

# 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. Bring on the questions. What's question number one? I gather you're not reading them to me, so I will read them.

Do you think the servant of the high priest whose ear Jesus healed after Peter smote it off believed that Jesus was God, just asking your personal opinion? I imagine he believed that his ear got cut off and got put back on.

I bet he was excited about ear surgery. I have no idea if he got saved or not. If I lost my ear and he got cut off and then somebody just stuck it back on there, I'd probably talk to him. So I would probably get saved.

Next. In regard to Romans 14, if the stronger brother has fewest standards, should I lower my standards to be a stronger Christian? Actually, that's backwards.

Listen to this. The stronger Christian has more rules. Understand. Excuse me. Let me back up. I'm still drunk. Let me read it again.

[ 1 : 01 ] The stronger brother has fewer standards. Should I lower my standards to be a stronger Christian? Yeah, that's a... I don't know. Man, I'd like to know who asked that question.

So I could just punch you or something. All right. I'm drunk. Don't forget. I just flew in from Africa. Here's the deal. Here's the deal.

You got to understand that in our church, we don't have a whole lot of it. But there are Christians who have a ton of rules that you don't have that would be extremely offended by things that you don't even think about twice.

And so I would say that, yes, you probably ought to lower your standards in some ways if that's what you would call them. To be blunt, honest, to have the idea that to be a good Christian, you must, as a lady, never put on a pair of pants.

You should probably lower that standard. That's probably not that clearly defined in the Bible. And you might want to lower that standard if you're going to call that. I used to have that standard. I wouldn't have said you couldn't be a Christian, but I would have said you couldn't be a spiritual, and you couldn't be right with God.

[ 2 : 07 ] And I took a strong stand on it. I would not take that stand today. And so that would be one. If you are one of the people who says, I don't believe in Christmas because I believe that Christmas has to do with worshipping the Christmas tree found in Jeremiah chapter 10, you probably ought to rethink that.

That's probably not a very strong biblical stand that anybody but you could discover in that passage of Scripture. So the idea here is not that you should lower your standards.

The truth is that you don't live by an external set of rules where somebody comes along and says, here are 10, 15, 20 things. And we're not talking about anything that's clearly taught in Scripture.

We're not talking about anything that's clearly taught in Scripture. For example, baptism is clearly taught, so we won't discuss it. That's not a doubtful disputation. But can you play rook or not is a doubtful disputation.

Somebody might say, Billy Sunday, the great evangelist, used to say that if you play any kind of card game, you will soon be in Las Vegas and selling your soul to the devil as a gambler.

[ 3 : 15 ] So never let anybody play. You couldn't play go fish. Anybody ever play go fish when you were a kid? It's wicked. You're all going to hell and you're on the slippery slope to Las Vegas already.

You probably play the slots already and I just don't know about it yet. And so in a sense, I would say, yes, you ought to lower your standards. You ought to be careful to have true Bible standards.

And Bible standards would be clearly defined in the Scripture. And so as bad as that may sound, should I lower my standards? I think you should get rid of all your standards and get his.

How about that? You should get rid of all your standards and get his. And I grew up, I told my Sunday school class this morning, my daddy was absolutely certain until the day of his death that the Bible said that a man is to be clean shaven.

And he was positive of it. And you could not convince him differently. When I was a young boy and he told me that, he told me that it was a very clear truth in the Bible that God hated beards.

[ 4 : 19 ] And I looked through the Bible and about the age of 15, I began studying my Bible at least 10 to 15 hours a week. For real, that's not a joke, not a stretch. I really did. Studied my Bible all the time. And so after a year or so, I went to dad and I said, dad, I've read the entire Bible through it.

I've searched in every concordance. I cannot find one thing about we can't have beards. And he said, it's in there. You just don't know how to study your Bible well. Well, it's 45 or 50 years later and I still can't find it.

But my daddy was utterly convinced that that was right. Can you eat in a restaurant that serves alcohol? Can you go to a restaurant that serves alcohol? Well, you know, if you said to me, I just prefer never to go to eat where they serve alcohol, I'd say, well, that's fine.

I don't have any problem with that. But for you to say that that's a biblical standard is probably not true. I would come to you, well, can you go to a grocery store that sells alcohol? I would also ask you, can you buy craft food since they also sell cigarettes?

And the Bible said in 1 Corinthians chapter 5 that you are not to fellowship with anybody who calls himself a brother who does these things. But he said, if I would not ask you to do that about people in the world or you couldn't even live in the world.

[ 5 : 25 ] Go read 1 Corinthians 5. You can't live in this world without associating with people that you really wouldn't want to necessarily associate with. So marry the right person and live the right person. So yes, in a lot of ways, I would say to you, lower your standards.

I would say to you, get rid of your standards. Let me say the last thing about that. Romans 14. I took strong stands on many things that were southern cultural things.

I can remember a point in my life where I would have really said Vision Baptist Church is dead. And I can tell you exactly why. There's not very many amens here.

When Brother Perea got up just a few minutes ago and he said, good evening, he said, let's do that again. Because y'all are famous for, you've all got the poochy lip.

And so I would just remind you, I would just remind you that I thought that those people who wouldn't say amen, it was because they weren't really born again. They weren't saved.

[ 6 : 26 ] I know people that said to me, a friend of mine's dad said to me one time years ago, he said to me, he said to me, Austin, do you shout for Jesus? And I said, sure. And he said, well, give me a shout.

And so I'm sitting there and I went, amen. He said, well, that's not much of a shout. But he was a shouter. He believed that if you didn't shout, you didn't have the Holy Spirit. And if you didn't have the Holy Spirit, you weren't saved. So it's a gazillion rules that don't work when you, like if you travel the world, if you cross the ocean, if you'd have been in the church this past week, many of you would have been very uncomfortable.

Blunt truth. You want to talk about music. It was African music. You ever heard about how the world wants to bring African music into the church? Believe me. It was African music. It, they, they were playing all kinds of instruments.

They got, they can make noise out of a piano that Kristen doesn't even know exists. And I'm telling you, I mean, it was, it was, and then, and even Brother Starwald, they'd be saying, Brother Starwald would be going, I'm just standing there like a dead, dead man.

You know, I don't, I don't know how to do that. The church I sang in Sunday morning, I preached in Sunday morning, I didn't sing anywhere. The church I preached in Sunday morning, they run about a thousand. Whenever they say, whatever they run, it usually means how many adults.

[ 7 : 44 ] They don't count. If you're not married, you don't count. And if you're a child, you don't count. You have to ask for three counts. But they were singing, and the ladies were singing, about 15 or 20 ladies, and they're all dressed the same, and they're going, all the time they were singing.

And I was thinking, Lord help me, don't let no fundamentalists come over here. Or we'll be. Ed would have loved it, wouldn't you, Ed? Because yes, you would have. Ed would have been in his own element.

So anyway, you know, you might want to lower your Sanders next question. What is going on with the woman with the familiar spirit, seeing God's ascending out of the earth, then it's being Samuel.

Is the dead being brought back to life? Well, that's a somebody thought out question there. I do not believe that Samuel came out of the grave. And so we could all argue and fuss and fight about what's going on there.

But the woman with a familiar spirit, a familiar spirit would be a demon. And I don't think that demonized people can call people back from the dead if they could. All the spiritists and all the witch doctors and all of those people would be calling all the dead people back from heaven.

[ 8 : 49 ] They'd be making so many trips. They wouldn't even have time to stay home. And so I don't believe that. I do believe that she had demonic powers. And I do believe that there was an image.

And if you read the passage in the scripture that says that he goes, that looks like Samuel. And she goes along with it.

She knows how to play the game. She knows how to guess where you are. And you can go to these people. And, you know, they'll look at you and they'll say, you know, you're married. And they'll say you had a tragedy in your life and you'll give them enough hints.

And so I would just tell you, I don't believe that any dead person is coming back like that. Only one person can bring a dead person really back if we were all the way there. And that would be Jesus with Lazarus.

But we people, there's a great gulf fix between the two in Luke chapter 16. And the people from this side can't get to that side or vice versa. And so if I were you, whenever I read those stories, I would read them in the context that they're being written.

[ 9 : 48 ] You've got a lady. You have a lady who is not supposed to be there, who is who is doesn't worship God and who supposedly can tell the men of God to leave the to leave Abraham's bosom, to leave the place of paradise and come back to earth and give an account.

And you would have to say to yourself, that's an awful lot of power for that lady to have. And all around the world. So I'll just go ahead and give you two things on that all around the world. There are tons of people that are spiritist and they have names for them.

In Peru, they would be a curandero. And there's another word for them in Chile. And Jason couldn't even think of the word this past week. But everywhere you'll see them. And then there are, I hate to say this, but then there are in the charismatic movement, there are often people like that that actually get all kind of visions and all kind of stuff like that.

And they go way beyond what the scripture says. So if the Bible doesn't say it and the Bible doesn't say it's for me, then I just don't take that position. And I would say to you, we stick with what we know what the Bible says.

The Bible is our only rule of faith and practice. It's our only rule of faith and practice. And that's how we decide what we believe and what we practice. Why haven't books like the book of Enoch been put in the Bible, seen the Bible mentions it?

[ 10 : 58 ] That's a good question. And I will refer you to my friend, John Pearson, who would be glad to give you a whole course on how the Bible was put together.

And he can do that with you for real. There are a lot of books that aren't in the Bible. There's a letter to the church at Laodicea that's mentioned in the Bible. There's apparently at least one more letter, maybe two more letters that were written to the Corinthians.

And in what's called the canon or the measuring stick or the rule, what happened was the church slowly decided what books they believed were genuine, had a genuine author, a genuine teacher or writer to put that down, a person who had the right to say that, and the hand of God on that passage of Scripture.

Your Old Testament was clear by the time Jesus was on earth, so there's not really a great deal of question about the first 39 books of the Bible. They were pretty set by the time Jesus got here. The next 27 are or could be have been questioned because that's happened in the last 2,000 years.

And so there are books that are called false, books that are called doubtful or doubtful disputation type book.

[ 12 : 14 ] They could not figure out did they really belong in the Bible or didn't they? And so as the church began to collect the books and to use the books, they chose the books that we have in our Bible, and that's the books that are in there.

There are whole courses that you can get, and I think John Pearson would probably be one of the best people you could sit down and talk to about how the Bible was put together, and I'd advise you to do that. But I will tell you this.

Here's a wild one for you. I don't really need the book of Enoch. I got 66 books, and I ain't doing all that good with them yet. And so trying to add me 10 more books probably ain't going to help me, so I'm just going to stick with what I got.

Next. What are the physical limits in a relationship before marriage? Well, the Bible's pretty clear, isn't it, about sexual sin.

The Bible's pretty clear about looking at someone who's not your wife. Job 31.1 I think says that I won't look upon a virgin. I'm pretty sure that's Job 31.1.

[ 13 : 15 ] The Bible is pretty clear about the strange woman in Proverbs, and you should read all that passage of Scripture about the strange woman, where Solomon advises his son about the strange woman, the woman who's not your woman.

There's only one woman on the planet that's my woman. That's why I would not look at pornography, and I would tell you that pornography is not for us to look at. We ought to stay away from that because there's only one woman who's not a strange woman.

There's only one man who's not a strange man, and that's the man that God gave you or the woman that God gave you to be married to, and that's your person. And so we don't need to be looking at other people's wives, and we don't need to be looking at anybody else.

So the physical limits in relationship before marriage would definitely be you cannot have sex. You can't have sexual relations before you're married. Now, I don't know who asked the question, so just let me say this.

Again, now we get into doubtful disputations. No doubt that she shouldn't have sex. Mary got pregnant. Joseph wasn't going to marry her. He was going to divorce her, put her away because they'd been engaged, and he found out that she was pregnant, so now he was going to get rid of her.

[ 14 : 18 ] There's a clear teaching in the Bible about marrying a pure woman, a woman that was set aside for you. Now, the next question, the doubtful disputation that would come up would be, can you kiss her before you marry her?

Can you hold her hand before you marry her? Can you hug her before you marry her? Can you go to the drive-in theater or the movie theater and wrap your arms around her and spend a lot of time with her before you get married?

And now we're in a place where I don't have Bible verses to give you an explicit answer. However, I would say to you that if you love her and you think she looks pretty, smells pretty, feels pretty, you better be careful where you go with her because you might just cross the one line you know was written for you.

So there's no doubt about, I don't think anybody in this room would say that in a biblical teaching that it would ever be right to have sex outside of marriage. I think we all would agree with that, and I think the Bible's clear, and I don't think there's any doubt about that.

Now, the rest of that, but now the rest that I taught my children, we didn't have them date alone, but they snuck around. Betty and I kissed before we were married.

[ 15 : 26 ] I'd like to tell you we didn't, but that would be lying to you. We kissed before we were married, and we did a number of things that I would be embarrassed about that I should not have done.

And if it hadn't have been for a godly woman saying to me, can't you wait three weeks, I wouldn't have. So I think that you can put yourself in a position that you don't want to.

I think tons of young people have been hurt by that. I think girls especially get taken advantage of by guys. And so the physical limits in a relationship before marriage is you can't have sex.

That's clear. Now, how close and how far you take that down the line, you'll have to draw your own personal line. But if I were you young ladies, I would say, I'm going to make it very clear of where the limits are, and he's not crossing those lines, and I'm going to put myself in a very great position.

This isn't in the Bible. These are doubtful disputations, so here they come. Listen to your dad. A man can see a skunk. We know skunks when we see them because we're skunks.

[ 16 : 25 ] And so when I see a guy coming after my daughter, I'm going to be like, our antennas are going off. This guy's not got the right idea. He doesn't know what he's doing. He's trying to take advantage of my daughter. And the antennas are going to be up.

Same thing, by the way, about girls. Moms can see it. Dads can see it. Your parents, your best friend. These are doubtful disputations. No verse. But God gave you good parents for a good reason.

And they have wisdom you don't have. And the only way you can have the wisdom they have is get hurt as many times as they've been hurt and get as old as they are. And so that's going to take you a while. It's going to take you a while to get as old as them.

And getting hurt is not very nice. And so if dad might help you not get hurt, it might be a wise thing to listen to dad. If listening to mom might help you not get hurt, it might be a wise thing to listen. So the rule, the clear teaching of Scripture, no sex before marriage.

The doubtful disputation, the Romans 14 issue is, here's a person coming to church and they're holding hands. I like to rag Miguel and Mariangela, two young people that I have loved enormously since I've known them.

[ 17 : 28 ] And the week after they got back from their honeymoon, it looked to me like Mariangela's smile was going to swallow her head. And she was smiling from here to here, not ear to ear, from here to here.

And I told them this morning, I was so happy to see them so happy. Nothing thrills me more as a kind of a step-in dad, kind of as a pastor, as a mentor, as a person who loves him than that.

And I used to rag them about being together. And after they got back and he held her hand or something, I said, get your hands off her, all in joke, all in fun, but the clear teaching, no sex before marriage and be careful.

And listen to your dad. And dads, be honest. Talk to your kid. Tell the truth. There's no way a 15-year-old knows what a guy's thinking.

A 15-year-old girl is too dumb to know what a guy's thinking. Not because she's dumb, because she's a girl. She don't know what we're like. And we are animals. Say amen. And so I would suggest that you consider that.

[ 18 : 33 ] Next question. Are we only washed in his blood? What if Jesus died another death without shedding his blood? How is Hebrews 9.22 justified? Did there have to be blood shed for his death?

I think that's been a question and an argument for a long time that people would say, and I would say to you that I personally believe that there's no way that salvation would have been possible without the shedding of his blood.

I think that's a clear teaching from Genesis 3.15 all the way through the Bible. So I believe had Jesus been strangled, had Jesus been drowned, had Jesus have died in the electric chair, it wouldn't have been the picture that the Bible clearly teaches throughout all the scriptures.

In Genesis 3.15 we have, well before that, when he kills the animal to get the skins to put on them, you watch, that's bloodshed.

Then as you watch all the sacrifice, Cain and Abel. Abel's sacrifice was an animal, Cain's was vegetables. You watch all the lambs that are killed, the blood on the doorposts.

[ 19 : 36 ] And you get to Hebrews and it explains it to us. And so every animal that died in the Old Testament was a picture of Jesus dying on a cross for us.

And so there have been churches that have come out to say, let's take the blood out of our hymn book. And Christianity is a bloody religion. And they would like to remove that from the Bible.

They'd like to remove that from the song book. But I would just tell you something. Jesus shed his blood for us. The Lord's Supper says that. And I would say anybody who in any way tries to say it was the death of Jesus, they are stopping short of the beautiful picture.

His body was broken, but his blood was shed. You're given two elements in the Lord's Supper. Two elements in the Lord's Supper. One of those elements is a piece of bread that represents a body broken for you, and the other a juice representing blood shed for you.

And Jesus himself gave them that comparison. So I believe his blood had to be shed for us to be saved. And I think so it is definitely the shed blood of Jesus Christ that cleanses us.

[ 20 : 46 ] Now, literally, we aren't washed. So you could take anything about that and you could say, well, does that mean we somehow are, there's some kind of blood washing ceremony where they take blood and wipe it on us. And that's not the point.

The point is Jesus died in our place. His blood was shed. Somebody had to die and he died for us. What does the Bible say about purgatory? Next question, because the answer is nothing.

And so I have nothing I can say. The word's not mentioned in the entire Bible. Nothing about the word is mentioned. By the way, if you would just use the word, let me just show you something that's beautiful.

You do have to be purged. Purged. You do have to have your sins purged. Purgatory. You do have to have your sins purged. But in the Bible, it was never your suffering, but his suffering.

And so my sins are paid for because Jesus died in my place on Calvary's tree. And so purgatory would be I've died now and I'm going to pay for my sins.

[ 21 : 48 ] And so how long do I need to stay in this purging place? This hurting place is being beat up places, being bruised place. How long do I need to do that before my sins are forgiven? And here's the answer.

Jesus paid it all. And Jesus paid it all means this. I don't have to go to purgatory. And nobody could ever pay enough to pay for their sin. There's no way you could ever.

If you could, then we wouldn't need Jesus. And religion. Now listen to this. Every religion in the world stinks. All of them. And Christianity is not supposed to be a religion.

And here's the whole deal. Well, every religion has this in mind. How can I get money out of them? So the Pentecostals come to you and say, give me a seed faith offering. Prosperity gospel.

Give a good offering and God will make you rich. The Catholics sold you time out of purgatory. Or they sold you penance. Or they sold you junk. And here's the whole answer. In the Bible, freely you have received, freely give.

[ 22 : 46 ] You are saved by grace. You don't deserve it. You don't earn it. You don't pay for anything. And that's what's so hard. Almost everyone would love what we teach and preach if they had to do a little sweating or a little bleeding.

But when you tell them Jesus paid it all, they're like, I can't take that. That's too good for me. It's too much. Next question. When will you shave your beard? I will shave my beard.

My wife leaves for Peru the day after Thanksgiving. And we'll be gone approximately two weeks. And the day after she gets back, I will shave my beard. Probably. Unless somebody else tells me I look like Robert E. Lee.

If somebody else says that, I just might keep it the rest of my life. Somebody else says I look like Spurgeon. Man, I'm on a roll. Next question. That is not too bad. All right.

That is not a good question. All right. Next. They say the best place to find a man is church. I've been coming for a while and I haven't found one yet. Why has God not provided me a man?

[ 23 : 48 ] Well, here's the problem with that question. They say. And I never have met them. And so that's a good question.

And I haven't found one yet. I love your English. You are from Tennessee. That's pretty obvious. Or you could be from Kentucky because Trent talks that way also. And let me just say. I will say this to you.

You know, wherever you are in life, you ought to learn to love Jesus and serve him the best you can and wait on him. And that may mean that you will not get a spouse your entire life.

And it may mean that you may wait a few more years. But here's the main thing. John Pearson said it very well today. In the offering devotional. He said, anytime you're still waiting on something for your happiness.

You know, you need that next thing. You won't be happy. He nailed me one time. He said, when will you ever be happy with vision? We got to 60. And I said, I'm waiting on 75.

[ 24 : 48 ] We got 75. And I'm waiting on 100. And we got to 100. And now we're about 189. It was what we had this morning. We'll have anywhere from 175 to 200. And a little dab over 200.

And I'm waiting on 225. And so I'm always wanting something else. And he nailed me. He said to me, he said, when will you be happy with vision?

And the Lord convicted me of that. And just let me say this. I need to be happy with what God's given me right now. And your child may not live to be 20. Your child may not live to be 15.

Your child may die earlier than that. You may not live. But you can enjoy what God has given you today. The offering of devotional today was not good. It was way past excellent.

It's one that's well worth your going back and listening to. And so I would say to you, if you're single and God hasn't given you a spouse yet, I would enjoy that. And I would use that extra time. And use that extra time to find a way to serve God.

[ 25 : 44 ] Get up a little bit earlier and do a little bit more in the service of the king. Do some more service. At the end of the day, you can take that. At 1 Corinthians chapter 7, Paul even said to the church, if you're not married, I wish you wouldn't get married.

And if you are married, I hope you'll live like you're not married. Because there's too much to do. Get busy for Jesus. Next question. Does the Bible really mention birthdays? Well, somebody was dancing at somebody's birthday and they got their head cut off.

And so it does mention some celebrations about that. And I don't really have an answer for that to give you a Bible verse. But wasn't it Herod's birthday when Herodias was dancing?

Is that not right? Somebody help me. And so I think that that was mentioned. There's more mentioned negatively about birthdays in the Bible than there is about Christmas.

And yet some people have taken a strong stand against Christmas and not against birthdays. Maybe we ought to stand against both of them. Or maybe we'll just celebrate our birthdays and let people give us gifts. How many of y'all vote for that? Say amen. All right. Next question.

[ 26 : 43 ] What happened to the dinosaurs? God said for every male and female to go in the ark. Well, what happened to the dinosaurs is exactly what happens with a ton of other things. They've become extinct.

And so there are, you know, I do believe there were dinosaurs. I believe the book of Job is pretty clear that there were dinosaurs. And I'm pretty sure there were dinosaurs by the time of the ark.

Not every, when you think of a dinosaur, you want to think of some monstrous thing. But all you had to take on the ark was a small baby or a very young whatever on the ark.

And so I would say to you that God did put male and female of whatever animals that were alive at that time that were placed on the ark. And I would trust God with that. There are interesting verses in Job.

And I can't give you the chapter right now. But in Job, the last part of Job, you'll find that there's an animal that drinks rivers and spears can't hurt. And I think his tail knocks down forest.

[ 27 : 42 ] Go read it. It's a wild thing. And if you read it, you'll be like, man, there must have been. And don't forget, no fish was put on the ark. Because when the flood came, they just got a bigger house. They were all doing fine.

Next question. In 1 Corinthians 1.17, Paul says he does not win people with the wisdom of words. What is the balance of persuading others apologetically but not winning by the wisdom of words?

Let's be clear. I'm not a real big fan of apologetics, though I don't think it's wrong. I'm just not a big fan of it. I just say pretty plainly what's going on. And I don't go around with, well, what if there's no God and try to explain all that.

But when he talked about not using the wisdom of words, what he was saying was, I don't try to quote Dr. Phil. What he was saying was, my quotes don't come from Plato and Socrates.

I just tell the truth. And what he was saying was, I didn't go read all the books that were written by all the philosophers and use those words. The Greeks were big on, did you study at the right school?

[ 28 : 42 ] Have you read the great philosophers? Do you know that? And Paul said, I just know this, Jesus and him crucified. So if I were you and you're talking to somebody and you want to use apologetics, go ahead and do that.

I got a phone call from our missionary, Tyler Masters, while he was living in Prudy. And I was, I think I was back here in the States. I'm not really sure when it was that I got the call. And he said, they want me to defend the Bible in a college class here.

And the university, the university of, one of the universities in Adikipa. And he asked me, he said, what verses, what would you have me say? Give me some hints. And I said, I wouldn't defend the Bible. I said, I would just use the Bible.

I never try to convince anybody where the Bible came from. I never try to convince anybody the Bible is the word of God. If you looked at me and said, I don't believe the Bible. I'd say, fine. The Bible said that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

What are you going to do with that? They said, well, I don't believe that. I'd say, so you don't believe you've sinned? Come on, tell the truth. You ain't never done anything wrong? You have. Oh, okay. So the Bible's right on that one. Let's look at another one it's right about. And so I personally don't think that it's very necessary for you to try to prove that Jesus really was God.

[ 29 : 50 ] The Holy Spirit does the convicting. And he will knock them on their backside. So I'm not against the guy doing the other. But I would say to you, your best thing you got going for you is just to be ignorant as all get out and say, I believe the book, Jesus and him crucified.

Tell them that and wait for God to do something in their lives. That about it. That's about it. That it? I can hear you. What did he say?

A couple more. How do I balance being a good witness for Christ in my everyday life and not feeling like I've alienated others from the gospel when I mess up? I think that's probably a very good question.

Your answer to them, if they were to question you, would be this. You are right. I am one big mess. That's why we don't teach and preach morality. We teach and preach grace.

And grace says, I was a mess when he saved me. And I am a mess every day that I live. And I did mess up. But it's God's grace who did that. And so, and if you sin, if you do wrong, if you mess up, say you're sorry.

[ 30 : 57 ] Don't try to act like it's okay. Don't act like, well, my church says that's okay. Just say, you know, you were, you know, I was wrong to do that. And I apologize. And if they say, well, I thought good Christians didn't do that.

Then you say to them, well, the truth of the matter is that what makes a good Christian is a person not being a very good person and trusting a very good God. Because none of us ever measure up.

None of us. By the way, if you were married to you, you'd know you're not that good. Your spouse knows very well all of your weaknesses. And I challenge you to remember that.

I challenge you to remember that the good, the beautiful thing about the grace of God is this. That God loves us in spite of us. And believes in us in spite of us.

And saves us in spite of us. And he does the work in us. And so it's never about how good I am or how moral I am. It's about how great my God is. And so share that.

[ 31 : 53 ] You know, if you would be more honest about your mess ups, you might see more people get saved. Because they know you're a mess up. And they know they're a mess up. And if you're acting so holy and sanctimonious, you've actually told them, unless you can be as holy as I am, you can't get saved.

Well, first thing, if they think you're holy, they'll say, I can't be that good. Or if they realize you're not, they'll think you're a hypocrite. So just admit it. You're a jerk. And you're not good. And you mess up all the time.

But God saves you. Not based on how good you are. Not a one of us will get to heaven and be able to brag about anything. Nobody in this room, nobody. There are no good husbands.

Not if we really knew you. If we really knew you. If we really knew what nobody knows but God. If we knew the thoughts you'd have. But we are saved by the beautiful, wonderful, fantastic grace of God that's good for everybody.

And if you tell them that, they'll probably like it. That's the last. That's it. Okay. Thank you so very much for being here tonight. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia.

[ 32 : 56 ] For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com) where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recording.

Thank you.