

Warning!

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[0:00] Let me tell you a story. I remember as a child the day that I swung around a corner.

! I was running down the patio, the porch. I was running around a corner, around this concrete corner, and there's a rail here, and I could take you to that very spot.

It's etched in my brain, etched in my brain. I swung around the corner of this porch and slammed my face into the side of the porch or the rail, whatever it was, but this is what happened.

I lost my front tooth. I was gone, forever gone, my front tooth forever gone. One moment of inattention, of carelessness, and disaster struck me.

Disaster struck me. I was careless, and it cost me, cost me dearly. It cost my mum and dad because they fixed it, and then I had to get it refixed.

[0:59] But I must sound a warning today. I sound a warning. I sound a note of caution here about taking precaution, about being cautious, about taking heed, about being heedful, praying that you'll heed the warning today to take heed.

And the Bible says take heed numbers of times. For example, 1 Corinthians 10, verse 12. 1 Corinthians 10, verse 12. Paul writes to the Corinthians, he says, Wherefore, let him that thinketh he standeth take heed, lest he fall.

The context there is perhaps of the admonition of murmuring, of tempting, of failure, of the context is of idolaters and people falling and failing God.

And Paul says, take heed, lest you fall. No one is immune from falling flat on their faces. Flat on their faces.

It's happened to me. It can happen to you. We must take warning and take action upon that warning. You know, I was thinking lately as I was reflecting about the kind of Bibles you can buy.

[2:14] You know, you go down to a Christian bookstore and you can get a children's Bible. You can get a businessman's Bible. What's some other ones you can get?

A youth Bible. A woman's Bible. And you get a precious promises Bible. I wonder if anyone's ever thought, now this could be, I have to copyright this, a warning Bible.

I wonder if anyone would buy that. All the warnings of the Bible underlined and highlighted in bright letters or bright highlight. A warning Bible.

Because the Bible is full of warnings. Of course it's full of promises, but sometimes we neglect those passages that are actually warnings to us. And we must take warning and take action on the warning of the Word of God.

Really this is, you could say, this is a solemn message in the sense that the Bible does firmly and straightly put to us necessary warnings.

[3:23] So there should be a serious tone really, as much as I lighten it somewhat, that as Bible readers, as Bible students, we should be mindful that there is warnings in the Word of God.

And it can be that we can miss the warnings of the Word. What do you think were the sins of Sodom?

The sins of Sodom. Of course we know those that would stand out as the word sodomy comes to mind, what the sins of Sodom were. But it can surprise us when we actually see what the Bible tells us were the sins of Sodom.

This is pointed out to me of late. And we see that listed in Ezekiel 16. Ezekiel 16 from verse 49. And it reads in full, it says, Behold, this was the iniquity, the sin of thy sister Sodom.

This was the iniquity, this was the sin of Sodom, writes Ezekiel. He says this, We know what happened to Sodom.

[4:52] God took it away, finished it. Notice here, Ezekiel 16, 49, the three particulars here. And notice the priority that the Holy Spirit gives in listing the sins of Sodom.

Notice the sins first listed in verse 49. God declares the sins of Sodom in these two verses. And it's easy for us to think, Oh, we're better than Sodom, than the people of Sodom.

But are we committing those sins listed here that God warns us against in these first two verses?

What does he say? He says, Pride, fullness of bread, abundance of idleness.

Think of pride. We can all find a little bit of pride, you know. I polish my humility badge every day, of course. But we can all get prideful, can't we?

We can all think more of ourselves than we ought to think. Prideful. Do we neglect to pray? That can be a sign of pride, can't it?

[5:58] Do we neglect to seek after God, to daily seek him, to confess our utter reliance and dependence upon him? Pride is one of the sins of Sodom.

Are we going day by day to him in prayer, in private prayer, prayer in secret, not praying to be seen of men, but prayer with our Heavenly Father, to commune closely with him, intimately with him? Or are we pride? Are we prideful? Are we proud? Self-sufficient? But we neglect to pray. Many times the Lord tells us to watch and pray.

They're paired. They come in combination. Watch. Be watchful. Be alert. Be cautious. Be aware. Warning.

Danger. Watch and pray. We see the world is more dangerous. It's getting closer to the coming of our Lord. Are we prideful?

[7:03] Self-sufficient, such that we neglect to pray. There's a warning and a corresponding action. Watch and pray. Watch and pray. Now this word watch, it means to stay wide awake.

Wide awake. We also see idleness. The sins of Sodom, pride, idleness. There's another one.

Remember the old stereotype of Norm. The Aussie Ocker Norm. Who remembers him? Norm. There sitting there.

Idleness, isn't it? Sitting there, laid back and pressing the remote. And just a couch potato. Idleness. Do we spend time? Really waste time in idleness. Idle things. Things that are neglectful and worthless.

[8:07] Now, forgive me. I know some might think I'm being a bit straight here. And I'm not knocking entertainment, holist, bolist. But there's a sense where we can, entertainment can be a diversion that represents an idleness, doesn't it?

It can be. It can be a trap. Of course, there's times of leisure and rest and just, I suppose there's that vegging out time.

But when it becomes a lifestyle like with such as this, you know, when it becomes a neglectful of soul, when it becomes an idleness, that can be an issue.

When we fail to make the best use of our time, because it's a finite resource, and we can say, yes, I need a spiritual overhaul. I need to be woken up from spiritual slumber myself.

If we really, I know for me, if I'm really honest, I'm not saying for you. You answer that for yourself. Am I like Norm?

[9:14] Bit laid back. And before you know it, time just goes, doesn't it? Especially these days with electronic gadgets and such pursuits, time just evaporates.

See the danger is my plea to you. So have your eyes open. See the danger. The danger.

Sometimes we fail to see danger.

There's warning signs. Danger, danger, danger. And people just plough through down that road and over the cliff. Our eyes have to be open to see the danger that lurks.

Thank God we've been converted. We've been revised. We've had a recharge, a reviving, a re-life, a back to life.

We've got a new heart. God has changed our direction. We're not going down that vain road. But there are still pitfalls along our journey too. Brothers and sisters, let's be mindful.

[10:11] As we know, dear pilgrims here, we need to all be aware. As we get new fuel for our journey, as we take the word and live it and breathe it and put it into our shoes and walk it, there are still pitfalls along that pathway.

For all of us, as we know, it can happen to anyone that they fall. So let's heed the signs of danger, the signs to watch for, the signs of warnings.

Of course, people always take heed about warnings, don't they? Of course, we see many warning signs that go unheeded.

You go into the shop and the shopkeeper asks you, which packet do you want? And you say, I'll have that one, the one smoking harms unborn babies.

Thanks. Or you might say, I'll have the smoking causes lung cancer one today. Thanks. Or maybe you say, oh, I'll take that packet, the one that says smoking causes blindness.

[11:22] Or smoking causes heart disease. Now, I'm being a bit lighthearted here, but it's the reality, isn't it? The sick reality that people ignore warning signs such that they're buying these nails in their coffin.

It's weird and it's sad at the same time, isn't it? It's weird that you could see a warning sign and ignore it. It's very sad. And look, I know it is the reality.

And it's people get a hold of the people that can't seem to break it. God can break that. God can.

What about the warning signs we see when we're driving down the road? Warning signs. You know, you look for those blue and red lights, don't you? The traffic lights, as it were.

The red and the green and the yellow. But people don't always exercise care. Where do you see all the accidents? You're usually at the intersections, isn't it? Someone didn't give way. Someone didn't give way.

[12:29] People don't exercise due care. It's like they don't obey the basic rules. Or maybe the traffic lights are faulty. But in case you need a reminder, red means stop.

Green means go. But one thing overrides that, doesn't it? What's that noise I hear? Eeh, eh, eh, eh. The ambulance coming through.

People don't even take heed to the warning of an ambulance coming through. When you hear an ambulance, you stop. Let them get through. The ambulance overrides those traffic lights.

Yet some people miss that too, don't they? They do not take heed. And I saw a near miss where a driver didn't give way to the ambulance. Not taking heed.

It's a big problem, isn't it? We must take heed. We must listen. Take heed. It means listen. Listen up. Heed the warning. God is higher than other authorities.

[13:26] You know, the ambulance trumps the green light. God's warnings trump our feelings or our wishes. Because God is higher.

His authority is the highest authority. The highest authority. The absolute authority. The final authority. The word of God. So he should heed his warning. But people go on in their merry way, don't they?

They don't heed the warnings. Hurricanes hitting America. In 1969, in a place called Past Christian, Mississippi.

There was this group of people and they heard the warnings. It was all over there on the radio. There's a hurricane coming. Evacuate. Evacuate. They thought, oh, we're going to have a hurricane party.

Come and join us. We're going to have a hurricane party. The storm's coming. But who cares?

We're going to party. And the wind was howling. As the hurricane winds came closer and closer, the police chief, Jerry Peralta, pulled into the driveway.

[14:32] It was sometime after dark. And he talked to the people there. And there was a man up there staggering around on the second balcony with a drink in his hand. And Peralta yelled, you all need to clear out.

You've got to get out of here as quickly as possible. The storm's getting worse. But others just joined the man on the balcony. Oh, we're having a merry old time.

And laughed at the policeman's order to leave. One of them yelled out, this is my land. If you want me off, you'll have to arrest me. But Peralta didn't arrest anyone. He wasn't able to persuade them

to leave.

He just wrote down their names, the names of the next of kin. The names of the next of kin of the 20 or so people who gathered there for the party, to party through the storm.

And they laughed at the cop as he took their names. They had been warned. But they had no intention of heeding the warning. It was 10.15 when the storm struck.

[15:38] The wind speed of 205 miles an hour. The strongest on record. The rain falling with the force of bullets. Waves were crashing the shore 22 foot high, 28 foot high.

And news reports later showed that the worst damage was that very spot. The motels, the gambling houses of past Christian, this town in Mississippi, where 20 people were killed as the hurricane wind struck the hurricane party.

And nothing was left of that three-storey building. One survivor was a five-year-old boy clinging to a mattress the following day. We can miss the warning signs. We cannot take heed to the warnings. We can miss the warnings of the word. We can ignore the danger, the peril that we face. Like Lot. Lot escaped, as we know, by the skin of his teeth. But look at Lot. The Bible calls him righteous, just. He was saved. But he was foolish.

[16:49] Lot got comfortable in Sodom. He got comfortable there. Maybe Lot fell in with the sins of Sodom. Maybe he got prideful.

He was sat at the gate. He was one of the recognized people. One of the business people. Lot, the Bible calls Lot righteous, but we know he was foolish.

To even set his tent towards the city of Sodom. He pitched his tent, kind of overlooking the city. Oh, I'm on a hilly spot. I'll enjoy the view of Sodom.

And before long, he moved right down, down, down into the valley of Sodom. Pride, fullness of bread. Abundance of idleness was in her.

Sounds like a city that you might like to be in. And a pride. There's a pride to this city. Like to live. Maybe it was like Burnside or something.

[17:47] Yeah. Maybe it was kind of a well-to-do kind of hoity-toity kind of place. And there's fullness of bread. Hey, plenty. It's lavish. It's laid on thick here.

And there's an abundance of idleness. Maybe it's like the Gold Coast or something. Just an abundance of idleness. You know, people went there to retire. I'm just being a bit creative here. But you can imagine, maybe it was a place you could kind of sit by the sea and just watch the world go by.

There was an abundance of idleness that's in her. Maybe Lot grew to like the lifestyle of Sodom. He got used to it. Lot.

He did escape. We know he was virtually dragged out, taken by the hand, by the angels who came. Lot. One of the leaders of Sodom.

He was at the gates doing business. The angels came. And the wicked city sought to molest them. Yet Lot himself was so corrupted such that he would have sent his daughters to the mob.

[18:52] Lot. There was a lot of Sodom in Lot. Foolishness. There was some Sodom in Lot. The sins of Sodom. Because we know it says in the letters of Peter, he was vexed.

It was stressful for him. With the conversation, with the lifestyle of the Sodom people. But yet, you see that he was foolish. The sins of Sodom.

Maybe Lot partook. Uppermost was their pride. Don't we see that today? Not interested. Don't tell me about Jesus.

Pride. Selfishness. Self-sufficiency. I can get by without God. Some people get so high and mighty, don't they?

So well-to-do that, oh, I've got it all. Why would I need God? They were prideful. A fullness of bread. Abundance of idleness.

[19:54] Why should I care about God? I've got everything I need. One day it'll be taken all away. All gone. Beware of the world.

Lot was in Sodom. And Sodom was in Lot. The world. Let me urge you some things to be aware of. To beware of. To beware of. To take heed of. Take heed.

Beware of the world. The world and the love of the world. I heard a sermon lately that was telling about maybe a church a bit like this one. Oh, it's actually a video.

I didn't realise that was going to happen. You know, hey, we could sort of join in and dance around with this video here. I heard a sermon lately that talked about how some preachers are like Pastor Nimrod from the Church of Babylonia.

They are like the candy man. What does the candy man do? He makes the world taste good. That's what some churches are like, isn't it? They make the world taste good.

[20:56] Don't they? There's a lot of worldliness. And some churches cater to the worldliness such that the worldly Christians can just go along with it.

They don't have to change. I don't want to give you a taste for the world, but a taste for the word. A taste for the word. A hungering for the word.

We should beware of preachers that make the world taste good. We don't want the world. It tastes foul. It's repulsive to us. As believers, we hate the world and the things of the world.

As in the worldliness of the world. The word tells us a false prophet's gone out into the world. They are of the world. Therefore, they speak of the world.

And the world heareth them. We are of God. He that knoweth God, heareth us. He that is not of God, heareth not us. Hereby knoweth the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

[21:57] It tells of two categories of individuals. Of the world, not of the world. Those who are of the world do not hear the word of God.

Those that are of God hear the word of God. Hereby we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. There's a lot of people that are spiritual. I'm spiritual.

I meet them all the time. I'm spiritual. You come into spiritual things, spiritism, talking to ghosts and mediums and magicians and witches.

They're spiritual. There's a spirit of error. And there's a spirit of truth. We've got to discern between the two. And don't mix them. We must heed the voice of caution.

Beware of the world. Many times the Bible urges us to take heed. Take heed. Take heed lest we let them slip, as it were. There's this danger of drifting, of slipping.

[22:58] Beware of false churches. There's a danger of counterfeits.

There's people telling me or asking me, what do you think of such and such a preacher or such and such a preacher? And sometimes I can give a resounding yes.

Some might say, handle with care. Handle with care. There's a danger of counterfeits out there. And we've got to ask ourselves all the time, what would Jesus do?

You know, the bracelet, what would Jesus do? What kind of church would Jesus pastor? How would Jesus pastor a church? What would Jesus do? You know, maybe he would look a bit like this, you know.

Here's a picture of the Lord Jesus going and flipping tables and chasing after people with a whip. And, you know, as in taking out those that are merchandising the church.

And making it a worldly wise marketing machine. Where preachers are just delivering a very weak, little or no gospel message. All light and fluffy.

[23:58] No challenge. No take heed. Just go with the flow. We'll accommodate all your whims and fancies. Take heed of such a church.

Of such a preacher. Some would tread unwisely. Walking on thin ice. Thinking they can have one foot in the world and one foot in the kingdom of God. It's not the way. We've got to be straight down the line.

And the Lord Jesus was straight down the line. He didn't toy or accommodate error and falsehood. He was straight against it. Now there's needful barriers.

Things that help us, that constrain us. And I like how a preacher has put it. I've heard the comparison to when you're going around a windy road.

You know, up in the hills where there's some windy roads. And some of those roads are a bit hairy. When you're going a little bit fast and you're going around, sweeping, sweeping corners around and around, one after the other.

[25:00] And you see there's a traffic barrier. You see this metal barrier. This traffic barrier that is holding the traffic from going over

the edge.

And some would have the attitude, Oh, I'm a good driver. I'll just go right up to the edge and, you know, get as close as I can to the barrier. And then get as close again to the barrier.

You know, just to show what a good driver I am. But of course we know that's dangerous, isn't it? Some people are like that. When the word cautions us about truth, about error, about sin, about avoiding certain things, about steering clear from things, about taking heed, there's a barrier there, a needful barrier.

Be separate from the world, the things of the world, the love of the world, the love of the flesh, the pride of life, et cetera. They want to get as close to the barrier as they can.

Oh, I'll just, oh, I can do a little bit of this without it harming me. You know, I'm spiritual. I'll just get closer and closer to the edge. It's a dangerous thing, isn't it?

[26:11] When God says take heed, we steer clear. Keep a long, what's the word, a barge pole between yourself and that which is doubtful or questionable, which might cause you to fall or sin.

We need a barrier from the world, brothers and sisters. So don't see how close you can drive to the edge, as it were. Beware of the flesh. Watch out for it.

Crucify the flesh. Exercise caution. You know, this piece of flesh in my mouth I have problems with. You exercise caution before engaging mouth, before you open your mouth.

Things like backbiting, murmuring, before you speak. Now, I'm sure most of you might have heard of this before. Who's heard of this before? Yeah, you've heard of that?

Think before you speak. It's something people use to consider the words that we speak, the communication that we deliver.

[27:19] There's a way that it's put and it goes like this. Is it true? Firstly. When it's gossip, potentially gossip, when it's hearsay, when you haven't heard it firsthand from the person concerned, ask yourself, is it true?

It might not be. So don't repeat it if you don't know that it's true. Is it honest? Is it someone who's actually giving you their honest concern?

Is it inspiring? Is it going to build up? Is it going to bless? When you're talking about a third party who's not present, are you going to be inspiring? Hey, did you hear about Brother Joe? They've just done...

There's a Brother Joe here, but I was trying to pick a name that's a general name. Brother Fred, let's say. Did you hear about Brother Fred? He's such a testimony for the glory of God, isn't he? You know, what he's done, how he's giving, how he's praying, how he's active for the Lord. And when you talk about a third party in an inspiring way, to say something good about them, that's a good thing.

[28:22] Is it necessary? Do you even need to talk about it at all? You know, when someone says, or how's so-and-so and you know there's something going wrong, we don't have to spread the dirt. Is it necessary?

Is it kind? Be kind. Be thoughtful. So you can see this on the internet. You can't probably read that that well, but is it true? Is it a fact or just an opinion or feeling?

Is it helpful? Does it help you or the situation? Is it inspiring? Does it improve the situation? Is it necessary? Would it be better left unsaid? Is it kind? What is your motivation?

What's driving you to actually even talking about it? Friends, take heed lest you fall. Take heed lest you fall. Notice and avoid the sin barrier. And engage maybe rather than, well, as well as engage brain, engage your spirit before you engage your tongue.

You know, watch out for that flesh that's in your mouth. It causes so much trouble. It's full of poison, as it can be, as the Bible says. So notice and avoid the sin barrier. Don't drive close to it.

[29:24] Keep a wide berth between you and that which is sinful or questionable. We need caution. Now, David's heart was never the same after his sin.

Think of David. He didn't take heed. He fell. He had to seek God's forgiveness. Oh, we've lost the picture, but in Psalm 51 verse 10, and that's fine, it doesn't matter.

But in Psalm 51 verse 10, oh, here we go. It says that, David cried out in the Psalm 51, Create in me a clean heart, oh God.

Create in me a clean heart, oh God, and renew a right spirit within me. That was the prayer from David's heart. Consider how marvelous, marvelous grace of our loving Lord.

David had to seek God's forgiveness and such a stained heart as David's heart, such a stained heart as David's heart, as his heart could be renewed.

[30:24] So there's still hope, isn't there? Even after serious failure, for loved ones on your heart, for loved ones on my heart, for loved ones from this church, they can cry like David did and get restored.

David, we read, he had a heart after God's own heart. Amazing that God could so transform David after he fell so deeply in sin that grace could do such a deep work in his heart, isn't it?

That he could be so radically ministered to, that he could be a radical testimony. Our setback can set us up for our comeback.

I heard one guy talk about, and it was quite another brother that I heard him speak and I got to know him last week, a man of God, and he talked about his background.

He had a horrible background. It was a real tough life he had in poverty and suffering. I think he lost his parents young, and there's lots of hardships.

[31:27] And he said that he didn't let his background put his back on the ground. I thought that was a good way he put that. He didn't let his background put his back on the ground. He was able to stand, and God was able to help him.

And we see some people will fall, but our back doesn't stay on the ground. He lifts us up, doesn't he? As he did with David. Take heed. Take heed.

Take heed to avoid having a critical spirit. That can be hard. I can be inclined to be critical. I think as a discerning Christian, you're probably maybe a little bit more minded to be discerning what's right, what's wrong.

That's black, that's white, and this preacher's don't touch him with a barge pole. There is that necessary caution. But sometimes we can have a critical spirit, and that can be a problem too.

Did you know Job's wife's name? Of course, you Bible students, you should know what Job's wife's name is. Of course, it's not given to us in the Scriptures.

[32:28] But I put to you that Job's wife's name was Nellie. She was a negative Nellie. What did she say? When she should have been a helpmate to her husband, she said, curse God and die.

Now, no offence to any Nellies that are present here tonight, or they might be hearing this, but we need to be lifting up others, don't we? Not to be negative Nellies, but to be lifting others, to be helping, to be blessing where we can.

Take heed. Take heed to associations, a little leaven. Don't even have a little leaven. Don't accept a little leaven.

In other words, leaven, we know it speaks of hypocrisy, of illegalism. I think it speaks of other things too, doesn't it?

A false doctrine, leaven can represent false doctrine. A little bit of that which is wrong can do great harm.

[33:29] Take heed and avoid negative thinking. Let's not be like Job's wife. Take heed and don't hang around toxic people. Take heed and avoid them. You might have some of those in your life.

You know, you can still be a blessing to them. You can still try to be a blessing, but there's some people are toxic, aren't they? And some people's talk is toxic. I know I was talking with some folk, and some customers can be toxic.

You'd rather they didn't patronise your shop. And it's sad for me. Sometimes I go visiting with some professing Christians, and I come out of there with a headache. It's like they're just so toxic.

You know, there's a sense where there's some people that just drain the life out of you. You know, and some professing Christians can act as toxic people. Shouldn't we rather be the opposite?

Shouldn't we? Now, that's not to say we can have our moments. We see the Bible talks about gainsayers and murmurers, disputers, people walking disorderly.

[34:29] You get some people that just want to have an argument with you every time. I've visited some people and gone home feeling physically and mentally sick. They've drained me such. They will not heed counsel or

warning.

You tell them, and they will just be like the people in Mississippi. Oh, she'll be right. We're just going to have a party. Some people, they veer off track. They go on byways.

You know, I talked about getting deactivated this morning. Another man talked to me, and he said, sometimes we can get derailed. Just they get so off track, they're off the rails. The Bible tells how the Lord says, my people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

Beware. You know, go and get, I'll have to manufacture one, but we'll have to copyright it, the warning Bible. And you can buy one off me when I've got it printed.

But no, there's a sense where there is warnings in here. You know, sometimes we love the promises, and we sort of cut the other bits out. You know, the kind of the more challenging scriptures that actually say, oh, that's hit a sensitive spot.

[35:39] I don't like that verse. We kind of want to get the Bible highlights, you know, the black texter, and kind of mark those so we can't read them anymore.

You know, sometimes we love the promises of the word, but there are the warnings of the word too. I guess that's really the simple point I'm trying to make here tonight, that let's take heed of the whole word.

Beware of toxic people, of toxic talk. It's likened to a disease. In James 1 verse 19, we caution how to talk, to be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath.

It tells us some of, in 2 Timothy 2 verse 17, of a couple of people. And we're still talking about them 2,000 years after they lived on this planet, Hymenus and Philetus.

It says their words eat like a canker, like cancer. It's like gangrene. Some people's words are like that. Let's not be in their number.

[36:43] But in all things edify. Take heed. Friends, think of the word. This is the ultimate standard. Our culture says not interested to the Holy Bible.

Our culture denies the truth. The truth is always the truth. It doesn't get changed, revised, updated, changed. It's always the truth.

We must take heed. Take heed. There is need for warning. And for every believer. Colossians 1.28, Paul says, of Christ we preach Christ, warning every man.

Warning every man. The sense where we all need warning and teaching every man in all wisdom that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.

Warning every man. That's quite a significant statement, isn't it? That we all need warning. Check in with me. Check in with you. That's iron sharpening iron.

[37:45] There's an exhorting one another. It doesn't mean it's always the pastor exhorting the people. The people can exhort the pastor. We learn, we grow as we are exhorted, as we're warning every man.

And there's need for warning the preacher must give. There's verses in Ezekiel such as Ezekiel 3.17, how God appointed Ezekiel a watchman, standing on the fortress ramparts, looking out for the coming enemy, giving warning, giving warning from me, our Lord says.

There's need for warning. Now, we dare not soften sin. Wilbur Chapman tells of a preacher, Dr. Howard, an Aussie preacher.

He preached very strongly on the subject of sin. And after such a service, the church officers came to Dr. Howard and they wanted to ask him to just smooth it over a bit, Dr. Howard.

You're getting a bit too pointed. You know, it's just talking so much about guilt and corruption. Our boys and girls might become sinners if you talk about such things and don't speak so plainly about sin.

[38:58] And Dr. Howard said this. He said, he pointed to a small bottle and he said, you see that label? It says poison. It says caution.

Do you know, man, what you're asking me to do? You're suggesting I change the label. Maybe we paste over it the words essence of peppermint.

Do you see what happens? The milder we make the label, the more dangerous we make the poison. We dare not soften or weaken. We must call it for what it is. There's need for warning.

The message must be strong and straight, hard at times, because we need to be warned. You hear stories about children going to the tool shed and some blokes put the weed killer in a lemonade

bottle and it just looks the same, like lime lemonade.

And, you know, the label must be clear. This is poison. It's dangerous. Caution. Take heed. It's likewise with the word of God, isn't it? With the many warnings. You know, get that warning Bible. [40:07] Underline those warnings as well as the promises. And take heed. Take heed. Paul continually warns. I've heard it said that love warns.

You know, we've got this world where love just loves everything and anything goes, but love actually warns. There's need for warning. We warn because we love.

Acts 20, it says, Paul warned people, everyone, everyone, night and day with tears. He ceased not. Because we love, we warn. And brother, sister, each one of us can take part in that ministry to join the devil resistance movement.

Resist the devil. First submit to God. Resist the devil and the devil will flee. We must resist the devil. He's come to steal, to kill, to destroy. He'll steal your joy.

[41:04] He'll steal your assurance. The devil wants to steal from you. He wants to kill. He wants to destroy. He wants to destroy your testimony. He wants to do damage to you as a standing Christian.

We must steadfastly resist. Take heed lest we fall. Even we that think that we stand, we know there's numbers that have fallen. It grieves my heart to see people fall.

We must steadfastly resist and be alert to the dangers all around us to know that none of us can be immune to temptation. Sometimes we get blasé.

It's like someone driving through the thick fog. It's dangerous, isn't it? Pull over. Drive according to the conditions. If there's a foggy situation, spiritually speaking, be alert to that danger.

Steadfastly resist. I read a story about a man who was a lion tamer. He got mauled to death recently by tigers that he'd trained with for decades. They got the taste of his blood and he was a goner.

[42:15] It's danger. He might have come to so lightly deliver that job that he had as a lion tamer that he kind of grew careless about the danger.

And the tigers mauled him to death. You know, some people play with fire, don't they? Take heed. There's necessary warnings.

We see, wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. We see the sins of Sodom, just a carelessness and idleness.

We see an abundance. We see pride. Let's take heed. Take heed. Brother, sister, take heed of the world.

Steer clear. Take heed of false teaching, false churches. Take heed of false gospels. Take heed to yourself. Take heed how you speak. Take heed how you interact.

[43:20] Think before you speak. Be a blessing. Don't be toxic. Guard yourself. Don't drive close to the edge. Keep a wide berth from that which is questionable, which is going to steal your joy and damage your testimony because that's what the devil wants to do.

He wants to take you out. Trust in the Lord. I urge you tonight, I've been speaking really to Christians, the message truly, it boils down to putting your trust in Christ and embracing him. Cleave unto him. Hold fast that which is good. He is the one who is good. He's the goodest, the bestest, the greatest, isn't he? Cleave unto the Lord.

Let your heart cleave unto him. Know his saving, his ransoming of your soul from sin and know you've got a testimony to testify. Don't let the devil soil or damage that testimony.

Be a strong and outright Christian, a steadfast Christian. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you. Your word gives us many warnings. We see of the carelessness of Lot that he grew to fit in with the culture.

[44:31] Lord, help us to not make that mistake that we will be steadfast. Lord, help us to be wised up to what is going on, to be aware, to beware, to take heed, to take heed to our soul, to take heed to your word lest it slip.

Lord, to take heed, to hold fast, that which is good. Give us wisdom, Lord, to steer away from what will hinder our walk, the world, the flesh, the devil, and all his ways, and all his traps.

Lord, so that we'll take heed in how we walk, in how we talk, in how we live, such that one day we'll see your face and we won't be ashamed before you at your coming, Lord, because we'll have dealt

with those things and got things right.
In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.