

Are You Out Of Your Mind■

by James Jennings

This sermon delves into the theme of being accused of being 'out of your mind' for zealously following Christ. It explores examples from Scripture where individuals like Rhoda, Paul, and even Jesus were labeled as such by others. The sermon emphasizes the need for Christians to be zealous for the things of God, even if the world views them as crazy, and to stand firm in their faith despite accusations of being 'out of their mind.'

Scripture: Mark 3:21, Acts 26:24, Acts 12:15, 1 Corinthians 2:14, John 9:4, Hebrews 11:13, Titus 2:14, 1 Peter 4:4

Topics: "Zeal for God", "Standing Firm in Faith"

Description

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Transcript

Help me. Father, give me the power of Your Spirit. Lord, Your presence.

Lord, give me life right now. In Jesus' name, Amen. So I'm not going to get in the pulpit.

No one's in the front row. I could stand right up here. Father, I want to speak to You this morning on are you out of your mind? Are you out of your mind? Are you out of your mind? Who are some people who you think are out of their minds? I know I ask it in a joking way, but it can be a very serious accusation, right? Because it carries with it the fact you believe someone's insane, that they're mad.

It carries a lot of that. I'm not thinking of Nebuchadnezzar. Was Nebuchadnezzar literally out of his mind? At some point, he was.

How did he get out of his mind? God took away his reasoning and he became like an ox. He was still a man, but he was acting like an ox eating grass. And if you witnessed that, that would have been absolutely terrifying.

If you knew him before, and then you saw him after, it would have been very, very shocking. You would have been shocked. And I'm not thinking about King David, who I believe wrongly pretended that he was insane in order to preserve his life.

He allowed spittle to come down his face. And the ruler said, do I lack a crazy man in my kingdom? And he didn't believe it was really David. So I'm not thinking about King David.

So, there's a people who are told they're out of their mind, and it's not because God actually took their mind away, and it's not because they have spittle coming down their face and they're pretending to be insane. These people are called insane when they're actually conducting themselves in a way that is actually completely normal in comparison to a certain standard. Now, we're going to look at three of these individuals who faced this comment that they had lost their mind.

Are you out of your mind? They were told something like that. We're going to look at these three individuals. Now, I'm going to mention the three to you before we look at them, and I want you to think about who am I referring to in Scripture.

And all three of these people fall under a broader category that something is true about them that led them to behave the way they did. And two of these make the point stronger than the first one, but I want to mention the first one nonetheless. So, this is the first individual.

One of them simply forwarded a message containing a miraculous answer to prayer and got a repeated return response that you are out of your mind. Who am I talking about? Rhoda. Yep.

Rhoda. So that's individual number one who it seems is a Christian. She was with the people of God in a time of persecution.

And when Peter came, it says she left with joy. So it seems she was a Christian even though she was a servant girl. So Rhoda.

We're going to look at Rhoda. This is the second individual. They had an evangelistic opportunity, and they boldly mentioned to the government officials that Jesus rose from the dead, that Jesus came not just to save Jews, but us Gentiles as well.

These people knew this was the truth. They had seen it with their own eyes, yet they suppressed the truth by saying this evangelist was out of his mind and that he was driven mad and had studied his Bible too much. So who is this? Paul.

Paul before Festus and Agrippa. Bethesda governor. Agrippa the king.

They cut him off. They didn't want to hear him anymore. They thought Paul was out of his mind.

Third individual. And what an individual this individual is. There's none like him.

The last one, he went from having a typical job most of his life to having no time to eat and going from one evangelistic meeting to then gathering again for another meeting back-to-back. Sometimes the crowds would almost crush him because of the healings he was doing. He even started discussing demonic deliverance.

And he even had an all-night prayer meeting. He spent a night in prayer. All night to make a decision.

This person's family, they heard about him. And you know what they said to this individual? They said the same thing. Have you lost your mind? Are you out of your mind? So who's that? Who's the third person? Yeah, Jesus Christ.

So Rhoda, Paul, and Jesus Christ were all told that they were out of their mind. And this is a good type of being out of your mind. These individuals actually were in their right mind.

And that's what led to the accusation that they faced. But the world views Christians as mad, irrational, lunatics, berserk, loopy, crazy, delirious, insane, unhinged, not in touch with the real world. You will hear one of these words at some point in your life.

Someone will use it to describe you. You're not in touch with reality. You're loopy.

You're this. You're that. Christians are going to face that.

And honestly, we're going to face it all the more as the world goes in the way it does. The truth though is the Christian is the only one who is in his right mind, calm, and his mind is all there. Now that's because we've been given a renewed mind.

Because God has saved us and changed us. And like the demoniac in Mark 5, it's not just that He put us in our right mind, so we're no longer living in a graveyard, running around naked, cutting ourselves. But that demoniac was in his right mind, and what did he want to do once he was put in his right mind? He wanted to be with Jesus.

And that's what the Christian wants. They want to be with Jesus. And Jesus told him, no, you're not going to come with Me.

And what did the demoniac then go and do? What's the next thing the Christian's going to do? If they can't be with Christ personally, what are they going to go do? Tell. Go and tell of the mercy that the Lord had on him. So there's a good type of being out of your mind.

If being out of your mind means your mind is set on heavenly things and is not according to the mind that is set on the flesh, because that mind is at enmity with God. Right? So, let's look at these three individuals. Go to Acts 12.

We're going to look briefly at Rhoda. Acts 12. And I was thinking, no one has named their daughter Rhoda.

There's something commendable about her. And I'm not signing up to name a daughter Rhoda either. A little difficult of a name.

So Acts 12. And brethren of the church there, they were facing some very serious things. If you just look at the context, verse 1, Herod the king laid violent hands on some who belonged to the church.

He killed James and then Peter was arrested. Verse 4, and when he had seized Peter, he put him in prison. So Peter was going to be delivered up.

Now what did the church do? Verse 5, so Peter was kept in prison, but earnest prayer for Peter was made to God by the church. And then just briefly, look at his deliverance. God heard their prayers.

Verse 7, an angel of the Lord stood next to him and a light shone in the cell. The angel struck Peter on the side and woke him saying, get up quickly. And chains did what? Fell off his hands.

He had guards strapped to him and supernaturally these chains fall off his hands. That is a miracle of God. Now the next thing is somewhat incredible.

Verse 8, and what did the angel tell Peter to do? Dress yourself. What's the next thing the angel said to do? Put on your sandals and then what's the third thing? Wrap your cloak around you and follow Me. Isn't that kind of odd? We've got time to just get dressed and get out of bed.

You do when God's doing the deliverance. This is a miracle. There's no rush here.

And he went out. And Peter gets out and then verse 12, when it finally dawned on him this is not a dream, this is not a vision, this is actually reality, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose other name was Mark, where many were gathered together and were praying. So this is the individuals who are earnestly praying for Peter.

He now gets to the house where they were at. And he knocked at the door of the gate. A servant girl named Rhoda came to answer.

Recognizing Peter's voice and her joy, she didn't open the gate, but she ran in and she reported that Peter was standing at the gate. Verse 15, they, so it's plural, it's multiple individuals, they said to her, you're out of your mind. What did she do? She kept insisting that it was so.

And what did they do? They kept saying it is His angel. But Peter continued knocking and when they opened, they saw him and were amazed. So here this young woman is just relaying the truth of the very thing they had been praying for.

And in this case, fellow Christians tell her, you're out of your mind. You're out of your mind. This isn't true.

This isn't reality. That was her offense. I mean, the very things they prayed for, God had answered, and they didn't even believe right away that God had heard them.

It sounds like they were still actively praying for this to happen and Peter shows up. Now, if you knew what type of all the guards were guarding Peter, I'd probably have been pretty slow too to think it had happened that fast. Now think of this, this is in the book of Acts.

In the book of Acts, the early church who saw such supernatural power and answers to prayer did not even initially believe it. This caught them off guard. This is a church that is already seeing all manner of supernatural things happen and they got caught off guard.

How much more could that happen for us? Because it's not normative that we're having all sorts of things like this happen. And if it caught them off guard, what of us? This is a warning. We can dispute ourselves out of believing the incredible when it is legitimate.

We don't want to do that. There might actually be something that God did and we don't want to think, we don't want to dispute that it's legitimate if it truly was from the Lord. So other Christians might say you're out of your mind when it comes to true and legitimate answers to prayer.

We see this idea in Luke 24. Don't turn there. But Christ rose from the dead and the women went and they saw that He was gone and they went to tell the apostles and Luke 24, verse 12 says, these words seemed to them, the apostles, to be an idle tale.

And they did not believe them. But Peter rose and he ran to the tomb. It seems like Peter believed it was true.

But these people heard. And it came across like an idle tale. There could be things of such power that God does that the person who comes to us and shares about it, our initial thought is, you're out of your mind.

This is an idle tale. And they did that here in Acts when these things were happening in a normative way all the time back then. And they were caught off guard.

So that's Rhoda. And if you want to think about something here that can make you think someone's out of their mind, do you see what they told Rhoda? She kept insisting, verse 15, that it was so and they kept saying it was what? His angel. His angel.

A commentator, he says this, the angel here is this idea that a man's spiritual counterpart is capable of assuming his appearance and you could mistake the angel as if it was the man. It's like there's some idea there. So I would look at that and say, hey, that's crazy.

But who knows? Who knows the New Testament, the idea of angels? I'm not going to deal with that this morning. So, let's go to Acts 24. Let's look at the second individual.

Acts 26. So here Paul is giving this defense before King Agrippa. And he's grateful for this in v. 3 because Agrippa is familiar with all the customs and the controversies of the Jews.

And we find, let's just read v. 24, and as he was saying these things, we'll look at that in a second, in Paul's defense, he was saying certain things, Thestis said with a loud voice, Paul, you're out of your mind. Your learning is driving you out of your mind. But Paul said, I'm not out of my mind, most excellent Thestis, but I'm speaking true and rational words.

For the king knows about these things, and to him I speak boldly. For I am persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe.

And Agrippa said to Paul, in a short time would you persuade me to be a Christian? And Paul said, whether short or long, I would to God that not only you, but also all who hear me this day might become such as I am except for these chains. Verse 30, the king of Rome, the governor, and Bernice, and those who are sitting with him. And when they had withdrawn, they said to one another, this man is doing nothing deserving death or imprisonment.

So here Paul is in an evangelistic situation. Look, a handful of you all went evangelizing this weekend. Someone might tell you you're out of your mind.

But what caused these individuals to say that Paul was out of his mind? It says here, when he was saying these things. Well, what's the these things referring to? What specific things was Paul saying that were so offensive to these people who are familiar with all the controversies of the Jews? If you look right above, verse 23, you find at least three of the things Paul was referring to. That Christ must suffer and rise from the dead.

And then look at the last thing Paul says before Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, you're out of your mind. What was the last thing Paul said? I must proclaim light both to our people and to who? To the

Gentiles. To the non-Jew.

Christ has come not just to save the Jewish people. This Messiah is saving people from every tongue and every tribe. And again, you find throughout the Bible the Jews hate the fact that there is such an inclusion and these people are being added in and they're also being saved.

And you go through this whole chapter multiple times. He says in verse 17 at the end, from the Gentiles to whom I am sending you. So Paul is going to be sent to the Gentiles to open their eyes.

He says in verse 20 in the middle of it, in all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles. Verse 21, for this reason, the Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. For what reason? What he just said in verse 20.

He declared to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea and also to the Gentiles that they should repent and turn to God. For this reason, Paul going to these Gentiles, telling them to repent and believe in God. The Jews seized me in the temple and they tried to kill me.

So they're trying to kill him for this reason. And then here in Paul's defense, he again brings up this matter of proclaiming light both to our people and to the Gentiles. And these religious people, they don't want to hear this aspect of the truth.

They don't want to hear about the resurrection. They don't want to hear about the message going to the Gentiles. They said that you're out of your mind.

You're driven mad, Paul, to believe such a thing. We have the same thing happen to us. There are certain truths.

It might not be this truth. There are certain specific truths that religious people will despise that we believe. What's one that happens all the time? As a church, we believe in what's known as lordship salvation.

That if you're really a Christian, Christ is actually Lord of your life. It's not just you believe in Him and then ten years later, you make Him Lord. He's Lord whether you call Him Lord or not.

And you're not a true Christian if you don't surrender all to Christ. You go tell that to someone who professes to be a Christian, and a lot of them, they're going to accuse you and say, are you out of your mind? That's a works-based salvation. It is a works-based salvation.

It teaches that salvation is based on a work of God. The work of regeneration. And He changes our heart to make us want to do good works.

And now that's our natural inclination with our new heart and our new desires. So it's a works salvation if you mean it's the work of God. We're not being saved by our works, but our works, as the book of James shows, very clearly point to the genuineness of our faith.

So, Paul's out of his mind because of certain truths he believes. Paul's also out of his mind here. Your learning is driving you out of your mind.

You could say they're saying to Paul, you're spending too much time studying. You're reading too much. You're taking this too serious.

I mean, look, I get reading your Bible on Sunday. I get having five minutes in the morning. But you're taking this too serious, Paul.

Your learning is driving you mad. No, Paul's learning was driving him more and more to the truth of who the Lord is. And how did Paul respond? You know, he said, v. 26, for the king knows about these things.

It was obvious Gentiles were being saved. And there's evidence of Christ being raised from the dead. He knew all these things had happened.

But what was this man trying to do? Suppress the truth. Rather than admit that he was out of his mind, what's the easy thing that the lost individual does? They call us crazy. Rather than own up to the fact that they're out of their mind, they say you're out of your mind.

You're crazy. It's a cop-out. They're trying to suppress the truth and their conviction and point at us and say we're the ones who are the problem.

They're going to say we're narrow-minded. And that's going to happen all the more in the world we're living in right now. The lost will reason away what we say as insanity in order to calm their conscience from having to think about the truth, having to think about the obvious.

Like Paul said, this hasn't escaped your notice. Look, Paul knew there were times when he was speaking, people would consider him a madman. He says in 2 Corinthians 11, I am talking like a madman.

And then he knew others are going to accuse him of that. You're a madman with what you're saying and talking about your labors in these things. Paul knew that was part of being a Christian.

People were going to say, you're out of your mind, you're a madman. The same is going to happen to us. And it probably has.

There's probably been times, how many of us, because of what we believe, have maybe had a family member tell us we joined a cult? I've heard many individuals who've stated that. You know, a cult is a group of people that take something too extreme. But if we're taking it as extreme as God does in His Word, then I would say, no, that's not a cult.

We're biblical. We're being biblical and being balanced. Okay, let's look at the third example.

Turn to Mark 3. Go to Mark 3. Mark 3. Let's just read verse 20. This is where we find this statement. Then Jesus went home, and the crowd gathered again in order that they could not even eat.

And when His family heard it, they went out to seize Him. Why? For they were saying, based on what they heard, that He is out of His mind. That He is out of His mind.

And then you look in this section that follows. He's talking about how can Satan cast out Satan? These different things about the demonic. And then you've got the blasphemy of the Spirit.

Then you've got v. 31. "...And His mother and His brothers came." Because if you look, v. 21, when His family heard it, they went out to seize Him. Then v. 31, it would appear they've arrived.

"...And His mother and His brothers came, and standing outside, they sent to Him and called Him. And a crowd was sitting around Him, which as was mentioned, a crowd gathered again. And they said to Him,

Your mother and Your brothers, they're outside seeking You.

And He answered them, the crowd, Who are My mother and My brothers? And looking about at those who sat around Him, He said, Here are My mother and My brothers." Why? Why? Because whoever does the will of God, He is My brother and sister and mother. Powerful words. That's a powerful chapter right there.

But in the midst of this, Christ is told by His kinsmen, by His family, it would seem His mothers and His brothers, that He's out of His mind. That He's out of His mind. That He's beside Himself.

Now why? Why do they think He's in some extreme state of emotion that is not normal? Why do they think that His behavior, something's off here? The text says, then when His family heard it, what is the it referring to? When His family heard it, what did His family hear? That made them say He's out of His mind. They heard something. I mean, they got a report.

What specifically was in that report? How did that person represent it to them? I don't know. But here are four possibilities of what the it could be referring to. Obviously, the first two are right there in the verse prior.

Jesus went home. And what's the first thing that happens? The crowd gathered again. I mean, what's wrong with that? What's wrong with the crowd gathering again? Now look what happened in v. 9 of chapter 3. He told His disciples to have a boat ready for Him.

An escape vehicle. Why? Because of the crowd lest they crush Him. So, I mean, Christ had crowds and was around crowds at times where He could have been crushed.

He told His disciples to have a boat ready. Okay, these are some pretty serious crowds that were around Him. The crowd gathered again.

You know, I think one thing we could draw out of that? You know what family says sometimes? You're spending too much time around the Christians. You're going to miss another family gathering on Wednesday night for a prayer meeting? I'm your mother. I'm your dad.

Why aren't you going to come? We've got a prayer meeting, Dad. We're finishing a week of prayer and fasting. Son, you're taking that too serious.

You're taking it too far. You just had a meeting on Tuesday, and then you had one on Sunday, and then you got another on Saturday. You're gathering again and again and again.

Or you could even try to apply it with the whole virus thing, right? I mean, it says they gathered again. Look, there's a lot of churches that aren't gathering again. They're not going to meet for a whole other year.

But here our conscience is we want to gather. We want to be around each other. Jesus, He didn't refuse people.

That's another aspect of this. Jesus is so loving. He would have been the one sitting down responding to the thousand emails in His inbox.

He would have been taking the time to serve others. I realize there's times that Christ, He left and there were still needs there. But you look at Christ, He met needs.

He spent Himself out. When He told His disciples to go away and rest a while, they didn't even get to go away and rest a while because more people came. It seems they weren't even able to do that.

But here Jesus is misunderstood by His family for His zeal for the things of the Kingdom. That happens. And it says here His family went out to do what to Him? Seize.

If you look at that word, here's another verse that word's used in. Listen to this. Same word in Greek.

Mark 12, they were seeking to arrest Him. They were seeking to arrest Him. This idea of seize, it obviously wasn't they were just trying to get Him outside of the door and then just have a conversation with Him.

They were wanting to get Him away from all of this craziness. It's what it appears to be. Jesus was misunderstood by His family.

You know what? One thing, an application of that is Christian, you and I are going to be misunderstood by our families. But guess what? Jesus can sympathize with you. Right? Your family says you're out of your mind, you're going too far.

Jesus went through the same thing. So they heard it. So we're looking at that.

There's four things I said, right? I've already mentioned one. They gathered again. They gathered again.

The second thing, if I'm trying to define the it, it says the crowd gathered again so they could not even eat. You might say, is that really part of the motive? It's right there. And when His family heard it, is that part of what is being spoken of? They could not even eat? Here's one way to put it is this, you're going to have people who think your lifestyle of self-denial and fasting and giving up ordinary and common things, they're going to think you're crazy because of that.

They're going to think that. We've got an upcoming week of prayer and fasting sometime in August. What happens when one of you young people who are still living with your family and your family is not a part of this church, and you go home, you're at home and one day you determine you're going to fast all day, say it's Wednesday, and you're determined to not have any food that day because you're wanting to pray and fast.

And you're kind of in an awkward spot because your family eats dinner and lunch together every day. And so your mom calls you to lunch and you kind of have to explain to her. You can't necessarily do it in secret because you've got to say something to her and you let your mom know, Mom, I'm not going to eat food today.

Look, some of you, your parents would look at you and think, why not? We're praying and fasting in this church. Are you out of your mind? Christians don't... I mean, they did that in the Bible, but Christians today, they don't need to fast. Family thinks that.

I remember when I was single at the Grace House, my family was concerned I was too skinny. I wasn't eating enough. I mean, you get stuff like that.

Are you neglecting yourself? You're spending all this time like Paul having sleepless nights for the ministry. Are you out of your mind? Are you taking this too far? So, that might be part of it. Well, there are two things here.

Well, look at v. 16. What does it say? It had recently happened. Maybe this was in the report.

He had appointed the twelve. Now what is significant about that? Well, in another account in Luke 6, listen to what it says, in these days He went out to the mountain to pray, and all night He continued in prayer to God. And when day came, He called His disciples and chose from them twelve whom He named apostles.

So Jesus had spent a whole night in prayer. That's taking prayer too far. Many people are going to say that.

Many people who are religious, people who are your own family members, are going to say, you're meeting too much. You're not eating enough. And you're not getting enough sleep.

You're out of your mind. And another thing here, Christ was talking about the demonic, v. 15, have authority to cast out demons. So maybe part of it was His family heard He was speaking about these controversial topics.

And they thought He was out of His mind. Look, there are controversial things. You and I start talking about it.

Here, it's normal. You go talk about that with other people who claim the name of Christ, or lost people in evangelism, and they think you're out of your mind. If you give too much attention to religion, people will think you're deranged.

And here, the perfect one, Jesus Christ, had this accusation leveled at Him by His own family. And Jesus had absolutely no imbalances. Jesus was perfect.

There are young Christians who, as they say, get saved and they're in the cage stage. It's kind of a term used, meaning they're too zealous, you need a little bit of help, to lock them in a cage so they don't cause damage as a new Christian. I get that.

That can happen. But this is Christ here. There were no imbalances in His conduct and He's getting this accusation leveled at Him.

Some of the cruelest things said to you will come from who? Your own family. Your own family. You lack too much of an interest in ordinary things, James.

Why don't you pick up a hobby? You need a hobby in your life. Yeah, I've got a hobby, Mom. I love studying the Bible five hours a day.

Here, Jesus, He had this recent life transition, you could say, from carpentry and common employment to being in full-time ministry. And that is pretty radical. Not able to eat.

Having a house crowded. Going from one meeting to another. So, His mother and His brothers, verse 31, they came.

And the crowd was sitting around Him and they told Him about His mother and His brothers. And as we already read, clearly Christ is misunderstood. And Jesus' statement is amazing.

He looks at those here around Him and He basically says, you are My true family. My true family is those who spiritually are on the same page. I felt that after coming to this church my first Sunday here.

I left GCC 13 years ago thinking, man, these people aren't my brothers and sisters. I mean, I just knew them. I knew them on the deepest level that matters the most.

And Jesus said, if anyone does not come to Me, does not hate his own father and mother, his wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. Our love for Christ is such that it would appear to the natural eye that we hate our biological family. Because our dedication and zeal for the things of the Lord.

We're going to be misunderstood. We're going to be misunderstood. And Jesus, it wasn't just His family.

Look at verse 21. His family says you're out of your mind. Look at the very next verse.

The scribes who came down from Jerusalem were saying He's possessed by Beelzebub. No, they're named for Satan. So His family is saying He's out of His mind.

And then the scribes, these religious people are saying He's possessed by Beelzebub. No. I mean, Christ is getting slammed with accusations.

Did this make Christ kind of get a little timid in His zeal for the things of His Father's house? No. He pressed on all the harder. That's what we've got to do.

When Jesus said He had authority in John 10, many of them said He has a demon and is insane. Why listen to Him? That's the type of things Jesus heard. He's insane.

And notice their reason for claiming He's insane? Why listen to Him? You see, the lost world, they want a reason to not listen to us, the Christian. And we've got to understand that often when they claim we are insane and out of our minds, it's because their mind might be coming under the convicting influence of the Holy Spirit where they start to recognize something this Christian is saying is true. But rather than acknowledge that, they want to escape from it, and so they throw out this accusation.

You're out of your mind. Even though we're not out of our minds. I mean, we are, but we're not.

We're out of our mind, meaning our mind is consumed with the things of the Lord. Our mind is not set on the things of this world. You're a fool if you listen to those insane Christians.

You say all these negative things about Christians and then it makes everyone afraid to be around them because they're just crazy. Don't be around them. So, that's three examples of Christ, Paul, and Rhoda who were told they're out of their mind.

Out of their mind. So we're going to be told that too by other Christians, by those we evangelize, and by our own family. It's going to happen.

We're going to get that leveled at us. And family members, they may want to remove you from the church as they did of Christ in hopes that you will come back to your right mind. Right? If we can just seize Him and get Him out of here, we might be able to let all that emotion calm down.

What happens when people tell you you're crazy? When they tell you you're a madman? How do you respond? Do you let that encourage you? Or make you discouraged, really question everything and wonder, oh man, maybe I am taking this a little too serious. Maybe I do need to tone it down a little bit. 1 Peter 4 talks about what the lost do.

They have drinking parties and lawless idolatry. With respect to this, they're surprised. When you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and what do they do? They speak evil of you.

They malign you. They're surprised. They're surprised.

Why? Because they need to be redeemed. They need to be saved. They need to have Christ.

And the fewer and fewer Christians that there are in this world, the more and more that suffering comes and the false Christianity kind of becomes more and more obvious, and it's clear to divide the true from the false, the more and more we're going to find people saying the true Christians, they're out of their mind. They're crazy. The world will approve of the Joelsteins and all of the easy believism.

But the world will slam the true Christians as insane in taking it too far. Now imagine this. Imagine a day and age when the government has added to their psych book, their DSM-6 or 7 or whatever it will be on that day and age, a definition of insanity that directly fits the behavior of the true Christian.

And they're going to have meds forcefully pumped into your system. Well, you know what? I know of someone that had that happen to them in 1977. Some of you have met him.

Santiago. Older brother from Columbia. He grew up in a Catholic family.

He was converted at 15 years of age. Fifteen years of age. This Catholic country.

You know what his parents' response was. They took him to a psychiatrist and they basically got the diagnosis that he was out of his mind because he left the Catholic faith. They put him on all these drugs.

He went through years of hallucination. He saw things moving while he was on those drugs. When he was 18, he finally got away.

He went cold turkey, meaning he stopped the drugs completely. He couldn't sleep for 20 days. So he then had to restart on the drugs to wean himself off over the period of three months.

And he finally got off of those drugs. And he was sharing all this in my house last year. Now it's 43 years later and he's never looked back.

His father admitted they were wrong for doing what they did. But his mother would not admit they were wrong. Why did this happen to him in 1977? Because he was a true Christian.

In a country full of Catholics who have a different doctrine, and they looked at him and said, he's out of his mind compared to what is considered normal in this society. Okay, you go 20 years from now in America, what's normal in this society is not going to be us. We're going to be the thing that, unless God sends revival, may it happen, but we're going to be the thing that's different.

And we might have a government that adds true Christians and all the things we believe, and they make a diagnosis that we're out of our mind. Just a thought. Well, I hope that doesn't happen to me.

The mind is a precious thing. You don't want to lose your mind. You don't want to lose your mind.

The world is not slow to declare that we are deranged. We believe there's an eternity. We believe that few people are going to heaven according to the words of Jesus.

We who warn people of the danger, they think we're nuts. Now, as I say all the things I say, I recognize there's a group of people who could wrongly take everything I just shared. Someone's going to say, James, I get your point, but I know people who do things in the name of Christianity and they are out of their minds.

Won't this justify them in their craziness? Look, I realize there are some who could take this idea and take it too far. I get that. Could someone use this idea to justify why they got fired from work? When getting fired had nothing to do with true, genuine zeal for Christ, but it had everything to do with them being a bad worker? Sure, someone could take it that far.

Could someone be very mean to their family in an unloving way, and then their family think they're nuts, and they say, look, I'm just doing what James said in his sermon. No, you might have actually acted nuts around your family in an unloving, non-Christlike way. And you've got to repent of that and go back to your family.

So we want to be careful when we try to fit this on ourselves and say, well, yeah, they said I'm out of my mind. It must be because I really am in my mind and thinking biblically. No, no, were you really thinking biblically? Examine the accusation.

Could someone like Martha who's anxious about a lot and overworking and needs to sit down? Could that happen? Are there going to be sisters in the church who are too busy and anxious and troubled about too many things, and they've got to stop it and sit down and do the one thing that is necessary? But they look at all their busyness as a really good thing because people say, well, you're really zealous. You must be out of your mind for the Lord. And that just encourages them on all of this lifeless busyness that God's not in.

Could someone take this idea and drive it to that extreme? Yes. But to me, that's not a reason not to speak on this, not to share this, not to hammer home this reality that Christians are going to be told that they're out of their mind. Look, as we saw last time I spoke, you can have all the spiritual gifts to the max extent, but if you don't have love, it's nothing.

You can give your body to be burned, and it profits you nothing. So be careful to claim that all of your zeal is really of God. You want to have humility to rightly examine everything.

So, this sermon is not meant to justify those who are actually out of their mind. You see, because that can happen. That can happen.

It's what I'm thinking and doing according to the Word of God. Does this reflect Scripture? I thought about Titus 3.9. It says to avoid certain things like dissensions and quarrels about the law and genealogies. And Paul says, because they're unprofitable and worthless.

If in your zeal, you're being known for something in a non-essential area, that's not a good thing to be out of your mind for. We dare not be ignorant of what God says in His Word. We've got to know the Word.

So, I guess in closing here, if you're not a Christian, what if you're here and you're lost, and you do think us Christians are out of our minds? And you might be thinking right now that I'm out of my mind. And I get that. I would have thought the same thing when I was lost.

Those who took the Lord serious, I thought they were crazy. 1 Corinthians 2 says, the natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, for they are folly to him. It's foolish to that individual.

He's not able to understand them. See, his mind's not working correctly because these things are spiritually discerned. You see, to the lost, these things are foolish.

What Jeff talked about in the first hour in our triune God, that's foolish. But the Bible says, to those who are being saved, it's the power of God. If you don't know Christ, like the demoniac, you too can be put in your right mind.

And you can go away sharing about the glories of Christ. You know what happened to Jesus' family? In Acts 1, it says when the brethren were entering into the upper room, it mentions a list of people who were there. Peter and John and others.

All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer together with women and Mary, the mother of Jesus and His brothers. Look, whatever your take is on Mark 3 about His family and who that specifically was, and if it included His mother and His brother further on in the text, which it seems like it did include His mother and His brother, whatever was going on in their mind, at least we find in Acts 1 that they were there with the church praying. It's like something had changed in their minds.

And it says in John that even His brothers did not believe in Him at some point. So Christ, it's not like Jesus had a family that was full of believers His whole life. Now look, every one of us right now we're out of our minds in some way.

What do I mean? Every one of us right now is taking something too far. What is it you're taking too far? Is it the things of the Lord and the Kingdom? Or is it anything else? It's very rare that we're just normal on everything. And if you're normal on everything, doesn't Titus 2 say He saved us to make for Himself a people for His own possession who would be zealous for good works? So we're trying to stay zealous for good works to the end.

To take Christ too far all the time to the end. Because you can't take Christ too far. You can't take knowing who God is too far.

Our issue is we don't take it far enough. So here the question is, have you ever been so zealous for Christ and His Kingdom that someone said to you, you're out of your mind? Has that ever happened to you? Has anyone ever said that? If they haven't said that, what does my family think about me? That doesn't mean we're trying to be crazy. But are there people who look and they say, He's different.

She's different. They're really zealous for the Lord. We need to do as Hebrews 11 says, acknowledge that we're strangers and exiles on earth.

I had a guy, he called the church phone yesterday. And he said, what are you going to preach on? And I said, I'm going to talk about how Christians are accused of being people who are out of their minds. And he said, yeah, my friends think I'm out of my mind.

And the reason he gave was that every time he takes a vacation, you know what he does with that vacation? He goes and visits churches. He drives 18 hours to go hear people preach and visit a church. And his lost friends, they hear that and they think, are you out of your mind? I remember getting married and we went to Denver, Colorado for our honeymoon and a big question was where are we going to go to

church on our honeymoon? I want to be around the brethren.

Right? And we visited Cornerstone, Denver on that trip. Some people look at that and they say, that's crazy, why are you even worried about that? You know why I'm worried about that? Because my mind is gripped with the truth of the Word of God that it's so important to be around the brethren, to be stirred up to love and good works. And I'm encouraged that I have a lot of people here this morning who have been accused in the same way as I have that you're out of your mind.

And the world views us as that. They view some things not right up here. But the fact is their accusation is not true.

The Christian is the only one who actually is in his right mind. The world is the one whose mind is futile and darkened. And we don't need their threats to make us shrink back, but their threats should make us feel pity towards them that we would all the more take the truth to them that they might be saved.

So do we need to lighten up? No. Let me read in closing here just a part of the hymn. I don't think we've seen this one, but I heard it from another brother.

Go labor on, spend and be spent. It's by Horatius Bonar. He's written a lot of very helpful things.

This is the end of the hymn. He says this, Go labor on while it is day. The world's dark night is hastening on.

Speed, speed thy work, cast sloth away. It is not thus that souls are won. Men die in darkness at your side without a hope to cheer the tomb.

Take up the torch and wave it wide, the torch that lights time's thickest gloom. Press on, faint not, keep watch and pray. Be wise the erring soul to win.

Go forth into the world's highway. Compel the wanderer to come in. Jesus said in John 9, verse 4, We must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day.

Night is coming when no man can work. Let's pray. Father, we thank You for, Lord, giving us family.

Lord, some don't even have physical family that they know of. They were fostered as a kid or something, they never had actual family, but here, Lord, we can have brothers and sisters, fathers and mothers in Christ. Lord, we're so grateful for that, to be able to encourage one another.

Lord, I just pray, would You help us as a church to be more zealous for the things of Your Kingdom? Lord, that we might in a legitimate way, not for actually being crazy and being imbalanced, but Lord, might our zeal be such that we would be accused of being out of our mind? Lord, we don't want just to live life and people look at us and they just think we're normal. Lord, I pray that those who are the co-workers of my brothers and sisters, that their co-workers would recognize, like those in Daniel's day, that Daniel's different. Lord, help us to believe You when You do the miraculous.

Lord, not to think that it's crazy. Lord, help us in evangelism when people tell us we're out of our mind to say like Paul, no, I'm not out of my mind, and to prove the truth to these lost and dying souls. Lord, that we would persuade them that very day to be a Christian, to trust in Jesus Christ.

Lord, I pray You'd help my brothers and sisters with their family. Lord, I know there are some here who are going through things with their biological family right now, and they need Your wisdom. They need Your help.

Lord, I pray You'd help them take what I've shared in a right way. Lord, that we'd honor our father and mother, but Lord, at the same time, that we would recognize there is a sword. You came to create division, to turn a mother against her mother-in-law, and so on, as Your Word says.

And so Lord, help us. Help us to be zealous. Help us, Lord, to do the works that You've given us to do, and to not be discouraged.

Lord, help us to suffer well. Lord, as Craig prayed, Lord, we think about the church in California right now. Lord, we don't know what's going on.

If authorities stop by Grace Community Church there, Father, we don't have a clue. We don't know. They go and arrest John MacArthur.

Are they trying to make a statement? Are they not doing anything? Lord, we don't know, but Lord, would You help us to stand firm and to trust You? Lord, as it seems the going is only going to get tougher in this nation, Lord, we pray for our rulers who are in high positions, that You would give them wisdom. Lord, that You would allow us to continue to have freedom to proclaim the truth. And so Lord, we thank You for being our God.

We thank You so much that You've chosen us. We bless Your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Okay, you're dismissed.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/rbpbvUHNDMU.mp4>

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