

New Life Baptist Church - Part 3

by Paul Washer

Paul Washer challenges the audience to examine their faith and understand the true nature of salvation in a cultural context that often misrepresents Christianity.

Duration: 1:10:45

Topics: "False Doctrines"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of examining oneself to determine if Jesus Christ truly dwells within. He compares the obvious signs of a demon-possessed person to the less evident signs of a true Christian. The speaker challenges the audience to reflect on their own lives and consider whether they are genuinely seeking to know God and follow His will. He also highlights the need for Christians to strive to be like Jesus, even if it means facing criticism or mockery from others.

Transcript

Christianity in America is a very, very dangerous thing, especially when we deal with Christianity in the South, Christianity and the Bible Belt. There have been scholars and churchmen throughout the last decade. These are not wild, radical men.

These aren't mean spirited men, but established churchmen and theologians and scholars who've said things like this. We would be surprised if even 15% of all the people who attend evangelical and Baptist churches throughout America are even Christian. If we were to take the New Testament, what it says about the evidence of true Christianity, and we were to compare the average Baptist church member to that, we could only come to one conclusion, the great majority of everyone who congregates on Sunday morning is lost, deceived.

A cultural Christianity, add to that bad preaching. We have taken the gospel of Jesus Christ and reduced it down to nothing more than a superstitious prayer. If you have repeated certain words after someone, you are born again.

Or we have reduced the gospel down to a type of morality. I go to church on Sunday, there are certain things I don't do. Yet there's no passion for Christ, no desire for God, no thought about eternal things, no worship of God throughout the week, everything confined to a church service.

Jesus said something one time and is probably one of the most frightening things that he ever said, and I just want you to listen, just want you to listen. Then I will declare to them, I never knew you depart from me, you who practice lawlessness. Now, in this same context, Jesus talks about a gate and way.

He said that few would find the way to life. Most would be on the path of destruction. Now, when we read that, we often think, yes, he's talking about people who go to church on the path to life and then everyone else out there, the atheist, the agnostic, the secular man who doesn't care or give any thought to God.

It's not what he's saying in the whole context. What he's saying is this. Among those who profess faith in me, few will be saved.

He's not even referring to the atheist or the agnostic or the secular man or the one who publicly and openly declares his hatred towards God. He's saying among those who profess to be Christians, even emphatically declare me to be Lord, among those few. We'll find life and the great majority will be destroyed.

So what scholars and churchmen are saying today. It's really nothing new, is it now? I want to just look at for a moment again, just listen, because we're going to go to another text, but he says, depart from me. You who practice lawlessness, you've probably heard the word antinomian eyes, a negative particle and not much law, it's literally those who live without law.

Do you know that describes the great majority of people who go to church on Sunday morning? Do you realize that it does? It describes them to a T. It describes some of you. You profess faith in Jesus Christ, and yet you live as though he never gave you a law to obey. What you do in your daily life is not determined by his word.

What you think about is not determined by any law or precept or statute that he gave. You profess faith in Jesus Christ and you do your little Sunday morning thing and then basically live the rest of your week like a practical atheist. Let's just draw on some examples so that we can be very specific.

Are you looking in God's word to determine how he wants you to be a husband? Are you looking into God's word to determine how he wants you to be a father? Are you looking into God's word concerning your finances? Are you looking into God's word concerning your time stewardship? Are you looking into God's word with regard to your behavior? Your attitude, your thoughts, your heart? Are you looking into God's word to discover the great eternal hope? Are you wanting to know more about Christ? Is your life centered around Christ or is Christ just some little accessory to your life like a belt or shoes that a woman might buy to match a new dress she's purchased? You see what the Bible says is true. And even at least this time, what many scholars and churchmen say is true. And that is, have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof.

Now, how can we know if we are Christian? That's a good question. How can we truly know if we are Christian? Ever thought about that? I mean, what is the basis for your belief that you're even saved? Huh? People say, well, well, you know, everyone who believes in Jesus is saved. That's very true.

But how do you know you believe? Because the devils believe and tremble. You say you believe, I've never even seen you tremble. How do you know that you believe? Because there is a vain way of believing.

You can't believe in vain. How do you truly know? Or were you raised on that even popular evangelical doctrine? Well, I know I'm saved because there was one time in my life when I prayed and asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart. Do you know that means absolutely nothing? Do you mean that? Do you realize that's nowhere in the Bible? Do you realize that nowhere in the Bible is that found? Do you realize that? It that whole type of saying that whole type of gospel presentation is literally something that started about 40 years ago or so, 50 years ago.

And it's the same error that the Catholic Church committed. Catholic Church didn't believe anyone could really understand the gospel. And there was no supernatural this to them because they never were really a church.

And so they reduced everything down to do to repeat a few short things and you'll be OK with God. Guess what? Evangelical community, including the Baptists, have done the same thing. There's no supernaturalness in salvation anymore, but we can sure get people saved.

And how do we do it? By leading them through a few questions. And if they agree to them at the end, get them to make a decision to open up their heart and ask Jesus to come in. And if they've done that, we tell them they're saved, even though they doubt it.

Most people think they're saved because one time in their life they made some decision like a flu shot or an inoculation. And to them, salvation is just all past tense. I repented one time.

I believed one time. I asked Jesus to come into my heart one time. But you see, he who began a good work in the Christian, the true Christian, continues it.

The evidence that you repented unto salvation long ago is that you're still repenting today. The evidence that you believed unto salvation is that you're still believing today and growing and growing in Christ and that Christ is of utmost concern to you. He is.

Now, how can we know? I want us to go to Second Corinthians for a moment. Chapter 13. Verse five.

Here you have the church in Corinth and we read through the first letter of the Apostle Paul to the church of Corinth and we discover that there are a lot of carnal people in that church. Now, you know, it's amazing. Paul says in chapter three, he goes, are you not carnal? And out of those few words, Christianity in America has created an entirely new doctrine.

It's the new doctrine, the false doctrine of the carnal Christian based on just a few little words. Are you not carnal? They've developed an entire doctrine of the carnal Christian. And what we say today is this, if you ever heard this in the church, there are three types of people.

There are spiritual Christians, carnal Christians and lost people. That's not what the Bible teaches. Not at all.

You know, we have Christians who Jesus is sitting on the throne of their life and Christians, but Jesus is not sitting on the throne of their life and then lost people where Jesus is not sitting on the throne of their life. But all throughout church history and the Bible, it's just spiritual Christians and carnal lost people. And when Paul says, are you not carnal? What he's saying is, aren't you acting like lost people? And as a matter of fact, maybe you are.

And as a matter of fact, when you get further into first Corinthians, you discover that some of those carnal people God killed and other of those carnal people were sick. Those weren't Christians he killed. Those were lost people he killed, tares who were destroying his church.

And that shows you again right there, the judgment of God upon the Church of America, that our churches can be so filled with so many carnal lost people and God's not killing anybody. See, one of the greatest signs of judgment is when God allows wickedness to continue. When he just pulls back and doesn't discipline.

One of the greatest signs of blessing and of God's presence is when he comes in and cleans house. I sometimes watch, like I said, the greatest oxymoron in the world today, Christian television. It's kind of like jumbo shrimp.

They just don't go together. And all these people, you know, the Lord is in this place. I was in a place one time where everyone started going, the Lord is in this place.

I said, no, he's not. And they said, why? I said, because half of you'd be dead if he was. He's not here.

Because if he did show up, it would be terrible. It would be utterly terrible, terrifying. And Paul looks at this church, 2nd Corinthians 13, and he says this, chapter 13, verse five, test yourselves to see if you are in the faith.

He looks at these people, some of whom did not seem to be walking as they should. And he said, test yourselves to see if you're even Christians. Now, notice he didn't ask them, was there ever a point in time in your life when you prayed and asked Jesus to come into your heart? He didn't even ask them about their past, because here's the here's the thing you need to understand.

The evidence that really something happened in the past and you were saved in the past is that you're still being saved in the in the present. How do we determine whether or not that experience you had in the past is valid? Because it's not it not only continues into the present, but it grows and gets stronger and becomes ever more life changing. So he goes.

Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith, examine yourselves. Now, this is very this is very Hebrew, this is very Jewish. In Jewish literature, we have something we call Hebrew parallelisms.

Something is repeated and sometimes repeated with a little bit different emphasis in order to add emphasis. It's like the wicked shall not dwell in the land, the wicked shall be destroyed. It's saying the same thing twice, changing it around just a little bit to define and to add emphasis.

He says, examine yourselves, test yourselves. Both words here are very serious, strong, severe words in the sense of not just sort of looking over things, but examining carefully. Testing a litmus test, doing everything in your power to determine whether or not you're saved.

You know, it's amazing to me. Most of the old literature in Christianity dealt primarily with two things, what the gospel of Jesus Christ truly is. And how do you know you're saved? I can challenge you.

You can go into any Christian bookstore in America today, maybe a few exceptions. But most Christian bookstores today, and you'll be hard pressed among all the thousands of stupid books in those stores, you will be hard pressed to find even a handful of books that even speak about the gospel of Jesus Christ or

help you understand whether or not you're saved. Isn't that scary? Listen to this.

It's terrifying. The most important thing in the world is not getting your best life now. But those are the books you buy.

The most important thing is this. What is the only message that truly saves? And have I believed it? Am I saved? Am I converted? Am I going to heaven? Those are the two most important things. And yet they're almost never preached on.

And you can't find any new literature on it. It's like jump over the most important thing and get to all the superficial, silly things like temporal blessings. You can give a Bible conference on the cross of Jesus Christ and how do you know you're saved? And very few people would show up.

You could give a Bible conference on economic prosperity in the Christian faith and fill up an entire auditorium. Why? Because most people identified with Christianity are lost, temporal and carnal. That's why.

He said, examine yourselves, test yourselves, examine yourselves. Or do you not recognize this about yourselves that Jesus Christ is in you? Unless indeed you fail the test. He's going, look, if you're really a Christian, Jesus Christ is in you.

The Father is in you through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This is a supernatural thing in which divine presence has come into your life. Listen to what he's saying.

You know, I want to tell you something, you ever meet a demon possessed person, it will be obvious. I mean, when the guy flies out of a chair and crosses the entire room without touching the floor and smacks into the wall opposite you, you know something's going on. So one demon can possess a person and it's obvious to all.

And yet God, the Father, God, the Son and God, the Holy Spirit can supposedly come into the life of a man and he can live in carnality and worldliness. And the only thing he does is come to church on Sunday morning. I'm afraid not.

I don't know about in your world, in your theology, but in my world, in my theology, the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit is much stronger than anything demonic. You see, here's what happens. You start off with true theology and then you reduce it down to creedalism.

An impersonal knowledge in which you set forth a few certain things about what Christianity is and you agree to them and all the power is gone. And then that, if you stay there, is finally reduced from creedalism to superstition and that's where we're at today. I prayed that little prayer one time.

I'm going to heaven because the evangelist told me I was and even told me to write it in the back of my Bible in case I ever doubted it. He says, look, if you are a Christian, Christ is in you. But you may fail the test.

What he's saying is if there is no outward, practical, real, observable evidence that Jesus Christ is in you, it's because he's not. It's because he's not. How can it be that there are some Christians who this morning in Peru got up three in the morning and walked six hours on foot an old path through the Andes Mountains to attend church? How is it that there are pastors in China and North Korea rotting like dogs in a prison

and could be set free if only they would promise not to speak of Jesus? And yet people who identify themselves with Christianity in the West, the United States, Western Europe, who, if it rains outside, they can't come to church and who never minister in his name and pay no price for the faith.

May I ask you a question? What does it cost you to be a Christian? How much have you lost? How much have you suffered in the name of Christ? You see, there's a big discrepancy that's really hard to overcome. What's going on? He says, examine yourselves, test yourselves to see if you are in the faith. Now, how can we do that? How can we truly test ourselves? I want you to go over to First John for a moment.

Chapter five, verse 13. John is a marvelous writer in his gospel. When he finishes writing his gospel, he tells us why he wrote the gospel.

He said that you might believe, that you might believe in the Christ, that you might have eternal life. When we come to his epistle, he also tells us why he wrote the letter. And he says in verse 13 of chapter five of First John, these things I have written to you.

What are these things? The letter. Could say this letter I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, those of you who profess faith in the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life. The purpose of First John is that by reading it, in reading it, you will find a series of tests.

Against which you should compare your life, and these tests will help you determine whether or not you've truly come to know him. So that your faith or your assurance of salvation is based on something more than the word of an evangelist who hardly ever studies his Bible. But your salvation and your assurance is based upon the infallible, inerrant, inspired scripture that the Holy Spirit uses to bear witness to our heart.

Now, let's look at these tests. We're going to look at them now. First John, chapter one, verse five.

This is the first test. The true believer walks in the light as a style of life. That's the first test.

And let's read. This is the message we have heard from him and announced to you that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. Now, what does that mean? It means basically two things.

That's the marvelous thing about John. When he writes, so many times he writes where there can be a double interpretation. He does it so often that we think he does it on purpose.

When he says God is light, what does that mean? Well, it does mean, as the common interpretation is, that God is holy. There's no evil in God. There's no darkness in God.

God does not sin. God is not tempted. God is holy, righteous.

Yes, that's what he is. But since in the context of this letter, there were a bunch of false teachers that had come into this church and they were teaching that God was very esoteric, very dark, very hidden. And the knowledge of God was hidden and dark and hardly anyone could understand it.

These false teachers were saying, look, you know, God is very, very hidden and you can't know him. So John is coming and he's saying, look, God is light, he's holy, but also he has revealed himself. You know who God is.

God has told you who he is and God has told you what his will is. Now, I can say that about everyone in this room. Now, you might not know every nut and bolt of the thing or be able to dot every I and cross every T, but you know, things like God is holy.

You know, thou shalt not kill. You know, a lot of the commandments, you know, some things about God. God's not hidden.

He's told you who he is, not only through his law, but through the conscience, through the law written on the heart of even the unbelieving man. So God is light. He's told you who he is and what he requires of thee.

Now, this is what it says in verse six, if we say we have fellowship with him, that means if we say we are saved. If we say we are Christians and yet walk in darkness. We lie and do not practice the truth.

Now, what does it mean to walk in darkness? To walk in the light means that you're walking according, living according to what God has said about himself. And and living according to what God has said about his will or his law, it's to walk in those things that God has revealed about himself and his will, his commandments. To walk in the darkness is to walk in a way that contradicts what the Bible teaches about God and contradicts what the Bible teaches about God's will.

Again, it's to walk as a lawless man. As a pagan who does not know God. As a lawless man who does not care about his will.

Now, to walk. The word the Greek word is *peripateo*. OK, but it has something in front of it, a prefix *peri*, which means around.

And it means to walk around in the light. I think that's very, very important because it means style of life. Not just walking in your religious walk, in your church walk, but everywhere you walk, everywhere you walk around, you're walking in the light of God.

You're walking according to the commandments of God in the church. You're walking according the commandments of God in your family. You're walking according the commandments of God in your business, in your work, with your children.

Everything is orientated towards knowing God, knowing his will and submitting to it. Someone can look at you and realize your life is marked by a desire to know who God is and to know his will and to carry it out in every aspect of your life. Can someone say that about you? Or is your only boast you prayed a prayer a few years ago? Can someone look at you? Because I'm not concerned about your heart.

I'm really not. I hear people all the time. They'll tell me, well, you know, you can't judge a book by its cover.

Yes, you can. Jesus said just the opposite. If you've ever said you can't judge a book by its cover, I want you to know you're teaching the doctrine of the devil.

Because Jesus Christ said just the opposite of what you said. He said, you will know them by their fruits. You will know them internally in their ontology, in their being.

You will know who they are by what they do externally. So there you go. Church is so filled with cliches and wives tales.

That's unbelievable. Well, thou shalt not judge. Thou shalt not twist scripture.

Because the same Jesus who said thou shalt not judge in Matthew chapter seven in the first part and the last part says judge, says you will know them by their fruit. So you see, my dear friend, have to be very careful, don't we? I think we invent a lot of these cliches in order to protect ourselves from the fact that we don't know God. So the first question that I have for you is if someone were to look at the style of your life, if someone outside of you now, we don't want to hear about your heart.

If someone was looking at you from the outside and studying your life, would they look at you and say. There is a person that they're serious about knowing God, and I can see they're serious about knowing God's will and they're serious about following it, they're not always perfect, no, they fall, they sin, but if you look at their life, you can tell, you can tell. Now, what about you? If someone looked at you, what would they say? If they followed you around in your home, in your work, what would they say, would they would they look at you and see you concerned about knowing God and knowing his will for your life and the life of your family and the life of your children, would they would they see someone like that or would they see someone who attends church on Sunday? What would they see? And, you know, one of the biggest lies that's going to pop into your head this morning, it's this.

I don't like that guy. I really don't like that guy. You know, you probably have good reason not to like me.

But that still doesn't change the fact that you're not confronted by me, you're being confronted by the word of God, and you've got to determine, is this true about me or not? You see, the devil will allow my bad personality to give you an excuse to walk out of here without hearing God's word. So the question is not whether you like me or not. The question is, am I telling the truth or am I lying? And if I'm telling the truth, you need to listen to it.

And you need to ask yourself, do you walk in the light as a style of life? Because if you don't, one of the evidence is that maybe you do not know him. We go on to the next test, verse 8. If we say we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us. What does that mean? Well, the first test was the true believer walks in the light as a style of life. The second test is this.

The true believer is sensitive to the sin in their life and that sin leads them to repentance and that sensitivity leads them to repentance and confession. Are you serious and sensitive about the sin in your life? Isn't it amazing that some people in the church can commit adultery or have vile, angry spirits and attitudes, can lie, can just not even be concerned about the things of God, and yet come to church and be happy every Sunday without any notion whatsoever of sin, can watch the vilest programs on television, can just look at any manner of thing and not be concerned a bit about it, not be affected. And then you have other people in the church who, if God begins to move in the church and deal with people about their sin, they're just broken and they're humbled and they're crying and they're weeping out to God and they're confessing their sin.

It's always amazing that when God begins to do a work in a church and God begins to deal with the sin of the people in the church, it is amazing that the most holy, most devout and most dedicated Christians are the ones who come forward weeping over their sins, while the most carnal, wicked, backslidden, cold-hearted church member sits there as though nothing was said about them. And what you're seeing is

the difference between a lost man and a saved man. A saved man is not perfect, but a saved man is sensitive to his sin.

And that sensitivity and that leadership and conviction of the Holy Spirit leads them to repentance and confession. Have you ever read the text, Esau, Jacob I loved and Esau I hated? What that means is this, God loved Jacob and he hated Esau. That's what it means.

It means exactly what it says it means. But how does God show hatred towards Esau and love towards Jacob? Well, if you look at Esau's life, every promise God ever made to Esau, God fulfilled. And Esau was so blessed and so wealthy when Jacob returned to the land that he needed nothing from his brother.

I mean, so how did God love Jacob and how did God hate Esau? What was the manifestation of that hatred? And it was this, never one time in Scripture does God convict Esau of his sin, discipline Esau, go after Esau, change Esau. He never deals with Esau, never deals with his sin, never deals with his carnality, never deals with anything. He lets Esau be Esau.

How does God manifest his love towards Jacob? He beat the living daylights out of the guy every day of his life. It wasn't Esau who was limping because of the discipline of God. It was Jacob.

Every time Jacob tried to do something that wasn't according to the will of God, it was according to his own self-will and his own pride. God would not let it happen, tore the boy apart. Same thing you see in the church today or in what's called the church, church membership role.

You have some people that can commit every manner of abomination, never attend church, do all sorts of things, but they believe they're saved, but God never touches their life. He never disciplines them, never deals with them, never does anything with them. And why is that? They're not his.

In the book of Hebrews chapter 12, it says, if you do not receive God's discipline, you're an illegitimate child. You're not born again, you're not a child of God, you're just a pagan. That's what it says.

Now, let me ask you a question. When was the last time you wept over your sin? When was the last time you wept over the fact that maybe you didn't love your wife as you should? When was the last time you wept over the fact that you serve yourself more than you serve Jesus Christ? When was the last time you wept over the fact that your head is filled up with thoughts about you and your own endeavors and not much about the Kingdom of God? When was the last time you wept over the fact that there were petty sins in your life that even after all these years, you haven't been able to overcome? Tom, when was the last time you were down on your knees confessing sin to God? That ought to frighten you. Because I talked to a great deal of people throughout this land, and many of them say, I can't even remember when I wept over sin.

I can't even remember when my heart was just struck like a knife through it because of something I had done. It only means one thing. We've got a lot of glorified, perfect Christians in America, or we've got a bunch of lost people who think they're saved.

So the second test, the question would be, the first one is, do you walk in the light as a style of life? Is your life marked by walking according to what the Bible teaches about God and about His will? The second test is this, if someone looked at you, would they be able to see that you are sensitive to the sin in your life? You hate it, and it leads you to repentance and confession. Now let's go to the next test. Verse 3 of chapter 2, by this we know that we have come to know Him if we keep His commandments.

Now listen to this, verse 4, the one who says, I've come to know Him, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar. Now look at that. I mean, it doesn't take, I know a lot of you guys are rocket scientists, but you don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand this.

Listen to what it says. The one who says, I've come to know Him, I'm a Christian, and does not keep His commandments, is a liar. He's a liar.

Just an out and out liar. You lie about being a Christian. That's what it says.

You know, I'm convinced that most seminaries teach preachers how to preach in a way so to take the blade off of the text and not be offensive. If I was in preaching class, I would have been told I shouldn't have said that. I'm not in preaching class.

I graduated a gazillion years ago, and I really don't care, because the one who's going to grade me is sitting in heaven, and I fear him. Look what it says. The person who says they're a Christian, and yet they have very little concern for understanding and knowing the commandments of God and applying them to their life and obeying them, is a liar.

When they say they're a Christian, a liar. Can you imagine standing there on the day of judgment and hear, depart from me, you liar? Oh, I don't think he'll say that. Really? Go back to Matthew again.

Depart from me, you worker of iniquity. Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness. Depart from me.

What is lawlessness? To act as though God never gave you a command to obey. Depart from me. Now, when it says keep the commandments, does it mean that the only evidence of a true Christian is absolute, perfect obedience to the commandments of God? No, because he's already said that Christians sin.

He's talking about, again, style of life. A person who is genuinely Christian. It doesn't mean your heart's going to burn every day to have a quiet time.

It doesn't mean that every time you read the Bible, you're going to learn something. It doesn't mean that it's not going to be a struggle. But it does mean this.

In the life of the true believer, you're going to be able to witness. You're going to be able to see a genuine concern for knowing the commandments of God. Obeying them, and when that Christian does not obey them, then the second test applies.

He will be convicted of his sin. His heart will be broken. He'll be led to repentance and he'll confess it before God and start all over again.

But to so many people who attend church on Sunday morning, the commandments of God never even enter into their mind through the week. And the will of God, not just the commandments, not just the preceptive will of God, which is the will of God revealed in precepts, but the decretive will of God, the will of God in decrees. People go, young people go off to college.

Christian young people go off to college. Why? Because that's what people do. Never concerning themselves with, is it God's will for me to do this? Marry without ever considering, is this God's will? Get a job without ever concerned about, well, it must be God's will.

It pays more. You see, the fact is, if you're a Christian, you're a slave. Your son, you're a slave, a bondservant.

Bondservants don't have ambition. They're not self-willed. The only thing they do is stand at the door of the master in the morning until he comes out and says, this is what I want you to do today.

And they go, okay, Lord, I'll do it. Democracy is a great thing, but it sure doesn't help you be a good Christian. Because you don't understand what it means to have a king.

You don't understand what it means to have a king. An absolute sovereign Lord. Do you know that Jesus Christ in the New Testament is called a tyrant in the Greek language? He is.

There are a few passages in which the word that we transliterate tyrant is used with regard to Jesus Christ. Did you know that? He's called the tyrant. Now, for men to be tyrants is a horrible thing because tyrant means literally absolute power, absolute authority, absolute sovereignty.

And we know that with regard to men, you know, absolute authority corrupts absolutely. But see, Jesus is the righteous Lord of glory, and He is a tyrant, make no mistake about it. What He says goes.

He's not into democracy. And He doesn't ask anybody to vote and really doesn't ask anybody's opinion ever. He does exactly what He wants to do all the time.

We have a really big problem with that because we think we ought to vote. At least about something. No.

Now, verse 6 of chapter 2. Here's another test, the fourth test. The one who says he abides in Him, the one who says he's a Christian, ought himself to walk in the same manner as He walked. You look at that and you say, well, then we're all going to hell.

Who walks like Jesus walked? Well, again, you have to understand the idea of lifestyle. You have to understand the idea. He's not talking about perfection.

He's talking about the one who is truly Christian. You're going to note in their life that they want, they desire in a genuine way. It's evident that they are seeking, striving to walk and act, be like Jesus.

Now, let me ask you a question. If someone's standing outside your life, even a lost person, has a lost person ever made fun of you because you're trying to be like Jesus? Have church members ever made fun of you? Because there's a lot of lost people in the church. Have church members ever made fun of you or criticized you as holier than thou because you were trying to walk like Jesus? Or has no one ever pointed a finger at you? I mean, when unbelievers walk up and go, yeah, most of those Christians, they're fanatics and they're just trying to holier than thou and everything.

But this guy, he goes to so-and-so Baptist church. He's a great guy, man. And he's just like us.

When I was a little boy, I used this illustration quite often. My daddy, he would get me up in the morning, about 5.30 in the morning. The first Bible verse I ever heard in my life was, Paul, boy, get up, no rest for the wicked.

That's what my daddy would always say. He'd come in there and it'd be cold, northern winter, snow on the ground. And we'd have to go out and bust ice for the cattle.

Or we'd have to go out and feed or something. And I remember walking out there, the moon would still be up, shining off the snow. And my dad was a big man and he would take great big steps.

And as a little boy, I wanted to be just like him. So I would follow him out to the barn. And what I would do is I would try to put my foot in his footprint in the snow.

Of course, he was my height, but I was about this big at that time. And I just looked ridiculous, like some sprawled out spider trying to reach out. And if someone would have saw me, they would have laughed.

They would have laughed until my dad turned around. They would have laughed. Look at this kid.

He's trying to do something he can't do. And he looks ridiculous and he's falling down a lot. But they would have been able to see that there was one thing that boy wanted to do.

And that is he really wanted to walk like his dad. It's the same way. The true Christian has been asked to follow in some footsteps that are spread out too far for him.

It goes beyond us. We strive. We want to do it.

We look ridiculous. We fall sometimes. And church members and other lost people look at us, point the finger and laugh.

But if you look at us, you'll be able to tell. Well, they might look pretty goofy, but yeah, I'd have to say that guy really wants to be like Jesus. Who do you want to be like? Who do you want to be like? You say, well, in my heart of hearts.

I really don't care about your heart of hearts because if it's in your heart of hearts, it's going to come out in your feet and your hands and your face and your words and your eyes and every other part of you. Can someone, a neutral, you know, bipartisan, impartial observer stand outside your life and look at you and say, man, the whole world is walking that way towards certain ambitions and goals and they all want to be like this and that. And this guy, he walks totally against the current and is going the other direction and just wants to follow some ghost from Nazareth who lived 2,000 years ago.

That's what I heard a magazine one time wrote about some guys who were trying to be Christian. They were actually musicians. And the Rolling Stones magazine wrote about them and said, they are fantastic musicians.

The only problem is they're trying to follow some ghost who lived 2,000 years ago in Judea. And, you know, that's a thing to be proud of. Those musicians should have cut that out of the magazine and framed it.

Great. You recognize I can play better than all of you guys put together and that I'm following Jesus. We'll put two and two together.

Maybe the reason that I play so well is because I follow him. But would someone say that about you? Would someone look at you? And then let's get it really personal. Would your wife look at you? Would your children look at you? Would your husband look at you? And say, they're really seeking to follow Jesus.

We always tell men to lead their home. Really, we need to be careful because you do lead your home. The only question is where and in what? Because you do lead your home.

It's like tell people, well, be an influence. Well, you are an influence. The question is, what kind? Do you seek to be like him? Do you seek to be like him? Is Jesus your model, the one you admire, the one you want to be like? Now, let's go on.

He says, verse 9 of chapter 2, The one who says he is in the light and yet hates his brother is in the darkness until now. The one who loves his brother abides in the light and there is no cause for stumbling in him. Now, that's the next test.

The genuine Christian will love his brother. Now, brother here is not someone of another race, even though we should love someone of another race, I suppose. You know, that's an amazing evolutionary statement, love someone of another race.

Do you know there isn't another race unless there's Martians or something out there? Do you realize that that doesn't even exist? And there's not even people of other color. Did you know that? They have the same color. They just have more pigment than you do.

That's an amazing thing. Well, there are people of a different color. No, they're really not.

They just got more of it than you got. So there's not really another race. There's just the human race.

But here, it's not referring to someone of a different color. It's not even referring to the poor, even though we should love the poor. That's not what it's referring to.

What it's referring to here when it says brother is you should love other Christians. The genuine Christian is going to love other Christians in a practical, real way. Well, I can worship God here out in my bass boat.

I can worship God here out on the golf course. You are the biggest liar in the world. I suppose you could, but you don't.

And even if you do, guess what? Let me tell you something. You're not allowed in the Bible to worship God the way you want to. Did you ever think about that? God says you're to worship him according to the way he's commanded to be worshiped.

As a matter of fact, there were two worship leaders in Leviticus 10 who decided they were going to worship God in the way they wanted to, and God burned both of them up with fire. You say, well, I worship God in my way. You better be careful because you might end up getting toasted.

Worship God in your way. He said, you worship me according to my way. Now, can you worship God in a bass boat? Yes.

Can you worship God in a golf course? Can you worship God in a tree stand? Of course, I do it all the time. Can you worship God turkey hunting? Depends on how big the turkey is. But if that is exclusively how you supposedly worship God, you're lying.

You're not worshiping God because God calls us to congregate together, to worship together. And then it's more than just, well, I can worship God anywhere I want because he doesn't command you just to worship him. As a matter of fact, he says you can't worship him unless you're loving your brothers in Christ, and you can't do that if you're not around them.

And then there are people who say, well, I have no problem. Gandhi, for example, the great Gandhi, that's lifted up as the great man of peace. He was an adulterer and had several wives and was very abusive to women, but that never comes into the media, does it? He said, I would be a Christian if it wasn't for the Christians.

That's a very famous statement he made because here's moral Gandhi talking about the immoral Christians, and no one cares to point out that that moral Gandhi, man, he was some kind of a character. If you ever find yourself outside of the people of God, accusing them and saying you don't want to be a part of them because they're this and they're that or they're not this and not that, congratulations, you are doing the work of your father the devil. He is a slanderer, has been a slanderer from the very beginning, an accuser from the very beginning, and you are doing his work.

And if there are wicked people in the so-called church, the reason for it is the wicked unconverted people in the church won't allow the church to do what it's supposed to, which is practice discipline and get the wicked people out. Matthew 18, 1 Corinthians chapter 5. So if it is wicked, it's because wicked people who are unconverted is keeping it that way, but don't blame the believers for it. Your friends, your companions, who do you like to be with? Now I can't say, if I just say, do you like to be with other Christians, I can really get in a lot of trouble because almost everybody believes they're Christian.

Let me ask you this question, when was the last time you got together with another man or another woman or another group of men, women, go out to lunch or just anything, when was the last time you got together with your friends to talk about Jesus Christ, just to talk about Him, just to do something in His name outside of the church? When was the last time you went over to someone's house? When was the last time you fellowshiped with a group of people and the only reason you were there was to be there in Jesus' name and to talk about Him? Isn't that terrifying? Because see, here in church, you're no more loving other believers than a man on the moon. You're sitting there in a chair. You sang a few songs, that's it.

And when we get up, isn't it true that when this service is over, the big thing is, get to the restaurant and when you're in that restaurant, you know, think about, think back on every Sunday, think back on your Sundays, when you got to that restaurant, did you talk about Jesus? Isn't that terrifying? I go to church, you don't go to church, that statement doesn't make any sense, I go to church. That's just grammatically incorrect, theologically, you can't go to church, it's impossible. This is not a church.

Church is, it is the called out group of people. You don't go to church, you are with the church. Fellow like-minded believers who love the Lord Jesus Christ and are much about Him, much about Him.

Now, let me share an illustration that I shared last night, I want to share it again because some of you weren't here. It's the idea of loving believers. If you do not love other believers, it's one of the greatest signs that you're on the road to hell.

And Jesus, when He talks about the great judgment at the end of Matthew, and He talks about the judgment of the sheep and the goats, He says, the sheep are Christians, the goats are lost people who claim to be Christians. And He says to the goats, I was in prison, you didn't visit me. I was hungry, you didn't feed me.

I was naked, you didn't clothe me. So on and so forth. Now, so many people today use that as a sign that, you know, commandment, we need to do prison ministries and help the poor.

That's not what that verse means at all. What that verse means is this. Let's say there's a group of Christians in Rome and they're meeting in the catacombs, hiding out, and all of a sudden, when one of them leaves the meeting to go home, Roman soldiers grab him, identify him as a Christian, and they throw him in prison.

Now, in prisons in South America, even today, and some that still exist, if you're thrown in prison, they do not feed you, they do not give you water. If you get sick, they do not help you. The only way you can survive is if someone visits you and brings you food, clothing, and medicine, and water from the outside and passes it through the bars.

That's the only way you're going to survive. And what Jesus is saying is this. Some believer gets thrown in prison for being a believer.

Now, the other believers, you have to decide. If I don't go take them food, clothing, water, they're going to die. But if I take them food, clothing, and water, the authorities are immediately going to identify me as a Christian and throw me behind bars too.

What do I do? Jesus says, if you go hide in your house, you're going to hell. When He talks about loving your brother, He's not talking about just being nice to him on Sunday. He's saying, I'm talking about a real sacrificial dying to self-love.

That's what I'm talking about. Lay down your life. That is the evidence that you're a Christian.

It's like when I shared last night, when we were going through terrorist territory during the war in Peru. We were terrified and we didn't have anywhere to go. And it was totally pitch dark and we're wandering through high jungle.

And we went into this village and we didn't know whether or not it was controlled by the communists or not. We made our way through there and asked someone if there were brothers there. And someone pointed to an old little shack.

And we went over there and a lady opened the door, a little Nazarene lady opened the door. And I said, we are pastors. And she grabbed us and brought us in there, killed a chicken, hit us in the basement, kept us there all night until we were able to leave the next morning.

She risked her life. I went up to buy a piece of land in the late 80s in the northern Andes. And after I made the agreement to buy the land so that those brothers could have a church, the terrorists came in the next day and slaughtered the people.

He's willing to, you see. And here's what happens. People today in churches leave churches because the pastor didn't shake their hand.

The church is so filled with lost people, it's unbelievable. Someone look at you the wrong way. Talk about going to die for someone in prison.

You can't even be nice. You know, the man who mentors me out in Missouri, dear brother, he always uses this illustration. He says, sometimes you go into a church and hear someone stand up and go, you know, we're Christians, we shouldn't be hating one another.

And he goes, if you're hating one another, you're not Christian. You're a bunch of unconverted church people who don't know God. See? Do you love your brothers and sisters in Christ? Now, I'm going to finish by saying this.

Do you actively love them? Okay, let's get out a sheet of paper and start writing. One, two, three, four. Tell me how you actively love other brothers and sisters in Christ in your congregation.

Tell me how you do it. Because, see, again, I don't want to know about your heart. That American idea that you can have all this love in your heart and it never makes it to your feet, hands, and tongue is a lie.

What do you do for other Christians? What do you do? How do you demonstrate love? I come to church. Whoopee! Thank you for your presence. What do you do? How do you manifest love for other brothers and sisters in Christ? Jesus said you basically do so by obeying Him.

For example, you've been given gifts and you're to minister them in your local church. I mean, there's so many things. Now, we're going to go through one last test and then finish.

Verse 15 of chapter 2. Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life is not from the Father, but it's from the world.

This is very, very difficult because we live in a culture that is worldly and extravagant. This is not so hard for Peruvian believers living in Condorcanchi in the jungle, but it is hard for us. A Christian can live with decency and dignity.

A Christian can live even with a type of excellence and elegance, but luxury, extravagance and sensuality are three things that God absolutely abhors. Driving cars you can't pay for, building homes that impress people, buying clothes when you've got a closet full, toys without number, things, things, things, things, things. Loving the world, thinking that what you do belongs to you.

It's all wrong. It belongs to God, everything, and you are only a steward. Listen, I said this to a group of very wealthy men one time, and they listened because they could tithe tens of thousands of dollars.

They were very happy about that. They made a lot of money, and when they gave 10% of it, well, that's good. I said, gentlemen, you will not be judged for what you give.

You will be judged for what you keep. You actually need \$500,000 a year to live with decency because that's how much you have left over, luxury, extravagance. We are to be a simple people, a pure people, in the elegance of simplicity, without luxury, and most certainly without sensuality.

I haven't noted that here, but I want you to know something, and if you talk to any other godly preacher who is an itinerant preacher like myself, he will tell you one of the hardest things to do is to prepare yourself to preach on Sunday morning in most churches in America because when you walk in, people are going to be dressed in such a fashion that a godly man has to keep his head down the entire time. My body belongs to one person, and there is one other body on the face of this earth that I care to know, and it's my wife's. Keep everything of yours to yourself because I don't want to know about it.

My wife has a great teaching on this. She tells young girls, if your clothing is a frame for your face from which shines the glory of God, it is of the Lord. If your clothing is a frame for your body, it is sensual, and

God hates what you do.

Do you desire purity? Not only purity, but let me give you a word that most people have never even heard. Do you desire simplicity? Just simplicity. There is such a beauty and such an elegance in simplicity, in not seeking to draw attention to yourself, in dressing in such a way as to have dignity and to reveal the beauty of the Lord, but nothing else.

Let me share with you, young people. Let me share with you something. You go over to Eastern Europe, and if you can get out of the larger cities, if you can get out of Bucharest or something like that, if you can get outside of the larger cities, and you get to the little villages where the communists haven't done much, you see the most beautiful, it looks like those Kinkade paintings, it's just beautiful, absolutely gorgeous, but you come into places like Bucharest or Timisoara, and the communists tore down all those buildings and they built these big cement block apartment complexes that are covered in soot and gray and dark and dingy.

And communism, in my opinion, is one of the most satanic things on the face of the earth. It is an attempt at babble, is what it is, to create a society that doesn't need God. Well, anything satanic, and it's seen in that system of government, destroys beauty.

Now listen to me, destroys beauty and promotes ugliness. Satan knows nothing of beauty. Alright, girls and guys, I was in Nigeria several years ago, and I was working, got to be with the Fulani tribe and different things, and all the women wear these just flowing robes and these turbans on their head, and it's just unbelievable.

And it's so beautiful. And then as soon as I arrived in, where was it? It wasn't Berlin, it was somewhere. Well, I arrived in some country, I forget what it was, and I remember getting off the airplane and just looking around, and people were dressed as western people.

You know, the girls in old ugly faded blue jeans, and the guys, you know, just kind of walking around. And the beauty was destroyed. The beauty was destroyed, the femininity was destroyed, just the elegance was destroyed, everything was destroyed.

Now, I'm not one of these legalistic type of preachers who scream, you know, you wear pants and you're going to hell and all that kind of stuff. I'm not really into that. But let me just share with you something.

Don't dress like the world. Don't seek to draw attention to yourself by being extravagant or luxurious. But refinement is okay.

Elegance is okay. And if you're a girl, femininity is good. It really is.

It's good. It's so beautiful. I mean, you can take, and I'll probably teach on that today when we get together with all the youth, but the world wants to take all your beauty and just give you the grunge look instead.

You know, dark under the eyes. I mean, all these models, they look like vampires. And then for you young men, the devil wants to turn you into mall waifs.

You know, you walk around with blue jeans kind of slumped over, you don't have a chest, you wear a little white t-shirt, you've got more jewelry on than any girl I've ever dated before I was a Christian. You know, don't be like the world. Don't do that.

And don't love it, because if you do love it, girls and guys, listen to me, if you really want to look like them, it's because you are like them. And if you are like them, you do not belong to Christ. Same way, adults.

You're not supposed to keep up with the Joneses, you're supposed to keep up with Jesus. Are you a Christian? Ask yourself that. Are you a Christian? Let's pray.

Father, I come before you in the name of your Son, and ask you, Lord, to give us help in this day. In Jesus' name, Amen. Pastor?

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