

Isaiah 58

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[0 : 01] Take your Bibles, if you would, and turn with me to the book of Isaiah, chapter 58. I just told Chuck, I thought he looked like he was enjoying casual too much.

And Chuck said he was, and I said, well, I am too. Bunch of liberals all in your Hawaiian shirts. Jeb Bush comes in the office and said, I had a chance to preach this morning. Actually, this meeting got canceled.

He said, I just couldn't get another meeting. And I could come here with my Hawaiian shirt. All I got to say is, y'all a bunch of liberals. But anyway, Isaiah 58, I want to read with you, starting in verse 3.

Before we start, I need to kind of prep you. I mean, first off, you know it's the Word of God, right? And you know it's beautiful and it's wonderful. I mean, I don't ever want us to lose the awe we hold in our laps.

A copy of the very Word of God. And I want God to hear me, don't you? I want God to hear me. I want God to talk to God and I want to know God pays attention.

[1 : 07] Years ago, I would say it was about 1977, I was working in a church and we'd heard about all these guys that God just did this miraculous work in their life and how God just came down on them.

I just really wanted that to happen. And me and a friend of mine waited until Wednesday night services over at that church and we got back on the platform because that's where God would hear you best from, of course.

And we fasted and prayed. We didn't take a bath. We didn't go home to sleep. We stayed there until Sunday morning at about 6 o'clock or so when we went to take a shower to come to church and try to act like we'd had good sleep.

And every time one of us would go to sleep, he doesn't wake him up and say, we need to keep praying. So we were watching and fasting and praying for God to just do something miraculous. On Sunday morning, I got up and I was like, this ain't working too good.

I went and took a shower. And you know, you hear preachers talking, you hear all sorts of things. In fact, as you probably know all about fasting, what I'm about to read to you is out of the Word of God. That's all I want you to hear.

[2 : 14] So anytime somebody wants to talk to you about what we think or teach or believe, always go to the Bible. Amen? It's the Word of God and we can trust it. And so as you read this, I really wish you'd keep your Bible open.

We won't hardly leave Isaiah 58 unless I just think of a verse that goes somewhere. But this is a great passage. Don't you want God to listen to you? Don't you want God to hear you?

Look at what he told the Israelites. Now he's talking to the nation of Israel. He's not talking to us. But we'll start in verse 3 and I really wish you'd keep your ink pen handy because I'm just going to talk to you. It's a Sunday afternoon and you're going to get to go home and have a nice time just relaxing all day.

But let's do this. Wherefore have we fasted and say they, thou seest not? Would you underline wherefore? And you might even just put there the word why. Why have we fasted and you don't see what we're doing, God?

Wherefore, underline that again, have we afflicted our soul and thou take us no knowledge? We're doing without. We're laying on a platform behind a pulpit.

[3 : 16] We're not taking showers. We're not eating. We're praying. We're trying not to even sleep. And you don't seem to pay attention, God. Behold, in the day of your fast, you find pleasure in exact all labors.

Verse 4. That was God responding. In verse 3, you can underline that behold there. God said, well, you want to know why? Just look here. Behold is a Bible word for Tennessee hillbilly.

Now, you just look here. And so you look here. In the day of your fast, you find pleasure in your exact all labors. Look here. You fast for strife and debate and to smite with the fist of wickedness.

You shall not fast as you do this day. If you want to make your voice to be heard on high, I got a question for you. Is it such a fast that I have chosen?

Are you all doing it the way I want it done? A day for a man to afflict his soul? Is it to bow down the head as a bulrush? You're going to build your head over like a tall plant, and you're going to lean your head over, droopy-headed, and spread sackcloth and ashes under him?

[4 : 22] Are you going to call that a fast? And you're going to say that's an acceptable day to the Lord? Verse 6. Is not this the fast that I've chosen?

Y'all want to know what I've chosen? I'm fixing to tell you. Is this not the fast that I've chosen? Here it is. To loose the man's wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, to let the oppressed go free, that you break every yoke.

Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, that thou bring the poor that are cast out to the house? When thou seest the naked, that you would cover him, and you quit hiding from your own family and not taking care of your responsibility there, your own flesh.

That's a pretty powerful little dialogue. Amen? God and the people. Let's have a word of prayer. Father, help us now as we just go through this chapter. Just all we're going to do is read it over and over.

We're just going to read it, God. Because I know nobody can say anything as good as you can. And I know that your people know that. This people, this church, they love you. They love your word.

[5 : 24] And they do want you. So, God, please help us to grow in this. And help us as dads to be able to pray for our families and Sunday school teachers to pray for our classes. And moms to pray for our children and children to pray for our parents.

And just all the ministry. God, we want you to hear us. We want to do what you'd have. And so, I pray you'd let this work in our lives. In Jesus' name. Amen. Number one. I think you'll get seven things here.

Number one. Isaiah is called to preach a message. Look, if you would, at verse one. Cry aloud and spare not. So, basically, he's saying, I want you to start preaching out loud pretty strong.

And I want you not to have any mercy. I want you to lift up your voice like a trumpet. And I want them to know what I don't like. Look at it. And show my people their transgression.

And the house of Jacob their sins. Now, we've been in Isaiah. We know Isaiah's on a ramp, buddy. And he's preaching. And in Isaiah chapter 58, he's going to talk to them. And God tells Isaiah, preach.

[6 : 22] Preach. And preach it hard. And preach it clear. Now, look, if you would, at verse two. And I want you to underline in verse two, as a nation. Now, look what he says in verse two.

I want you to notice that phrase. Yet they seek me daily and delight to know my ways. As a nation that did righteousness and forsook not the ordinances of their God.

They ask of me the ordinance of justice. They take delight in approaching to God. That's a pretty hard verse to read, just to be honest with you. So, I want you to go with me. I'll show you. If you'll underline as a and put the emphasis where it ought to be, you'll understand what he's saying.

He's saying, oh, yeah, they seek me daily. Yeah, they do. And they delight to know my ways. Like as though. That's what that is.

As a nation. As a nation. But like as though they were a nation that did righteousness. And like as though they had forsaken or not the ordinances of God. They ask me what I want them to do.

[7 : 21] And, yeah, they take delight in approaching to God. I mean, Isaiah is just being a real sarcastic, smart aleck preacher. That's a blunt truth. Look at the verse.

Make sure you see that. I want you to underline as a and you'll get it. He says, go show. See, look at verse one. He said, go show them their sin. Go show them their transcript. Go tell them what I said they're doing wrong.

And then he goes, yeah, I know they seek me daily. And I know they'd like to know my way. You remember last week or whenever it was, we were in the other chapter. And here they are doing all this wicked worship. Worship, this wicked worship.

Don't lose the context. These people are doing wicked worship. And then they have the nerve to come and say to God, why don't you listen? Look at it. Verse two. They seek me daily.

They'd like to know me as a nation. The people were hypocrites that thought God owed them. They were busy worshipping and studying the things of God.

[8 : 16] They give all the appearance of being what they should be. But God said, look at your sin. That's verse one. See, what we got here is like the form of religion.

What we got here is like people that are pretending. They come to church and they got a good old Bible tucked under their arm. And they know when to say amen. And they know when to sing the songs. And they've learned all the songs.

And they're acting out the part. And he said, Isaiah, go preach to them and tell them what I don't like. Now, I know. They say they're doing good. You just go preach to them because they're like a nation that says that. But they're not doing it. I go to the third thing.

The second thing. Verse three. God heard the complaint. So Isaiah is called to preach a message. And then God heard the complaint of the people. Here's what the people say in verse three.

Why have we fasted, say they, and you don't see it? That's a pretty reasonable question. You know? I mean, I had that question. I laid on that floor Wednesday night and Thursday night and Friday night and Saturday night.

[9 : 16] I didn't eat. I didn't shower. I didn't really sleep. Just in and out whenever we just get so exhausted we couldn't stay awake. I wanted God to hear. I wanted God to do some kind of miracle in my life.

Why have we fasted, they say, and you don't see it? Why have we afflicted our soul and you take no knowledge? Now, I want you to just underline, you see not.

Thou seest not. Underline that. Thou takest no knowledge. Underline that. They demand to know from God why. Their complaint.

We are doing what we're supposed to do. We are doing all the things you're supposed to do when you're fast. And God, you are not paying attention to us.

And we want to know why. You need to underline the word wherefore and you'll see the why right there. So God names the cause of the problem. God names the cause of the problem.

[10:11] Look at verse 53. Last part of the verse. And if you've got your Bible, circle these beholds. You're going to see quite a few beholds. In verse 3 it says, behold, in the day of your fast you find pleasure and exact all your labors.

I was supposed to circle around that word behold. See, you've got to picture this. You've got to see it's like a group of people talking. And then you've got to see God over here. And God's over on this side. And then there's Isaiah over here.

And God looks over and says, now Isaiah, you go tell them what I don't like. And then God says, here's what the people are doing. Hey, you, we are fasting and we're afflicting our soul and you are not paying attention.

I mean, this is what's going on. Huh? And then God looks at Isaiah and said, all right, you go tell them. Bless God. You go rip them. Rip them a new one right now. He says, this is what you tell them.

He said, behold. Yeah, on your day of fasting, you exact your pleasure. Ain't nothing changing. You're fasting, but you're being the same old sinner and the same old rebellious person you always are.

[11:16] And you exact all your labors. You're not setting aside time for me. I'm not important to you. You're worried about your business more than you're worried about God. You're more concerned with your pleasure than you are about me.

And you talk about fasting. Behold. Look at it. Behold. In the day of the fast, you find pleasure. And exact all your labors. Verse 4. Behold. You fast for strife and debate and smite with the fist of wickedness.

What in the world? Why do y'all? You come to church, y'all still fight with each other. But you got a bunch of bad attitudes in the place. Hey, you. I don't like you. Hey, you. Hey, God judged my brother over there.

See? Look at it. You fast for strife. I fast. They don't fast. I do right. They don't do right.

Fast for strife and debate and smite with the fist of wickedness. And look what God says. You shall not fast as you do this day if you plan on getting your voice to be heard on high.

[12:20] Look at that. So now you got this little triangle going. You got God talking to his man who's going to talk to his people. You got the people fussing at God and saying, God, you don't listen. And so he said, Isaiah, just go tell them.

If they want me to listen, they're going about it all the wrong way. I am not. I have no intentions of listening if that's how they're going to go about it. You shall not fast as you do this day to make your voice heard, to be heard on high.

Go to chapter 58, verse 5. So there's a chosen path for them to take to worship him. Look at it, verse 5. Is it such a fast that I've chosen?

That's like a rhetorical question. Y'all really think the way you're fasting is the way I want you to fast? Y'all really think that? And then he tells them how they fast.

Look at how they fast. A day for a man to afflict his soul. So what do you, God, hear me, God. Hear me. I'm flicking my soul. God, I'm hungry. I'm hungry.

[13:20] God, hear my soul. I don't know how many times I fast to try to twist God's arm. Have you? I was even taught to do that. I was taught you won't God do something. You fast, it'll force him. I hadn't read Isaiah 58 yet. I had.

I just never paid attention. Then he says this. A day for a man to afflict his soul, to bow down his head as a bulrush. I don't know how to tell us what a bulrush. You just picture a plant that's got such a head heavy, and it's got the plant laying over.

He said, yeah, you're just like a big old plant. Your head's so heavy, you laid over. And so you're not really meaning that. You're not really in love with me. You're not really humbling yourself. What do you think fasting is?

Spreading out a sackcloth and throwing some ashes on you? You think that's what fasting is? I don't know. In fact, if you remember the New Testament, we won't go there.

I said I wouldn't. But in the New Testament, Jesus said, y'all go out fasting and make it look like you've been fasting. I think the kind of fasting I like. Verse 5. Is it such a fast that I've chosen, a day for a man to afflict his soul?

[14 : 19] Is it to bow down his head as a bulrush, to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Are you going to call that a fast? Are you going to call that something I'm acceptable with? And then he says, look at your Bible. He said, is not this the fast that I've chosen?

So now he goes, now, hey, let's just be honest. Y'all already know what I want. It isn't like you're shocked at what I'm about to say. You already know the fast one. But if you want to pay attention, this is God's chosen fast.

God says, I don't really want you afflicting your soul and sitting on a bunch of ashes and bowing your head over and acting all sad. That's not what I want. Here's what I want.

Now look at it. This is like the opposite of fasting, in my opinion, of what I was taught fasting was. He said, to loose the bands of wickedness. To loose the bands of wickedness.

See, y'all been using fake humility and religious observance. But that's not the kind of fasting I like. That's not the kind of fasting I like. What I want you to do is to cut loose all that wicked junk you're doing.

[15 : 22] When you come to fast, you walk in there and say, you know what? I've been doing wrong and I'm going to quit. You want me to hear? You come in and tell me, I'm cutting off what I've been doing wrong.

I'm going to undo the heavy burdens. Look at it. To undo the heavy burdens. To let the oppressed go free. And you break every yoke. Now, let's stop just a second.

You see, here I am and I'm a leader in Israel. Or I'm a wealthy guy and I got people working for me. And I'm an abusive boss. And I'm really taking advantage of the people.

Because that's how you're making money when you're not right with God. And God says, you come in here and you're doing wrong. And you know you're doing wrong. And I don't like what you're doing. And you pray to me.

And I know you take advantage of people. I know you put burdens on people. I know you oppress them. I know you put a yoke on them. You really want to get right with me. Let's fix what we're doing wrong. You want to pray?

[16 : 17] You want me to hear? Well, stop pretending and start doing what you're supposed to do. That's what he said. If you see it, say amen. Verse 7. He said, I want you to deal your bread to the hungry.

And we'll just be honest with you. Here comes a wicked confession about how sinful and prideful I can be. I can remember the one time I heard a person say, I want us all to fast tomorrow. And everybody give \$5 to this needy cause.

Because you would have spent \$5 eating. And so if you fast, you could give that money. And I remember thinking, that ain't fasting, bless God. It ain't about giving money to nobody. It's about me being hungry and God hearing my prayer.

I just remember thinking that. And then you read this verse, you're like, well, you should have read this verse before you ran your mouth. Look, he said, I want to tell you what I want you to do. He said, there's people out there hungry. And you're my people.

And you're coming in here to me. So I want you to go give some bread to the hungry. Hey, there are people that are cast out of their house. And they're poor. And they have nowhere to go. And you want me to hear you?

[17 : 17] Go take care of them. Read it. Tell me if I'm reading right. Come on. Say amen if I am. Say no. If I'm not, we'll talk about it. Look at it. He said, I want you to give to the poor.

I'm bread to the hungry. I want you to bring the poor and cover them. And then he said, I want you to quit taking advantage of your own family members. You could be a help, but you're not. You're hiding from your own flesh.

So you have to get to the New Testament to know how true this is. Jesus is going to say, y'all say Corbin. And you use a game with me and claim you don't have to take care of your poor family members by claiming you did something at the synagogue.

See, it's all right here. Like, quit that. You want me to help you? Quit that. I don't want fake humility. I want a kind of fasting that changes things. I want the kind of fasting that takes the focus off the faster.

I want the kind of fasting that takes the focus off the faster. What's Jesus going to say to them? When y'all pray, you pray on the street corner so everybody can see you. When you give, you make sure to sound trumpets so everybody can see you.

[18 : 23] And when you fast, you paint your face and look sad and tired. And you come out going, I'm fasting for Jesus right now. I need y'all to know how holy I am. I think I'll put a little dot on my forehead so you'll all know I'm humbling myself.

He said, I don't want that kind of fasting. He said, let's get the focus off of you. Get it on me. And when you get it on me, it'll be more about others than it'll be about you.

Fasting should have been to seek God and others, not make much of themselves. But when they came to God, you remember what they said, you don't listen to us. We're going hungry and we're afflicting our souls and you're not paying attention.

God's like, so since when's it been about you? Can you see it? Do you see it or not? That means no.

That means I'm really doing a lousy job. Or you don't want to see it. I'm not sure which. God commits to several promises now. In Isaiah 58, 8, he said, then shall thy light break forth as the morning.

[19 : 28] He said, now y'all said I don't listen. But the reason I don't listen is I don't like how you fast. And that's why I don't answer. But if you want to know the fast I've chosen, you do what I just said to do in verse 6 and 7.

And when you do that, then shall the light break forth as the morning. And thine health shall spring forth speedily. And thy righteousness shall go before thee.

And the glory of the Lord shall be thy real reward. I'll just tell you the truth, guys. If you'll fast like I want you to fast, O nation of Israel. You fast like I want you to fast. Do what I'm saying.

Quit that fake junk you're doing. And quit that focusing on yourself junk you're doing. And start focusing on me. If you do that, if you do that, then I will see to it that great things happen.

Look at the stuff he says will happen. Your light will break forth as the morning. You've been trying to show off and see who you are. And I won't let it happen. But if you put me first, it will happen.

[20 : 25] I'll let your light shine. Your health, your righteousness, and the glory of the Lord. Verse 9. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer.

Remember what he said? They said, why don't you hear us? He said, because I don't like the way you fast. But if you'll fast the way I want you to fast, then I will hear you. And I will actually say that you'll cry, and I will say, here I am.

You'll cry out, and I'll say, here I am. That is, well, I don't want to talk about that yet. Go down to verse 10. I'll be back to that in a second. Verse 10. Then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noon day.

You do it right. I'm going to bless you big time. You do it right. I'm going to bless you big time. Then shall your light rise. Verse 11. And the Lord shall guide you continually.

He's going to be there directing them and showing them where to go and showing them what to do. He's going to be working in their life because it's not about fasting so you can get God to do stuff. It's about fasting so you'll get right.

[21 : 28] It's not about fasting so you can fuss at God. It's about fasting. It's going to change the way I live. It's going to start showing in my life. And he said, I will satisfy your soul in drought, and I'll make your bones fat.

That means I'll prosper you. I'll prosper you. You see, when you're afflicted, your bones dry up in the Bible. When you're afflicted and things go wrong, your bones dry up.

And when you're getting blessed, your bones fatten up. It's not talking about the fat I have. It's talking about in your bones, though. And thou shalt be like a well-watered garden and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.

He said, y'all do what I'm saying here, and I'll tell you what's going to happen. You do what I'm saying, and I am going to answer your prayers. I'm going to make you like a well-watered garden. Now, you know, I don't think we understand that in our context here.

You know, because, I mean, it rains like 60 inches a year here. But in Adikipa, Peru, where it used to rain anywhere from 5 inches to 11 inches in a year, everything is dry, everything is dusty, and everything is dead.

[22 : 35] If you fail to water your grass for three or four days, it will all die. I mean, it's a humidity so low that when you walk across the floor, sparks can fly to your finger when you go to touch the light three inches.

And it only happens at the worst time. But I've gone to kiss Betty before, and you want to talk about lighting in our kisses? Jesus, Lord, help me, a fire jump. Am I lying, baby? I'm not lying. She's like, boy, you're lighting me up tonight.

Amen. So you're in the middle of the desert. You're in the middle of the desert, and it's all as brown as this platform. And I am not teasing. You do not believe me.

You're in a desert as brown as this platform, and then you come to a well-watered garden, and it is luxurious, green everywhere, and flowers. It's like being in Burkina Faso. It's the same way there. Burkina Faso reminds me so much of that.

He said, you just pray like I want you to, and you'll be like a well-watered garden. Everybody know. Everybody know. Somebody working on that. Everybody know something's blessing that, and your waters won't fail. You won't run out of water.

[23 : 36] He said, I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll even fix it where you can rebuild your country. Look at Isaiah 58, 12. The country's been devastated.

Bad things have been happening. Everything's torn up. But if they'll pray right and fast right, God says, I'll use you so big everybody will know you're doing it. Not only that, you'll enjoy God and his blessings.

Look at verse 14. Then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord. I put a circle around that. Then shalt thou dwell and delight thyself in the Lord.

You know who we've been delighting in? I don't know how many times. We Baptists are almost as bad as prosperity gospel people. We had never admit that because it would hurt our feelings. But we're like, God ought to be doing stuff for us.

God should delight in me. God should meet my needs. It's all about me, me, me, me. But he said, no, no, you will delight in the Lord. You'll be like, I just want what you want, God.

[24 : 50] I just want what you want. It's not about me. It's about you. I just want what you want. I love you. Delight yourself in the Lord. Heave you the desires of your heart. And he says, you know what will happen to say? Could you get excited about me?

I will cause you to ride upon the high places of the earth and feed you with the heritage of Jacob, your father. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken.

Man, I got big promises for you. I'll do big stuff with you if you'll just treat me right when you come talk to me. In case they weren't following the argument, it all started out with God telling Isaiah, you need to go tell them people.

I mean yell it. You need to yell out of it. That's where preachers get yelling, by the way. The reason they yell is that verse right there. Cry out. Spare not. Because it's about the yelling.

It's only about the yelling because these fake religious people weren't doing what they ought to. And then the people look at God and say, why don't you answer our prayers?

[25 : 50] Why don't you, when we fast, why don't you pay attention? Why are you failing? Why are you failing? And God answers back, I'm sure, with Isaiah doing the preaching and says, hold it here.

I don't like your fasting at all. Don't come at me like that and say to me, why am I not doing what I ought to do when you couldn't? Well, no, you're not doing what you're supposed to do. You've been hearing my preaching a long time.

The word of God. You're talking about Isaiah, not me. You've been hearing the truth. You know the truth. I mean, we're 58 chapters in. Stop acting like God's not doing his part. Pretty much what it's saying here.

Start doing right. Fast the way God wants you to fast. And God has big promises. But then he says, there are conditions placed on the promises. Look if you would at Isaiah 58, 9. Got your Bible open there?

If. Going a little inside the verse. If you take away from the midst of thee the yoke. Say, I'll do these things if. It's a conditional thing.

[26 : 50] It's high school math. If you do this, then this will happen. If. You put away from thee the midst of the yoke. The putting burdens on other people.

So much. Preachers. I'll take all the blame. Preachers, man. We're good at yoking. We put the yoke on you. Put it away. Stop the yoke stuff. Stop the yoke stuff.

Jesus is actually going to say, I know they've been burdening you down with yokes. Come to me. Take my yoke. It's a nice one. It ain't going to be heavy. It's going to be easy.

I'm good. I know them preachers have been pretty rough. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke. And the putting forth of the finger. What's a putting forth of the finger? I have more than one student asked me, what in the world putting forth?

That's it. You know what the problem in this church is, don't you? I'll just. You are the problem here. In our family, I'm known to put forth the finger.

[27 : 50] We started having a little argument. I said, listen here, woman. It's you. It's you, old woman, standing in the need of prayer. The putting forth of the finger. That's what's going on in the church there.

It's in the congregation of Israel. And speaking vanity. What are y'all doing talking about junk? Well, you're acting like you're acting religious. And it's not real. And I'm tired of it. Stop it.

Conditions. Verse 13. Circle the word if again. If you turn away thy foot from the Sabbath. So, this Sabbath's not us.

We're not bound by Old Testament rules. And the Sabbath was their thing. But they were supposed to take this whole day from Friday afternoon about sundown, six o'clock we'll say, till Saturday afternoon about six o'clock.

That was the Lord's day. They weren't to work. They weren't to do other things. Unless it was an emergency. It was a day of rest and worship. That was it. But what happened was they learned tricks.

[28 : 50] Like independent Baptists got tricks. You know, it's like, so a Jew was never supposed to leave his lodging. So, on Wednesday, they'd run a rope from this house all the way over to the cantina where I want to go.

Really, I'm not saying the cantina. But another guy's house, as long as I was close to my property, I was still in my house. So, they're just looking. Like independent Baptists, always looking for a way to say they're not doing wrong while they are doing wrong. And they know they're doing wrong, but they're just making up an excuse to do it.

That was not good. I shouldn't have said that. Yes, I should. He said, if thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath from doing thy pleasure, stop doing your pleasure on my day.

This is for Jews. This is Old Testament. But the truth is, God was saying, that's my day. I think for years, the idea has been Sunday is the Lord's day and you're supposed to honor it.

And this isn't law for us, but it is like sometimes we want it to be our pleasure, not his pleasure. I'm leaving town.

[30 : 02] Read this. And call the Sabbath a delight. Oh, stink. Saturday's coming. I won't be able to make any money on Saturday. I won't be able to make any money on Saturday.

I hate Saturdays. Saturdays are one day a week. I can't have my business open. I hate Saturdays. That's what's going on. He said, I want you to go. Glory to God. It's time to go to church. Time to go worship God down at the congregation.

It's what he said he wanted. Call the Sabbath a delight. The holy of the Lord, honorable. And honor him. Not doing what you want to do.

Not finding your own pleasure. Nor seeking your own words. Nor speaking your own words. Now, let me just say this. That is really not about you coming to church.

And I'm not even trying to take a dig at you if you find too much pleasure on Sunday. That's not what I'm doing. But I do think, well, I'll take a hint there. I do think, I do think God deserves.

[31 : 01] I do think God deserves. Hmm? Hmm? Do I need to see any more? My wife says, I'm excited.

We're going on a trip together. She said, you excited? I said, sure. Yeah. I travel all the time. She said, but you're traveling with me. And I'm like, well, we travel together all the time too.

And so, this is how you need to go. You definitely need to get away so you can fix your marriage. But isn't that how we do the Lord? I talk to you on Mondays.

I talk to you on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday. Sunday ain't that big a deal. Saturday ain't that big a deal. I got other stuff I want to do. So, here's what he told them in that passage of Scripture. Stop abusing people.

There are three things I put down here that he told them. Stop abusing people. Start really worshipping. And I'd like to say that to all of us. This is an Old Testament passage. It's about the nation of Israel. It's about Saturday.

[32 : 02] But you know what? You need to come to church here and worship. You need to be very careful that you're not just coming. God is my witness. I struggle sometimes pastoring.

I love you and I love this church. But it's like it can become so ho-hum. It's time for him to bring that message. He will be done on time.

He's pretty good about that. Dump some more facts on us. Amen. Amen. We love Jesus. But we don't really worship him. He said, stop abusing people.

Start really worshipping God. I don't know what there is about this. But biblically, God likes it when people get together and worship him. You could get on a boat, if you want, in the middle of a lake and fish and worship God at the same time.

But God's like, I like it when y'all get together. Where two or three of you gather together, I'll be there. God was like, if y'all get together. Here's what God wants. He wants a bunch of us going. We love you.

[33 : 07] And deny yourself and honor God. That's what he told them. Deny yourself and honor God. Now, let me give you the close right here. Here's our convictions as we proceed, I hope.

No verses. You've read the chapter. Start living out who we are. We are the born-again children of God. Say amen.

I am not looking at a bunch of sinners. I'm looking at a bunch of saints. Saved by God. Sanctified by God. Set apart by God. Names written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

We ought to be going, whoa, sing that song. Kids were singing this morning. The choir was singing. And then the group that was singing. And I do know you got excited, so I'm not criticizing.

But, I mean, we ought to be like, I'm having a hard time containing myself right now. I like him. And I like him. And I like him. They're saying they like him. Jesus, give me Jesus.

[34 : 06] Take the world and give me Jesus. We're all supposed to be going, that's right. You're just singing what I'm feeling right now. I'm singing some more. I'm afraid that's not what we're doing, though. I'm like, I think we're going, she missed that D in that song.

Did you notice? It was really a C+. He was not right on the harmony. Did you catch that?

We're not worshipping. Come on. Start living out who you are. Stop being hypocrites.

If there's anything in this chapter, it is God saying, oh. Oh, the funniest part of this chapter to me is when God says, preach to them. Oh, I know they worship me, don't they?

Like bull rushes that lower their head, and they spread their little sackcloth and ashes, and they pretend to really flick their sails. But we both know they don't mean it. Read the chapter.

[35 : 05] Here's the problem. You go through it too quick. But quickly, you read that chapter, and God's like, they don't worship me. There ain't nothing going on down there about me. Number two, stop trying to manipulate and use God.

That's what I did with fasting. The longest I've ever fasted was 10 days. And we had this horrible financial need in the church because I'd not been a good leader, and I didn't have people helping me, and I'd really mess the church up.

So financially, the church was in massive, massive trouble. IRS had come in after us because we had a daycare, and we hadn't paid our taxes, and I fought the treasury, paid the taxes, and I shouldn't have trusted the treasury.

I should have been checking up, and I didn't. And so I told Betty, I said, when they met with me, they were, man, they were mean to me. I mean, I'm like a 27-year-old guy.

They scared me to death. It was like, we're putting you in jail. This is fraud. I'm like, well, I promise you ain't fraud. Stupid, maybe. Fraud is not. And so I told God, I said, now I ain't eating again until you give me the money.

[36 : 22] I need \$4,000 to get my debt off of me. It's only \$4,000. I know y'all be like, I take it out of my back pocket. But that was a lot of money to a boy making about \$100 a week as a missionary, as a pastor. So I was manipulating God.

On the 10th day, God did give us some money, by the way. That's when I started eating again. Let's quit manipulating God. And I start really loving and honoring God.

Let's start that. Isaiah 58, apply to us. Live out who you are. Be excited about who God is. Oh.