

# Partnership With God

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[ 0 : 00 ] I'm going to talk to you today about partnership with God. Partnership with God. Today is the start of partnership training. This will be the first sermon in a series that every new prospective partner will be required to listen to in order to become a partner.

Right. Partnership is how we do membership at Christ Church. We chose the word partnership rather than membership because it's a word in the Bible that we believe in our current cultural context creates the clear picture in the minds of those who hear it.

Of what we believe church commitments should look like. All right. So we have found that the term membership typically makes people think of what they're going to get rather than what they're going to give, i.e. Costco membership, gym membership.

Typically, when you get a membership like this, you're thinking, OK, I got the membership. Now, what do I get? Very rarely do you think of membership in that regard as, oh, now what do I give? And so we believe partnership is a better word to really connote the idea of when we partner together, we want to give towards this.

Right. So a partner is a Christian. A partner is a Christian who can be counted on to be what a Christian is and to do what a Christian does. The biggest hindrance to partnership is when people lack the fruit of being a Christian.

[ 1 : 19 ] In many years of doing partnership as membership in a couple of churches now, for sure, the biggest hindrance to partnership is when people lack the fruit of being a Christian.

Some might say that Christchurch asks too much. To them, I would ask the question, is your problem with Christchurch or is your problem with Jesus? A partner is someone who has moved from attendance to responsibility, from observing to participation, from consuming to creating value for others, from primarily receiving to being an intentional giver, and from helping to taking ownership.

In other words, a partner is a Christian. If you look at the stats in America on Christians, the Pew Research Center says that 62% of people in America identify as Christians.

All right. John Dickerson in his book, *The Great Evangelical Recession*, indicates that the actual range is between 7% and 8.9% based on people believing the following four things.

So if you just ask the people, are you a Christian? Do you identify as a Christian? Yes or no? 62% say yes. Okay. But if you ask about them believing the Bible is the Bible God's word, that Jesus died on the cross for our sins, that individuals need to be personally converted to be a Christian, and belief in the gospel of Jesus needs to be expressed outwardly, then that number goes down to 7% to 8.9%.

[ 2 : 53 ] Quite a bit of a decrease there. Okay. That still doesn't mean for sure that those people are Christians. If they say they believe those things, clearly people can say they believe things that they don't.

But for conversation's sake, if let's just say that those people are Christians, that means that at a minimum only 13% of professing Christians in America are actually saved, and that at least 87% of professing Christians are not saved.

87% of professing Christians. Like, that's an important thing to think about. Now, we like to give people the benefit of the doubt, and there's a certain degree where that's a good thing, right? 1 Corinthians 13, love believes all things, hopes all things, trusts all things.

That's a good thing for a lot of things, but what it's not a good thing for is when someone says they're a Christian, and they're not. What is loving about letting someone think that they're a Christian when they're not, when the results of not being a Christian are eternal damnation?

So this is one of those things where we don't just want to give people the benefit of the doubt. This is an important thing. And if, in fact, even just based on a simple survey like this, that it could be that 87% of those who profess to be Christians aren't actually Christians.

[ 4 : 08 ] This is something we should think about as we go about our days, as we meet different people, as we meet people, we work with people, we're neighbors to people, we're family members to people, and they say, oh yeah, I'm a Christian, but are they in fact?

Okay? Titus 1.16 says, speaks of a group of people that profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

Mark 7.6, Jesus says, Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honors me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.

So there's a way to profess God, but deny him with their works. There's a way to honor him with lips, but have a heart far from him. This is important for us to realize.

It's important because there can be no partnership with those who aren't Christians. Okay? Did you hear me on that? I'm going to say it again. There cannot be any partnership with those who are not Christians.

[ 5 : 09 ] And this is where I'm getting this from. First of all, this concept of partnership, Philippians 1.3-5 says, I thank my God and all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all, making my prayer with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

What is our partnership based on? It's in the gospel. It's a partnership in the gospel. If I believe the gospel and you don't believe the gospel, we're not going to have any partnership. The partnership we do have is a partnership that is in the gospel.

2 Corinthians 6.14 says it a little more specificity. He says, do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. And then he asks these two questions.

For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness? Or what partnership has light with darkness?

Okay. There is none. It's a rhetorical question. Light and darkness have no fellowship. And a Christian and an unbeliever have no fellowship ultimately, no partnership together. So the Bible exhorts us to examine ourselves to see.

[ 6 : 18 ] 2 Corinthians 13.5 says, examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith. Test yourselves. Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?

Unless, indeed, you fail to meet the test. Okay. We live in a easily offendable world right now. We live in a world that is very sensitive to saying the wrong thing.

What is the wrong thing? Depends on the person. Okay. But one of the things that could be the wrong thing is telling someone who professes to be a Christian, I don't know if you are. That is very offensive.

One of the more ways that we have offended people over the years in my church involvement has been this concept of questioning whether someone's a Christian. People get really offensive, offended by that.

Unfortunately, what ends up happening is rather than finding identity in the person and work of Jesus, people find identity in the label of Christian. And if your, if your identity is in the label of Christian without the action and heart of a Christian, then it's a false identity.

[ 7 : 22 ] And if you're finding your identity in the label of Christian, you're taking a certain pride by that. What ends up happening is if your profession does not match what your actions literally look like or what the, what is coming out of the heart, then you'll be offended when someone says, Hey, I don't know if what you're finding your identity in is really true and your pride will be offended.

So this tends to be an offensive topic for many people, especially when you get down to the brass tacks of the actual fruit that the Bible says.

First John 5, 13 says, I write these things, this, this whole book, the first Johnny, he gives us the reason why he's writing it, but she got a love when someone actually just flat out says, this is why I wrote this book.

Okay. I don't know about you, but I kind of like that. That's which all the books just said that. But first John does say that says, I write these things to you who believe in the name of the son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, that you may know he's, he writes that whole book to tell you, Hey, there's a way to know.

And I'm going to just really black and white kind of tell you multiple things. And we'll, we'll look at a bunch of versions from first John as we continue. Basically today we want to look at what the Bible says, the fruit of a Christian is so we can properly examine ourselves.

[ 8 : 38 ] Okay. And, uh, this is not a burden. It's a new creation. First John five, verse three, and then I, V says his commands are not burdensome, right?

His commands are not burdensome. And second Corinthians five, 17 says, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The oldest passed away. Behold, the new has come. I'm not talking about dressing up something that isn't to make it look like something that is.

We're talking about a whole new creation. We're not talking about a bunch of a list of to do's and a list of commands that is burdensome. No, the commands of God are not burdensome because they come from being a new creation.

When you're a new creation, it's no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me, right? It says in Galatians. And so that's what we're talking about. I'm not just talking about, you know, knocking off a bunch of bad fruit on a bad tree and then hoping that it looks more like the tree with good fruit. You can't, the old fruit's going to come back and you've got to cut it off at the root and plant the whole new tree. What only counts is a new creation. Okay. Two disclaimers before we jump in. Number one, this, what I'm going to talk about is not how to become a Christian.

[ 9 : 46 ] This is the biblical fruit showing that you already are a Christian. Okay. So again, same concept. We're not just adding a bunch of stuff in our life and say, Oh, now I'm a Christian because I do good things or I do this fruit.

No, the fruit comes from being a new creation. Number two, when the Bible talks about the word disciple, it means Christian. And we know this from Acts 11, 26, because it says in Acts 11, 26 in Antioch, the disciples were first called Christians.

Okay. So these words are used interchangeably in the scriptures. When the Bible talks about being a disciple, it's talking about being a Christian, Christian and disciple, the same thing. There's not Christians. And then disciples, you know, it's not like there's this higher echelon of Christian. That is a disciple. No, if you're not a disciple, you're not a Christian. And they were, they were always called disciples until, Acts 20, Acts 11, 26. And they also started calling the disciples Christians.

Same thing. Okay. So I'm going to look at 10 different fruits of being a Christian, which are necessary when we're talking about partnership with God. You see, we can't talk about partnership with each other.

[ 10 : 51 ] If we're not partnered with God first, a person who's not first partnered with God can never be partnered with each other. You follow me on this logic. That's where we're going here. Okay. So number one, a Christian loves God and obeys his commands.

Okay. Christian loves God and obeys his commands. First John two, three to six. By this, we know that we have come to know him. If we keep his commandments, whoever says, I know him, but does not keep his commandments is a liar.

And the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word in him. Truly, the love of God is perfected. So I love first John. You can't say it more plainly than that. Right? Hey, if you say, you know, him, but you don't keep his commandments, you're a liar.

Whoa. Like that's a little, yeah, it's pretty straightforward. It's pretty direct, but this is the word of God and it's helpful. Honestly, like if we're talking about heaven or hell, we're talking about eternal consequence here.

Do we really want to mince words? Do we really want there to be confusion? Do we really want to think, well, I'm really not sure what it means to be a Christian. Really? Like that's not, that's not going to fly. We're talking of something of such high consequence.

[ 12 : 00 ] So praise God that the Bible is clear. Praise God that the Bible is specific. I mean, this is straightforward. By this, we know. How do you know? You ask the question, how do I know?

Well, this is how we know that we've come to know if we keep his commandments. The word says, I know him, but does not keep his commandments. He's a liar. Okay. And you know, Jesus confronted this in his ministry.

Luke 6, 46. He says, why do you call me Lord, Lord, and do not do what I tell you? In other words, if you believe that he's Lord, you're going to do what he says to do.

Right? It's a kind of an oxymoron to say, oh, you're my Lord, but I'm not going to do what you tell me to do. Well, obviously you don't believe that I'm your Lord. Because when you, I believe he's Lord, then you do what he tells you to do.

That's why he says, Lord, why would you call me Lord and not do what I tell you to do? Same thing in Matthew 7, 21 to 23, same, a little more detail on the same story, but in Matthew, he says, not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my father who is in heaven.

[13:06] On that day, many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and cast out demons in your name and do many, many, mighty works in your name. And then I will declare to them.

I never knew you depart from me, you workers of lawlessness. That's one of those verses. You're like, Ooh, that's kind of, that's a kind of a scary verse.

Cause you think, well, the person who prophesied and cast out demons and did mighty works, surely that's, that would be the person that he would not say, depart from me.

That would be the person. He wouldn't say, I never knew you. Now it's important to know when we read that verse, person first John two, he was talking about us knowing him. This verse isn't talking about us knowing him.

This verse says, I never knew you from God's perspective. So we like to talk about, you know, we got it. We want to know God. How do I know if I know God? All good stuff. This verse isn't talking about that.

[14:01] This verse says the people who do this, he will say to them, I never knew you, which honestly, obviously begs the question. If there are a group of people that Jesus will say, I never knew you.

My question is, how does God know someone? Because I don't want him to say this to me, right? I don't want to be surprised. And these people in this, in this section, they're surprised, right?

They're thinking, wait, what? But, but we did this, but we did this, right? They're surprised. And he says, I never knew you. Okay. So how does God know someone?

Again, I love how scripture interprets scripture. First Corinthians eight, verse three says, if anyone loves God, he is known by God. If anyone loves God, he's known by God.

So how do you know that you're known by God? Because you love God. If you know, if you love God, then he knows you. So again, it goes back to a Christian loves God and obeys his commands.

[15:01] And those are the people he'll never, you never have to worry about him saying, I'll never, I never knew you. If you're someone who obeys God, because the ones who obey God are the ones he knows. That's good to know.

Luke 14, 26 says, if anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brother and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

And you think, well, what is it? What is that? Love for God makes other loves look like hate in comparison. Okay. He's basically saying, Hey, if you're exalting these other things, even good things, even things like a father or mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, we all say those are good things, right?

We should love those people. Yes, even your own life. But if those things become more important than Jesus, if you're not loving God, first and foremost, first and greatest commandment, if that isn't uppermost in your affections, you cannot be his disciple.

You cannot. It doesn't say, well, you're a bad disciple. No, no, no, no. It says you cannot be his disciple. That's what it's saying. Love for God makes other loves look like hate in comparison.

[16:11] And first John five, verse three says, this is love for God to obey his commandments. And he said, what does it look like to love God? Well, glad you asked. This is the love of God. This is love for God to obey his commands.

First John five, verse three. So let me ask you the question. Is Jesus precious to you? Do you love him? You know, sometimes we're talking to people. They're wanting to get involved in the church and trying to determine where they're at.

And, you know, there's a lot of people can talk to talk. There's people who can even describe the essence of the gospel better than most. And yet this is a great question to ask them. Is Jesus precious to you?

Do you love him? It's like, well, and then they start talking and it's, no, no, no, that's not what I asked you. I didn't ask you if you could articulate the gospel. I didn't ask you. You have all your Bible verses memorized.

Is Jesus precious to you? Do you love him? Is he most important in your life? Great questions for all of us. Okay. Number two, a Christian loves people.

[17:13] John 13, 35, from that old song, right? They will know we are Christians by our love for one another. By all this, people will know that you are my disciples. If you have love for one another.

Okay. There's a distinction. How do we know whether someone's a disciple? Well, they're going to have love for one another. First John three, verse 10 says, by this, it is evident who are the children of God and who are the children of the devil.

Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is the one who does not love his brother. Okay. It's that stark language again. It's like, if you don't love your brother, I'm sorry. You are not a child of God.

First John three, 16 to 18. He goes on a little later there. He says, by this, we know love that he laid down his life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against them, how does God's love abide in him?

Little children, let us not love in word or talk, but indeed in truth. And Christians love to love in word and in talk, right? We love to profess things. We love to sing things. We love to say things.

[18:19] But the question is, are we doing things? What does it come down to? What does our love come down to for God? When it manifests in our love for one another, do we love our brothers?

First John four, 20 to 21.

Says, if anyone says I love God. So again, this, you know, goes back to, Hey, I'm a Christian. Let's say those 62%. If anyone says, I love God, I'm a Christian and hates his brother.

He is a liar for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. And this commandment we have from him, whoever loves God must also love his brother. Okay. If anyone says I love God and hates his brother, he's a liar. So the Bible actually says this offensive thing, that there's people who say they love God who are liars.

Well, you can't say people are liars. Yes, you can. Yes, you should. Did you hear that? Yes, you can. And yes, you should.

[19:17] Because the Bible does. The Bible says some people who say they love God are liars. Are you ashamed of that? Are you ashamed of how the Bible talks about people who think they're Christians or not?

Are you someone who says, well, I can't do that. And I don't like churches who do that. What about Bibles who do that? What about gods who do that? Your God who you profess, he does that.

He says that those who say they love God, but don't love their brothers, he calls them liars. Are you ashamed of that? Are you ashamed of that?

Number three, a Christian abides in God's word. John 8, 31 to 32, Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, if you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Truly. Another version says you are really my disciples, right? So, there's people who aren't truly his disciples, who aren't really his disciples. They're the people who don't abide in his word.

[20:20] A Christian abides in God's word. 1 John 2, 5 to 6, says, By this we know that we are in him. Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.

So, a person abiding in the word of God walks the way Jesus walks. He knows what Jesus wants, and he does what Jesus does. And that doesn't mean he does it all the time, but there's a pattern in his life of obedience, of abiding in God, and knowing what his will is, and then walking out his will, just like Jesus did with his father.

Okay? Number four. A Christian carries his cross and follows Jesus. A Christian carries his cross and follows Jesus. Luke 14, 27.

Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. Again, I've seen people get so offended when you say, hey, actually, I know you profess to be a Christian.

I know you're saying to be a Christian. I am saying, because of what the Bible says, you cannot be a Christian. It's not even possible for you to be a Christian. Why? Because you've not picked up your cross and counted the cost and have come after Jesus in a way that you are dead to yourself.

[ 21 : 32 ] You're still living for yourself. You're still, you are on the throne of your life, not Jesus. You are living in such a way where what you want first and foremost is dictating your life. And this is antithetical to what Jesus said discipleship looks like.

Jesus said it very plainly. Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. Cannot. Again, let's be clear. It doesn't say, oh, they're a bad disciple.

No, no, no, no. Cannot. They cannot be my disciple if they don't pick up their cross. And we have a lot of people who think, oh, it's fine to be a Christian, to do what I want, when I want, how I want, the way I want, and then profess Christ.

No. That kind of person cannot be a disciple of Jesus. According to me? No. According to Jesus. According to King Jesus.

The one who's called the Lord. Number five. A Christian gives up everything. Also Luke 14. Luke 14, Jesus gets really specific here.

[ 22 : 34 ] Luke 14, 33 in the NIV says, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. And so, if we're holding on to something and say, Jesus, you can have this, you can have this, you can have this.

Jesus, you can have it all. Except that. You can't have that. That's, that's mine. Well, you would say, well, they're on a journey.

They're, they're, they're, they're just, you know, they're working it out. They're, they're just trying to become. Jesus says, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. Did, was Jesus offending people when he talked like this?

Yes. In fact, there's one instance where they said, you remember this one? I can't remember which gospel it is, but they literally say to Jesus, Jesus, you offend us when you say this. It's like, uh-huh. And so this was a pattern, like you could, whether they said it as plainly as they did right there, where they say, Jesus, you offend us when you say this. There's other times, clearly, they are offended and they're not saying, hey Jesus, you're, you've offended us.

[ 23 : 40 ] And yet, how often do we avoid the offense of the gospel? How often do we avoid the offense of the truth? We don't want to tell someone that they can't be a disciple. We just want to tell them they're on a journey and, uh, you be you and you do your thing and everything's going to be okay.

Jesus didn't say everything's going to be okay. Jesus put stark lines. He drew lines in the sand and he said, hey, if you don't give up everything, you cannot be my disciple. But we've made it a lot easier and we've made it a lot less offensive and you've got to ask the question, if your version of, quote unquote, truth, like they like to say nowadays, your truth, but if your truth isn't his truth, then it's not the truth.

Okay? And if your truth doesn't offend, why does the truth that Jesus say offend and the truth that we say doesn't offend? You've got to ask your question. Have I become worldly in the way I look at Christianity?

Have I become soft? Have I compromised the truth and have tried because I was fearing man and I was fearing being that kind of church, those kind of people? Am I afraid of that kind of offensive language?

Is it the language of Christ or is it not? Who do you say that you follow? Christ? Anyone who walked, what do you say? Whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way he walked.

[ 24 : 56 ] I'll tell you one way he walked. Offensively. He wasn't obnoxious, but he most certainly offended people. I'm not advocating obnoxiousness. There's plenty of that as well.

Jesus wasn't doing that. He's just stark. He said hard things. Number six, a Christian walks in the light. 1 John 1, 5-7 says, This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you that God is light.

And in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin.

That word fellowship is the same word for partnership. Okay? Same word. Same Greek word. If we say we have fellowship with him, partnership with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.

But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship or partnership with one another and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin. It's that concept again.

[ 26 : 01 ] You can't have partnership with each other if we don't have partnership with God. And once again, this verse is saying, if you're saying, hey, I have fellowship with God, but you're walking in darkness, the Bible says we lie and don't practice the truth.

Typically, to call someone a liar is very offensive. You're lying. You're not practicing the truth. This is what the Bible says about people who are walking in darkness, people who are leading a double life.

A Christian walks in the light. A Christian gets his sins out in the light. A Christian says, hey, I need Jesus. I am a sinner who is saved by Christ and the blood of Jesus, his son, cleanses us from all sin when we walk in the light.

1 John 2, verse 9 says, whoever says he is in the light and hates his brother is still in darkness. You ever had someone who professes to be a Christian but they hate their dad or they hate their mom? We have to tell him. You want them to be surprised in this life and offended in this life or surprised and offended when they die and they stand before the judgment seat and the king says, you said you were in the light but you hated your father and mother or your brother.

[ 27 : 22 ] You hated them your whole life. You were never in the light. I don't even know who you are. Wouldn't we hate for them to have that because we were too gutless to say something? I remember one time I told a woman at a job I was working in the past that she was talking about this mass murder and how bad he was and just kind of condescendingly going on about this guy who was in the news at the time and I knew she hated her dad.

She had constantly talked to me about how much she hates her dad and her dad was not a great person. And I told her, I said, hey, you are just like that murderer because the Bible says that if you hate someone it's like murder.

And she literally went, ah! Like she was so offended. She didn't talk to me for days at work. And I don't like that.

I mean, I kind of like being friends with the people I work with. Especially this woman because I worked with her every day. So that was kind of not a good work environment thing there, right? But I would rather be ostracized from her at work than her be ostracized from the Lord forever in hell. And I'll tell you what, she was self-righteous. She thought she was better than other people because she didn't do what they did. But God in her heart knew that her heart hating her dad made her no different than that murder.

[ 28 : 44 ] Whoever says that in the light hates his brother is still in darkness. She was in darkness and she thought she was okay because she's not as bad as that murderer. And that was the first step towards God breaking down her heart. She became way more open to the gospel after that conversation.

But I first had to offend her. Did I want to offend her? No, I didn't want to offend her. I didn't want to have that conversation. But I had to because I loved her and I wanted her to be saved.

Number seven, a Christian does not love the world or the things in this world. A Christian does not love the world or the things in the world. 1 John 2. You see we're in 1 John a lot here if you haven't noticed.

1 John 2, 15-17. Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and the pride of life is not from the Father but is from the world.

And the world is passing away along with its desires. Whoever does the will of God abides forever. Okay? If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. And say, well, I'm a Christian, the love of the Father is in me.

[ 29 : 48 ] Not if you love the world. Not if you love the world. Or the things in the world. Okay? And we live in a culture that very much is seeking to seep into the church.

Right? If you're on an ocean, you want, it's totally fine to have a boat in the ocean but it's really bad when you have the ocean in the boat.

Right? What's going to happen? The boat's going to sink. Ocean, or boat in the world? Fine. I mean, boat in the ocean? Fine. Right?

Boat in the ocean? Fine. Ocean in the boat? Not fine. Church out there in the world reaching people, preaching the gospel? Fine. Good. Should be. We should go. Okay? When the world

comes inside of us, we start to sink.

And the love of the Father is not in us. Do not love the world of the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. Careful of this. Number eight, a Christian does not make a practice of sinning.

[ 30 : 54 ] What are you saying? Nobody's perfect. The amount of times I've heard this, like nobody's perfect. Yeah, I know. I know. I happen to be one of those imperfect people.

I get it. That's not what it's saying here, though. Let's look. 1 John 3, 6-9. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

Just stop there for a second. And just... Oh, how many of you just had a bunch of butts come out? Yeah, but... Yeah, but... No, no, no. Let's just let the Word of God just hit us.

Let it just get you right in the chest, right? Let's read it again. No one who abides in him keeps on sinning. No one who keeps on sinning has either seen him or known him.

Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, and he is righteous. Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning.

[ 31 : 58 ] The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil. Verse 9. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning, for God's seed abides in him, and he cannot keep on sinning because he has been born of God.

Wow. That's some direct stuff right there, right? And notice in verse 7, he says, Little children, let no one deceive you. Why did he have to say that? I'll tell you why.

Because this is not one of the number one ways that people are deceived. They say things like, nobody's perfect. They say things like, oh, you think you're self-righteous? Like, that's not the Jesus I see in the Bible.

They say things like that. But it says, No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. It doesn't say most. It doesn't say probably, hopefully. It says, No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. Why? For God's seed abides in him. This is what I'm talking about. This isn't a checklist. This isn't us just adding a bunch of morality to our life. Christianity isn't a mental ascent to higher morals.

[ 33 : 00 ] It's becoming, it's incandescent transformation from the inside out. It's a new creation. He says, No one born of God. No one who died and was reborn. No one who was born of God.

It makes a practice of sinning. Why? Because God's seed abides in him. And then listen to this. And he cannot keep on sinning. He has been born of God. I find that the people that are most perplexing or confusing who profess to be Christians are those who do the very opposite of this verse and profess to be Christians.

They literally say that I can't stop sinning. Like there's this pattern and practice of sin in their life that they literally feel like they can't stop and yet they keep professing to be a Christian.

And this verse says, God's seed abides in them and he cannot keep on sinning. He literally, the thing he can't do is to keep on sinning. When the seed of God is within you, you can't keep sinning because you've been born of God.

It's no longer you who live, but Christ will live in you. The seed of God is within you and the seed of God makes it so that you can't keep on sinning. Do you sin? Yes. We haven't, as long as we have these bodies of death, there will be sin in us.

[ 34 : 12 ] Okay? That's why one of the greatest like gospel future great news is when death is swallowed in victory and we get our new bodies. Finally, we can say death has been swallowed up in victory.

No more temptation to this sinful flesh. It's gone. Right now, we have it and the spirit also within us, the seed of God within us so that sin doesn't rule over us and we don't make a practice of sinning.

We don't keep on sinning. If we sin, we repent, we come to the light and we change our behavior. We repent. But someone who keeps on sinning and actually can't stop sinning, there's a good, this is a good indicator.

They don't have the seed of God within them. And again, people get really offended. Like, how dare you say that? I didn't. The Bible did. The Bible says God's seed abides in them and he can't keep on sinning.

No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. Think of how offensive that just that phrase is. No one born of God makes a practice of sinning. Well, no, no, no, no, no.

[ 35 : 13 ] No one born of God makes a practice of sinning because God's seed dwells in them and he cannot keep on sinning. I tell you what's good news. That's good news.

I say, that's not good news. That seems hopeless. No, no, no, no, no, no. You know what's good news? When you cannot keep on sinning. Wouldn't it be awesome if there was a religion where when you believe it, the God that you believe in, his seed comes inside of you and you can't keep on sinning.

Wouldn't that be awesome that it wasn't just about all your effort and energy to try to be a moral person? But if there was a religion where the God you believed in came and lived inside of you and then you couldn't keep on sinning anymore.

Wouldn't that be amazing? It is. It's real. It's true. This is the God we serve. That's what separates us from all the other moralizers and all the other religions.

We're not moralizers. We're dead people who are possessed by God himself living the commands through us. What a gift. What a gift. Christian does not make a practice of sinning.

[ 36 : 21 ] Number nine. A Christian inherits the kingdom of God. Galatians 5, 19-24 says the works of the flesh are evident. Sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. How dare you say that? The Bible says it.

I warn you, as I warned you before, those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. But, the fruit of the Spirit, not the fruit of your trying in the flesh, the fruit of the seed within you, the Spirit within you, is love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, kindness, faithfulness, self-control. Against these things there is no law. And those who belong to Jesus Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. They've crucified the flesh. 1 Corinthians 6, 9-11.

Similar. He says, Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? He says, Do not be deceived. Again, notice in these verses, when he says, Do not be deceived, you can say, Well, you can say that about any verse.

[ 37 : 43 ] You could, but it doesn't. It doesn't say that in every verse. Why do some verses say, Do not be deceived? I believe the reasons they say that is because these are ways that people are easily deceived.

Okay? And so, where are people easily deceived? Well, let's look at the list. It says, Don't you know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

So, that's why he's saying don't be deceived because, does this hit home at all in our culture right now? People who say, Oh, no, no, no, no, you can, love is love, man. You can be a homosexual and still be a Christian and still inherit the kingdom of God.

You actually can't. That's offensive. That's offensive. That'll get you fired. That'll get you losing your job or losing your platform. To say, you can't be a homosexual, somebody who practices homosexuality or adultery, sexual immorality, you can't, don't be deceived.

He's saying, don't be tricked. Don't be dupe. People are going to trick people with this. People are going to deceive people with this. They're going to say, no, no, no, that stuff's okay. You can do that stuff and still be a Christian. He says, these people will not inherit the kingdom of God.

[ 39 : 02 ] And then, there's this amazing statement in verse 11, 1 Corinthians 6, 11, then he says, and such were some of you. Were. Such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Some, that's, some of you were that way. Some of you were that way. That's the difference. All of us were, or some of us were these things at one point in time.

But that's the difference. When you're born again and the seed of God comes in you, Jesus lives inside of you, you don't do these things anymore. They're no longer your way of life. You have a new way of life. Such were some of you.

I love just that phrase. Such were. Past. It's your past. Ephesians 5, 3 to 8. It says, you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure or who is covetous that is an idolater has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Again, listen to what he says here. Let no one deceive you with empty words. Are you hearing this warning? He's saying in multiple sections of Scripture, this is the grounds that people will deceive you.

[ 40 : 13 ] Let deceive you into thinking that you can be a Christian and do all these things that Christians don't do and yet you can still inherit the kingdom of God. He says, let no one deceive you with empty words.

With empty words. For because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not become partners with them. See that language?

Do not become partners with them. For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. We can't partner with people who profess to be Christians but do the things that the Bible says will not inherit the kingdom of God.

There's no partnership with those people. And when you try to have partnership with those people, dead on arrival. It's never going to work, never has worked, never will work, and we're not going to try it. That's what we're saying.

We're saying we believe that we must first develop this reality that partnership with God makes partnership with one another. And if someone does not have partnership with God, we cannot have partnership with one another.

[ 41 : 17 ] Lastly, number 10, a Christian bears much fruit. John 15 verse 8 said, By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove yourself to be my disciples.

Another thing that people get really offended by is when you examine their fruit. But the Bible says, according to Jesus, that God the Father is glorified when you bear much fruit.

And this is how you prove to be your disciple. The proof is in the pudding, as they say. Jesus didn't have that analogy at the time, but he might have used that, right? The proof is in the fruit.

And so, we look at fruit. We say, Hey, if you're a part of the church, there will be this fruit that shows. People say, Oh, you can't do that. Like, we can and we will. We can and we will.

And we won't apologize for it. Because we want to make sure people are disciples. Because if they're not disciples, there's no fellowship. There's no partnership. And a person that proves their discipleship, I don't need to prove anything to you.

[ 42 : 20 ] You're right. You don't. But the Bible says your actions prove to somebody. So, you don't have to think about it, but it's right here. Your fruit proves it proves whether you're a disciple or not.

And so, you know what we're going to do? When you say you're a disciple, we're not just going to say, Oh, he says he's a disciple. Everything's cool. We're going to look at the fruit. We're going to look at the fruit. And we're going to determine it by the fruit.

Why? Because we care. Because we love. Because we think that heaven and hell are real. And we don't. And we think the church needs to be one of the most effective groups of people on the planet when it comes to unity.

And there is no unity with light and darkness. There is no partnership and fellowship when one of us is in darkness and one of us is not. When one of us is not bearing the fruit of discipleship and one of us is. Okay?

In conclusion, a partner is a Christian. A partner is a Christian who can be counted on to be what a Christian is and to do what a Christian does. Let me ask you the question. Are you bearing the fruit of partnership with God?

[ 43 : 21 ] Are you bearing the fruit of partnership with God? And are you embarrassed that the Bible demands fruit of your partnership with Him? Is that embarrassing to you? Is that something that you don't, you've maybe softened on?

Because if we have, that's something we need to repent of. You might say, no, I know I have fruit of partnership. I know I'm a believer. If I examine the fruit of my life, I'm a believer. But are you embarrassed to acquire the same fruit in someone else's life?

Does that embarrass you? If you are, we can't be ashamed of Him. We can't be ashamed. The Bible says, if anyone is ashamed of me and my words. Remember that part?

He doesn't just say ashamed of me. He says ashamed of his words. I'm asking him, are you ashamed of the words He used? If you are, that's a problem. Okay? We can't be ashamed of the words He used.

Amen? Yeah.