

# Homosexuality and the Believer

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Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you, John. I'm going to ask you in advance to give a report to me.

Judith and I are going away for a brief vacation. We're leaving after the morning service. We're going down to, where is it? Sevierville, Tennessee, okay?

Down near Gatlinburg, et cetera, and we're going to have a wonderful time there. Be back Thursday evening. But I am not going to be here for the youth missions team report tonight, and here's what I am looking for in particular.

I want to know whether or not the person who speaks, that's Caleb Gibbs, if he asks you to pray for him, will you report on that?

You let me know. You can email me. This is one of those times that you can email me. I want the inbox with lots of people saying, yes, he asked for prayer. Three or four times, he stopped and did it specifically so that you had adequate emails in your inbox.

[ 1 : 05 ] You got it? Okay. Do we believe in praying for those who preach the Word of God? What's the answer? Yes. Yes. I am looking forward to the reports I hear.

I know that our missions team has been working diligently. I'm very thankful for what they have been doing and for what all of those who are working with our young people have been doing. It's a great blessing to watch them at work and to see the details that God is bringing together. Well, if I'm going to ask you to pray for me, then let's do it together, and then you can kind of at least three times during the service, and you may sense when it's necessary.

You just say, oh, Lord, help them. I don't care if you do it out loud. It won't bother me. I believe it more than you do. That was wrong. But I depend on your prayer, and so I don't care if you say it out loud.

Now, some of you are going to do that just because you're perverse, and it won't bother me. There you go. More, more often.

[ 2 : 10 ] Okay. Precious Father, my heart can't help but think about the truth of Zechariah where it said, not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord.

Preaching is a terrifying business in that while it is the sweet savor of salvation to those who are being saved, it is the odor of death to those who turn away from Christ.

And I would ask your power this morning to preach the word with clarity and with the enabling of the Spirit of God, that those who are here today and know Christ would have their hearts strengthened, their resolve increased, their passion for holy living amplified, and their desire to see people come to the Savior strengthened.

And pray for those who are here today that do not know Christ, some that are completely deceived, believing that church attendance or something they said decades ago that really has never made any difference in their life is the same as having a personal relationship with the living God and Savior of this universe.

And I pray that this morning your Spirit would bring them to conviction, that they would see their need for the Lord Jesus Christ, and they would cry out and be saved. Now help me.

[ 3 : 52 ] I ask it for your glory. Amen. Well, you who know me, I think over 26 years, know that topical messages are not my favorite.

I'll just tell you that right up front in case you didn't know it. I would much rather start in chapter 1, verse 1 of Ephesians and work my way through to the end of Ephesians, and then after that, I can tell you I'm already beginning to pray about what I'm going to preach next, Lord willing.

And I'll tell you ahead of time that I'm beginning to think real seriously about the book of John. And I don't know, I can't promise that yet, but it's beginning to become a thematic focus in my own private devotions and study.

And I love preaching expositionally. Take our time and work our way through the book. That's my preference. But there are times that I believe it is right, it is important, it is responsibility of a person who ministers the Word of God to speak to those matters that are contemporary to where we are. And I don't think there's a one of you here in the room that is not aware of the fact that the Supreme Court, the Supreme Court, the Supreme Justices, are in the process of considering the Defense of Marriage Act that California passed.

[ 5 : 14 ] And there is a high probability that the court is going to, in some way or another, diminish the significance of that law and pose some challenges to the traditional view of marriage.

And that being the case, I believed that it was right for me, as a preacher of the gospel, to stand before you and address the issue of homosexuality and the believer.

So let me speak, first of all, in broad terms, in terms of where we are and what's going on, bring it down a little more specifically to what's happening with the issue of homosexuality, and then bring it down to what I believe is the most important part for us.

What is it that Christ wants us to do as His witnesses and representatives in this world that He has placed us in? So let's think about it in broad terms. Where are we?

First, let's kind of look at the broad state of our nation and what is happening with social norms.

Recognize that you may take pleasure in realizing that divorce rates are dropping.

[ 6 : 16 ] How many of you picked up on that? The divorce rates are dropping. Good news, good news. The fact of the matter is, the reason divorce rates are dropping is because people are just not marrying. And so I wouldn't go around touting the statistics that says, whoo, we're having some kind of modest revival because fewer people are getting divorced.

The truth of the matter is, fewer people are getting married. And more and more people are just cohabiting, living together, and just kind of leaving it out there. Let me give you some very startling statistics.

41% of the children in the United States of America live in single-parent homes. 41% of children in America live in single-parent homes.

I was doing some research on the web, and I was really struck that one of the primary factors in poverty is single-parent homes.

You look at the statistics and recognize that 29% of Eurasian people, white community, they come from single-parent homes.

[ 7 : 23 ] 53% in the Latino community, and 73% in the black community live in single-parent homes. It is devastating to stop and realize how many people grow up without a daddy and a mommy in the same home.

It's unbelievable. We are growing into a culture in which entitlement is a way of life and a perceived right. And if you want to see people really get animated and really angry, just suggest to them that you're going to take away any of their entitlements, any at all.

Our rate of narcissism, that's a fancy little word for self-focus, has grown by incredible leaps and bounds in the last two decades, and it is at the point where people are culturally consumed with themselves and their own preferences and interests.

Our culture's drug use and criminal behavior is up significantly. I sat in here about a week ago when our homeowners association here, Trebu Woods, we host them once a year, and they had a police officer come in and talk to them about just common safety and block watch issues because there's so much crime going on.

It is going on because of heroin in particular, and they were just giving little tips on what not to do to make your house a ready target. Let's speak a little more specifically to what we see happening in the area of homosexuality.

[ 8 : 50 ] We see there is an aggressive agenda that has sought to unseat truth and to suppress it in news, in entertainment, in classrooms, and in every manifestation of the public square.

Make no mistake about it. Those who oppose our God and Savior will never be happy so long as any believer is capable of standing up for the truth and calling people to repentance.

Don't be surprised because we realize that what is really going on, there are two kingdoms in conflict. Do you understand that? There are two kingdoms in conflict, and don't be surprised at the adversity that is coming for those who will at any point and any juncture say, hey, that's not right.

I am stunned to realize that there's been a significant shift in public opinion on many fronts, but particularly in the area of human sexuality and self-gratification.

There's been a huge shift in the last 20 years. I remember when I was going to seminary in the mid-70s, and the predominant focus of my seminary education was on learning the languages and the discipline of exposition and study and pastoral theology, and nobody ever thought to say to me, pastor, before you retire, you are going to be dealing with the devolution of American culture, and you are going to see the church of the living God become progressively colder and colder, both to holiness and to moral purity.

[ 10 : 23 ] We see a futile attempt by social conservatives trying to argue a theological truth without relying on the authority and the sufficiency of Scripture.

And when you turn away from arguing a theological truth without relying upon the theology of truth, guess what happens? It doesn't work.

I don't know if you're actually aware of it, and some of you perhaps are, but in, let's see, what is it, 2003, the law against sodomy in the state of Texas was ruled against by the Supreme Courts. when that was, when that happened, the reality of the fact is this, is that there was removed all rational basis for insisting on any kind of moral behavior in our culture.

And be certain of this, that once that has passed by the wayside, the door is open for every kind of imaginable perversion as men can imagine.

[ 11 : 33 ] It's very interesting. I did some research last several weeks. I've been studying and praying about this subject. But one of the things that I went back and began researching is the vocabulary of acceptance that has worked its way in.

You may not realize this, but first of all, there was a time when homosexuality was called a perversion, even in secular fields. Then it was recognized as a psychological difficulty.

And then it was recognized as an alternative lifestyle and a preference that everybody should have the right to choose simply because, hey, that's what I want and why should I not be given what I want?

Listen to me carefully. The same logic is being played out today in the area of pedophilia. And any of you who don't know what the word means, you can ask your mother or daddy at home later on. The vocabulary of teaching our culture to be acceptable to that form of misbehavior is in play and is being advanced aggressively in our day.

[ 12 : 43 ] I have to look out on our congregation and recognize that there are some of you probably. I think it probably will take longer than the next 10, 15 years. But I would not be surprised if we saw the same argument play out and the same consequence take place in the area of pedophilia that we have seen taking place in the area of homosexuality.

And if you think I'm wrong, ask yourself historical questions as to what's going on and where it has gone and how quickly it has gone.

I recognize that as we think about what is going on today, we also recognize the building pressure on professing believers and the probability of wholesale compromise on many fronts.

I would not be surprised if in the next decade it's not just liberal churches that quietly and tacitly agree with homosexuality, but a great deal of accommodation is going on in churches all over our country.

And I'm not just talking about those who are liberal and would tell you that really Jesus did not come to die for our sins, but He came to be a good example. I anticipate that many churches will compromise because they simply will not want to face the pressure that goes with the issues that are on hand.

[ 13 : 58 ] So let's come to a second question and that is what is going on here in America now? And I want you to turn in your Bibles to Romans chapter 1. What is going on here in America now?

Romans chapter 1 beginning in verse 18 through 28 and I'm not going to take care of an exposition of the entire passage but kind of follow the broad sweep of what is in view.

But pick up, if you will, in verse 18. It says, For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth.

I want you to recognize that what I believe is taking place is God is in the process of displaying His wrath against those who are ungodly and are intent on suppressing the truth.

Now, do you follow what I'm saying? Ungodly but also intentional in their energetic attempt to suppress the truth. Hey, all you have to do is say, I don't believe homosexuality is an acceptable alternative lifestyle and what happens to you in your workplace?

[ 15 : 06 ] Unless you're a mother at home or you run your own business, guess what? You're going to face pressure. And everybody else is wandering around with these two equal signs that are made out of pink. Do you follow me?

It's the way it is. I recognize when we think about God's wrath that we have to identify there are different ways in which God's wrath is or has been expressed and eventually will be expressed. For one, we do see illustrations in the Bible occasionally of God's wrath being directly displayed as is or as was the case against Sodom and Gomorrah. You look back there in Sodom and Gomorrah and you recognize that God reached the point with their sexual perversion and wickedness that He finally brought fire from heaven and destroyed them.

If you're a student of Scripture, you also realize that one of the reasons that the Amorites and the Canaanites were driven out of the land was because of their sexual perversion and their murderous treatment of other people, their shedding of innocent blood.

In fact, remember, Abraham was told, you are eventually going to receive this land and you're not going to get it now because the iniquity of the Amorites has not filled up to the point that I am going to put judgment on them.

[ 16 : 20 ] I want you to understand also that God's wrath generally is something that is released only on occasion. We don't see many illustrations of God's wrath in this day and age and if you were to think back on that subject, you realize in Romans chapter 2 it says that God delays.

Why does He delay His judgment? What's His reason? His desire is that no one should perish. He's patient, patient, patient and in His patience He is giving men opportunity to repent.

However, when men disrespect His patience and temperance, I want you to understand that the day of judgment is coming and judgment will be amplified by the amount of patience and forbearance He has displayed.

Ultimately, we do need to understand that God's wrath will be displayed against unrepentant sinners for all of eternity. And that is a terrifying prospect to stop and realize that individuals who rebel against God and refuse the grace of Christ will spend all of eternity in hell.

That's important for us to realize. Remember I said that we are watching God turn His back on America and He's releasing this nation to the devolution and the unintended consequences of rebellion against God's will.

[ 17 : 39 ] And I bring this to your attention for several reasons in the text. First, let's look at what we find there in Romans chapter 1. Mark what we see in verse 24, 26 and 28.

And let me just draw attention to you. It says here, therefore God gave them up. God gave them up. God gave them up. And that little statement, that little phrase, identifies the judicial act of God whereby He steps aside to allow sin to produce its horrible and unintended consequences.

How many realize that when God says don't do this, there's a little subtext that says, this is going to hurt you. I was reading another interesting article about the coming certain economic difficulty in America.

And that coming economic difficulty has nothing to do with our national debt. Ooh, what is going to cause our economic difficulty?

Guess what it is? How many of you know it is the birth rate? Japan today has more people in adult pampers than in nappies for babies.

[ 18 : 59 ] And as you get older, guess what happens to your creativity and your productivity upon which a culture depends for economic stability? How many of you heard that we had too much population going around?

You remember hearing all that kind of stuff? The unintended consequences of not following God's Word plays out eventually and catches people in their foolishness.

Same thing happening in China, by the way. Well, you look here and it says that God gave them up. Second, notice that in each of these three instances, God's act of giving men up to their sin results in them doing things that are unnatural.

Look at verse 24. He gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves. In verse 26, God gave them up to dishonorable passions for their women exchanged natural relationships with those that are contrary to nature.

Now, what does it mean to be contrary to nature? Here, my son called me the other day asking me a plumbing question. I am an informal plumber.

[ 20 : 09 ] I'm a plumbing pastor. And it happens on a regular basis. People call me with plumbing problems and I will tell them it should run downhill. Keep it going that way and you want it to go towards the curb.

You want it to go away from where you are. But there's something else about plumbing. How many of you know when you go to buy fittings, they are called male fittings and female fittings? Duh. There's a reason for that vocabulary. It has to do with biology. And when it says that they are doing things contrary to nature, it's saying they're doing things contrary to the biological structure that God has provided to the male body and to the female body.

Look at what it says there in verse 28. And since they do not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done.

Now when it says ought not to be done, it's not just talking about what is not morally correct, but it's something that is destructive to the person who engages in it. Third, notice something else in our text.

[ 21 : 23 ] The characteristics that bring judgment are not only rebellion against God's order and the law, but I want you to notice something else in verse 32. And ask yourself this question, does this not describe what we see happening in our culture?

for though they know God's decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.

Hey, you want to get acceptability in our culture today? Just let everybody know how tolerant you are and accepting you are of homosexuality and every other perversion out there.

Well, everybody's doing it, you know, I was going to say picking their nose and chewing it, but I didn't think I should say that. So, we'll take that off the, scratch that from the tape. Okay. I've been praying a lot that I don't say things I don't need to.

That was one of them. Okay, here we go. You cannot miss the fact in this passage that God calls homosexuality and its behavior sin.

[ 22 : 29 ] In one sense, it is no more offensive to God's holiness than any other sin. In another sense, it profoundly violates God's greater plan and has more lasting consequences like the sin of lying or covetousness.

It causes destruction to the foundational relationship of the home and marriage and procurativity. It harms people. And so, I want you to understand that the Bible is explicit, undeniable, and clear on the matter of that homosexuality is sin.

Now, I've heard people argue and I've listened to some of those arguments and also read them that homosexuality was really something that was only an Old Testament edict. It was a problem. The Old Testament, there was a lot of problems with male prostitution, cultic prostitution, and so, it really didn't get carried over into the New Testament.

Well, Romans, I would advise you, is in the New Testament. But I want you to look at another passage, if you will. Turn in your Bible to 1 Corinthians 6. 1 Corinthians 6, and I want you to look at verse 9.

In fact, this is a good passage to underline, particularly verse 11. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Guess what that means. Listen to me carefully.

[ 23 : 48 ] People who do not know Christ will go to hell. Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor greedy, nor drunkards, nor revelers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

Now, look at verse 11, and that's the one I like the most. And such were some of you. Isn't that encouraging? Guess what? There's not a single one of us in here that was not born with perversity woven into our heart.

Agreed? Now, could we have gotten worse, left to our own devices? That's undeniably true. The grace of God delivered us from the devolution that sin brings into an individual's life.

But understand this. The Scriptures make it clear that homosexuality is sin. And let me explain something I already touched on, but just mark it down. Homosexuality contradicts biology and by its nature is part of Satan's attacks on the foundations of culture and its home.

I think it's very interesting that when you think about the matter of homosexuality, you recognize that it's a very attack on the relationship that God ordained between a man and a woman. And God thought that that relationship between a man and a woman was so important that He actually kind

of changed, didn't forget, but He tweaked the normal flow of His creative process so that men didn't miss the issue.

[ 25 : 34 ] Now, what am I explaining? I mean, everything else that He created, how did He do it? Shazam? I mean, you know, I mean, bang. He said it, it happened, and it all came out, what, male and female.

But with man, how did it happen? Man alone. And then in order to amplify man's identity of his difficulty in his alone state, He had him name all the creatures, and as He was naming them, guess what He kept on looking for?

He was looking for a partner, and then God helped him realize it wasn't there. And then God created woman out of man and brought that woman to man, and Adam responded with, I mean, it's probably one of the most expressive little statements in the early parts of Genesis.

In essence, it says, wow, bone of my bone and flesh of my, do you know what He was saying? He was saying, this is it. This is what I need. This is right. And Satan has put his energy into attacking the glory and the wisdom and the kingdom of God, and he attacks the foundation when he attacks the issue of the relationship that God has ordained between a man and a woman.

And I have to tell you that I watch our culture here in America lunging towards a futile confrontation with the God of this universe, and I tell you that it will not be good.

[ 27 : 06 ] I'm reminded of what it says in Psalm chapter 2. Why do the nations rage and the heathen imagine a vain thing? Do you know what vain is? Stupid. I remember, and the image kind of stands out in my mind, out in the southwest, there was a large pile of roadkill been hit by a previous semi, and this buzzard had landed down in the roadway and was enjoying dinner early morning, dinner, and just kind of picking at the guts and pulling them out and eating them, and out in the middle of nowhere, and along comes this semi just kind of tooling along the highway, and the buzzard thought, you know, who is this to take my lunch?

And instead of flying away, kind of puffed himself out and stood out in the middle of the road right in front of that semi, and guess what the outcome was? New roadkill. And so I got to tell you what I see happening in America is we see a culture that is standing out, puffed up, in front of God, and the consequences are going to be undeniable.

And let me tell you something. Unto whom much is given, much is what? Say it with me. Much is required. There are lands all around the world that have not received the blessings that America has received.

And I believe those blessings have come to a large degree because of the humility and godliness of our forefathers. And this generation is squandering it in its violation and rebellion against God.

Let's come to the most important part. What's the believer to do? What's the believer to do? Turn over in your Bible if you will to Matthew chapter 5 verse 10 through 16.

[ 28 : 58 ] Matthew chapter 5. Be salt and light. I tell you, we live in a day and age that is no more wicked than what the Roman Empire was like.

Do you understand that? I see people sometimes wringing their hands in kind of absolute despair and just broken hearted. No, that's understandable. But the level of anxiety among professing believers is unfitting.

When Jesus said what He did in Matthew chapter 5, look there in verse 13. You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall it be salted? How will it be restored?

How will it be turned around? And the imagery of Scripture is clear. When Christ saved us, He did more to us and for us than just deliver us from future judgment. He appointed me, He appointed you to be His ambassadors and He also appointed us to be His representatives in a broken and despairing world.

Being His ambassador, beloved, involves godly living. Mark that down. Godly living. Let me just touch on a few texts to make this undeniably clear.

[ 30 : 09 ] In Matthew chapter 5, as I recited here, being salt and light refers to living a godly life that lifts up the character and truth of God in a dark and desperate world.

Titus chapter 2, verse 10 through 14, says this, that we are to adorn the doctrine of God by living godly lives. We are to adorn. We're to make it look good. And over in 1 Corinthians chapter 15, I want you to look at this passage just for a moment.

1 Corinthians chapter 15, verse 34, wake up from your drunken stupor.

Now, I don't believe the primary focus of this passage is talking about drunkenness in the church at Corinth. I think it is talking about carnality and ungodliness that had become so pervasive in the body of Christ there that they were completely missing their calling.

Wake up from your drunken stupor as it is right and do not go on, what's the next word? Sinning. Why? Why? Because some have no knowledge of God.

[ 31 : 30 ] Can you live a sinful life and have a significant testimony? No. Can God use you in your sinfulness?

Yes. But is your testimony compromised by your impurity and your failure to be a living representative of Christ in humility and tenderness and an affection for godliness?

And what's the answer? When you drift away from what He wants you to be, you lose effectiveness. Now, look at that passage again.

He says, stop acting that way. Don't keep sinning because there are people that don't know Christ.

Let me have you think also of another factor. As you think about what is happening today, and remember, salt and light, Titus passage and this passage, I got to tell you, I think the moral impurity that we see going on in our culture has some roots back in the misbehavior of the church today.

[ 32 : 43 ] The moral impurity that's crept into the church of the living God is unbelievable. Rampant pornography is an undeniable fact in the congregation of God's saints.

Heterosexuality and immorality, heterosexual immorality is something that goes on all the time. I remember reading an article in Christianity Today where there were some young people that were writing and saying, listen, you old fogies need to get with it and just realize that young people are going to have intercourse.

Just don't get upset about it and just be hopeful that we don't get pregnant. These are Christians. I remember talking with a pastor who explained to me that he no longer asked young couples who came into his office if they were living together.

It just was too embarrassing for him. Listen, that's not being a faithful shepherd. And when the salt loses its saltiness, it is ineffective and as a result it gets trodden underfoot.

Let's go on and recognize something else. We are to be loving and telling the truth. I make a sad prediction that you're going to see more and more believers just go quiet on this subject and the sinfulness of it.

[ 34 : 05 ] I think it's somewhere in May. No, maybe it's April 19th. I think it is April 19th. There is going to be a silent day in public schools. Do you hear me? Thousands of schools and I would venture to say many of them in our community will have a day of silence.

Do you know what the day of silence is to recognize and celebrate? Homosexuality. And many, many Christians will just be quiet and acquiesce and not make any stink because do you want to seem to be out of sorts in that environment?

When people that have been called by God to declare His truth sit by quietly in the face of sinfulness, they are invariably or invariably also quiet on the gospel.

Let me explain something here. People who do not know about sin do not need a Savior. Does that make sense? Can I say that again slowly? People who do not understand the sinfulness of their heart don't need a Savior.

Let me put it in a frame so you can understand what Jesus meant. He said, hey listen, those who are well do not need the doctor, only those who are sick.

[ 35 : 27 ] And in Galatians it tells us that the purpose of the law is to bring conviction. The law doesn't save us but the law lets us know that we're desperately sick and we can't save ourselves.

And beloved, I want you to understand that we have a responsibility of telling the truth. It is an unloving thing to watch people going about intentionally preparing for their own eternal suicide and just sit there quietly because you don't want to offend anybody in our culture.

Do you understand that? Expect adversity if you're faithful for Christ. Expect adversity if you're faithful for Christ.

Let me have you look at a passage that I think just rings the bell on this one. Over in 2 Corinthians 2 verse 14 through 16. Paul makes a very interesting statement about what it means to be a believer in contemporary culture.

In verse 14 he says, but thanks be to God who in Christ always makes us, who leads us in triumphal procession and through us spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of Him everywhere.

[ 36 : 34 ] For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. We smell like God to people who are saved and dying.

And then he goes on and says in verse 16, to one a fragrance of death to death, to the other a fragrance of life to life. And who's sufficient for these things? Beloved, if you are faithful to your calling, people will pick up on the aroma of your life.

and the aroma of your life becomes hope-filled to those who are desperate and despairing in their condition and it becomes supremely offensive to those who don't want to hear anything about Christ.

Now am I suggesting that you'll go around putting sharp sticks in people's eyes? No. But when someone says to you, hey, why are you so happy?

Well you have an opportunity to say, because Jesus forgave me for all of my sins and granted me salvation through his finished work. And I'd like to have you know him too. And you offer them the hope of the gospel.

[ 37 : 50 ] If you don't have confidence that he can save you from your sin, I guarantee you, you won't advertise it to anybody else. There's another thing that I want you to realize that believers should be doing.

We ought to grieve as we watch the growing effect of sin. Don't kid yourself. Probably one of the most inaccurate statements in our culture today is the term gay. It's not.

Homosexuality is a perversion against nature. By the way, I don't want to get into genetics and breeding and all that kind of stuff, but if, how many of you realize that maybe 1.4, 1.6% homosexual, apart from the Kinsey report, and if really this genetic disposition could be carried on genetically, guess what would happen when 1.4 of them carry forward the genes?

Leave that to your own entertainment. What is he talking about? Let's go back. Grieve as you watch for the effects of sin. It says in Psalm 119, 136, my eyes weep when I consider people not following your law.

Let me add two more and close. Rejoice that you're an ambassador to rescue sinners from the pit. Do you know what? Life's short. It really is.

[ 39 : 11 ] When I was about 20, I didn't think life was short, but it is. And you know what I'm learning? The older I get, the faster it goes. And here's the deal.

In the time I got left, I want to talk about things that count. I like the fact that in our prayer bulletin, when you look at it Wednesday night, when we're praying for people that are sick, how many of you know there's always a little point out to the side?

If the person's unsaved, we put that there. Do you know why? People that are saved, be careful here, I know, get in trouble, don't need to be healed as desperately as people who aren't saved. Because when people are saved, die, where do they go? Hey, come on, say it with me, absent in the body, present with the Lord. Now, do I pray for people that are sick, that are my brothers and sisters?

Absolutely. There are a lot of Dorcas's out here, and I want to keep them alive. But on the other side, if they die, it's okay. When people do not know Christ and they die, they spend the rest of all of eternity in hell.

[ 40 : 22 ] Look at your passage in 2 Corinthians 5, verse 11, plead with those you love and do so with tears. I really like 2 Corinthians 5.

Therefore, knowing the fear or terror of the Lord, we persuade others. you know, there was a time in my life where the pendulum swished over to the side where I had done some training in sales and I could pretty much coerce people into saying yes even when they didn't want to say yes.

Now, in selling used cars and vacuum sweepers, you have a reversionary clause, am I right? Well, when you coerce people into making a provisional profession of faith, guess what happens as soon as you leave?

If it ain't real, it ain't real. But on the other part, I recognize that what it says here, it says, look at what it says, read it with me. 2 Corinthians 5, therefore, knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men and let me tell you something, your affection for the heart of lost mankind ought to lead you to be more passionate about people who are on their way to hell than any other thing in life.

Look at verse 20, therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal. I understand election by faith, but I understand appealing to God making His appeal through us.

[ 42 : 14 ] We implore you. Do you know what that word means? We're down on our knee begging with you, please don't destroy your life with sinfulness. Come to Christ and discover the complete forgiveness that is in Him.

Where are we at? Our culture is going downhill. Where are you at? If you're a believer, you were left behind to be His living, visible representative of the glory of God that saves sinners.

He saved you. And He wants you to be like the woman at the well. Do you remember what she did? When she discovered the sweetness of complete forgiveness, she ran into town and she told other people about, come see the man.

and if you're not all about that, if you're not all about that, sadly enough, you've lost some of the affection and joy you had in Christ Jesus.

and I would plead with you this morning, humble yourself before God and say, it is not to be that way. I am not trudging my way towards my day of death or retirement or vacation.

[ 43 : 49 ] I am on point for Jesus and people who need Him. Is that for you? Let's bow our heads.

Without anybody looking around this morning, I want to ask you real quietly and quickly, if you're a believer this morning and you recognize the Spirit of God is addressing an issue in your life and you realize that there is lukewarmness and there's spiritual indifference and you are there this morning saying, I don't want to stay this way.

I would challenge you to put yourself on notice. Slip your hand up and say, Pastor, I'm convicted but here I am.

Yes, yes, yes. I want to change and I'm willing to let God do whatever it takes. I just don't want to stay this way. Is there anybody else?

Anybody else? Yes. I wonder if there's someone here that does not know Christ. This morning, your life is, it's a mess. But Jesus died and rose again and he did that that you might have everlasting life and what the scriptures say is true.

[ 45 : 07 ] Whosoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. And like it says in 2 Corinthians, we plead with you in Christ's stead, be reconciled to God.

And if you need Christ as your Savior, slip your hand up and say, that's me. I need complete forgiveness for all of my sins. I need Christ to save me. Father, work in us that Christ might be glorified.

In your precious name, amen. As our band sings together, would you stand together and if God lays a matter on your heart you need to care for publicly, you come forward. Lord, it might be that he's calling to be part of our fellowship.

It might be that you need to be obedient to the Lord in the matter of baptism. You know Christ, but baptism is a public declaration of your relationship. It might be that you need someone to counsel with you and pray with you and make the issues of salvation clear.

You come forward as we sing this song loudly and enthusiastically as we close. You come forward to ending of a ending of a of a ending of a ending