

# What Kind of Letter Are You?

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] in chapter 3 let me uh well i'll wait i'll wait i'll read the scripture first about three verses here the first three do begin again do we begin again to commend ourselves or need we as some others epistles of commendation to you or letters of commendation from you ye are our epistle written in our hearts known and read of all men for as much as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of christ ministered by us written not with ink but with the spirit of the living god not in tables of stone but in fleshy tables of the heart that'll make more sense when we get into it the word means symbol is very full of symbols it gets its point across by using many symbols most symbolic book i think that's ever been written for instance jesus i sat down this morning and wrote down what i could think of jesus christ is called the light the door the shepherd the day star the morning star the high priest the lamb the lily of the valley the living water the living bread the lion of judah the great physician the redeemer the rock stone and word of god i just wrote those down you probably can think of others why so many names for jesus i think it'd be impossible to describe all the facets of the lord jesus each one gives us another hint of something about his personality and the bible is like that called salvation it calls it justification redemption many other things the bible is a very descriptive book it uses symbols in our scripture in second corinthians chapter three it's very interesting one i think as he calls us epistles of christ the word epistle means letter and the idea of in those three verses is we are all letters written by the lord and sent to somebody and my my question in this sermon this morning is what kind of a letter are you keep that thought in mind as we go along here these corinthians paul said you're a letter to me paul had lots of churches this was one of them does anybody know what his best church was say it philippians right the church of philippi anybody know what his worst church was yeah this one here he never got those drastically straightened out man he tried to and because he was trying to so hard we have a great book filled with things that we shouldn't do and should do the books of corinthians are full of good instruction we never got them where they should be their letter was not a good letter now they had good paragraphs and they were knowledgeable people and they were good speakers and they were spiritually gifted and talented people he said you come behind no other church in gifts that god's given you you're just not doing anything with them but watch the bad paragraphs that those letters of the corinthians had in them they were contentious and divided couldn't get along with each other they were carnal that means fleshly they were still babes in christ they hadn't grown up spiritually they were arrogant and they permitted fornication in the church and didn't do anything about it they were suing one another they were divorcing their mates they were stingy and giving they were idolaters they were idolaters they had disorders in the home unsubmitive wives and long-haired rebellious husbands they had cliques in the church they had disorders at communion they had a tongues problem in the church they had worldliness they were critical of paul the preacher and finally he even said one time you need to examine yourself see if you're even saved i mean the way you the way you're acting i don't know i'm not sure you even got it now they weren't a very good letter were they what kind of letter are you what kind of letter am i hmm

Paul said not only are you a letter to me but you are known and read by all men he said that in verse 3 and your testimony is affecting their hearts either good or bad did you know yours is too you know somebody's watching you did you know you're influencing somebody good or bad probably several somebody somebody said we all have a certain circle of influence some of us have 20 people in our circle some might have 200 or more but we all have a circle of people that are influenced by us what kind of letter are you from Jesus to them how are you affecting their hearts well that's the question now let's see if we can answer it to whom has God sent me and you as letters you remember he said as the Father hath sent me so send I you so we're letters that God has sent number one

BBC members members of this church you are letters to the others of us in this church all of you are a letter to me all of you are letters to each other and you affect our hearts and you influence us you have no idea how much you influence me I hope that I have a little bit of influence on you I hope that's why you come here because you think that this preacher here can help me and I believe in him and I believe that he's got some ways that he can help me influentially if you didn't believe that either me or Scott one one of us you wouldn't come here I wouldn't go three Sundays to a place where I didn't believe in the preacher you expect the preacher to affect you and help you you expect me to be a good letter to you hey I expect you to be a good letter to me and to each other because we affect each other's hearts what kind of letter are you to your church we need your encouragement we need your acceptance we need your cell phones we need your friendship we need your respect you're a letter to us to help us every one of you is here to help everybody else here and to help this church every one of you well you know

I think I was called to wear out 18 inches of pew that's what I was called wrong you're called to help somebody and help the church what kind of letter are you our children read you what kind of a letter you are to my kids the other kids they watch you too the children are going to be like the adults that influence them the most usually it's the parents because they have more of an opportunity but that's the guy there that drew me with a with a half a dollar for my head I told them earlier before you got in here Chad that you probably used a quarter to draw my head and some smart aleck back here in the choir said no he used a coffee cup because I'm fat by the way you need to be in the altar repenting of your wicked sins disrespecting your preacher your face is sort of round too you know you have some precious children aren't you glad that you can point your little girl to some of the ladies in the church and say

[ 9 : 35 ] I want you to be like Mrs. So and So aren't you glad you can do that aren't you glad you can point your little boys to somebody in the church Brother Griffin now you watch Brother Griffin you watch him and you learn how to be a man you act like he acts aren't you glad you can do that don't you need a lot of examples for your kids wouldn't it be hurtful if your children saw somebody as a bad letter and a bad example of course it would and all of you are like that we need you all of us need you we need your example of Christ likeness and faithfulness and friendliness and all the other things what do the rest of us read in you Chris what do we read when we read you how do you influence me how do you influence the others that know you how does Mrs. Griffin sitting on the on the panel bench how does she influence people everybody sees her her countenance is going to influence people

Mrs. Griffin is very careful to keep to keep a smile a good countenance I've watched her and she's very careful when the preacher makes a fool of himself and tells a bad joke but she'll just laugh she wants to put the preacher in a good light because people are watching her besides that I've told her I'd kill her if she didn't do that everybody's everybody's influencing people and we need you hey we need you to leave your junk at home we want you to come out here in a good mood if you're moody you leave the bad moods at home we don't need that we don't need somebody out here chewing everybody else out we don't need somebody walking by somebody you know just growling we got enough of that at home no no I didn't say that when you come out here be a positive influence remember

God sent you to this church what kind of letter are you what do people read in you do you lift up people or you tear people down it's very important number two you're a letter from Jesus to your family old Dr. Rice used to teach that we ought to be able to win our families better than anybody else on earth because they know us front and back and they know all about us and when they see the Lord change us from a sinner to a saint and they see the difference in us it ought to affect them more than seeing anybody else because they know something happened to you and your very life changing in front of them ought to be a great great testimony to the great power of God you ought to be able to win your loved ones better than anybody else can and yet there's an idea that I can't I can't I can't witness to my my family I need somebody else to come do that

Dr. Rice said that's not right you live like you ought to and you don't know it but you're influencing them more than anybody else is you're sent to your family for that very purpose John the Baptist was in Jesus family was he a good letter when Jesus came along all he had to say was behold the Lamb of God and those people had so much respect for John Jesus cousin that they flocked after Jesus he was a great influence for the Lord what kind of a letter are you he was good for his cousin wasn't he and Jesus good for him he said he's a burning and shining light he's much more than a prophet among those born of women there's not a greater than John the Baptist Andrew heard about Jesus went and got his brother Peter and brought him to him and the leader of the new church for generation was that man that Andrew influenced his own brother think about that you ought to be able to do something for your family several brother sets in the apostles did you know that there's a possibility that there's four sets of brothers in the twelve apostles how does your family read you what kind of letter are you to them number three you're a letter from

Jesus to your neighbors what kind of a neighbor do they know you to be I work hard at being a good neighbor you know all of us all of us Baptists here in Dubuque we're sitting in the nest of Catholics and it's hard just you know you've got to win them to yourself man but they already suspect us you know they've been taught they've been taught that we're weird and we'll come after them try to get them out of their church and they say they're suspicious and I boy I've worked hard I've been in my present house since 2002 2002 I have I have plowed snow for neighbor after neighbor after neighbor especially I've had I've had three elderly women who lived alone and I've taken care of their snow needs two of them have died on me

[ 15 : 24 ] I've gone through two and they're down they're down behind my house the next corner and there's a long sidewalk and I have about half of that and their house has the other half and for years and for years I've snow blown that whole thing and I get down there and go down in front of their house and then I do all the driveway and the sidewalk and get that get it ready for that lady that doesn't have anybody else to do it.

Now she may have a son somewhere but when he gets there it's already done and that lady died I think she was saved and then somebody bought the house for another elderly lady and I thought oh boy so here I go again for years I'd be very very friendly to that lady people will like you if you do something for them and then she died I think she was saved.

And then a fellow bought the house with the family praise God he does his own snow snow blowing. In fact I met him one time I went down my sidewalk he was coming up his and I met him and I you know we we'd introduced each other soon after he came there and boy he's cussing like a sailor oh my goodness.

I didn't know what would you do? Well I'm a Christian I don't talk like that. That's why you don't influence anybody. You got to overlook that stuff and you got to love people and you got to love them where they are and you got to accept them like they are.

I didn't say one word I just talked right. I was very friendly to him. I accepted him. That's what he is. He didn't. That might be what I could have been had the Lord let me be there.

[ 17 : 20 ] Don't ever feel make people feel like you're better than they are. You don't help anybody. And so we talk over the back. We don't have a fence but you know our back lawns face each other and I've got an old thorn tree back there on that line.

His line and mine. And I when I mow I always very carefully mow underneath that tree and I mow a big swath around that tree in his yard so that he doesn't have to get under my thorn tree to mow.

And I go all the way across the yard and I've got other bushes there and I make a big path around them so that when he mows his he doesn't have to worry about all that. It's already done.

Just little things. And the guy likes me. I wonder why. Is it because I'm such a wonderful personality? It's probably because I'm so handsome you know.

Round face and all. No. No. No. It's because I'm good to the guy. Treat somebody nice and they're going to like you.

[ 18 : 28 ] We had a big snow come not long ago and it came in on Sunday. Remember that? And I got back home and my neighbor had come all the way up that sidewalk.

Turned the corner. And I got another neighbor on the other street. Two or three houses down that I've made friends with him. And we have joined together to do the snow for another widow that lived between us.

And we've become very good friends. And he had come down the other sidewalk. And I got there and all my snow blowing was done. And Paul, you remember when we went over to Catholic as the Pope, our neighbor next door, she had oxygen in her nose and she was dying.

She wasn't going to live long. Paul and I sat in her living room and told her all about Jesus. Tried to get her to understand. She sat there and listened because we'd taken her cookies and pies.

I'd done her snow blowing forever. She said, I think I see it. I said, you got to see it, Sonia.

[ 19 : 47 ] You got to see it. Because all your sacraments and your good deeds and you're a good lady, but that won't get you to heaven.

And she sat there very thoughtful and she said, I think I see it. And I said, well, you're going to have to just say, dear Lord God, I'm a good Catholic, but that won't get me to heaven.

And I'm a good Baptist, but that won't get me to heaven. You can't get there by what you are or what you do. You've got to throw all of your soul on him and let him do it all.

He died for you and he paid for your sins and he won't take part of the credit. You can't do it partly and let him do the rest. And she said, I'm going to do that. Now, she wouldn't do it while we were there.

But it wasn't long before I heard she went to heaven or she went somewhere. And I think she went to heaven. I hope she did.

[ 20 : 53 ] I did all I could do. I'm not the greatest neighbor in the world, but I work at it. I want to influence people for good.

I'm a letter to them from Jesus. He put me in that spot on purpose. And he said, Stark, I'm sending you into this community here.

And you're a letter. Now, what kind of letter are you going to be to these neighbors? They're all Catholic. They do the best they can. They think they're okay. They're good people. You're not going to convince them now that your doctrine is better than theirs.

You're going to have to win them to yourself. One time, Sonia called me. She left a message because I wasn't there.

It's some kind of a message. And for a long time after she died, I left that message on my answer. And I'd go in there and play it. And I'd say, dear God, I hope she's with you.

[ 21 : 55 ] I did all I could. I hope she's with you. Don't you feel like that about your neighbors too? Not long ago, I heard a big something during the night.

Didn't know what it was. Got up the next morning and half of, about a third of a tree in my front yard. It split off. These locust trees are worthless, man. I don't know where you Yankees come up with locust trees.

You won't find any past the Mason Dixon. Little old leaves that look like that. Try to rake those suckers up. Anyway, it split and whomp.

And I've got power lines over here. And I've got a house here and a yard in between. And that big old third of that tree came right in the middle of that, right in that yard.

Missed my house, missed the power lines. Didn't hurt anything. Fell right there. You and Greg came over and sawed that thing up. Remember how it was laying right in there? Well, I had one of my neighbors down the street came by.

[ 23 : 05 ] He said, man, look at that. You can tell you're a preacher. Lord wouldn't let it fall on your house, would he? He noticed.

He thinks. They're thinking. See? I mean, that guy was even thinking. God bless that fella. Yeah, he said it. And I've had some good times with him, too.

What kind of a letter are you to your neighbors? Why do you think you live there? Why do you think they live around you? Why do you think those two ladies died?

And the people kept moving in there. And a fella came in there that's sort of rough. Because I'm supposed to influence him. I'm supposed to win him as a friend.

And he's supposed to look at me one of these days and say, you know, that fella's got something I don't have. That's why you're a neighbor to who you are. It blows my mind when I hear about a Christian that's warring with his neighbor.

[ 24 : 11 ] Hollering, fussing about some fence on the line or some fence or whatever. Or his cows got in my pasture. Forget it, man.

You're a letter to him from Jesus. Might be the only letter Jesus ever sends that person. What kind are you? I've been long enough on neighbors.

All right, you're a neighbor from Jesus to your job site. Your job site. At least one of you fellas in here has told me, I blew it at work.

I mean, I lost my temper and I blew it. And I don't have any influence. And I said, well, you can get it back. Live it down. Start from today.

When you get a chance, apologize. If you blew it in front of somebody, you say, man, look, I'm a Christian and I'm supposed to be better than this. And I want to tell you, I'm sorry.

[ 25 : 10 ] I apologize. And you win them back. You're working where you are, around the people you are, because you're a letter from Jesus to that job site.

When you go to work, you think about that. Jesus sent me here to influence these people for him. I may be the only letter in this company that he sent. That's your job there.

Your job is not to do the job you hired. Your job is to represent Jesus. Number one, then do the job. Do the best job that's done. Be different.

Be consistent. Be the best worker there. Be honest and genuine and accepting and caring and personable and never crabby or selfish.

Because you're a letter from Jesus to that job. Earlier in my ministry, I worked for off and on, it totaled 10 years.

- [ 26 : 08 ] As I was starting churches and working with little churches and had to work on the side. I took it very seriously. Where I worked. Took it very seriously. I went in there, brother.
- I'm a Christian first. And then finally, I'm a preacher second. And these people may never get anybody else like me as close to them, working with them, that can influence them as I can.
- And brother, I'm telling you what, I'm not bragging on myself. But there's going to be a whole bunch of my coworkers in heaven because God put me in there with them. And I worked at it.
- I worked at it. I wrote down some of the names. Mac. I've told you about Mac. He died of cancer. And I have a sermon about Mac.
- I told him right before he died, I wanted him to Christ. And he lived a little while. And at 28 years old, he died of cancer. I was there that night and Wednesday night.
- [ 27 : 10 ] We were saying goodbye. He knew he was just about done. And I said, Mac, I've got to go to church. It's a nice Wednesday night. But I'm going to be here as soon as church is over.
- I'll be back. And I started out the door. He said, Larry, just barely whisper. Come over here. He said, I can't talk loud.
- I can just whisper. But I want to talk to you a minute before you go. And he made me lean my ear down. And he said, first, I want to say I love you. I want to say thank you for getting me saved.
- I was an old Methodist. And I was trusting in my works. And you didn't let that stop you. And you got me saved. I want to thank you for all the books that you let me have to learn and grow.
- And how you taught me how to be a soul winner. And I won a lot of my friends in the National Guard with Jesus because of you. And we had other sweet words.
- [ 28 : 13 ] Then he said, is there anybody in heaven you'd like me to say hello to? I said, my grandparents, I told their names. Very serious.
- He was serious. I was serious. And then I said, Mac, of all the Bible characters, the one that seemed to influence me most in a certain time of my life was Ezekiel.
- The prophet Ezekiel. And I said, would you tell Ezekiel that there's a little preacher down there in Arkansas that he's his favorite prophet? Would you tell him that?
- And he said, yeah. I went. I got to the door. And I started to leave. And I was waving. I said, bye. I didn't know if he was going to live until after church.
- And by the way, he didn't. When I got back, he was already gone. So this was the last things we said. And he said, Larry, Larry. I said, yeah. He said, was that Isaiah?
- [ 29 : 11 ] I said, no, Mac. Now, you can say hello to Isaiah. I like him, too. But it was Ezekiel. Oh, yeah. I'm not going to forget it. Within an hour, he was there.
- So maybe he didn't forget. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. If he hadn't come to work for me, that cancer at 28 years old, taking him to hell.
- Because he thought he was all right as a member of Methodist Church. And you can be all right as a member of Methodist Church. But he was trusting the church and not the Lord. He knew it. Well, I just go on down the line.
- There's Billy. There's Wingo. I don't know about Wingo. I did my best. There's James I and James II. James II, boy, he gave me fits.
- When I came to work there, I got promoted over him a little bit later. And he never forgave me. And the fact that I was a Christian was his target. And people would come through and he'd say, ah, be careful now.

[ 30 : 19 ] Don't curse here. We've got God in our department. He'll strike you with lightning. And they just gave me a fit. And I'd always smile and say, that's right, James.

You tell him now. Just go along with him. Always love him. Always try to find ways to be good to him. Bring him lunch. You know, take him.

Whatever I could do for him. Just wearing him down. One day I was sitting there at my desk. And his desk faced mine right here. We were in an engineering office where we were.

Drafting office. And I just felt his eyes on me. I looked up and James Bounds was looking right at me. And I said, I just smiled at him. He said, Larry?

I said, yeah, James. He said, you're not afraid to die, are you? I said, what? He said, you're not afraid to die, are you? I said, no, James, I'm not.

[ 31 : 17 ] I'm not afraid to die. I know where I'm going. He said, I am. I said, would you like me to help you? He said, I would. I said, I can't do it on company time, so don't you die until break time.

At the lunch break in that parking lot, I led James Bounds to the Lord. He became my best buddy. Protected me. Big old burly guy.

Wouldn't let anybody do anything to me. He became the greatest champion I had when he was. He was like Paul, you know. Paul was the worst enemy Jesus had, and he became his best friend. I had to move from that place a couple years later.

I was loading up my truck, and James drove up in his car. He walked across the lawn. I was just about ready to go.

He said, I want to hug you. Is that all right? I said, it's okay. He threw his old form around me and just sobbed, and he said, I want to tell you I love you like no other man. I want to tell you I thank you for putting up with my junk and winning me to the Lord.

[ 32 : 29 ] And he said, if we don't ever see each other again, I'll see you on the golden streets. And I've never seen him since, Chris. But I'll see him one day.

James Bounds would have gone to hell if I hadn't taken seriously that God put me in that job to win him to the Lord. How are you? What kind of a letter are you on the job?

You see what I'm trying to say? Jesus sends us into these areas, and we're his representatives there. We've got to be careful, friend, to be a good one. I wish I were a better one.

I've got names here that I never did win, and I tried to win, and I couldn't win. But I've got a whole bunch of names that I did. There's old Larry. His name was Larry, too, and he became one of my best buddies, one of the nicest fellows, a good Christian.

He became Mike. Mike is another one. David. I remember David came. They made me supervisor of that drafting department. I had about six guys under me.

[ 33 : 36 ] And David came one day. Personnel called up and said, we've got a guy here who wants to apply for a job. And I always went up to interview him. And this little dried-up guy, scared of his own shadow, man.

He was just very shy. It was painful for him to talk to me and tell me he wanted a job. He had gone somewhere to some drafting school and had a two-year degree, and he's looking for a job.

And he said, I've been all over town, and it's so hard for me. And he said, I don't think I've impressed anybody. And he said, I think this is my last stop. And I said, well, here, let me let you draw something.

Tell me what you can do. Tell me all the courses you've had and everything. And so I just went and got him a cup of coffee and tried to calm him down and made him feel, you know, calm.

And finally, he felt comfortable with me. And the guy was sharp. He's sharp as a tag. In fact, his last name was Sharp. And I said, David, you're sharp as your name, boy.

[ 34 : 45 ] You're good. You got good training here. I don't know why these other guys didn't lap you up, man. I'm going to hire you. He said, you are? I said, yeah, I can use a guy like you.

Trying to build him up. But 30 years later, I went back down there to that town. I went over there to see if any of my old guys were still there.

The guy that was in my department, but in a different, he was different, but we're in the same room, was now the plant manager.

And several of them were still there. I said, who's running in the drafting department? They said, oh, David Sharp. I said, who? Yeah.

Oh, my goodness, yes. He's one of the best we've ever had. And I thought back to that day. David got saved and was a Baptist member of a Baptist church up in the country.

[ 35 : 48 ] Drove in the country. And he was put in my place, in my way, for me to influence him. Made one of the best employees they'd ever had.

You couldn't tell it, man. But when he came, and I was over him for a couple of years, and he just gained confidence, you know, gained confidence. The guy's over the department.

Wow. I've got such a list. I'm trying to tell you. I took it seriously when I was working somewhere. These three, Dave and Tom and Mike and I, had to drive a ways to the job, so we carpoled it.

And it was Tom's car. And the rest of us bought the gas. And so I had every morning and every evening going and coming to influence those guys.

And I got all three of them, man. And finally, on Monday through Friday, we'd carpool it to the job.

[ 36 : 51 ] And then on Sunday, the other three, we'd carpool it to church. And they sat right on my front row. Got all three of them. Boy, what a time we had. I took advantage of the opportunity.

I was a letter that God sent. I'm not bragging on me. I'm trying to tell you it can be done. One time, these guys in my department up in the St. Louis area, when I first moved there, the little church had 65 people, and I got a job until they could get big enough to put me on.

I was working in Monsanto, and we had about half a dozen in our department. And when I came there, first thing I did, they introduced me.

And I said, hey, fellas, let me talk to you a minute. I want you to know me. They all just look, you know. What's this guy? What's he doing? I said, I'm a Baptist preacher.

And I saw three or four of them. Oh, man. But I'm not going to preach to you. And I'm going to make you like me.

[ 37 : 56 ] And I'm going to make you change your mind about working with a Baptist preacher. Now, you give me a chance, and I'll give you a chance, you bunch of heathens. They all laughed.

Slowly but surely, I worked my way into their hearts. One time, old Big Red stopped me, and he said, Larry, could I talk to you about spiritual things? Man, I'm in a mess.

Outside of the job, I helped him. Anyway, one day, these three said, Larry, in talking, you said you love chili. And I said, man, I do.



I love chili. And he said, well, we've all talked about this. We want to take you and buy you the best bowl of chili in St. Louis. I said, that sounds great, man.

Well, we're going at lunch. I said, okay. Well, I got in their car, and we drove, and they pulled up in front of a tavern. And I said, what are you guys doing to me? No, no, look, we talked about this.

[ 38 : 56 ] What we want you to do now, we know you're not going to go in there. And we know that you wouldn't dare put your money in there and buy chili. That's why we said we're going to buy it for you.

We want you to sit in the car, and we want to bring you a bowl of chili out of the car. Is that okay? Can you do that?

I said, I don't know, man. You know, buying chili from a tavern, I've never done that before. Well, ain't the Bible got something to say about it?

I mean, you know, can't we buy you a bowl of chili? It's the best chili in St. Louis, even if you can. I said, well, the Bible says if a person brings meat to you, and it was offered to idols, but you don't know it, go ahead and eat it.

And they said, well, you already know it. I said, that's right. So, what I'm going to do is I'm going to sit in this car, and I'm going to study a while, and then if somebody just wanders up from somewhere with a bowl of chili, it doesn't tell me where it came from.

[ 40 : 13 ] I mean, you know, maybe I could get away with that, but I've got to tell you what, when you come to church next Sunday, don't tell any of my members. And I'm telling you right now, I don't know if it's right or wrong.

I might be wrong. If my conscience hurts me, we'll never do this again. But one of you just sort of happened by, and don't tell me where you got the chili. And I ate that chili.

Guess what? My conscience hurt. So I never get any more. But notice how those guys tried to help me, you know. What do you do?

You win them to yourself. You're the letter that God sent to them. You accept them like they are. Don't make them feel like you think you're a Holy Joe and they're not.

Be one of the guys. You can do that. I've got to hurry. I had several other things to say. I'm about to run out of time. Well, I won't read the rest of those names.

[ 41 : 12 ] You are a letter to your community. You know that? The woman at the well, your city, the woman at the well was a terrible, terrible, sinful lady.

But when she got Jesus and Jesus sent her back to her town, did you know nearly the whole town came out to Jesus? He sent the right letter, didn't he? Somehow or another, she was able to influence all those people.

And you can go through, you can go through the Bible and you can find such things as that. our city, Jesus writes us here at our church and sends us into Dubuque.

Did you know that? We're supposed to be letters to Dubuque from him. What kind of a letter are you? What kind of a letter are you? I went to Louisiana where Brother West and I have worked for five years together and then he came up here to help us as we hired him for our school.

Brother West, first two weeks I was down there, I was out visiting, you know, meeting people. And I knocked on this door, I said, I'm a new pastor of Grace Baptist Church over here on the highway.

[ 42 : 17 ] And he said, oh, yeah, I know. And I said, well, you don't know me. And he stopped me and he said, no, I don't know you, pastor, but I know one of your members.

And he said, you must be a pretty good guy if he's in your church. I said, well, who is he? He said, his name's Larry West. And he said, I don't have to know you.

If Larry West wanted you to be his preacher, I know all I need to know. Then he said, then he said, if you got a church full like him, you got the best church in this town.

Now, isn't that a wonderful, wonderful testimony? Of course, he didn't know Larry West as well as I do. Isn't that the way that people ought to see us? Isn't that the name you ought to give your church?

Shouldn't people see us like that? And what kind of letter are you to the community? What kind are you? Well, I'm going to close up now. We're going to go home. Jesus deserves my very best.

[ 43 : 29 ] People must read my faithfulness, my separation from sin and worldliness, my generosity, my clean language, my soul winning efforts, my warm friendliness, how I dress ought to be different.

Sometimes I wish I was a lady so I could show the women how to dress. Women don't know how to dress anymore.

I'm not used to that. Man, when I was a teenager, you ought to have seen the dresses on the girls. They were these big wide, what did they call them, Paul? Big wide skirts. Oh, they had a name.

These big old wide skirts. Huh? You don't know, Chris. You're not old enough. I don't know what they called them.

I know they were full. They were really full and they were long. Poodle skirts. Poodle skirts. Poodle. I would never have a poodle. I want some kind of, I want a, a Rottweiler or something.

[ 44 : 39 ] Anyway, anyway, those skirts met the bobby socks. You know, they were long enough to meet the bobby socks. That's the way they dressed.

They didn't show every Tom, Dick, and Harry that came along. Parts of their body didn't have any business. See it? I don't, I don't believe what we've come to in these days.

Sometimes I wish I was a lady and I'd walk around and show you how to dress for goodness sakes. Some of you ladies embarrass me. Embarrass the Lord. What kind of a letter are you?

Now this is as mean as I'm going to get, okay? I always get my meanest against the women. No, I don't. You fellas, I've got blue jeans but they don't have holes in the knees and patches on them and faded out and look like they're 100 years old.

Dressed with a little dignity and a little class. The way you dress shows your character and so on. I got a lot more I can say but I won't.

[ 45 : 42 ] We are letters from Jesus. We are letters from Jesus. We say He loves you. He died for you.

He saved me. He can save you. I want you to see that I'm different. I don't think I'm better. I want you to see Jesus in me.

That's all. We're letters. He sent so many people to me to help me. He's sending you to help somebody and I don't have time for the rest of this. I want you to come back sometime.

Heard and I about eyes closed, please. Thank you. Thank you.