

Sacred Cows

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[0:00] Sacred Cow Sacred Cow Sacred Cow Sacred Cow Sacred Cow Wanting to talk about sacred cows.

! Sacred cows. A sacred cow is something, it's an expression that's used to talk about something that's highly regarded and valued. Something that others would think is something that should not be questioned or criticized.

Because it could cause an outcry, an outrage. It can include a person, an institution, a custom, a belief system, which for no other reason than that it demands by popular opinion that it be followed and revered and respected.

Not touched or handled or examined too closely. It's a treasured belief or process. Something that, something or someone that has been accepted or respected for a long time.

And that people are afraid or unwilling to criticize or question. Now, sacred cow is an allusion to the Hindu reverence for cows.

[1:09] If you were to go to India and drive a motor car around, you wouldn't be allowed to damage the cows. They're revered and worshipped in India.

They're considered holy and sacred. Of course we know they're just a cow. But, and it is a good thing for us to question sacred cows. Sacred cows.

It's been said that sacred cows make the best hamburgers. And maybe it's time for a sacred barbecue. For those sacred cows. Of course I'm talking tongue in cheek about a number of things. And I'm going to talk about some sacred cows that are on the church scene. And maybe in some of our own lives. What are the sacred cows? The holy cows of God's people.

And what ought we to do with them? I believe we ought to be violent with such things. Now we see in John chapter 2 a record of how our Lord dealt. When you could consider the sacred cows that were going on in the temple.

[2:12] In John 2 from verse 13. John 2 from verse 13. It says, And the Jews' Passover was at hand. And Jesus went up to Jerusalem.

And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves and the changers of money sitting. And when he had made a scourge of small cords. He drove them all out of the temple and the sheep and the oxen.

And poured out the changers money. And overthrew the tables. And said unto them that sold darts. Take these things hence. Make not my father's house a house of merchandise.

And the disciples remembered that it was written. The seal of thine house hath eaten me up. There was some oxen there. Some sacred cows. If you like.

There were some doves. There was some merchandise going on. And our Lord Jesus saw that this was out of place. It was wrong to have such things in the sanctuary.

[3:12] Sacred cows. Sacred cows. Sacred cows are lies. They are things that are out of place. They are things that ought not to be. And they are things that ought to be dealt with strongly.

We know in the word of God that it says that the violence take the kingdom by force. And there is a sense where there is a need to be radically revolutionary.

And that was what our Lord Jesus did when he saw these things that were out of place. In the house of prayer. In his father's house.

It was become a house of merchandise. And I put it to you. There is a number of sacred cows that you could consider that are contemporary.

They are happening in our time. In our day and age. Some sacred cows. Sacred cows that we ought to confront. One of them is consumer Christianity.

[4:11] Consumer Christianity. What do I mean by that? Consumer Christianity is all about being hip. It is about being popular and cool. And some Christians are drunk with this kind of consumer Christianity. That desire to be relevant. To be relevant. Some churches are hellbent on being hip and relevant. Cool and trendy. They are market driven. Market driven. You know I talk about being purpose driven. But really it is market driven. Market driven. And by this approach. They have dragged Jesus down to the level of the culture. That is the danger. That is the danger in consumer Christianity. That we are conforming the Lord Jesus Christ. In all his glory. And honour. And majesty. To the culture. Of our lost. And fallen world. The Lord Jesus broke all the rules. He wasn't about being hip.

[5:09] And cool. And trendy. He wasn't about being popular. Far from it. He took the time. To break from the establishment of his day.

And to take time. For the broken people. Of his world. The Lord Jesus broke all the rules. But consumer Christianity. This model of the consumer Christianity. Has its focus on giving people what they want. Give people what they want. You know you have some churches where. They dress up as clowns. And they have all kinds of razzmatazz. And gimmicks. And attractive ways. To kind of pull the crowd. The saying goes. What you win people win. You win people too. We don't want to win people. By the worldly ways. And affections. And the toys and trinkets of the world. The gimmicks and gadgets of the world.

[6:08] We want to win people with the truth. With the word of God. With God's word. With the gospel. Because if our church is purely driven by offering trendy products.

That create more consumers. Then Jesus becomes just another trendy product. And trendy products get stale and boring. They get out of fashion. And we need to find something else to feed that consumer mentality.

And consumer Christianity is flawed. It's designed to be a church around a performance. It's designed to be a church around performers on a stage. And some churches make a big thing about the stage.

The platform. About the performance. And about everything geared and rehearsed and orchestrated. To just make the atmosphere. And just to set the scene just so. Feeding really the carnal appetites of those who are there. Consumer Christianity falls short of the real thing. Where it's all about entertainment based sermons.

[7:11] That revolve around meeting people's needs. Jesus didn't come to meet your needs. Jesus didn't come to make you healthy, wealthy and wise.

He came to save your soul. He came to save your soul from sin and hell. And the danger is if we put a focus upon people's needs. It's very dangerous ground.

It's thin ice. Because if it's based around people's needs. Regardless of how selfish and godless these needs may be. It's taking people down the wrong track.

The preachers' goal ought not to be to make the Bible relevant. But to help people see how relevant the Bible is. It's the Bible that's relevant. It's the Bible that we need.

It's God's message of salvation and truth. The market driven preachers want to be liked. They want to use entertainment to draw people to listen.

[8:08] But they may be entertaining their hearers to death. There's a danger when entertainment takes the centre stage instead of God's truth. But really in reality it's the Bible, the Word of God that is timelessly relevant.

It transcends all cultures and fads and fashions. Some churches now resort to having a fog machine and a jazzy light show. They want these things.

They want the glitz and gloss and the razzmatazz of the world. Such that it takes away from what ought to be a gathering of the godly in worship and adoration.

With the object of the glory of God. That ought to be why we gather. It's to His glory. He is the one who is the audience, not man. And so we need to caution against this danger of centering a service around the performance on a stage.

It detracts from the biblical model. The biblical model is a model of a participation of the congregation. It's a participation where, you know, like we endeavour to do, having corporate prayer, we have times where there's opportunity for different people to take part and to be an active part.

[9:28] And yet not strained to the point where it becomes a program driven church. That's another danger too. Where it's all about having activities and people are running here, there and everywhere to meetings every day of the week where they run themselves ragged.

And it's not about having a lot of activities. That can be a danger too. So one of the sacred cows we ought to look out for is consumer Christianity. It's a sacred cow.

Some other sacred cows today that we ought to confront are inclusion and tolerance. Inclusion and tolerance. Today it's as if it's a cultural sin.

The ultimate cultural sin is intolerance. Intolerance. What dare you? Be intolerant. People say of the Christians, of the preachers, of the churches that stand for God's truth.

And for many in the professing church they follow suit with this pandering to this supposed philosophy of tolerance, of tolerating. And it goes to the extent that it becomes a toleration, an accommodation of sin and a falsehood and compromise.

[10:41] That's a great danger for us, brothers and sisters. That inclusion and tolerance becomes the byword instead of what is true, as God's word would say. And there's many false prophets that are corrupting and destroying the church from within.

And people will not sound the alarm. They will not speak out, speak up against such things. And whilst they may be doing some good, some of these tinctures are distributing poison.

Distributing poison. Mixed together with a dose of truth. The Bible commands us to be separate from error. To be separate from error. Not to be inclusive with error.

Our obligation is to separate because of error. Now friends today, I don't know if you have read the newspapers or seen the kind of news stories that we're getting fed so much of lately.

There are many professing churches and professing Christians who are totally astray from biblical truth on many fronts.

[11:51] For example, we're getting many churches today rejecting the scriptures' teachings against homosexuality. Against abortion. Against the inerrancy of the scriptures.

And promoting liberal theology. Someone sent me a webpage of a Baptist church. An independent Baptist church. In North Adelaide.

And the man is a proponent of gay marriage. He is supposedly with a male partner. And he's propagating all these moral vile things.

And yet it's an independent Baptist church. God have mercy on his soul. There is a valid time to hate.

To hate. In Psalm 97 verse 10 it says, Ye that love the Lord hate evil. Ye that love the Lord hate evil. Don't accommodate it.

[12:48] Don't excuse it. Don't just let it go unaddressed. Ye that love the Lord hate evil. There's times when God hates the evildoers.

You know, he's against people. He speaks strongly against evil. And we ought to speak up too. There's a time and a place to speak up.

There's some things that we ought to be intolerant of. Intolerant of. Intolerant of things like the demonic Roman Catholic church. We ought to be intolerant of that.

It's ungodly. It's against God. It's against the scriptures. It's against the truth. Some countries, I believe in the Philippines. In some of the South American countries.

Roman Catholic priests are venomous and vicious. They're absolutely anti-Christ. In their dealings with godly biblical Christians and churches today.

[13:53] And yet, some would think we can, we can just excuse our differences and all get together. All get together. But the Roman Catholic church and its teachings, its doctrine, is anti-scriptural.

And some would think, well there's some good ones out there. Mother Teresa. Mother Teresa. It's a sacred cow. She doesn't believe that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life.

No man cometh unto the Father but by me. Doesn't matter how many lepers and cripples she's helped. If she doesn't know the Saviour, then friends, she's, and she's already passed away. It's too late for her. And friends, it's very clear where she stood. As far as salvation goes, I could show you some quotes from Mother Teresa that will show you that unless she repented at her last breath, she is not a Christian.

It's a sacred cow. There's some things we need to be alarmed about. And not be blinded by what is the popular view of such things.

[15:02] The false prophets of the charismatic movement. Jesus doesn't promise you will be healthy and wealthy. It's wrong. It's false doctrine. There's a need to issue a clear call to Biblical discernment and Biblical discipline.

We need to declare what God says. Sin is sin. Homosexuality is sin. Sex outside of marriage is sin. Freemasonry is sin. Ecumenism is sin. But thank God He can forgive us of our sin if we will but come to Him. There's no excuses for an accommodation of sin.

The answer is not an accommodation of it, but a repentance from it. A repentance from it. In 2 Corinthians 6 it says, Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

This is speaking to young people here. Don't consider an unsaved partner as your life partner. Don't consider an unsaved man to become your husband young lady.

[16:12] Don't consider an unsaved lady to become your wife young man. The Bible says, Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers.

For what fellowship have righteousness with unrighteousness? And what communion have light with darkness? They're diametrically opposed. Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord.

The Lord Jesus did not mince His words. He was very clear and straight and to the point. Now as He grabbed that scourge and He inflated it on those money changers, on those ungodly people, He did not mince His words.

When He addressed the Pharisees, He was straight down the line. You brood of vipers. You generation of vipers. He was very straight.

A Christian writer, Josh McDowell, I'm going to quote in part from him now. Josh McDowell writes of this extreme idea of toleration, of toleration that is endemic in our society today.

[17:26] It's as if toleration has replaced justice as the primary American virtue. Tolerance, toleration. Tolerance, he says, tolerance today means that every view of truth and morality is equal to every other view.

That's what the world would tell us today. Toleration, every view of truth and morality is equal to every other view. Now take that to the extreme.

Just consider that statement. Every view of truth and morality is equal to every other view. That's what the hard diet in the world atheist really thinks.

In other words, there's no morality at all. Just do what feels good. You know? I can elaborate but your mind can take that to the extreme that it can take it.

And that's how violent, vulgar and ugly atheism really is. Because there's no God in their minds so they do what they please. There's no values, there's no morals, there's no absolute truth.

[18:31] It goes on here, if you dare to tell someone else what they're doing is wrong, you're going to be branded as an intolerant bigot. In that view, everything is right and nothing is wrong.

Tolerance. Some educators now argue that the public schools must teach students to be intolerant of intolerance. And who is the most intolerant of all in the eyes of the world?

Christians are. Christians are because we believe in a creator who established absolute standards of right and wrong. It may be well that in just a few years we'll see a major cultural shift in which anyone who dares to speak out for God or against evil will risk being ostracised and publicly humiliated.

If that is true, then we will face some tough decisions in the days ahead. Satan's strategy has always been to stir up opposition to the church. So we will be intimidated into silence and compromise.

It was true in the first century and it's still true today. Tolerance. You may face opposition at work or from a critical colleague or from a classmate or a friend, a teacher, a neighbour, a relative or even from your own children.

[19:48] Or your spouse. Satan's primary strategy against the church is to discourage us by stirring up opposition so we will stop spreading the gospel. He goes on, the majority has usually been wrong throughout history, especially on matters of morality and spiritual truth.

Friends, the purity of the church has been soiled, it's been marred, it's been dragged in the mud. As you see these teachings, these false doctrines, this error has become accommodated and has become a stumbling block.

We must deal with the sacred cows of ecumenism, of apostasy. It's time for Christians to stand up and be Protestants. Protest! Protestants!

Not that really as Baptists, we were always in the church. We didn't join Rome. But for those who have joined Rome, come out and be separate.

Be a Protestant. Protest! Speak up! Speak out! Get out! Come out from among them and be separate. Friends, the modern church is in a mess because we've conformed to the worldly ways that are taking over the church.

[21:02] Inclusion and tolerance. It's a sacred cow. Another sacred cow is a substitute gospel. We're witnessing today what is a substitute gospel.

It's a poor counterfeit of the real thing. We're seeing what has been called an epidemic of false conversions across the globe. Jesus doesn't offer you, in worldly terms, a prosperous, healthy life. Jesus didn't come to make your life more easy. It's a false gospel. And the church today in the cryptic such a thing has become kind of like a social religious club.

You know, you can have your Jesus and your sin at the same time. But we must declare the whole counsel of God. A substitute gospel that's been perverted.

It's been made more acceptable. Watered down. And the Jesus they preach is a watered down Jesus, a false one. A Jesus who is confused with all kinds of messages that are not scriptural.

[22:11] Friends, Jesus didn't die for your sicknesses. He didn't die for your sicknesses. He died for your sin. He died for your sin. You know, Christians get sick.

Ultimately you're going to get sick and die. That's how it is. We're vessels of clay. Now thank God in His will, He sometimes heals us. But we cannot claim healing from the atonement.

It's not there. The reality is that thousands if not millions of people in churches today are not truly converted. They're not converted. They're not converted.

They're not born again. A preacher Ravenhill said, The sinner's prayer has sent more people to hell than all the taverns in America. The sinner's prayer has sent more people to hell than all the taverns in America.

You know, you can say, you can glibly say, repeat after me, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. And it's not real. Because you're not converted.

[23:09] It's just words. It's just words to you. It's got to be faith in your heart. Believing in your heart. Then confessing with your mouth. You must trust Him. The substitute gospel is a sacred count.

Friends, don't think you're saved if you're not certain of it. If you're not certain that your faith and trust is holy in His blood, in His work, in His dying on the cross for your sin, in your receiving of His gift, then friends, get right with Him tonight.

It's a substitute gospel. It's a sacred count. Another sacred count is biblical illiteracy. Spurgeon held up his Bible and he said, These words are God's.

Thou book of vast authority, thou art a proclamation from the Emperor of Heaven. Forbid from me to exercise my reason in contradicting thee.

This is the book, untainted by any error, but it is pure, unalloyed, perfect truth. Why? Because God wrote it.

[24:14] The Bible. This book does not contain the Word of God. This book is the Word of God. The Bible that we trust and hold dear.

And this is a time that we must slay the sacred cows. Some churches today, they do not even have real Bibles. They don't even have a real Bible.

Let alone preach from one. Some Bible versions today are outright perversions. And we play into the devil's hands to give over to them.

Yet some Christians, some church leaders, some churches are completely ignorant. They would pander to this confusion, this blasphemous Bible of Bible versions.

The King James Bible. This is the Bible. There is no time for smooth words, but for God's Word. Pure, unadulterated truth. Many are going about today denying the inspiration of the Bible.

[25:18] Where are those who will with steadfast loyalty hold fast to the truth. Who will exalt the Word of God above the ways of men and the methods of the world and tradition.

biblical illiteracy is a major problem today. Because Christians don't even have a Bible. Let alone read it, study it, memorize it, hold it dear. Friends, it's a sacred cow.

Biblical illiteracy. And that's why we are in such a mess today. Another sacred cow is conformity with the world. James 4 verse 4 it says, Ye adulterers, unadulteresses, no ye not.

That friendship of the world is enmity with God. In other words, hatred towards God. Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world will be the enemy of God.

That's strong language isn't it? To be a friend of the world is an enemy of God. You know someone has said this, If you're not born again today, your worst enemy is God.

[26:20] God is the enemy of the unconverted. He's the enemy of the world's thinking and the world's systems. Of the world's attitudes, thinking and conduct. God is the enemy of the world's ideologies that are hostile towards him.

God is the enemy. They are the enemies of God and he is their enemy. To become a friend of the world, purposefully, is to choose to be an enemy of God.

Yet why is it that in many churches, sadly, they want to be a friend of the world. They want to court the world's favour.

To be accepted by the world. And they court and cater to the unconverted in the church and to the unchurched. Aping the world in its ways, in its music, in its lifestyle.

Terrified to offend somebody. They don't offend anybody. And we're bringing a brand of Christians who are inclusive, pluralistic, so open-minded and really worldly in their thinking.

[27:25] But the Bible, Biblical truth, is a contradiction to human philosophy. It's a contradiction to worldly thinking. God's plan is not to make the church more worldly.

That's not his plan. We're to confront the culture of the world. Confront it. In John 15, our Lord says, If you were of the world, the world would love his own, but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.

It's meant to be a distinction for you. As God's children, a clear difference. And the world hates you. Jesus said, that's how it will be. That's how it is. Conformity with the world.

It's a sacred cow. We shouldn't want a bar of it. Churches that are catering and pandering to that have lost their way. Totally lost their way.

We've mentioned some sacred cows tonight. Consumer Christianity. We've mentioned inclusion and tolerance. A substitute gospel. Biblical illiteracy.

[28:28] A conformity with the world. It's endemic in many churches. So what will we do? What will we do? Friends, there's no gentle way to kill a sacred cow.

You know, brother Brad's got a cow. A calf. A calf. And he's going to end up killing it. I don't know if he's going to wield the weapon of destruction.

But that cow's going to die. And I hope he invites me to the barbecue. But that calf is going to die. The sacred cow is going to die.

And it takes action to kill a sacred cow. And that action might be unpopular. It might be unpleasant. Rocking the boat. It doesn't go well with the crowd.

To take a stand. But it's sometimes... Really it's better, isn't it? Just to do it. It's like when you rip the band-aid off. You don't just sort of peel it off slowly. Just go rip it off.

[29:27] That's what we need to do with the sacred cows. You know, I was watching a Christian movie and I was talking about some reformer and he went into a church in England and there was all these crucifixes and

statues and all these images and all this decorative material that was supposedly religious.

And he went in there and he smashed it to the ground. He threw it down, the crosses, the crucifixes, all these images of man that have been made to adore in place of the real God.

And then I saw this other video of a preacher and he had this statue of Mary. Well, it wasn't actually Mary but one of the saints. And he brought it into the congregation and he bowed in mock worship to it and then he wielded the hammer and he slapped it and slapped it and smashed her head off. And, you know, we look back to the times of the reformers and they had what was called an iconoclasm. An iconoclasm. An icon means a picture, an image.

They destroyed the images. When the reformers saw the truth of God's work they didn't want to have images and crucifixes and all kinds of religious icons and paraphernalia.

[30:47] They just wanted to have the simple gospel, the simple truth. They wanted to smash the sacred cows. It was something that was ingrained, it was embedded in the culture.

It was something. Shock, horror. How dare they? Smash those beautiful pictures and those beautiful artistic statues and works of art. But they were sacred cows and they had to be demolished.

Friends, we must slay the sacred cows. We may not have statues of Mary and icons in our church circles but, yeah, independent Baptist churches, just like any kind of churches, we can have these things that we should question and challenge and criticise in a good way.

And I'll put it to you just in closing, a couple of things to put to you how we can slay the sacred cows. And firstly, a plea for passion.

A plea for passion. Someone said a church is not a church when the passion for souls is gone. The passion for souls, the passion, the passion for truth.

[31:57] Let his will be your passion. You know, when these reformers of all went to such great lengths and faced the rank and the flame for their faith, they had a passion.

There was a passion there. Is the will of God your passion? A preacher said this, To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge. To do the will of God is the greatest achievement.

Do you know his will? And will you do it? Ravenhill said, We are not eternity conscious enough. Do we think of eternity? Now, this time on earth is just a vapor, isn't it?

Really. And he said, The surest thing in the world is not death and taxes. As the saying goes, It's death and eternity. Yet, we are so unconcerned.

Think of that tonight. The surest thing in the world is not death and taxes, as the saying goes. It's death and eternity. Eternity! Yet, we are so unconcerned.

[33:02] Are you concerned for your soul tonight? We ought to be concerned for our soul. We ought to be concerned and passionate, truly passionate about eternal things. William Booth said this, I'm going to quote just a section here.

Love to the king and concern for his interest must be the master passion of the soul. All outward effort, even that which springs from a sense of duty, will fail without this.

The hardship and suffering involved in real spiritual warfare are too great for any motive but that of love. It's said that one of the soldiers of Napoleon, while being operated upon for the extraction of a bullet, exclaimed, Cut a little deeper and you will find my general's name.

Meaning that it was engraven upon his heart. And Booth goes on, So must the image and glory of Christ be engraven on the heart of every successful soldier of Christ.

It must be the all-subduing passion of his life to bring the reign of Jesus Christ over the hearts and souls of men. The great end in all we do must be the promotion of his kingdom.

[34:21] A man may work in order that he may eat, but he must eat to live, not to himself or for the promotion of his own purposes, but for his king and for the advancement of his interest.

There will be no running away, no forsaking of the cross, no shrinking from the hard places of the field, but a determined pushing of the battle to the gates, even amid weariness, opposition and sometimes in the face of dire defeat.

I ask, was it any less a devotion than this which actuated the martyrs and confessors of old? End of quote. You know, there's a sense where there's a passion.

This is a war that we are enghosting. If we will be a sacred cow slayer, let us be bold. Let us have passion. Let us not shrink back. Let us have a godly passion, a godly courage.

I exhort your passion tonight and also leave you with a plea for revival. A plea for revival. I'm quoting Ravenhill again. He says, People say we want another Pentecost.

[35:35] I don't believe them for a minute. Pentecost in the New Testament is tied in with persecution, poverty and prison. Do we really want another Pentecost?

The fire never falls on the altar. The fire falls on the sacrifice. The fire falls on the sacrifice. When do we make the sacrifice, brothers and sisters?

A further quote from him, it says, Do you go to church to meet God? Or to hear a sermon about Him? How many come to church expecting a confrontation with deity?

Friends, there's some sacred cows. Will we be sacred cows in our own personal lives? Will we be as our Lord Jesus did? Will we deal with them strongly and faithfully?

Will we overturn those tables? Will we take the width to that which is hindering? To that which is out of place? In the godly place.

[36:43] In our own life. Other things that need to be dealt with tonight. Other sacred cows that are in your life. Obstacles. Stumbling blocks to your progress as a Christian.

Friends, we face opposition of devils. Yet their work is mostly hidden. Undercover. And it's all about us. And it's all about us. An endemic worldliness.

Saps the life and strength out of the people of God. And we're not immune to it. We might think, oh, that's them. But it's in all of us.

The flesh, the struggle. The inclination to do what we ought not to do. The inclination not to do what we ought to do. There's an endemic carnality that we've got to fight and crucify daily.

And die to. We've got to slay the sacred cows. Slay the sacred cows. And seek God for a renewed passion. And revival.

[37:49] A renewed passion. In our love for him. A revival. In our dependence upon him. Because it's got to come from heaven. The fire falls from heaven. And it falls on the sacrifice.

On the sacrifice. I've talked about consumer Christianity. Let's not make that mistake as a church. We're not here to pander.

And please, you might leave offended tonight. That would be a good thing. A sacred cow. Inclusion. Tolerance. Again, I might have treaded on some toast tonight. Or people that see this.

You might be offended. The cross is an offence. It's unpleasant being nailed to a piece of wood. You might be offended. You might be offended. The cross is an offence. It's unpleasant being nailed to a piece of wood.

And yet we're called to that. There's a substitute gospel today. Don't fall for it. If you're not sure you're so, please speak to someone tonight.

[38:53] If you're not sure that you're born again, speak to someone tonight about your soul. Most of all, speak to him. Call upon his name and you can be saved. In truth, though, biblical illiteracy, it's a problem.

People aren't taking their Bibles seriously. Take your Bible. Treasure it. Love it. Learn it. Conformity with the world. It's all around us.

We're barraged by the propaganda. It's constant. Let's have a godly passion and trust him. We're looking for a true revival. We're looking for a true revival.