

# Conform or Contend?

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[0:00] Romans 12, verse 2.

My question today is, what will we do? Conform or contend? What are we to do in relation to this world in which we live? God says, be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

There's a whole lot of pressure on people today. Young people, older people, all of us. Pressure to conform, to be squeezed into a mould, as it were, to cave in to the mentality and mindset of this world, to be conformed to this world and its values, its philosophies, its thinking.

And it's the easy thing to do, to do just that. To take this path of conformity. There's a lot of pressure to follow the Pied Pipers, if you like.

You know the story of the Pied Piper? Some mythological character that the children of Hamelin went and followed to their destruction. In fact, it's based on a true story, apparently.

[1:33] There's some truth to it. A Pied Piper plays the flute and people follow. And we all face this pressure today. The pressures of the world we live in, the pressure just to conform, to be just another clone of this culture in which we live.

And it's everywhere, and it's in churches too. Christians face it. And some have lost their way, big time. But I urge you, don't fall into line. Don't be, as it were, swimming with the school, when God says to go the other way. Resist that pressure. Break the mould. Swim against the tide.

There is no place in the Christian for conformity with the world. At the heart of this question of conformity is compromise. Compromise.

To compromise it means to reduce, to devalue what is right, what is true, what is faithful. It cheapens it, it spoils it, it soils it. And when we compromise, friends, when we compromise what counts as a Christian, we disrespect and dishonour our God.

When we compromise our faith, we subtract something from it. We lessen it, we reduce it, we weaken it, we subtract something. We give ground to the enemy of our soul. Conformity with the world is something we all need to be awake to.

[2:52] It weakens our witness, it damages our testimony, it hinders our effectiveness as God's people. And it's interesting that the standout heroes of the faith, down through the pages of Scripture and the records of history, are they that are called non-conformists. Non-conformists.

That's where they were, that's what they were called. They did not go with the flow, they did not swim with the rest of the fish, they went the other way. They did not go with the flow of the popular church of their time.

Let's face up to this, do we conform and compromise? Do we? Do we do that? Our stance would rather be, no surrender, no compromise, no retreat, no prisoners, no truce, no compromise.

Jude tells us what we are to do. Rather than conform, let us contend, contend. Jude 1 verse 3, he says, He says, The content in here is the sense of a struggle, of a hand-to-hand combat, of an intense struggle, as it were, as an athletic event.

It speaks to us of that determination, of that tenacity that we should have in defending the truth of the gospel. It is a hand-to-hand fight. Here is a picture when I found, when I googled the word determination, determination.

[4:52] It looks a bit hopeless there, doesn't it? A young boy trying to lift up this massive, massive weight. Now one day he will. He keeps working at it. He will lift that weight one day.

Amen? Amen. Determination. Determination. It may not be easy for you to contend, to contend, to struggle, to fight. It may not be easy to contend, but one day we will get there.

We will get there. And we must take this path, the path of no compromise, no shortcuts. What are we to do? Do we conform or contend?

I put it to you that we must not conform, but rather contend. If you contend earnestly for that which matters, it's worth the effort.

You might get bruised along the way. You might be black and blue and bleeding. You may get wearied. It may seem impossible and hopeless like this little boy with the weight.

[5:50] The odds are against you, but it will be worth the fight. It will be worth the effort to contend. It will not be easy. It calls for hard work. It calls for diligent study. It calls for a willingness to take up your cross, to stand against the world.

And those who would water down the gospel and sound doctrine, to contend earnestly for the faith. We must. We must. We must. In an age of compromise, we must stand firm.

When compromise saturates everything, in this brave new world, so-called, in this postmodern world, a world where people say, just give in and go along with the crowd.

Just go the easy path. Everybody else is doing it. But what are we to do? What are you to do? What are you and me to do? Let us be like Paul at Athens.

At Athens, when he stood on Mars Hill. And I was privileged to stand on that very hill when I visited Athens. And I could just imagine Paul there, preaching the gospel on that hill in Athens, when he stood on Mars Hill.

[6:55] Paul didn't adapt to the culture of his day. He didn't adapt to it. Or pander to the world. Or succumb to its charms. He proclaimed to it. And we likewise have called to speak up, to lift up our voices.

Paul didn't cave in to the culture. He confronted it. And through the word, we see when God's people woke up to themselves, when God's people repented and got right with him, they smashed the idols of Baal.

They tore down the altars. They didn't adapt them and bring them into the holy worship of God. No, sir. They confronted him. And we need likewise plain preaching.

And smash down the idols in our own hearts. And let God have his rightful place. And read the holy place of the marketeers and the merchandisers. The early reformers smashed the idols.

I watched a replay of a particular reformer of old. And it showed him going into a church and tearing down the statues and the Marys. And the crucifixes.

[8:03] And smashing them. Because they took God's place. They were idols. They were idols in the false Roman church of their day. We don't need all that kind of thing to worship God.

We need the plain preaching. The simple truth of the gospel. And we need a faith that is militant. A faith that is willing to be valiant for the truth. We must communicate biblical truth in these days to the next generation.

But without diluting it. Without diluting it. We must be valiant for the truth. This is our mandate. We've got it backed on. We want to pass on.

And we want it to be passed on. Now more than ever. This is the message Australia needs. This is the message this world needs. This generation needs.

The word. Paul tells Timothy to Timothy 4. Preach the word. Be instant in season. Out of season. Reprove. Rebuke. Exhort. With all long suffering and doctrine.

[9:04] For the time will come. When they will not endure sound doctrine. But after their own lusts shall heep to themselves. Teachers having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth.

And shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things. And your afflictions do the work of an evangelist. And they call free of thy ministry. I was tuning in to a Christian radio station recently.

And there was this woman going on about all these weird dreams. And it was God speaking to her. And I thought wow that's wacky stuff. Wacky. Wacko. No I don't know how bad I've got the word.

The more sure word of prophecy.

I don't need some funny dreams and visions. As it were. That are extra biblical. And quite bizarre. And that was what got airplay. Sadly. On this Christian radio station.

It's a shame. We must faithfully preach the word. There's no new revised version of it. It's still the word. The word that we need. We declare timeless truths. To this changing society.

[10:04] In which we live. It's the same message. That our world needs. It's the same message. The good news for modern man. Is the one it always has been. It's the Bible.

And it's because people's needs. Are still the same today. As they were when Adam was a boy. They still need the same message. In fact I don't know that Adam was a boy. He was made a man wasn't he.

But whatever it be. Since Adam needs have been just the same. They're still the same then as they are now. And we need to waken up church. And seize on the truth.

We are against some things. Against some things. And I'd much rather preach for some things. But there are some things we are against. And yet we are contending for some things.

For the faith. The most holy faith. The faith. Once delivered. Here's some truths of the faith that we can contend for. We can fight for them.

[11:01] Because we know they're right. And there are many more of course. But here's one. For a start. One of the truths of the faith is the reality of the wrath of God. You know in Brad's reading it talks about the anger of the Lord was red hot.

The reality of the wrath of God. What did John the Baptist say? He summed it up well in six words. Flee from the wrath to come. Wow.

That's in your face isn't it? It's still true. If you're outside of Christ. There's a red hot wrath. God's wrath. And it's against you. And it's as real as it ever was.

It's as red hot as it ever was. And we need to be mindful of it. Let's seize on this truth. But for believers today. Thank God. Christ took the wrath of the Father for you.

Jesus Christ took the wrath. And it's red hot. Pouring out. But if you're outside of Christ today. It will fall on you.

[12:07] You'd better flee. You'd better get your running shoes on and flee. Flee to the refuge of Christ. Flee to that sure shelter from the coming storm.

Now I interrupt this message for a weather warning. There's a storm coming. It's going to be terrifying. Flee from the wrath to come.

If you're outside of Christ. If you're in danger in great peril. Make Christ your shelter from the storm. Don't leave it. Make Christ your shelter from the storm.

Find his peace and his forgiveness today. Now. Now. Before it is too late for you. We need to contend earnestly for the wrath of God. It's real. And it's red hot.

Consider also. The truth of separation. 2 Corinthians 6 verse 17. It says. Wherefore come out from among them. And be ye separate. Sayeth the Lord.

[13:05] And touch not the unclean thing. And I will be a father unto you. And ye shall be my sons and my daughters. Sayeth the Lord Almighty.

Let us seize on this truth. Let us contend earnestly for this. God wants his people to be a separated people. A separate people.

And touch not the unclean thing. God says. Come out. And be his separate people. We care about what God says. And we will contend for it.

Earnestly. We must. Consider also the truth of the fear of God. 2 Corinthians 7 verse 1. It goes on. Having therefore these promises dearly beloved.

Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit. Perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Don't kid yourself.

[14:01] It's a fearful thing. To fall into the hands of the living God. Hebrews 10 verse 31. It's a fearful thing. We ought to take this seriously.

The source of truth says. We should perfect holiness in the fear of God. In other words. We should mature. We should grow.

We should encourage ourselves to live in the light of this truth. Of the fear of God. That we revere him. We honour him. We esteem him. We regard him as holy.

Holy. Holy. Do we act like we truly fear God? Do we believe it? Really? Do we contend for it? We ought to.

The fear of God is the whole duty of man. Ecclesiastes 12 verse 13. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter. Fear God and keep his commandments.

[14:55] For this is the whole duty of man. In other words. It's important. It's something we should contend for. Isn't it? It's in here we should contend for it.

Amen. We should believe it and we should speak up for it. Let us seize on this truth. Also. If only we would grasp a deep sense of the holiness of God.

The holiness of God. If we did that we'd be more attuned to what causes an affront to a holy God. We're called to be a holy church.

Not a country club. We're not a cruise ship. But a battleship. There's a neat video clip that I watched lately.

I put it on my Facebook there. About cruise ship versus battleship. You can look it up there. Cruise ship versus battleship.

[15:53] It draws this analogy, this picture, this parable if you like. We're called to be contenders aren't we? We should be in a battleship. Not lying back in the sun sipping a drink.

Not on a cruise. We should be on a battleship. We've got something worth fighting for. This is not a social club.

Where you come and meet nice people. And have a nice little cup of tea. And a biscuit. Of course I'd like to think that you can do.

You can enjoy that blessing. You can enjoy that being around some nice people. I think there are some nice people here. Amen. And I think you can get a blessing by being here.

And enjoying meeting with people. But it's not our key purpose. It's not our key purpose. God's church is meant to be a gathering of a people brought near by the precious blood of Christ.

[16:54] Brought near to God. And transformed by his redeeming grace. And made into his own precious dear holy people. By God's grace we will be such.

And we will grow together to be more and more like him. In brotherly love and truth. The church. It's worth fighting for. Worth fighting for it.

The church of Jesus Christ. The church of the living God. It's meant to be the pillar and the ground of truth. In other words it's that. A pillar like a column. And the ground of truth.

You know you see these ancient statues. These ancient buildings with these columns. That have stood the test of time. They look pretty much brand new. Some of them still.

In some countries around the world. These columns. And these foundations. These grounds. These foundations. And the church. Is the pillar. And the ground of truth.

[17:50] It's that. It's. Founded on that. It's based on that. The foundation is truth. The church is no play thing. It's not a man made enterprise.

To be manufactured. And manipulated. And marketed to the masses. As if it's some business. The doctrine. Of the local church.

Matters. It's important. Para church. Organisations. Can lack. Something.

They can lack. Needful. Scriptural. Authority. Right. And they can be. Therefore. Vulnerable to error. The pillar. And ground. Of the truth.

Is the church. The church. And we will not tread. The path of compromise. It's dangerous. It's thin eyes. To. Join with a mixed multitude.

[18:48] The Bible talks about a mixed multitude. A mixture. Of truth and error. It's leaven. It's leaven. In the love.

We must steer away from that. Steer away from that. Steer fastly. Hold fast. The gospel truth. And God's clear direction. It's been said that where.

There is compromise. There is no holiness. I think there's truth in that. Some people would consider this church. Peculiar. Peculiar.

Oh you go to church for you. Oh that's one of those churches isn't it? You're one of them aren't you? Amen. One of those weirdos. Peculiar. Yes.

Praise God. Amen. Let's seize on the truth. That we're meant to be peculiar. We're meant to be different. We're meant to be. A bit out there.

[19:48] Different from the crowd. We're called to be a separate. People. Titus 2. For the grace of God that bringeth salvation. Have appeared to all men. Teaching us that denying ungodliness.

And worldly lust. We should live soberly. Righteously. And godly. In this present world. Looking for that blessed hope. And the glorious appearing of our great God and saviour Jesus Christ.

Who gave himself for us. That he might redeem. Us. From all iniquity. And purify unto himself a peculiar people.

Zealous of good works. There's meant to be a distinctiveness about us. It's okay to be different. We're meant to be different.

He's purifying unto himself a peculiar people. Zealous of good works. We don't have to dress and act like the world. Or play the world's music styles.

[20:45] We don't have to follow the customs of the Babylonians. To win them. We don't have to march to the tune of the trendy churches. To reach this generation. No sir. You don't need that.

We don't need the rock. To keep the youth. We need the rock. The rock. Christ Jesus. Amen.

That's what we need. That's who we need. The rock. Preach with power. Preach with conviction.

Preach with authority. We need the soul saving work. Of the Holy Spirit of God.

That's what we need. To do his work. His heaven sent work. In human souls. That's what we need. And we will be peculiar.

And not ashamed of it. Not ashamed of the gospel. And we will not ally ourselves with unfaithfulness. With those who are hostile to the gospel.

[21:43] Who will water down and candy coat. And dilute it. Till it's no longer the gospel anymore. We will not join party. With those who peddle false doctrine.

And outright lies. If it is false doctrine. We're against it. We'll have nothing to do with it. God makes us peculiar. Peculiar. That's what we're meant to be.

To walk a different pathway. Blessed is the man. That walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly.

Nor standeth in the way of sinners. Nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight. Is in the word. It's a different pathway people. Choose your companions carefully along life's road. It matters who you associate with.

We walk a different pathway. There's a detour. Off the main drag. Off the broad way. And it's called the narrow way. The narrow way. It's Jesus.

[22:39] We walk with him. There's a difference then. There's a difference in your life when you get saved. There's a transforming work by the Holy Spirit's power. There's a renewing of your mind when you walk this different route.

We get our brain, our soul, our heart rewired. So that we actually start to care about. What is God's will for me?

The will of God. We'll start to care about. What is the will of God for me? And we'll seek after it. And we'll find it. And we'll do it.

Friends, I just want to encourage you to that. To encourage you to hold true. Hold true. And be a peculiar people.

It's okay to be peculiar. God wants us to be. Because pleasing God is what counts. Pleasing Him as a transformed people. Even if it means stand virtually alone.

[23:35] To stand for the right. No matter the cost. Someone has said right is right even when everyone is against it. And wrong is wrong even when everyone is for it.

It's a secular quote. But I think there's truth in it. And my responsibility as a preacher is not to win friends and influence people. It's to issue a clarion call.

It's to sound an alarm. It's to cry aloud and spare not. I must be faithful. Even if it kills me. And I was watching the book of Acts on film.

Retold on film recently. It was very interesting. One thing really stood out to me. The book of Acts. And there was a reenactment of Paul and his preaching.

And then what happened next. As Paul was stoned at Lystra. It was graphic. Acts 14. And there came to the certain Jews from Antioch and Iconium.

[24:38] They persuaded the people. And having stoned Paul. Drew him out of the city. Supposing he had been dead. They threw stones at him. They pelted stones at his face and his body.

They bruised and blackened him. And scarred him. And cut him. And made him bleed. As if he was a dead body. And dragged him out. What did he do next?

Looked so bad that he looked dead. What happened next was that he got up on his feet. And he went back into the city. And he preached on. Some more. He preached on.

Some more. It's a light to that when the man of God in Acts 5. And it says verse 40 in part it says they beat them. They commanded they speak not in the name of Jesus Christ.

And let them go. So they beat them. It says they rejoiced. That they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And then daily in the temple.

[25:33] And in every house they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. Beaten. And they went back. To where they were beaten up.

This is what we need to be people. You might face that in your personal workplace. When you witness for Christ. When you stand out as a Christian. When you're one of those peculiar ones. And you stand out. And you share the gospel as God helps you to. As opportunity comes to you. And you'll go back again and again. This is what we need to be.

Men of grit. Who will not be swayed. Men who will not quit. We must declare the faithful word. Not with fear or favour. Preaching should be provocative.

It should stir us. I want to be stirred. I love preaching that stirs me. I urge you to be stirred today. As God's dear people.

[26:32] We dare not compromise. What is compromise? What's he going on about? Compromise. Let me define it for you. It's been defined as. To reduce in quality.

Value. Or degree. To reduce in quality. Value. Or degree. Compromise. It means to weaken. Water down. It means. Instead of being pure.

In quality. You mix a little bit of this. And a little bit of that. Compromise. It's a curse. It's a creeping thing. It's like a canker.

Like a cancer. It's like speeding. You know there's an advert that talks about the creepers. Isn't there? Where they creep. You just creep a little bit. The speed limit. Then oh just a little bit more. Just a little bit more. Just a little bit more. Then bang. The cough gets you. You know. It's speeding isn't it? It creeps up on you. And compromise is a creeping thing. It's like the vine on my house.

[27:27] It just creeps over everything. It's a creeping thing. And compromise can creep up on us. If we don't watch it. And it's Satan's strategy to desensitise us to some things.

And to weaken us. And to weaken us. To weaken our witness. So we whip out. With the world. Conformity. It's a dangerous thing.

Conformity. Sometimes we can get too comfortable. Way too comfortable. Sometimes it's as if we set life on cruise control. No. No. Who's got cruise control? Oh just flip the cruise control on.

And then. Oh. It's a. You just lay back and just enjoy the ride. Cruise control. Christians can set their lives on cruise control. Just coast along.

Just coast along on the glory train. Coast along. Settle back. Kick back. Take it easy. Slack it.

[28:25] Let's not make that mistake. Life's too short. Life's too short. I pray we will not. We will not slack it. I want our church. Our people.

Our witness to be one of telling the truth. That we have preachers. And I believe we have preachers. And Adam and Brad and others. Preachers who aren't afraid to tell you the truth.

To tell you the truth. Oft times through the gospels. The Lord Jesus says. I tell you the truth. It's quite a marked feature. I tell you the truth.

Verily verily. And we need the truth today. There's a crisis of cowardice. Of courage. In our culture. Courage is lacking. And we must not fear to speak the truth.

We must not be afraid to speak up. You individually. In your place of influence. Do not be afraid. Do not fear. We need men and women. Who will stand and deliver.

[29:19] And stand up for the truth. Men will care about the truth. Men with backbone. Men who will honour God's word. No matter what. And honour their own word.

They'll be men of integrity. At this church. We love the truth. We love the truth too much. To tell you a lie. What about you? Will you conform?

Or pretend? Will you blend in? Or stand down? There's a preacher here. Who just now is facing prosecution. And a possible prison term.

Simply for preaching. In his own church. Here is the front page. Of the Belfast Telegraph. Of last Friday. I'm not saying anything prior.

Against this particular preacher. But the fact is. He preached a fiery sermon. Now I know we need to be. As wise as serpents. And as harmless as dust. You know this is going out. To the world.

[30:14] Through the internet. But when the government. Starts to intrude. On what a preacher preaches. In his own church. To the people of God.

It's a dangerous development. I put it to you. It's a dangerous development. This is happening in Northern Ireland. Right now. And it's just one example. Of the mounting war against Christianity. That we face. Look back through history. We see. Men and women were tied to stakes. And burnt to death. Simply because they stood against the popular church.

Of its time. Where are the Protestants today? The Protestants today. Those who will lift up a voice of protest. Who will dare and care enough.

To speak out. I was looking for some pictures. That illustrate reformers. And of course one that crops up a lot. Is Luther. Luther.

[31:13] With the 95 Theses. On the door. Of the Wittenberg Cathedral. Of the popular church of his time. Now Luther.

He had good and bad. In Luther. I think he started something wonderful. He was a protester. He was a Protestant. He spoke up.

And maybe today. We need likewise. To have that boldness. To nail something. Some sound doctrine. To nail it. Whoa.

Whoa. Whoa. To the apostate church. Of our day. Maybe we need to take a hammer and nail. And nail it to the door of some churches.

Some movements of our day. Where it's apostate. Apostate. Apostate. Apostate. To be bold. To be valiant for the truth. Where are we?

[32:10] Nothing must stop us. Nothing. We must not be afraid. We must speak up. We will not modify the message. We will not accommodate the spirit of the world.

We must not. We dare not. We're meant to be contending. Separated. Protesting. And more than ever. We need men and women of conviction.

In an age of compromise. We need this today. We need people who will not embrace this world view. With its values of carnality. And godlessness at the root of it all.

We're not meant to love the world. We're meant to not love the world. But to hate. What is false. In all its shapes and sizes. In all its trappings and disguises.

Now that's a strong word. Hate. Hate. Psalm 119. Therefore I esteem all thy precepts. The word of God. Concerning all things to be right.

[33:07] And I hate. Every false way. Hate. It's a strong word isn't it? Now this could be a hate crime. This sermon. Hate.

Is a strong word. But it's a biblical word. A biblical word. Who hates spiders. Would you like one in your house? Now I've yet to meet anybody.

Who keeps a red back as a pet. There are some things that we hate. We hate them. And we ought to hate some things. We must not compromise.

It can be rightful to hate. To hate with a holy hatred. To hate every false way. We should hate. False apostate movements.

False doctrine. False teaching. False worship. False Bibles. So called. False prophets. False revivals. Falsehood.

[34:05] Wherever it is found. Hate every false way. We must hate the false. And love the truth. Cherish the truth. Hold it dear. We have a God breathed book.

God's word. It's absolute. His words allow no compromise. The record of scripture. Shows us the many compromises. Of men and women. Down through history.

May God help us. To learn from their example. Let's cite some quickly. For example. God's judgment. Was against. Achan. For sin in the camp. Joshua 7.

God's judgment. Was so severe. Achan. Disobeyed God. He hid away. His stash of. Silver and gold. And a Babylonian garment. Just a bit of silver and gold.

And a little garment. But it was compromise. He disobeyed God. Cain. Also compromised. He. Compromised. In his worship offering. Unto God.

[34:59] He worshipped. But he did it wrong. Abraham was a compromiser. He should have waited. For God's promise. Isaac. But what did he do? He compromised.

He ended up with Ishmael. And the whole world has had. Trouble ever since. Lot compromised. It was little by little. Inch by inch. He just got closer and closer.

Till he was actually living. In sinful Sodom. And his family. He suffered for it. David. David drifted into compromise. And fell into sin. We know. The big mess he made of it.

And David went along with the new idea. Of a. Of a. A new card. A new fad idea. Wow. That sounds good. Let's get the holy ark of the covenant.

There a bit quicker. You know. Parade it before the people. And 1 Corinthians 13. 4 it says. All the congregation said. That they would do so. For the thing was right.

[35:56] In the eyes of all the people. You know. They put it to the AGM. And the vote was unanimous. Yes. David. Let's go and get that ark. And we're going to have a wild time of worship. Yeah.

Whoa. Bring it on. It was compromised. It was compromised. The only problem was. They adopted the.

Culture and worship of the fleshly Philistines. Just like the churches with their mosh pits and rock bands do today. Just like they do today. It's compromised.

It seemed like a good idea at the time. But God killed Uzzah the driver for this compromise. Because it was. Out of order. 1 Chronicles 15.

13. It was out of order. Ananias and Sapphira they compromised. With money. And they suffered God's dread judgment. God also took the kingdom from Saul.

[36:52] For his rebellious compromise. God called it witchcraft. 1 Samuel 15. 22. 23. We heard about the golden calf. Aaron.

Aaron fashioned a golden calf. It was beautiful. Gold. Beaming. Beaming. Beaming. Glowing. Brilliant. Handcrafted.

The golden calf. And God. And Aaron called the people together to have a feast unto the Lord. Compromise.

A golden calf. Let's have a feast unto the Lord. It was a dreadful compromise. So we must be watchful of such things. Churches seem increasingly willing to compromise and conform to the world.

Men follow doctrines of devils today. In compromised worship. In compromised associations. Compromised doctrine. We cannot join party with such compromise.

[37:58] Interfaith dialogue. Ecumenical associations. They are a dangerous compromise. Dangerous. Dangerous. I urge you before God. To steer clear of it.

Be ye rather transformed. By the renewing of your mind that you may prove that acceptable. And good and perfect will of God. In a world with its crying need.

We need men and women with courage. A crying need for God's holy truth. We need some guts. Don't we? We dare not compromise the word of God. But hold it fast. The unadulterated word of God. The blessed holy Bible. We will settle for nothing less.

Nothing less. We will not compromise or corrupt it. We dare not trifle with the holy things. But rather deliver the faithful word. We must hold it fast. But Revelation 22 talks about warnings.

[39:01] About adding to and taking from. It's serious stuff. God is calling out a people for his name. He's calling us to a purity. He's calling us to an integrity. To righteousness.

And we must never be afraid. Never be afraid. To stand with the minority. To stand with those called peculiar. Those mocked as a remnant people. Sadly there are many who profess to know him.

But in works they deny him. Titus 1.16. The crowds don't mean the people there are saved. The fact is many church goers are not saved.

There could be some here today. Church goers. You might come morning, night, midweek. And still be lost. Still be lost.

I don't want to deceive you into thinking you are saved when you're not. But to truly trust Christ. To truly trust him. Trust him today.

[39:58] Time is too short to be almost saved. Step over the line. It's not a time to compromise. But a time to contend. The more you compromise.

The more you'll tolerate. And so don't give an inch. Don't weaken. Don't compromise your convictions. Don't follow the world and worldliness.

Like Samson. Lying in the lap of Delilah. Oh it was comfortable. Oh getting caressed. Oh. With her sweet words.

Samson compromised with Delilah. And she gradually broke down his defences. And left him weakened and powerless. Sightless. Some will argue the case to compromise.

As if the end justifies the means. I've heard people say. Oh what about this and that. Let's just give a little bit here. A little bit there. Let's lower the standard. Just a little bit. We cannot.

[40:59] We cannot. We cannot. The word of God is clear. There can be no room. No room to accommodate the world. It says be not conformed to this world. Love not the world. Neither the things that are in the world.

If any man love the world. The love of the Father. Is not in him. Yet despite what the scriptures plainly say. Some will still try and justify worldliness.

Whatever the reason be. They'll say things like. We need to be worldly. So as to keep the youth. Keep the youth. That's what it's all about.

Bring in the numbers. Bring in the numbers. Get the results. Increase our popularity. And everything gets sacrificed on this altar. Of relevance.

Some people are willing to sacrifice everything on the altar. To be popular. To please the crowd. Sacrifice spiritual principle. Sacrifice separation. Sacrifice standards.

[42:04] Sacrifice doctrine. I urge you as God's beloved people. As God's children. I beg you. My heart cries out.

I urge you. To not cave in to the world's pressure. In all of its shapes and sizes. And aspire for higher standards. Aspire to please God.

People will call you peculiar. I'll think you're a nutcase. I've been called that. A few times. You know. We dare not disobey.

We cannot compromise the clear instruction of God's word. In our practical lives too. In a society that's lost its mores. Where it's prone to drift. We need an anchor.

An anchor. Prove. What is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God. What is the will of God. I put it to you that the will of God is the word of God.

[43:03] Applied. The word of God applied. Amid the storms of doubt. And the dashing waves of a Christ rejecting world. This is our sure anchor. The word of God. If the Bible requires husbands to love their wives.

Without bitterness. Colossians 3 verse 19. Then we husbands must not compromise this. Love your wife. If the Bible requires wives to reverence their husbands.

Then we must not compromise this. What the Bible says we must not compromise. When God says his own people are to be zealous of good works.

Then we must make no compromise here. There should be a zeal. For a biblical people. That's what we're called to be. To have. That's what we're made for. Ephesians 2.

It's the word of God applied. For we are his workmanship. Created. In Christ Jesus. Unto good works. Our Lord calls us to devotion. To obey him.

[44:03] To fervency. To know him. To integrity. To purity. To wrap it up. Let me say this. We're called not to compromise.

Not to conform. But to contend. Contend. It's what it boils down to today. And we need a renewing of the mind to think of what matters.

What is this telling us? The wrath of God. The fear of God. Separation. Holiness. We need to be in a sense. As much as I think Baptists have always been the remnant.

That we are to protest. To be Protestants. Who will raise our voices in protest. Against the apostate church of our time. We need to be a peculiar people.

It's time to lift up a standard. Not to let it down. To stand firm. Not to give way. Under pressure. To refuse to compromise. And we will not slide down that slippery slope.

[45:05] Of conforming to the world. Let's rather be non-conformist. So friends to close. Let's run the race. Be uncompromising. Stay in the will of God.

Be that battleship. Not a cruise ship. And to declare the message. To contend. With God's convicting power. Please take here today.

It's time to stop playing church. It's time to stop playing church. Amen. Someone has said. Before the world is ever going to take Jesus seriously. The church has to take Jesus seriously. Amen. And so. Let's just wrap up. Philippians 2. It says. That we should be shining lights in the world.

Don't conform to it. You're meant to be. Peculiar. Huh? Shining lights. Philippians 2. Therefore it is God. Which work with him ye both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

[46:04] Do all things without murmurings and disputings. That ye may be blameless and harmless. The sons of God without rebuke. In the midst of a crooked and perverse nation. Among whom ye shine as lights in the world.

Holding forth the word of life. That I may rejoice in the day of Christ. That I have not run in vain. Neither laboured in vain. The choice is clear. Conform.

Or contend. What will it be? I perceive you therefore present by the mercies of God. That you present your bodies. A living sacrifice. Holy.

Acceptable unto God. Which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world. But be ye. Transformed. By the renewing of your mind. That you may prove.

What is that good. And acceptable. And perfect. Will of God. I appeal to you today. If you're not a Christian. Behold. Now is the accepted time.

[47:06] Today is the day of salvation. Trust him. In simple faith. Let go. And let God. Yell to him.

Trust him today. And believers. Stand strong. Be encouraged to be peculiar. Don't worry what everyone else says. Be true to what you believe.

Be true to what he says. Let us pray. Let us pray.