

Mark 3:7-12: The great crowds / Missionaries from Brazil

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[0 : 00] So Wessel and Daisy, Oliveira, come on up, are here in the States. They're from Brazil, so you'll hear an accent when Wessel talks to us.

But he's going to share something this morning about the ministry that he has in Brazil. He's here touring around at different churches, sharing his ministry, raising some support. And he's got a table out in the hallway with some facts about his ministry and some books that he's translated.

So he'll tell you more about that, his translation ministry. But I think that's it. So I'll turn it over to you. We're going to start with a video, but you go ahead and introduce yourself, and I'll get the video set up.

Hello?

Hello? Well, good morning, everyone. I don't know how many of you have heard some words in Portuguese.

[1 : 19] Bom dia a todos. This is the translation of good morning, everyone. I would like to begin with a verse from our Bible before our presentation video.

The book of Acts, chapter 20, and verse 24. Acts 20, 24.

Let's show the video.

Here we go.

Almost there. Almost there. Almost there. Okay. Okay. Sorry. Technical difficulties. Mm-hmm. Special difficulties. Mm-hmm.

[2 : 38] All right. Who wants to fill the dead air? Sing for it. That would be actually a good idea. We can sing that song now. All right. All right. Unplugged. Are you on HDMI 4? Well, it was before. Okay.

All right. Yeah. Okay. Okay. All right. All right. Who wants to fill the dead air? Sing for it. Do it. All right.

Do you? Do it anymore? Okay. Do it anymore. Do it anymore? Okay. That would be actually a good idea. We can sing that song now. All right. Well, I'm sorry. Are you on HDMI 4?

Well, it was before. All right. All right. We'll see you next time.

We'll see you next time.

[4 : 20] We'll see you next time.

We'll see you next time. And finally, we got the visa. We got the visa. And after two years, we decided and I bought the ticket to the United States.

But you know, honestly, these last two years, I talk about the COVID, the visa, but really, honestly, I was very afraid to speak in English in front of you.

So, but I'm here because of the goodness of God. This is a big privilege to share our ministry with you. Even sometimes a little bit difficult to speak English.

Daisy's just starting to speak English the first time in the United States. And I myself only the second time trying to speak English. But because of the goodness of God, because of the importance of our ministry, I faced this challenge.

[5 : 59] I started to translate books in English to Portuguese because I was very impacted.

I feel so much joy when I understood the distinctions. I came to the Lord at the age of nine to ten years old.

And after many, many years, I was learning about God, about Bible. In 1995, I had a big opportunity to study not the full seminary, but some disciplines in seminary, some subjects.

And first time, I understood dispensationalism. But that time, dispensationalism, I understood dispensationalism by the perspective of Acts 2 dispensationalism.

And at the end of that time, I had some questions about the Bible, some open questions about the Bible. And some years after, a friend of mine, he's a pilot.

[7 : 21] And when he was in Recife, another city in Brazil, the northeast part of Brazil, my friend was in a church. He was waiting for the flight to come back to his base in São Paulo.

And he decided to go to a church. It was a grace church. And when he was hearing the message, sometime, at the moment, my friend stopped the message.

Hey, pastor. I can imagine the middle of the message. My friend stopped the message and said to the pastor, Pastor, Pastor, I know the Bible. I know all of...

I read more than 50 times the Bible. I know everything about the Bible. But for me, some things I don't understand very well. Apparently, there are contradictions in the Bible.

What Jesus Christ said, the 12th, and John the Baptist, is different from the Apostle Paul said.

[8 : 33] I don't know why, but to avoid the mistake, I prefer stands to Apostle Paul. You can imagine a question like that.

My friend understood a difference, but he can't explain why this apparently contradiction. And pastor said to my friend, Hey, Marco, just a minute.

I have to finish my preaching, my message. But I ask you something. Don't forget your question. After the service, we went to a restaurant.

And I will explain to you something you don't understand yet. But don't forget your question. And they went to a restaurant.

And pastor explained to my friend about the distinctions, about the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God, the distinction between the gospel of the kingdom, the gospel of the grace of God.

[9 : 38] And the pastor gave to my friend a book from Cornelius Stem. The name is Paul's Apostleship and Message. I think you know this book.

Paul's Apostleship and Message. And when my friend decided to read the book in a bus trip, this is Paul the Apostle.

This is another. When my friend decided to read this book in a bus, in a nine-hour trip to his house, after I finished this book, my friend, his name is Marco, he said to me, Awezel, when I finished to read the book, I felt like a pain in my chest, not because of some problem of my health, but I was so happy, so joy, because all open questions I had come down after reading this book.

Now I understand. I understand now why things apparently are contradictions in the Bible. It's amazing. And then, my friends, Marco, explained to me about distinctions.

But Marco didn't know about dispensationalism. And I taught him about dispensationalism, and he taught me about distinctions. And after this moment, I think my life changed in terms of understanding.

[11 : 21] Things to me became very clear. And because of this, I am very motivated to do what I'm doing this moment.

in 2016, Paul Chris Myers, another missionary in our mission, invited me and asked me, do you consider to be a full-time missionary?

And this moment, I understand the plan of God of my life, under my life. Because many years, I was thinking about another kind of job, profession.

I am a pilot, too, but I don't fly anymore. Many years ago, a pastor said to me, Wazio, God has to you such higher flights than you can imagine.

At that time, I didn't understand what does it mean, higher flights. I have so many difficulties to find places under the sun in this profession.

[12 : 32] this profession is for few people in Brazil. But now I understand what does it mean, higher flights. I couldn't imagine an opportunity like this to be in front of you, sharing my ministry, making the first deputation, five months, traveling around the United States, 15 states.

God has something I couldn't imagine. And I'm very thankful to God because of this. And I'd like to show you quickly some examples of books.

these books, Portuguese and English. I decided to make the same cover because it's a very classic book from Donald Webb.

And this book, English and Portuguese, The Mystery. O Mysterio, A Chave da Biblia, The Mystery.

And O Mysterio, A Chave da Biblia, The Key of the Bible. This is a very important book for beginners in terms of understanding the distinctions.

[13 : 52] And we have another three examples of books. These three books, they have already done.

I finished the translation. But these books are waiting for a found to publicate. People buy these books in a cheaper price.

And sometimes these books cost, the first edition cost more than I receive as a payment. Because we have to make people have access to these books.

For example, this edition, this first edition this book cost to me 50 in our money, 50 reais in our money.

And this book was sold to 30 reais. They are like of 20, 20 dollars.

[14 : 58] But in second edition, the first part of our production of the book, this book, editor, proofreading, the creation of the cover, diagrammation.

And the second edition, this is not necessary to pay anymore because it's already done, the PDF. And the second edition, the cost of this book for me is 15 because I only pay to the print shop.

And the second edition, I have some money back. And when we have more than one edition, we have a little, a little bit best, best balance.

But not all books, I have a second edition. So, because of this, I need our prayers about our ministry. Our goal is not to receive profits about books.

It's to make people have access to learn and understand the distinction. This is very important. And finally, I have this book.

[16 : 13] You can imagine the challenges to tell me this book. I'm translating this book just now. I stopped for a while because I came to the United States. But after I came back to Brazil, I keep going to translate this book.

This is interesting, important for seminary. We have BBI in Brazil at this moment. And people in Brazil will study in this book about dispensations and theology in the perspective of dispensationalism.

Well, if you feel identified with our ministry, please pray for us. We need prayer about our ministry.

People in Brazil don't accept easily the distinctions. our conservative churches like Methodist, Presbyterian, and Baptist don't accept very well this message.

They elude to us to accept. They don't fight with us. This is not the case. But they don't understand very well.

[17 : 30] We have to be patient with them. and because of this the challenge in Brazil is a big challenge. So if you feel identified with our ministry, pray for us and join us in this ministry praying and if you can support us financially, financial supporting.

but the most important is the prayer. And after the service I will available to you if you want some questions or pass us question now until you decide if the questions is now or after.

Sure. Yeah, so I'll just say a few more things. I'll use the microphone here. So we've been hosting the Wessel and Daisy here since Friday and have enjoyed their company.

They're a great couple. Heard about their family and so I thought in fact maybe we could get a microphone to see if there's any questions you might have about their ministry.

If not that's fine but I wanted to at least give an opportunity like Wessel said he'll be available after at their table and I would encourage everyone they have these little cards with their family picture on it that you can take home and whether you there's an opportunity to support the ministry but also like he said to just pray for them and you can put up their card on their refrigerator or whatever it might be and that'll remind you every once in a while when you walk past you can pray for them and the ministry that they're doing.

[19 : 13] I think it's an important ministry and I appreciate all that you're doing. Is there any questions anyone has about their ministry or what it's like in Brazil or something like that in fact as we're looking so Brazil what is the primary religion?

Brazil is a catholic country and even the statistics show us the evangelical people is growing up we have in Brazil 45 millions of people named evangelical 45 million evangelical 45 million evangelical and what's the total population 300 million?

No 230 million of people 230 million people in Brazil in Brazil but even we have 45 millions of people in Brazil named evangelical Brazil is still a catholic country and evangelical doesn't mean believer do you understand?

And in evangelical there are inside evangelical many many kinds of evangelical people Right So somebody might be called an evangelical but they may not know the gospel is that true is that what you mean?

Yes we have in Brazil a movement named New Pentecostal is New Pentecostal is different from traditional Pentecostal is in Brazil the church like Assembly of God is a kind of traditional dispense traditional Pentecostal is church they teach about the signs the over natural the tongues things but they still preach the cross of the Christ they still preach salvation but there are another movement named New Pentecostal ism focused only in prosperity and health this is a big problem in Brazil this kind of church is growing up very fast than another kind of church this is a big problem New Pentecostal ism and then you work with

[21 : 43] I think I mentioned this the Krasmeier Paul Krasmeier and his family and they were here a couple years ago I can't remember how long ago it was but and so you work together and it's a ministry called Word of Grace Word of Grace Mission Word of Grace Mission yes we work together we are very we are very you a unit among us Paul Krasmeier and his dad Bernardo they plant in church and I translate books and we are connected and Paul Krasmeier started this year exactly this year BBI Brazil he teaches students in BBI Brazil it's a very important step in Brazil and that's a that's a Bible Institute or Bible yeah BBI BBI BBI BBI Brian Bible Institute yeah BBS Brian Bible

Society Brian Bible Institute and Brian Bible Fellowship and Brian Bible Institute now is in Brazil and students in Brazil had great opportunity to to learn about distinctions to the gospel, to the grace gospel in Portuguese.

This is a big step in terms of developing a great grace message in Brazil. Yeah. Anything else? Okay, we have one.

There you go. I was wondering how many of the books do you have to do for the first run that's more expensive when you have them printed?

Sorry? How many books, when you print a book the first time, how many do you print at the time? You need to print so many, minimum. Yes. It's difficult for us to print more than 100 or 150 books.

[23 : 49] That's a maximum? That's a maximum. In one case, we reached 200 books. But we are few in Brazil.

There are not so much Christian believers, grace believers in Brazil. It's very difficult to print more than 100, 150.

But we can, we can, even at least 100 and 150. So there are more, 20 books translated, 10 authors, and even some difficult, some moments.

There are five years I'm working in this, five years. And we have, we have books in Brazil. And it's working.

The price of the book is a little bit high because I want to make a editorial quality, best quality of books. So we prefer books from print shop than like Xerox, as some years ago.

[24 : 59] Yeah, I see. I see. Okay. Great. One more down here? I was just curious if in Brazil, do you find that there's a particular generation or age group that's more receptive to hearing the gospel?

So is there a certain age group that is open to the gospel message? Mm-hmm. About age. Yeah, age, yeah. Not specifically.

We can't identify. I specifically age interested in, in understand distinctions. I have people with 20 years old and, and below in case of, of my, my youngest one, when he started to, to study about this.

And people like my mom, 88 years old. And in Brazil, we are a small group. So it's difficult to identify a specific kind of, a specific age interested in.

In general, it's very difficult to people understand. But in all kinds of ages. Okay. Okay. All right. Well, thank you.

[26 : 18] Thanks for sharing your ministry. I know it's difficult. You imagine, right? If you go to a different country and you don't speak the language, or, you know, you're just learning the language.

But he has a translation ministry. And, but he writes the words. Yeah. And you know, that's very different from having to speak them. Yes. This is the case. Yeah.

Yeah. I write a lot, listen a lot. I love, I love English. The sound is, I love the sound of English. I have many influence of English in our life.

All people in Brazil have very many influence of English. But to speak English, I have to make a decision. Right. And I postponed my decision to practice real English.

So because of this, I speak English. This way you will see me. Well, we are very glad that you did. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. All right.

[27 : 11] Thank you. Thank you. All right. Thank you. Well, great. So grateful for their ministry. And when, when he was talking about distinctions, that's something we'll actually bring up this morning.

We don't have too much time, so we'll see how far we get. But as we're going through the book of Mark, we're studying the life and ministry of Jesus.

And it's important to understand that we've been talking about this, that Jesus's ministry was during a specific time. And he was, he was sharing a specific message.

There are certain keys to understanding the Bible. It's a Bible is a big book. It spans thousands of years of history. And it can be confusing.

There can be some confusing parts, things that seem to contradict. And if you don't understand some of these keys, really some big picture ideas about what is happening over these thousands of years, there will be some confusions.

[28 : 22] So, as we study through the book of Mark, we're looking at some of these things and we'll actually address that today. Just one example. Someone asked Jesus, they said, what must I do to inherit eternal life?

And Jesus responded and he said, what? He said, keep the commandments. He said, keep the law of Moses. And then you turn the pages, you turn a hundred pages later and you see Paul, the apostle, and he says, get away from the law of Moses.

The law of Moses will do you no good. If you want eternal life, trust in the blood of Jesus. And that's all. That's a pretty big difference.

And so, as we read through the story of the Bible, we see where there were changes that happened. Jesus was ministering to Israel through the law of Moses.

It was established on this covenant that Israel had with God through something called the law. And that was the ministry under Moses and for thousands of years under Moses and then Jesus in his earthly ministry as well.

[29 : 44] But then something changed. At the cross, something new was offered, was made available. And it's Paul in his epistles that tells us about God's work, which he did among the Gentiles to bring grace through faith only in the blood of Jesus.

Nothing to do with the law of Moses. So let's open up our Bibles to Mark chapter 3. And we are in verse, we're going to start with verse 7.

And we're going to look at two things. Actually, we might just look at one thing today based on our time. We're going to see Jesus' interaction with the crowds. As Jesus continues to minister, more people hear about him.

He's preaching a unique message that is quite really, I mean, it's an astounding message about the kingdom and then about who he is.

And then he's doing things. He's performing all these miracles, signs, casting out demons, healing the sick with just a word or just with a touch.

[30 : 57] And so lots of people start to gather and come to see him, come to be healed. And then, well, I don't think we'll have time. We'll look maybe in a few weeks about Jesus' choosing of the 12.

So let's just look today about the crowd. We're just going to look at a few verses here. Mark chapter 3, verse 7. And just a little context, because I think context is required, especially here.

Jesus had just been in a synagogue. And there was a man there who had a withered hand, the Bible says. And there were some Pharisees there, some scribes and Pharisees who were looking to see, is he going to try to heal somebody on the Sabbath day?

They wanted to see what he would do. And Jesus, he does actually heal on the Sabbath day and speaks to that whole idea and really is a rebuke to the Pharisees for really their legalism.

But right after this happens, this is kind of the context. In verse 7, it says, So he was just at the synagogue with all this going on, and he withdraws with his disciples to the sea.

[32 : 10] And a great multitude from Galilee followed him, and also from Judea and Jerusalem and Idumea and beyond the Jordan, and those from Tyre and Sidon, a great multitude, when they heard how many things he was doing, they came to him.

So he told his disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for him because of the multitude, lest they should crush him. For he healed many, so that as many as had afflictions pressed about him to touch him.

And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw him, fell down before him and cried out, saying, You are the Son of God! But he sternly warned them that they should not make him known.

So we'll focus on this today. Today, we've talked a bit about his healing ministry and his deliverance ministry. So today, I just wanted to really focus in on the crowds.

But as we go back to verse 7, just to point out a few things, it says, Jesus withdrew with his disciples to the sea. Withdraw means you're going away from somewhere. So he wasn't necessarily had a certain place that he wanted to go, but he was kind of just getting away.

[33 : 20] And what was he getting away from? Well, there's two ideas that I have in my mind. One, these Pharisees, because what does it say in verse, where is it, verse 6? It says in verse 6, Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against him how they might destroy him.

They wanted to destroy him. That's quite a word. They wanted to kill him. He needed to be done away with. And so Jesus in his ministry many times had to try to avoid the threats from the Pharisees.

And I think maybe that might be kind of what's going on here. Also, some crowds are gathering. The crowds are growing and enlarging. People are coming from all over.

So that may be part of why he withdrew as well. We'll see here the crowds growing. People, some of the different places that people were coming from. And so going out to the sea, it was more of a countryside area.

So there would be more room to avoid kind of the tight and closed places in the town or the city where he was at previously. It says in verse 8, and we'll start in verse 7 again.

[34 : 38] But it says, These are all just different places around the area.

This was farther beyond Israel. You know that the Israelites, the Jews, had been dispersed. They had been taken captive by the Babylonians and the Persians.

And many of them had returned. But they were still quite spread out. They weren't all just in Judea. They were in some of these other places, which were Gentile areas. But that's where they lived.

So all these people, some people have tried to make estimates on how many people. I've heard numbers from 10,000, 20,000 people.

And that's quite a number if you think about it. The numbers of a stadium or maybe a concert or something like that.

[35 : 47] I don't know how somebody could really tell how many people were actually there. I haven't really looked into it to see what kind of veracity is there to it. But you can see a picture here in the next verse.

It says, So he told his disciples that a small boat should be kept ready for him because of the multitude, lest they should crush him. I mean, that's...

I don't know if... Have any of you ever been in a situation where there were so many people that you felt like you might be crushed? I know there's stories in the news every once in a while, right?

Usually it's some kind of sports event or maybe a music concert where something happens. There's just one little trigger. Somebody yells. Somebody screams.

Something happens. And there's a rush of people. And sometimes, tragically, somebody gets trampled underfoot. And that's a scary place to be in.

[36 : 44] This seems to be the situation that Jesus was in. There were so many people, there was a fear of just getting crushed by the throng of people that were coming out to see him.

So Jesus said to his disciples, Hey, let's get a boat ready. And so I'm going to preach basically on the seashore. Now, this is the Sea of Galilee. And usually when we think about a sea, we think about a huge body of water, like the ocean.

In this case, the Sea of Galilee is more like a lake. Now, it's a very large lake. It's not quite as big as some of our great lakes. But a big enough lake that it would be difficult maybe to see, maybe just a few miles across.

A few miles across. But he stood on the seashore in order to speak to the people. But he told his disciples, let's have a boat ready, just on hand, just in case the crowd gets, you know, a little too squirrely, a little too close.

So that we can kind of have an escape valve. We can escape to the boat from the huge crowd. It's interesting. You know, Jesus is considering here some very practical security for himself.

[38 : 01] He kind of got away from that synagogue where people were threatening or planning to kill him. And then in this case, he has this kind of escape route for a boat.

And why would that be? Jesus, he does all these miracles, all these healings. I mean, couldn't, it's certain, right, that he could miraculously save himself from any kind of risk to his life.

Couldn't he just, instead of trying to avoid the Pharisees and the threats that they have, couldn't he just boldly walk out in front of them at any time?

And, you know, if they try to do something, then they're just thwarted by angels or some kind of miraculous means. But I find it interesting, reading through the Gospels, that Jesus never really uses his miraculous power or even, you know, the Bible talks about Jesus could have called upon the angels, right, even at the cross.

And he never did that. And I think probably that speaks to Jesus and him wanting to experience our weaknesses. He lived under threat, under threat from the Pharisees and others, even the Romans.

[39 : 18] And part of his ministry to us, even to those people at the time, was to be like us, to experience the weaknesses that we experience.

And we know that not long after he rose from the dead and ascended into heaven, his own disciples experienced these threats on a regular basis.

And they could look to their Savior, Jesus, and so can we. He experienced these same things that we did. So as I look through the Scriptures, I notice that when Jesus does miracles, it seems that he only does miracles for others.

You don't ever see Jesus doing a miracle for himself. Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I missed something. There's only one example I can think of. In fact, there's a couple of times where it mentions where Jesus is threatened, and it seems like he's able to just walk through the crowd that's threatening him somewhat miraculously.

In fact, I've got a Scripture here. Luke 4, verse 28, says this. So all those who were in the synagogue. This is just after Jesus read in the synagogue about the anointed one.

[40 : 34] He read the Scripture in Isaiah about the anointed one, and he said, today this is fulfilled in your ears. And they knew what that meant. And it says in verse 28, So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, they were filled with wrath.

And they rose up, and they thrust him out of the city, and they led him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw him down over the cliff. And then it says, this is the last sentence.

Then passing through the midst of them, he went his way. I don't know what's going on there, but it seems he was in big trouble. But it seems like maybe there was some miraculous involvement there possibly.

He just walked right through them. They were carrying him off to throw him off of the cliff. And then he just walks right through them to save himself. We'll go on to verse 10.

For he healed many, so that as many as had afflictions, they pressed about him to touch him. There were people who were sick. They heard, there's a man who can heal me. And just like we have today with many illnesses, and probably, in fact, even more, right?

[41 : 45] We have such, we're advanced so much in our medicine, so many things can be treated. Some very easily. Back then, there was a lot less of those types of things.

You can experience how much people were afflicted by sickness and disease. And they pressed about him. They were pressing in. Just to touch him. And then it says, And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw him, they fell down before him and cried out, saying, You are the Son of God!

We saw this before, didn't we, with other unclean spirits. In Mark chapter 1, as we went through that chapter, verse 24, there was a spirit that cried out, and they called him the Holy One of God.

And so here, the spirit called him the Son of God. And what did Jesus say? What was his response? It says in verse 12, But he sternly warned them that they should not make him known.

Why would that be? I think we've talked about this a little bit. But basically, when the spirit cried out, as he was casting the spirit out of whoever it was, the spirit would say, You are the Son of God!

[43 : 00] And Jesus would respond. It says sternly. It says, Hey! Don't tell people who I am! He commanded them with authority.

Don't say that! Why would he do that? Why would he? Wouldn't Jesus, and didn't he, actually reveal himself to people?

Why wouldn't he want these spirits to say something? Well, one reason I can think of, he doesn't want demons to be the one that proclaim him, right?

I mean, if you want somebody to tell about you, you probably don't want it to be evil spirits. But also, I think Jesus was very judicious in how he went about his ministry.

Very careful. It seems very strategic. There were times when he wanted people to, where he healed people, and he told them, Go tell what I have done for you.

[43 : 58] And there were other times where he told them, Don't tell anyone. And it seems like it was earlier in his ministry where he would say, Hey, let's keep this quiet. And later on, when he was more willing for people to tell about who he was and what he was doing.

And I think that's part of his three-year plan. He had three years to accomplish a mission. And in the beginning, you know, you can imagine, I think there were two risks to revealing too much about him and his ministry.

One was the threats to his life, which we've seen here with the Pharisees, the threats to his life. The other was a threat of, well, let's read.

There's a passage in the book of John, chapter 6. And, well, here, let's turn there because, so we can get some context.

John, chapter 6. And Jesus had just fed, what was it, 3,000 or 5,000?

[45 : 09] Yeah, Jesus had just fed the 5,000. And you can imagine, wow, that's an incredible miracle. It says in verse 15, therefore, when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he departed again to the mountains by himself alone.

That was the other risk. Jesus was doing all these things and people were realizing, I think this is the Messiah who the prophets told us about. The one who would sit on the throne of David and rescue us from the Romans and our enemies.

And so, this was the other risk. They're going to make him king forcibly. Come on, Jesus, let's put a crown on your head and make you king. And Jesus had a plan and it was too early.

It wasn't time. It wasn't until later he was crowned king or declared king. One was walking through the streets of Jerusalem and another when he was crowned with a crown of thorns and that was all part of the plan.

So, he wanted to make sure that things went how he expected them to. We'll finish up there for today since our time is short, but I wanted to just speak briefly about this whole idea of crowds.

[46 : 29] Are crowds a good thing or are they a bad thing? I see a bad. It can be both, right? Crowds can be good. Crowds can be bad.

But crowds are somewhat of a fickle thing. There was a book written, I don't know, maybe a hundred or so years ago. I think it was written in the 1800s by a guy named Charles McKay.

The title of the book is called Extraordinary Popular Delusion and the Madness of Crowds. And he tells all these stories throughout history about these insane, crazy things that happen when you get a crowd of people together.

One of the most famous examples I think that he gives is the tulip mania that happened in Holland. Is anybody familiar with that? This was back in the 1600s and Holland is known for their many tulips, their beautiful flowers.

But there was this mania that happened. I'm not sure how long it lasted, a few months or a few years. I can't remember all the details. But where people, the value of a tulip went through the roof.

[47 : 39] And if you had tulips to sell, people would pay almost any price. It was just crazy. And who knows, I don't know if he talks about it in the book, what triggered it, but sometimes it's just these little triggers.

Something happens and people just kind of, they lose their minds. And they think that a flower, which has a little bit of value, right? A flower has a little bit of value. They would put a tremendous amount of value on it.

I think in the US, does anybody remember the beanie baby craze? Okay, yeah. If, I don't know, I'm in my 40s, so when did that happen?

In the 90s? I don't remember exactly, but there were these little, like stuffed animals about this big. And I still see them around, but they called them beanie babies. And there was only so many of them, but for some reason, and who knows why, right?

It's hard to explain. Who knows why these beanie babies became so popular that they sold out everywhere. And so if you wanted one, you had to buy it from somebody else.

[48 : 37] And so they said, okay, well, I'll charge you double. And then the demand went so high that people could charge triple. And then 10 times. And then 100 times what they bought a beanie baby, a little stuffed animal for.

It was crazy. Eventually it died down, right? People realized, hmm, these aren't actually worth what I just paid for them. One of the things that it reminds me of in our day right now is this whole gender confusion thing.

It's a mania. It's insanity. People are sharing with others, oh, well, here's my pronouns. My pronoun is, you know, he, him, or she, her.

Or maybe it's something different. You know, I'm not going to be restricted to just man or woman, male or female, so I'm going to go with they, them, or I've heard like ze, zur. We just make up new interesting things.

And that's a mania and people are starting to see it. You know, people are looking around like, but there are some people who are like, well, hey, I guess I should do this.

[49 : 48] So, they don't necessarily have a commitment to undermine male and female, God's design. That's not their purpose. But what are they doing?

They're just going with the crowd. Well, this is what everybody else is doing. So let's just go with the crowd. It reminds me of a time in Jesus' ministry, John chapter 6, if you're still over in John.

John chapter 6, verse 66 and 68 says this. Jesus had just said some very difficult things, very difficult teachings. And it says in verse 66, from that time, many of his disciples, they went back and they walked with him no more.

And Jesus said to the twelve, do you also want to go away? You know, the doors open.

But Simon Peter answered him and said, Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of life. There were many who were following Jesus in that day and they were just following the crowds.

[51 : 01] There was excitement about what was happening, healings, and miracles and a message about a Messiah and a kingdom. But when things got difficult, when things got tough, when things got confusing, they left.

They went home. But there were those twelve, those twelve, that said, you know what? We're not going to go with the crowds.

we're sticking with you. We're sticking with you. Because we know of a truth that there is, that you're speaking words of life, words that are true. You hold eternal life and that's worth everything to us.

Let the crowds go where they may. You know, I see this, you see this both in the world, right? I've seen this over and over in my life. Those who, they start attending church, I know my testimony, as part of my testimony, I was at a good sized Bible college, I guess it was a small Bible college, but a big sized church, over a thousand people.

Lots of students, some people were new in the faith. And it was exciting. The music was very exciting. Great, wonderful music.

[52 : 20] The preaching was just tremendous. Very exciting. Lots, lots going on. Lots of ministry things happening. And then things went south.

And it was discovered that there was all kinds of immorality going on among the leadership. Horrible sexual immorality. And it was exposed. And I saw many people after they found out, they just left.

And they didn't just leave the church, which would have been appropriate, right, when you see that kind of thing. They decided, you know what, I'm not going to follow Jesus anymore. I'm just going back to the world.

I'm going to go back to my sin that I was living in. I'm going to go back to the filth and the grime and the dirt. I'm not going to mess with this anymore. It's too difficult. And I, whenever I think about it, I think about this passage where Peter, in his response, and he says, where else are we going to go, Jesus?

Are there words of life back home? Are there words of life back in the world? Even with all the riches that maybe I could enjoy, the business that I could build, whatever it might be, is there eternal life found in those things?

[53 : 39] We have found that it's only in you, Jesus, where there's eternal life. And that's, it's easy to follow the crowd and we can do so even as Christians, right?

Even as blood-bought, born-again Christian people, we can just follow the crowd and then when things get tough, we can follow the world and go the way of the world.

I've seen that, I've seen that, in fact, I saw that in myself, especially younger. Go to church on Sunday, follow Jesus, do what I should and then when I, when I go back, you know, to school, kind of go back to doing things the way that the world does them.

But that's not how things ought to be, should they? We need to follow the Lord and Him alone. Follow the truth. Follow the life.

Not follow the crowds. Crowds are fickle. Sometimes it's exciting, you know, crowds, crowds can be going, you know, you can be following a crowd and they're, they're going the right direction and then in a moment they go the opposite direction.

[54 : 51] Are we going to continue to follow the crowd or are we going to follow the truth and follow Jesus? I'm going to end there because of our time but I have a few announcements that I think dovetail into this.

Here in Ohio there's a battle brewing. I told, I mentioned this a couple weeks ago but everybody is familiar.

In fact, one year ago yesterday there was an important Supreme Court decision called Dobbs in which the Roe v. Wade decision, which many of us are familiar with, was overturned.

That Roe v. Wade decision basically forced legalized abortion on the whole country. When that ruling was overturned it, it was both good but kind of bad.

It was good in that that decision of legalized abortion was not forced on the states but at the same time it did not provide any legal rights to unborn children.

[55 : 52] It just left it open to the states. So what's been happening over the last year is that different groups have been trying to legalize abortion in their, in each individual state.

Michigan, this happened pretty quickly. The people there voted for some kind of law, I can't remember the details, basically to allow for abortion as a legal practice there in the state of Michigan.

Many other states have the same thing. Here in Ohio we have a lot of restrictions and there are groups that are spending tens of millions of dollars to try to change that this November.

So they've been going around paying petitioners to go around and collect petitions from the community. They have to collect 400,000. It seems like they've already completed that.

They already have enough signatures in order to get an initiative on the ballot to vote in November. And that will be on the ballot in November to choose to support the initiative or to not support it.

[57 : 00] And there's a risk. You know, the leftists that want to support abortion violence, they're totally willing to lie and deceive people.

The initiative that they put is quite broad. I mean, it allows abortion through all nine months. There's even wording in there that would take it even further in certain ways.

And so they have quite the marketing blitz, the marketing campaign to try to get this law passed. One thing happened just recently, a few months ago.

The legislature in Ohio has put something on the ballot in August, in just over a month. And in August, there will be a special election.

And so I just want to make sure everybody is aware of this. There will be a special election to change how the November election will work. And so the November election is all about amending the Constitution in Ohio.

[58 : 05] Amending the Constitution, which is a pretty big deal. And you may know that to amend the federal Constitution requires what? Anybody remember from school, you have to have two-thirds votes in the Congress, both houses, and you have to have three-quarters of the states, three-fourths of the states to ratify that after that's voted.

It's very difficult to amend the Constitution. And I think that level of difficulty has actually helped preserve our Constitution to where it is today to a large degree.

In Ohio, the way that things are now, you just have to get 50% plus one, just a simple majority, to amend the Constitution. And so this special election in August is going to change that.

It'll change it to 60%. You have to get 60% of Ohioans or voters, those who vote, to support whatever amendment it is.

There's actually all kinds of people who are coming out to support this, not just Christians, not just pro-lifers. There's gun lobby groups and even like the Chamber of Commerce and a bunch of other groups because, anti-drug groups, because these leftists have used kind of this, I don't want to call it a loophole, but this means to try to get a bunch of things passed in the state of Ohio.

[59 : 35] In fact, there are people, the anti-drug groups are concerned that they're going to use this same process, this voter initiative to amend the Constitution to legalize drugs.

And there's already, you know, we've already had some of that, but to legalize drugs completely. So there's actually a fair bit of support about it. But with a special election, a lot of times people don't know what's going on.

So there's a bunch of pamphlets out there about, there's some details about what's going on. And so I just want to encourage everybody, let people know about this, you know, consider showing up to that election and voting.

You know, whether you have 50% or 60%, it's not really a moral issue, but it is strategic. And I think, in my estimation, I think it's a good strategy to try to, because if the Constitution in Ohio is amended, unamending the Constitution is difficult.

It's really hard. And so if this passes in November, this amendment, it's going to be very, you can't just pass a law to undermine it, to reverse it.

[60 : 48] You have to amend the Constitution again. You can imagine how difficult that would be. So I think this is a very important, these two elections coming up are very important, specifically with the issue of life.

You know, there's lots of issues about economics and, you know, fiscal policy and all that kind of thing. The issue of the right to life is of the utmost importance. And so I'd like everybody to consider, and sorry for going over time, but I think this is really important, to consider this issue and how you might work to support it.

There's other things that you can do. In fact, if you're interested, there are ways that you can call around to people. I think the Republican Party has like a call list that you can get and just call people.

These are voters who almost certainly would agree, would want to vote for or against the, for life in both of these elections, I'll say, but just don't know.

And so just getting the word out, letting people know. There's door knocking opportunities and other things as well. So if you're interested in helping out in some way, would you contact me and maybe next week we'll talk about it just a little bit more.

[61 : 54] So there's pamphlets like this out there and a bunch of other literature all about the details. There's actually, you can read the wording of the amendment and it's actually marked up with details about, you know, what the risks are and kind of how to, kind of how to analyze it well.

So I just want to make sure everybody knew about that and give everybody an opportunity to do something there. Let's finish up with a word of prayer. Father, we thank you for your love and your care for us. We thank you for the knowledge.

We thank you for the ministry of Wessel and Daisy and what they're doing out in Brazil. We pray that their ministry would thrive and grow. Thank you for giving us understanding as we read your word.

And if there's any place that we don't have understanding, especially on those important things, Father, give us that understanding that we would grow in our knowledge of you, that we might be witnesses, that our lives might be changed, but that we also might be witnesses of you to the rest of the world around us.

In Jesus' name, amen.