

Fruit of Unholiness

by Joe Focht

Joe Focht's sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking holiness and the dangers of unholiness in our lives and society.

Duration: 37:51

Scripture: Leviticus 11:44, Proverbs 13:15, Matthew 5:13

Topics: "Holiness Matters", "Spiritual Restoration"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of holiness and the consequences of straying away from God. He highlights the prevalence of unholiness in the world, such as the high number of abortions, adult bookstores, and broken homes. The speaker then turns to Psalm 51, where David cries out to God for cleansing and restoration after his fall. The sermon concludes with a prayer for the pastors in attendance to examine their own lives and strive for holiness, recognizing their role as the salt and light of the world.

Transcript

We were sitting there talking and just for some reason out of my mouth came, you know, the way of the transgressor is hard and Chuck said, why don't you teach on the fruit of unholiness? And I thought to myself, why did you say that? Why did you say that? Let's pray. Father, we settle our hearts as we continue. Lord, it is a miracle to have 700 pastors here.

Lord, committed to teaching your word when there is a famine of the word of God in the land. Lord, we look at our policy makers and our nation. And Lord, we believe what you say that we alone are the salt of the earth and the light of the world that America's only hope in one sense is here at Murrieta, Lord, these days.

Father, if there is unholiness in our lives and in my life, Father, if there is that which would keep us from being ineffective, that which would, Lord, grieve your spirit as he desires to work through our lives in a nation that is in darkness. Lord, we lift that to you. Lord, we pray that as we are here these days, Lord, that we would leave change, that we would love Jesus more when we leave and when we came.

And we believe we're praying according to your will. Father, we commit this to you in his name. Amen.

If you want to open to Psalm 51, that's where we will be. To kind of recap, talking about God's holiness. And I was thinking as I'm listening to the studies and as the theme of the conference kind of evolves.

As I think of the cherubim around the throne of God going, holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, who is and who was and is to come. And as I realized that holiness, and I heard Don McClure say this years ago, and it always stayed with me. And if it's wrong, I heard it from him.

That there is that which is God and there is that which is not God. That's all that exists anywhere. There is the creator and there is the creation.

Those are the only two things that exist. The cherubim are part of the creation. The angelic realms are part of the creation.

The spiritual realms are the physical realm, part of the creation. What makes him holy is that separateness. The only things that exist are that which is God and that which is not God.

That which is holy, that which is God. And that which is not holy, which is the fallen creation. The creator and the creation are all that exists.

So as they ascribe that to him, he is separate then from all else. And his love then is a holy love. It isn't, what sets it aside from all other loves, the love of God towards us is that it is a holy love.

It's a separate love. And it's sometimes what makes us hesitate because we judge him on a human level as we go to receive his love. And yet there's no increment to measure.

There's nothing to weigh it against. His mercy is a holy mercy. And his calling is a holy calling because of who he is.

And there can only be holiness in our own lives as we are in fellowship with him because holiness comes from him. In association with him, as Lewis said, as Chuck said, to walk close to him is to be holy, to enjoy the fellowship that he intends for us, that he paid for in the blood of his son, is holiness. The further we go away from him then, we begin to see the fruit of unholiness.

And of course, ultimately, that's hell. I mean, we see all around us in the world we live in the fruit of unholiness. We see 34 million abortions in the last 20 years.

We see the atrocities in the Sudan today and around the world. I read before I left the East Coast that adult bookstores outnumber McDonald's restaurants in America at a three to one ratio. And that 70% of the printed material will end up in the hands of children.

I read there's over 200 children every 30 minutes that become the victim of broken homes. So while we've been here this last 24 hours, over 10,000 children have become the victims of a broken home and a broken marriage. And I don't have to tell you about the fruit of unholiness.

It's all around us. And as we look at Psalm 51, we're looking at territories, Bible teachers that we're all familiar with. So maybe just to share my heart or to put certain things in remembrance or an exhortation.

Because as we look at Psalm 51, we're looking at David after the fact. He's fallen and he's crying out to God for cleansing and for restoration. Not as a king, he's still king.

So often I think when we think of restoration as pastors, we think, if I ever fell, could I ever come? No, David is still king. He's asking for restoration in his spiritual relationship with the Lord. David was also a prophet.

And at the end of his career, he would call himself not king, but the sweet psalmist of Israel. And the thing that made David a great king was his relationship with the Lord. And it's as he moved away by increments, as he took to himself wives, and as he transgressed the word of God in his sin, finally to have God say through Nathan, you have despised my ordinances.

It's not something that we think of David. And David is now in the position of having fallen. Now, I don't believe that we have to fall or get into this position to appreciate these things.

I believe if our heart is towards the Holy Spirit, towards God's word, and we're willing to be obedient and to listen, we can understand the tragedy. And I think enough of us have seen that around us. I've had two assistant pastors that have gone and I have watched their families.

I've watched an 11-year-old son of one of my assistant pastors stand at the window every night saying, when is daddy coming home? And I know he wasn't coming home. I have an assistant pastor now that no matter how much we say, no matter how much we talk to him, he seems bent on a course away from the Lord. I talked to someone right before I left the East Coast whose marriage is falling apart.

And I know you're seeing more of it too. And he said to me, I have considered the consequences. I know what I'm doing.

And I said, you have considered the consequences. You know them by concept. You have no idea what it will be to live them out and that we'll be left with the pieces of your broken home and your wife who's pregnant and your children.

And David is at that place. He's on the backside of the sin. And he's kind of, he's woken up to what's taken place after a year of bearing that.

I think of Louis Neely saying, you know, I wash my hands every day just because it feels dirty. I couldn't stand to go through all day without washing my hands. And he said, that's why we should come to the Lord, to the cross every day and be cleansed and be current with the Lord.

And I think, how could David go a year? How could he bear up under that for a year before finally it comes into the light? But that's where we find him in this place. Now, we'll read the psalm together. And then we'll back up and we'll look at it for several moments.

Have mercy upon me, O God. According to thy loving kindness, according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before me. And against thee and thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight, that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest and be clear when thou judges. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean. Wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear joy and gladness that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence and take not thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation and uphold me with thy free spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways.

And sinners shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from blood guiltiness, O God. Thou God of my salvation and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness.

O Lord, open thou my lips and my mouth shall show forth thy praise. For thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it. Thou desirest not, thou delightest not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, a broken and a contrite heart. O God, thou will not despise. Do good in thy pleasure unto Zion.

Build thou the walls of Jerusalem. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering. Then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

I find David here at this time face to face with his sin. And I think often as we see somebody, by the time they're at that point, there's been so much destruction wrought in their family or in the church already. It is so difficult.

By the time they wake up, they're almost like, I don't know how this happened. I feel like, you know, I'm waking up from a nightmare. I'm waiting every day for this to be over and it's never over.

I don't come out of it. And David in that place is crying to God. He's not standing before God as a king.

He's standing before God as a man. And he's saying, Lord, first of all, cleanse me. We hear him cry to God.

I need to be cleansed of, first of all, of my transgression, the words that he's using. Transgression is a word that means to be in rebellion, to revolt. And David had done that.

God had drawn a line and said, don't step over this line. It's called thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. And David stepped over it.

God drew a line and said, David, don't step over this. It's thou shalt not commit adultery. And David stepped over the line.

God drew a line and said, thou shalt not commit murder. And David stepped over it. God drew a line and said, thou shalt not bear false witness.

And David stepped over it. And he says at this point, Lord, my transgression, my rebellion, Lord, please, God, take it away. Mine iniquity.

He holds it up before God. No one else is his own. And it means to be bent, to be twisted.

He's acknowledging, Lord, there is something within sight of me that is not straight. It's twisted. Lord, it's become twisted.

And then, of course, his sin, missing the mark. We're all familiar. And as David lays those things out before God, he feels a desperate need.

He says to the Lord in regards to those things, blot out my transgressions. Lord, I have sinned against you. My nature has become twisted.

I have rebelled and I have stepped across the line and has left me, Lord, in this place. And my crown means nothing to me because, Lord, I can no longer pick up my harp. Lord, I used to see you in the trees and in the stars.

And, Lord, I saw you all around my life. And I find myself now unable to pick up my harp, Lord, unable to worship you. So, Lord, blot out my transgression.

My rebellion against you has been recorded in a book. And he says, Lord, obliterate that. Strike it from the record, please.

He says, wash me from mine iniquity. And it means to wash thoroughly over and over and over the way clothes would be whitened then. Lord, thoroughly, continually wash me.

Remove this crookedness, this iniquity. And he says, cleanse me, the word of the priest, cleansing the leper. Lord, cleanse me.

This sin has been a disease. It has eaten away and has made my spiritual senses have become atrophied. Lord, please cleanse me from my sin.

And he's in that position as we look at him crying out to the Lord. Now, he isn't just satisfied. Nathan would say to him, David, the Lord is not requiring your life.

And David is not content. He is asking for that. But he goes beyond that.

He'll say, Lord, restore me. He knows that, yes, I can come to the Lord for cleansing. I can come to him for forgiveness.

But there's more. I was not the man that I used to be. Lord, I want to be the man that I used to be.

Crying out to God again. He says in verse 4, against thee and thee only have I sinned. The best Sheba had not written the law.

Uriah had not written the law. Ultimately, his sin against them was a sin against God. And certainly, it touched their lives.

But against thee and thee only have I sinned. And done this great evil in thy sight. Lord, that you might be justified when you speak and clear when you judge.

He's confessing. In the New Testament, John tells us that if we confess our sins, homologeo, to say the same thing. David is in agreement with God now.

He isn't hiding any longer. He's not covering. He's in agreement with God.

You are justified when you judge me, Lord, for these things. And then in verse 5 and 6, there are two beholds that he sets in counter distinction to one another. The first one is, behold, I was shapen in iniquity.

And in sin did my mother conceive me. Then he says again, behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts. And in the hidden part, thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

He says, consider or behold. First of all, I was born in sin. I was conceived in iniquity.

There is part of me that is drawn to that which is wrong. There is part of me that is drawn to forbidden fruit. Now, that is true of all of us.

All of us have that traitor within. All of us have to deal with the flesh. And when I say that, I'm not just talking about the physical body.

I'm talking about a nature that is insatiable that you can't negotiate with. You can't satisfy it with bits and pieces so that it'll leave you alone. There's no way.

I think one of the ways I'm often reminded of this is there is a restaurant in Philadelphia that we like to go to, not necessarily because of the quality, but because of the quantity. And 22 ounce sirloin steak, \$11.99. Yeah, I know. And it looks like a roast beef.

I mean, everything on the menu is like that. So you sit there, and the first thing they do is two different kinds of bread, three different kinds of butter. And you start there laughing, talking.

You know, it's a blessing as Christians. We can still eat. And the salad comes.

And then you're getting full, and you're talking, and you're saying, boy, when the main course comes, I don't even know how I'm going to eat it. I don't know how I'm going to get. Now, you know exactly how you're going to eat it when the main course comes.

And then the main course comes, and the whole table gets quiet, because everybody's going, and they're eating, and people are laughing. And you get to the point where nondiscreetly you're trying to loosen your belt under the table. Nobody will see.

You're thinking, well, I wish I was home with my sweatsuit on, laying on a living room floor. I can hardly breathe. And you're sweating.

And then people get giddy because you do these little, you laugh. And you go, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. You can't take a deep breath, because the food has pushed your diaphragm all the way up against your lungs.

So there's like these little breaths you take, and everybody's laughing, goofing around the table. And then the waitress will walk over and say, with a plate full of desserts, would you like dessert? Now, you're way past sin at this point. You're gluttoned.

And you look at the tray. Your physical body has no need of any more food. In fact, the food is up your esophagus now.

Your swallowing mechanism is saving you. And you're looking at this tray full of food. And then you say to your wife, honey, do you want to split one? And you're ready to split.

And at this point, your flesh is tired of your flesh. Your body's saying to you, go on, eat it. I hope you die.

And this stops. I can't stand it anymore. And the thing that you see there is the flesh is not physical, because you can't even fit any more food in.

And there is something that is a part of us that still wants more. And you can apply that to physical pleasure. You can apply that to money.

You can apply that to power. There is a part of us. The flesh, the fallen nature, Charles Manson's flesh, and Jim Baker's flesh, and my flesh, and all flesh.

It's the same. And David, at this point, is saying, behold, Lord, consider, I was born in iniquity. I was shaped in iniquity.

I was born in sin. There is part of me that is a constant traitor and a constant struggle, Lord, that is drawn to that which is forbidden fruit. But he says, behold, you desire truth in the inner parts.

He knows that something else needs to take place. And he sees that. He doesn't just want to come to God and say, forgive me, and believe that God has done that.

He wants to be restored. There are things that now have atrophied and that are dead. He says that here.

Lord, my sin is ever before me. I can no longer see the things that I used to see. He says, my mind, Lord, make me know wisdom in the inner part.

I don't understand anymore. Lord, make me to hear joy and gladness. My ears have been stopped up by my sin.

I can no longer hear. I hear discord. I hear dissatisfaction.

Lord, make me to hear the sounds of gladness and joy once again. My bones, Lord, the broken part of me needs to be mended, not just forgiven, Lord. My eyes, Lord, my mind, my heart is no longer tender, Lord.

Create in me, Baruch, something from nothing. Do a miraculous work, Lord. Create in me a new heart and renew a right spirit, Lord.

I'm vacillating. I have changed. There's no joy.

Open down my lips and my mouth, so forth. I pray, Lord, I can no longer sing. I can no longer say the things that I used to say.

And I think it is in that confession that we see, at least to a degree, how he felt. No one, I don't believe anyone, is doing great spiritually, prayed up in God's Word, going along, enjoying the relationship with Christ, and just decides, oh, today I'm going to commit murder. Or today I'm going to commit adultery.

There is a process that's involved with it. And God, in his calling us to himself and making us holy, drawing us to himself, has given us capacities that we did not have before. The Bible says to us, taste and see that the Lord is good.

It's not talking about the palate, the mouth. It's something that happens in our heart. Or that we would take hold of the promises of God.

It's not with our physical hand. Or that we would behold Christ and be changed into his image. Not with the physical eye.

There are spiritual capacities he's given us as we have been born again. And he has drawn us to himself. And what happens as we begin to sin? And see, we can do that.

There are certain sins in good standing. Like envy or things that are not so noticeable. Here I am.

I'm Pastor Joe. And certainly I have my pastoral persona. But there are things sometimes that I struggle with.

And Louis said, you know, one of my struggles is I want to be the same person outside of the pulpit that I am inside the pulpit. I understand that. I wouldn't say, Lord, I want to be the same person in the pulpit that I am outside the pulpit.

I'm still changing. But there's a process. If we shut one thing off, it's the heart being hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.

It is drifting from our moorings. It is by increments that somehow we no longer measure. When I was a kid, I was born in 1950.

I remember nobody burnt the American flag then. There was a bit of honor and patriotism in our nation. You may not have agreed with the president, but he was honored.

I didn't grow up in a Christian home. We would go out on Halloween. We would go for blocks on end.

And my parents wouldn't worry about somebody putting a razor blade or LSD on our candy or somebody stealing us. And I remember a society that was vastly different than it is now. I don't let my kids out of my sight.

I look at what's going on in Washington and the nation, and I think, Lord, what in the world is going on? I pulled a little article out of U.S. News and World Report. It's public school teachers. And you've heard this before, but I'll make a point with it.

The things they were most concerned about in the 1940s were these. Talking out of turn, chewing gum, making noise, running in the halls, cutting in line, dress code violations, littering. Now, you notice we still worry about a lot of those things around here.

This is public school. 1990, the same questions, and these were the answers. Drug abuse, alcohol abuse, pregnancy, suicide, rape, robbery, assault.

And the point is, as I look at that, is how in the world did that happen? How did that change? I didn't notice a particular day when it changed and when it was worn away. And the nation is not what it used to be. And I look at that.

If the most terrible thing in 1940, 1950 was chewing gum in school, and the first thing on the list today is drug abuse, what that tells me is we no longer even measure. The increments are no longer there to measure things that are not right. It is right to respect someone else.

And it is right for children to honor their parents. And things that were important then are not even measurable anymore because of assault and rape and pregnancy. And that same world is the fruit of unholiness that is moving away from the Lord.

And the question is, how much of that would we allow ourselves to be part of? How would we allow ourselves possibly to slide in that direction? And is there a temptation sometimes for us maybe to do something that we wouldn't do in front of the entire congregation? A couple years ago, my wife and I decided we'd try once in a while to get away overnight at a hotel on a Friday night, get away from the kids one night, just spend time together talking, having a great time, go out to dinner. And we did okay for a while. It spread out a little again somehow.

We were going away to the Holiday Inn on Friday night. And we were there. And we ordered breakfast in bed.

We never do that. We never sleep in. We got four kids.

Well, we went to sleep and forgot all about breakfast in bed. So 8 o'clock in the morning, someone knocked on the door. Now, I jump up.

I've got a bathing suit on. I jump up. She's, oh, what's that? And I look around.

I'm somewhere. Oh, yes, breakfast in bed. So I run to the door.

My hair is sticking up. I haven't pushed my face back where it belongs yet. And I open the door.

And the guy's there with a tray full of food. And it's a hotel. So you have to take the tray full of food.

There's always a coat rack on one side. And then there's a doorway with a bathroom. So I kicked the door shut and went to turn around.

And I hear, so I say, oh, man. So I turn around. I put it down on the sink.

And I come back to the door. And open the door. I said, what? He said, well, you didn't sign.

You have to sign. I said, oh, sorry. So I sign the thing.

I said, OK. Have a great day. And I kick the door shut again.

Boom. Turn around. Pick up the tray.

And I go to turn around. I hear again. And I say, oh, man, what is this? So I go.

And I put the tray back down. I open the door. And this time, I kind of say, what? What do you want? And he said, well, it's always so crowded after church.

I never get to say hello to you. I never get to. There's always so many people.

And I said, oh, praise the Lord. How are you there? And I said, meet you. You know, and he walks away.

And I'm thinking, oh, boy. And my wife's saying, did you tell him I'm your wife? He's going to think you're in a hotel with a strange woman. I said, it's OK, honey.

We're married. Not to worry. Not to worry.

But you know, on Sunday morning after the service, when I'm up front praying with someone, they come up and they ask me something. I don't say, what? What is it that you want? And see, it's a bit of hypocrisy on my part. Now, don't worry about me.

I'm not out doing the big bad stuff. But I look at that and I say, Lord, I want to be the same outside the pulpit as I am in the pulpit, Lord. Can I let these little things go? It tells us in 1 John that if we say we have not sinned, that we're not walking in the light, that we're lying.

That's hypocrisy, that when we lie. And I think there's some of that in all of our lives. We are not yet perfected.

And we're working on that. And I think in hypocrisy, you can at least know what you're doing. I think it says that if we say we have not sinned, we deceive ourselves.

That's duplicity. That's lying to yourself. And certainly, the problem is beginning then when we are believing our own story.

And how often I've had somebody in my office and their family's falling apart. And they're giving me this mumbo jumbo of twisted Bible verses that just if I'm thinking, what in the world are they thinking? And then finally, it says if we say we have not sinned, that we make God a liar. That's apostasy.

And how often we've seen someone go off in black and white sin that should be recognizable to a new Christian. And they've justified it and said it's OK with God. And they're gone.

David is crying not just for forgiveness. He's saying, Lord, restore me from this process. Lord, bring me back again.

Make me the man that I used to be. Let me once again see your work and creation. Let me hear your voice, Father.

Let me hear your spirit speaking to me. He's crying for that because it was in that step by step, you know, almost without increment, compromise, hypocrisy, little by little that we come to the place where the fruit of we're moving away from God and that fruit of unholiness is being produced in our lives. And for everyone who does it, they find themselves standing saying, this is my transgression.

Lord, restore me and ultimately use me. And how many of us have known pastors that have fallen? And the question is, Lord, use me again. The brokenness is there.

David says here, Lord, make me what I used to be. He says, then, Lord, I will teach transgressors. Look at verse 13.

I will teach transgressors thy ways, Lord. Use me again, Lord. Forgive me.

Restore me. Then I will sing, he says in verse 14. Verse 15, then I will praise you again.

Thou desirest not sacrifice. There is no thing that I could offer. I'd offer 1,000 bullocks.

There was no offering for murder and adultery. It was a capital offense. And David is looking at God saying, there is no thing that I can do.

It's a broken and a contrite spirit that you won't despise. He's looking to God for his mercy. And ultimately, I think he's saying, restore Zion, rebuild Jerusalem.

He's realizing, if I had been a foot soldier and I had fallen, Lord, the repercussions would not have been so great. But Lord, as king, as someone that had great influence in the lives of other people, Lord, I've fallen. You restore Zion.

You rebuild Jerusalem, Lord. The repercussions are far-reaching. And they went on for years.

Yes, God forgave him. Can someone fall and be restored? Certainly. Will they ever be what they were before? I don't know.

I don't know the answer to that question. Spurgeon said, when our repentance is as widespread as our sin, there's a chance. I think Redpath said that it's like a bird having its wings clipped.

It might fly again, but never as high. And I look at David. I think, what might his life have been? Now the death of Uriah, the death of the baby, the death of Absalom, the death of Amnon, the death of Ahithophel, all of the repercussions that were connected with the one act where a man is standing on the front side of it saying, I've considered the consequences.

That's insanity. That's insanity. As I look at this and I think of the weakness in myself, I say, Lord, I want to be a good finisher.

I want to be able to say what Paul said. I've finished my course. I've kept the faith.

I want to finish well. I just want to do this now. I want to be a good finisher.

Whenever that time is and however it happens, I want to finish well. Had opportunity to go out with Cliff Barrows the other week. Not because Cliff Barrows calls me at home and asked me to go out to lunch with him, but because the Harvest Crusade is in Philadelphia and the Graham Organization is involved.

So Cliff Barrows was there. And I had been wondering. I sat and talked to him.

He said, we've been together for 51 years, working together. And he talked to me about the Modesto Manifesto. I thought, Damian, something has happened in Modesto that's wonderful.

The Modesto Manifesto. We've heard them talk about that. Years ago, we decided, we prayed that we would four things.

He said that we would always tell the truth. We wouldn't exaggerate for God. There would be no evangelistic news.

We wouldn't stretch the truth. We wouldn't have to hype for God. We would tell the truth.

100 people got saved. And the paper said 400. We'd go back to the paper and say, reprint that, only 100 were saved.

We decided right from the beginning. He said, we decided that we would be accountable with finances. That there would be accountability in our lives.

We wouldn't do it ourselves. But we wouldn't give an opportunity for the enemies of God to blaspheme. He said, we did our first crusade.

It was just Billy and I. Just Billy and I. Atlanta for eight weeks. The last two nights, we took an offering. And he said, don't you know, the press showed up just as we were loading the car.

And guys were putting the buckets of money in the back seat. And that's all they printed. He said, we decided that we'll never give them a chance.

He said, thirdly, we decided, because we were away from our families and our wives sometimes for nine months at a time, that Lord, we would look to you. Lord, strengthen us and keep us alive. Let us be good finishers.

And lastly, they decided they'd support churches. Whatever the domination, when they went into a city, they would support the body of Christ across the board if they could, as best they could. You know, and I listened to him talk.

And I thought to myself, you know, I kind of have that. I mean, it was you and Billy and Sterling and you and Bev Shay, those guys. And I thought, I've got this fraternity that means more to me than anything in this world, but my wife and my kids.

And I would be destroyed. I love Don and Jean McClure. If he fell, it would break my heart.

Or Mike and Sandy or Leo. I could go around the crowd. And I could name so many of you by your first name and say, I've loved you enough and crossed your path enough at this point in time.

You know, it would kill me. It would break my heart. And I think of my own wife and my kids, the church in Philadelphia.

And Chuck, I know. I just think, those that would be brokenhearted if I fell. And all of that is only a reflection of God.

He is the one who's taught us to love one another. And I think as we are here, this is hopefully some kind of a Calvary Chapel Modesto manifesto. We have three days to spend together.

You alone are, and it's in the emphatic in the Greek, you alone, no one else, not the Buddhists, not the Muslims. You alone are the salt of the earth. You alone are the preserving factor in America today.

You alone are the light of the world. Right here, look around. This is the only hope for the nation that we live in.

I look at our teenagers at church, and I don't know if they have a future in America, but I know America has no future without them. And the kids that are here at the Bible College, and I think, Lord, don't let me ever blow this, Lord. Don't let me ever depend on my strength or my ability, even in the keeping of my own life, Lord.

Let holiness, Lord, my relationship with you be my strength, Lord. Let my life ever be moving towards you and never away from you. And I am willing to say, as best I can anyway, guys, that I love you too much to ever want that to get a hold of me.

Not that I would doubt there would be people around me to encourage, but I can say it, that I am looking to the Lord, Lord. Let me be an example to the believer, Lord. Let the fruit of unholiness not take hold in my life, because I'm moving away from you by increments, by any little thing that I can do and no one sees, but that is covered by my pastoral persona when I'm in the pulpit, Lord.

Don't let that happen. As Bob Coy says, let's not wait until it comes to fruition. I think Greg's going to come now, wherever he is.

But I'm going to pray. Father, as Greg comes, we settle our hearts. And Lord, I, for one, enjoy this fraternity, Lord.

You've granted to us this family. And Lord, I pray for all of us that we never stand in a place of brokenness, begging for cleansing and restoration to be used again, Lord. We look to you, Father.

Send us away from this time together changed, challenged, renewed, holier when we leave and when we came, we pray in Jesus' name, amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/14/SID14866.mp3>
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