

Question and Answer

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. All right, tonight is Q&A; night. We'll have three or four questions, and then we'll move on with some songs.

So let's see what kind of questions that we have tonight. That record don't work too good. Please list detailed steps to becoming a missionary. Okay. Please list detailed steps to becoming a missionary.

That's impossible to know how many details you want. Get saved. Step one. Get baptized. Step two. Be faithful to church and become a giver and a server and a faithful church member and become so integral to your church that leaving your church would hurt your church, that it would do damage to your church.

If you're leaving, the church wouldn't do damage because we would miss you so much. You know, every year in high school football or college football, whenever the seniors leave, they know that leaves a gaping hole, and they're just praying they've got somebody who can fill that spot or this guy who just stepped away.

That ought to be who you are. So if you felt like that Lord wanted you to become a missionary, you should become so strong in your church that you'll be making a major difference. Then after that, you need to get training.

[1 : 23] You need Bible training. You need Bible training, and you need to use the training and see God use your training and your gifts in the lives of people.

You need to teach and preach and see if lives are changed. There are Sunday school teachers who will kill a class if given the opportunity.

It's just the honest truth. You give them a class, and they'll kill the class. They can't get the class to grow. There are preachers that just can't do it. And so you want to test your weapons, and you want to see, does God give me a modicum, a certain amount of blessing?

It doesn't mean that you're going to have thousands, but you are going to have results. You're going to see God do something with you. You know, if God doesn't use you to see people saved here, He probably won't use you to see people saved there.

If God doesn't use you to bless people here, He probably won't use you to bless people there. There's nothing magical about changing geography. If you move to another place, the only thing you do is add some difficulties to your life.

[2 : 30] You add some other hindrances along the way to doing that. So get your training. Use your training and see that God is blessing it. Then after that, you would start deputation. A deputation would mean somewhere between two and three years of hard work.

You will make hundreds, if not thousands, of phone calls. You will get no answers, wrong numbers. I have been known to call.

Back in the days when I was doing it, there weren't cell phones. And I remember calling this church, and I asked for the pastor. Pastor, and the guy who answered the phone said, I'm sorry. I called his name, and he said, I'm sorry he died.

And I said, didn't I speak to the current pastor? And he said, you're speaking to him. And I said, I am so sorry, brother, that the pastor died.

What's your name? And he gave me his name, and he said, that was my dad. And so it didn't get, that was kind of a rocky start. You know, he never supported me. I never could figure out what I did wrong on that one.

[3 : 37] But he never supported me. So you call, you call hundreds. I tell the guys it takes usually, you've got to contact maybe 3,000 pastors. That's that you get on the phone and you talk to them.

And that means you had to make 10,000 phone calls to get 3,000 to answer their phone. And then 1,000 of those will let you, you'll, let's see, how's it go? You'll talk to, you'll get into 300 churches.

You talk to 1,000. You'll talk to 1,000. You'll get into about 300 churches. And out of that, you pray to God that 100 of them will support you. Then you are financially set to go to the mission field.

You've been trained. You've practiced. You've got the money. Now you've got to go learn the language. You've got to learn to adapt to a culture. You've got to learn how to teach and preach the Bible in another language. And you've got to learn how to live cross-culturally.

And then I guess you're well on your way to becoming a missionary. I will tell you this. I think that sometimes because of our church, you may have a false picture of a missionary.

[4 : 36] A missionary is not a guy who travels on deputation. Deputation is one small step on the road. And you may look at them and say that they seem to travel to exotic spots. And some of them post on Facebook, you know, they just saw the ocean.

They just saw the mountains. And you're like, they're just taking a long vacation or traveling all over America. And I tell them all the time it would be best to post any of that. But you do get extremely tired. It's not an unusual thing.

Jeff Bush, I remember a time Jeff Bush was preaching in the Carolinas one night. Went to Missouri to preach the next day or two and was back in the Carolinas.

In fact, I asked him to cancel a meeting because he was driving all night long to preach and then driving all night long back to the next place to preach. And you're going to kill yourself on the road.

And the \$30 a month they were going to give you is not going to be of any value. So you might want to consider not doing that. He was very ambitious in trying to get that done. So they travel a lot. And it gets very old in the car.

[5 : 38] They have their children. They have advantages we didn't have when Betty and I were doing it. And we had advantages they don't have. When we were doing it, there were no seatbelt laws. So your kids could go anywhere they wanted in the car.

And I'm telling you, they did. They'd be laid up in the back window. They'd be laid up in the back window. They'd get bored. That's the floorboard. Then they'd cross all over the car. One time, Chris opened the door.

This is where we were missionaries. Two, he opened the door. And we were running 75 miles an hour down the interstate. That was the speed limit in Tennessee back then. And he had the car door leaned out. And, I mean, he was that close to just plunging to the ground.

And I would have felt like a dog for the rest of my life because he would have died. But Betty reached around and pulled a spider woman reflex move of a mother. Snatched the young man back into the car.

Threw him on the floor and said, bless God, you little punk. Don't you get next to that door again? I don't know what she said. I'm sure it was motherly. And we had a van.

[6 : 39] And we put a full single bed back in the back. It was one of the vans like the big brown van the church has. We put that back there. And Betty and I would drive all night long. I would be driving.

And she would be back in the back asleep. And then when I'd get tired, I'd just pull over to the side. She'd know it was her turn. She'd get up and she'd drive. And we'd drive all night. Some of the sweetest times of our lives. I can remember driving down the road.

And Chris was the oldest. He was 11. And he would sit up front and talk to me and tell me he loved Jesus. And when he grew up, he wanted to do something. And Stephanie came one night. We were riding down the road.

I don't know. It was 4 o'clock in the morning. We were on our way to the next meeting. Because I finished my deputation in 13 months. So therefore, I mean, we literally had to always be in a meeting.

And she came up and stood beside me. We were riding the road. I got my arm around her. She would have been about 8 or 9. And she said, Daddy, someday I'm going to be a missionary. I'm going to marry a missionary.

[7 : 33] And I'm going to serve God. And Joy did the same thing. And David was only two. So he didn't do much talking. He just did a lot of crying and messing diapers. But let's see. He was one before we got to.

He was one on all of deputation. So what may seem to you to be a luxurious life and travel. Travel becomes very tiring. What, you know, that long trip you make to Florida or Savannah or wherever to have vacation becomes like that's a Sunday afternoon drive.

And now, after all these years, you know, whenever people ask me to make these long drives to go places, I'm like, I cannot believe I used to do this all the time. There are plenty of times I've driven 11 or 12 hours, preached on Saturday night, preached on Sunday morning, driven six hours on Sunday afternoon, showed up at a church on Sunday night, preached at that church, got in the car and drove home and been home the next morning by 6 a.m.

Fell into bed like a dead man. One of the wildest experiences on deputation before we move on to the next one. He's no longer a pastor, but Pastor Eldon Fowler was a Capitol Baptist church, Dover, Delaware.

And 401 Morgneck Road, I believe, was the name of the church. Because I went there several times. He liked me. I don't know why. But I showed up to preach and I had been driving all afternoon. I told Chris, I said, I'm going to prove to you how good your God is.

[8 : 50] And we were home on furlough and we didn't have two vehicles. And so I rented a pickup truck from a guy in the church. In fact, their daughter is a part of the Mableton church now.

I was going to say Vanessa, Victoria Schwartz. And so I rented her dad's pickup truck and Chris was riding with me.

It was one of the little, it was one, a little two-seater, Datsun, Nissan, whatever they were. And I put a camper top in the back and threw our clothes in and we were gone for a solid month.

And so we started leaving the house and I gave Chris a notebook and I said, I've got \$300 in my pocket. And we're going to see what God does for us. And so we started driving and I drove to the first church.

And on the way there, the pastor already told me, we're a very small church and cannot afford to support missionaries. But we've been supporting you. We'd like you to come by, but we can't give you a love offering and we can't do anything for you.

[9 : 50] So I drove 12 hours to his church. Well, Chris was a growing boy by this time. Chris was like 15 or 16. And I said, I said, son, if you want to eat, we're going to stop at McDonald's and you can eat anything you want.

And I'll pay for it because I don't know if this pastor can afford it. And he's wanting to meet us at McDonald's. And so we stopped at McDonald's. I didn't eat because I needed to be able to eat with the pastor.

And so I thought he was going to buy our supper. That was a wrong thought. But anyway, so Chris went in and I don't know, he ate like 45 McNuggets and a Big Mac or something, you know, whatever it is.

He ate like, he always ate so much of that food. And then we pulled up at the church. We got to the McDonald's and the pastor said, you can get your food and I'll wait on you back here. So I went up and Chris ordered another 45 McNuggets and another sandwich.

And I got me something. And I said, Pastor, can I buy you something? He said, no. And so we went and sat down. And that night they put Chris and I in the same double bed. I sleep with one person.

[10 : 54] And that is Betty. So we got in the room. I said, son, I love you. But you will be on the floor tonight. And he said, well, daddy, there's no blankets. I said, hey, we'll split one. We'll take one off my bed.

You just enjoy that floor. I love you, buddy. Have a good time tonight. I will see you in the morning. And so next morning I got up and I preached in their church to about five people, six people. They did give us \$25.

And Chris said he had written down all the money I'd spent and showed how much. And he told me it was riding. He said, daddy, we're losing money. We showed up at the next church and we're still losing money. And that night the pastor, Brother Fowler says, I walk in the room.

We had been driving six hours, finished preaching. The pastor didn't give us lunch. We drove straight through. And I walked into his office about 30 minutes before church. Been driving all afternoon.

And I walked into his office and he said, you don't expect to preach dressed like that, do you? And I said, yes, sir. He said, those pants are wrinkled.

[11 : 53] And those shoes need shining. And I said, man, I am so very sorry. I don't have to preach tonight if you don't want whatever. He said, go in my bathroom.

He had an office. He had an office. He had an office. And he sent me in his office. We were in his office. He sent me to his bathroom in his office. And I went in there and he said, pass me your pants out.

And he ironed my pants. You want to talk about humiliating. Then he said, now hand me your shoes. He polished my shoes. He said, no man of God ought to ever stand in the pulpit looking like you look tonight. And so deputation isn't what you might think it is.

And I would tell them to always tell you the pleasant stories because we want you to be mysteries. But I promise you, it ain't always as fun as you might think it is. Then you run into some nut preachers. I'm telling you, nuts.

Nuts. So anyway, I'll get off that subject. I know how many times we would go into church and you look for the seats that nobody occupies. But if there's a church that's been around 40 years, there are pews that everybody knows who owns that pew.

[12 : 57] By the way, if you see a pillow, stay away from it. If there's a pillow on the seat, somebody owns that seat. If there's a little footstool, somebody owns that seat. If there's a Bible, somebody owns that seat. So Betty and I were looking around and we picked the seat and we sat down and a woman came to the edge of her own.

She just did it just like she went. That's my pew. I said, excuse me. So ma'am, I am so very sorry. I got all six of us up and we just stood in the aisle and I waited until everybody kind of settled down.

And then we looked around and figured out which pew we could set in. So believe me, deputation isn't the thrill you think it is. Next question. Genesis 22.1 stats.

Yeah, I like stats. God did tempt Abraham. And James 1.13 stats. Neither he tempteth any man. And if there are no errors in God's word, why does it seem these two verses contradict?

Well, I'm glad you read enough and you noticed that. And I'm glad you're in your Bible reading. You got to Genesis. We're on Genesis 22. And this is January the 5th and the 15th. Hey, you're ahead. That's good.

[14:02] You're ahead if you read that far this quick in the year. Don't quit in Exodus. Keep going. You can find more contradictions to ask me about. All right, it's a very simple solution. The word tempt and test or try are basically the same word.

The word test or tempt are the same word. And so context has to tell you what it means. God never tempts us. God never tempts us. He would test us.

And so it says in James, it says in James, he doesn't tempt any man. He never tries to get you to do wrong. Never. God never, ever would try to get you to do wrong.

He would never take you to a place so you would do wrong. But he would allow testing to come in your life so that you could prove what God had done in your life and show that and he would help you.

Not for him. He knows. He already knows what the end is going to be before you ever start it. But he's helping you see who you are by sending you through that trial. So when you come out on the other end, you can stand up and say, wow, I think God must have really made a difference in me.

[15:05] He helped me get through that. He worked in my life. And so he does not tempt us, but he does test us. Tempting, the sense that he doesn't tempt us is he never tries to get us to do wrong.

Ever. Ever. God is not the author of evil. Not the author of sin. He does not do sin. All things happen because he allows him to happen, obviously, because he is almighty God.

But he would never tempt you to do sin. But he tempted or tested. That word there, he tested him. He put him to a test and let him see it. So to Abraham, it would appear a temptation.

But it wasn't a temptation from God. It was a test for him to prove who he was. One more question and we'll sing a song. Can you make that face you made when you were on the pay phone when Miss Betty, the kissy part, also did your lips actually touch the phone?

All right, there's some Yehu in this church that I got a stats about. And I'm going to...

[16:09] Robert, did you put that in there, buddy? What? Not alone. Well, I will tell you the honest truth.

You ready for this? I kissed Betty's picture every night before I went to bed, before we got married. I really did. But I got dinged. But I'd pick her picture up, kiss it. I'd tell her good night.

I'd get up in the morning, I'd give her a kiss. And I've been doing that about 40 years now. A little over 40 years now, except when I've been on the road. And so, yeah, I was probably just about as dumb as I looked in that. Now, is there a real question?

Kissy part. Is money a neutral object? What does the Bible say?

Not the fox. I'm trying to get to verse. Filthy lucre.

[17:07] 1 Timothy chapter 3. Wouldn't that not be it? Open your Bible. Let's see. 1 Timothy chapter 3. Let me just... I'll give you a good... I think I'll give you a good...

I can give you a good biblical answer. Let me see here. 1 Timothy 3. 3. Not greedy of filthy lucre. Let me state this to you.

In the majority of the time in the Bible, money has a negative connotation. Remember this. There's nothing wrong with money in and of itself.

Even in the Bible, there's nothing wrong with money. The problem is that money is often... The love of money is the root of all evil. That would be what? 1 Timothy chapter... Just check me. 1 Timothy chapter 6 verse 10 maybe.

Love of money is the root of all evil. The problem with money is that money represents... Money represents what we want and the ability to get anything we want.

[18 : 09] In Matthew chapter 6, he said you will either love mammon, which is another word for money. You'll have to either love mammon and hate God or hate mammon and love God. So you've got to hate money and love God or you've got to love God and hate God and love money.

So in the Bible, on the whole, money has a negative connotation. So you need to always approach money with the idea. You need to approach money with the idea, I know this stuff wants to take over me.

Money is a lot like a drug. You ever notice the more you get of it, the more you want of it? Is there ever enough to satisfy you? You know, an alcoholic can't seem to get enough alcohol and a moneyholic can't get enough money.

Now a godly man, a godly man, John Pearson's devotional, I don't know when it was years ago, maybe you weren't here, but he got up one Sunday and he said, we're going to tell our money where to go.

We're going to tell our money where to go. And he said, you're going to look at your money and say, no, you're going in the offering plate. And here's what I would say, money in and of itself could and would be neutral if you didn't have a love affair with it.

[19 : 18] But we tend to have a love affair with it. I have a love affair with it. That's not trying to be ugly about you. That's not trying to get you to put money in the offering plate. The facts are that money, mammon, material goods, this world cries for our attention.

And it cries so loud. What's it say in Matthew 13, is it? That the seed falls on some of the ground and the cares of this world, the riches of the world, whatever it is in one of those verses, choke out the word.

So money in and of itself tends to, I would say it has a negative influence in the Bible. It has a negative thing. So you must tell it where to go and you must put it in line.

You must make sure you get a priority because you're never going to have enough. You are never, ever going to have enough. It's impossible. When they've asked the richest people on the planet, they don't have enough.

And so what you have to do, a Christian can have enough because he has Jesus. And Jesus gave us instruction in Matthew 6, 33. He said, seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added to you.

[20 : 29] That's after in Matthew 6, 24. He said, you've got to love God and hate mammon. You have to choose. You can't have both. And I hear a lot of times when people make a comment like, just make sure you put God first.

There's no way to put God first unless you stomp money. There's no way. You have to say to money, you're not going to be the object of my life. Money will ruin you if you're not careful.

You have to say, and I know what you're fixing to say. I don't love money. I'd love what money will do for me. That's the point. But God's supposed to do for you. God's supposed to do for you. And guess who has the hardest time getting into heaven?

Rich people. Why? Because they don't have any needs that money can't meet. So there's nothing wrong in and of itself in money. Obviously, money is an inanimate object. The problem is not the money.

The problem is your heart. And God can have people who've had, God's had people who had great amounts of money, but they didn't look at that money as theirs. They looked at that money as something they were to manage. And if you have a biblical perspective, that's a great question.

[21 : 33] If you have a biblical perspective on it, you need to look at your house. You need to look at your children. You need to look at your future. You need to look at your business. And you need to say, none of this belongs to me. None of this belongs to me.

It all belongs to God. And if Jesus were to come into my house right now, how would he tell me that he wants me to spend my time? If I were letting him tell me, how would he want me to spend my time?

And by the way, he is very happy for you to enjoy what you have. He is very happy for you. Don't ever get the feeling he doesn't want you to enjoy. Because it's such a hard line to get.

Look at 1 Timothy 6, 23. If not 23, get like the next to the last end of the verse. Whatever it is. I don't know how many verses are in 1 Timothy 6. He gives us richly all things to enjoy.

And so God is all happy with you enjoying things. It's not that God doesn't want you. That's Matthew. I need you to get to 1 Timothy. It's not that God doesn't want you to enjoy things.

[22 : 28] It's that God wants you to realize that he's first. First, and by the way, the word first with God is not the word first in a numbered list like you use.

No more than your wife wants to be first in a numbered list. I mean, if you were to look at your wife and say, Look, baby, you're number one, but my job is number two. And number three, and like that, it's like, no.

If I have to, baby, I'll quit the job before I'll miss anything that'll hurt us. I'll cut this off. Number three, it's preeminence. That's the Bible word for what Jesus is supposed to get in Colossians.

He's like, so number one, there is no number two. You're to seek him first with everything in you. Now, he'll give you money, but your eyes can never be on the money, because if you put your eyes on the money, you'll get off track.

Did you give me the verse in 1 Timothy? Look, God gives you money and things to enjoy. So let's say you have a motor home.

[23 : 33] Let's say you have a boat. There's a guy at the Whitfield Baptist Church I always picked on because he had a boat. He took me and David fishing one time, and he would always say, Every time you do a missions conference, you're trying to get me to get rid of my boat.

And I'd always get up. Last time I preached, I got up and said, Brother Larry, I'm here. Time for you to get rid of that boat again. You don't have to get rid of the boat. God wants you to enjoy the boat. That's not a problem at all. But God doesn't want the boat to ever be more important than him.

Just like God, Betty would never like it if I had. She's my number one woman, and I got my number two woman. That doesn't work that way. She wants to be, number one, she wants to be everything.

She wants to be all. And so be very careful about money. And when I say money, add into that everything that goes with money. Position, power, popularity, things, comfort, retirement.

And by the way, I would teach every one of the missionaries that I work with, I would teach them, man, you need to lay aside money for your retirement. You should have a good retirement account. You should work on all that, but that can't be. You can never trust your retirement account.

[24 : 36] You have to trust Jesus. So you have a retirement account, but you trust in Jesus because you could lose your retirement account. Some people lost everything when one idiot ran a Ponzi scheme that took the whole country.

Money's not trustworthy. Jesus is trustworthy. So our attitude is always this, I love Jesus. And if the money comes, amen. If the money doesn't come, amen. I love Jesus. I love Jesus when I got, and I love Jesus when I don't have.

By the way, can I just say while I'm on that, that same idea about money is the same idea about health. We don't love Jesus because of health. You should not. Some people become health addicts like money addicts.

Some people become family addicts. It's like all of a sudden family is more important than Jesus. See, here's the whole principle in the Bible. There's only one person who is everything.

And all the other stuff on the whole planet become nothing in comparison to him. You lose your life so you can find it. You give up your stuff so you can have your stuff.

[25 : 39] You die to yourself so you can have yourself. And so the whole philosophy would be, yeah, money, and just to be blunt honest with you, even your wife could be a bad thing.

Are you ready for that? You know what he told them when he said, you want to follow me? He said this. He said, if you don't hate your mother, your daddy, your brother, your sister, your wife, your own life also, your things, you cannot be my disciple.

So being a disciple of Jesus Christ is all or nothing. And so is money bad in and of itself? No. No. But I need to remember this, buddy.

I've got to watch it. Brother Steve Morgan won't like this illustration because it's a country boy illustration. But I grew up riding a horse all the time. Every day of my life I rode a horse.

It was part of my lifestyle. I counted cows in the morning. I counted cows in the afternoon. I rode fence lines. I was always on a horse. And the horse and I were very good friends.

[26 : 42] Let me tell you something about a horse. The second you relax and they know it, they will take advantage of it. So the second you relax, you could be out on the back corner and if she felt like she, when she's ready to go to the barn, she would turn and make a break for the barn.

And I mean, you could be going this way and all of a sudden she'd go, boom. And I mean, you'd be like, boom, and she'd be gone. And you're walking all the way back to the house. So you learn when you're riding her, I've got to be real careful what she's about to do.

Well, that's the way it is of money or family or things. All the time I've got to be saying, is this leading me towards Jesus or away from Jesus?

Am I allowing this to be a trap? And I'm going to finish by going to 1 Timothy 6, verse 6. And we're going to read through that. And I'll preach and I may have ruined all the question time.

But this is a great lesson for all of us. 1 Timothy 6, 6. Walk with me through this. Godliness, living like God wants us to, with contentment. Being happy with what I have is great gain.

[27 : 47] Great gain is not having stuff. Great gain is loving God and just being happy wherever I am with what I have. Happy with the woman you got. Happy with the children you got. Happy with the husband you got.

Happy with the church you got. Austin, that's a punch for you. Happy with whatever it is. Godliness with contentment is great gain. Verse 7. For we brought nothing into this world and we're not taking anything out.

When you came in here, you came in here naked. And when you leave, you're leaving naked. When you came in, your hands were empty. And when you leave, your hands are going to be empty. So be happy where you are with what you have.

And let me just say to what John Pearson has nailed my hide over the last eight years, at least on two or three occasions about this. He said, when are you going to be happy with vision? Because when we were running 50, I said, when we get to 75, I'll be happy.

We got 75 and I said, when we get to 100, I'm going to be happy. And he was right because it was a wickedness in my heart of not being happy with what God had given us as a church and me as a pastor.

[28 : 51] And instead of being happy, I had developed a bad attitude. Can you see that? So I've got to be happy with what I have. Verse 8. Having food and rain.

Having food and clothes. Be happy. Be content. What kind of food? Well, not steak every day. You know, when you and I read food there, that means being able to eat three good square meals a day.

You need two eggs and a half a pound of bacon for breakfast and two or three pieces of toast and a gallon or two of coffee or whatever it is you do, you want that for breakfast. And then for lunch, you want to have a big old ham sandwich or a steak or a pot roast.

And then for supper, actually what that means is if you've got enough food to keep you alive, be happy. And it said clothes. Clothes, raiment. That's just one outfit. And most of us, I read a Lifehacker post yesterday that said this is how to keep up with your clothes.

As you wear them, put the clothes you just wore on this side so that you know that way you won't wear the same clothes. People won't think you hang up with that one outfit. Now, you know, so you move, you wear this, put it over here, and it slowly works it back over there.

[30 : 01] That way you always, you know, you keep wearing new stuff all the time. Unless you're like me, you just wear the same thing all the time. But he said have food and raiment. Let us be content. By the way, there's no house mentioned.

There's no car mentioned. There's no good health mentioned. There's no children mentioned. You've got enough to eat. You've got something to put on your body to be happy. Next verse. And they that will be rich.

It's not a thing at all about being rich. The answer is will be. They that want to have money. By the way, guess who wants to have money? Rich people. Poor people.

Middle class people. I can sum it up in one word. People. They that will be rich. I'd like to be rich. Can I just be blunt and honest with you? If I had 10 million bucks, if you just wanted to give me 10 million bucks tonight, I wouldn't even pray about it.

I'd just take it. I'd be glad to give God a million of it. Build us a building and move on. Amen? I think I've got good ideas for that other nine million.

[31 : 06] Say amen. And I'm not the only one in this room. They that will be rich. When you want money. Now some of us may have today, today, have victory over that.

You've got the horse squarely under you. And you're ready for the horse to dart left to right. And you're ready. And you're holding on. Your legs are tense. Or not tense, but prepared.

You know, you're kind of hanging on there. You're not like you're... You don't have to do it like that. But you're not just up there kicked back like in an easy chair. Because you do that, buddy. She's liable to just take on and dump you right there.

And unless you've just got a really dud horse, believe me, they're not the easiest thing to stay on all the time. So what happens? They will be rich, fall in temptation. And what? Look at it. And a snare.

A trap. The devil uses money to put a trap for people. And the foolish and hurtful lust. You know what lusts are there? Desires. Things I want. Can I tell you?

[32 : 06] I... This is the honest truth. I don't go to stores. I don't. I don't go to Best Buy. I used to have a Best Buy addiction. When I got a Mac, I was at least could stay out of there.

Because they didn't do too good on Macs anyway. I tried to stay away from the Apple store. Don't go. Man, if you walk in the Apple store, they have some of the fanciest, shiniest things for sale.

And you know, really, you have to have them. And Best Buy's got them. And there's about a... I can tell you the honest truth. I have so many foolish lusts, desires, things I'd like to have.

If you came up to me right now and I was honest, I wouldn't be honest. I'd lie to you. If you said, brother, what can I do for you? Something special you'd like to have? I'd say, brother, I don't need anything. But if you just want to slip \$10,000 under a mat and don't say anything about giving it to me, I've got a lot of foolish stuff I could spend on them.

I promise. The fact is, if you make it \$100,000, we're getting close. You see? Foolish. Hurtful. Things. The fact is, you know, you get that new boat, it might keep you out of church on Sunday.

[33 : 09] Nothing wrong with the boat, but it could become hurtful if you're not careful. And they drown men in destruction and perdition. Money, man, it'll suck the life out of you because you always want more of it.

And they'll get there unless you are in control and you've given your desire. Verse 10. For the love of money is the root of all evil. Some have desired after, coveted after, wanted after, and they have erred, got off the path from the faith.

Money has actually gotten people off the faith path. Can you believe that? Money has gotten people off the faith path. They have gotten off the faith path because they wanted money.

And then it says, and it has pierced them through with many sorrows, brought tons of pain. I remember a guy named Jack who was a member of our church in Cartersville. And I love Jack with all my heart.

He was a Century 21 man, and he bought motorcycles for his kids. And, I mean, every kind of toy they could possibly want. And one of the things that broke his heart the most was, no matter how many toys he gave them, they never were really satisfied.

[34 : 13] And when I was his pastor, his boys didn't love him that much. And he said, I have done everything I could all my life for them. And they're never satisfied. Because what money does is if you've got one motorcycle, two or better.

If you've got 180, you need 1,000. I mean, you've got to have something else. Verse 11. But thou, hey, Austin, old man of God.

Hey, church member. Hey, old man of God sitting here. You follow after. What do we go looking for? Righteousness. How can I live holy? How can I honor God?

How can I be godly? How can I have faith and love and patience and meekness? That's what I'm supposed to chase after. So every morning while somebody else gets up and goes looking for money, we get up looking.

That doesn't mean, hey, God may give us a ton of money. God may give us. Don't leave your sin. So we're never supposed to have money. We're never supposed to want money. We might have money, but we don't want it.

[35 : 13] Money can't become our idol. Verse 12. Fight the good fight of faith. Lay hold on eternal life where until thou art called and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Now go to the last verse where it says you can enjoy it, so I want to get the other side of it. In fact, just give me about two verses before that where I get all of it. There it is. I think I'll start right there. It'll be good. Look at this. Charge them that are rich in this world.

If you have some money. By the way, and everybody in this room falls in that rich in this world category. There's a web page. You can go on and ask the web page where you rank in the world.

And no matter what you make, if you live in America, you're like in the far right top 10% of the world. Some of us would be in the top 5% of the world. You know, when they talk about the top 1%, believe me, we are all ranking.

In the world, when people are, some people live on a dollar a day. That really skewers our \$8 an hour minimum wage or whatever it is. Charge them that are rich in the world that they be not high money.

[36 : 12] Don't you let your money make you think you're better than people. Don't trust in riches because they're not trustworthy. They're uncertain. Trust in a living God. And look at this. It's not because God doesn't want you to enjoy stuff.

Isn't that beautiful? It's not because God doesn't want you to enjoy stuff. So say the Lord will let you have a \$100,000 car. It's not a sin. That's not the point.

The point is, it's not that you can't have a \$100,000 car. I don't know that anybody has one of those in our church. But if you did, that's not the point. God would say, hey, enjoy it. You're my child. I love you. But don't ever love the toy.

Don't ever love the gift more than you love the giver. You know, it's Christmas time. We just finished it. And amazingly, your children get so excited about gifts when they're a little bitty.

But they often aren't excited about who gave them the gift. And they can get their eyes on the gift and forget the giver. And that's what I've done many times in my life.

[37 : 09] I've looked at the things God's given me, and I've forgotten He gave them to me. And He can take them away from me. Father, I thank You for this privilege of looking at Your Word. I thank You for the privilege of studying Your Word.

And I pray that You'd help us to handle money correctly. And I'll give You praise and honor and glory for what You do. Thank You. In Jesus' name, amen. Let's all stand together. We're going to sing, when I survey the wondrous cross, I think.

Well, I've kind of blown our schedule. But we've got time for a couple more questions. Maybe three. 1 John 5, 8. What do these three witnesses mean? Spirit, water, and blood. Holy Spirit, Jesus, and God.

It's in verse 7. 1 John 5, 7. You'll throw that up there right quick. And if you're, there may be some of you that your Bible left that verse out. But it'll make a, it'll pretty well explain it.

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these three are one. God's three. They're one. They're not, they're all, they're different persons. But they're all the same.

[38 : 08] They're equal and yet different. And that's as much as I understand of them. That part of them. Next question. What country has Lord placed on your heart that needs a missionary?

A couple years ago you were pushing India. Is there another country? I guess my country that I'm probably more concerned about and praying for right now is Indonesia. Though I certainly can't give up on India or China.

Indonesia is the fourth largest country in the world. We don't have anybody there. And we need an aggressive church planner who is willing to risk everything. Like the guys are doing in North Africa.

Like the guys are doing in China. I don't know that you have any idea of this. I don't know you ever pay attention to this. But you have, we are supporting some of the most unusual missionaries on the planet.

Most missionaries to China never share the gospel. They teach English. They never share the gospel. The missionaries out of this church and the missionaries that are part of our team of missionaries that we work with.

[39 : 06] They actively, proactively preach the gospel and have church services and everything else. And so do the guys in Morocco. And I mean they're a wild bunch of people. I wish you would go on a trip.

Can I ask you to go on a trip? I'd like to introduce you to these guys. Today and yesterday I was talking to Tyler Masters who's a member of our church. And Saeed is over there in Tunisia on a visit right now.

And Saeed is learning Spanish just so he can talk to me. And he listens to all the lessons that I, because he can't get the English down. It's harder for him. The Spanish is easier. And he's learning Spanish and he listens to all the podcasts I put out.

My own church people don't do that. And Saeed's listening even though he can't understand them. Can you imagine? These are great people. And we'll just see what God will do in some of these other places. Next. My cousin is an unbeliever and her husband is asking for a divorce.

They've only been married for a couple of years. What advice should I give her in addition to trying to make their marriage work? In 1 Corinthians chapter 7, if she can abide with him, and that's the chapter.

[40 : 07] Go read 1 Corinthians 7. And that will be the answer. If she can, if he will stay with her. I mean that exact story comes out of 1 Corinthians 7. If he will stay with her, she sanctifies him and the children.

She puts holiness to work in that family. So if there's any way possible that she can stay slowly, God may work in that family and cause them to get saved. And God may make a difference.

On the India film, you watch the India film. The story of the lady, the story of the lady whose dad calls a prostitute and publicly humiliates. And beats and mistreats and everything else.

She sees her dad get saved. She sees her husband and her brother. And she sees all these people getting saved. And she saw all of her suffering as a road to getting those people to get saved.

And so if they could, if they could stay together. But if the husband's asking for divorce, 1 Corinthians 7 considered her free. She would be free because he was walking away. She wouldn't, but he would.

[41 : 10] Okay, one more question. How about that? And then I'm leaving for Mableton. Do we have an idea how much our new church building will cost? I'm dealing with people all the time, finding out stuff all that I can.

Probably, probably, let me give you a wild ballpark, wild ballpark. I think we can probably get her for a million three, million and a half.

That's counting all the dirt work. And I don't know enough about that to know. But somebody will find that out. I don't know about that for sure. We'll have some studies done on that later.

And we could get building and parking lot and roads maybe, maybe for that number. But, no, you know, it's just a wild guess. That's like asking me, that's like asking me how much something else would cost.

And I don't know anything about it. But I have been talking to people, and I am actively working on it. We'll present things to the men. And over the next couple of years, we will see as God takes us to that point.

[42 : 10] And I'm glad you're interested and glad you're concerned. Next question. There's one more he said. If we confess, 1 John 1, 9 says, If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Seeing that that is true, do they need to make sure they daily confess their sins? If so, why? My answer would be no. You do not need to make sure you daily confess your sins.

You've got to be very careful about what's going on there. Some of you have been taught that if you go to bed at night and you forgot to confess one of your sins, you might lose your salvation.

That's just utterly ridiculous. We confess that we were sinners. That's how we got saved. So that's our clear picture of how we got saved. And we still should confess our sin.

And I think that if you love somebody, if you ever hurt somebody in your family, hurt your wife, has anybody ever hurt their wife's feelings in this room besides me? Am I the only pig in this room? Have you ever hurt your spouse's feelings?

[43 : 07] Do you have to say amen? What do you do? You say, I'm sorry. Let me explain something to you about Betty. This I think will help us understand it.

Betty's not going to leave me. We have ample proof of that. She has had a 40-year track record. She has been a great wife. She has lived all sorts of places.

She has had no money, some money, more money, less money. She's had children problems. She's had health problems. She stood by my side and taken care of me when I was a drunk out of my head from the drugs after having kidney surgery.

All that other stuff. And she was still there when I finally came back to my head and wasn't acting as stupid as I had acted before. And she loves me. And so I could easily offend her and she'll forgive me.

I'm already forgiven. I'm forgiven right now by Betty. I mean, that's the kind of woman she's been to me for 40 years. But I would never play on that. I would never want to abuse that.

[44 : 13] I would always want to say to her, I love you. I thank you. And I, I'm sorry, what if I inadvertently did something wrong or didn't even realize I had done something wrong and I forgot to confess it?

Because I'm using what you said at the bottom. Is it true, do they need to make sure they daily confess their sins? Well, the truth of the matter is, you'll know if you need to say sorry.

And it's more for you than anybody. Because the Lord loved you when you were still a sinner. He loved you first. He didn't love you after you got pure or right. And there's not anything over there where heavy, heavy hangs over your head and he's saying, ask forgiveness for everything or I'll pull back my salvation.

He's not saying that at all, ever. You live under the sweet, wonderful, long-suffering, merciful grace of a great God who has already forgiven you for everything. But it'll sure do you good personally.

It'll do your heart good to be able to say, hey, Jesus, I know you love me and I know I'm already forgiven. You know, you know, when the prodigal son came home, that word prodigal kind of almost has the idea in our minds of sinful, but it's really more the idea of extravagant.

[45 : 21] He went out and wasted all of his money on extravagant living. And when he came home, he had practiced all the sorry story he could tell. So he could tell his father that he was sorry and ask for forgiveness.

Have you ever noticed he did say it, but the father never paid attention? Go read the story. It's the wildest thing in the world. He comes back saying, man, I don't deserve to be called your son. Just let me be one of your heart.

And he's doing all that talking. And while he's talking, the father's going, hey, bring me the fatted calf. Kill the calf. Bring a shirt. Bring a coat. Bring a ring. My son's come home. We're having a party.

I hear you, son. You can talk all you want. We're having a party. So that's the good father you've got. So don't dare let anybody put you into, I'm sure I confessed all my sin yesterday.

No, no, no, no, no, no, no. Now, should you say, I mean, sure you should. And I know a preacher recently made the comment about a preacher stopping in the middle of the street, and he wasn't about to even cross the street before he got his prayers or his sins confessed.

[46 : 19] Just let me say this. That's not in the Bible. That's a good story. And it's told about Spurgeon and Moody. And who knows if it's true at all. Not one story is like that's in the entire Bible. Preachers make up stories.

They're famous for making up stories. So here's what I say to them. If it ain't in a book, I don't have to believe it. Amen. And so there's no story in the Bible about Charles Spurgeon getting halfway across a busy street and stopping in the middle of the street and saying, oh, God, I have offended you, and I will not take one more step until you've told me it's okay.

That's not in the Bible. That's not in the Bible. So don't let that creep into your mentality. Should you say you're sorry? Yes. You know what? When Betty and I fight, sometimes we fight.

The time one of us gets around to saying sorry, usually I'm the first one to say I'm sorry. That's the truth. It really is the truth. Because in six months, she told me at the end of the six months, she said, you know, you never say you're sorry. So I started saying it, and she quit.

39 and a half years ago. I'm sorry. But you know what?

[47 : 27] We'll get in a fight, and whenever she'll say, I'll say I'm sorry, and she'll say, it's nothing. It didn't matter. It's okay. It's amazing what love does. Just remember this.

If you can imagine how much you love your child, multiply that by a bazillion, gazillion, bazillion, and you won't touch the hem of the garment of our great God.

He loves you. You are not to live in fear. And don't you dare go home tonight and say, man, God hates it when I have a good time. Because the preacher said we're not supposed to love money. No, you just, hey, he would love, he'd love to see you, he'd love to see you playing with your new toy.

As long as you keep saying, you're such a good, thank you for the gift. He loves that. He just don't want you to ever think this gift's more important than him. That's fair, isn't it? I mean, that's not one thing.

And he said, he richly gives us all things to, what was the word? You remember? To what? I love it when I see somebody I give a gift to. When I see them enjoy it.

[48 : 27] I saw somebody, I saw somebody at the summit that was using an iPad. I gave them. They made a mention they needed an iPad. And I gave it. They were preaching out of it. You know what I thought when I saw it? I'm like, that's my iPad. That's the same.

That's my favorite cover for an iPad I ever had. He's got it. But I thought to myself, I couldn't, I've tried to find a one like that. I've not been able to. But you know what I thought? I was happy.

And your father's happy. He just doesn't want you to ever love the gift. When you love the giver. And for that, you'll have to be real careful.

Because we are so excited about the gifts. We often forget who gave them to us. And we get our hearts wrong. Thank you so much, man. I love you. And I always enjoy question and answer night. Peyton told me one time he liked it because it was the time I got off subject.

And I really just spoke to you about what you want to talk about. So I hope you'll get some questions ready for next month. And Brother Tripp is going to come with some announcements. And thank you so much. Pray for Cobb County.

[49 : 24] Man, the Lord seems to be opening some great doors there. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information, log on to www.visionbaptist.com where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.

Thank you. Thank you.