

Shrewdness and Bitterness

by Robert B. Thompson

Robert B. Thompson's sermon emphasizes the need for Christians to approach worship with reverence, seek wisdom in navigating temptation, and maintain shrewdness in a morally declining society.

Duration: 47:00

Scripture: Psalm 5:7-10, Psalm 53:2-3, Psalm 110:1

Topics: "Finding Joy", "Gods Mercy"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher reflects on the difficulties of life and the struggles faced by people in the community. He observes the older individuals pushing shopping carts and describes their appearance as if they have been through a lot. He acknowledges that life can be so challenging that some people even contemplate suicide. However, the preacher emphasizes the importance of finding joy in the Lord and counting our blessings. He encourages the congregation to rejoice in God's mercy and to come together in prayer before worship services.

Transcript

We'll turn in our Bibles then to Psalms 5. We started this Tuesday night, and if you're interested in what went before, it will be on Tuesday night's tape. You can get it after the service over in the tape room. We're going to be starting at verse 7, and we'll read down to verse 10.

Verses 7 through 10 of the 5th Psalm. You want to turn there and read with us or read from the screen? Here we go. Psalm 5, verse 7. But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house.

In reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple. Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness because of my enemies. Make straight your way before me.

Not a word from their mouth can be trusted. Their heart is filled with destruction. Their throat is an open grave.

With their tongue they speak deceit. Declare them guilty, O God. Let their intrigues be their downfall.

Banish them for their many sins, for they have rebelled against you. Alright, now back up to verse 7. But I, by your great mercy, will come into your house. In reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple.

I know that the church building is not the house of God. I realize that when you're not here, there is no house of God here. It's just a building.

But when we assemble, this is the house of God. Praise the Lord. So, I want to inaugurate a little procedure here.

And I asked John Beck to help with this. I would like, if you will be so kind, on Sunday evenings when we start at 6 o'clock. It tends to be a little raucous.

And I would like to begin, and for Stan and John Beck, help begin with five minutes of prayer. Just call everyone up, particularly the young people, and all else who will, before we start with the worship, the music. Just five minutes, that's all it will take.

And let's give a chance to pray that God's presence will be with us. Don't you think that will help us going into the service? Yeah, I believe it will. And it can't hurt, and it might help.

Alright, in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple. And when we're in here, I like things to be good and fun and a happy place for children. I enjoy that.

Nobody enjoys that more than I do. At the same time, we have to keep a sense that we're coming into the presence of the greatest of all kings. Isn't that so? And so, when we assemble, it becomes more than just a building.

It becomes the house of God. And so, we come, as it says in Psalms, in reverence will I bow down toward your holy temple. Lead me, O Lord, in your righteousness.

Because of my enemies, make straight your way before me. And you remember it says in the 23rd Psalm, He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake. God wants to lead us in paths of righteousness.

But we have to keep praying. Our culture is immoral, and it's becoming more and more depraved. And we can get swept away in it.

And we need to be led in the ways of righteousness. Righteousness is a case of wisdom and strength. More than we have.

More than we have. Strength from God. And wisdom.

Righteousness is a case of strength and wisdom. It's not just don't do this or do this or do that. It's something that we have to be conscious of.

At all times, God, is this your way? Is this the way? Lead me. Lead me. Lead me in a plain path.

Because of my enemies. And we may take vacations and get careless and do parties and one other thing. But the enemy never does.

He's always watching. Just the time you think, oh, kick back. That's the time Satan kicks in.

And I'm not saying that we should not have times of pleasure and relaxation. We have to if we're going to be healthy. Mentally and emotionally.

But I'll tell you, boy, it's good to post a guard. It's good to keep a guard up and keep your wits about you. The Lord's Prayer is an interesting clause in there.

Really. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from the evil one. I don't seem strange.

We should have to pray to God that God would not lead us into temptation. What's going on here? You know, but that's what Jesus said to pray. And so we pray it.

Whether we fully understand it or we don't. How shall we pray, Lord? Pray this way. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from the evil one.

Well, doesn't God know we're down here? Yes. But he does like the trumpet blown. He does like to hear it from our mouth.

You can't take it for granted. He's pretty busy up there. And so you pray, lead me not into temptation.

Your feet have a lot to do with temptation. Do you know that? Your feet. Your number 12s.

They have a lot to do with temptation. How's that? Because you can walk away from it. You don't want to see how close you can walk to hell without toppling in.

You stay away. You say, well, that's a doubtful thing. Well, there's an old saying, if it's doubtful, it's dirty.

It's like a shirt. If it's doubtful, you look at your collar. If it's doubtful, it's dirty.

Amen? Well, if something in your life is doubtful, use your feet. Feet, get me out of here. Don't expose yourself to temptation needlessly.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. A very important part of the Lord's Prayer. So he says, lead me.

Lead me, O Lord. Lead me. 23rd Psalm.

He leads me in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, so that God's name will be honored among men when we do the righteous thing. Does that make sense to you? Because we have enemies. Lead me not into temptation, but deliver me from the evil one.

Well, that isn't necessary for me to pray. I'm a Christian. Hey.

Hey. Hello. That is all the more necessary.

You're a big trophy. Satan can get you and pull down a lot of other people along with you. Lead me not into temptation, Lord, because of my enemies.

Make my way plain. I don't want to walk in confusion. I don't want to walk in gray areas.

I want a black and white. I mean, this is right and that's wrong. Dear Lord, our society has gotten away from absolutes like this.

God works in absolutes. He tells you, this is wrong, this is right. Doesn't he? Well, I don't know about the middle, maybe.

You know. This is right. This is wrong.

Amen. Makes life simple. Simple.

Some things are wrong. Some things are right. Do what's right and God will bless you.

Your health will abound. You'll be protected. You'll be under the blessing of God.

Amen, Brother Thompson. Preach it. Because of my enemies, make straight your way before me.

Now, the next couple of verses here is talking about wicked people. And I'll tell you what we can get out of this is that we Christians, we tend to be sheep. There's something about conversion.

Some of you have grown up in the church and never knew what it was like, I suppose, to be not a Christian. But I was not a Christian until I was 19. I was a person in the world.

All right. Well, so in the world you have a conscience and you have a certain sense. Most people do.

Most people do. Unsafe people do. They have a sense of right and wrong.

And a lot of them try to live by it. A lot of good people in the world try to live by their sense of right and wrong. But when we become a Christian, what happens is we get this sense that our sins are forgiven.

And that's a very joyous sense. It's honey in the rock. And we feel really good.

It kind of knocks us off balance in terms of what is right and what is wrong. You say, well, it should increase it. Well, it doesn't.

Because for the first time in our life, we have a consciousness of God and we feel our sins are forgiven. And we get silly. We get silly.

And so there's a time when the natural man's moral sense, his conscience, is governing him. And over here, as Christ begins to be formed in us, we have a supernatural sense of what is right and wrong, which is even stronger and more reliable than conscience. But it's that gap of lawlessness in the middle is where we get caught.

Where we don't have the natural man's sense of right and wrong. And we haven't matured enough to really be walking in the spirit of God. And that's a dangerous place.

I call it the gap of lawlessness. And so you see Christians are speed on the highway. Well, they figure, I'll never be arrested because the Lord is with me.

You can go down and walk on the catwalk down in county and see the Christians in there reading their Bible. Because they got arrested. Because God didn't put them above the law because they serve the Lord.

Everybody say amen. But you'd be surprised how this permeates Christian thinking. I know there was a false teaching sprang up in Texas, and I don't know where else it is, that we're now in the year of Jubilee and therefore we don't have to pay our bills.

Oh, you say, well, I would never believe that. Hey, we've been sucked in on the prosperity message and the faith message and who knows what else. Christians are gullible because they feel we have a deep feeling we're better than other people.

And there's those stupid cops out there. Well, let me tell you, those stupid cops out there are agents of Christ. Say amen.

Those stupid cops out there are agents of Christ and don't forget it. I don't care whether they swear or what they do. God, this is God's world.

And He has put authority into this world. And one of the best things a Christian young person can learn is that they are not better than other people. They are not above the law, but they have to obey the law just like everybody else.

Yeah. So we tend to be somewhat sheep-like concerning evil. And that's why the Lord gave us a very interesting verse here in Matthew 10, 16.

And I want this to sink into your heart because we do do stupid things. Oh, yes, we do. Don't look at me.

We do do stupid things. We're not as smart as people in the world. Is there a scripture to that effect? Where is that, Lisa? I forget where that is.

The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. Amen. Well, I thought I was smarter.

No, it tends to be the other way. The children of this world are wiser in their generation than the children of light. And so look what the Lord told us.

I am sending you out like sheep among wolves and the world out there is wolves. Therefore, be as shrewd as snakes. How many has ever seen a shrewd snake? It's even hard to pronounce.

Shrewd snakes. And as innocent as doves. Christians tend to be as shrewd as doves.

And therefore, they're as innocent as snakes. That's usually the way it comes out. But I don't know how cunning snakes are, but they must be or they wouldn't be in the Bible like this.

So what God is saying is he wants us to be crafty, wise. Some of the things that Christians have done lately, and I feel for them because I know I probably do a lot worse. But some of our leaders, the things they say, they don't use discretion.

Oh, Lord, they're going to bring persecution on all of us. The first thing one prominent leader came out with was, well, this is God's judgment on all the homosexuals and the lesbians and everybody else. Well, maybe it is, maybe it isn't.

But in any case, you don't say that out as a Christian leader to the world. How do you think the average person in America responded to that? This guy. Doesn't he know God loves us? You know, well, you see, it may be true.

But you don't blurt out things that are true when it isn't appropriate. See, there's another way of going about it. Of saying, well, come on, America, let's get busy and pray for our country.

All of America, yay, rah, rah, get out the red, white, and blue. Let's pray for our country. Congress stands on the steps and sings God bless America.

You don't stand in front of them and say, well, the problem is all them lesbians. That may go all right in your little group. You know, or say.

But you don't say that out to the nation. How many see what I'm talking about? Well, another prominent and very able Christian has come out with another one. It just slips my mind right now.

But I was thinking, there's another way to say that, brother. Because immediately it gets the national news up. And this man said this.

You know, and you can just see it's written all over him. Oh, boy, we don't want any part of that. So, Jesus told us to be shrewd.

That's exactly what he means. Because the wolves are ready to eat you. We're harmless as dogs.

That is, we're innocent in our heart. And we'll do anybody good. It doesn't matter if it's Osama bin Laden.

We'll do him good if we have a chance. Wouldn't it be wonderful if he accepted Christ? Could you realize what that would do to the Muslim world? If Osama bin Laden accepted Christ? How many of them praying for him that he'd get saved? Are they praying for him in Wisconsin, Joe, that you know of? No, they're not praying for him in Wisconsin. No, I don't think so.

If anybody's going to pray for him, it'd be us nuts out here on the West Coast. But I'll tell you the truth. Christ died for that man.

And when you're thinking about how wicked he is, just say to yourself, there but for the grace of God go I. You know, I was praying this morning. The early hours of the morning, I woke up and I was having a wonderful time with the Lord. And there is a prominent Taliban leader.

I can't pronounce his name, but he just was killed. Well, I was praying and I said, Lord, where is this man now? How does this shape up here? And all of a sudden, it was like he was standing there. I don't communicate with the dead, okay? The Lord told me not to do that.

So you get yourself deceived. But this fellow appeared. He says, I've been lied to.

And I wasn't talking to him and I didn't talk to him. I talked to Jesus. I just said, where is he? And it was like he was in a kind of a... Oh, I don't know.

He wasn't in flames. I didn't see any flames. But he was mad.

And he says, I've been lied to. There wasn't 70 dancing girls there. Well, Christians have been lied to.

We've been told we can live like the devil and we're going to hear well done, good and faithful servant. Come on. We've been told it doesn't really matter how we behave.

We're going to hear good and faithful servant. We've been lied to. And I wonder if there are Christians up there saying, we've been lied to.

I expected Jesus to be here when I died and He wasn't even here. I wasn't told the truth. I expected to hear good and faithful servant.

I didn't hear it. Something to think about, isn't it? So God wants us to pray for all people. How many believe that? Our kingdom is not in this world.

And it may be our very fault as a church that more Arabs aren't Christians because they do frown on our immorality. And we may be looking in the wrong direction. We may need to look in the mirror and find the enemy.

Come on. Come on, because they're human beings like us. And they need Christ the same as we do.

Okay? But at the same time as we read here, not a word from their mouth can be trusted. Their heart is filled with destruction. Their throat is an open grave.

With their tongue they speak deceit. And I want you to know that. Especially the young people when you're in the world.

Don't be trusting. Listen, at my age, I hardly trust anybody. I got that way by living.

I don't trust salespeople. If there are any salespeople here, I trust you. But ordinarily, I don't trust salespeople.

I don't trust bankers. I don't trust used car dealers and real estate agents. Now, I know some of them are Christians.

God bless them. But some of them, Lord, you better have your back covered. That's all I'm going to say.

So, don't be simple and believe that the whole world out there is a loving place just waiting for you to show up and say some dumb thing. Well, this up here, Matthew 16 and 10, that's not an invitation. That's a commandment.

Be shrewd. And you say, well, I'm really a simple soul. Well, then pray about it.

Pray that God will make you shrewd. And pray when you're dealing with people. It can't be trusted, our society, that we pray for them and we work with them, but we don't trust them because our society is becoming increasingly perverse.

A lot of what's going on is increasingly perverse. Perverse, what else can you say about it? You're attacking us. Well, how about the World Trade Tower? Did you ever think about that? It doesn't matter.

You're down on the Muslims. You know, it's perverse. That's all you can say about it.

So how do you answer? You don't get mad and swear. Pray. Say, Lord, what is a wise answer from You? I'm dealing with a spirit of perversity here.

What is a wise answer? A wise answer is to say nothing. You don't have to say everything that comes into your mind, you know. That's not called shrewdness.

Declare them guilty, O God. Let their intrigues be their downfall. I have a simple saying about that.

Give the wicked rope. You'd be surprised how practical that is. And if you've got somebody that isn't doing right, and you prayed upon them, they're still not doing right, give them rope.

Let their intrigues be their downfall. So they slander you. Just commit yourself unto the Lord.

They'll fall into their own traps. Let them curse you. Their curses will come back on them if you are serving the Lord.

You don't have to get down about with the wicked people. You don't have to do that. God will take care of them, but they will bring you to Jesus if you will take the things that they do and let them drive you into the Lord.

They will do you good. The wicked will do you good. But you've got to be shrewd.

You can't be silly or stupid and act in saying stupid things because you're a Christian. Because you're a Christian, you've got to be more shrewd than the average person. You've got to be thinking, what can I do to do this person good? Or what can I do to get out of their clutches? Or whatever.

Banish them. You know, I love this. You know, there's so much of this in Psalms.

And we Christians get to be so sweet. And it isn't a good idea to be all that sweet. How many know that? It was against the Levitical law to put honey on the sacrifice.

I hear people say beautiful Jesus. That isn't what the 53rd Psalm says. Anything about beautiful Jesus.

So the Christian life is not beautiful. And if you haven't found that out, well, just wait. The Christian life is not beautiful.

It is rugged. And the cross is rugged. It isn't the old beautiful cross.

It's the old rugged cross. And it is rugged. And it's a rugged way.

And we have to endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ. Amen. Now, we have to realize that this is the Spirit of Christ in David.

This is the Spirit of Christ in David. And what is He saying? Banish them for their many sins. Oh, sweet Jesus would never say that.

Well, sweet Jesus says these kinds of things. But He doesn't want you saying them. He wants you to remain sweet.

If your enemy hungers, what do you do? Feed him. Give him a snicker bar. If your enemy thirsts, what do you have him do? But not in the sanctuary because it gets in the rug.

Alright? In other words, God says, you keep sweet. Let me do the fireworks. Jesus did not say these... Well, sometimes He did speak very harshly to the Pharisees.

But that was in the wisdom of God. That did not come out of Christ from a bitter, hateful spirit. It was prophecy.

Prophecy. It was not a spirit of hatred. God does not want us speaking out of spite or hatred or spitefully, meanly.

He does not want that. It pollutes our spirit. But just realize that God will avenge you.

Vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord. So, you don't have to.

It isn't that these horrible things that were done to you by your parents, or in the case of molestation, which is quite common among Christian women. It's not uncommon at all that they were molested when they were little girls. It's about the most horrible thing you can do to a person.

And God isn't just saying, oh, be sweet and love them anyway. God isn't saying that. Because then you stuff it.

And it never gets right. You have to do what Audrey was leading you in this morning. You have to bring it to Christ.

And let Him deal with it. Let Him deal with it. He will avenge you.

Don't avenge yourself. And don't wish for vengeance. Just clear it out of yourself.

And God will do that for you by His power. He's not expecting you to stuff it. He's not expecting you to proceed with your father or your uncle as though nothing happened.

He isn't expecting that of you. That's unreal. That's trying to be religious.

You don't handle vicious things like that. You go to God about it until God clears it in your heart and heals you. Am I making sense to you? There's power there in the body and blood of Christ to heal you from that thing that happened.

But just know this person that did this will have to answer to God. Christ said about the soldiers, forgive them. They don't know what they're doing.

They didn't know what they were doing. But those people that said, let His blood be on us and on our children, put a curse on their race. Jesus didn't say, oh, it doesn't matter that they crucified Me.

He let them hang themselves. He let Judas hang himself. The worst thing He said to Judas was, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss? He didn't say, oh, you rotten, rat, fink, giddy.

Just gave him rope. And Judas finally figured out what to do with the rope. And those that called for His blood brought a curse on their offspring.

Oh, no. I want you to see when you see Psalms like these, don't blow them off. This is the Spirit of Christ.

This is how it works in the spirit realm. But God doesn't want you to be polluted with it. If someone hurts you once, fool me once, shame on you.

Fool me twice, shame on me. And when you let bitterness come into you, you got hurt twice. And that's not necessary.

Alright, you got hurt once. God will deal with that person. You don't have to fall all over them or do anything.

Just do as the Lord leads you. You just do like Jesus. Did you betray the Son of Man with a kiss? God will do the rest.

Amen? That's very endemic, what shall I say, pervasive in our society is people that were hurt when they were young. I'm astonished at the things that I hear from people and the long-term effect that it had on them. And as Audrey was praying this morning, God doesn't want that.

That's just cripple you from moving forward. Every little bit of thing you're remembering about evil in the past will cripple you from moving forward. And I'll tell you another good prayer is to say, Lord, block this from my memory bank.

Just remove it from my memory bank. And He will. God heals memories.

So you can chew on it or you can ask God to remove it. That's not stopping it. That's God removing it.

And you come forth singing like a bird knowing that God will deal justly with whoever harmed you. Because you don't wish evil on them. God may bring them through terrible things like the man in Corinth until they finally repent.

Believe that with God. Oh, that's good preaching, I'll tell you. I'm about to take up the offering again.

No. No. But let all who take refuge in You be glad.

I love these. And there's so much of this. This is the same thing as Jesus said, Abide in Me.

It's the same thing as the 91st Psalm. He that dwells in the secret place. You have to live in Christ like a room.

You live in Christ. You take refuge in Him. There's no refuge.

I'm sure people on the West Coast and the East Coast are probably figuring they would move into one of the middle states like Kansas. Kansas is smack dab in the middle of the continental United States. Did you know that? Kansas.

Well, I'll move to Kansas. There's no refuge in Kansas. There's no refuge in heaven.

The Bible doesn't say there's a refuge in heaven. We teach that. The Bible doesn't teach that.

The refuge is Jesus. Hallelujah. And things may heat up yet.

I'm glad we're winning. Praise the Lord for our side. But I'm not sure from the spirit that this thing is over yet.

And it may get worse and heat up. And if it does, you don't want to panic. You want to know that you're in Christ.

And when you're in Christ, living in Him, which means you're thinking about Him, and talking about Him, praying to Him. It's a constant thing. I'm living in Jesus.

I'm taking refuge in the Lord. And there's safety there. There's no safety from our armed forces.

They do the best they can. There's not safety. The safety is in Christ.

Come on, listen. I'm almost through. I'm in these psalms because I believe the Lord said feed the people with strength.

Feed the people with strength. I'm trying to feed you with strength. And the psalms are strength for war.

It's a book of war, the psalms is. Let them ever sing for joy. Joy is the ultimate goal of God.

Even love gives way before joy. Joy is the ultimate goal of God. As a creation in which He's full of joy, Christ is full of joy, the Holy Spirit is full of joy, all the saved people are full of joy, everybody's full of joy.

That's where it's all going. You need to keep that in mind. Because this world is not a bowl of cherries.

Come on. Some of you have been through it. Some of you haven't.

But I'm telling you, there can be rough times. Rough times. Rough, rough times in this world.

This world is simply difficult. I look sometimes at the people in Escondido. Some of the areas there, Quince and Mission and around in that area.

You see a lot of people there that are older. Some of them are pushing shopping carts. Some of them look like they've been dragged through a sewer pipe.

That's what they look like walking down the street. And I think to myself, that was somebody's little girl. That was somebody's little boy at one time.

Playing with his teddy. It was a little girl with a bow in her hair. These people, and then you see them going down the street with a vacant look on their face, unkempt, unshaven, pushing all their belongings in a Vans cart.

Life beats the juice out of you. And then you can get a wrong impression of life. Some commit suicide.

Even young people commit suicide because they're already frustrated and figured life is so bleak they're hoping for the next world. I wouldn't advise it because you don't know what you're going to get into. It might be worse.

We say there's no pain in the spirit realm. I wouldn't count on that. Hell is in the spirit realm.

Lake of Fire is in the spirit realm. Being beaten with many stripes is in the spirit realm. No, I wouldn't count on getting out of my problems by committing suicide because what happens is once you're in the spirit realm, you can't faint, sleep, or die.

See, at least in this world, if the pain gets bad enough, you'll faint. If it gets intense enough, you'll pass out. Or you can escape for a while by sleeping.

And finally, God and His goodness takes you by death. But you commit suicide and then you're in the spirit realm, in the hands of God, and you can't pass out. I mean, you're there.

And let me tell you, spiritual pain, mental pain, emotional pain is terrific. Terrific. And you don't know how long it's going to last.

So that is not a smart move. See, God is talking here about let them ever sing for joy. Who sings for joy? Who sings for joy, people? All? Those who take refuge in the Lord.

And in the case of some of the young people or the older ones either, you may get to the place where you feel, I am so frustrated. I am so out of this. I can't see any hope.

This life is so dumb. Well, it's because you're not living in Christ. If you were, you would have joy.

And God wants you to have joy. He wants you to have joy. He's bringing you to joy.

And you may say, well, it doesn't seem like it. I know it doesn't seem like it. He's bringing you to joy.

Everybody say amen. Amen. He's bringing you to joy.

Believe it. In thy presence is fullness of joy. Do you know what that means? That means there's nothing you want that you don't have.

Now think about that. Because as long as there's something you want you don't have, you don't have fullness of joy. 10% of it there is lacking.

Does that make sense to you? God is bringing you to the place where you will have everything you want. Fullness of joy. Fullness of joy.

Why do you think God up there is broke? Or He created you to be miserable? You say, but this world is miserable. This world is miserable because of sin. Not because of God.

Because of sin. God didn't run those two airplanes into the World Trade Towers. God wasn't in anybody's co-pilot up there.

People did that. Okay? Well, God didn't protect us. No, He didn't protect us.

Why didn't He protect us? Well, you don't have to think too hard to figure out why. But He didn't do it. And sickness and death and pain and misery and insanity and everything else are not gifts from the Spirit.

You read the gifts of the Spirit in here, you don't see any of them are insanity. Or pain or paralysis. The Holy Spirit doesn't give you a gift of paralysis.

Everything that comes from God is good. Okay? Heart attacks, Bob, are not a gift of God. They're not a gift of the Spirit.

Okay? We're living in a world that rebelled against God originally and still is rebelling against God. And that's why we have pain. So a wise person puts it together.

Why am I miserable? It's because of sin. What do I do about it? Get rid of the sin. You're not going to do it by suicide.

You're not going to do it by running from God. That doesn't make any sense. That's going to make things worse.

Well, I'll do drugs and that will relieve me. Sure, it will relieve you for a while. But it isn't going to last and you know that.

Eventually, you won't be able to think clearly. Amen? Booze isn't going to do it. And you're not going to find joy in a bottle.

You can get yourself out of the picture for a while. You know, like I'm out of here. Somebody said that recently, I'm out of here.

Not mentioning names. I'm out of here. Sure, you can get out of here by jamming yourself with fast music and drugs and booze.

But eventually, there comes an accounting. Somewhere, somehow, you're going to be brought to an accounting. And so there's foolishness.

It's not smart. In other words, it's dumb. It's not the way to go.

You're not going to end up as a happy camper. But there is a way to end up as a happy camper. And that's to take refuge in the Lord.

Make Him first in your life. Then you've got a shot at joy. And if you keep on with it and appear well done, good and faithful servant, you'll have joy forever.

That's hard to realize. Joy forever. Man, I'm so used to being beat around the head three times a week.

Joy forever? Whoa! That's better than eating cheese. Huh? Eating cheese and not getting high blood pressure. That those who love Your name may rejoice in it.

I love to rejoice in the Lord. I love to rejoice in holiness. You know, these things are kind of contagious.

When you start out, it seems like the biggest drag on the market. But after you get used to it and get into it, it becomes kind of addictive. Oh, I want more holiness.

That's what I want for Christmas is more holiness. I want to be holy like the Lord is holy. I want to be holy.

Oh, man! I'll tell you, it's better than peanut butter and Snickers bars. Those who love Your name may rejoice in it. God loves people who work righteousness and rejoice in it.

Not dragging around, wishing you were sinning. What a depressing thing that must be for God to look down at people and think, oh, I wish I was out of here. I wish I was back watching television.

Watching Harry Potter. Which reminds me, I'm not going to start on Harry Potter. I had to tell you about the Titanic.

I hope I don't have to tell you about Harry Potter. But it teaches the children to read. Well, why not give them pornographic magazines? Maybe that'll interest them and they'll read.

You know, there's such a thing as high interest, low vocabulary readers like Cowboy Sam. You don't have to go to Harry Potter because what that's doing is setting up millions of young people for spirit guides. What do you think the kids are going to get out of this? There's power and fun in the spirit realm.

Well, the first thing you know, there's going to be a little animal or a little elf or maybe a cute little dragon or something. That's going to come into their bedroom at night and say, Hi there. You know what my name is? It's Mary Bell.

Oh, Mary Bell. And I'm going to be your friend. And you know that person in the school that's mean to you? Oh, I'm going to fix them.

Oh, you are Mary Bell? Oh, yes. And your teachers will love you and you'll get good grades. Oh, and you'll have power.

That is what Potter is setting up. And you better know it. Satan is not dumb.

He found a way to get at the American public who worship education. We'll get them. We'll give them a book about the supernatural that the kids with as high interest, low vocabulary.

We'll get them. And everybody will bless it. Oh, the librarians are ecstatic.

Many of the parents that the children have not found reading interesting are ecstatic. Everybody's ecstatic. And if you think Satan is dumb, you're missing it.

He's very clever. Now, I'll tell you what's stupid. It's to go out and say, Harry Potter's of the devil.

You know how many friends you'll have in the community? The whole community will be in an uproar. And our new sign they'll be up there. I'll put it out there.

Harry Potter's of the devil. That sign will last about two days. And it'll be nothing there but just fragments on the ground.

That's not what you call shrewd. There's nice things you can say. Oh, you found Harry Potter interesting.

Well, isn't that wonderful? Well, I found another book too that I really like. Let's try this one. You know? Some treasure island maybe.

Or even the Wizard of Oz, although some people that are against frogs and owls are also against the Wizard of Oz, so I don't know if that would be the greatest, but it's a cut above Harry Potter for sure. You've got to be shrewd in what you do. You don't go blating out everything that came into your mind so there's a constant running stream that starts here and runs out through your mind.

People are saying, I wish you would shut up. I can't get my stream going. And it's the truth.

Oh, we fall in love with our own words. That those who love your name may rejoice in you. You know, sure, our nation is facing dreadful things and God knows what's going to happen today or tomorrow, but God wants us to be rejoicing.

And why is that? The joy. This reminds me of that show on television. We fill it in.

Give me a T. Anybody give me an S. An N? We come up there. Who got it? Don't anybody have it so far? We've got a T. You got it! Give that man \$500,000. If you want to be weak, be miserable.

Go around chewing on some old bone. If you want to be strong, rejoice in the Lord. You say, I don't have anything to rejoice about.

Yes, you do. Yes, you do. As a matter of fact, if you're here and you're ambulatory, you're able to get around, do you realize how many people wish they could do that? Just start thinking about it.

We used to sing, count your many blessings and see what God has done. Maybe we need to break that out, Stan. For surely, O Lord, You bless the righteous and He does.

You say, if this is a blessing, I'd hate to feel the cursing. It is a blessing, but it's leading you to joy. It's leading you to where you have joy, but you can maintain joy.

It's where it's all going. Our God is bringing us to joy. You surround them with your favors with a shield.

Oh, hallelujah! Shall we stand? Praise the Lord.

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