the lies upon which we have given ourselves to that's what Jesus understood he knew what was in men as he said in John's gospel the sixth chapter and he did not commit himself to any of these men because he

bring every single word in the Old Testament and Kittel had the ability and the methodical ability in his mind to bring every single word in the Old

Testament and K what was coming when Adolf Hitler introduced what he called positive Christianity to the church and he became one of the subscriber and the supporter of Adolf Hitler's policy for the church.

These were men who understand truth.

But what happened? They knew words, they knew philosophy, they knew all of his theology, they knew all of its history. So this is not just a confrontation between Pontius Pilate and Jesus Christ. This is an epic battle that has continued ever since and is still continuing.

It was fought out way back there in the 1900s and we saw what happened out of the failure. It's more horrifying than you ever know. How is it possible? Why is it that they didn't stand up? Why is it that the church in Germany subscribed to it? They gave in.

He could control the church to the point. These men, they were not just any other ordinary guys. These were the best the German church has to offer.

And finally when Germany, sorry, when Adolf Hitler saw all of these pastors and all of these men like Kittel and all of the German pastors came under his control. He finally said that, he said, you know the church and the state has no difference. He said, let the church come under the state, come under me.

I'll rule over it. I'll look after you pastors. We salary you, we pay you.

And can you imagine? And all of them came under his policy and his influence and was actually paid by him. And he paid them to the point. And this is what he said.

He said, these pastors are like dogs that come for these miserable salaries. He took Adolf Hitler to mock them, privately behind these pastors. He said, they just turned to my policy.

They just come and bow before me and follow what I said, you know. And this is Adolf Hitler, who himself was a baptized Catholic. And he used a sneer and mocked them.

He called them miserable salaries. He said, they are like dogs coming to the right government to get their salaries. This is Germany, saints, who knew truth.

And Jesus said to Pontius Pilate, are you? So you are the king, isn't it? You correctly said that. But it was the way in which Jesus introduced the kingship. Because saints, who should be king here? Is Jesus king? If Jesus is king, then who should be judging who? Who should be questioning who here? Who should be ruling over who? Who is to be subdued to who? Yes or no? But here is the king.

He said, Jesus said, you correctly said that I am the king. And then Jesus immediately established his kingship on a whole different foundation. You see, I said to you, saints, Paul so wonderfully understood the foundation.

He said that the pillar and the ground of the church is truth. That's why, saints, Jesus meant it to be the pillar and the ground. Because if the pillar and the ground is gone, if it is violated, if it is broken, there's nothing on it.

You can have your games, you can have your churchianity, you can have your theology, you can have your Bible school and your theological ivory palace and tower, and it will crumble when the time comes. Jesus said his kingship, you know where his kingship is? He said, this is what my kingship first is. That's why I said to you, truth first.

Remember that? It's truth first. That's why the first thing that Jesus did when he introduced the coming of the Comforter, he said, when he, the spirit of truth is come, truth first before others, before power, before love, before grace, before mercy, truth first. That's why it's truth first.

It is truth first, the pillar and the ground of the church, not love. It's truth first before his kingship can be established. And let me say this to you, there will be no kingship.

Listen, maybe this explains why today, so many Christians are struggling and fighting with God for a long time, considering the whole issue of God's rulership over you. Maybe the whole issue of God's government ruling every part of your body is a big issue for many of us. It's because truth has not been established.

Truth is not in our inward part. We don't desire it in our inward part. We only desire it because it's in our heads.

We desire it because we are the spirit of this age. We are the Pontius Pilate of the world. We are the Romans of the world.

We're given to the spirit of this age, who can entertain ourselves for the longest period about what truth is, but never ever be subjected to the spirit of truth as a life and as a spirit. And that's why there's no kingship outside of truth. And Jesus indirectly actually answered this.

So you are the king, aren't you? And this guy has no understanding upon what Jesus was deliberating and was moving to show to him. This man was blind. This man was darkened, lost by all of the fame, the fortune, the prosperity, and all of the exaltation of the human mind.

I'm not again studying the truth, please. And by that, I mean it with every sense of my, every atom in my heart. We need, we need the theology, we need the theological endeavors, we need the scholarship.

Thank God for that. But now, in the latter years of my life, I'm beginning to grapple something that has significance, not only 80 years ago in Germany and then for the rest of the world, but it's going to have even greater significance in the days to come, probably even far more than ever before. Can we understand this here today? Do we desire truth in our inward part? Do we long now? Do we begin to understand now when Jesus said this? What an irony, isn't it? What is truth seems to be exalted to the point that who is truth is makes subservient.

What is truth seems to be exalted to the point it is actually on the very throne. It is a throne here, but it's just the throne of the head. It's just the throne of reason.

It's just the throne of your calculation. It's the throne of your human sufficiency and your confidence. What is truth? You can know things and yet not know Him.

You can know about truth and yet not know truth. So, my little young brother should be happy that I'm reading this for you now. It's not just for you, but for everyone here.

So here I am, I'm a student of history and I want to read to you extract from a book that actually has been chosen for a medallion award in America. And it was wonderfully written. The thing I like about this book is because it was written for lay people.

You don't have to be a clever man. You don't have to be a preacher, educated person to read this book. And so it's so simplistic, but at the same time it is so accurate.

And it's kind of dovetail, you know, into some very clear stock reporting of history. So I just want to read. It's not a thick book, but just hear this.

I'm going to name two persons, by the way. I'm going to read to you. You know two persons, isn't it? Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Martin Niemoller.

Maybe this name is a little bit new to you. Martin is your normal M-A-R-T-I-N. Niemoller is N-I-E-M-O-L-L-E-R.

There's even a book written about this pastor. This was a close friend of Dietrich Bonhoeffer. You read Bonhoeffer far more than you read about Niemoller.

And I don't think they even publish the book anymore, Niemoller, his life. The thing is because Bonhoeffer died in the end, but Niemoller was released after the Second World War when the Allied forces invaded into Germany. He was finally released.

And he was in prison in his last seven, eight years of his life in a place called Dachau. Remember the place that half-visitors not too long ago, alright? It's one of the concentration camps where many, many died. And Martin Niemoller was incarcerated there at Dachau and suffered under the hands of the Nazi government.

So I want to read to you an account of both of these men in the like of what I've just spoken here, alright? I want you to hear this. First is Bonhoeffer. He stood up one day, I think it was a morning, and he cried out, Confess! Confess! Confess! You like that word? I don't think you have appreciation of a word like that.

Not until finally one day it dawns on you. Confess! Confess or confession is more than just what you say. Finally it will lead to what you say, but it will only lead to what you say, is because what you say is who you are.

That's confession. It's not just what you say. It is what you say eventually, but that eventually what you say is only because it has become the very sum of everything that you are.

Because Adolf Hitler wanted to control the church. He called it positive Christianity. Isn't it strange that all these words were actually coined by Adolf Hitler? It's strange that sometimes when you go to some of these bookstores, how many authors are trying to make Christianity more positive.

Ever heard of positive confession? There's a lot of positive. You must be positive when you go to church. When you go to a Sunday morning, you must get blessed.

You must be positive. There's a lot of positive Christianity. You know one of the first person who used it? Adolf Hitler.

He wanted to preach. He wanted the churches to adopt something called positive Christianity. He even gave them rules.

He actually gave them pointers how to actually embrace positive Christianity. And those subscribed to that kind of Christianity under Adolf Hitler were known as German Christians. As far as Adolf Hitler was concerned, they were true German Christians.

They were Christians, but they were German. Because the thing is that he was glorifying Germany, not Christians. He was wanting to use Christians into his program of Germanization or Nazification.

He wants to Nazify the church until the church will follow his mandate and do the things he wants to do. So he called them German Christians. Bonhoeffer stood up and began to come against what he already knew, like Martin Leinmuller.

They saw, they found out, there were things that were subtle, that were deceptive. It looks good, it sounds almost as if there's nothing wrong with it. It was favorable, it was accommodating, it was all good, it was all nice, it's going to work, it's going to be a wonderful thing.

Germany is going to become a great nation again. Why shouldn't you be a great nation? When one billionth mark on that day is equivalent to one US dollar. One billionth right mark before the Deutschmark came about.

They call it the right mark. And according to the German government, one billionth mark equals to one US dollar. Saints, there used to be a fictitious story, actually told all over Berlin, all over Germany, how a woman took a trolley, you know those trolley? And she piled billions of her right mark on her trolley and she pushed it down the grocery store, when Germany was at the deepest pit.

She wanted to go in the grocery store to just buy a loaf of bread or something, for some provision. But it was so heavy, she made her way and pushed it all the way outside the grocery store, parked it outside the grocery store, went in and told the shopkeeper, the money is out there, just give me this one loaf of bread. She came out, she found out the whole pile of mark was lying on the floor, but the trolley was gone.

Because they didn't want the mark, they want the trolley. So here you are, confession. Confess, confess, confess.

The words reverberated in the sanctuary of the Trinity Lutheran Church in Berlin. A young theologian was pleading with the congregation to awaken its responsibility at an hour when its witness and strength were most sorely needed. He insisted that if the church stood upon Christ as the rock then, the church would not be taken from us.

Come, this is now Bonhoeffer speaking, the church will not be taken from us. How do you get a man who has come to a love for the church so intense and so deep, only when truth has become her foundation. That's why I always say that when truth finally works into your life and into your nature, you not only love God, you love the church that God loves.

You not only love God, you love the church that God loves. You love anything that God loves, because you are now of the truth. And when you are of the truth in you, then the voice of your father you will hear.

Because if you are of the truth, you would have heard my voice. He said the church will not be taken from us. Come, you who have been left alone, you who have lost the church, let us return to the holy work.

Let us go forth and seek the church together, for the times which are now times of collapse to the human understanding may well be for her great time of building. Let her collapse now, but her time of great building is going to come. Church, remain a church.

Confess, confess, confess. Yes, this was Dietrich Bonhoeffer pleading. You can almost hear his voice.

If I have not heard his voice, you can almost hear his spirit. You can almost probably see tears streaming down his eyes, his face. And when was it? The date was July the 23rd, 1933.

And when I saw the date, it really made me cry. Because July the 23rd, 1933 is only 6 months that Adolf Hitler has come into power. He became the Chancellor of Germany on January the 30th, 1933.

My goodness, it took 6 months into his reign for a man as young as he was, he was barely in his early 30s, to spot something was wrong and risk his own personal safety and stood on the church there in Berlin and say, Confess, confess, confess. He said, Church, remain a church. The church must remain a church.

And that was the love of Bonhoeffer. He said, the church is no church. You can make the church into anything you want.

But it is not the church if it is not a church of this nature. That's a lie out there. 6 months as they anointed this man as the Chancellor of Germany.

I was shocked. I didn't know it was that soon for him to pick this up. And he was already preaching and pleading to the church there in Germany.

The young theologian was Dietrich Bonhoeffer. In the January of the same year, Hitler has been installed as the Chancellor of Germany. The very next day, this young man, who was duped by the furious intention, duped means has been fooled, who was not duped, duped means to be lied to or to be fooled, by the furious intention, gave a radio address in which he warned that when a people idolize a leader, the image of the leader will gradually become the image of the misleader.

Can you imagine saints going to even the radio to speak to men and women that has been given to this man and pleaded with them, you cannot do this to him, you can't idolize him. The image of this leader will gradually become the image of the misleader. And thus the leader makes an idol of himself and mocks God, he said.

And before these last, as he was saying over the radio, and before even these last sentences were about to be broadcast, Bonhoeffer's microphone was mysteriously switched off. Bonhoeffer kept reminding anyone who would listen that the church has only one altar, before which it must kneel, and that's the altar of the Almighty. The pride of the church, he says, must be rebuked by the humiliation of the cross.

God's victory means our defeat. God's victory means our defeat. And Jesus could do this and gave, and seems to show to Pontius Pilate, for now you seem to be winning, you seem to be having the shot, you seem to be calling the shot, you seem to be the one in authority.

Because why? I have not died yet, because soon I will mount on that cross and I will die, and that will be the final victory. And that final victory one day, it's going to defeat you, it's going to defeat these things

here. For now, you can have all you want, you can have your fun, you can have your heyday, like the world is having, like America, and so many today in America, you can have your homosexuality, you can have all of your pornography, you can have all of your fun, you can go to the supreme high court, and do the things you want in the name of law, you can do all these things in the name of civil liberty, do what you want.

The time is coming, and Bonhoeffer here pleading with these men, God's victory means our defeat, it means our humiliation, it means that God's mocking anger, at all human arrogance, being puffed up, trying to be important in our own right, it means that the cross is above the world, the cross of Christ, that means that the bitter scorn of God for all human heights, and bitter suffering of God in all human depths, the rule of God over the whole world. With Gideon we kneel before the altar and say, Lord on the cross, be thou alone our Lord. And Amen, he says.

The crisis of which he spoke was only partly a conflict between Hitler and Christianity, it was primarily a struggle of the church against itself. The battle was not the church against Germany, the battle was actually the church against itself. Or against itself.

Isn't it sad? The failure of the church in the days of Adolf Hitler was not because the church was up against this psychopath, as someone called him the psychopathic God, small g. The battle was not between the church and Adolf Hitler, the battle was actually the church between, or within itself. It was the struggle of the false and the true. The swastika, you know the swastika? The broken cross, that looks like the cross but is all broken on all four angles? It was the swastika and the cross.

It was a struggle within a church that had voluntarily embraced the German nationalism of the day. Bonhoeffer insisted that only a Christ who was free of German national ideas and culture could rescue the church at this critical hour. And the church must proclaim a Christ who stands above politics, above the sacred and even the secular.

That Dietrich Bonhoeffer, pick up some of those things that he has ever written and spoke about. Saints, it amazes you what men like him came into. Martin Neumuller, listen now.

This is the next account. Early in 1934, and that's the reason why I'm reading from both of them, is because the First World War didn't begin until the 1st of September 1939. The first bomb, the first shot from a cannon from Germany over to Poland, because Poland was the first nation to be invaded.

No nation under Hitler suffered more than Poland. No nation in Europe suffered more than the Polish. That's why today, I think maybe people probably know this a little bit, you can't go to even Poland apparently, and yet not see, and yet not hear, and yet not see the consequence of what has happened to the Polish people under that regime.

And surprisingly, incidentally, no nation on the face of Europe had more Jews than Poland. Three million. By the time the Nazi Germany marched over to Poland, they were waiting for that target because of all of the European nations, that was the nation that has the most number of Jews.

You know what, Saints? They virtually wiped out the three million. Exterminated them one by one. Systematically.

The hatred, the Nazi Germany, stirred as a nation. So this is early 1933, 1934, and that's why it's kind of like locked me in my room. It kind of jams something within my spirit.

This is not late 1930s in the Second World War. I said, God, these guys saw it at the beginning. These were men that had the character.

They gave their families and their lives to the threat. 1934. Hear this, please.

In 1934, Martin Niemöller mounted the pulpit of his church in Berlin's suburb of Dahlem and prophetically declared God's purpose in the trials that faced the German church. As early as 1934, Martin Niemöller made this statement, and according to this author, it was virtually a prophetic message. Now hear the message, please.

Just an extract of the message. Hear this, please. 1934.

We're now 2012, coming to 2013. Almost 70 to 80 years later. I'm now wondering whether we do hear what I'm about to read to you.

If not the church in America and the church in the nations of the world is already now in the same spirit and in the same mode. He says, we have all of us, the whole church and the whole community. That means all, when you use the word community, the community of the church of Jesus Christ all over Germany.

The whole church and the whole community. We've been thrown into the tempest. Tempest means the devil.

We've been thrown into the tempest sieve. You know, sieve, S-I-E-V-E, being sieve. We've been thrown into the tempest sieve.

And he is shaking, and the wind is blowing. And he must now become manifest, whether we are wheat or we are chaff. You know chaff, C-H-A-F-F.

Because wheat and chaff cannot be together. If wheat is going to be of any good, it has to be separated from its chaff. The chaff is only just the husk that covers the wheat.

No wheat is good wheat, or productive, or fruitful, if it is not first harvested to the point of separation. So wheat and chaff have to be separated. He is using the analogy here from Jeremiah.

It must now become manifest, whether we are going to be wheat or chaff. And you will never know until the time of sifting. You'll never know anything about so much of what you and I have been giving ourselves to what this thing called truth is, until the time of our sifting.

Until finally, verily, a time of sifting has come upon us, and even the most indolent, indolent means lazy, lackluster. Indolent means carefree. Indolent means benign.

Can't say that you don't love God, you love God in your own way. Can't say you don't go to church, you go to church, you do your churchy thing. The time of sifting has come upon us, and even the most indolent, or indolent, I would corrupt pronunciation, and peaceful person amongst us must see that even the calm, C-A-L-M, the calm of a meditative Christianity is now at an end.

I look around today, with a heart broken, we're living in a time and a generation of meditative Christianity. You know meditative Christianity? It's all nice, benign, simple, innocuous. In other words, it doesn't offend, it doesn't harm.

It's called meditative Christianity. It's now at it's end. And by the time when Martin Mymola was preaching his message, Lutheran Church was having one of the greatest movement in it's holiness movement, called Piastic Movement, and it was happening all over Germany.

Can you imagine? Sometimes it's almost ironical, isn't it? At the very time when Hitler was rising in power, there was a Piastic Movement, pioneered by the Lutheran Church. Piastic means a lot of Bible study. A lot of sudden interest in Bible study.

Let's get back to Bible study. Let's learn the word of God. Let's spend more time praying.

Let's get together and focus on God. Let's find God. Let's get our family together.

It's called meditative Christianity. Is it wrong? No. Is it good? Absolutely.

Such a desire for holiness. Such a desire to return to Bible study. To be more fervent with the word and apply the word for our family.

Raise our family on family altars. Wonderful things. And the author of this book, Martin Niemöller, of course said, then why is it they couldn't stand what was coming? Why is it the church collapsed? And went with Hitler all the way.

Supported him. Went all the way with him. And gave him every bravo.

Every shout. And every agreement. Strange, isn't it, saints? So he says that the calm of a meditative Christianity is at an end.

Maybe that's what it takes, saints. Maybe that's exactly what the Lord will allow each generation or in the coming generation. How would God be able to find out whether even some of our meditative Christianity has any value, has any true nature, any reality in it? It is now springtime for the hopeful and the expectant Christian church.

It is testing time. And God is giving Satan a free hand. You know, I tell you, when I was reading this, you can't read this today in any of our modern churches, most of our modern churches today, and yet not have a rebuke and probably even have a revolution in your hands.

That God is giving Satan a free hand. I thought we're supposed to be in charge over Satan. We're supposed to put Satan and his head under our feet.

I thought we're supposed to bind and loose and do spiritual warfare. And we're supposed to inundate him and paralyze him until he has got no effect in our nations, in our society. Does this statement gel with modern teaching today? When I was reading this, I was just talking to myself.

God is giving Satan a free hand so that he may shake us up and so that it may be seen what manner of men we are. Because that's the only way God is able to find out finally whether truth is indeed truth as he is. Or whether truth is only because you enjoy it, you subscribe to it, you follow it, you kiss it, you study it, you play with it, you toy with it, you embrace it, you hallelujah it, you have run with it, you have been talking about it, you have been singing about it, you have composed songs and hymns out of it.

Finally, he wants to know whether it's the real thing in you. Does it gel? Does it cause you to be uneasy? That God could give Satan a free hand? This same author, who himself, I think, is of a German origin, has

returned to Germany on many occasions, has many friends and visited Germany and been to all of these extermination campsites from Auschwitz to Treblinka to Sobibor and the Dachau and the Buchenwald. I admire what he said in one of his encounters when he went into Dachau, the same place that you went, and he saw pictures of all of the torture, all the torture chambers and the tormenting things that German officers were doing to prisoners.

And he was quoting from another preacher who was visiting, I think he was Ravi Zachariah, and Ravi Zachariah was watching those things and he was almost horrified, he was like, he couldn't even talk, he could hardly even breathe when he saw what he saw. And he turned around and he saw another old man with a glass, an aged man looking at the other side of those photos. And this man made eye contact with Ravi Zachariah and this chap was making mention of what Ravi actually said.

And this man said to Ravi, he said, It gives you a lot to think about, doesn't it? No, first of all he asked him, where are you from? He said, I'm from America. What do you do? He said, I'm a preacher. You're a preacher? He pointed at those pictures.

It gives you a lot to think about, doesn't it? And Ravi Zachariah asked him, what do you do? He said, I'm a judge from the state of New York. And Ravi Zachariah said to him, that would also give you a lot to think about, wouldn't it? A judge talking to a preacher and a preacher talking to a judge. Can't you see this? I have to see this as a church.

Because the church was involved in this whole thing. The church was blind to what was happening. What manner of men we are, Martin Leibmuller said.

We'll be very unhappy today in our modern setting, if we hear Martin Leibmuller preaching a message like this. That God is going to give Satan a free hand. So that he may shake us up.

So that it may be seen what manner of men we are. Saints, if this is required 80 years ago, in the best of the European culture, because the Germans were the best. Berlin was the pristine city of Europe.

Nobody would have dreamt every individual in Europe would long to visit Berlin. It was the exemplary city of the European continent. Satan swings his sieve and Christianity is thrown, hittle and tittle.

And he who is not ready to suffer, he who calls himself a Christian, only because he thereby hopes to gain something good for his race and his nation, is blown away by the wind of this time. You want me to read again? Satan swings his sieve and Christianity is thrown, hittle and tittle. And he who is not ready to suffer, he who calls himself a Christian, only because, when I read this, I have to pause for quite a while, he hereby hopes to gain something good for his race and his nation.

Isn't Christianity today only for so many here, so many everywhere today, to gain? It's about our business, it's about our family, it's about our marketplace, it's about prospering, it's about making the best of all that God is to us, so that we might do something for Him here. To make something good for His race and even His nation, is blown away like a sieve by the wind of the time. And here the author finally said, and God let loose Satan to shake the whole German church, to separate the wheat from the sieve.

Christ did not abandon His people, if they would trust Him, and with their eternal souls He would walk with them through the fire of affliction. This is not Martin Leinmuller, this is the author making comment of that message. Christ has promised that He would build His church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it.

The church, however small or humanly weak, would prevail. It would prevail, but it would only prevail on the premise of who is truth and not what is truth. We should not be surprised that God often judged the church severely.

To the church at Ephesus, that has lost its first love, Christ sends a warning, repent and do the deeds that you did at first, or else I'm coming to you and I'll remove your lampstand out of its place unless you repent. The lampstand in the German church was for the most part wrestled from its setting, when the cross before which all men should bow was exchanged for the cross by which proud men march, meaning the swastika of Nazi Germany. Near the end of this chapter we were introduced to a German theologian who would tell us the forces of wickedness that was unleashed in Nazi Germany because the cross of Christ had been cast down.

I'd like to read to you that, I don't have time, which was an amazing piece of theology. The church, he believed, was crushed on the rock called God because God is not mock. And when the cross was confused with the swastika, it no longer was the pall of God for salvation.

Even in judgment there was mercy, and many true believers experienced the strength of Jesus as he sustained them, comforting and powering and purifying, such as men like Martin Magmuller. They came for him, by the way. I would like to read to you, he had a final confrontation with Hitler, men to men.

It was amazing, I didn't even know that happened to him. He was invited to a final gathering where Hitler scolded them. See what happened was, that because of what Hitler was doing, forming what is known as the German Christian, taking the German church to a whole different direction, uniting the church with Nazi Germany and with Nazi doctrines.

Men like Martin Magmuller and Bonhoeffer started what is known as then the Confessing Church. Alright, they call it the Confessing Church. So what happened was that it was before long, Adolf Hitler and all of his clonies knew about this Confessing Church.

It was gathering momentum from few hundred to a thousand, two thousand, and even that they were all tested, finally. Two thousand of them was invited for a final meeting with Adolf Hitler, and they was there with those pastors that Adolf Hitler scolded and lambasted all of the pastors for not being faithful to the German cause, and so on and so forth. Anyway, there were two thousand at the time that they were confronted by Hitler.

Right after the confrontation, he shook hands, he came down, and he shook hands with each one as they were marching off the conference hall, and Martin Magmuller stood there, face to face with Adolf Hitler, and plucked up the courage on the inside of him, and spoke to him for the final time. Because this is what he said to the two thousand pastors, you look after the Church, and I will look after Germany. Martin Magmuller went up, and looked into the face of Adolf Hitler, not only you are supposed to look after Germany, the Church of Jesus Christ will also look after the German people.

Can you imagine the boldness? It's one thing to know that you have it on a Sunday morning, and do all the talking, and do the singing, and do all the kind of things, but it's another thing when you're being sieved. It's another thing when you're being tested. It's another thing when you're looking straight at the face of the man, who can finish you in two seconds.

And what broke my heart was when they came out, in the subsequent days after the meeting, many of them in the two thousand started to walk away from Bonhoeffer and Martin Magmuller, and blamed Martin Magmuller for being so confrontational and so forward, and offended the Führer. And many of them left the Confessing Church. And that was really heartbreaking for both of these men.

Don't say anything here saints, I'm just reporting history to you. I'm kind of tempted to read to you further, but I think I've read enough to you. And by the way, not too long after that, they arrested Martin Magmuller.

They threatened his family and his life, and took everything away from him. And the privilege that he had was that when he was arrested, he didn't know his faith, but apparently when he was arrested, they put him in Dachau. And then for seven years in Dachau, the suffering that he went through, it was horrendous, the thing that they did to him, the inhumane thing they did to him on a daily basis.

And he never knew, because by the time when he was released, he found out that his good partner and his dear brother, Bonhoeffer, had just died, you know, just 21 days before the surrender of Germany, on April the 30th, 1945. And Bonhoeffer was executed somewhere in the early part of April. So when the Allied forces came and Dachau was released, he was one of those that was just skin and bones, Martin Magmuller, was released.

He couldn't even believe that he found himself still alive. And right after that, just remarkable, men like them, and how God had preserved him, one to live and one to die, and was to go on to become one of the most profound voice for the church in Germany. He led the entire German church to repentance, to reconciliation.

He made every German to see where they had failed. Can you imagine how wonderful that was? Must be great to live in those days, isn't it? To see something so truthful and so real, coming out through the fiery furnace, forged in the anvil of suffering and persecution. Something which is not even known in our generation anymore.

But we need to know this now. And this was the very premise by which they were tested. Because only then did men like Bonhoeffer or Daimler be able to know.

Only then will God be able to know. Is it just because truth is truth as a commodity, as an item? As something that you subscribe to for the longest time in your life, and yet it has no intrinsic bearing to a point by which God can establish his kingship. So I profoundly was affected by the fact that when Jesus answered Pontius Pilate, he rightly said to him, so you are the king, aren't you? You correctly said that.

But he left the whole issue of the kingship aside, and began to come into this whole issue of what truth is, because that's who he was. He said, I came that I may have testified to the truth. And that's why the heavens could open over him on the day when he stood on that river Jordan.

The spirit came upon him, not because Jesus was already functioning in the power of the spirit, because Jesus did nothing by the power of the spirit. Jesus did no miracles, no preaching, no healing, no deliverance of demonic powers, no great salvific act through the power of the Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit didn't even come upon him, didn't even anoint him.

Then why was the heavens open and it has to come in the form of a death upon him? Because of truth. Because the spirit recognized the truth that was in him. Because the spirit of God is the spirit of truth.

And all that Jesus was within himself was of the truth. He testified of the truth. And because of that, he heard the voice of the Father.

And that's why the spirit, that's why the heavens have to be opened. That was his foundation. And if that was his foundation, don't you think it was right for God to establish the church and to inaugurate on the same foundation? If truth was at the very beginning for himself in his incarnation, don't you think that it must also be the truth? Sorry, it must also be the foundation, even for the church.

So poor, so accurately put it, it is the pillar and the ground of the church. Truth is. And for that, God has the right and the prerogative to test every generation.

Listen, even if it takes for him to use the devil and Satan. And no praying against him or coming against him would avail when the time is right. Do we have to come sometime and pray against him? Yes, we do.

I do. When he inflicts things on your family and do things to you. Saints, you have the right to resist him, the scriptures say.

But there will come a time where the hands of God will be free to employ him for the final act. In the closing days of human history. As it was for Nazi Germany, but this time it will not just be Nazi Germany, this time it will be the church worldwide.

This time it will be the nations of the earth. So saints, we need to come to this. So in any small way that the spirit will apply this into our lives here today, it will be a rejoicing thing.

So far away, you can't read something like this as I have in these past days and weeks, and yet not give you a sense of foreboding. A sense, almost a sense as if you have been emptied out, you have been dragged to your last lap. You make to see, you make to consider so many issues about your own life, about your Christianity, about your daily relationship with God.

So, here you are. So may we be able to answer this question here. What is it for all of us here? What is truth? Or who is truth? Because it will be called out again, as it was called out not only in the time between Pontius Pilate and Jesus, it was called out between Germany and the church.

It was called out once again between even, you know, Bonhoeffer and Neidmüller, with so many of these men and women. It was so heartbreaking to hear the testimony, to hear the entries in Bonhoeffer's diary and his journaling. The heartbreak.

He saw a young man, so fervent for Jesus, so given to God. Seemingly everything looked so rosy, so prospering. These were young men under him, who were registered in his underground Bible school when he returned from England.

Sorry, let me see. Yeah, returned from England. And because he felt that that was the best way to prepare what was coming, returned to Germany.

But by that time his name was already hunted down by the Gestapo, the secret police. And he said, the best thing I could do with what I have, as young as he was, he was barely in his mid-thirties. He said, I'm going to start a little underground Bible school with no one.

It was illegal, banned. It was against Nazi Germany, against Hitler and his policy. And he did it, he gathered whoever wants to come, and most of them were young guys.

And they were fervent with what Bonhoeffer was teaching. And for two years they operated under a basement of a seminary, abandoned now, closed down by the Nazi government. And they met on a daily basis.

And there he prayed with them, read the Psalms with them. And there he taught the course of discipleship that came up from those two years of teaching. The course of discipleship that you have been reading once in a while, came up from those basements.

Those difficult years of hiding from authority, and escaping from persecution, and even death in the end. And it was on a daily basis when he met with these young boys and girls, that he poured his heart out to them, that the life together was born as a community. What church was, how he loved the church as indeed a people, a community.

That's why he understood, what is the church? Church is Christ existing as a community. That's what the church is. Christ existing as a community.

Is it a church? If it is church, then where's Christ? Where's Christ in our relationship? Where's Christ in our money? Where's Christ in our behavior? Where's Christ in our personality? Where's Christ in our coffee and our tea? Where's Christ in our eating? Where's Christ in our man and our woman relationship here? Where's Christ in our marriage? Where's Christ in our brothers and our sisters relationship? Where's Christ? Where's Christ in our borrowing and our giving? Where's Christ in us sitting here together where all of our all our personality clash with one another? Where some sometime get into your nerves? Where's Christ in all of these issues? He wrote that out of the anguish of living together and to see later When when they surface later and send these young men out there and to see these young men one by one Collapsing before Nazi Germany. They were the best young men he ever saw and they gave in to what was happening to Germany They couldn't take it. It was too much for these young men and Bonhoeffer was crushed.

I sat there I said God What hope do we have? Listen Saints, listen to me. What hope do we have if we're not prepared for the days coming? I Asked myself not even asking you am I prepared for that? Is it a talk, you know this kind of acorns and I was kind of setting our jobs our home I'll pay our checks our cars our bed easy when the time comes And the time is coming Make no mistake it is coming And it will come So Irvin Lutzer Lutzer if I can pronounce his name dear brother He had another book out of this Cry and anguish because when I read this this guy must have broke his heart writing this I didn't know that he wrote another book that may being passed to me And this time he took that book and he warned the church in America The seven things that was there in those 12 years Before Hitler led the nation to a bloodbath He said the same conditions that existed in Germany now exists in America He's saying that I don't believe that American will guess six million Jews ever again I'm not too sure about that I'm not too sure that the American Church will not even be responsible in the last days for the death of even Jews Not everyone I think but he pleaded with the church in America when he wrote the second book What was it called when the nation? When a nation has forgotten God or something like that He said that those conditions that existed 80 80 hundred years ago In European Germany he said now exists in America He warned the church in America If we are not going to rise and be prepared for what's coming if we're not going to stand now in these days with our families with our churches if our pastors and our Shepherds and our leaders are not going to stand on pulpits in our homes and our marriages and our family and begin to deal with These issues these fundamental issues of what the truth is to us as a people He said we're going to fall prey. He pleaded with his own country And I'm pleading here this for this part of the war So this is

recorded I pray that this word Will find its way to the to the hearts in the years of many men and women in our time and in our days Santayana Was a great philosopher in his early days who said Anytime when men has forgotten history We will be sentenced back To make the same mistakes again.

He who has not learned from history is bound and is sentenced back to make those mistakes at the end So Lord we're thankful here and This is Maybe a series of a tone, but yet there's no other way to see this hear this And to handle this for our own lives We thank you for so long ago men like these were risen was given Lord a Preparation by which even in the darkest hour As though even the church may have fallen the church may have failed and yet there are those companies of men that you have preserved for yourself as witnesses the entire candlestick May seems to be No longer lighting anymore, but yet they were still litter flickering of a candlelight across the land across Germany So we are thankful So Lord we thank you that you've given us this time here in this part of the war Seemingly everything seems prosperous good flourishing Church has never been tested in this part of the war for a long long time So Lord none of us can ever pray that this will be exempted that this will pass us away. No it will not So thank you that you have called the church not only in Germany, but the church worldwide Lord even in the last days to meet this final challenge, so Lord we're thankful Thank you that this is not nice to our years, but necessary to our hearts and to our spirit It is not good for today, but it will be good for our future So Lord. Thank you again.

This may come to us Lord as a something that is Unnerving and uncomfortable even may even be offended But yet Lord this is good for our for our total man So Lord we thank you breathe this word into our hearts into our lives Help us help us to make preparation for the days ahead my God spiritual mental financial Physical every area help us to make preparation because Lord We're not sons of truth help us Help us The best of Germany And the best of the church in Germany could stand it How much more how much more we?

The best So we asking you to help us Give all of us grace give me grace We thank you for First one I'm a lot Thank you for these men and many more they didn't have a name on that day but stood and came against the tide and the floodgates of the devil So God we thank you help us we pray here We're so grateful to you in these past days you have been engaging with us Lord in an intimate way in a solemn way in a wrenching way Lord for things like this and We call it a privilege Thank you that you're not going to make this into a show you're gonna make this into something personal for all of us here Make it personal Lord Make it.

I'm praying for this if there's any prayer. I'm praying for these dear Saints I'm praying the Lord you will make this personal to them every man here every woman Those who are even visiting those that we hardly see once in a while even them Lord Let them engage into something very personal here for themselves for their future For what lies ahead? So God we thank you how we've misread you and misunderstood you and Remind us that just because we seems to be the best of the modern generation has to offer and think that we will not Interpret you help us know we will even the best in Germany misinterpreted you The best pastors the best theologian the best teacher the best Bible scholar even misinterpreted you How much more any one of us here today?

So Lord, may you strike a humility in us And causes to come to you in repentance in need of you Of a deeper work in all of our lives Thank you Lord for thou art truth to us and thou art the spirit of truth So confirm this confirm your word in each one of us in the way that you were so choose for your namesake For this we are grateful And we owe you Lord for all that we could ever give to you We honor you and we

bless you to stay in Yeshua's name Amen let's come to the table I Thank you Lord We're grateful to you Lord I Mean if there's even a prayer in your heart from some of you We would honor we appreciate that if you want to do that Even as we wait for one another if this is upon your heart for you to genuinely and sincerely pray then please do so Thank you Lord Hmm Yeah We can say that

you can sit yeah Yeah, that's true that can also be a basis in our thinking Let me know who you if there's a prayer in your heart since I I Just want you to just freely express this In just a short way before the Lord Let me not hold you Thank you Lord Thank you Thank you Lord Yeah Yeah Oh Yes, thank you Lord That's right But she forgot Yes Yes Yes Thank you Yes Thank you Thank you Lord Yes That's right, it's true Even Yeah, that's right Thank you Yeah Yes, that's right That's right Yes Yeah Yes Thank you Yeah Yes, thank you Lord That's right, yes That's right Yes Thank you Lord That's right Oh Yes Yes, yes, that's right Yes Amen Hallelujah Jesus name Amen Thank you Yes Yeah Yes Yeah That's true That's true Yeah Yeah Yeah That's true That's right Yeah That's right It is Yes Yeah Yeah Yeah

That's right It's true Yeah It's true It's true Yes Yeah Yeah It's true That's right Yes That's true That's right Yes, yes Alright Yeah It's true Yes That's right Amen Yes, yes That's right Yeah That's right Yes Thank you Lord Thank you Lord Hallelujah Amen Yes Hallelujah Amen Yes Yeah So true Yes Thank you Lord Yeah Hallelujah Yeah Yeah Thank you Lord Thank you Lord Amen Eunice will you pray for this couple break for us Thank you Lord Thank you Lord Yeah Yeah Yes Thank you Lord Yeah Yes Help us Yeah Yeah Praise you Lord Thank you Lord Thank you Lord Yeah Yes That's right That's true Wow Yeah Yeah Thank you Lord Yes Yeah Yes Yeah Yeah That's it It's true Yes Yes That's right That's the truth That's the truth That's right Yeah Yeah You are good Amen Amen Yes Yeah Yeah Yes Amen That's right

Amen That's right Yes Thank you Lord Yeah Yeah Yeah Thank you Lord Let's eat and drink this together We praise you Lord I like this symbol Eat and drink Now let Lord Your word Be eaten and be drank Into all of us Take us to yourself Each of us have a different story Different journey Different battle Different struggles Different history But yet Lord all of them converge To the same point And that point is You who is true You who is indeed truth We thank you And in so Encountering with you And meeting you So that all that is within us Be make true To the very Spirit of truth May indeed Lord Conquer everything Truth Establishes the kingship of God In every area No area Where truth has not invaded No part In which truth has not touched Truth has not conquered For whatever The truth has not

conquered Then your kingship isn't there at all However we However we make that kingship to look like Only that truth Truth as you are That have finally conquered us Will indeed be The place where your kingship is Otherwise everything is a facade Is a sham It's just a religion Like the religion that was in the church In Germany At that time So our God we thank you Come bless this And you have already But Lord for the course of the days and the weeks ahead Make this to be a point Not only for prayer but even for deep consideration For meditation For change For some of us Lord to encounter And to deal with issues with our own lives Habits, ways Actions, behavior Conduct Attitude, lifestyle Everything Thank you Lord because until that is indeed seen Then truth hasn't reached us yet We only

have a figment of it We only have an appreciation But we don't have the reality of it So God we thank you For each one here For saints that will be hearing this Near and far Lord let your heart into it Into the spirit That is amongst us here today We thank you And we praise you In Jesus name Amen Amen

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