

Chris Gardner Preaching

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[0 : 0 0] 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. How many of you are glad you're redeemed? Say Amen. And if you're not redeemed, you should get redeemed.

You should trust Jesus Christ as your Savior and let that be a reality in your life. Well, ever since I was a little boy, and I'm not sure exactly when, I got saved when I was just before turning 8 years old.

I've always wanted to serve the Lord. And from the time I was about 11 or 12, one of the biggest dreams of my life was that one day I would get to be a dad. That's probably foolish sounding to you, but I didn't really have an extremely close relationship with my dad.

My favorite TV program was The Rifleman, because The Rifleman, Lucas McCain, had a little boy. His name was Mark. I still watch The Rifleman. He's recorded right now. And I know every one of them. I know how they're going to end up.

I can tell you when they start, but I still watch them. And so I prayed and dreamed. And Betty and I got married, and I was a broke preacher. And I dreamed about having a son, and God gave us a son.

[1 : 0 3] And I want my life to carry on. I want my ministry. I want God to do something with me after I'm gone. And so I asked him for children, and he did. He gave me four wonderful children, and he gave me two preacher boys that are serving God today.

Chris is here in the States right now because of Joshua. David is in Arequipa, and I'm just so excited about the chance to have him here. And excuse me for being a proud dad tonight, but I am blessed by God to have the man you're about to hear preached.

That I get to call him my son. Love you, Chris. You come on. It's good to be with you guys tonight. Yeah, the rifle man, I watched him when I was a kid as well. I really pretended to like it a lot.

And the funny thing is, prophecy fulfills itself because Mark Coffey came along. And I'm just kidding. But anyway, it is good to be with you guys this evening and just watch, just see how God's blessing the church.

It's awesome because I'm not here often, but it's neat because you see people you don't know. And that just means the church is growing. The church is bringing new people in. It's exciting to see you guys, and I'm just privileged to be here with you this evening.

[2 : 0 7] And if you can, open your Bibles to the book of John, chapter 7. You know, we used to say open your Bibles. Now you can say, hey, click, or, you know, because I don't know how many people are actually. You know, you used to hear pages ruffle. Now you hear iPhone turn on.

So it's a little bit different nowadays. But this is going to be my first 10-minute message ever because I was in the Sunday school. Well, teachers meeting and I was told that 10 minutes is about the limit. So I'm going to try.

We'll see. It's not going to be 10 minutes. John, chapter 7. And just give you some things to think about tonight as I've been preaching through the book of John. And this passage right here has just been a passage that's really hit home with me in John, chapter 7.

And starting verse 44, and we'll go to verse 53. And before we start with the Bible, just, you know, I want you to think a little bit about children today. You know, I don't know.

You know, kids, they start off in life. And one of the things that they learn quicker than anything else, I don't know, but most parents don't go to this deal where they go, oh, you're seven months old now. Now it's time to teach you how to scream.

[3 : 04] You know, we don't do that. We don't say that one of the very first words that kids learn. Anybody know what it is? No. And then after no, one of the ones when they're playing with other kids, they love this word.

It is mine. It's universal, isn't it? Because, see, here's the deal. In America, it's mine. In Peru, it's meal. It's like, and it doesn't matter. It's mine. I don't speak Arabic.

But can I guarantee you that if Aaron Bashor was here, he could tell you that in Morocco, they say mine. But they just say it in Arabic. It doesn't matter where you go. It's kind of universal.

Everybody wants their way. Everybody wants things the way they are. And so kids learn it a lot quicker than anyone else. And so, you know, how many of us have ever had, you can't really say the privilege, but how many of you have known people that never grew out of that stage?

You know what I mean? It's like they're 25 and you still, dude, we're not on the playground anymore. You act like you're still a kid. Everything's about you. And so, you know, you know those kind of people. Well, we're going to see in John and chapter 7 something about like that in the book of John chapter 7 going on between the Pharisees and Jesus.

[4 : 11] And so, in the context, we see how Jesus' message at the Feast of the Tabernacles, and this is a feast where they're celebrating all that God has done with them as a nation. He took them out of slavery and He took them out.

He showed them that they had this water that was provided miraculously for them. And in the Feast of the Tabernacles, they would have this gigantic ceremony around the water. And Jesus stood in front of the place where they were pouring the water out.

And He said, hey, guess what? I am the water of life. I'm the water. And in chapter 8, He goes out and He says, you know what? Not only that, I am the light of the world. They're celebrating.

He's just saying time and time again that He is the Messiah. He's the one that everybody's looking for. He told them that He was the one thing that could truly satisfy their thirst. Can I tell you that we live in a day and age in America of consumerism where mainstream Christianity in America is all about your thirst.

And it's all about filling your thirst, but we try and fill it with the wrong stuff. But if you look in the passage, what Jesus is saying is, I am the way. I am the truth. I am the life.

[5 : 18] He's saying, listen, if you're looking for water, I'm the only one that can satisfy. You can drink, but if you drink, you're going to be thirsty again. I'm the only true satisfaction that you can have.

And so you come to this passage and Jesus is making these gigantic, bold statements. And He's making them on a platform that they understand because they are celebrating exactly what they were waiting for and that was the Messiah.

His whole message screamed this. Stop trying to fulfill your thirst with the wrong things. Stop trying to fulfill your thirst with the wrong things.

It's not about how you think you can fill your thirst. It's not about how much money you can make. It's not about the status symbol that you acquire. What it's about is me. I am the only thing that can satisfy your thirst.

And see, when you're a young person, you think, when I get married, it'll be satisfied. But you find out that it's not satisfied. I still remember on June the 7th of 1996, 17 years ago, 15 years ago, how many years ago?

[6 : 19] A long time ago. 17. 17 years ago. Thank you. I almost slept over at Trent Cornwell's house the night after that. So 17 years ago, I still remember my dad making fun.

And hey, the rapture is going to come on June the 6th of 1996. I was like, Dad, that's just cruel. Because see, I thought this. If I could get married, I'll be satisfied. And then you want to have kids.

And you think, man, if I could ever have kids, then I'll be satisfied. And what we find is Jesus screams at the top of His lungs, if you want satisfaction. It doesn't come by any point in your life.

It doesn't come with any income level. It doesn't come with anything that surrounds you. Satisfaction comes from me. And from me alone. And this is just the context of the passage we're looking at right here.

It caused a division among the people. Jesus always causes division among the people. You can't... Jesus is not a choice. He's a fork in the road.

[7 : 16] And He says, hey, it's either me or there's no other way. Your decision and your devotion to Christ will cause a division among those you love the most. Remember where we're at.

The people are wrapping the Feast of the Tabernacles up. They're ready to go back home. And He says, if you're thirsty, drink from me. He says this as they're remembering the water that God provided for them as they were exiting Egypt.

It was a bold statement. And He says, I'm the water you're looking for. In chapters 7 and 8, all it is is the Pharisees. It's like this merry-go-round of fighting.

And it gets rougher and rougher until chapter 8 wraps it up as they're sitting going back and forth at each other about Jesus and who Jesus claims that He is. He says, I am the water. The temple guards in John chapter 7 and verse 32, right before you come to verse 44, they've been sent out to arrest Jesus.

Go arrest this guy because here's what He said. And you can imagine these guys. These guys, they've been following Him for a few days. They've been watching Him. They've been listening to Him. And they've been seeing how He truly operated.

[8 : 20] Now, these temple guards are not Barney Fife. Okay? These temple guards aren't Barney Fife. You know, you give Him a pistol and one bullet and you tell Him to keep it in His pocket.

You know, that's not what these guys are. These guys are Levites. These guys are guys from the tribe of Levi. And these guys know the book of the law. These guys know the Word of God.

And they tell Him, you're going to go arrest Jesus because He's not saying things right. And what He's saying is wrong. And there's no way He could be the Messiah. And so these guys go out. They're chest puffed up.

Ready to go and ready to get Him. But then as they're at the outskirts, they hear Jesus speaking. And they come back and they say, He speaks as no man has ever spoken before. There's no way that we could arrest Him.

He is not who we think that He is. They've been following Him for days. These temple guards, they were Levites. So they grew up knowing the book. So we're going to start reading in chapter 7 and verse 44 and discover the results of these men that have been following, looking for an opportunity to arrest Him.

[9 : 21] Let's go verse 44 through verse 46. The Bible says this, And some of them would have taken Him, but no man laid hands on Him. Then came the officers to the chief priests and the Pharisees, and they said unto them, Why have ye not brought Him?

The officers answered, Never man spake like this man. We sent you to arrest Him. Evidently you are Barney 5, because I told you to arrest Him, and you come back and you have anything and everything but Him.

And they say, No, no, no, you don't understand. We are Levites. We are trained. We do understand the Word of God. But we heard Him speak, and He speaks different than anybody else speaks.

There's no way that we could arrest Him. We can't arrest Him. And so they have their excuse. Can you not imagine what the moment was like as these men are returning? Think about it.

Okay. Can you not imagine being a scribe or a Pharisee, watching them as they're walking in the back door, and they don't have Jesus, and you're like, Man, this is going to be some crazy story, because we sent them out to arrest them, and they're not arresting them.

[10 : 21] This is crazy stuff going on here. They must have some great wounds. They must have tried, and somehow the attempt was foiled. Something happened. This is an Ocean's 11 or 12 or 13 or 17 or 18 moment.

Something's going on here. Something happened. And they didn't get Jesus. What in the world happened here? What in the world happened here? They say, We've never heard anybody speak like this.

That's not what we were expecting. You know, kind of a letdown. They're waiting for them. The scribes and the Pharisees are sitting at a table, watching them walk in the door, and they're sitting there waiting on them to give a report about what happened, and they're expecting to hear the continuation of Rambo.

Okay, that's what they're expecting to hear. They're expecting to hear, We tried to arrest him, but let me tell you, this is what happened. We tried, and nothing went down. But when they get there, all they say is this. Nobody speaks like this man speaks.

These are men that are informed and truly know the law and began with the same desire to arrest him as the Pharisees did. When they left, they knew beyond a shadow of a doubt they were going to arrest Jesus.

[11 : 25] No doubt about it. That man deserves to be arrested. He deserves to be put to death. There's no doubt about it. We're going out with one purpose in our heart, with one purpose in our mind. But as they got to the outside skirts of where Jesus was speaking, they said, We've never, ever heard anybody speak like this man.

That Jesus' word creates a division in them as well. Things are not near as clear as they were when they left to arrest him. They knew what they were going to do, but all of a sudden, there's some doubt comes down on it. They're caught between the power and the grace of his message and the hatred of their leaders.

They were paralyzed to inactivity because they had no idea what to do. We've been told to arrest him. We've been told to think as well. We're Levites. We understand why we're going to arrest him, but as we go, we just can't get him.

There's no way to arrest him. The way that Jesus speaks is not the same. Can you imagine what they say here? When the temple guards come back, they look at the scribes and the Pharisees and they say, Jesus speaks like nobody else speaks.

Okay, now think about who he's speaking that to. They are speaking that to the speakers, saying, You don't speak like Jesus does. There's something different about the way this man, our Messiah, he speaks different.

[12 : 42] He's not like you guys. You guys may know a lot in your head, but man, when this guy speaks, it's different. He's our Messiah. And so, he doesn't speak the same. This is what happens, by the way.

When the Word speaks the Word, it's amazing how powerful it is. That's exactly what's happening is Jesus is speaking the Word of God. The Pharisees spoke down to the people, but Jesus ministered to the people.

And there's a difference between these methods. Because see, here's what happens. The next story you're going to see is they bring an adulterous woman to Jesus, and as they're speaking down on her, Jesus is looking at her with love and with forgiveness.

That's exactly what's going on in this passage. Jesus speaks differently. They had an excuse. You know what? And that's true in our day and age as well. Because see, the truth is, many men love the pulpit, but very few love ministering to the people in the church God gave them.

And there's a big difference between those two. They loved the position of power and they loved where they were placed and they loved how much they knew and they loved how much training they had but what they didn't understand is they didn't understand ministering to people.

[13 : 45] While the Pharisees were throwing an adulterous woman at His feet, Jesus was looking at that woman not as an adulterous woman, but He looked at her and when He speaks to her in the next chapter, here's what's beautiful. First word out of His mouth to this lady is this.

The exact same word He says to His mother in John chapter 2. He says, Woman, who accuses you? He spoke to her as a person. He loved her. And so, they have all these excuses.

The second thing you see is their example. Look at verse 47 through verse 49. I just want you to get kind of the vibe that's going on in John chapter 7 as we go here. Verse 47 to verse 49.

The Bible says, Then answered them, the Pharisees, Are ye also deceived? Are you also deceived? The problem with the Bible is it's black and white. And we don't really get what's going on in the context.

Think about this for a second. These smart guys are looking at these other guys that are temple guards that are supposed to be smart guys. And he goes, Oh, really? Did he dupe you too? That's really what's going on here.

[14 : 43] Are you deceived as well? And have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him? Translation for you is this. Has anybody else with a brain believed?

Have you not noticed everybody with a brain doesn't believe in Jesus? That's exactly what they're saying to Him. They're talking down to the temple guards. Verse 48. Have any of the rulers or the Pharisees believed on Him? Verse 49.

But this people who knoweth not the law are cursed. Dumb people believe on Jesus. Smart people don't. Are you really willing to say that you're dumb? That's really the way that they're going at Him here.

And they're talking to these temple guards. They try and make an example of them showing them how smart they were and how dumb anybody else that believes in Jesus was. You're deceived too? We thought you were too smart for that.

Is what they're saying in verse 47. Their question is basically this. Has anybody really believed that knows how to think? That sounds rough but that's exactly what they said. If you've been to college you'll know that that's almost what happens to you when you go in as a Christian to college, isn't it?

[15 : 47] If you really had a brain you couldn't believe that Jesus is Christ. The Bible can't be true. That's exactly what... They're dealing with the same issue as they come back and they say nobody's spoken like this man. They go, listen, nobody with a brain believes what you believe but go ahead you little dummy.

You'll never know any better. That's what's going on. Pharisees tell them to search and Jesus says come and see. He's you go search and see and Jesus says you come to me and see. Don't you realize that the people they don't know the law.

They're cursed. They're dumb. They don't know any better. That scathing rebuke though phrased in the form of a question chided the officers not for their lack of professionalism as members of the temple police but for their alleged lack of spiritual discernment because they're Levites.

If there's anybody that's supposed to know it would be you you're supposed to know better than what's going on here. Sense their arrogance on every level. I want you to just sense what they're doing.

Just sense what they're doing. I'm better than you are. Nobody's as good as I am. There's this whole level of hey listen we are the Pharisees and you will know that we are the Pharisees. You know we are the professionals you are the non-professionals.

[16 : 53] That's the whole vibe that's going on. You don't know what you're doing you come to me I'm a professional you should ask the professionals the professionals will tell you how it's done. that's exactly what's going on here. It's in ridiculing the crowd the Pharisees implicitly appealed to the officers pride and desire for prestige.

The officers had a crucial decision to make. They could either reject Jesus and be applauded by the apostate religious establishment or believe in Him and be castigated with the redeemed.

They had two choices. You can be dumb and be castigated or punished with the redeemed or you can be a smart guy like us and not believe in Jesus. There's this big old separation going on in this passage here and number three you see their excess.

Look at verse 50 to verse 52. The Bible says Doth our law judge any man before it here at verse 50 Nicodemus saith unto them he that came to Jesus by night being one of them Doth our law judge any man before it hear him and know what he doeth?

They answered and said unto him Art thou also of Galilee? Search and look for out of Galilee Ariseth no prophet. Nicodemus came to Christ the first time in the dark and this time he's speaking out to them about how they're judging Jesus.

[18 : 05] The way they deal with this is by attacking his intelligence as well. Oh so you're one of them too? Okay this is this is a this is this is literally the way they're saying it in modern day English in Georgia language it's this Are you really a redneck from Galilee too?

Is that who you are? Are you really a redneck from Galilee? There's no other way to explain it how dare you believe this? In case you're wondering these are these are your Alabama jokes Ain't Georgia thankful that they have Alabama?

And Alabama loves Mississippi because they have somebody to make fun of I don't know you know that's just kind of the way it goes on you know and so these are the Alabama jokes and so it's like you know I don't know if you Nick Saban said that he's going to address 20 players for the upcoming game the rest are going to have to address themselves that's kind of what's going on here hey you know it's a what does the average Alabama student get on his SAT test?

Drool what did the Alabama graduate say to the Georgia graduate? Welcome to McDonald's may I take your order please? That's just going on there's literally looking at them going hey you're a redneck there's no way and see here's exactly what happened when fools don't have anything to say here's what they start doing they start making fun of the other person that's what they do they start making fun of the other person even on the things they spoke about they were mistaken you know what they said there's no prophet from Galilee but if you look at the Bible there is it doesn't matter that they're right they're authorities they're wrong in what they say and in this passage in John chapter 7 and 8 they repeatedly make a mistake in what they're saying but it doesn't matter because you know what I went to Bible college and I have all this knowledge in my head and from a young child I've been trained in the word of God and so nobody can say that I'm wrong that's exactly what's going on here that didn't stop them from proclaiming even though it wasn't true it never occurred to them that Jesus' words should have such an effect because they were too caught up in their own importance if you really want to know what's going on here you have a group of people that think extremely highly of themselves and you have another group of people that they're trying their hardest to malign and talk down to so the question that begs to be asked is this why would they not believe in the Messiah that they've spoken and taught of and studied their entire lives why would they not believe in their Savior that was coming to save them how could they not believe in them and you know what they would have accepted their Messiah but they wouldn't accept the Messiah they had a list of things that they would allow but they're not going to accept somebody unless it comes exactly like they want it to and the sad thing is it sounds all familiar to us as well doesn't it you know of course we accept Christ that's the cool thing to do nowadays

I just got through reading Jake's blog the other day and my fear is that we're not accepting the Christ because see in America the cool thing to do is to accept Christ and the biggest and the big picture the Christ isn't interested in becoming a part of your life he wants to be your life he doesn't want to be a part of it he wants to be your life your entire life your entire being is about Christ just Jake Talby wrote this on his blog and I'll read it and you'll know it's not my words because I'm not near this smart but he says there's cautionary instruction for western believers and all of this as well while Chinese people have to buck societal pressure to make a commitment to Christ and in many places in the west there's considerable pressure pressure in the opposite direction when an American profess faith in Christ it can be viewed as an altogether traditional and respectable sort of choice but as all who resolve to follow Christ ultimately discover there's no escaping the cross whatever you culture you happen to belong to even in America where Christian faith is often lumped into the same category as table manners in college education if a believer lives according to the radical message of the gospel there will be blowback so while we are thankful for our good heritage and all the rest we would do well to analyze our own walk and ask what has it cost me to follow

[22 : 14] Christ if the answer is not much we should seriously contemplate whether or not our commitment to Christ is more than cultural is that not true today you have this group of men who think they're better than everybody else and this other group of men that they're trying their hardest to put down and tell them how bad they are that's what's going on here in this passage the tone of the whole passage is the tone of a superiority complex on the part of the Pharisees say Chris I appreciate all the history but how does it hit home we're getting there just a second because here's what happens in this passage the tone is one of saying I wish you could be more like me that's what the Pharisees are saying if you want to be good you should be more like me because you don't understand if you had my brains you had my intellect and you had you know when I look at myself every morning in the mirror I just go hey how smart of a guy this is that's exactly what's going on if you could just be more like me here's what they're saying let the pros do the pro job let the boys stay at home let the men do the man's job that's what's going on here and this seems so much like us it isn't even funny for a matter of fact it almost sounds like the doctrine of the

Nicolaitans in the Bible look at the book of Revelation chapter 2 and verse 6 with me Revelation chapter 2 and verse 6 it sounds so much like the doctrine of the Nicolaitans I'm better than you are I know more than you do it says but this thou hast that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans which I also hate if God says he hates something it's probably good to understand what it is and to decide you don't want to be a part of that if this is something God hates it's a good idea to know exactly what it is the Nicolaitans started what we know today as the clergy and the laity we'll sit down and let the pro do that the pro can do the job and we'll just sit down and listen to him we'll put a check in the offering plate every week and we'll call it a day that's what the whole Nicolaitan idea was about here's the deal God he says they had an exclusivity that came with a position of being in full time ministry that's exactly what happened to the Nicolaitans they're like listen you're laity

I'm clergy I'm going to do what I need to do you do what you need to do but here's the deal God doesn't want everybody in full time ministry I hate the idea of full time ministry you know why because God has only selected a few people to be in full time ministry the few people that he has selected are the people that have accepted him as their savior he didn't ask pastors and missionaries and evangelists to be in full time ministry he said you're saved by the grace of God 1 Peter chapter 2 and then verse 9 look at what it says 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 9 but you are a chosen generation a royal priesthood a holy nation a peculiar people that you should show forth the praises of him who has called you out of the darkness into the marvelous light you say Chris what do you mean by full time ministry I believe that everybody ought to be in full time ministry everybody you say Chris well you know I just wish the church would fix this that's a good point go ahead and start because see it's not about full time ministry is only the only people called to full time ministry are not the men that stand up here the men in the training center it's not the it's not the young ladies that are called to marry a guy in full time ministry the people in full time ministry the Nicolaitans was this

I'm clergy you're laity you sit there be quiet and let me do everything I need to do that's the idea but what you find in here that attitude is an attitude that goes totally against every single book in the word of God God saves us God redeems us and as he redeems us he redeems us so that we as a people can serve him God calls us so that we can serve him God says I only want a certain kind of people in full time ministry those that are called my children you're responsible for Vision Baptist Church you're as responsible for Vision Baptist Church as Austin Gardner Trent Cornwell and Robert Canfield are nobody is more responsible for this church than you are because here's the deal there's no such thing as well he's a full time paid guy he needs to take care of it here's the deal God called us all to be in full time ministry you're all in the full time ministry how can you prove that your life reflects that he said Chris I like that idea but if you had to go to a court of law and prove that you're in full time ministry how would you prove it working in a church right now trying to help as I'm waiting to get back to Peru just trying to help this church out and one of the guys looked at me and he said

Chris you need to stop taking on the responsibility of this church because it's as much my responsibility as it is yours and I thought I wish every American church member could understand that he said this isn't your job this is our job we have got to do the work that God has called us to do it's not your pressure Chris it's not what's going on in your life it's all about us in John chapter 7 you have this idea of we're better than you are we're the professionals leave it at the professionals you go to the book of Revelation and God says I hate that mentality I called you as my children to be in full time ministry your life is all about it you're a constant ambassador for Christ I wished that God had said only those in full time ministry were ambassadors but he didn't look with me real quick in the book of 2 Corinthians chapter 5 in verse 20 it says now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us we pray you in Christ be you reconciled to God when he saved you he made you an ambassador not a part time ambassador not an ambassador that puts on his ambassador clothes on Sunday morning and on Monday does a different thing he made you an ambassador that's the promise from the word of God now the question is whether you're following the Christ or not not one of your own making isn't it funny to you that Christ always seems to agree with everything you want to do have you ever noticed that

[28 : 15] I love it when people tell me how they know that something is God's will brother Chris it's God's will for me to marry this girl really have you asked her not yet but I know it's God's will three years down the road do you marry somebody else he's like no it was God's will for me to marry that girl have you ever noticed how we use God's will and we throw it around like it doesn't matter can I tell you this God has a plan for you and it may not be to be preaching every Sunday morning but God has a plan for you to be in full time ministry and your life ought to reflect exactly that when you wake up on Monday your life ought to reflect I'm in full time ministry I'm eat up with what God has called me to do because I'm his ambassador on Monday and on Tuesday and on Wednesday and on Thursday and on Friday and on Saturday I am the ambassador for Christ and if I have to be brought into a court of law to prove that I hope you can say I can prove that I am an ambassador of Christ I'm in full time ministry I'm in full time ministry this is one of the most misused phrases in Christianity the Bible says we're supposed to conform to his image but the way we pick our churches and the people that we allow to lead us what we're saying is this

Jesus you conform to my image we're in full time ministry we're children of God we're ambassadors of Christ we are a royal priesthood and as that that is not something to prove the only difference with the majority of mainstream Christianity in America between them and their neighbor is this their neighbor gets to sleep in on Sundays that's the only difference I don't sleep in on Sundays I go I go to church and I'm even in the music ministry I get there early I do the setting up I do the no no we're in full time ministry not just in our church in our job where God has placed us we're in full time ministry we choose our leaders because they reflect what we want the way we choose our leaders also screams the same message here's what we believe they believe that too but you know what there's no Bible in what we believe the Nicolaitans would be very happy with you coming to a church and giving money and letting the preacher do all the work there's only one problem with that God hates it the Nicolaitans they would think it was really cool that you only show up and it's really convenient to go to church there's only one problem with that

God hates it they would be great with the idea of you making sure that everyone understood what was wrong with your local assembly oh if they'd only fix this and this and this and this everything would be great but there's only one problem with that God hates it we're the pros let the pros do their job you be a good member come to church write a check say amen when required and hey don't get in too much trouble that's the mentality of mainstream Christianity but can I just tell you that God hates the idea because God has called us and God has redeemed us and we are His people and we are to represent Him every single day of the week that's who we're called to be we are not what the Nicolaitans loved because God hates it you do your part in your job in your day to day you put your shoulder into the job that Christ gave His life for the only problem with this is that this is the same mentality He hates and after all I guess He does get a vote in what happens in our church because He did buy it with His blood

He bought it with His blood you're looking here and these Pharisees come out and they go look I am smarter than you I'm better looking than you I have more experience than you I know the Word better than you and you don't know anything and that's kind of the idea here but here's what God says to us He says listen you are my children you're called to do what I've called you to do you know what's wrong with it in America we've got to be careful that we understand that we're really about the church think of all these things that you think about your church and then realize that you are to be involved in changing everything about it you're involved in changing every single thing that there is to be found in the church you say well Chris I don't know enough isn't that what we all like to say oh if I knew more I'd do more but can I just tell you our problem is never our knowledge we love to think knowledge is the problem but knowledge isn't the problem God chooses to tell us repeatedly in the Bible that He uses the simple to confound the wise I'm thankful for that because that's me

Matthew chapter 11 in verse 25 to 27 says at this time Jesus answered and said I thank the old Father Lord of heaven and earth because thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent and has revealed them unto babes he goes you know what you don't have to be the smartest guy Paul just in case you're wondering he would probably be qualified as a smart guy you know to the tune of he wrote most of the New Testament so I think we can count on the fact that he might be pretty smart okay here's what Paul says 1 Corinthians chapter 1 in verse 26 through 31 for ye see your calling brethren how that not many wise men after the flesh not many mighty not many noble are called but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise the Pharisees were the guardians of the correct theology and everybody else was dumb in comparison to them the reason that the Pharisees walked away from the Christ was because he messed up their personal agenda and what they thought would be the Messiah one of the saddest verses we have read up until now is verse 53 this gigantic thing goes on the feast of the tabernacles and here's what I wanted you to see what happens look at verse 53 he gave this great invitation and here's what you would think when Jesus gives an invitation like this there's going to be scads gathered at the altar and changing and saying hey this is great stuff he said I'm the water

[34 : 03] I'm the light this is going to be great but when you look at verse 53 it says this and every man went into his own house so how did this message that Jesus preached in it ended with a about like every Sunday morning in America didn't it you're just going to go home the Pharisees were sitting there with this great mentality with this mentality that was totally totally wrong Jesus offered for them to find satisfaction in Him in Him alone can I tell you if you're looking for satisfaction tonight there's only one place to find it and that is in Christ you say Chris you don't understand when my business grows no when your business grows you're not going to be satisfied when my family grows no when your family grows you're not going to be satisfied no when I have this income no you're not going to be satisfied your satisfaction comes from Christ you say Chris this is one of the things by the way the Lord's been teaching me big time as we're dealing with all this Joshua business can I just tell you American doctors really are proud of their work in case you were wondering when they send you the bill you can tell that they know that they're really good at what they do if your satisfaction comes from the fact that your family is healthy you totally lose the idea because your satisfaction comes from Christ if your satisfaction comes from the fact that you're where you want to be then you lose the idea because that's not where your satisfaction comes your satisfaction comes from Christ

He's the only one that can give us true satisfaction let's leave today saying I'm not going to allow someone else to live out the ministry that God called me to do I don't know of a better church in America than this church man God has blessed this church every time I come in and I look at that back wall and just look at the missionaries you've sent out and that's great but those missionaries we can't grow much farther with those missionaries unless people in the pew say this is my church and every time I hear a story about vision I hear about people stepping up and saying this is my church this is my church be very careful that we don't have the idea of full time ministry that we have the idea of I am in full time ministry I'm doing what God has called me to do help me to have strength to stand against the current and the tide because I know what God's called me to do He's called me to do the ministry He hasn't called somebody else to do the ministry say Christian you said that as a preacher no I say that as a Christian because God's called me to do the ministry

John chapter 7 and John chapter 8 when He wraps up John chapter 8 He wraps it up by saying I am the I am and my question for you today would be what would our lives look like if we really believed that if Jesus really is God then what would our lives look like if we really believed that would we walk different would we talk different would we live different would we maneuver different in our lives Pharisees had this haughty idea of hey look this is where I'm at this is who I am this is what I believe this is what I think y'all don't know anything I thank God your church isn't like that but can I encourage you as a Christian to say I will do the ministry that God has called me to do Chris I'm only 15 years old well good you're only in full time ministry if you're saved Chris I'm 13 years old good you're in full time ministry if God has saved you because you are an ambassador for Christ let's be a good ambassador let's walk out of here and say I'm not going to be a guy that comes to church

I'm going to be a guy that is the church where God places me I'm going to do what God has called me to do dear Lord I come to you thanking you for your word dear Lord I ask you that you might help us to leave today dear Lord just saying thank you for saving me and thank you for giving me the privilege to serve you and to do what you've called me to do dear Lord I thank you for your word in your sweet holy precious name I pray amen 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