

Jeremiah 5

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[0 : 00] Please join me in Jeremiah chapter number 5. What a great song. As we go to Jeremiah and we hear God speak to us through the book of Jeremiah and through his prophet, and as you're turning there, I'd like to just take a quick moment and thank all the parents that allow their teens to be involved in the student-driven service on Sunday night.

I know some are on Awanas. We have Grant that preached in here the other night. He's on the second row, and they just did a great job. And one of the things that I heard repeatedly throughout the week talking about the service was how the young men handled the scriptures when they taught, how serious they were about delivering what the Bible says.

And that should be encouraging to all of us here. It says in Deuteronomy chapter number 28, verse 47, 48. I didn't put that in the notes, but if you would turn there for us.

But in Deuteronomy chapter number 28 and 47, it tells us that if we will joyfully serve the Lord with our lives, 28, 47, 48, 47, good.

It says, because thou servest not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart for the abundance of all things. So that's one option for our teenagers. Another option is, therefore thou shalt serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee in hunger and in thirst and nakedness.

[1 : 13] If our teenagers do not treasure the word of God and do not joyfully serve the Lord, God loves them too much to ignore them. And if that doesn't happen, then with that time that they would spend in the word, joyfully serving the Lord, they're going to serve lesser things.

You know, the worst thing that we could do in our relationship towards God is be apathetic, right? It's just to not have a heart. What is the worst thing that God could do towards us is be apathetic. We'd be in so much trouble if we were in a condition where we did not treasure God's word and it just didn't change our lives, where we didn't joyfully serve him, but it made no difference and he just left us to ourselves.

But God isn't like that. And so let's pray for our teenagers. Let's pray that during this time in their lives, they really develop a heart to worship God and to serve him that will go with them into their adult years.

So Jeremiah talks about matters of the heart more than you see in most of the books here in the Old Testament. He's always speaking from a position of his heart.

Obviously, God's giving him a message. If you have the responsibility of saying, thus saith the Lord, you have a heavy responsibility. That's what those young men had the other night and every time you stand to teach, you have the responsibility to say when you open the Bible, thus saith the Lord.

[2 : 26] It isn't just something for the prophet. It isn't just something for the preacher on Thursday night. But every Christian, when we open up the Bible and give counsel or teaching to somebody, we're saying, thus saith the Lord. It comes with a great responsibility and one that Jeremiah has before the people.

The work of the priest was hard and Malachi, it says it brought a weariness to them. It was physically demanding of them. It was hard on them emotionally. But there was a routine about it. Jeremiah's dad would have had that.

But Jeremiah is going to be all over the place. Here in this chapter, we're going to see him going throughout the land looking for somebody that seeks after the truth. And he puts his whole heart into it. It's amazing how quickly the people of Israel will change, though, from where they move.

What kind of preaching in church will a vision have in 30 years and in 50 years? It's really determined by what we come and we look for. You know, if we want the word of God to be taught to us, then that's what we're going to get.

That's really what stood out to me when I read this passage here. It says that they got profits after what they wanted, what they desired. It's that we bring that into our lives. The type of information we're getting is what we're looking for.

[3 : 32] The type of teaching we receive is what we're looking for. But let's read Jeremiah chapter number 5. I'm going to read every verse of it, all 31 verses. It's most certainly worth our time to read God's word. I'll make a few comments along the way as we go back and look at it.

But it's only worth the time if you will listen to me as I read it, okay? So if you're going to listen at any point tonight, make all of it, all right? But especially listen to, as we listen to God's word, because the story here and the imagery, it's just so strong.

We're going to look at a group of people that didn't treasure God's word, and their lives just fall apart. They're just getting what they want. And a group of people that aren't seeking after the truth. Let's start in verse number 1.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem. See now and know and seek in broad places thereof. If you can find a man, if there be any that executed judgment, that seeketh the truth, and I will pardon it.

And though they say the Lord liveth, surely they swear falsely. So God is speaking and saying, go out the land and look. Not look for 50, don't look for 25, don't look for 10. That should remind you of a story in Genesis, right?

[4 : 31] Genesis 18, story of Sodom and Gomorrah. But now we're saying, go out there and just find one person who diligently is seeking for the truth, that wants to know God, and that wants to know him from his word and have a meaningful relationship.

Go find one person like this. Could you imagine? I've never answered the door for a census. Anybody ever had anybody dock on their door and do a census? I'm not sure how they're doing it. If none of us are having anybody, Chile, they do them a lot, right? In other countries.

But I couldn't imagine, they knock on the door, they're like, how many kids do you have? I'll say, Stephanie, how many kids we got today, all right? And then I'll answer the question, and then I would, they would answer, then they'll say, does anybody in this house seek for the truth?

And I would hope to say, surely I do. It says that when they answered this, though, they would, they said falsely. They weren't telling the truth. Oh, Lord, are not thine eyes upon the truth? Isn't that what he's looking down and searching for?

Isn't that what God is looking for in our church services? Not just talented people singing songs, but people that love the Lord, singing truth to him. Thou hast stricken them, but they have not grieved. Thou hast consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction.

[5 : 32] They have made their faces harder than a rock. They have refused to return. He's been loving to them, but they have not responded. Therefore, I said, surely these are poor. They are foolish, for they know not the way of the Lord, nor the judgment of their God.

So they said, well, maybe I was going to the poor people and the less educated people, and they didn't know the ways of God. But if I get away from the training center students over here, and I go to some middle class families, if I go to some people over here, maybe they've had some education.

Maybe they know the ways of the Lord. Don't be offended, Chase. Nobody expects you to have any money at this stage of life, okay? And if any girls are listening, you might have some money, okay? I'll leave that option open.

All right, and so it says here, it says, surely they are poor. And then he says in verse 5, I will get me unto the great men. I will speak unto them, for they have known the way of the Lord and the judgment of their God.

But these have altogether broken the yoke and burst the bonds. From the poorest and the uneducated to the richest and those that have the most opportunity there, nobody was seeking after the truth.

[6 : 33] Verse 6, wherefore, a lion out of the forest shall slay them, and a wolf of the evening shall spoil them. A leopard shall watch over their cities. Everyone that goeth out thence shall be torn in pieces, because their transgressions are many, and their backslidings are increased.

How shall I pardon thee for this? Thy children have forsaken me, and sworn by that are no gods. When I have fed them to the full, then they have committed adultery and assembled themselves by the troops in the harlot's houses.

Jeremiah alludes to the example given in Hosea many times about Hosea taking care of his wife and giving provision, but then she still continues to commit adultery. Jeremiah reminds them that you have the energy and the provision to do what you do, because God has provided it for them.

And so they were fed and they were taken care of. Shall I not? How shall I pardon? Verse 8, they were fed horses in the morning. Everyone neighed at his neighbor's wife, coveting what was it theirs.

Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? Give up, ye up, upon her walls and destroy. Make not a full inn.

[7 : 40] Take away her battlements, for they are not the Lord's. All the things that they thought they did that would protect them from the enemy, the battlements, none of that's going to stand a chance. Verse 11, for the house of Israel and the house of Judah have dealt very treacherously against me, saith the Lord.

They have belied the Lord. They have spoken and said that what God said is not true. They have been counterfeiting God's word. They didn't say we don't just care about God's word, but there's been false prophets saying, thus saith the Lord, but not telling the truth.

And said, is it not he, neither shall evil come upon us, neither shall we see sword, nor famine. The false prophets are saying, hey, just calm down. Nothing's coming against us. And the prophets shall become wind, and the word is not in them.

Wow. Thus shall it be done unto them. Wherefore, thus saith the Lord God of hosts, because you speak this word, behold, I will make my words of my mouth fire, and the people would, and it shall devour them.

Lo, I will bring a nation upon you from afar. A house of Israel, saith the Lord, it is a mighty nation. It is an ancient nation, a nation whose language thou knowest not, neither understandeth what they say.

[8 : 46] Their quiver is an open supplicant. They are a mighty army. If you looked in their quiver and in their arrows, and if they have 14 arrows, there's going to be 14 people that die. They are just carrying around death.

And they shall eat up thine harvest, and thy bread, which thy sons and thy daughters shall eat. They shall eat up all thy flocks and thy herds, and they shall eat up thy vines and thy fig trees. They shall impoverish thy fenced cities wherein thou trust us with the sword.

Nevertheless, in those days, saith the Lord, I will not make a full end with you. God in his wrath is going to remember mercy to these people. Verse 19, and it shall come to pass when you shall say, wherefore doth the Lord our God all these things unto us?

Then shall there answer them, like you as have forsaken me. Listen to what it says here carefully. It says, like as you have forsaken me and serve strange gods in your land, so shall you serve strangers in a land that is not yours.

As you have brought in false gods from another land, and you have served them, now I'm going to take you to another land, and you're going to become the servant of those strangers. Verse 20, declare this in the house of Jacob, and publish it in Judah, saying, hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding, which have eyes and see not, which have ears and hear not, fear you not me, saith the Lord, will you not tremble at my presence, which have placed the sand for the bound of the sea, by perpetual decree, that it cannot pass it, and though the waves thereof toss themselves, yet they cannot prevail, though they roar, yet they cannot pass over it, for this people have a revolting and a rebellious heart, and they have revolted, and God, God, the sea even knows to stay within its boundaries.

[10 : 20] The sea may roar and it may toss, but it stays within its sand boundaries between the land, but not the children of Israel, not just like the rest of creation, they have a rebellious heart, they're going against God's plan for them.

Anybody want to help me here? Oh, verse 24, thank you so much, I'm all alone. Verse 24, neither say they in their heart, let us now fear the Lord our God that giveth rain, both the farmer and the latter in the season, he reserveth unto us the appointed weeks of the harvest.

Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sin have withholden good things from you. What a message there. Your sins have withholden good things from you. We're not trying to withhold sin from you, God's trying to give you good things, and you're taking the lesser things.

For among my people are found wicked men, they lay wait, as he that setteth snares, they set a trap, they catch men, as a cage is full of birds, so are their houses, full of the sea, therefore they are become great and waxen rich.

They are waxen fat, they shine, they're sweaty. Yea, they overpass the deeds of the wicked, they judge not the cause, the cause of the fatherless, yet they prosper in the right of the needy, they do not judge. Not only do they do deceitful towards the needy, but they don't advocate for the needy, which are both sins.

[11 : 31] Shall I not visit for these things, saith the Lord? Shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this? A wonderful and a horrible thing is committed in the land. Thy prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means.

And my people love to have it so. And my people love to have it so. And what will you do in the end thereof? Heavenly Father, thank you for your word. Lord, I thank you for people that came here tonight because they wanted to hear from you.

And in wanting to hear from you, Lord, they want to know you more. And so they have it so tonight. Lord, I pray that you'll help us have understanding. We do not want to be people with ears who do not hear and people with eyes who do not see.

We come tonight, Lord, not with rebellious hearts, but with hearts that want to know you and make you known and proclaim truth in this world. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. So as we started off tonight in that example, it just said find one person for us that would be there, that would not swear falsely, that would truly say, I seek after truth, which is what we should be doing with our days.

We should be seeking after truth, understanding we have a book full of truth, and that truth being the person of Jesus Christ. One of the quotes on my wall that I took from the missions conference a couple years ago was by Judson.

[12 : 43] And it says, let me beg you not the rest contented with the commonplace religion that is not so prevalent. I love that quote. Judson wrote it in his day, early 1800s. It's true today. It was true in the day of Jeremiah that there's a form of religion that just wasn't really seeking after the truth, that loved all the form, but they didn't really want to know him.

And we shouldn't be surprised by that, right? Matthew 7 tells us that there's a group of people that say, Lord, Lord, and he says, depart from me. I never knew you. But just because people talk about the things of God doesn't mean that they really want the truth.

They just find in Christianity what they want to find. They just find what satisfies their lives. It says that they swear falsely. This isn't a small talk. This is meaning that, like in court, before God, that God hears them saying, yeah, I swear that I diligently seek the truth.

And God says, no, you don't. You don't. You people, you don't. Your life is indicative of the fact that you don't treasure my word. People who do not understand, verse 21, without understanding which have eyes and see not.

That's a common thing throughout the New Testament, having ears and not hearing. And the Bible teaches us that the word either melts us at times or it hardens us, right? Every time we hear the word, we're making a decision.

[13 : 54] Not just the ones who come to an altar, not just the ones that pray in their seats. Every time we're exposed to the word of God. And this is just a challenge. This is such a challenging thought. It should be for all of you that are involved in discipleship, that teach a class through Sunday school.

It's having realized that kids were listening to you. They either stopped believing. They either stopped believing. And that was their response. Or they're going to deal with the consequences. But every time we hear God's word, they have a decision to make.

I have a decision to make. Coming to church as often as we do, hearing as much teaching as we do is such a wonderful thing. But only as we keep our heart as people that seek the truth. Because when we don't, it makes us hard and calloused people.

An unwillingness to receive correction, verse 3. But they refused to receive correction. From the poorest of people to the richest of people, they no longer had open eyes. Psalm 40, verse 6 says, It says, It says, God has opened up our ears to hear from him.

Why don't they hear his voice? Psalms 40, verse 8 tells us this. It says in Psalm 40, verse 8, I delight to do thy will, O my God. Yea, thy law is within my heart. Why is it within the heart?

[15 : 06] Because it says, In verse 6 we just read, It says that they have their ears are open, And their ears are open because they delight in his word.

They delight in his will. You probably were told this as a teenager, And if you don't, you probably know it would have been good advice. That you're not going to know God's future will for your life Unless you are willing to obey his will for your life today.

That was probably said in some version. I think it was said to me differently. But that's the gist of the matter, right? Is that if something is put before you, If you know what to do right, Then you don't get further revelation. You don't get further understanding of what God wants from you.

And so not as a nation, And not only as a church, But as individuals, We should ask ourselves, If someone knocked on our door and asked us If we were diligently pursuing the truth with our lives, Could we honestly answer yes?

Are we seeking the truth of God? Are we turning the pages wanting to know him? Are we coming here and listening? Are we meeting together in small groups? Are we in discipleship saying, I really want to hear from God?

[16:07] And don't tell me that you can go through all these motions and not do that. Because I know that we can. I know we can show up to the right places and turn to the right chapter. But not have ears to hear and listen to him.

So what was expected wasn't found. We remember King Josiah, right? The couple neat things about him. How young he is when he starts. I always assume if you're king at eight, Then your mom's basically the king, right?

She's the queen. She's got to tell you what to do for a while. But Josiah starts. And then when he becomes a teenager, As his heart turns toward the things of the Lord, They're rebuilding the temple. They find Deuteronomy.

They find the law there. They're told about the Passover. Is it not mind-boggling to you that that was lost? Like, really? I mean, of all the things you kept up with, You lost that for you. You lost that practice.

But they did. And so in 2 Kings chapter number 23, Verses 2 and 3, it says, And the king went up unto the house of the Lord, And all the men of Judah, And all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were with him, And the priests, And the prophets, And all the people, Both small and great.

[17:04] You know, the rich and the poor we talked about. He reads in their ears all the words of the book of the covenant, Which was found in the house of the Lord. And the king stood by the pillar, And he made a covenant before the Lord, To walk after the Lord, And to keep his commandments, And his testimonies, And his statutes with all their heart, And all their soul.

And to perform the words of his covenant, That were written in this book. Look what it says. And all the people stood to the covenant. Later on, Jeremiah becomes a prophet about the time That there's this renewal going on.

Josiah will die. And when Josiah dies, Jeremiah writes some songs of lament to him. And these people are sad about it. And they continue this tradition Of singing these songs that we miss King Josiah.

But less than a decade later, Jeremiah is going out throughout the land. And he's saying, Hey, is there anybody out here seeking for the truth? You know, 10 years ago in Jerusalem, Less than 10 years ago, There's people gathered around the book, Saying we've made a covenant That we want to obey God's word.

And less than a decade later, Here's a group of people. And when he does a census throughout the land, People aren't seeking the truth. So what does he find? He should have found a man in every home, A lady in every home, A kid doing a Wana workbook.

[18:12] Whatever it is, He ought to have found a whole family Dilettantly seeking the truth. It hasn't been that long ago, But he finds false worship. Verse 19, Because there's no other option. If they're not treasuring God's word, We're made to worship.

So verse 19, Like as you have forsaken me, And serve strange gods in your land. So you go lusting after these things of the world. They have committed adultery. They have coveted what belongs to their neighbor, As a horse, Neighing after their neighbor's wife.

They're deceitful, And they're incompassionate people. They had wax and fat. They had taken people and deeds. They're incompassionate. They judge not the cause of the fathers, So they didn't prosper in the right of the needy.

And do not judge. Lest you be Lori Hote or somebody else here. And say it's meaning to say uncompassionate. But I'll look these words up, okay? I'm choosing incompassionate here in the moment. Because incompassionate says, Not only were they not compassionate, But they lacked any kind of pity, Or ability to show compassion.

So here he said, Not only were they being deceitful like the world, And taking advantage of people. But they didn't judge the fatherless. Meaning they didn't look after the case of other people. They didn't say, I should do something about that.

[19 : 16] Brother John, you might remember this. When we went to India for the first time, Pastor taught us a neat thing on a survey trip. Is ask the same people the same question. Don't just assume that one person tells you something. It is going to be the truth.

But one of the questions I really wanted to know was, What do you do about all the poverty around you? Just all the time. As a Christian, how do you live out your Christian life? Knowing that when you sit down to eat, There will be somebody looking at you who wants that meal.

And unlike America, Where we try to separate you from different sides of the track. There it is right on top of you. Heard different answers. One person said, Well, we just give nothing to anybody. And that makes it easy. All right? I'm like, Well, mathematically, that's pretty easy.

All right? Not so good for the heart. Easy on the brain. All right? Others said, Well, we do this thing in our church. And this is going on. And that was a good answer. And then one person said, We just have to let the Holy Spirit lead and guide us from day to day.

Sometimes we help. And we may not should have. And other times we don't. But we're humans with a heart. And God has to lead us. I understand that we can't solve every problem we see. But if it's been a long time since you saw a problem and you wanted to meet it, then I'll tell you that you're not treasuring the Word.

[20 : 18] Because the Word will just soften your heart towards people. It will make you want to make a difference. So we can't get on board on everything that we see. That's not discerning. We wouldn't be able to be helping other people if we just let everything come their way to side.

But if it's been a time that you've just done, the Bible would call it just a pure religion, where you just gave to something, knowing that there's not going to be a return, can I tell you that the Word may not be having its rightful place in your heart?

It has a place in your mind academically, but it isn't massaging that heart as it should. And this is what's happening to these people. They've become like that. They're not treasuring the Word. Good things are being withheld.

Verse 25, Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sin have withholding good things from you. You know, when you're rebellious, especially as a teenager, you're like, these are all the things I want to do, and this is all the things that people are keeping me from. This is the joy that sin has for me, or this is the happiness.

We don't realize and remember all the things that sin would keep us from. The Bible gives many different things. One, as a husband, I don't get to pray to God. My prayers are hindered when things aren't right with me and my wife, and that should matter to me.

[21 : 19] I should want to be able to pray for you. I want to be able to pray for my kids. We saw Sunday night, the teens on Friday night, a loss of fruit bearing. As we're not abiding in Christ, the sin is there. He doesn't bear fruit in our lives.

We don't get to be involved in it, in the work of the Lord. If we don't repent of sin, like Psalm 51, that joy won't be there in his lives. A loss of friendship, Proverbs says that, 17, is that you're just not going to have meaningful relationships if there's sin in your life, a bitterness, or a hatred towards anybody will affect your relationship with everybody else.

Sin hinders things. Teenagers, I hope you hear this. Sin keeps you from what's best for you. There's no trade-off for it. That one sin that you're holding on, that makes you given so much, giving that sin up would give you so much more return than you could imagine on it.

Do any of y'all go back to the time when you were younger? Were you realized that? The day that you gave something up, the day that you got some help, and that burden that was lifted off of you to live the way that God had called you to live?

So look at the conditions. What were the conditions that caused this? Jeremiah asked, Oh, Lord, don't you seek after truth? God says, How can I just look over these things? Don't they fear the Lord? There's these false teachers that had led them astray.

[22 : 25] The false teachers said, they have lied to the Lord, and they said, Neither shall evil come upon you. One of the common messages of false teachers are, there's no sense of urgency. There's no need for holiness.

Sin's not a big deal, and there's no sense of urgency. That was the message of the false teachers here, and it said that their mouth was as wind, but not as words. Ooh, that's strong, isn't it?

They were just blowing out hot air, but it wasn't the word of God. You know, we say that when a false teacher stands, I can name false teachers, but it wouldn't do us any good because you probably don't know about them because you don't care about them, right?

You just want people of the word. But we say that a false teacher fills a crowd of places, right? They fill stadiums with people. That's not necessarily true. Stadiums full of people put false teachers on a stage.

We get what we want. We get what we want in this world. That's why we have churches and places that do what they do because that's what we want. That's what it says. He says, The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their names, and my people love to have it so.

[23 : 27] That just really stuck out to me because I blame these false teachers all the time. Like they're just a small group inside the country, and they're just so good at what they do, and they're so charismatic, and they lead people astray. That's not the case.

They just are given the opportunity because people are getting what they want. We look for people to allow us to worship the way that we want to. We want to create a God in our own image, so we look for people that will talk about God in a way that is created in our own image.

Stephen and I the other day were looking for a van for Mitch. Met a guy named Muhammad, and he said, My son's going into cybersecurity, and we thought, Well, that's a pretty smart thing to do. It seems like there's a real future in cybersecurity. Well, let me tell you, there would be a real future in being a false teacher.

A lot of people are looking for him, okay? If you want to teach, you can find a message that would gather people around, and that's what they're looking for. And so these false teachers had protection. They had a livelihood because they had a message that people wanted to hear.

And so it's not just the false teachers. It's the people that want to hear it. And why? Verse 23, The people had a revolting and a rebellious heart. They were getting what they wanted in regards to the teachers here.

[24 : 31] What did God offer for them? Jeremiah 3.15, He says, I want to give you pastors. I want to give you shepherds. I want to give you Bible teachers that are according to my heart, which will feed you with knowledge and understanding.

These false teachers are teaching. It says, Now these are people that don't have any understanding, but God wanted to give us people in our lives that would give us understanding and give us knowledge. And so the way we treasure the Word is really going to show in our lives.

I know this stuff's extreme, but that's what's great about it, isn't it? It's just an example to see something happen so radical in 10 years. You just really can't miss it. And so I know it doesn't seem as drastic in your life that every one of us has felt what it's like in our lives when we don't treasure the Word, when we get caught up in lesser things, when the gods of other people's gods, and that's how Jesus talks about it, right?

He doesn't just say, You either worship God or you don't worship the things of money. He says God or mammon. He'll say that the worship of money is a false god. That's how he sees it, that these worshipping lesser things is worshipping false gods.

We felt the consequences. And as we worship those false things, then we become servants to them. And they come in, these strange gods, and then we become strangers in their land. And we've got to treasure his Word.

[25 : 40] We've got to diligently pursue the truth and make it available to all. I know Brett in the back says amen to that. As we've talked about people overcoming addiction and strongholds in their lives, one of the principles that he would teach is that you have to diligently seek the truth.

That means no matter where it's taking place, if people are teaching the Bible, if they're teaching truth, you just go to it and you find it. You find it every night of the week. That's what we should be looking for if somebody is sharing it with you.

So we just have a few minutes. Let me give you five things real quickly as an application in my life and you as we think about this. First of all, we should fill this community and the world with truth.

Church in Jerusalem has said that they filled Jerusalem with their doctrine in Acts chapter number five and verse 28. We should be looking to speak about God's truth. Yes, ultimately about the gospel every chance we get, but every truth of God's Word.

We don't stand for lies. We don't stand for things that are said against God that aren't true. Why? Because we are people that are able to say, thus saith the Lord. Don't just apply this message to me because I'm up here tonight.

[26 : 41] If you're able to open your Bible, you're able to say, thus saith the Lord, which means you could be part of filling places with the teaching of God's Word. Number two, remember the responsibilities to all of us that say, thus saith the Lord.

Jeremiah said, thus saith the Lord, behold, I bring an evil upon you which thou shalt not be able to escape and thou shalt cry unto me and I will not hearken unto them. And you say, whoa, that's heavy. 1,200 times throughout the prophets, they say, thus saith the Lord.

And you say, Jeremiah could not say that if it wasn't of the Lord. He could not make these kind of statements if it wasn't from the Lord. We're not asking you to make heavy statements about the truth if it was not God's Word.

You're not to go around judging. You're not to be going around making hard statements. But we are to be taking the Word of God. We have a pretty hard statement to say as well, right? At the end of the passage, it says, and what will you do when the end therefore?

Is that not a question that we're asking people as well? Like where will you be? Seeing that you haven't treasured God and His Word, where do you think you're going to be when this is all said and done? When the enemy ultimately comes in and we're all, it's over for everyone?

[27 : 43] Number, the third thing, we are called to earnestly contend for the faith. Beloved, when I give all diligence, I write unto you the common salvation. It was needful for me to write unto you and exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints.

One of my favorite things to do is to talk to a Christian who has studied something because they had a friend or a family member that was confused about it. And then they said, I have to figure out what the Bible teaches about Mormonism.

I have to find out what the Bible teaches about work salvation. I have to figure out what the Bible says about baptismal regeneration because it became real to them. So they went to the Word and they learned how to earnestly contend and then they went in there and they helped some people.

And then when you talk to them, it wasn't just something they did in class. It wasn't something they did as a hobby. They were people who went to war with the Word, who learned what it said. And that's what we should all be doing. We should be talking to people about the gospel and discipling so much that we always have a list of things that we're saying, I need to know about this more.

If I could talk to God right now and I could get an answer to a Bible question, I have five right now that I would want and I ought to be studying those. As a church, we're called to be the pillar and ground of the truth. We cannot let anyone take that responsibility from us.

[28 : 55] It is not the job of anybody else to be the pillar and the ground of the truth. No Chick-fil-A, no news, nobody can take that away from us. We are the pillar and the ground of the truth as a church.

We uphold it. We can't advocate that. We can't give that to somebody else. Number five, make sure there is a place in your heart for His Word. John 8, 37 says it like this, last verse before I pray.

I know that you are Abraham's seed, but you seek to kill me because my Word had no place in you. I really like that passage. I hate it and I like it, right?

It says, I know that you're Abraham's seed. Could you get any more religious than Abraham's seed? I mean, they had the right pedigree. They had just everything. I mean, they were God's people. Everybody knew it. They had all the trappings of it.

And that's what was happening in Josiah's day. They were changing these outwards things, but it didn't get into the heart of the men and in a short time it was gone. But it said this, because my Word had no place in you.

[29 : 54] I know you come to a lot of churches Thursday night. I know you got your kids and I want to. I know that you hear a lot of Bible. I know that most of you teach a lot of Bible. But could we just ask ourselves tonight, is there a place in our heart for God's Word?

And if not, what has taken its place? What have we begun to treasure over it? Because maybe you're just in the beginning stages, but I tell you, whatever you have allowed in your life over the rightful place that it has, is just going to cause you trouble.

It's just going to bring destruction. It's not the way we're lived. So that's why I challenge you to pray the night. Would you say, God, I want there to be room in my heart for your Word. I want there to be more room. I want to clean out some closets I haven't cleaned out in a while.

I want to be able to pull my car back into the garage, all right? I want to get rid of some bikes that aren't being used anymore. Let's remember that stuff, all right? I want to make room in my heart for what belongs there and then keep God's Word in His rightful place.

What a vivid picture for us. And you have the work of Jeremiah. You say, thus saith the Lord, we're people of the book. What a, people have called us that through history as an insult, but we take it gladly, right? That we are people of the book.

[31 : 00] Not as a nation and not just as a church, but as individuals. Let's have a place in our heart for God's Word. Let's have a place in our heart.