

# Hell's Best Kept Secret (At Texas A&m)

by Kirk Cameron

---

*Kirk Cameron's sermon emphasizes the necessity of understanding sin and God's law to foster genuine faith and repentance in evangelism.*

**Duration:** 57:25

**Scripture:** Psalm 19:7, Matthew 9:37-38, Matthew 28:19-20, Luke 16:19-31, John 4:1-42, Acts 1:8, Romans 3:20

**Topics:** "Evangelism"

---

## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of sharing the gospel with others. He suggests starting conversations with everyday topics and then transitioning to spiritual matters. He also mentions the use of unique gospel tracks, such as a grading card with Charles Darwin on the front, to catch people's attention. The preacher then shares a personal testimony of hearing the gospel for the first time and feeling convicted of sin. He concludes by discussing the function of God's law and how it reveals our need for a Savior.

---

## Transcript

The desire of my heart is to take some of the principles that I've learned over the last couple of years and help you to put them into practice because I found them to be so extremely effective. Really quickly, for those of you who weren't here earlier this morning, most of you know me as Mike Seaver on Growing Pains. A lot of people ask me what I have in common with Mike and I usually tell them that we tend to look a lot alike.

We also married the same girl, the girl who, Mike Seaver married a girl named Kate on the show and the actress that played that character is named Chelsea and we actually got married in real life 12 years ago and now we have 6 kids and they're 6, 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 on the way. My wife is anxious for me to get back home, we have lots of diapers to change and lots of work to do there but this is so important that we both are passionate about what you're here for tonight. I didn't grow up in a church family, I was an atheist for most of my life.

When I was 14, working on a television show, Growing Pains, all my dreams had come true by the time I was 17 years old. I was rich, famous, doing whatever I wanted, hanging out with, partying with whoever I wanted to. Never heard the gospel before in my life.

I finally went to church, a girl had invited me there. I heard the gospel for the first time. It wasn't a bunch of stuffy religion, it was about an all-powerful God who was holy and pure and righteous and the pastor opened up the Bible and talked about what sin was, this stubborn selfish streak that runs deep through our hearts, shows up when we lie, when we steal, when we lust, when we put other things in a more important place than God in our lives and I began to feel guilty.

Even though I didn't really believe in God, I began to feel that something was wrong and he began to explain about God's judgments against sin. He talked about hell and then he talked about God's redemptive plan of compassion and mercy through Jesus Christ. It was about a month later that I was in my car and I thought about the fact that I was going to die one day and realized that if there was a God in the heaven, I wouldn't be going because of the attitudes and lifestyle that I was living and my arrogance against God.

And I decided that I would pray. I didn't know how to do it, but I just said, God, if you're there, I need to know. If you're real, would you please show me and change me? Please forgive me and make me the person that you want me to be.

And I don't have any miraculous story of Jesus appearing on my windshield, but I can tell you that that day marked a huge turn in my life. I began to study the Bible. I began to trust God and trust His Word and obey what He said.

It's changed my life radically. It changed my heart tremendously. And I know today that not only there is a God who lives, but He sees the filthiness of my heart and of your heart.

And instead of giving us what we deserve, He's provided a way to give us mercy and forgiveness and new life. And that's the God that I love and that I live for. And that was about 14 years ago.

What I've wanted to do more than anything is to share my faith with people. I know there's only one way to heaven. Jesus said, I'm the way, the truth and the life.

No one comes to the Father but through me. And I've tried my darndest to witness to people and share my testimony with people. And the results have been pretty frustrating.

Sometimes people say, hey man, I'm just not interested. Other times people will come to church with me and kind of go along with it and act like they're interested for a while, but if it doesn't really take care of all their problems or give them the warm fuzzies right away, they take off and they sort of would become what you'd call a backslider. Someone who sort of steps forward and makes a decision and sort of falls away.

And I realized that I wasn't the only one experiencing these kinds of results. In the modern church today, we're experiencing something called the fallaway rate of around 80 to 90 percent. That means that modern evangelism and its methods, the way that we share the gospel, is producing something like 80 to 90 backsliders for every 100 decisions for Christ.

I'll make it even more real for you. In 1991, a major U.S. denomination was able to obtain 294,000 decisions for Christ. That means in one year, this major U.S. denomination was able to obtain 294,000 decisions for Christ and unfortunately, they could only find 14,000 in fellowship.

That means that 280,000 of those decisions could not be accounted for. And that's normal, modern, evangelistic results. I was shocked.

That's awful. I began studying my Bible more and more. And I listened to a message called Hell's Best Kept Secret by a guy named Ray Comfort.

And he pointed out some things that I found very, very interesting. Namely, that Jesus shared the gospel radically differently than the way most of us were taught to do that. I'll give you an example.

In Mark 10, 17, and in Luke 18, 18, there's a story of a young man who comes running up to Jesus, gets down on his knees and says, Good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Now, I don't know about you, but if someone ever did that to me, I would be extremely excited. I mean, this would be a chance of a lifetime, right? Someone running up saying, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Well, look at what Jesus said. Notice he did not say, Oh, my friend, what a good question.

I'm so glad you asked. Listen, you have a God-shaped hole in your heart that only God can fill. And in a little while, I'm going to die on a cross.

And if you'll just believe in me and invite me into your heart, say this prayer and mean it with everything you've got, you'll go to heaven when you die. No, Jesus didn't say that. Jesus said, why do you call me good? There's only one who's good, and that is God.

He was correcting this man's understanding of what good was. And then he pointed him to six of the Ten Commandments. That's odd.

He said, you know the commandments. You shall not lie. You shall not steal.

You shall not commit adultery. You shall not murder. Honor your father and your mother.

And the man self-righteously said, well, I've kept all those since I was a boy. And Jesus said, well, there's one more that you have not kept. And he pointed to the essence of the first and second commandment and said, sell all that you have and give it to the poor.

Then you'll have treasure in heaven. And then come follow me. He was pointing out that this man's God was his money.

And sure enough, the man went away sad. And I'm scratching my head as I read this, kind of going, what was Jesus doing? Why was he talking to this guy this way? I mean, he didn't mention grace. He didn't talk to him about the cross.

He didn't mention God's love or his mercy. He didn't even pray with him. On the outside, it looked to me like Jesus really could have benefited from a friendship evangelism course.

But I realized later that Jesus was using a principle that's extremely effective and necessary to prepare a self-righteous, stubborn-hearted person's heart for the grace of the gospel. And this is a principle used by guys like Spurgeon and Moody, Finney, Whitfield, Luther. And it's been almost entirely neglected by the church today.

I've begun putting these principles into practice and found them to be extremely effective. And I want to share them with you today. If you have Bibles, please pull them out.

Get a pen and paper. You're going to want to take some notes. Anybody have any water? Is there a glass of water? Just eventually, that would be great.

Thank you. This is a message called Hell's Best Kept Secret. It radically changed my life the first time that I heard it.

And I'm going to share it with you exactly the way that I was told it myself. The Bible says in Psalm 19, verse 7, the law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. Now, what is it that the Bible says is actually perfect and converts the soul? The Scripture makes it very clear.

The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. Now, before you get your shorts all tied up in a knot over that verse, I want to demonstrate for you the function of God's law. Imagine if I said to you, I've got some good news for you.

Someone has just paid a \$25,000 speeding fine on your behalf. You'd probably look at me and say something like, What? That's not good news. It doesn't make sense.

I don't have a \$25,000 speeding fine. My good news would seem like foolishness to you. But more than that, it would actually be offensive.

Because I'm insinuating that you've broken the law when you don't think that you have. However, if I said it to you this way, it might make more sense. On the way to this meeting tonight, you went through an area set aside for a blind children's convention.

And you were going 55 miles an hour through that part of town. There were 10 clear warning signs stating that 15 miles an hour was the maximum speed, and you went straight through at 55 miles an hour. What you did was extremely dangerous.

There's a \$25,000 fine. The law was about to take its course when someone you don't even know stepped in and paid the fine for you. You are very fortunate.

Can you see that by telling you precisely what you've done wrong first actually makes the good news make sense? If I don't help you clearly understand that you've broken the law, then my good news will sound like foolishness. It'll be offensive. But once you understand that you've violated the law, then the good news becomes truly good news.

Now, with that thought in mind, if I were to walk up to a normal, unrepentant sinner and say to him, I've got some good news. Jesus Christ died on the cross for your sins. It's going to sound like foolishness to him.

But more than that, it's going to be offensive. Foolishness because it's not going to make sense. The Bible says that.

The preaching of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing. And offensive because I'm insinuating that the guy's a sinner when he doesn't think he is. As far as he's concerned, there's plenty of people far worse than he is.

But if I take the time to follow in the footsteps of Jesus, if I take the time to open up the divine law, the Ten Commandments, and show the person precisely what he's done wrong first, that he's violated God's law, then when he becomes convinced that he's broken God's law, then the good news of the fine being paid for him will not sound like foolishness. It will not be offensive. It'll be the power of God to salvation.

Now, with those thoughts in mind, let's take a look at Romans 3, verse 19. It says, thank you. It says, We know that whatsoever things the law says, it says to them who are under the law, that every mouth may be

stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

So, one of the functions of God's law is to stop the mouth of sinners justifying themselves and leave all the world guilty before God. To stop the mouth of a person saying, I'm a good person, and show them that they're actually guilty before God. Next verse.

Verse 20. Therefore, by the deeds of the law, no flesh shall be justified in the sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. So, God's law tells us what sin is.

1 John 3, verse 4 says, Sin is transgression of the law. Romans 7, verse 7. I had not known sin except through the law. So, Paul's saying, I wouldn't have known what sin was unless the law had told me.

And Galatians 3, verse 24. Therefore, the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. So, he's saying, the law was a schoolmaster that brings you to Christ so that you'll be justified through faith in His blood.

See, the law doesn't help us. It just leaves us helpless. The law doesn't justify us.

It just leaves us guilty before a holy God. We say that again. We are not saved by the law.

We are saved by grace alone through faith. The law is just like a mirror that shows us that we're filthy dirty so that we'll go to Christ for cleansing. And the tragedy of modern evangelism is that around the turn of the last century, when it got rid of the law and its ability to convert the soul, to drive sinners to Christ, modern evangelism, therefore, had to find another reason for sinners to respond to the gospel.

And the issue that modern evangelism chose to attract people to Jesus was the issue of life enhancement. The gospel degenerated into Jesus Christ will give you love, joy, peace, happiness, and lasting fulfillment. Now, to demonstrate the unscriptural nature of this very popular teaching, I'd like you to listen to the following story because the essence of what I'm saying pivots on this particular point.

Two men are seated on a plane. The first man is given a parachute and he's told to put it on because it would improve his flight. Now, he's a little skeptical at first because the guy can't see how putting a parachute on in a plane could possibly improve his flight.

But after a while, he decides to experiment and see if the claim is true. And as he puts it on, he notices the weight of it on his shoulders and the fact that he can't sit straight up. However, he comforts himself with the thought that he was told the parachute would improve his flight, so he decides to give the thing a little time.

And as he waits, he starts to notice some of the other passengers are laughing at him because he's wearing a parachute in the plane. He starts to feel somewhat humiliated and as they begin to point and laugh at him, he finally can't stand it any longer. He slinks in his seat, unstraps the parachute, and throws it on the floor.

Disillusionment and bitterness fill his heart because as far as he's concerned, he was told an outright lie. Now, the second man is given a parachute, but listen to what he's told. He's told to put it on because at any moment, he'd be jumping 25,000 feet out of the plane.

He gratefully puts on the parachute. He doesn't notice the weight of it on his shoulders or the fact that he can't sit straight up. His mind is consoled with the thought of what would happen to him if he jumped

without that parachute.

Now, let's analyze the motive and the result of each passenger's experience. The first man's motive for putting on the parachute was solely to improve his flight. The result of his experience was that he was humiliated by the passengers.

He was disillusioned and somewhat embittered against those who gave him the parachute. As far as he's concerned, it'll be a long time before anyone gets one of those things on his back again. The second man put on the parachute solely to escape the jump to come.

And because of his knowledge of what would happen to him without the parachute, he has a deep-rooted joy and peace in his heart because he knows that he's going to be saved from sure death. This knowledge gives him the ability to withstand the mockery from the other passengers. His attitude toward those who gave him the parachute is one of heartfelt gratitude.

Now listen to what the modern Gospel says. It says, Put on the Lord Jesus Christ. He'll give you love, joy, peace, happiness and lasting fulfillment.

In other words, Jesus will improve your flight. And so the sinner responds and in an experimental fashion puts on the Savior to see if the claims are true. And what does he get? Just what Jesus promised.

Temptation, tribulation, persecution. The other passengers mock him. So what does he do? He takes off the Lord Jesus Christ.

He's offended for the word's sake. He's disillusioned and embittered. And rightly so.

He was promised peace, love, joy, fulfillment, happiness. And all he got were trials and humiliation. His bitterness is directed toward those who gave him the so-called good news.

And now he's worse off than he was before because he thinks he's given Jesus a try and all he's gotten was a big letdown. Another inoculated and bitter backslider. Instead of telling people that Jesus improves their flight, we should be warning the passengers that they're going to have to jump out of the plane.

That it's appointed for a man once to die and then comes judgment. And when a sinner understands the horrific consequences of breaking God's law, then he will run to the Savior to escape the wrath to come. And if we're true and faithful witnesses, that's what we'll be telling them.

That there is wrath to come. Just like Jesus did. Like Paul did.

Like Peter did. Like all of Scripture does. Acts 17:30 God commands all men everywhere to repent.

Why? Because He has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness. You see, it isn't an issue of happiness, but of righteousness. It doesn't matter how happy a person is, how much he's enjoying his sin, without the righteousness of Christ, he'll perish on the day of judgment.

The Bible says, riches profit not on the day of judgment, but righteousness delivers from death. You see, that's how I knew that I needed a Savior. I had riches.

I was famous. I was a celebrity. I had everything I wanted.

But I knew that when I faced God on judgment day, none of that stuff would fly with Him. That wouldn't impress Him. It was the righteousness of Christ that I needed.

To be saved. Now, this is very important. Listen to this point.

Peace and joy are legitimate fruits of salvation. They are the results of salvation. But it's not legitimate to use these fruits as draw cards for salvation.

Come to Jesus. He'll give you peace. He'll give you joy.

Why? Because if a person comes to God to find peace and joy and happiness, but doesn't have a truly repentant heart, grieved that he has sinned against God, stripped of his self-righteousness and humbled to Jesus as his Lord and Savior, he will not find peace with God. He won't know the joy of the Lord. He will remain separate from God because of his sin.

He will remain, by nature, an enemy of God. A child of wrath. Because of their sin.

Without hope. Without God. Think of the second passenger.

He had joy and peace in his heart. Why? It was because he knew that the parachute was going to save him from sure death. And as a believer, I have, like Paul says, joy and peace in believing.

Because I know that the righteousness of Christ is going to save me on the day of judgment. Now, with that thought in mind, let's look at another incident on board the plane. We have a brand new stewardess and it's her first day on the job.

She wants to leave an impression on the passengers. And that's exactly what she does. Because as she's carrying this boiling hot tray of coffee down the aisle, she trips over somebody's foot and slops this boiling hot liquid into the lap of our second passenger.

Now, what's his reaction as this boiling hot liquid hits his tender flesh? Does he go, oh, man, that hurt. Yeah, of course he feels the pain. But then does he rip off the parachute, throw it on the floor and say, this stupid parachute.

No. Why should he? He didn't put the parachute on to improve his flight. He put it on to save his life.

And if anything, the hot coffee causes him to cling tighter to the parachute and even look forward to the jump. Now, if you and I had put on the Lord Jesus Christ for the right motive, to escape from the wrath to come, when tribulation strikes, when the flight gets bumpy, we're not going to get angry at God. We're not going to lose our joy and our peace.

Why should we? We didn't come to Jesus for a happy lifestyle. We came because we know we violated His law. And we have run to the love of Jesus Christ on the Savior to save us from the wrath to come.

And if anything, tribulation drives the true believer closer to the Savior. And sadly, we have literally millions of professing Christians who lose their joy and peace when the flight gets bumpy. Why? They're a product of a man-centered gospel.

They came without repentance. And without repentance, you cannot be saved. For years, I suffered from something that I didn't know had a name.

Then I learned it was called evangelical frustration. It's a disease among Bible-believing Christians. I so wanted to share the gospel with people in a way that would be effective and bring people to Christ that I had zeal without knowledge.

And I unknowingly gave them this man-centered gospel. It went something like this. Man, I've been a movie star.

I've been rich. I've been famous. You're never going to be happy and find peace until you ask Jesus into your heart.

And if a person would respond and say, alright man, I'll give it a try. I was excited but half nervous because I didn't want to produce another backslider. And I knew that there was a good chance that if the statistics show, he was going to be a backslider.

And so we'd pray a prayer together or he'd pray with a pastor. And I'm thinking, man, I hope that this guy is sincere in what he's saying. But so many of the times, if I could see right into that guy's heart, I would see that he absolutely was 100% sincere.

He sincerely wanted to give this Jesus thing a try to see if he could get a buzz out of it. To see if it would solve all of his problems. To see if it was as great as all these Christian sayatives.

He wanted to know if Jesus really was better than beer. He wasn't coming with a repentant heart, broken over his sin. No.

He had a very shallow understanding of what sin was. How can a guy repent if he doesn't know what sin is? Romans 7 verse 7. Remember Paul said, I would not have known sin except by the law. Or maybe he's been to church so many times and heard these words so much that it didn't mean much to him anymore.

He had never seen the true wickedness of his sin. That he would be broken in his heart over how he has treated his creator. You see, in our culture today, people want to experience something for themselves before they believe it's true.

They don't want to take my word for it. They don't want to take your word for it. They don't want to take God's word for it.

They want to experience it for themselves, then it becomes true. You see, it's kind of like this. You see a man who's out in a lake, who's drowning, when he doesn't believe he's drowning.

And you think to yourself, oh my gosh, that guy's drowning. Yes, he's drowning. I'm going to go save him.

So you run out, you dive into the water, grab the guy by the neck, throw him up on shore without telling him anything. He's not going to be very happy with you. He's not going to want to get saved until he sees that he's in danger.

Or it's like this. If you came up to me and said, hey Kirk, I said, yeah? You say, Kirk, you've got Ronenson's disease. This is a cure for Ronenson's disease.

I sold my house to raise the money to buy this cure for you and I'm giving it to you as a free gift. I'd probably look at you and say, what? Ronenson's disease? You sold your house to raise the money to buy

this cure for me and you're giving it to me as a free gift? Uh, thanks. Bye.

Man, that person's kind of a nut. I mean, that's probably what I'd think if you told me you sold your house to raise the money to buy a cure for a disease I hadn't even heard of. But if you said it to me like this, it might make more sense.

Hey, Kirk. Say, yeah? Kirk, you've got Ronenson's disease. You're going to be dead in two weeks.

I can see ten clear symptoms on your flesh. And then I became convinced that I had the disease because the symptoms were so evident. And then I looked at you and I said, oh my gosh, I see what you're talking about.

Oh man, what do I do? And then you said, don't worry, this is a cure for Ronenson's disease. I sold my house to raise the money to buy this cure for you and I'm giving it to you as a free gift. Oh man, I'm not going to despise your sacrifice.

I'm not going to think you're strange. I'm going to say thank you. I'm going to appreciate it.

Why? Because I've seen the disease so that I appreciate the cure. And sadly what's happened is that we have preached the cure without first convincing people of the disease. We've preached a gospel of grace without first convincing people of the law that they're transgressors.

And as a result, we have literally millions of people in our country, particularly throughout the Bible Belt, who think that they have a relationship with Jesus because they've invited Jesus into their heart or accepted Jesus, but they did not come through the narrow gate of repentance, stripped of their self-righteousness and surrendered to the Lord of the universe. Why? Because they've never been thoroughly convinced of the disease so that they might appreciate the cure. 1 Timothy 1, verse 8 says, but we know that the law is good if it's used lawfully for the purpose for which it was designed.

Okay, what was the law designed for? The next verse tells us. The law was not made for a righteous man but for sinners. It even lists the sinners.

The ungodly, the unholy, adulterers, perverts, murderers, liars. You guys, if you want to bring an atheist to Christ, we don't need to get stuck in intellectual arguments with them. Give him the Ten Commandments and let his own conscience begin to work on him.

The law was made for the ungodly. If you want to bring a Jew to Christ, lay the weight of the law upon him. Prepare his heart for grace.

If you want to bring a Muslim to Christ, give him the law of Moses. They respect Moses as a prophet. Give them the law of Moses and strip them of their self-righteousness and bring them to the foot of a bloodstained cross.

If we want to bring our children to Christ, we don't need to get them to join the God Club and convince them that it's cooler than MTV. No. Just show them the Ten Commandments.

Let them see their personal sins and understand why Jesus died for them. Then they can see why they should cling to Him for dear life and never let go. Think of the woman caught in the act of adultery.

Violation of the Seventh Commandment. The law called for her blood. She found herself between a rock and a hard place.

She had nowhere to turn but to fling herself at the feet of the Son of God for mercy. You see, that's the function of God's law. It condemns.

Now, you might be saying, Wait a minute. You know, you can't go around condemning sinners. But the truth is, they're condemned already.

John 3, verse 18 says, He that does not believe is condemned already. You see, all the law does is show him himself in his true state. Okay, ladies.

You're going to recognize this. You wake up in the morning. You go out into the kitchen.

You realize that your dining room table needs dusting. And so you dust off the table. All the dust is gone.

Then you open up the curtains and let in the early morning sunlight. What do you see on the table? Dust. What do you see in the air? Dust.

Did the light create the dust? No. It merely exposed the dust. And so when you and I take the time to draw back the curtains of the Holy Scriptures and we let the light of God's law shine upon a sinner's heart, all that happens is that he sees himself for what he is.

The Bible says the commandment is a lamp and the law is light. That's why Paul said, By the law is the knowledge of sin. That's why he said, By the commandment, sin became exceedingly sinful.

In other words, the law showed him his sin in its true light. Okay? I want to share with you how I witness to people personally. I'm a strong believer in biblical evangelism and following in the footsteps of Jesus.

And a wonderful example in Scripture of how to witness to somebody personally is found in John chapter 4 with the woman at the well. I call it the way of the Master. It's Jesus in action.

He started in the natural realm. He swung to the spiritual. He brought conviction using the seventh commandment.

And then he revealed himself as the Messiah. You may not have ever thought of him doing that, but that's what he did. So when I meet somebody, I'll talk about the weather, sports, my job, my kids, family, whatever.

Let them know that I'm not some religious fruitcake. And then I'll deliberately swing from everyday things to spiritual things. And a real easy way to do this sometimes is with a good gospel tract.

I'm not into offensive, obnoxious tracts with angry-looking people on the front. But things that are really going to catch people's attention. And through our ministry, we create some tracts that we think are kind of unique.

Here's one here. It's a greeting card. It has Charles Darwin on the front looking at a caterpillar on a leaf.

And it says, Did the butterfly evolve? And you hand this to someone and they open it up. And there's a butterfly inside. And there's a gospel message on the wings.

And there's gospel messages in here with quotes from Charles Darwin and Sir Arthur Keith and Albert Einstein to show the absurdity of evolution. And open up a door of conversation about the gospel. If I don't have a tract with me, you can just say something like this.

Hey, do you go to church? Are there any good churches around here? Do you have a Christian background? Not an offensive question. People say, Yes, no, whatever. I'm an atheist, no, I'm a Muslim.

Yeah, I go to church. I used to go to church. Whatever.

I'll say, Well, listen, let me ask you a personal question. Do you consider yourself to be a good person? Most people will say, Yeah, absolutely. Yeah, definitely.

I'm a very good person. And then I'll say, Do you think you've kept the Ten Commandments? Because, I mean, that's God's standard of what's good. Do you think you've kept the Ten Commandments? And most people will say, Yeah, pretty much.

I mean, I've never really murdered anybody. So, yeah, I'm doing all right. And I did this with a guy not too long ago on the golf course.

His name was Ray. It's not Ray Comfort. It's a different Ray.

And just for clarity here, and I said, Hey, Ray, do you consider yourself a good person? Do you think you've kept the Ten Commandments? Oh, yeah, definitely. Yeah, definitely. Yeah, definitely.

A really good person. I said, Okay, let's go through a few of them and see. He said, The Ninth Commandment, Have you ever told a lie? Have you ever broken that commandment? He says, Yeah, of course.

I said, What does that make you? He says, Human. Yes. Very good.

I can tell that you're a human. I said, Come on. Be honest.

You know, if someone murders somebody, it makes them a murderer. If you rape somebody, it makes you a rapist. If you lie, what does that make you?" He says, a liar.

I said, okay, have you ever stolen anything? He says, no. Sometimes I'll say, I don't believe you. You just admitted to me you're a liar.

I said, come on, be honest. And he says, all right, yeah, when I was young, yes, okay, yes, I have. I said, all right, what does that make you? He says, a thief.

I said, okay, now here's the one that really got me. Jesus said, whoever looks upon a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart. Have you ever done that? Have you ever looked at a woman with lust? He says, oh yeah, of course.

I said, well then, Ray, by your own admission, you're a lying, thieving adulterer at heart, and you have to face God on Judgment Day. And that's only three of the Ten Commandments. You should have seen the look on his face.

He just looked guilty, because he knew he was guilty. Now, when you think about it, the commandments do leave us feeling very guilty, because we are guilty. I'd like to quickly go through the rest of the

commandments right now to demonstrate this.

I'm asking you to listen to your conscience right now, and be honest. In your own mind, ask yourself these questions. Engage your mind right now, if you're zoning out on me.

Listen. Have you kept the commandments? Look at the first commandment. You shall have no other gods before me.

Have you always put God first in your life? Always? Jesus said to love the Lord your God with all your heart, mind, soul, and strength so much that your love for your mother, father, brother, sister, your family, even your own life, is like hatred compared to your love and devotion for God. Have you always loved God that much? No. The Bible says that none of us have kept that commandment.

The second commandment. You shall not make for yourself a graven image or an idol. Now, you can do that with your hands, or you can do it with your mind.

Have you ever thought something like this? My God is not a God of judgment. He is a God of love and mercy, and he would never create a place quite like hell. Well, if that's what you think, you're right.

Your God would never create a place like hell, because he couldn't. He doesn't exist. He's a figment of your imagination.

You've created a God in your own mind that you're more comfortable with. You've created a God to suit yourself. It's called idolatry.

It's the oldest sin in the book, and the Bible says that idolaters will not inherit the kingdom of heaven. The third commandment. Have you ever taken God's name in vain? Have you ever used his name as a cuss word? If you've done that, instead of using a four-letter filth word to represent disgust, you have used God's holy name in place of a four-letter cuss word.

The God who's given you your life and your family, everything precious to you. It's called blasphemy, and the Bible says that every idle word a man speaks, he will give an account of it on the day of judgment, and he will not hold him guiltless who takes the name of the Lord in vain. The fourth commandment.

Keep the Sabbath day holy. My whole life, I didn't care one bit what God required of me. I never even thought about it.

I just took, took, took from God, and I couldn't have cared less what he wanted from me. He's given me every day of my life. He asks for one out of seven? I didn't even care about that.

How selfish of me. The fifth commandment. Honor your father and your mother.

I broke that every day as a teenager. Have you always honored your father and mother in word, thought, and deed? The sixth commandment. You shall not murder.

Well, most of us think we're innocent with that one. Whew. But Jesus said, he who is angry with his brother without cause is in danger of judgment.

And the Bible says, he who hates his brother is a murderer. Because God considers the attitudes of our heart and considers hatred as wicked as murder. Think of it this way.

If I could put a high-tech computer chip behind your ear that monitored your thoughts 24 hours a day, seven days a week, everything you think, everything you desire, stuff you think and do and say when no one else is watching, and recorded it for a month. And then we held a special service here at Central Baptist. And I put all those thoughts up on that big screen and that big screen.

And we viewed it in front of the whole congregation. And your family, your parents, your kids, your spouse. How would that make you feel? Ashamed? Embarrassed? Humiliated? And God says that's exactly what will happen when we stand before him.

And he brings out every secret sin done in darkness. God will judge every work, including every secret thing, whether it is good or evil. Nothing in all creation is hidden from the eyes of God, but they're bare and naked before him, to whom we must give account.

God sees everything, right down to the thoughts and intentions of our heart. And the tenth commandment, who of us can say that we're not guilty of coveting or wanting things that belong to other people? We are guilty. Seriously guilty.

Now you might be saying, man, I can't lay that stuff on people. That's so heavy. It'll offend them.

But so the wonderful thing about God's law is that he has already taken the time to write it on the heart of every man and woman. Romans 2 verse 15 says, they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness. Now conscience means with knowledge.

Con means with. Science means knowledge. So every time a person lies, lusts, fornicates, has sex outside of marriage, blasphemes, commits adultery, he does it with knowledge that it's wrong.

His conscience accuses him and the law condemns him. And so I said to Ray, if God judges you by the ten commandments on the day of judgment, do you think you'll be innocent or guilty? He said, no, I'd be guilty. I said, so do you think you'd go to heaven or hell? He says, heaven.

I said, why? Is it because you believe that God is good and therefore he'll overlook your sin? He says, yes, that's it, forgiveness. God is all forgiving. He's good.

I said, try that in a court of law. You're standing before a judge guilty of serious crimes and the judge says, before I pass sentence, do you have anything to say for yourself? And you stand up and say, yes, judge, I know I'm guilty but I believe that you're a good man and therefore you'll let me go. The judge would probably say something like, well, you're right about one thing.

I am a good man and because of my goodness I'm going to see to it that you're punished for what you've done. And the very thing that many are hoping will save them on the day of judgment is the very thing that will condemn them. Because if God is good, then by nature he must punish murderers and rapists and liars and thieves and adulterers and fornicators and blasphemers and all who violate the inner conscience that God has given to every man and woman.

God will punish sin wherever it is found. And I said, Ray, the truth is if God gives you justice, you're not headed for heaven. You're headed for hell.

At this point Ray could understand that he had violated God's law and that he had angered God, that the wrath of God abided on him. He could now see that when he's weighed in the balance of eternal justice,

he is in huge trouble. And now he could see the need for a payment.

At this point, Ray was back in our golf cart looking down at the floor with his mouth stopped. He knew he was guilty. That's the function of God's law.

Perfectly prepared for the grace of the gospel. And I said, Ray, do you see your need of God's forgiveness? He just looked at me and I said, Ray, put yourself back in the courtroom. You're guilty of multiple serious crimes.

You're in a civil court and this judge says to you, your fine has been set at \$500,000 your life in prison and you don't have any money to pay your fine. And so you're being let off to prison when all of a sudden someone bursts in the courtroom doors, walks up to the judge and hands him a check for \$500,000. The judge says, wait, your fine has been paid in full.

You're free to go. The law has no more hold on you. I'm setting you free on the grounds that your fine has been paid.

And this man's sacrifice is a demonstration of his love for you. I said, Ray, that's what the Bible says God has done for us. 2,000 years ago, Jesus Christ stepped into the courtroom and paid our fine.

Think of this, the God of the universe who made the stars, the moon, the planets, who spans the universe with the palm of his hand, reduced himself to become one mere man. God in the flesh, the sinless man, Jesus Christ, and he willingly suffered and died on the cross. The Bible says he was marred more than any man and suffered at the hands of wicked men who murdered him so that you and I could be set free.

The Bible puts it this way, God demonstrated his love toward us and that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us. We broke the law and Jesus paid our fine.

It's as simple as that. And when I said that a light bulb went off in Ray's head, I could see it in his eyes. We talked about the prodigal son, how when he had finally come to his senses and realized that he had sinned against not only his father, but he'd sinned against heaven.

He turned back to his father in humility and in repentance, coming back to him, willing to just be a hired servant. And the Bible says that the father ran to him and met him and swept him up into his arms. He said, my son is lost and now he's found.

He was dead and now he's come to life. And we got to the end of the golf course and the other guys were putting away their clubs and my friend Ray just stood up and he said, you know I've been running from God my whole life and I can't do it anymore. And he sat on the front of the hood of the cart and began to cry.

A grown man in the parking lot crying. I didn't know what to do so I put my arm around him and I just said, Ray do you need to be forgiven of your sin? Do you need God to forgive you? He said, yes I do. I said, then cry out to him.

Tell him. Do what the Bible says. Confess and forsake your sin.

Turn from sin and trust Jesus with all your heart. Tell God that you're sorry right now. And he began to pray.

I didn't lead him through a sinner's prayer. I didn't even know how to do that. But he began to pray and confess his sin before God and he was crying while he did that.

This wasn't a man who came to Jesus for just a happy lifestyle. He came to Jesus because he was broken over his sin. Why? Because he had seen it so clearly when we went through the commandments like Jesus did.

And he wanted the mercy and forgiveness of God. And he was overwhelmed with the love of the cross. And after he prayed, I prayed for him.

And we opened our eyes and he had a smile on his face that was so beautiful. And we talked about his new life in Christ. That he was now a new creature in Christ if he had truly called upon the Lord.

We went home that day and he said that he was going to begin to talk to his family about Christ. And about true salvation. Not just about going to church and saying prayers and singing and raising your hands.

But about surrendering your life to Jesus as Lord and Savior. The one who demonstrated his love on the cross to forgive us of our sin and save us from the wrath we deserve. He was going to lead them out of the darkness and into the light.

This man was on fire. My wife asked him that next day, Hey Ray, how was your golf game yesterday? He said, Oh Chelsea, yesterday was the best day of my entire life. And golf had nothing to do with it.

I didn't say any magic words, you guys. I simply followed in the footsteps of Jesus and used the law as a schoolmaster to lead him to Christ. The law is like a sharp spade that plows up the hard soil of a proud person's heart to make it soft so the seed of the gospel can take root.

It's like a needle that pierces a person's flesh and opens the way for the silken thread of the gospel to follow in after it. Charles Spurgeon said they will never accept grace until they first tremble before a just and holy law. And Charles Finney said every more the law must prepare the way for the gospel.

He said to overlook this in instructing souls is almost certain to result in false hope, false expectations of the Christian life, and to fill the church with false converts. And now I'd like to do something a little different from what we normally do in church. I'd like to ask you, with every head raised and every eye open and no music playing, if you will join me and examine the validity of our own salvation, of your own salvation.

You've probably heard it said, never question your salvation. The Bible says the exact opposite. It says check yourself and see if you are in the faith.

It's better now than on the day of judgment. The Bible says make your calling and election sure. And some of you know that something's radically wrong in your Christian walk.

You lose your peace and your joy when the flight gets bumpy. You never fell on your face before Almighty God and said, I have sinned against you, O God. Have mercy on me.

Because you've never seen yourself as that bad. You've never fled to Jesus Christ in His blood for cleansing in desperation, crying out, God be merciful to me, a sinner. And there's a lack of gratitude.

There's not a burning passion for the lost. You can't say that you're on fire for God. In fact, you're in danger of being one of the ones called lukewarm, who will be spit out of the mouth of Christ on the day of judgment, when multitudes will cry out to Him, Lord, Lord.

And He will say, depart from me. I never knew you, you who practice iniquity. You workers of lawlessness.

You have no respect for the divine law. The Bible says let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity. So today you need to readjust the motive of your commitment.

Maybe you see your own sin in a new light this evening. Maybe you see your wandering eyes toward other men, other women, that you're not married to. You finally see that that is lust and adultery in the eyes of the Lord.

Your white lies, your little white collar crimes, cheating on your taxes, taking things from the office, from work, from school, is deceit and theft in the eyes of the Lord. And it makes you a liar and a thief. And you see that you need to get right with God today.

What do you need to do that's different from what you've done in the past? You need to repent of your sin and put your faith in Jesus Christ. Repentance is not a work that you and I work up in order to be saved. God grants us the gift of salvation by granting us the ability to turn from sin, which we can't do on our own, and put our faith in Jesus Christ.

Repentance simply means to turn away from sin. To turn from sin, turn toward God. Desire to have nothing to do with sin again and begin to desire following after God in obedience with a heart surrendered to Him.

He is the Lord. And then put your faith in Jesus Christ. It doesn't mean just believe in Him intellectually.

It means to trust in Him the same way you trust in a parachute if you were jumping out of a plane at 25,000 feet. If I gave you a parachute and you just believed in it, sang songs to it on Sundays. Yes, I believe it's a parachute.

Yes, I do now. That's not going to help you when you jump. You got to put it on.

That's the only way it's going to save you. And that's what the Bible says. Put on the Lord Jesus Christ and you'll be saved.

Please don't let your pride stop you. Pride is a killer. Don't let it stop you.

I'd like to pray for you. And in a moment, if you'd like to be included in this prayer, I'm going to ask you to lift up your hand. But before you do, if you're thinking, well, I really should raise my hand.

I need to raise my hand. But what will everybody think? That's pride. You prefer the praises of men to the praises of God.

And the Bible says everyone who is proud of heart is an abomination to the Lord. God resists the proud, but He will give grace to the humble. So humble yourself before the mighty hand of God.

He will raise you up in His perfect time. If this is the day that you need to raise your hand and surrender to Jesus Christ, because you see yourself in desperate need of His cleansing blood, and because you know

you've never departed from iniquity, but you want to begin today, I'm going to ask you to raise your hand. Who's going to break the ice? Listen to your conscience.

Let the Holy Spirit speak to you right now. Now is the time for salvation. Don't wait.

Don't put it off. You could die tonight. If your heart is not right with the Lord, and you die in your sins, there is no second chance.

The wrath of God still abides on you, whether you think you're a Christian or not. You must come clean and come through the door of repentance and surrender to Jesus. Raise your hand to God.

Let Him know that you are in desperate need of His forgiveness. And as sinner, I'm going to give you one more minute. This is between you and God.

Let's pray. Father, I thank you so much for this night. I thank you that you don't sugarcoat things, and you don't give us silly messages just to make us feel good.

We are not good people. You've said that only one is good, and that is you. We are filthy dirty, and you love us enough to tell us the truth, that Jesus Christ's brutal death on the cross was the extreme length you went to to make things right for us.

Our sin is no trivial thing. It's wicked in your sight, and it cost you the life of your Son to fix it, to redeem us, and that blood is so precious. I thank you for that blood of Christ tonight.

I thank you for the courage you've given people tonight to see their sin for what it is, and to repent of their sin, to not make any mistake about their salvation, and to throw themselves completely at your feet. Father, fill them with the Holy Spirit tonight. Cleanse them of their sin.

Make them a new creature in Christ. Pour out your grace upon them. Blot out their sins.

Remove the guilt from their soul, and ignite a passion in them to go out and preach the gospel to every creature, to do like Jesus did, to seek and to save the lost. Raise up laborers for your harvest. Let's do away with this statistic of only 2% of Christians sharing their faith.

Holy Spirit, make us new. Empower us the way you empowered the church in the book of Acts, to go out from the upper room and preach the gospel to a dying world that's sinking in to hell, to have enough compassion for our friends and family to tell them about Christ, but first to convince them of the disease so that the cure will be truly precious to them, and that they might be saved. I pray in Jesus' name.

Amen. If this message this evening has struck a chord in you, I beg you to listen to the next message that will be given by Ray Comfort. It is called True and False Conversion.

It's vitally important. We're going to take a short break, come back and listen to this message, and we are going to begin to learn the difference between true and false converts, a subject that you don't hear much about in church today, and then we're going to talk about how to effectively share your faith and put those tools into your hands. Let's take a quick break and we'll come back.

God bless you.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/5/SID5753.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/kirk-cameron/hells-best-kept-secret-at-texas-am/>

# *Grow in Your Walk with Christ*

---

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

**[www.sermonindex.net](http://www.sermonindex.net)**