

# Q & A Service for October

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. During this time, Pastor Garner will give answers to various Bible questions.

Okay, that first one was real fast. What is the King's command? What is the King's command? Well, I don't know. I think you're setting me up, so I'm going to make that one very brief. Let's open our Bibles again to Matthew 28, 18 through 20.

The King is Jesus. Amen? Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. Matthew 6, 33. Jesus is our King.

He is our Lord, Lord and King. That's almost the same word in one sense. And His command is, verse 19, to go and to take the gospel to all the world, to teach all men, to help them understand.

By the way, we disciple them before they get saved. We disciple them until they get saved, and we disciple them after they get saved. Our whole life is discipling. We don't talk people into praying.

[ 1 : 06 ] We walk them through it so they'll know how to be saved. They accept Jesus Christ as their Savior. And then we continue to teach them so they know how to live in a way that brings honor and glory to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Matthew 28, 18 through 20. And I guess that's because of the King's command over here, and that is what we'll be doing at the summit and our missions conference and the camp next year.

That's the theme that the guys on the team have chosen to use. Next question. How does Matthew 10, 32 through 33 relate to eternal security? I don't know.

Well, that certainly doesn't sound a lot like Robert's voice, though. Robert's had a voice change. Matthew 10, 32. Would you like to throw that up there on the screen?

Matthew 10, 32 through 33. And how does that relate to eternal security? Matthew 10, 32 through 33. Now, I tell you, well, let's just flip quickly to Romans 10, verse 9.

[ 2 : 17 ] And I think maybe we'll get to the epistles. You know, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are written to the, they're written, they are really kind of between the time of the nation of Israel and the church.

And they're kind of, the church is getting started. And they're very true, and it still applies. But here it is written out for us now. Verse 9. Before we're going to go through verse 13.

But look at what it says in verse 9. Would you look at that with me? You confess. You say, I believe. With my mouth, I tell you, I believe the Lord Jesus. I confess the Lord Jesus.

I admit. I recognize. I acknowledge publicly that he is Lord. That he is God. That he is king. That Jesus is not just a regular man. And I acknowledge that.

And you believe it in your heart that God has raised him from the dead. Then you'll be saved. Verse 10. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness. And with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

[ 3 : 22 ] So only something that came from my heart through my mouth really matters. And people lie with their mouths all the time. Verse 11. The scripture saith. That goes back to Matthew 10.

Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. So just let me say this. If you really believe Jesus, you're going to confess him. If you really believe Jesus, you're going to confess him.

And if you deny him, you're telling me you don't really believe Jesus. Now, I think, because I'm trying to read into the question what you might be thinking.

You might be thinking, well, what about when somebody's discouraged? What about when somebody's scared? What about when somebody doesn't take a stand? What about when Peter denied Jesus? Jesus. And if that's what you're talking about, just, we're going to go ahead and read just in a second.

But just listen to this. Peter did not live a life of denying Jesus. Peter messed up. He denied Jesus three times. He immediately realized he was an idiot.

[ 4 : 19 ] He was a fool. He shouldn't have done that. He went out. He wept bitterly. He got his life right with God. It goes on to profess him. Peter, or Judas, denies Jesus and betrays him.

And he does go to hell. That was the lifestyle he chose. One said, I might have done wrong, but I'm sorry. And I won't forgive. And forgiveness, that's not who I am. And the other one didn't.

So just let me say, before I read these last two verses, and then we'll go back to Matthew. If you're really a saved person, if you're really born again, you're going to confess Jesus Christ as Lord.

You're not going to be ashamed of him. And you're going to tell people about him. And I would say to you that there are a lot of people that are Christians saved in quotation marks that aren't saved.

They have said they're saved, but they're not saved. They talk it, but it's not real. You know, it's kind of like what young guys do when they're going to marry a girl.

[ 5 : 18 ] I love you. And what they say is, I love you, so they can have some things that are supposed to wait until after marriage. And they lie to her, and they talk her into that. And they don't mean it.

And sometimes they're like the guys in the Old Testament, and Amnon, and Tamar, and all those people. And there's no real love there. And the real love says, I say it, I mean it, and it'll show in my life.

I think you ought to know this. True Christianity shows. True Christianity shows. You say, well, what about Christians that walk away from God? God, that's fine. You can do that, but you will be chastised.

You'll be spanked to death even. That's what the Lord's Supper was about tonight. Jonathan read that to us. Some are weak, some are sick, and some are sleeping or dead.

Let's read verses 12 and 13 if we could. Romans 10, 12. There's no difference between the Jew and the Greek. For the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. Verse 13.

[ 6 : 19 ] For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. Why do you call on his name? You call on his name because you know he is who he said he was. And I believe him. And I trust him.

Now let's go back to Matthew. Let me show you what I think about eternal security there. Matthew chapter 10, 1 at 32 and 33. Whosoever therefore shall confess me before me in him will I confess before my Father which is in heaven.

I confess Jesus because I trust him. I believe him. God's done a work in my life. And I confess him. I think everybody in the room understands that. That's not your problem. Verse 33 says.

But whosoever shall deny me before me in him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven. I'll show you one other verse that just popped into my head. If I can find it right quick. But I just want you to know that this person here.

If you deny him. If you don't believe him. And you don't trust him. Then you don't have real Bible faith. It's interesting that this very week I have been asking for prayer for those that follow my blog.

[ 7 : 23 ] I've asked for prayer for a guy in Iran who's in his mid-30s. And he will not deny Jesus. And they have asked him. They've told him to deny Jesus.

They've told him not to say that he's not saved. He's not a Christian. That he'll go back to the Muslim faith. And he says if I have to die. I have to die. And he will not deny Jesus.

In Timothy. Somebody can help me real quick with the verse. Even when we're not faithful. He remains faithful still. I think it's in two or three.

In one of the chapter two or chapter three. In one of those. Who can holler that out for me? One of you Bible scholars. Where's that one found? First. Second Timothy chapter two.

If you would. I think. Verse 13. South Sudan. Verse 13.

[ 8 : 19 ] If we believe not. Yet he abideth faithful. He cannot deny himself. Verse 12. If we deny him. He will also deny us.

Same phrase. Used there. So there are. Sometimes. Maybe in your spiritual life. You've gotten weak. And you may have denied him. Temporarily like Peter did.

But if you did. And you are really saved. God. Whipped. Your. Backside. And you didn't really. Deny him. Because if you're his.

You will not. Get away. With sin. You will not. Get away with sin. God will take care of that. Next question. Please explain the difference.

Between biblical Ephraim. And Israel. And Judah. Lord help me. Throw up in the last.

[ 9 : 15 ] Give me another one. I'll take. I'll take one for 10. When someone leaves the church. In a troublesome way. How do you both obey. Romans 16 17.

To avoid strife and commands. To forgive. And to make right. With your brother. Sometimes when people leave. They want to continue. Relationships. With some in the church. And it causes confusion. Doesn't true forgiveness.

Require restored relationship. Well let's look at. Romans 16 17. If you would. Romans 16 17. And I think that. That one's pretty.

I think that's. A little bit different. Than the question. So I think maybe. You're confusing two things. In the question. I guess real quick. On Israel. And Judah. And Ephraim. Let me just tell you.

This real quick. What comes to my mind. Off the top. By the way. Brother Frick. Is the Old Testament. Professor. At our church. And he is waiting. To answer that question. Immediately. After church.

[ 10 : 10 ] And he will do a good job. And I will agree with him. And trust his answer. Just so you know. Let's see. Brother Frick. Help me now.

The ten tribes. Belong to. Israel. Judah. Shake your head. Do something. Help me here. The ten tribes are. Don't do me this way.

Brother John. Come on. Israel. That's what I thought. Made that one. All right. Brother Frick. Wasn't about to help me. All right. Ten tribes are Israel. Two tribes are Judah.

They lose Jerusalem. And Ephraim. Which is one of what. He is one of. Manasseh and Ephraim. He's one of Joseph's boys. Sets up idols. And so the difference is.

The nation divides. And one of them. Ephraim is used. Often for the idol worshipers. And brother Frick. Will be glad to help you with that. At a later date. That's as much as I want to get into that.

[ 11 : 08 ] And. Or John Pearson. John answered the question very well. And Tim looked like he knew. Right there. And so y'all just hit those guys. Right after church. And I'm sure they'll answer that question for you. All right. Romans 16 17.

I beseech you brethren. Mark them. Which cause divisions and offenses. Contrary to the doctrine. Which you've learned. And avoid them. How does that go with the two? Now here's the question. Go back to the question now.

Watch this. There's. There are two groups of people. I think in the question. Can you throw that. Look here. When someone. Leaves the church. In a troublesome way. How do you both obey. Romans 16 17.

And forgive. Now watch this. Romans 16 17. Is not about somebody. Who backslides. Or somebody. Who even changes churches. Okay.

There will be people. Along the way. That will leave. Our church. And go join another church. And there have been people already. Now if I was.

[ 12 : 02 ] The better pastor. Maybe we wouldn't lose anybody. And if you were better church members. That'd help too. If we all work together on that. But people will. Along the way. Not fit in.

Not like each other. And go their way. And we ought to love them. And you have not heard me. In the five years and a half. That we've been here. You've not heard me.

Talk bad about anybody. Who's left this church. You've not heard me. Preach about them. You've not heard me. Say disparaging words about them. You've not heard me. Sit up here and say. Don't have fellowship with them.

Because they are. Our brothers and sisters. And if there's some little. Junk and petty junk. We're family. And we will overlook it. Can you say amen? We're not gonna. We're.

By God's grace. Now Charles Spurgeon died. When he was my age. And since I'm not as big a man of God. As he is. Neither physically. Nor spiritually. Maybe I got a few more years. But. Well I.

[ 12 : 56 ] So. Because I just told Betty Ford Church. I said. Man if I die when Charles Spurgeon did. You ain't got but a couple more months of me. But anyway. And she looked at me and said. Well you ain't that big a man of God. So. Now. Yeah you did.

You said you take better care of yourself. That's right. Which meant. You weigh 20 pounds less than he did. And he was a 600 pounder. But anyway. But. But. But. But. As long as I'm pastor. I don't ever want us to be one of those churches.

And I'll tell you. If you come to me and you say. Brother Austin. I just feel like God would have us move our membership to. Another Bible believing church. I'm gonna shake your hand. Hug your neck. Tell you I love you. Hurt like the devil.

And miss you like crazy. But be as smiling as I can. While you do it. That's the way it ought to be. Now if somebody leaves over sin. That's a different matter. But even that. I'll be honest with you.

You won't find me running you down. Or chasing you. Or trying to get you. Or. I just don't really think that's the way it's supposed to be done. And so. I won't do that. But that Romans 16 is totally different.

[ 13 : 54 ] And you're not gonna mix these two together. So look at the question. When someone leaves the church in a troublesome way. Now go back to Romans 16, 17. That's not a troublesome way. Romans 16, 17.

I beseech you mark them. Which cause divisions and offenses. Contrary to the doctrine. Which you've learned. And avoid them. So let me just explain what that means.

Suppose somebody came in here. And joined our church. And began spreading through our church. That Jesus was the most godly man.

Who ever lived. But he was not 100% god. And they gave you historical arguments. Church father arguments.

And Jehovah's Witnesses Bible arguments. And they. But they disparaged the name of Jesus. I will just tell you as a church. One of us will be leaving.

[ 14 : 53 ] Him. Or me. And you will decide. Because that is a division. And an offense. Contrary to the doctrine. Which we have learned.

Now if somebody comes in our church. And says. I believe that doctrinally. We can't use chairs. They must be benches. I'm simply going to say. Where does the Bible say that? We're not going to argue about that one.

Or a color. Or any minor detail. I said. I was joking with Brother Frick this morning. In the office. And this happened this week. Somebody was talking to me. And I said. You're philosophizing.

And I like biblicizing. So if you don't have Bible. I'm not really interested. So. If this person were in our church. They would. Maybe they would tell us. That salvation depended on getting baptized.

Or speaking in tongues. Or getting circumcised. We would have. A knock down. Drag out fight. But I'll explain to you. Even how I would handle that. So you'll know. Because it may happen someday.

[ 15 : 50 ] I would go to that person. In private. Or with two or three of you guys. And I would sit down. And I would say. I need to talk to you about. Some things I hear you spreading around the church. And I want you to show me.

What you're saying. And I would take the Bible. And I would do my best. To show them. That Jesus is God. And I would do the best. I could explain it to them.

And if they would listen. And come this way. Then I would never mention it. It would never come out. I would simply leave it alone. But if they wouldn't. We'd have to take a stand.

We would have to take a stand. That's a church. You can't deny Jesus. And be part of a Christian church. Not a real Christian church. And there's a lot of other things.

Can I just say this? Because I don't know who wrote the question. But most of the divisions. That you've known over the years. Have come over petty junk. They've come over everybody fighting amongst each other. The deacons fighting with the preacher.

[ 16 : 43 ] The preacher fighting with the deacons. I want to have deacons meetings. They don't want to have deacons meetings. I want the walls to be green. And y'all want them to be black. Or whatever it is you want to do. And we got all these little fights. Joe painted these walls black.

Amen. Joe and Mark and Phillip. But anyway. You see. Those are little things. Those are little things. And we would not ever have a fight about that. Next question please.

How should single people deal with sexual desires? We don't have a spouse like married people do. So what do we do? Wait till you have a spouse. Like married people do. That's a great idea.

I got two verses. Let's go to two verses. Let's go to 1 Corinthians chapter 7 verse 1. 1 Corinthians chapter 7 and verse 1. If you throw that up.

Now listen to this. Now concerning the things whereof you wrote unto me. It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Now this will be interesting to you. The word.

[ 17 : 39 ] The Greek word. Which the New Testament was originally written in. Behind the word touch. Touch is a passion word. It's a flame word. It's not talking about you shaking hands. Or my wife giving you a hug. Or me shaking your hand. Or somebody touching you. That's not what it's talking about. It's not talking about that kind of touch. It's talking about that kind of touch.

And everybody in this room knows about that kind of touch. They make whole TV programs about it. And movies about it. And we all understand that touch. So I'm just going to go ahead and tell you. God doesn't want us touching the opposite sex.

Period. Until we're married. You say how you know that? Verse 2. 1 Corinthians 7. 2. Nevertheless to avoid fornication. Sexual sin.

Immorality. Let every man have his own wife. Let every woman have her own husband. Can I get you to go now to 1 Thessalonians chapter 4. Now let me remind you.

[ 18 : 35 ] That's a good question. And I'm going to talk to you young people about how to handle it. Because I would assume that comes from a young person. 1 Thessalonians chapter 4 if you would. I want to help go over with you how we would handle that.

You do know that Jesus said even to look on a woman and lust or desire her in your heart is a sin. So to look at a woman and for me to think a thought in my heart is a sin against God.

I'm only to have sexual physical relations with one person. I've been married to her for a long time. I'm only to think thoughts like that about one person.

That's my wife. And God wants you to get married in holiness and purity and sanctification. And so God has.

It's all a picture by the way. It's all a picture. Do you know weddings? Do you know weddings are so beautiful because they're really a picture? They're really a picture.

[ 19 : 42 ] The father brings the bride down the aisle. The father gets the bride for Jesus. The bride comes marching down the aisle in a white dress.

We do all that because the bride, Christ, the church will be dressed in white. Not because of her personal purity but because of the blood washed purity that she has.

It's not because she's good but because the father through Jesus did something great for her. And he brings the bride down and he gives the bride over to Jesus. And Jesus paid the price to get her and make her his bride.

And so there's supposed to be something holy and pure in marriage. Ephesians chapter 5 where it talks about husband and wife relationships. It goes all the way down through. It says wives submit to your husbands.

Wives submit. Wives respect. Husbands love. Husbands love. Husbands love. It goes all the way down through there three times for each one of them. And then it says but really I'm not even talking about marriage.

[ 20 : 42 ] I'm talking about Jesus and the church. So we're a symbol. That's why we don't believe in divorce. Because there's a symbol involved there. I'm married to Betty and we want our marriage to be a testimony to you that I took her and she took me.

And we took each other for better or for worse. I didn't say we're going to be mad at you. If some of you have been through a divorce symbol, he's being ugly to us. I'm not doing that at all. I'm just saying it's a symbol. It's a symbol.

You know, you remember when Moses struck the rock and God got upset? He got upset because the rock was Jesus. It represented Jesus. And Jesus only gets struck one time. And so there's something special about marriage.

And so in 1 Thessalonians chapter 4. 1 Thessalonians. Am I wrong? No. 1 Thessalonians chapter 4. The Bible says in verse 1. He said, Look guys, God wants you pure.

God wants you to stay pure. By the way, can I just throw in here real quick? That's pornography. That's dirty jokes about sex. That's any of that stuff. God wants us to be pure.

[ 22 : 08 ] You're not going to be pure on your own. It's always going to be the blood of Jesus that purifies us. But there's something special about it. Verse 5. You ought not get your wife in the lust of concupiscence.

If you want to put that over, put a circle around that and draw an arrow to the margin. Concupiscence is like desires out of control. See, there's nothing wrong with a sexual desire that God gave any of us.

It's just that God has a place to fulfill that sexual desire. And that's in marriage. Can you say amen right there? And it's a marriage between a man and a woman.

It's a marriage between a man and a woman. So the question was, I think while I go, how do we deal with that? I'm going to give you two things. Number one, listen, I want to tell you, you need to stay away from the opposite sex.

And don't play with all the dating that this world does. The world's taught you. Now, this is Austin Gardner's opinion. But I think, I will only tell you something. I really think I could show you a Bible principle that goes with it. This idea of kissing and smooching and dancing with this girl tonight and that girl the next night and that girl the next night only tears your heart and her heart.

[ 23 : 19 ] God never plays with that stuff. He doesn't play with us. He doesn't play with each other. You ought not do that. So it'd be best if both of you just focused on, seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness.

Let's just seek God and then all these things shall be added unto you. Matthew 6, 33. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added to you.

One of the most beautiful pictures in the human beings that I know is Keith and Rebecca Shoemaker. I knew both of them when they were single. Rebecca was signed up to be a missionary in South America.

She's married to Keith Shoemaker. They live in Burkina Faso. Keith was a missionary to Burkina Faso. So I tried to set Keith up with any and every girl I could because I didn't want him to go to the field single. And he's so mad at me now, he still throws that in my face.

We get together. He said, you remember when you set me up with that woman? I'd have killed you if I'd have married her. But I said to him, I said, Keith, you ought not go to the mission field. He said, brother, I've got my eyes set on Jesus and what he wants me to do.

[ 24 : 22 ] And he was headed that way. And I talked to Rebecca. And Rebecca said, I'm headed this way. This is what God wants me to do. And God brought them together. And they love each other.

And they're put together. Keith was made for Rebecca. And Rebecca was made for God. And neither one of them were looking. Neither one of them were looking. Here's what's the beautiful thing. Let God give you your spouse.

So, young people, how do you do it? Stop watching so much junk on TV, Facebook, Internet, and everywhere else that get your passion stirred up. Stop hanging around with guys. And all they can do is talk about girls and their bodies.

Or guys and their bodies. Stop hanging around with those people. Focus on being around people that love Jesus. Want to talk about the Bible. Want to do something for God. Want to be involved in ministry. And when the time comes and you find a girl you think you're interested, you don't need to be alone with her in private.

You do not learn what your girl looks like at the beach. You don't learn what your girl looks like alone in a quiet, dark room. You know how you learn? You learn what she looks like when she's at church serving God.

[ 25 : 24 ] And what she's doing right. That's when you learn about her. And then just kind of serve God and just let your hearts grow together. Just let your hearts grow together. That's what I'd say to you.

Let me get the question again. Is that it? How should single people deal with sexual desires? You're going to have them. Every time the thought comes to your mind, say, Lord Jesus, I love you. Bring the spouse you have for me to me.

Now, I fell in love with girls. I figured out the girl thing about the age of 10. I was a late bloomer. I like girls.

I've liked girls ever since I was 10. By the time I was 12, I wanted to be married. And I wanted to have a son. My favorite TV show was The Rifleman, Lucas McCain and his boy.

That's my favorite. How many of you ever heard of it? Y'all looking like you've never even heard of it. That's a great TV show. Amen. And I wanted to be a daddy when I grew up. And so I dated several girls, which no one taught me or helped me.

[ 26 : 25 ] And every girl I dated just broke my heart. They broke my heart. I decided finally that I would never give a ring to another girl.

I would never pretend I was in love again. Because every girl, every girl, this one girl I dated, I didn't, we kissed. And I wouldn't kiss her with my mouth open.

The next day, everybody at school was laughing at me. I walked in and said, look at you, you didn't know how to kiss. And everybody's having a good time about that. And so by the time I met Betty, I never asked Betty to be my girlfriend.

I never asked her to be my girlfriend. I never gave her a ring. We never went together. We never went steady. And we didn't do any of that stuff. We went from nothing to, will you marry me?

And it took her three hours to answer me. We were sitting alone. It seemed like three hours. We were sitting alone at the top of the steps of Marshall Curlin's house. And I said, will you marry me someday? And she seemed like forever.

[ 27 : 21 ] And finally she said, yes, I will. And so I called her the next day or two. I called her. I said, how about two months from now? Let's get with it. If we're going to get married, let's get married. And we were married at, I was the ripe old age of 18. I think that's good advice.

Not for you guys. It says 18 for y'all is like 12 for our age. They say on the internet, even that the new 18 is 26. That means you guys are immature. Why don't you let go of your mother's skirt?

Why don't you put on your big boy pants and put up your little boy shorts? Why don't you get a job when you're like 12 and go earn some money? Why don't you paint a fence, drive a nail, do something like a big person, act like kids, throw away your stupid little, and get a, I mean, come on.

You ought to be able to pay your own bills. You know that? You said, there are no jobs. They know there are no jobs because you won't work. That ain't in the Bible. That's Austin Garden.

Man, we done got off target. Man, I'm turning into a preacher. Amen. Anyway, so don't focus on Jesus. Focus on Jesus. Focus on Jesus. This is a true story.



[ 28 : 30 ] I was riding horses with Betty. And we were riding along. I said, well, tell me about your boyfriends and stuff. And she said, boys have never liked me that much because I don't want to do what they want to do.

So I went, I like that. Point number one. And then she said, she said, I just want to be Betty Crocker. And I went, well, point number two.

Then she said, I want to be Susie Homer. I'm like, sold, sold. I'll take you. And, you know, did you know you can be clean and pure? There's a guy waiting for you.

There's a guy waiting for you. There's a guy looking for a girl that loves Jesus. Betty got saved just a few months before we got married. Betty got baptized. I watched her get baptized.

I watched her love Jesus. And it's been over 38 years of wonderful marriage. And I just tell you, trust Jesus and don't mess around. You'll only rip your heart out. Don't get married like lost people get married.

[ 29 : 30 ] They mess up. Christians get messed up because they marry like lost people. Find a woman, marry her, and stay with her for the rest of your life. Next question. Boy, I know you're mad at me on that one. What do you believe causes a seemingly godly person to walk away from it all?

Example, a husband walking away from his marriage without an explanation. I think Jesus talked about that in Matthew chapter 7, if you want my opinion.

Matthew chapter 7, I think it is. And let's go down to the last part of that chapter. Matthew 7, 24. He said, Therefore, whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.

And the rain descended. And the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not. For it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon sand.

And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon the house, and it fell, and great was the fall of it. It came to pass when Jesus had ended these sayings of people were astonished at his doctrine.

[ 30 : 39 ] He taught them as one having authority and not as the scribes. I think if you want to know the truth about why those people quit, I think they probably never were saved. In fact, let me just say this.

I believe with all my heart they weren't saved. Now, if they back away and they quit, and God whips them and brings them back, then I'll come right back to them and say, Good, they must have been saved. They must have been saved.

You need to know something. I don't know how to get this across. Do you understand from the bottom of your heart that when you got saved, something miraculous happened to you? I don't know how to get this across.

I'm serious. You didn't make a decision. You didn't make a decision. You didn't just sign a piece of paper. I mean something big that you can't see and you can't understand happened.

You are a part of a limited number of people. You're a part of a weird group of people. You are born again and on your way to heaven and you will not get away with sin. I mean, it's just that simple.

[ 31 : 37 ] It's just that simple. He loves you, but he will whip your backside. Play with him. He will whip your backside. In the southeast, everybody's a Christian.

I'll tell you though, if you're a Christian, when the storms come and all the mess happens in your life, if you're founded on the rock, when the storm's over, your shingles may be blowing off and the boards may be coming off the side of your house and you may be crying and brokenhearted, but you'll still be standing.

You may be like Job saying, man, I wish I could talk to him. I'd like to tell him face to face what I think about what I'm going through. But when it was all said and done, old Job was still standing there saying, I'm still waiting to talk to him.

And then God came down to talk to him. Job said, excuse me, I really don't want to talk to you. You're right. I'm wrong. I know I'm wrong. I know you're God. And I'm sorry for running my big mouth. Amen. So why do people seemingly saved walk away?

This is the truth. Sunday school teachers, you are teaching morality. You're teaching morality. You're teaching a bunch of rules. You're teaching people how to dress, talk, and act like they're saved, but you're not getting to the heart of the matter.

[ 32 : 45 ] And the heart of the matter is you're a sinner and you deserve to go to hell. And you need to know that and trust Jesus. We are experts at building hypocrites in our churches. We tell people all the stuff to do on the outside.

You go to our church, we yell at you. Stand this way. Talk this way. Walk this way. Act this way. Say this thing right here. But what's on the inside always comes out. You don't work on the outside.

That's why that little thing over here says, be, do, serve, train. The key is what's on the inside of you. And that's why I preach a Bible verse. And you don't hear a whole lot of, comb your hair this way.

You don't hear a whole lot of that because I can fix the outside. I could probably talk some of you into fixing the outside the way I think it ought to work. But the only thing that changes you is when he fixes the inside.

And when he fixes the inside, the outside just gets to looking just like he wants it to. One more question maybe. I don't think you're, okay.

[ 33 : 47 ] Go ahead. What are helpful verses to build a strong relationship with the Father? The Father with a capital F, correct? Well, since we happen to be in John, let's just use a couple of them.

How about that? I like the book of John now. Whatever book I'm in, that's what I'm going to like. Amen. Go with me to John chapter 1 and verse 18. John chapter 1 and verse 18.

Let's see. I think, let's go to 14 and then we'll come to 18. We'll just jump around a little bit in John for a second. John 1, 14. The Word, the Word was made flesh.

That's the Word that was with God, the Word that was God, the Word that everything was made by Him. He became flesh and He dwelt among us and we held His glory. The glory is of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

So when we see Jesus, we see the Word made flesh. In verse 18 it says, No man has seen God at any time. The only begotten which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him.

[ 34 : 56 ] So when I want to see Jesus, I want to see God, I see Jesus. In John chapter 14, Philip says, I think it's Philip, he says, Hey, it would be enough.

It suffices if you would show us the Father. And Jesus says, What? You've been with me all this time and you haven't figured it out. You have seen me. And if you have seen me, you have seen the Father.

In Hebrews it says that Jesus is the express image of the invisible God. Let me tell you how you get to know the Father better. Fall in love with Jesus. Fall in love with Jesus. You can see Him on every page.

You can see Him in everything you read. Now, so here's some steps that I think are biblical and lead you there. Number one, I think the first thing I would say is, I would say is, man, be in the Bible every day.

Not by law, not by rule, not because you have to, but because you want to know Jesus. Betty didn't write me a whole lot of letters. She was slow about writing letters and I didn't get a whole lot of letters, but I read them and I re-read them and I smelled them and I re-read them.

[ 36 : 09 ] And I showed people what they said because when she said something nice about me, I'd like somebody else to think something nice about me and I'd show them what Betty said because Betty's letters meant a lot to me. There was a girl in the church I was in in McEwen when I was in high school and she put on the front of her Bible, God's love letters to Gail.

One of them little things you could stamp out the letters. She had it stuck on the front of her Bible, God's love letters to Gail. And she used to say, I like to read that because that's where God's telling me how much He loves me and where God's talking to me.

So the first thing I'd say is this, spend time in the book. Second thing I'd say is change, change all the time as He shows you what to change.

You see, intimacy, you know, Catherine and Micah just got married and they're enjoying some of the sweetest, the sweetest days of their lives so far.

But I'll say there's something here. Some of you older people know that's sweeter than what they know. Maybe a tad different because it's not honeymoon, but you've been married a long time and you've both learned what the other one likes and all the little stuff that came along the way.

[ 37 : 20 ] When you learn this kind of offends her, this kind of offends him. This is what she likes. This is what he likes. And slowly we have grown together in an intimacy. intimacy that's just, I'm not talking physical either.

I'm talking about you just know each other. That's the sweetest thing in the world. But you know how you do it? We were talking the other day because I'm a redneck. I was born in the country, raised in the country.

And somebody said, well, you're not a redneck. And then somebody else said, Betty's had too much influence on you for you to be a redneck anymore. And the truth of the matter is that's probably very true.

I think I wore blue jeans to church until I went to college. And I know none of the things I wore matched. And the other Sunday I was here and I had something on.

And Amy Coffey and Mark Coffey had a discussion that my shirt and my tie didn't match. And, you know, I mean, I'm like, so what? They never have. It's not like if somebody else doesn't do it for me, I don't get it.

[ 38 : 18 ] And you know what happens is you love each other. You just grow together. So you know what you do with God when you're walking with him? Now, he doesn't need to change. Okay? He's already right. So as you read, that's holiness.

That holiness is, he really doesn't like it when I do that. And I love him, and so I want to quit that because he doesn't like that. There are things that they don't want you to say.

Your partner doesn't want you to say. There are, you know, there's a gazillion little things involved in marriage that you older married people know about. I mean, it's from how you squeeze the toothpaste to whether or not you put your underwear in the dirty clothes basket.

It's about whether or not you pick up your clothes or leave your clothes laying around. It's whether or not you take your plate to the kitchen. There's a gazillion things everybody's doing in your marriage. And somebody might say, did mama make you do that?

No, she didn't make you, but she likes it, and you like it because she likes it. And when she likes it, and you like it, and we like it, we start getting together. Well, that's the way it's going to work with God. How am I going to get close to God?

[ 39 : 22 ] It's not about coming to church, raising your hand, and singing, and shouting, and saying hallelujah. It's about every time God speaks to me from his word, I say, okay, Lord, you, okay, you like it that way.

Okay, I don't even understand why you like it that way, but I'm going to do it that way. So I would say to you, get in the Bible, get in prayer, slowly, little by little, start changing all these little things, be in all the church services you possibly can where you can learn about Jesus, and just try to please him.

I would say to you, listen to this, real sweet knowing the Father in intimacy is like this. Listen to what the other person likes.

I try, and I'm trying to act like I've got this down because I'm not that good a husband at all, but I try to know what Betty likes or wants. And I try to pick and do what she likes or what she wants.

It's Christmas time, you know, in just a few months, I'm listening every day. If she just whispers the wrong way, I will figure out what she wants. I want to hear just what, I want to watch the way she looks if I see her, because she knows that if she says it, but if I hear her talking to you, she's over here talking to Kristen, and I'm going, and I hear her say she likes it, I'm going to be like, I think she might like that.

[ 40 : 43 ] That's the way it is with a father. He doesn't need to hit you, beat you, yell at you, fuss at you. Listen to the spirit. And shh, you read your Bible, and you just feel like he likes it when I don't complain.

He likes it when I say thank you to him. He likes it when I pray. Have you ever had these feelings come across you? You ever had this like, I think the father likes it when I praise him.

Has that ever happened to anybody in this room? You know what I'm talking about? Man, every time you do that, every time you take that little step towards him, it's like he just whispers another little thing.

And they're not painful. They're not painful, and they're not hard, and they're not oppressive, and they're not rules. They're not rules. It's not like rules. Not like rules at all.

It's like, man, I love him, and I want to please him. So that's how you get closer to the father. It's the wildest, sweetest thing. And I read my Bible every day, and every day I just try to find something that he says.

[ 41 : 45 ] And I try to write down. This morning I sent out a little Twitter message because I was reading in my Bible, and I wrote a devotional that will come out in a few days.

But I wrote a devotional. It talked about how refreshing it is to be around God's people and God. I sent out a little Twitter thing. It said, I hope the people of God are refreshed today.

You know, we ought to come in here and just feel like, wow, that's like throwing water in your face. That's like drinking a good, strong cup of coffee. I mean, that's like God's just so sweet. It's fun to be around these people.

You know where I found out? I was just reading my Bible, and it was there. I'll just tell you this. He is the sweetest God. And you'll get that when you're sitting with somebody else. You'll be sitting. You'll be sitting with somebody.

There's godly people in this room. I'm just going to tell you. I think almost everybody in this room, I really think you're growing. And so you're sitting with one of them, and he's talking, and he starts, and he just mentions, you know, as I was reading my Bible, the Lord said, you ought to listen and say, maybe you'll say that to me.

[ 42 : 45 ] Maybe that's what he wants from me. You don't have to live up to anybody. You don't have to follow any kind of rules. It's not about doing rules. It's not about, I got my 22 things. It used to be 10 commandments.

Now that preacher's made it 242. It's not that at all. It's just that that's what he likes. That's what he likes, and I like him, and I want to please him.

You know, I try to listen to my friends, don't you? You know, if you're a good friend, if somebody says something you know hurts your friend's feelings, you'll stop it, won't you? You won't say it. Well, he's your friend.

Just let the Holy Spirit deal with your heart. Let the Holy Spirit guide you. Well, it is 708 by my watch, and I don't know if you've got any questions left, but whatever you do, you can save them for next time.

I'd like that last question very much. I would just like, can I just challenge you? When you hear holiness or righteousness or purity, it might rub you the wrong way because it just sounds like somebody's trying to give you rules.

[ 43 : 49 ] But that's the opposite of what's happening. If you're my friend, if you're my friend, we're friends, you know what? I want to please you. People say, well, you're trying to please people too much.

Friends always try to please friends. That's part of being friends. If I was going around and saying, I'm going to see how rude I can be to that person, that won't be a very lasting friendship. And you know what?

Just work at this friendship. Man, don't you love Jesus? How many of you love Jesus? You know what? While we're, even tonight as we talked about him, maybe it came, maybe it was during a song service. I was listening to, I heard Don Richardson on Monday.

I think it was Monday night. I can't remember what night we went to hear him. And he was talking about when he was of the Sawi people in Papua New Guinea. And they were in their mid-20s.

And they were out there. And they were the only people in this tribal group in Papua New Guinea. And in the mornings, they would get up and they would sit around and sing praises to Jesus.

[ 44 : 49 ] And the natives would hear them in their hut praising Jesus. And it crossed my mind. He does like that, doesn't he? And I hadn't been singing in the mornings.

So now when I get up and nobody's up, sometimes I'm sneaking out a little song. I don't want you to hear me. Because it would be embarrassing to me and you. But you know what?

I think he probably likes to hear us just singing sweet, sweet stuff to him. Singing sweet, sweet stuff to him. To work at getting close to him. Father, I pray you'd bless all of your dear people.

I love these people. I thank you for them. Thank you for your wonderful word. Thank you for the wonderful fellowship. Thank you for the beautiful special by Chuck and the family tonight.

God, just bless them and use them. Help all of us, Lord, as we grow and go. And Lord, I just pray this week you'd honor yourself.

[ 45 : 46 ] Pray you'd be with Trent and Stephanie and their group in India. And bless them in a special way. You'd be with all our missionaries out of our church that are traveling. And just pray honor to your name. We love you. And thank you for the chance to serve you.

In Jesus' name, amen. Thank you for listening to this message by Austin Gardner, pastor of Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. For more information on Vision Baptist Church, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com).

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