

# Ephesians Sermon Series Q & A

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Preacher: Cedric Moss

[ 0 : 0 0 ] In your experience as a pastor, what would you say is the number one reason or number one reasons why persons may feel not connected to a body as to be a part of that shared ministry.

What would you say? It's a very good question. Since you just said number one, I think there are many, but I would say number one is the air that we breathe. The air that we breathe is an air of individualism.

It's all around. People talk about get your brand. You have to do you. Everything is you, you, me, me, I. We're just egocentric. We are just centered on ourselves.

And so we, and I think it's part of brokenness as well. When we are together, when we share together, when we come into close proximity together, we can know and be known.

I think a lot of times we don't want to be together, so we don't want to be known. And so we hide. We see with Adam and Eve, when sin came in, it was every man for himself, naming and separation.

[ 1 : 3 0 ] And so I really think if I had to choose one, it would be that. That's the air that we breathe. That's our default. Our natural inclination is to be separated and to center on ourselves.

That's what I think about that. I'll add one more part to it. The gospel is always calling us back to what we should have been in the first place.

So, for example, when we were looking at Ephesians chapter 6, and we looked at how husbands and wives were to be, how they were called to treat one another.

That's what they were supposed to be doing from the beginning. The inverted relationship where a wife is now usurping, wanting to usurp the position of her husband, a husband now wanting to dominate his wife.

And Paul is saying, submit to your husband, love your wife. That's taking them back to before the fall. That's the way we're supposed to have been. And so without sin, there is this community that we have.

[ 2 : 3 6 ] So when we come to Christ, we have to remember that now that is a call no longer to be in isolation as an individual, but it's now to be joined together with the people of God and know and be known.

And know and be known. One of the things that really glues us together, whether it is in a marriage, whether it is in a church, it is to share life together and open our hearts together.

There are some people who could walk away from a relationship because they lose nothing. Because they gave nothing into it. But when you open and bear your soul, when you join your life to another person, that's a costly departure.

Because you'll be leaving a part of yourself in that. And so I think we invest in relationships by giving of ourselves into them and truly having this joining that really keeps us together, that helps us to endure the storms, the difficulties, the trials, all of those things.

A lot of times people withhold the very thing that's needed to keep the relationship together, whether it's in a church, whether it's in a marriage, whether it's in a business and partners are together.

[ 3 : 56 ] The very thing they withhold is the very thing that's needed as the glue to really keep that together. And so I do think that we really need to recognize the need to divest ourselves, to invest ourselves.

And there's risk involved. I mean, there is no true love without vulnerability and risk. And that's all a part of the community of God. In marriage, it is a commitment to a sinner, a fellow sinner.

In the church, it's a commitment to sinners as well. We are saved sinners. We still sin. But I think that's the number one issue.

Anyone else? All right. Thanks, Pastor. Last week when you taught on the full armor of God, can you provide even some more practical ways in which when we talk about the helmet of salvation, how we ought to remember what that is and how do we fight or place on this armor of God?

Because sometimes there's a lot of people, you know, binding the devil and casting out and all these things. But how do we, as Christians, be able to do this and have that balance?

[ 5 : 19 ] Yeah, it's interesting. You know, I think you'd all agree with me. If words could bind the devil, he would have been bound a long time. And I remember when it began to dawn on me, you know, I was a part of a church where we bound the devil a lot.

And it dawned on me one day, you know, how long does a binding last? You know. It didn't seem to last long. And so I began to be awakened to that.

I think when we think about it, Paul was using some kind of analogy of a soldier of sorts when he was talking about this armor.

So think of a motorbike rider. The most important thing the law says to the motorbike rider is protect your head. It's the most vital part of the body to be protected.

So I think that speaks to us as well, that there's something that, if we can translate that into the spiritual as well, it's kind of like we are to protect the head of our spiritual life in this ongoing battle that we are in.

[ 6 : 31 ] And so when we think about how the Bible says salvation is that helmet, what we need to be doing is we need to be thinking about and meditating about salvation, what it provides for us, the protection that it gives to us.

And really, I think it is in the meditation of that that we kind of like build a helmet of protection for our spiritual lives. So, for example, I mean, let's, we could just go to, we go to Romans chapter 8.

Romans chapter 8 talks about the enduring nature of our salvation, where Paul tells us that there's nothing that we endure in this life. He starts it in verse 31 and he ends it in 39.

There's nothing we endure in this life that will be able to separate us from the love of God in Jesus Christ. And so we could take that on. And we could meditate on that and realize, you know what?

Nothing that we face in this life is going to affect our salvation. Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Paul is giving a list of things in this passage.

[ 7 : 49 ] And he gets down to the end in verse 37. He says, So I think what we have to do when we think about this, about salvation protecting the most vital part of our spiritual life.

It needs to be in meditation, but it also needs to be in the moment. What we're doing right now, memorizing scripture, so we think of it like this. Maybe the enemy is just bombarding your mind.

And our constitutions are different. So there are people who struggle with doubt, for example. There are people who would read and they would hear that nothing separates them from God's love and that no one can pluck them out of God's hands.

But they still struggle in believing that they are eternally secure in God. And so I think wherever we find ourselves being attacked or struggling in the moment, we need to appropriate God's word and just be building that helmet of salvation, protecting against wherever that attack is coming from.

So I think, Ed, that it's multifaceted, but the whole idea is to try to appropriate the benefit of salvation.

[ 9 : 33 ] And that is really where the protection comes. And you know, you think about it, right? There we talk about the helmet of salvation. This is in our heart. This is deeper than our soul where this conviction really comes in.

And so I think that is the, that's probably the best way that I could think of that. I would say practically speaking as well, one of the ways it helps me is I sing hymns.

I feed my soul in that way. I'm trying to think. There was a... I'm trying, there was a hymn I've been singing more recently, but one that stays with me is the hymn, Whatever My God Ordains Is Right.

That just, it just covers so many, many broad things. And I'm absolutely convinced that whatever my lot is in any day, that is a God-ordained lot.

It may have darkness, it may have trial, it may have difficulty and despair and all the other things. It is a God-ordained lot. And I know that one of the ways that God uses those circumstances is to drive us to Him.

[ 10 : 52 ] And to really bring us to Him. So I think practically it is meditating on God's Word and then appropriating God's Word in an ongoing way, but especially in the moment with that.

So let's say, for example, maybe the enemy is attacking you about past failures, past sins. I think we all know what it is to confess what God's Word says, that when we confess our sins, He is faithful just to forgive us, but we're still languishing in guilt and shame and condemnation, all the other things.

The only thing we can do is, again, get to God's Word and uphold that, renew that in our hearts, and build that helmet to protect against those debilitating doubts and the attacks of the enemy to really push us down.

So I think that's the way I would respond to that. Is that helpful? Anyone else? Sure.

Sure. So, you know, that scripture, the whole word past, the speech about that, about binding and releasing.

[ 12 : 23 ] So, scripture, whatever, you bind on earth, bound on earth, whatever, release on earth, release on earth. What exactly does that mean? Yeah, I think that's one of the most forged scriptures in the Bible.

You know, forgery, you take it and use it for a purpose it wasn't intended for. That's a forgery. And so, if we go there in Matthew 18, one of the locations of it, so the context of it is a brother sinning, and so I'll read it.

If your brother sins against you, Matthew 18, beginning in verse 15. If your brother sins against you, and he sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone.

If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile or an unbeliever and a tax collector.

[ 13 : 59 ] Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Essentially what the Lord is saying right there is when the church operates in this way, when the church is exercising discipline, heaven supports it.

Heaven supports it. Now, in this particular situation, when you think of binding and loosing, it could very well be that in a church discipline situation where a dispute comes to the church, it may be that the church may say to the one bringing the accusation, no, we see nothing of merit in what you're saying here.

So the situation is loosed in a sense. Or, it may be enforced in a sense against that person to say, we do see merit in this, and so, you need to repent, you need to do what is right as a believer.

So, all it's simply saying is that heaven will support what the church does in this situation where it is rightly administering church discipline.

[ 15 : 15 ] But to lift this scripture from here and to go and start applying it all over the place, I bind this and I bind that, I bind the prime minister from doing this and doing that, I mean, that's a forgery.

That's taking it out of the place where it didn't belong. Now, there's another one that comes to mind right over in chapter 16 where Peter had the great revelation of who Jesus is.

And Jesus then says to Peter in verse 18, he says to him, I tell you, you are Peter and on this rock, the revelation that you just had, I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Now, here's what's interesting. The you there is to who?

It's to Peter. to take that and say, well, he did that to every single person. It would make no sense for him to give Peter any keys because if he's giving it to every single person.

[ 16 : 29 ] So he says, I give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth shall be loose, shall be bound in heaven. Whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

Now, there's a lot of debate around that in terms of what it means and I'm not sure that it is necessary to come to the certain conviction about what that means to conclude what it doesn't mean.

What we know it doesn't mean is that Peter then had a license to go and do all manner of things but even if one thought that that's Peter that you can't take that to the whole to the whole to the whole church and so I think not only is it unbiblical but the mere fact that people are just beating their gum and just talking should be evidence enough that somehow you got that wrong what you're doing because again if talk could bind the devil he would have been bound a long time but the Bible tells us that there's coming a time when Satan will be will be bound and maybe I should even rephrase that because there is a sense that Satan is bound even now and what I mean by that is Satan is not the same today as he was before Calvary and the Bible tells us that the Bible tells us that in the cross

Jesus defeated Satan so Satan after Calvary is not the same Satan before Calvary the sway that he had over the nations he doesn't have that sway over the nations there's a passage that is easily overlooked when Jesus was beginning his ministry this is in this is in Matthew chapter 4 when Jesus begins his ministry Matthew says this in verse 14 he says so that what was spoken of the prophet Isaiah may be fulfilled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali the way of the sea beyond the Jordan Galilee of the Gentiles the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light and those dwelling in the region and shadow of death on them a light has dawned

Satan had a sway over the nations prior to Christ's coming that he no longer has over the nations and that's one of the reasons that the gospel is going forward and one of the interpretations of that passage in Revelation 20 where it talks of Satan being bound a thousand years is that that thousand years is just a very long period not literally a thousand years and that that began when Jesus came down when you read the language in Revelation 20 he talks about a mighty angel coming down having the keys to death and hell and he bound the devil for a thousand years there's a particular interpretation I think has a lot of merit and I would agree with it that the vision that John had was really a vision of the Lord Jesus Christ and what he did to Satan when he came down on the cross that he defeated

[ 20 : 20 ] Satan and so Satan is a defeated and a restricted foe and though he is not finally defeated the sway that he has over the nations and the sway that he has over the people of God is not the same as he had prior to that and so there is no warrant in people going around and saying I bind this or I bind that just this week there's a young man who I'm a friend with on Facebook a very godly young man but misguided in a lot of ways he picks up on all kinds of things and so this one guy who used to be a pastor but now says he's a coach he put up this thing and yeah he used to be pastor now I'm coach and he puts this thing up and says repeat after me this weekend is going to be the best weekend of my life and you should see the post

I mean dozens of people repeat just ditto ditto ditto repeating after I'm thinking what craziness is this and so I saw this guy repeating it so I I'm getting a bit wiser on Facebook now because I realize when you pick a lot of fights on Facebook you just stay there fighting all day and so I try not to pick fights as much so I private messaged him and I said I noticed that you responded to this post and you said that you know it's going to be the best I said you realize that for some of the people saying this could be the best weekend of life this could be some of their worst weekend some of them could die this weekend some horrible things could happen to them because it's not in your hands it's not in your mouth I mean imagine that that we could just say it's going to be live forever speak whatever you want to speak it is humanism it is unvarnished humanism and so

I was just encouraging him I said you know God is sovereign and he uses pain I mean God uses pain and suffering in our lives to build us to shape us for his purposes last night we were looking at Brother Kelly read a passage out of 2nd Timothy chapter 4 I know Paul is lamenting he's saying how Demas forsook him and how Alexander the coppersmith did him much harm and how when he was going on trial he said no one stood with me but the Lord was with me and I read and I thought wow I said as hard as that was for Paul God is using it for good for us that we could be encouraged to know that no matter what you go through the Lord will be with you he will be on your side he will not forsake you hard for Paul but good for us and so God works in all things and because he is God he can work in good things and bad things and hard things and he can use them for our good and so there is no warrant there is no biblical warrant for walking around and binding the devil and loosing this and all the other stuff it's just an exercise in futility and you would think that people have been doing it long enough that they would stop it

I remember when Hurricane Dorian was coming all these people were you know they're doing I was like what are you all doing what are you all doing it's in a vacuum because you don't want the hurricane to come you send the hurricane over why do you send it over there if you have the power to send it over there tell it to just go away and go nowhere it's just that's a hot button with me I'm sorry but yeah it doesn't mean that okay so I hope you see the way I believe we should approach these scriptures it isn't sometimes important in the moment to know what a scripture means it is important to know what it does not mean you can rule that out right away so whatever you want to make the Roman Catholics have a view of Matthew 16 there are all kinds of different views about what it means with Peter having these keys what it doesn't mean is that any person could go in there and grab a hold of that and say now I start binding all these different things there's no warrant for it and it doesn't happen alright that's my best response on that one

Keisha anyone else the question the question I was going to ask is very similar to the teacher's question I think you may have already answered it two things I hear a lot lately is one when things don't go as planned or exactly how the person expects it to go they would say oh the devil this and the devil that and sounds to me like the devil is being praised the Lord by doing that and the second thing I've been hearing too is I declare and I decree yeah yeah yeah again just verbal exercise that's all that is verbal exercise I decree and declare this and that and all kinds of things and sounds good but the Lord is sovereign and we trust him in in all things what what I would say about when things happen we actually have examples of both let me show you one

[ 26 : 22 ] I think in Romans let's see Romans chapter one and verse thirteen Paul writes to the church and he says I do not want you to be unaware brothers that I have often intended to come to you but thus far have been prevented now he's saying I've been hindered who hindered him he doesn't say but he's been hindered there's another example if someone can help me

I'll search it in a second but there's another time Paul says Satan hindered him if someone can search that for me but in yeah in Acts chapter 16 and verse 6 this is Paul and his comrades he says Luke is writing and they went through the region of Phrygia and Galatia having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia who forbid them the Holy Spirit now how did they know the Holy Spirit forbid them I believe it is by discernment it is by having discernment that this is the

Holy Spirit not oh Satan you know you're the one doing this you're the you're the you know I bind you and we decree and declare that we're going to go anyway no none of that they they discerned that it was the Holy Spirit who was telling them not to go to not to go to Asia and then in the circumstances of things they saw the Spirit was leading them to Macedonia and that's where they actually went anyone found that scripture I was referring to 1 Thessalonians 2 18 1 Thessalonians 2 18 so Paul is writing to the Thessalonians and he says to them because we wanted to come to see you

I Paul again and again but Satan hindered us and see this is why we need discernment you cannot just see some situation that happens things not going the way that you want it to go and immediately that's the devil no could be the Holy Spirit could be the Holy Spirit could be God and sometimes it can actually be some kind of a satanic resistance and so what do we do when we have the sense well first of all I think what this requires of us is to pray it requires of us to pray Lord help me to understand what is going on and how I should respond not just to start rattling off I decree and declare you could be decreeing and declare against the Holy Spirit so it takes it takes discernment and what we saw in the

Acts passage is Paul obviously talked to his comrades who said we rediscovered that the Spirit did not want us to go to Asia and then towards the end he said we discerned he wanted us to go to Macedonia because Paul had a dream that night there was this man in Macedonia who said come over and help us and they concluded God wants us to go to Macedonia and so I think going right back to what we looked at last week in terms of spiritual warfare it takes discernment and we are naive if the extent of our understanding is everything negative is the devil and everything positive is God if that's the extent of our understanding we have no understanding there are some situations that can look very positive and it can be Satan transforming himself as an angel of light so we need discernment there and then there's some situations that aren't going our way that could be negative and we need to discern what is the impulse of this so certainly if the spirit is hindering us we cooperate with the spirit if we discern that it is the enemy who is opposing us by the grace of

[ 32 : 02 ] God we press forward and we trust the Lord in that and so there is no simple answer to every single situation it's a case-by-case basis we need to stay close to the Lord and to brothers and sisters and we need to discern what the Lord is actually saying and doing the good thing though is that God is able to use it all so let's take for example maybe a conflict at work a conflict at work is so easy just to focus on the conflict and try to think about how we deal with this or deal with that without stepping back and trying to see how God wants to use that and work in that and that we cooperate with his purposes instead of with the enemy's purposes and the reality is that in situations we face there are these dual purposes at work so you read the book of Proverbs the book of Proverbs talks about folly sitting on the street corner in the high places but also says wisdom sits there too and so when we are going about living our life there's wisdom calling to us there's folly calling to us and so we have to have discernment to know which way we ought to go yeah but the decree and declare one is very similar to the bind and loose one and we can trust the Lord

I mean the idea that somehow we can have God going like this based on what we do or not it's just that's not the God of the Bible he's sovereign we want to follow his lead we don't want to give him our lead he'd say do this and do that and go here and go there we follow his lead okay we have time for one more hi pastor I know in your message you well when you stood up there for minutes ago you said something about the fact that a lot of times when persons when they don't want to fellowship it sometimes has to do with separation from God the way Adam and Eve was and you spoke about the fact that Adam and Eve it was always supposed to have been fellowship it should have never been a separation so I think in some cases and you could tell me if I'm wrong in this where you may have some situations where persons may feel disconnected from God and then there are others that they feel vulnerable they feel that if they become too close or get too close to persons that somehow people are going to find out things and we all carry stuff none of us are perfect so how do we as a body identify well I mean it's easy to identify these persons but what do we do to let these persons know that hey you're safe how do we now get them to a place of understanding that we're in this together as you mentioned and we all have a responsibility to carry the great commission that's a great question all the questions have been great

I think the first thing I would say is we need to be patient we need to be patient with one another we all have different constitutions God made us differently so some of us warm up the people faster we make friends faster you can go back on our lives and see that and then we've had experiences along the way as you mentioned there have been betrayals so sometimes people are more reluctant to trust in relationships and so we have to factor all those in mind we have to be patient with people and really bring them along I think the first thing to remember is that we will not all enjoy the same levels of friendship and closeness with everyone in the church that's no different I mean even in families you realize in families you can find siblings that are tighter than with the others for any number of different reasons there's chemistry there are things that really join us to particular people you think of

David and Jonathan that was unique didn't have that with everybody else and so I think we should all desire close relationships it should be a matter of prayer there needs to be some initiative on our part some level of taking some degree of risk as we seek to build relationships but I don't believe that true fellowship and being a part of a body necessarily means that we share the same degree of intimacy and closeness with every single person we just want to be prayerful for the Lord to lead us into those relationships you know just the other day I was praying for my daughter Abigail she's going to be going to a new school and my prayer was Lord would you give her friends would you bring friends into a life that would be for her good that would help her to grow and get really connected to a group of believers and help her on the journey and so that's not everybody that's not a whole bunch of people it's really just some select people and I think we all know that we cannot be close with every single person but we do need a band of brothers and sisters and we just need to be praying asking the

Lord to bring us to them bring them to us to join to join our lives together there's a book in the bookstore called Side by Side we studied this book in our care groups when they were care groups a number of years ago it's a wonderful book it talks about how we build how we come side by side with other people with all the realities of what it means to live in a broken and a fallen world with people who have been betrayed in relationships and are learning to trust again it's a wonderful book there's also another resource that comes to mind and this would be maybe about five years ago I don't know if any of you remember we had an issue of table talk that dealt with shame the title of it was shame that's all it dealt with wonderful because one of the things about shame is that when we think of things in our past expressions of our fallenness our brokenness we have to come to grips with shame and the way we come to grips with shame is to realize that Christ died for our shame as well not just for our sins and he wants to set us free not just from our sins but also from our shame and that's what the

[ 39 : 33 ] Bible says whom the son sets free is free indeed not just from sins but from shame and that book is also a wonderful and a helpful resource that helps us to come to grips with shame because one of the realities about shame is that we don't even want to in our own private space and in our minds think about our shame because it brings shame so we just want to think happy thoughts but the gospel calls us to bring our shame to Christ and to receive the same freedom from our shame that Christ gives from our sins so that we're not identified by our sins we're not identified by the shame attached to those sins yes they're part of our past but they don't define us they're not who we really are and that doesn't mean that you know you just get on our soapbox and start to broadcast your life to the world it doesn't mean that at all but what it means is that we are postured that as we do life together as we connect and build relationships that there may be moments where there are individuals who we are able to open our lives to and we feel no shame because we've been set free from that particular shame and the sin attached to that shame and so

I think the best way I can say that Patricia is what you shouldn't what none of us should feel what none of us should feel is that there is this mandate or there is this command that we must go and bear our souls to and our lives to every single person I don't think that's what it is at all we can enjoy fellowship and community with others without every single thing being known to every single one but it is a wonderful thing to be able to have brothers and sisters who we can let into the bedroom of our lives and you can think of it like this we have people they're kind of like in the old days some of you remember this how you saw neighbors who would come to the house and they would stand outside the fence and they talk to your parents talk to them in the fence then you had some who come in the yard talk to them then you had some who came in the house in the living room you talk to them some who come in the kitchen then some go in the bedroom and those are all different levels of relationships and so we just need to be prayerful these are the street these in the yard these in the living room these in the kitchen these in the bedroom and allow the Lord to really lead us in those the message is that basically just like you said having the wisdom and being able to discern who to open to but in it we still ought to love absolutely there is a foundational level of community and sharing that we should all have and then above that foundation you're going to have it differing based on the different relationships a lot of it some of it is just the providence of God the way the Lord joins us to people and you can think of it like even going back to primary school perhaps there was one or two persons who just providentially you just connected with on a job you just connect with in a church

I think it's the same but there needs to be a shared sense of community with all of the people of God that's a common denominator and then above that we trust the Lord to help us with those relationships I think one of the lessons we should all learn about being confidential and protecting people betrayal is when we see the damage it brings when there's betrayal it's a painful thing and so we must be very protective of one another and we must consider it a rare treasure when a person does open up their life in that way that it's not something to take lightly and it's not something to deal with flippantly and to betray in any way so great questions



I'm sorry I couldn't be more specific but hopefully those principles are helpful all right I did say that was the last one but I'm generous so there's one more this will be the really really last one yes Jennifer okay when you were talking earlier this is Patricia's question this is more in the line the scripture in Proverbs 18:21 that talks about death and life are in the power of the tongue and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof so I read it listening to you earlier when you say fruit where's that again

Jennifer give me the offering Proverbs 18:21 okay mm-hmm death and life are in the power of the tongue and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof so when we talked about discussing earlier about speaking certain things and it's just talk mm-hmm how does this scripture relate to that yes good good question it's a good question because I think the question gets at how we need to see the Proverbs Proverbs are not promises they're principles so for example one that we've heard quite a bit train up a child in the way that you should go when he's old he won't depart from it is that a promise or is that a principle that's a principle it's a principle that it generally holds true but it is not a promise that if we do exactly this we will get exactly that it's a guiding principle

[ 46 : 50 ] I think what this proverb is speaking to is telling us is that we need to be mindful of our speech so for example if I may I may use my speech to berate Alexia and just just beat her with my words that's not wise to do that it's not wise to do that I'm going to get the fruit of that in terms of me berating her in that way as well as I could use it for good in encouraging her and blessing her and I will eat the fruit of that as well but let's think of it this way imagine a world imagine a world where our life was dependent on our words none of us want to live in that life

I mean if you take that view what you have done is you have removed the sovereign God you've removed the sovereign God who acts in spite of our words in spite of our foolishness and all the other kinds of things that we do thank God that he doesn't leave us just to the whim of our words so I think this is speaking here about a principle in terms of how we are to use our words for good but I don't think it is saying that well I say it this way I don't think that you can come to this verse and walk away saying this means that what I could do is I could just speak and have what I say it's not that it's not that at all so if we if we look at it in context this is really just telling us that this is a principle we are able to use our lips for good or for ill and we have the fruit of that but I think that's in the limited sense of interactions with people

I mean I think we all know this we all know that we can we can heard one guy say that talking about one woman he said this woman's tongue should have been licensed as a concealed weapon you know because of how dangerous her words were when she actually spoke how she can cut for the words and so I think it speaks more to that that we can have our words can build up and our words can destroy I think that's the extent of it that we can establish with that so if we were to think about Proverbs 18:20 and 21 I think the boundaries around these verses speaks in the area of how we use how we use our words to bless or to curse and to harm or to do good and how we can have the fruit of that or we will have the fruit of that as a result of how we use our words but

I don't believe at all not a hint of these verses give any warrant to go around and saying well I can speak just positive things and all that kind of stuff you know when I was young I tried that to avoid a beating and it didn't work I was positive I still got beaten yeah so that's my best attempt on that one Jennifer you got a follow up I thought about this scripture in relation to when people are sick a lot of people say speak life you know and death and life is the power of tongue so we don't want anybody around us like if somebody is in the hospital and you know they're ailing we don't want anybody around us who isn't going to speak!

okay we don't want any negativity because if we speak life death and life is in the power of the tongue yeah it doesn't go that far it doesn't go that far I mean you think about that right here's a sick person in the hospital and do you really think that a sovereign God is going to leave that person to the whim and fancy of the people who walk in that room and what they say or don't say if the sovereign God has determined that person is going to die no amount of positive words can change that if the sovereign Lord has determined that that person is going to live no amount of negative words are going to change that and so I think people make too much of that and I've heard people say it and it's a good example that you raise speak positive speak positive that's humanism that's humanism we put our faith in God and he has a will he has a will I mean the people who really think that God has a neutral you know you have your car neutral and go and drive a reverse that's

[ 52 : 34 ] God's posture he's a neutral and if you positive then he go this way that's a yo-yo that's not God God has a will God has a plan God has a purpose and so we don't need to be superstitious we don't need to get into think positive be positive and all the other kinds of things I know practically speaking let's say that a friend just lost his or her job we want to go there and try to encourage them so we want to be careful you don't want to go and say that in that moment you may talk to them later and say well you know hey you realize that you may have contributed to that but I think we all need wisdom there's a proverb that says that words spoken fitting words spoken in the moment is like a treasure of apples or something like that but it talks about speaking fitting words to fit the moment and we have to be able to do that but brothers and sisters if we are really living our lives really believing in positivity and negativity and

I must speak this I speak that we really know better than the humanists we know better than the person who work in obia or practicing voodoo because that's what they really believe that they can do those kinds of things we serve a sovereign God who works in all things including bad things and that's why like Job we can in the midst of great losses say blessed be the name of the Lord Job is a wonderful example for us in all the calamity that he faced his mind first went to God not the devil but for a lot of us our first thought is the devil Job first thought was the Lord gave the Lord is taken away blessed be the name of the Lord and so let's use the proverbs as principles because that's what they are that's what a proverb is a principle not a promise and

I think if we do that we will rightly divide these kinds of things but isn't that good to know that people could speak all kinds of negative things around you and it is neither here nor there because there's a sovereign God they could curse you and means nothing away from a sovereign God when David was leaving in shame going in exile when Absalom had risen up against him there was this man Shimei who was cursing David as he went cursing him and one of David's men said to David let me go and take the head off that dog let me go and kill him and David said no leave him alone he said perhaps God is having him to curse me and see we just have to grow in our conviction of the sovereignty of

God God is sovereign in every single thing and yes sometimes he does allow brothers to betray us sell us into slavery he does allow a person to falsely accuse and cause you to pay the punishment for something that you didn't do but he is sovereign over all of that when you read the account of Joseph there is this regular refrain but God was with!

him after everything that bad happens but God was with him and so God is with us and we just need to distance ourselves from superstition and from the belief that we can take the place of a sovereign God we can't we bow to him and we trust him for whatever our Lord is I don't know if it's because I recently turned 60 but I think about death more and and the truth is that death is the better portion for the believer anytime we think this life is to be held on to we are absent minded we're making more of this life than we really should God has promised something far better for us