

# The Way, Not The Stay

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     How we doing, gang? Good? We are joined this morning by King's Church Charleston, and we, if you don't know, we have a church plant, a church expansion, church something.

I don't like the nomenclature that we have in the church world. I just, it's weird. God's doing something by his spirit with a group of people that are connected to the vision that he's given this house, and it's something where people are connected to the spirit of God and the truth of God's word. They're not Christians that have ignored everything that's happened in the word just to huddle until Jesus comes back, and they're not Christians that believe that the Holy Spirit has left us and left when the apostles died, because that's not in the Bible, and they're growing, and God's doing something great, and people are giving to it. We've raised over \$65,000 for Charleston so far. Isn't that awesome? And God's going to launch them this spring. Bethany and I were, we were in a lot of places in the last seven days. We were in Miami and Kentucky and Tulsa, Oklahoma, and Brooklyn even, you know. And we went to Tulsa because we have a group of King's Church family that are there right now. They're watching us, and this current moment right now, 1227 Eastern Standard Time. And

Dylan and Christy came here via one of our friends, Zane. How many of you guys know Zane? Yeah, Zane is awesome. A little too tall, but he's good.

And Zane brought Dylan and Christy one day from out of town, and they said, this is amazing. We want to do this. They basically said, we want to do this in Oklahoma. And I was like, you know, I don't know where that is, but okay. Is it by Alaska? No. And so we've kind of zoomed back and forth over the last year as they've been gathering with some people, and they have about 20, 25 incredible people in Tulsa right now. And we're going to launch another King's Church community in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Isn't that crazy? Isn't that amazing? I just want you to know, we didn't sit down with like a board of America and say, where do we want to grow? We're not doing that. We're not being that way. Because I would have chosen Miami, and we're not in Miami yet, you know? Actually, I would have chosen St.

John. And I've tried to manipulate a couple of people into pastoring a church in St. John, and nobody's interested yet. Hopefully we get there. Sincere, you? It's tropical. It's beautiful.

[ 2 : 4 2 ]     It's like 12 people. So we're really excited about Tulsa and Bethany and I were there ministering with their gang last Thursday night and worshiping and sharing the word and sharing words of the Holy Spirit and prophecy and all of this awesome stuff. And I got from one of the gang members a real sheriff's badge from the former assistant chief of police of Tulsa. He gave me a badge. And so now I'm just going to be arresting people. I'm going to cover up the Tulsa part with my finger and open it and be like, I'm a cop. You're under arrest. And that was one of my favorite parts about going there was the badge. I felt like a little kid, like I wanted a little plastic gun as well, you know?

We're excited about what God's doing. And we are a church that's really interested in spirit and truth. And the truth part is that we're rightly oriented to the world around us through God's word, but also through truth in general. And so there's no subjects that we don't talk about. Why? Because God's word talks about everything. There's no parts of society that we say we can't say that. Why?

Because proper theology informs you about every area of life. And we have churches that are like, don't talk about that. It'll offend people and they won't come back. I'm like, sorry, good, goodbye. So I don't care. Like, who cares? God offends people all throughout the scripture. That's part of what he does. He likes to do it. He's offended me. Has he ever offended you? You know, and it was good for me to be offended. And I learned and grew and I didn't like it at first. And so we're into truth and we're into talking about all these different areas. Literally last Sunday, Bethany and I were in Miami and we were with a group of about 450 Christian leaders from the nation. And all of the primary presidential hopefuls were giving presentations to this group. So DeSantis was there speaking to us. This new guy, I can't remember his name I was talking about. What is his name?

Yeah, Vishal. Something Indian. And we're butchering it right now because we're racists. And so it's too bad. And Donald Trump called into the meeting and gave a presentation. It was like all of these things because we believe that Christians are supposed to be engaged in every part of society. That's just very simple. It's not like some kind of complex and weird theology. It's like be engaged everywhere.

If you're a cop, be a Christian cop, right? And show Christ in your station headquarters with your own badge. That's not as cool as mine. But we're also a spirit truth. We're not just, we're not just spirit church. We're not just a truth church. So we believe God is alive and living and active today. And so in first service, I was praying for this room as I do when we're wait, when we wait on the Holy Spirit, I say, God, I just want to lift up my church. And God, I ask you encourage them this Sunday. I ask that people would leave with their burdens lessened. I ask that you would speak particular, particularly to their hearts.

[ 5 : 46 ] And so I'm praying this prayer as I do normally pray on Sunday morning. And homeboy, Justin was sitting over here. He's not here now, but he was there at first service. And I just had this picture of an eagle in my mind as soon as I saw him. And I was, and I was reminded of the scripture in Proverbs chapter 30 that says there are a bunch of mysterious ways. And one of the mysterious ways is the way of an eagle upon the wind. And I shared that with him and we prayed over him. And I just felt like the Lord's got you in this really cool, you're an eagle word, da, da, da, da. Great.

And then you're like, is this one of those kind, I just made this up in the fly. If you're a normal human, you have those thoughts when God speaks to you. Cause we're, we, we like to doubt. We're cynics, especially as New Yorkers were cynical. And he came up to me after the service and he said, I don't, he said, you don't know how accurate this word was a year ago, right about now.

I felt like I got a word about being God's eagle and lifted up in the wings. And I pray it all the time. And my wife and I talk about this word, this eagle word. And I was like, wow, that's awesome. I'm so glad I didn't get a picture of a beaver because team failure, you know, we believe that God interfaces with mankind and still communicates with us and knows us and cares about us. And it's not just pretend bedtime stories. We were at an Eric Metaxas event a couple of months ago and, and, uh, they had a smart old guy there. Can't remember his name. Lots of smart old guys around. And he said, most Christians in America are actually atheists. They don't believe God is, will, is real and will do anything in their world at all. They believe he exists far off. And there's like a body of ideas that you have to agree with, but they're atheists in that they believe he has nothing to do with this world and he doesn't interface with mankind. And, and that's not untrue. That's not untrue, but we are not of that ilk. We are of the kind that believes in God has truth for us to order our lives with and structure.

And he has spirit moves as well. And we hold on to both of those things in tension. And as I've said many times, the, hopefully the truth people get offended that we do too much spirit stuff. And hopefully the spirit people get offended that we don't do enough spirit stuff and we do truth, too much truth stuff. That's kind of my balance. That's kind of how I kind of figure that out, figure that out.

Tulsa, I'm excited about, but again, I just want to make this point very clear to our church and our New York city community that we're not trying to do some kind of world expansion takeover, but we will go everywhere that God opens a door. If God opens a door, you better believe I'm going to run into it and say, let's establish this outpost of people that are truth oriented and that are filled with the spirit of God. Let's establish it because the church needs to be reformed.

[ 8 : 47 ] You know, about 505 years ago, actually exactly 505 years ago, the church was reformed. The Bible was not in the hands of the people. It was in the hands of a special class. And that special class, they spoke the Bible to the people, except it was in Latin and the people couldn't speak Latin.

Serious problem, you know? And then the church was reformed and the scripture was released to the body and the world changed radically. In that next 500 years, the world radically changed. Like we went to the moon. This, I don't have time to go into it. The world radically changed and the kingdom of heaven radically changed on earth. And my prayer is that at this next 500 year mark, which is right now, as we sit here, that the church will remember that the spirit of God is alive. And I don't mean just little pockets of Pentecostals that, you know, wear suits and dance weirdly. I mean, the church would remember that God's spirit has not left us and he's still here, accessible. Amen? Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. And so here's Hebrews 11, 10. It says, for he was looking forward to the city whose foundations and whose architect and builder is God. Most church plants or new churches, they have their own architectural plan. They have their own design plan. And we don't really have that design plan.

We say, God, what are you doing? What are you leaning into? And then we just try to follow him. Like the Israelites in the Old Testament where they followed a pillar of fire by night and a cloud by day.

It's really that picture is the picture of Christians leaving the bondage of Egypt, headed towards the promised land, which is heaven and following God, following the living presence of God. That's what that picture is for the believer. And I don't want to go to a church. It's just a building. And I like pay my tithe. Then I go home. I want to walk with God. Amen, church. I want to be someone who follows a living God. And I want to be right to PS, you know, I want my ideas to be right. I want my theology to be right. But I also want to walk with a living God and him to lead me and guide me in my jobs, in my relationship, in my giving, in all of those things. So God, let it be in our church in Jesus name and Charleston, in Tulsa, in New York City, in St. John with sincere in Jesus name. Amen.

[ 11 : 20 ] I'm joking, Lord. You know I'm joking, Lord. Can't afford the flights, so. All right, let's jump into this portion of scripture real quick. This is a really great portion of scripture. And Paul is continuing his polemic against the law. What does that mean? That means he is giving an argumentation that is saying to the Jewish believers, you're not justified by the law.

It's not the law that justifies you. Because Abram, who in the journey, the walk with God, turned into Abraham, that happened by faith. He didn't have the Mosaic law.

Moses wasn't around for another four to five hundred years, right? Because the Israelites are 400 years in bondage, correct? And then before that, you have Abraham, Isaac, Jacob. So you got about 500 or so years. He's walking with God. He's not justified by the law. And that's what Paul is saying here. Because he said, hey, look, guys, you're all in sin. Gentiles, you're in sin. You know it.

It's written on your heart. You ignore it. You're still in sin. You're busted. You're dead. Jews, you even have exactly how to follow the law. It's written on your heart and on the tablets and on everywhere. And you have it hanging off your, right? They have the law hanging off the tassels, tassels to remind them of the law. And you still break it every day. What are you doing? Cut off the tassels. They're not doing anything. That's what Paul is saying here. You're not justified by the law.

Paul. And he goes into the story of Abraham and the journey of Abraham. And he begins to make it very granular. And he begins to show us that this faith and this journey of faith justifies us. This initial justification happens, Romans 3.23, in faith. And then we follow God in faith. And he transforms us in the process of walking with God. Again, one of the things that I'm really upset about this Asbury outpouring about is all these people are like, how many people repented? How much sin is being thrown out? We change in the process of following God. And yes, there's a standard. And yes, there's repentance.

[ 13 : 34 ] We know that. We've been saying that for the last, at least a couple of weeks. But we mature in the process. And that's one of my favorite and one of the most encouraging scriptures in the New Testament. When Jesus says the kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, he doesn't say the kingdom of heaven is like a poplar seed. Poplar is the fastest growing tree of all the trees. And so for paper mills, Bethany and I used to live in eastern Washington, and they had these giant poplar orchards. Why poplar, you ask? Because they're the fastest growing tree. And their wood is actually one of the softest woods. And they chop them down, and they chop them up, and they put glue, and they make paper and plywood and all of these other...

Jesus doesn't say it's like the poplar. He says it's like the mustard seed, which is an incredibly slow-growing plant. But if you continue to water it and care for it, it takes over all of the other plants in the garden. And you may say, David, I've been struggling with X thing for 10 years. And I'll say to you, keep leaning into Jesus. Keep asking for forgiveness.

You're not identified by your sin. Turn from it and turn back to Jesus every Sunday, every time we take communion. Every time there's an opportunity. God, I'm pursuing you. And in time and season, the mustard seed... How long does a mustard seed take to grow over all of the plants of the garden?

A little bit of time. And you better be careful with that seed, baby. You better not despise the smallness of the seed. You better not despise the smallness of the shoot.

Imagine that shoot comes out, and we're like, yeah, there's no way this thing is going to be big. No way. Look at how small the seed is. Look at how small the shoot is.

[ 15 : 39 ] Moving back to the tomatoes. They're popping up every six months. We got tomatoes. Tomatoes. But imagine life without mustard. God forbid it in New York City. You know what I'm saying?

I mean, we got pretzels. We got hot dogs. We need mustard here. And we need mustard seeds. I don't know. That was weird.

All right. Abraham's walking with God. God walks with man from the beginning. You can see that in the garden of Eden. Genesis chapter 3, verse 8. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day. God has walked with man from the beginning of the story of man. God is not like the other gods of all of the other peoples, of all of the other pagan nations, of all of the other deformations of the Christian God. He's not like that. From the beginning, he wants to walk with man. I promise you, Apollo doesn't want to come down and be your friend. He wants to bite your head off. Doesn't he bite somebody's head off? Is that somebody else? We don't know Greek gods that well around here. It's too bad. So sad.

That's going to bother me now. Gosh. Saturn eats his children. That's who it is. Saturn bites the head off. He's eating his kids because there's a prophecy that a kid's going to take him over.

And so there's this painting of Saturn eating his children. There you go. There it is. You're going to use that in jeopardy one day and make money, and you're going to tithe it here. So you needed that. Genesis 3, man is walking with God. Man is still called to walk with God.

[ 17 : 28 ] Sometimes we need to travel to walk with God. Sometimes we stay put walking with God. Sometimes we travel. Acts 14, 14. There were found some brothers who invited us to spend the week with them, and so we came to Rome. The brothers that heard about us, they traveled as far as the forum of Appius and the three taverns. I'm glad they left the taverns. Sinners to meet us. When Paul saw them, he was encouraged. He gave thanks to God. There are times when it's good to travel to see what God's doing. Apostle Paul was coming to town, and people from leagues away were like, we're making our way to see, Paul. God's doing something. There are times to follow and chase after when God's doing a thing.

When I was a boy, I was 12 years old. There was a movement in North America called the, what was it called, Gabe? The Renewal. And the Renewal was happening at the Airport Vineyard in Toronto. And unbeknownst to me, Gabe Finocchio and I were likely there at the same time, because you were there all the time, right? Your parents were dragging you there all the time.

And my parents drove us from upstate New York there because God was pouring out a spirit in a very unique way. Now, it got wacky. It got wacky town, and there was some wacky town stuff that was happening there because they didn't include fathering and shepherding. So this is spirit and truth combined together, folks. Truth and order. And so they let wacky people start barking like dogs and rolling around. And like, if you really have a strong urge to bark like a dog, that's fine. We're just going to take you like on the fourth floor, and we'll talk to you there, and we'll pray for you. But we're not going to let you freak out and terrify the entire rest of the church and distract from what God is doing.

But they were so excited about the move of God, they didn't want to touch anything. And so the spirit of God and the moving of the spirit of God was disparaged throughout all of America. And all of the cessationists were loaded down with ammunition with which they still shoot at the spirit of God today.

And that's a problem. That's a problem. Oh, one of the greatest things about being at Asbury this week was that I came into this chapel where all of these people were worshipping the Lord. And every, you know, every 30 minutes, a leader came up and said, this is what we do here. We're so excited that you're here.

[ 20 : 03 ] These are, these are kind of the guardrails. We're so happy that you're worshipping Jesus. And then we're going to have two testimonies. And there was order and structure and presence and spirit. And I was like, yeah, this is what we need in the church of America. Order and structure and teaching and presence and young people being inspired by the Holy Spirit. And instead of being like, I could never be used. There was this, there was an atmosphere of boldness and atmosphere where people were stepping out.

That's what Paul seems to indicate in 1 Corinthians 14, 26, by the way, that one would have a song, that one would have a word, that each would be done so in orderliness, but inspired by the spirit of God.

It's really beautiful and really healthy. Can we do that? Church, listen to me. Pause, you know, the podcast in your mind right now. Listen to me. When we wait on the presence of God in our church services, ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you. If you have something burning, come and tell me or Gabe or Bethany and say, I really feel like the Lord wants us to pray in this direction or share this thing.

Is it okay if you're totally wrong? And you're like, I just feel like there should be an offering for me right now? Strongly? I'm thinking 20% Lord. Or do you have to just be perfect? Are you terrified to be embarrassed? I mean, we have to be brave to appreciate and accept and walk in what God's doing. Amen?

Amen. That's good, Pastor. Podcast, back on. Boom. Okay. Abraham, he walks with God. That's why we're talking about walking with God, because we're talking about Paul, talking about the justification of faith that happens in the process of moving with God. In chapter 17, 1 and 2, it says this, God appeared before Abraham and said to Abraham, Abraham, walk before me in righteousness that I may bless you. Now remember, in Genesis chapter 12, Abraham gets the initial call and he begins walking with God. In chapter 17, God comes to him again. He changes his name and he gives him the covenant that's going to pass down from generation to generation. Again, says to him, walk before me in righteousness that I may bless you. And I have a son, number two, Solomon. Anybody have seen that kid around here before? Is he here? He's playing hooky. No, he's helping in the nursery.

[ 22 : 42 ] Solly, he arm-barred a kid yesterday. I was very proud. He won the world championship, fourth place, a 12-year-old boy out of five kids. I was very happy with that trophy in my mind that he got. But it's all for our entire life of him walking, which has been about, wow, he's 12, 11 and a half years, 11 years. He walks in front of me and he walks slowly. And as a New Yorker, I have a couple of kryptonites. The TSA is my first primary kryptonite. I'm going to go there. I mean, if you're a TSA agent and you're listening today, I mean, I'm not saying you're a bad person. I am saying you're doing the devil's work. I mean, kryptonite. The TSA and secondly, slow walkers in Manhattan or really anywhere, slow walkers. I just don't, I have a certain length of leg and I have a certain speed at which I walk and I got places to go. You know, I'm not here to see the bull downtown. I'm here to get to my office and you're like, the sidewalk fits four people across and your family of four has spread out across the entire sidewalk. And I'm like, have you ever left your barn in North Dakota before? Because there's other people out here. That's why these sidewalks are so wide. You know, we could bless the city. We could serve the city. When people land, we can have leaflets as they get out. Like, this is how to walk out down the sidewalk, you know, like here's where Joe's on Carmine is. This is the best pizza in New York, you know, that kind of stuff. God says to Abram, he says, walk before me in righteousness that I may bless you. And I just think it's so amazing that God doesn't say walk behind me. I just think that phrasing is the phrasing of a gentle and good God. It's okay if you walk slow sometimes. You know, it's okay if you're not at my speed at all times. I'm God. You're probably not going to be at my speed, you know. And God says, walk before me in righteousness that I may bless you.

That there are times that we're called to walk slowly and that's okay. I was, I run every once in a while and I hurt my Achilles and I ran again about a week later and it hurt way worse. And now it's been like three weeks and finally kind of getting back to normal. If you run when you're broken, you break more things. God calls us to walk before him in righteousness, not behind him.

Sprinting like God, oh, I'm going to perfect everything. No, you're not. But walk with God. Amen. I want to talk about Apostle Paul real quick because he thought he was walking with God and he was in fact not walking with God. Acts 9.1. But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus so that if he found any belonging to the way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem so that if he found any belonging to the way, everyone say the way. Christians in the first century in the early church were called members of the way or those belonging to the way. The church initially was called people of the way because Jesus is the way, the truth and the life. No man comes to the father, but by him people follow God along the way. I said to the first service, and I'm cringing now that I'm going to repeat this phrase, but I said, God is not about the way. I said it wrong.

Dang. God is not interested in the stay, but he's interested in the way. Oh, pastor. Tattoo. Next set of hats. Whoa. And what does that mean? That just means that relationship with God is not a static belief where you believe a thing and then you just kind of go on with your life. But the way is walking with God, right? It's growing in Christ. It's maturing. It's stomping out the cockroaches of sin.

It's growing. And we had a guy that came to the church in December and he said, my goal financially is to grow my tithe from giving 10% to giving 90% of my salary. And he's like, I means I have to make like, if I'm going to live with a hundred thousand dollars a year, I have to make a million dollars a year to give God the rest. And I was like, man, that is amazing. That's an amazing idea that he would want to grow in generosity. That we would want to grow in the gifts of the spirit, that we would grow in humility, that we would grow in kindness and goodness and self-control. Wouldn't that be awesome to grow in self-control? That would be amazing. Yeah. Yes. Paul believed he was walking with God. He believed he was on the way when he was actually on the way to Damascus to kill believers.

[ 27 : 59 ] Paul was, he was being called Saul at this point in the book of Acts, but they start calling him Paul later. I don't want to get into that, but he was a murderer. Paul had partaken previously in the murder of Stephen, in the slaughter of Stephen. And let's, let's, let's, you know, make this graphic and technical for us. People crushing Stephen's heads with rocks and his body with rocks, a group of Paul's friends. And Paul is holding all of their jackets as witness as he's being stoned to death.

And you may say, David, well, that's not like killing somebody. He didn't pull the trigger. Well, in law, and has been the law for hundreds of years, since Blackstone, who is an amazing Christian jurist from England, who got his, his steps from Aquinas, there's a charge called aiding and abetting. Have you ever heard of that charge before? Aiding and abetting? That means if you're hanging out with your friends and they all decide to murder someone and you're hanging out with them while they decide to murder someone and you don't run away and stop the crime or call the cops, you get charged for murder as well.

And you say, well, it's probably a lesser charge. No, it's the exact same charge of murder. You get the same penalty because you partook in the murder of someone. And Saul partook in the murder of Stephen, the first martyr. And this is a beautiful picture in Acts chapter 3 in verse 58, as Stephen is looking up to heaven and he sees Christ standing there in the heavens.

Oh, it's just incredible. And the murderous rage of the Pharisees to destroy this new little shoot, this work of God that was about to spring. It was actually just maybe starting to spring out of the ground. Jesus was the seed that came out of death, hell, and the grave. So this move is just starting to sprout. I think, listen, I think bad revival theology thinks like a snap of the finger happens and then the whole nation gets saved. Jesus installed the disciples, became apostles, and it wasn't until 400 years later that the church really took hold in Rome. Do you know that?

Like we think in revival culture, we're going to pray it in, we're going to pray it in, everybody next door is just going to fall over and then wake up, get up and be saved. It took 400 years before the church really had a position. Constantine says, hey, no more killing Christians or feeding them to lions anymore. It wasn't an overnight success because the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. It's a mustard seed that you have to tend to and water and take care of and prune and then it grows and takes over all of the kingdoms of the world. I actually think the picture of the mustard seed is the kingdom of heaven in our life and also the kingdom of heaven on the earth. And then God, you know, it says about Jesus, of the increase of his government, there will be no end. We have bad left behind eschatology and we just think the world is going to take over and we're just going to get stomped. We're going to get chipped in the eyeball and then we're going to join, oh man, I almost said his name, someone else's church and we'll all get raptured in the spaceship together and meow. And that is so evil because we stop believing that God wants to continue to build the kingdom of heaven and earth. And we abandon the kingdom of heaven and we abandon the state and we abandon the government. We abandon our jobs to all the secular people. And we say, I wonder why it's going so left and secular because you've all told us to hide out in our basements and buy more roots for our root cellar because we're going to need like more canned goods because we're just going to be hanging out in the basement for 20 years because the Russians are attacking, which they might be, but that's a different, totally different thing. It's Biden's fault. Maybe.

[ 32 : 00 ] What are we doing? What are we talking about, pastor? Oh, I'm talking about, I'm talking about Saul. He's on the road to Damascus. What is Damascus? What does that name mean? That name means well-watered place. And Saul is going there to kill this brand new work of God that's happening in the church. Do you know what else means well-watered place? Eden. Eden means well-watered place. And the devil went there to destroy the work of God. This brand new life in Adam and Eve that had just sprung up on the earth. The devil's on his way there to kill it off. And he kills it off through deception. And many people right now would love to see the Asbury outpouring killed off because they're working for their father, the devil. And they're deceived because that's what the father of lies is. He lies to people. And Sun Tzu said, all warfare is based upon deception. I want to say just three quick things. You might be Paul if you're definitely right about everything.

This is why God blinds Saul to say, you don't see correctly. P.S. by the way. You know, if you're positive that you're right about everything, you're probably wrong. The Bible says, be careful when you think you stand. You stand on my pride. God, I know it. Everything, every move, every situation. I know when it's you or not because I'm so smart. Can I tell you a shameful story? Yes, pastor. We love to hear your shameful stories. I was in Charleston last summer and I was hanging out with our gang down there and we were having a barbecue and I was just feeling top gun. I mean, I was feeling maverick that day. And one of the dudes was like, pastor, do you have any questions? Just like if you could get to heaven that you'd ask God. And I was like, I really don't.

I just know all the answers. I literally said that. I literally said that. I just kind of know everything. And I mean, there's some stuff I don't know, obviously, like, you know, about how many dinosaurs there were. Were the Job things dinosaurs? Did Job have his own dinosaur? I don't know. It's like, were there dinosaur eggs in the ark? Do they all freeze off? I don't know. Some things I got some minimal questions about. And then I started thinking, because I was just in a crazy mood.

Ever been in a crazy mood? You say something stupid? Just for months, I would think back to that and say, I'm so embarrassed that I said that. That was so arrogant and prideful. That was such a moron thing to say.



Only a moron would say, I have all of the questions answered. That definitely means you don't. Saul is blinded by God, in part to show that he doesn't see correctly. If you're guaranteed that you see correctly, you probably don't. It doesn't mean that we don't have surety in theology and this kind of stuff. I'm not saying that. But if you're, I'm better than everyone, and I know more than everybody, and I'm perfect, and I'm always right, you're probably wrong, and at least you should deal with your pride. Here's the other reason that you can know that you're Saul on the road to Damascus, is that if you breathe out murderous intent. What do I mean by that? It says Paul's breathing murder. That means his default set in and out, in and out, is criticism, destruction. The devil comes to kill and steal and destroy. The people that are breathing life, that indicates they're of the kingdom of God. The people that breathe criticism, death, that shows that they're of a different kingdom. That their father is a different father. Like sometimes I go to church and I look out across the room and like some people that have great theology, I'm like, you're not a part of the kingdom of God. You're full of darkness and criticism and evil. Paul's default is murderous intent. His default is destroying. His default is to kill. That doesn't mean that we don't believe in justice or the application of the sword. Or saying you can't be a 40-year-old man in 12-year-old girls' soccer club.

[ 36 : 06 ] We do say that, in fact. It's one of the reasons people don't come here, actually, in fact. But I will contend to you to say things like that that are highly offensive. Because it's insane to not say those things when we have a culture that's going that way. I said to the first service, I was talking to a guy BJJ with the boys and he's like, ah, man, as long as it doesn't hurt anybody else, that's just, I'm fine if you want to be anything you want to be. And I said to him, I'm not okay with that. I'm not fine with that. And you could feel immediate tension. And I'm like, man, I'm really glad I said that. I'm really glad I was brave. I'm really glad I stood for truth. In that little one-second conversation, I'm really glad I said that. That doesn't mean we don't care for truth and defend righteousness, blah, blah, blah, blah. But as Christians, our default is not kill, murder.

We're not looking throughout the world saying, where's wrong in you? I'm waiting. I'm listening to this pastor's message. Wait till he says something wrong. There it was. What? What? What are we doing?

There's no, there's no Jesus here. Nope. I mean, he's living in a, but we're all humans that sin and make mistakes and have misunderstandings. Even Gabe, believe it or not, even Gabe.

Don't believe it. He said, don't believe it podcast. Okay. Three ways to know if you are Saul. One is if you're always right, then you may need to be blinded by God and struck down. One that you have murderous intent. And then here's my number three. This is my new favorite.

If you make it your living to hunt down other Christians. And this is just in particular for the people out there on the online world that have large YouTube audiences and all they do is hunt other Christians. That's all they do. My job is just to kill other Christians. I just hunt down other Christians. That's my occupation. I don't kind of remember Jesus giving anybody that occupation.

[ 38 : 28 ] I kind of don't remember him giving any of the apostles the occupation just to hunt down and murder other Christians. I'm not saying that theology is not important. We know in our church that theology is important. I'm saying if your primary grift in this life is to go after the people that are a percent wrong, there's something wrong with your heart. There's a little Saul living in there breathing out murders. And we don't want to be like that, right? We want to actually be quick to rejoice in life and slow to cut things up and smash things. Eric and Morgan Lucas had this most beautiful little baby you've ever seen in your whole life last week. And she was born on February 12th, which is my birthday. That means I'm her godfather, whether they say yes or not.

I was so excited. She was born on February 12th. It's such a dorky thing, but I was so happy. And Bethany and I went and visited little Madison Page Lucas in the hospital this week. And she was like the most beautiful little baby in the whole world. And some babies come out and they're squished and you have to lie as a pastor and say, that's a beautiful baby. But I didn't even have to lie at all. She had a super thick head of hair, just gorgeous baby. And we rejoice when there's new life. That's the default for a Christian is to rejoice at new life in hope. And that's one of the reasons we hate abortion because it's killing new life. It's the murder. That's being a Saul. Saul loves abortion. He loves aborting the moves of God as well. He loves criticizing every move of God. He wants to, he's abortive in his practices. It might not be perfect. It might have a genetic defect. So we should kill it in the womb.

It just fell off. That was a good, that was a good, that was the whole rise. That was good. I had a good point here. What was it?

We do kill things and we do chop things up, especially things that come into the church. Like when the BLM movement was happening in our city and they were like, all white people are racist, all black people are oppressed. And I was like, nah, that's not in the Bible. We're not doing that.

Or when the George Floyd thing happened, I said to the church, I said, we're slow to execute judgment. We're not rash to killing. Paul is rash to killing. The bad guys are rash and rush to death.

[ 41 : 10 ] And then they're slow to rejoice. We are the exact opposite as Christians. We're fast to rejoice over life. And we're slow to bring the sword. The sword takes deliberation and wisdom and time.

But if somebody tells me they're pregnant, I'm jumping up and down. I'm not saying, you know, I'm going to be, I'm going to take it really easy. I don't know if you're going to, the whole pregnancy is going to go through. I'm not going to really be excited until after the birth. Then I might, then I'll, you know, get you a balloon. No, I rejoice when I find out a mom is pregnant. I rejoice. When there's a move of God in the country, we should rejoice.

Will there be things to criticize? Maybe, sure. But we should be the first to rejoice. People want to worship God more? I don't know. There's something fishy here.

People are singing and praying for hours? Sounds suspect. Let me get out my magnifying glass. They were singing, oh, how he loves us over and over and over and over again.

It's a vain repetition. It's a vain repetition. They were repeating like a mantra. Like, I want to fly to wherever you live in Texas and punch you and fly back home. I'm not allowed, I'm not supposed to be harsh or rash, but I want to be. We want to be quick to celebrate life and slow to anger. Amen, church? Amen. So Saul was murderous. Let's get to this last point and worship team, you can come up. When Abraham was 99 years old, the Lord appeared to him and said, I am God Almighty. Walk before me, blameless, and I'll establish my covenant to you. That was, we shared this Romans 4, 19 and 20, without weakening in his flesh.

[ 43 : 12 ] He faced the fact that his body was as good as dead since he was about 100 years old, and that Sarah's womb was old and also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had the power to do what he promised. This, for this reason, it was credited to him as righteousness.

For this reason, though he was dead, in the sense that his flesh was unable to produce life with his wife. He's beyond, he's in the stage of impossibility. And this is what Romans says, that you, because of your sin, are in the stage of impossibility to access God's grace and goodness. You don't get, because you're justified or because I'm a good person, you don't get the life of God inside of you.

It's Jesus Christ and his sacrificial death for you that grants you access when you say in faith, yes, God, I believe. Can you believe that God chose a murderer on the way to go murder more Christians and said, hey, hey, I got a great idea, angels. I'm thinking that I should use this murderer here who's on his way to murder more Christians in the brand new church. They say Paul's conversion was between 33 and 34 AD. That's what theologians believe. That means I'm talking the first year of the church, Saul's on his way to murder the brand new Christians. And God's like, I'll take that guy.

I'll take this murderer. And I'll show him that the road he's on is the road of destruction.

And there are many of us here that have areas of death and sin inside of us. And we're just like, God, I don't think you can bring life to that. If God can bring life to murderers on the road to do more murder and use those guys to build the church, he can change your life. He can take you from where you're at and bring you on his purposes and on his journey. So then you would be like the early Christians, someone who is walking on the way, someone who is part of the way, like Abram, who is walking with God, your own path, your road to killing to Damascus can be interrupted by Jesus Christ.

[ 45 : 57 ] That's who shows up on the road. Jesus shows up on the road. Father, we thank you that for so many of us here, Jesus has showed up on our road.

Our own way, our own journey, our own path, our own control, our own order, our own knowledge, our wisdom, our brilliance.

That Jesus, you're faithful to show up on the road. And God, would you come to the places in our heart that we haven't given to you, God, the places that we've been wrestling with you on, Lord.

Come and blind us, blind us as related to our own vision, the way we see things now and open our eyes to the way your kingdom actually is.

Give us eyes to see the kingdom of heaven, ears to hear your promises. God, let us be people that celebrate new life and do that new life inside of us.

[ 47 : 10 ] In Jesus name, everybody said amen.