

# Who Do You Say I Am?

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[0:00] Well, good morning, everyone. It's good to see everybody. We survived another winter. This was pretty mild, wasn't it, compared to those who are from here.! You just think, how many more can we get of those like that, Lord?

But anyway, thank you for it. Sorry to those who are winter buffs and love snowmobiling. But, man, like I said, I really enjoy getting up at 40 degrees weather.

And I see my son in North Carolina tell me it's 60, but just for me, 40 feels like 60 during this February or March. So, good to see. A little bit of thing here, not much preface this.

I'm going to spin off a little bit what I've been taught last Sunday or whatever, a while ago back. But I like the song there. It says, I depend on you. It's kind of that, what we're dealing with today.

As the older I get, and I pray that's for young people as well and everything else, but I realize how much more I have to depend on God. I'm now saying those famous words, Lord willing. I will be there, Lord willing.

[0:58] And that's kind of telling me something, and so does my kids remind me occasionally. But the point getting at is I think the more we see the day approaching, the more we're going to have to depend on him.

Because, again, like I said, it's going to get a little darker each and every day, and it's going to get a little tougher to have to deal with. We pray as the church. We are the restrainer.

We do hold a lot of this back. We realize when we're gone, then it just, Katie bar the doors, lack of better terms. I don't know if that's even used anymore. But, like I said, again, it does totally get out of control.

I mean, you have three different ways of things going. You've got people, first place, a world that has no believers on it. The first time ever, there's no believers here. And they're all trying to scamper to figure out what's going on, and it's going to be difficult for them at times.

Then you've got an Antichrist person, and then you've got Antichrist. You've got Satan, who's also going to make it tough on them. And then the third thing, you have God's wrath.

[1:59] We're underneath his grace. Since that finished work of the cross that we have received, we haven't seen God's wrath. Now, he does make his judgment, but we don't see his anger. But his anger will be on this earth, and I know that's tough for us to swallow.

But that's going to be the truth. And why is that? Because of the judgment. Because they will not accept. They were not willing. And the only way God can get those to come is by seeing that this is the end days.

So as I teach here a little bit, I'm going to take off here a little bit of a gospel, but I'm going to start with Matthew. Well, I'm not going to start with that, but that's where I'm going to teach out of. But my last teaching given to me was on Luke 18 about that persistent widow and her persistency to speak, to seek, and to seek her just reward.

And Jesus had those closing remarks of saying, when the Son of Man returns, will he find faith? And that's a true question. First place he was speaking to the Jews, and I think prophetically he meant it there at the present time.

But he was also looking down the road, saying when he returns, will he find the Jews in faith, which we know by Zechariah, a third of them will be. And there will be people on earth here, and many will give their life during the tribulation.

[3:15] So again, he's looking down the road with this. We also get insight on Matthew 24 in regards to Jesus stating signs that the end age

will be like the days of Noah.

Now that to us is not me and maybe a whole lot. And then when you read the book, part of Genesis of Noah, you don't get a lot of information from there. But you do get an idea that there is this crazy sinlessness going about.

Because when you think about it, there's millions of people on earth, possibly a billion, but millions anyway. We'll just keep it down the number low, but only eight get on the ark.

And you know Noah took, what, a hundred and some years to do this, and he's preaching and teaching as these guys are helping him build, and I'm sure they're getting paid and fed and everything else. But yeah, yeah, yeah.

But I'm going to go down to the bar as soon as I get done here. I'm not trying to knock bars, but they had to be going somewhere, drifting. So that's again, like I said, and Jesus used that same analogy.

[4:13] He was saying that they're going to be eating and drinking and merry, and it's going to be business as usual, he says. And he says, they knew nothing about it until the flood came. And I'm going to read from 2 Peter 3, chapter 3, verse 3, and I'm going to start there a little bit to kind of prime the pump.

It says here, and again, like I said, in verse 3, first of all, you must understand that in the last days, scoffers will come and scoffing and following their own evil desire. They will say, where is this coming he promised?

That's what they're going to say. And we're going to hear that more and more as we say we see it coming, because we are under the Holy Spirit. We can see things happening. They're going to have difficulties following that.

But you're going to get these scoffers, these naysayers, that ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it's since in the beginning of creation. Doesn't that sound like the days of Noah? They had to be saying the same thing when that ark was being built.

Come on, Noah. We've never even seen rain. And you're telling me we're going to have floods? You know, it's the same here. Come on, Mr. Munson. You're just getting older. You're probably thinking you're going to die soon.

[5:18] That's probably why you're swoping for rapture. Not really. I'm just looking at the times as they unfold because I have this much wisdom underneath me. I didn't see this in the 60s. I didn't see this in the 70s.

I didn't see this in the 80s. I didn't see it in the 90s. 2000, it started to become real clear. And we got 25 years off that yet. So it goes on, it says, everything goes on since the beginning of creation. But they deliberately forget, Peter says, that long ago God's word, the heavens existed and the earth were formed out of water and by water.

He says, by these waters also the world at that time was deluged and destroyed, Noah. By the same word, the present heavens and earth will be reserved for fire. So we know that God made a covenant, made a rainbow, said he'll never flood the earth.

But he ain't going to say he's never going to destroy it again. He's going to. He's going to eventually light the whole world on fire after a thousand years of rebuildment. He doesn't want to see one fingerprint of man anymore on this earth.

[6:21] Because they go and turn rebel again after he released Satan. After a thousand years living in Utopia, he releases Satan. What do they do? They go back to their old ways. It tells you how this Adamic nature in us is powerful.

Even though we're saved, I don't know how we don't explode when we receive the Holy Spirit. And that's another thing. But it's difficult. My old Adam nature, if I'm young and I'm older now, still tugs at me.

Still wants me to say something. Still wants me to react to something. Just like Jack talks about driving. Wants to say, hey, what are you doing there? You know, I'm just saying.

It's just in me. And I still got to hold it back. It says, by the same word, the present heaven and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly men.

This is where we need to keep that in mind here. This is a destruction because men will become lawless. And this is where Peter is saying. But he goes on and says that he talks about a year is like

a thousand.

[7:20] So, again, don't be patient here. Again, as I talk about technology advancing us in toward the end days and its leaping and bounding, so is God. A thousand years is like a day and a day is like a thousand years.

So he's also moving in that same fast pace. So what we learn here is I spent some time on Paul writing about Ephesians, about gearing up for the battle and how we're positioned to stand firm. Not the lunge forward. We're not on the attack. And, again, like I said, we don't stand down or the military kind of talks at ease. Nor do we kick back. Again, we should discern this position. Again, this tells us what we should be doing. And, again, like I said, in 2 Peter 17 through 18, it tells us. It says, therefore, dear friends, since you already know this, be on guard so that you may not be carried away by the air of the lawless men and fall from your secure position. Trust me. Today with the media and everything is trying to get you to compromise and fall from your secure position. It goes on and says, but grow in the grace and knowledge of God, our Savior Jesus Christ.

[8:27] It says, to him be the glory both for now and forever. We need to hold on to our position. We're not moving forward. We're not standing back. We are holding firm. We're waiting for those words, come hither.

And that's when we know we'll be released. But we want to be doing what God wants us to do when he taps us on the shoulder. We don't want to be doing something that we shouldn't be doing. So, again, like I said, I'm going to go here.

Eventually, we're going to go now to actually Matthew 16 where I'm going to do most of the meat and potatoes. But I'm still going to jump around, as you know. But Matthew, like I said, 16. I'm going to get there. My little marker in there, I believe.

Yes. Matthew 16. And we're going to start at verse 17. Excuse me. Verse 13. I'm sorry. Verse 13. Today, I'm going to stay on that same kind of thing about spiritual warfare and applying scriptures back then, as well as what's going on today in the New Testament and how do they apply. But starting with this, this is a part where Peter makes his confession. And this is important. So, verse 13 starts, When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea, Philippi, he asked his disciples, Who do the people say the Son of Man is?

[9:41] I bet today that could be opened up with discussion, too. But he asked them back then. He says, And they replied, Some say John the Baptist. The others say Elijah. And still others say Jeremiah or one of the prophets.

How did that ever get started? It's incredible. In fact, the Jews don't believe in reincarnation. And these guys are all dead. And they think somehow Jesus was reincarnated and made one of them. Now, that might seem far-fetched then. But what about today with the propaganda? Could that happen today? Can't we falsely say things and do things and get people to move left or right? And you're thinking, But here back then, the same thing. But why is that? Well, there's a common denominator there. And it is today. His name is Satan. He's good at deception.

So again, not recognizing. Even the demons that he drew out of people. I think Tim talked about last time about the pigs that jumped over. They even said, Did you come to destroy us now?

[10:42] Spare us. Even they recognized him. But the Jews who had the word, the Bible, the Torah, everything, seen him in the temple, watched him in his parables, did thousands of miracles.

And the rumor has it he might be Jeremiah the prophet or John the Baptist, who just died about three weeks ago. So he goes on and says to this, he says, Others say prophets.

But listen to what Jesus did. He drills down on this a little bit. He says, But what about you? He asked. Who do you say I am? So he turns around and, but like I said, Simon Peter, who seems to be the spokesman, says, answers, You are the Christ, the son of the living God.

Yes. And he's 100% right. And this is powerful what he said there. By asking Peter, who do I say I am? Peter, as a spokesman of the group, identifies him correctly as the Messiah.

Now get this. Everyone else doesn't seem to understand this, but he does. Even the whole group, I don't know if they realize that, and Peter is the only one. Now it doesn't quite give description enough, but they all gave their comments before, but at the end, only Peter speaks.

[11:48] So here we go again. We see here, by asking Peter, who do I am? He's the spokesman. He's correct. And again, like I said, but Jesus was seeking out something, and that's something he was looking for was a revelation.

He wanted to know, where were they at? Where were they standing? And again, so it goes on, it says, Before continuing, I'd like to make their point regarding, like I said, that these men that they said who they are were passed away.

And again, like I said, today this is kind of typical. We start starting rumors. We start spreading falsehood, and all of a sudden, there's a narrative out there that isn't even accurate. And we have to be careful where we're going and what we're listening to.

So he goes on. He says, Simon Peter, answering again, he used to Christ, says, Jesus replied, Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

Now that don't seem like much, but you've got to understand, these Jews are blinded to this. Jesus wanted to know, do you know who I really am, or do you just think I am some great prophet, that I am some of this great man, or one of these past prophets.

[13:00] But have you ever noticed it's the same truth for us when we come to know Christ, when we become born again, that the Father reveals it to us, who the Son of Man is, who Christ is. The Father leads us to the Son.

As Jesus says, no one can enter into the kingdom, except through me. He makes it clear that no one can, because he's the one that paid the price in full. So he tells him, he says again, but by my Father in heaven, but I tell you, that you are the church, excuse me, I tell you, he says again, excuse me, I take that back, and I tell you, you are Peter, and this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loosen on earth will be loose in heaven. Then he warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

That's kind of an interesting comment when he says this. He talks about binding and loosing, and wondering what does this actually mean by this. So what we're looking here is to continue on this same type of theme, we're looking at the revelation of Peter, and the Father realizing he's opened his eyes.

Now Jesus, why is that so important to him? What is he really looking for? Well, there's a couple things. Number one, this is his third year in the ministry. So he had to have two Passovers prior.

[14:26] Why didn't he just prepare for death then? I'm sure he was, but he didn't go because their eyes weren't open yet. See, now that he sees Peter identifying who he is, he knows the clock is ticking.

He knows the cross is coming. So that's why he's asking Peter, are their eyes open? Did the Father open their eyes?

So again, two things. First, the revelation Peter is given to the Father. Second, Jesus gave an edict to Peter in regard to having the keys to heaven, meaning he could enter through Christ.

He could get to heaven. He guaranteed it. However, again, like I said, the standard is given regarding that anything loosened and bounds on earth will be remained in heaven. So he gives him this power.

And when he is, and I can't go to there right now because like I said, I'm going to be limited on time. I'm making sure I get here. Put my phone out. But anyway, in Acts 2, for those who are interested in this, if you look and you go there, you're going to find out that verses 36 through 41 is when Peter comes out of the upper room and he lets the Jews know that what they have done, that they have crucified the Christ, the Messiah.

[15:43] And that's kind of the bound thing. You killed the God that you wanted. But here's the good news. If you repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus, you will be set free.

You'll receive the power of the Holy Spirit, he was telling them. And it goes on and talks about how they will go to heaven. So Peter is fulfilling this edict by saying here's the bad news. Here's the binding.

But here's the good news. And isn't that for us too? Here's the bad news, Mr. Munson. You don't make the grade. Your best efforts of praying and being good and being kind and helping the homeless and doing all your sweet little things don't get you to heaven.

But let me tell you the good news. There's one that went before you that went to the cross and paid the price in full for you. Paid it in full. And if you just put that faith plus nothing, just your belief in that, receive all things that was given to the Son.

I am made holy and righteous. I am made pure. I will someday, this old body will be given back to me in a glorified form. Yes, and it will be like Jesus and we will stand there.

[17:05] We'll be able to enjoy no more the old Adam in me but the new Adam, the new creation in me. And this is what they're getting at is that they're talking about. So again, here we go now.

Here we have, Peter gets this revelation. He tells them, hey, you got it, buddy. Way to go and everything else. Now here comes some of the bad news. We're going to continue on. From that time on, Jesus began to explain to the disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and teachers of law and that he must be killed on the third day and raised to life.

that didn't sound too happy to them. First place, crucifixion is no way to go. First place, besides it's painful, it's disgraceful. No one bragged about in their family that my brother was crucified.

It was something that you mumbled because you didn't want them because anybody that's crucified was to disgrace the family. Peter catches this right away. So Peter takes him from the side, took him over from the side and began to rebuke him.

Bless his heart. I can relate to Peter. Never, Lord, he said, you shall never, never happen to you. And Jesus turned and said to Peter, get behind me, Satan.

[18:23] You are a stumbling block to me. He goes on and says, you do not have the mind, the things of God, but the things of man.

How I can relate to that. Many a times, I'm in the cook, I'm in the heat, I'm in the moment of testing how I want to yield to the man instead of God.

And yes, it seems like the words were a little tough for Peter, but he needed that awakening. He'd understood that Jim Munson was waiting in line and so all were you to get in the kingdom.

Jesus knew this. He also remembered too way back in Genesis when Satan told Eve, did God really say?

Goes on again, like I said, it might have seemed a little bit tough to see this happening. But what we realize is, it says on the surface, reading these words would think Jesus was rather too stern and quick to answer.

[19:38] But if we go back to the garden where the snake deceived Eve and use some truth with a bold-faced lie and God witnessing all the centuries of the destructions, the murders, the wars, the lawlessness, and looking through the lens of Jesus, it had to be said.

More than anything else, Peter also needed the awakening. Jesus stated, you don't have the mind of things of God but the things of men. Yes, what Peter said was an admirable thing. Most people would say, well, what are you talking about?

But truthfully, that wouldn't have saved us. We wouldn't have done anything. So again, like I said, it doesn't seem like, again, like I said, doesn't this seem like typical kind of today?

That same question, who do you say I am? But who do they say I am? And again, now we're going back to this where he confronts Jesus and says that you do not have the mind of things of God but the things of men.

How luring is that today? How many times do we try to find that comfort zone, that circle that we need, that safe place so that we can feel that comfort instead of maybe suffering or having difficulties?

[20:55] What's it say? Better one place in his temple than a thousand or in his presence than a thousand elsewhere. So again, like I said, it doesn't seem to be, doesn't this seem to be the same issue today?

Is not the world operating in overdrive to steal our attention, our minds, and our hearts away from the things of God and head us toward the things of this world? You look at a lot of commercials and a lot of advertising, it just has to do with a self-righteous or a self-deserving way.

Nothing about Paul suffering when this man took his shirt off, looked like a road map for all the scars and the beatings that he took. In Matthew 7, 13, it says, enter into the narrow gate, for wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction.

But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life. And catch this last part. Only a few find it. It's hard to swallow. Here we are.

I think Tim also gave the teaching about the seeds and I'm not going to use math because this is not accurate, but I'm just going to throw this out here. If you notice, there was four different parables kind of given on it. Only one, 25%, Tim's better at math than I am, grasped it.

[22:11] It grew on the soil that came and gave it 30, 60, 100 fold. I'm not saying that's the number 25% are being saved. I'm more just trying to say is we know that it's true when he says only a few find it.

If you're wondering why the road you're taking is rather lonely and meeting someone who's a believer is far and in between, now you know why. But, however, if you're traveling down the road that is backed up with traffic, you might want to turn around before it's too late.

You're on the wrong road. The road you should be kind of lonely. The road you should be feel like a little bit that where is these fellows? Where is all my brothers and sisters at? But if you're on a road that everyone's cruising on, merrily along, getting that Noah kind of mentality, you're on the wrong road.

You really need to turn around before it's too late. But today, with so many things being thrown at us, ranging from DEI to gender euphoria, common sense is gone.

Truth is subject to one's own thinking. I'll decide what truth is, not what the Word of God says.

Again, churches are faltering because of outside pressure. Attendance is down at the younger generation.

[23:23] They have no point at this time to come aboard. And I don't blame them because they're really asking what is truth, what Jesus said, Luke 18. They want to know.

And again, like I said, notice that when we further and further away from the mind of things of God, when we go farther and farther away from the things of God and follow the things of men, the more we are deceived in exchanging the truth for the lie.

That's where we get out of Romans. So I'm going to do here just for a moment, I'm going to read 1 John 2, 18 through 19 real quick, and then I'm going to come back to 2 Timothy.

But let's go to John. Let's go to 2 John here, 2, 18. I told I'm going to jump from past tense to modern.

Excuse me, that's 1 John 2, 18. I said 2 John, sorry. 1 John 2, 18. In verse through 19, it says, Dear children, this is the last hour.

[24:30] And as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many Antichrists have come. In other words, the spirit of the Antichrist is available, not so much the Antichrist himself.

This is how we know it's the last hour. Hear me out, children. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. Post-pandemic, how many churches took a hit because they did not belong to us.

For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us. But their going showed that none of them belonged to us. It's important to understand it.

I know it's difficult. We have good friends that seem to know who God is, I think, up here, but don't know him here, 18 inches away. That's the difference in heaven and hell.

So we need to keep encouraging them. I'm not saying walk away from them. I'm not saying you shouldn't visit them, but continue to encourage them to come back and corporately worship with us. This is what God said. Paul says in Hebrew, when we see the day approaching, all the more we should be meeting and gathering and discussing these things.

[25:39] Even if we don't all agree on post or pre-trib or whatever, it doesn't matter. What matters, we should be meeting, sharing in the body of Christ, healing each other, things of this nature.

So I'm going to go to 2 Timothy here too and also affirm some of this.

If I can get there, 2 Timothy. And I'm going to go to chapter 4. I want to touch on that, verse 3 and 4. And I think this is very pretty. I love how somebody writes something 2,000 years ago and you read

it now and you're thinking, wow, that is so true.

It's amazing. But here we go again. Talk about God's word is true and let every man know he's a liar. There it is right here. But he goes on and says in verse 4 and I'm going to start there.

Or verse 3, I believe I said. Yes. Verse 3 says, For the time will come. Listen to this. This is the time he's talking about. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine, with the truth.

[26:43] Instead, to suit their own desires, they'll gather around them a great number of teachers. Just turn your TV on. This morning or whatever, you'll find these great amount of teachers right now meeting as we get Monday through Sunday.

But again, like I said, instead, again, like I said, to suit their own desires, they'll gather around them a great number of teachers, a lot of like-minded people to say what their itchy ears want to hear. It's not to educate us. It's their narrative they're trying to give to us. Their itchy ears want to hear it. How many times do you see an interview where they interview somebody and actually hear somebody that is opposite of what their views are?

Unless they're setting them up for something, that's not going to happen. They're going to get a like-minded person to interview. And this is where Paul is writing to Timothy. He says, a great number of teachers to say what their itchy ears want to hear, they will turn their ears away from the truth, who said, I am the way, truth, and turn aside to myths.

I just told you before, you use your common sense today. Don't even use your Holy Spirit wisdom. It's hard to relate what's going on. You're like, where is this person coming from?

[27:54] I can't believe this. This is where we're at. And here already, Paul's writing this. He said, there is a time coming where they'll turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to the myth.

But he tells Timothy, but you keep your head in all situations. Endure hardship. Whoa, that's interesting. That ain't what the world's saying. Do the works of the evangelist. Ooh, I don't hear that. And discharge all duties of your ministry.

Start making disciples. Others can carry it on. However, again, even though it's difficult, don't get me wrong, and I know I'm giving some pretty strong words here and food to live on.

We are got an upside coming here, but I got to just do a little more tough. So hang in there with me. However, I'm going to say silence isn't the answer either. If you think just being quiet is not going to work.

As we know in Revelation, God kind of told us what happens in Luke as far as when people are lukewarm. So God doesn't want that. And all that, it's the enemy would want you to think that, but it's not a safe place to be silent.

[29:02] It goes on, and I say, by remaining silent, you're saying a whole lot more than you think you are. Derek Bonhoeffer, which is well-known, who was a pastor during Hitler's time, and the only one that stood up, one of the few that, I should say, stood up to this man, said, silence in the face of evil is evil itself.

He goes on and says, God will not hold us guiltless. He says, not to speak is to speak. He goes on and says, if you remain silent, you have already casted your vote.

Not to act is to act. You think someone else is going to do it, and it's not for me, I'm not good at witnessing, or I'm not good at standing on my faith, you're wrong.

And you're really stating something. You're letting somebody else have the floor. You've got to come, you've got to say it, and even if it don't come out right, even if you, for some reason, just sound a little dogma about it, at least you can apologize, but look, I just want to tell you how much zeal I have for God.

What I have in my heart, I understand who you are, because I was like you. I know exactly what you're thinking. I know exactly, I try to fill me with all these things too, but they don't work. I just want to help you to understand better about this God that usually most times when I witness somebody, I find out they're mad at God.

[30:27] Something happened in their life and they blame God. And I don't blame because a lot of times we picture maybe our fathers weren't the best. They were kind of maybe tough on facts and not much on feelings and love.

But you get a chance to explain God really isn't, how your testimony changed you. So again, Bonhoeffer said, silence in the face of evil is evil itself.

You remain silent, you have casted your vote. Act is to, not act, is to act. It's a serious offense to God if you don't stand for the truth. Jesus said in Matthew 10, 33, but whoever denies me before men, him I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

Those are powerful words. Remember when they were separating the sheep from the goat? Lord, when were you? That you did unto me or that you did unto those brothers of mine, you did unto me. And even those that did good works did them but only for their own self. They didn't do it for Christ. They wanted to sit in the front seat. They wanted the glory like the Pharisees. They wanted somebody to pat them on the back and say, oh, you gave money to this?

[31:36] Where it should have been done in silence. Only you and God knows what you give. So it goes on. The price that was paid for our debt, our sin debt, was bought with the precious blood of the Lamb, Jesus Christ.

It took a sinless, all-righteous, all-loving Son of God to accomplish this redemption and to reconcile us. We just didn't get forgiven. We now have peace between God the Father.

Jesus sits between that as the propitiation. When Adam and Eve did what they did, it broke that relationship. Like I said, I come now by faith.

I don't have to bring a bowl. I don't have to throw something on a fire. I don't have to do works. Now, don't get me wrong. I do want to do good works under the power of the Holy Spirit, but I don't have to get Jim more prettier, more sweeter for God than God's favor will draw on me.

I just got to lay my heart before him. And if I'm struggling, I'll just say, help me with my unbelief, God. But I want to be honest with him. I want him to know that only he has that power.

[32:46] So when he asked me, who do you, Jim Munson, say I? I want to be able to not only say it, but live it, who he is. So again, this is reconciled.

That finished work of the cross has paid it all. You know that song says, all to the I.O. Sin has left a crimson saying. He washed it white as snow.

Is that true? That's a sweet song. Amen. We're talking about hanging in the balance between heaven and hell. Lives can be lost or saved, remaining silent or speaking the truth. You might ask Mr. Munson, do you have a Bible verse such a statement?

And I do. You go to Ezekiel 33. This is going to be some strong food, but we're going to get to some sweeter moments. But here's something that Ezekiel, and again, I feel sorry for this guy because he goes through a whole lot.

But here's what God is telling Ezekiel, and this again, like I said, we start on verse 1, 33. I just want to make sure I don't go over my time here. Yep, I've got a few minutes yet. The word of the Lord came to me, son of man, speak to your countrymen and say to them, when I bring the sword against the land and the people of the land choose one of their men and make him their watchman, that's what we also are.

[33:57] We are in the body of Christ. We are the watchman. And he sees the sword coming against the land and blows the trumpet to warn the people, then if anyone hears the trumpet and does not take warning and the sword comes and takes his life, his blood will be on his own head.

Yes. Now hear the flip side. Since he heard the sound of the trumpet but did not take the warning, his blood will be on his own head. Again, since he didn't take the warning, I'm sorry, he would have saved himself.

But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet to warn the people and the sword comes and takes the life of one of them, that man will be taken away because of his sin. But I hold the watchman accountable for his blood. That's some tough words. Let's tell him where we stand. I know this is the Old Testament.

I know it's concealed and what we're seeing revealed. And I'm going to get to the New Testament. Where do we stand? But what a tough thing to tell Ezekiel. Son of man, I made you a watchman for the house of Israel. So hear the word and I speak and give them warning from them.

[35:05] When I say to the wicked, O wicked man, you surely will die and you do not speak out to dissuade him from his ways. Somebody says, I don't believe in Christ or I don't believe in this or I believe God and you do not speak out to dissuade him from other ways.

That wicked man will die for his sin and I will hold you accountable for his blood. That was a huge responsibility on Ezekiel. Now I admit we're under grace and again I'm not going to say this is under all of us but this is what he was told.

Now the good news is again, like I said, we're going to eventually get to it. Go to 2 Corinthians 5.14. Now this is where we stand. So we do have a responsibility. 2 Corinthians 5.14.

Starting at verse 14, it says, for Christ's love compels us.

Did you get that? We don't do this on our own. It's his love compels us. We are convinced that one died for all and therefore all died. Amen. And he died for all that those who live should no longer live for who?

[36:11] Themselves, but for him who died for them and was raised again. So I no more live. It is Christ that lives in me. But follow this now.

So from now on, we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do no longer. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Talk about that glorified. The old is gone. The new has come. All this is from God who what?

Reconciled us to himself through Christ.

No other way. He goes on and gave his life to the ministry of reconciliation. We have that power and then we're going to get to that. We have that power to recognize.

We have that power. Again, here we go. It says here that God was the, excuse me, that gave us the, this ministry, that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ.

[37:14] Not counting men's sins against a man or a bunch of IOUs until Jesus went to the cross. And he was committed and he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors.

Get that? I don't know if you know anything about ambassadors and I know a lot about them. I really don't. But I know one thing. They're representing your country when you're in their country and you're supposed to hold that self-esteem up. We are considered Christ-like and we are that new creation and we are to reconcile the world back to the Father.

That is our responsibility. So through God we're making this appeal through us. So this is what I'm saying. As through God we are making this appeal through us.

And God is not doing himself. He's doing it through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

So hold your head up. Hold your head up. You're going to boast about your weakness. Tell them how Christ made that weakness work for his glory. This is where we stand.

[38:29] And this is where we're at today. We are ambassadors. We are that new creation. We are the ones that are the voice, the vehicle. Remember Christ says you've seen what I do?

Well after I'm gone you'll do more than what I'm doing. How? Because there's millions of us now. That's how we can do more. He only had one. One man, one ministry. This is the power we have. So that's why I'm saying be bold. Especially as we see the day approaching. As I kind of said before I work with the homeless population. I ain't going to go real far. But it says there's no atheist in a foxhole.

I believe there's no atheist that's homeless. I've many times had visited them. I said the best I can do at this point but I'm going to give you my best. And they were looking probably for money or looking for food and different things.

And not that we don't get those. But I told them I'm going to pray over you. Remember Peter says silver and gold I do not have but what I do have I will give to you.

[39:27] Prayer is not the last resort. Prayer is the first resort we should go to. I'm going to pray over you. And I can't tell you how many times that client come back to me and said that changed.

This moved. That wall fell. This barrier went down. All I do is give him the glory. So as God watchman on the wall and Bonhoeffer pastor as a theologian knew and saw with his own eyes and the church is the same apathy and impassiveness that led to spiritual blindness.

And this is back in 1940s early 30s late 30s the Nazi regime bullied and intimidated those who opposed them just as long as they could have the church sing to drown out those Jews packed and suffocating boxcars crying out for justice.

They sang all the louder. Trust me they too were held accountable than Ezekiel by the same God they were worshipping. Who do you say I am?

That you did to the least of my brothers. Those were Jews he's pointing at. So we can't we can't afford to remain silent neutral and different as Paul stated all the more we see the day approaching. [40:41] Again like I said we know what lukewarm does. I'm going to close off with Philippians here and then we'll bow our heads for prayer and then we'll go forward. But go to Philippians wind up on some good news.

Philippians 3.17 let's go there. Philippians chapter 3 verse 17 we're going to start there. It says join others in following my example Paul says brothers and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you.

for I have often told you before now and say it again even with tears that many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. The road is wide many take it.

Their destiny is their destruction he says their God is their stomach remember trying to pull you serve man feed yourself take care of yourself got to worry about yourself and their glory is in their shame.

their mind is on earthly things here Paul reverts it but our citizenship we who are ambassadors is in heaven.

[41:56] Remember we're pay forwarding everything to heaven. I'm not taking nothing with me. I'm investing in the place I'm going to be at in heaven. So he goes on and says but our citizenship is in heaven we eagerly await a savior from there the Lord Jesus Christ who by the power that enables him to bring everything under whose control his control listen to this this is how beautiful will transform our lowly bodies so that it'll be like his glorious body.

I know we're here and I know we're suffering I know we're having difficulties I know people are sick I know we have all kinds of stuff going on but someday that will all pale compared to what we'll have. We're in heaven and we see those glorified bodies and we're in them.

No more sorrow our tear ducts don't work no more. We say goodbye it's never forever. We don't use terms like he passed away or we lost him. Nothing like that ever again.

It'll be all worth it. It'll be all worth it so lay it down here if you can. Continue to ask God remember what John the Baptist said these are tough words because he was going to get beheaded. He said he Christ must become greater I must become less.

It's a tough battle. That's a tough battle when you've got to say I can't become more he has to and you have to contend and fight for that. So in closing the questions is ask yourself who does this world say Jesus is and ask yourself who do I say Christ is.

[43:33] Again when you're binding things or bounding things on earth ask yourself again if things are loosening and you're seeing a lot of things falling apart as we're seeing happening today and you wonder why things are falling apart because people are loosening up.

They are letting things happen that shouldn't happen. We are teaching children that are things that shouldn't be taught to them. Again third thing do you have the mind on godly things or is your mind on man things?

And again as I'm saying as I'm convicting myself and is the road you're on is it narrow? Few you can really say are close friends or is it wide and broad and they're merrily cruising along.

Again like I said I know this was some serious stuff but we thank you Lord. Let us bow our heads here and begin to pray. Dear God the Father I appreciate you giving me this chance I thank the men and even the congregation that has given me this opportunity.

Sometimes I stand up here Father I convict my heart so deeply that I realize how much I have fallen short but God I just want it to be open these people's eyes that they realize that we are coming to this time and don't be discouraged when you see all these wicked things happening.

[44:50] Look up and know that your Savior draws near. Know that we win this battle. We will someday be with him forever and ever and I have to see this happen again. So Father I thank you in that most powerful name Jesus for what you have done, what you're doing, what is yet to come.

Amen. Thank you.