

Joel McGarvey - Church Service

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Preacher: Joel McGarvey

[0 : 00] All right, Joel, you're with Bible Doctrines to Live By, which is a ministry, by the way, which our church supports. And so you do lots of different things, traveling around the country, but also doing internet broadcasts and things like that.

And so I'm just going to leave it to you to share your ministry and then share the word. I can't wait for Thursday night. I don't know what I'm going to say, but I can't wait. Well, it is good to be here. This is our first time here in Springfield. Lee was here many, many times over the years, but this is our first time. And we appreciate the opportunity to come and to open the word of God and share it. In the morning time, the Sunday school time, we shared our ministry and what the Lord is doing and the changes that he is bringing into our ministry in the very near future.

We have for 20 years done, traveled in the summer during the vacation Bible schools. And Susan and I normally would do up to 10 vacation Bible schools around the country each summer.

[1 : 08] And Susan's wearing out. No, she's worn out. Oh, she's worn out. All right. So we are stepping out of that.

This is our farewell tour for that. And we are going to be doing traveling in a different way for Bible doctrines. Right now, I am the president and executive director of Bible doctrines.

And for October 1st, I will step down to become the associate director. And the associate director is going to take my place as the executive director. So in the eight years that I've been his boss, I hope I've been nice enough to him that when he becomes my boss, he'll treat me well.

But he's also my son-in-law. So that gets a little leeway there. So anyway, I'm going to ask you to take your Bibles and turn with me, if you will, to the book of Ephesians, Ephesians chapter 6.

And we're just going to start there. But we will come back, perhaps. But we want to start there in the time we have.

[2 : 23] And the pastor said I needed to be done by 1230. So we need to rush this as best we can. Before we, though, do that, let's pray, shall we?

Father, we are truly thankful this morning for this opportunity to come and to, yes, represent Bible doctrines, but ultimately represent you and your word.

And as we have this privilege, this opportunity now to stop and to open your word, we ask, Father, that through it you would teach us, you would guide us.

We will allow it to say what it says and mean what it says. And we would take it at that. Guidance upon our time now. And we pray this in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen. Amen. When is that dance? Oh, we're going to be gone. I had my kilt and everything.

[3 : 25] But, you know, as we think about today, today is, as we celebrate this weekend and Tuesday, independence, our independence. And as the pastor said, and I don't want to expand on it too much, today we need to be thankful for the country that we live in.

Amen. Is it perfect? No. But it's still, Susan and I, over the 20 years that we've been with Bible doctrines, and a little before that, we had the privilege to actually travel to many countries of the world.

And at every turn, when we come back to the USA, it is a feeling you can't believe to be back here. No matter where you go and the ability to travel as we've traveled in those countries, and we never have faced any kind of opposition, but everywhere you go, there's nothing like the USA.

Nothing like the USA. And we are so thankful for the freedoms that we enjoy. We see freedoms today increasingly coming under attack, particularly against the church.

[4 : 35] And in particular, I would argue that it won't be long until it will be against the true Bible-believing people. Right now, it's just against religion.

But it will be narrowed in on those who truly stand for the Word of God. I mean, truly stand for the Word of God. And we will see that. And I think the day will come where we may not be able to meet like this.

It's possible, isn't it? Isn't it? And because of that, I think what we need to do as a church today is we need to be preparing for the church of tomorrow.

We don't know what the church of tomorrow will look like. But you look at the church today. You look at the church of 10 years ago, of 20 years ago. And the church of 10 or 20 years ago looked a lot different than the church of today.

In many different ways. And sadly to say, the church has been on a decline for many years.

[5 : 49] For many years. And it just seems like we are losing generation after generation after generation to the world.

To the society that is there. And our young people have been indoctrinated through various systems. In an ideology, really a small t theology.

That is contrary to the God of the Bible. And they've done it very subtly. Very subtly. If they would have done it 20, 30 years ago, all bam, one time, there would have been an uprising.

But you do it drop by drop by drop. By drop. And you succeed. You succeed.

And the temples of America, the universities of America, have done a fantastic job in diluting the minds of America.

[6 : 58] America. But that's America. What about the church? Now that carries over to the church. But you see, the difference is, you and I have an answer.

You and I have the answer. You and I have the only answer. You and I have the only source of absolute truth. And that's right here. That's right here.

Everything else. I don't care who says it. I don't care who wrote it. I don't care the book. I don't care how much money he made by it. All of it is one man's opinion.

Spun the way he wants us to see it. This is the only true source that we have. The only true source that we have.

And therefore, it is this source that is greatly under attack today. If we can destroy this, everything else will fall.

[8 : 01] And we see that in the area of science and creation, as the pastor talked about. If we can destroy Genesis 1, the rest falls.

If we can destroy Genesis 1 to 11, you have no idea of this guy who would come to earth and die on a cross.

Why? Why? You've undermined the entire gospel by destroying the first 11 chapters of the book of Genesis. And we need to get our young people.

We need to get our young people back into the word of God. And back into the word of God. And looking at the word of God as a true source of absolute truth. Absolute truth.

I think it was Josh McDowell who wrote a book a number of years ago, The Last Christian Generation. The Last Christian Generation.

[9 : 04] And in that, he talked about young people who raised in church. Now, the problem when you say raised in church, that doesn't always mean anything. But young people raised in evangelical churches.

And you know today, that really doesn't mean anything. The pastor and I were talking about that yesterday. Very often, I refer to evangelicalism as evangelism. Because it's not centered in on anything.

It's just anybody and everybody's a part of it. But young people raised in evangelical churches go off to the universities. And in one year, one year, walk away from the faith.

Walk away from the faith. A number of years ago, Ken Ham wrote a book. They're already gone. Before they even get to college, they're already gone.

The high schools have done a wonderful job. But where did the high school teachers come from? The university. The university.

[10 : 08] An interesting study is a fellow by the name of Horace Mann and his influence on public education. And you ought to go back and look at that sometime.

But let's get back to the church. Because we know what they're doing. The real question is, what are we doing? What are we doing in the church?

What are we doing in the church to take the future and to ground it in the word of God? To give them answers.

Not just answers to Genesis. Not just answers to the so-called science that we hear today. But answers to the questions of, what is the Bible? Can I trust the Bible?

Who is Jesus Christ? Who is he? What has he done? Why did he do it? Is he really God or isn't he God? Or is he just one God among many gods? We need to take our kids and get them back into the word of God.

[11:12] The Apostle Paul in Ephesians chapter 6. And you turn there. In Ephesians chapter 6. And we can start with verse 1. But the kids don't always like that verse.

Children. What? Obey. Obey. Obey. Let's. Let's. I hide it. When I was a kid, I would highlight that verse with my black magic marker. But let's go down to verse 4.

Let's go down to verse 4. Ye fathers. Ye fathers. And you know, you could argue here.

It could be argued that Paul's talking to the parents. But ultimately, I think he is talking to the dads. God has given to us a responsibility.

One of the problems we have today, and even truly Christian parents, is the dad is very often missing in the areas of the spiritual upbringing of their kids.

[12:17] In most cases, it will be mom who does that. And sometimes, sometimes I look at, look at kids coming out of Christian home, girls.

And I look at them, and I look at what they're wearing, and I'm thinking, where's your dad? Where's your dad? I remember years ago, we headed out from our house, and my daughter said, Dad, I need to stop.

It was just two doors down. I need to stop and go in there and get something. And she went in there and got it, and she said, let's go. I'll change back here. And I said, what are you putting on? And she showed me this belt.

It wasn't much more. And I said, whoa, we pulled back in the driveway. I said, you can take that back in. You're not wearing that. You're not wearing that. And dads need to raise Christian daughters.

Daughters that emulate the work of God in their life. Christian dads need to raise godly sons who can be godly dads.

[13:23] And Christian dads need to be a testimony, an example of a godly father and a godly husband in front of their sons and daughters.

And dads need to step up to the plate. Step up to the plate. And one of the things in the latest Truth of Flame, those of you who get it, you should have gotten this one.

Paul Turner's article is, whatever happened to godly men? Whatever happened to godly men? And it says here, fathers, in verse 4, fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the what?

The nurture and admonition of the Lord. I was talking to a young man a few weeks ago. Well, maybe two months ago now. And he had, for years, made a profession that he had trusted Christ as his Savior and all of that.

And he came and he said, but you know, I don't believe that anymore. If his profession of faith early on was real, is he saved?

[14:33] Yeah. That's not up for me to decide. But my concern then shifts from him to his daughter. And I said, what about her? And he said, what about her? I'm a good dad.

I'm a good dad. I feed her. I clothe her. I take care of her. I'm a good dad. I said, well, what about her spirituality? What about her relationship to Christ?

Well, she'll have to decide that on her own. And I said, you're not a good dad. You're a lousy dad. You're a terrible dad. Being a dad means more than buying a child clothing or putting food on the table.

A good dad is directing his child, is directing his child to the Lord Jesus Christ. It says here, bring him up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

The nurture, the training, the dad. It's the dad's responsibility to begin to train that child in the things of God. And it says, fathers.

[15:39] Fathers, step up and be a dad to your kids. He says, the nurture and admonition, the love of the Lord. Is that happening in our homes today?

And you look at what's happening at the church, in the church today. Look at what's happening in the church. Look at the exodus that is happening in the church.

And primarily, I would say that exodus that's happening in the church today is primarily goes back because dads weren't being dads. A number of years ago, I preached a Father's Day message, which is one of those times where you really...

And a father came to me after service, and he said, you stepped on my toes today. He said, for years. We at that church at that time, we had Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening.

And so it was Sunday evening, and he said, you know, look around the church today. I have four sons, married sons. Where are they? And he said, for years, I took them to church Sunday morning, and Sunday night, we'd go fishing.

[16:56] Look where they are today. Now, this was a number of years ago. Praise God, all four have returned back to church. But he said, look at them. I trained them well. I trained them well.

And the Apostle Paul here says, we are to bring up our sons and our daughters in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We cannot let that slide.

We need to be actively involved in their lives. If they go to... If they're homeschooled, they're homeschooled. You're teaching them in the ways of God. If they go to a Christian day school, that's all well and good, but they're still your responsibility.

You don't just send them over there and say, all right, you do it. No, you send them over there, but when they come home at night, you go, what are you learning here?

You need to be a godly parent, and you send them to public school. Whew! You better be sitting down every day with those kids. If they're allowed to bring the stuff home.

[17:53] See, that's one of the... That's one of the telltale signs. There's problems here when they can't bring their work home. When they can't bring their work home. Go back with me, if you will, to Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy. And let's see.

Deuteronomy chapter 4. Chapter 4. Now, you understand, the book of Deuteronomy, this is really Moses' last lengthy sermon to the children of Israel.

He will die at the end of this and not be permitted. You know, he was not permitted to go into... He was not permitted to go into the Holy Land of promise because of his disobedience to God, but God allowed him to see that.

And you know, that's something... Susan and I, a couple years ago, we did a trip in Egypt and Jordan. And in Jordan, we stood on Mount Nebo where it's supposed that Moses stood and gazed into the Holy Land.

[19:06] If you've never had that experience, you go, because God showed him the Holy Land. From Mount Nebo, you can see, on a clear, clear, clear, clear day, you can see the entire thing.

It's amazing. It's amazing. From the Dead Sea all the way to the Sea of Galilee. Over there's Jerusalem. Over there's Jericho. You know, you're just looking at all this. And he saw it all, but he couldn't go in.

And here in Deuteronomy, he's giving his last address to these people. And look what he says in verse 9. We're just going to pick out some verses here. Look what he says in verse 9.

Only take heed to thyself. What's he saying here? Be careful. Be careful. Take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently.

Guard yourself. And diligently. You need to put yourself into this. Don't assume it's going to happen. Don't assume.

[20:05] You put yourself in. You pour yourself into it. Take heed to thyself and keep thy soul diligently. What's the next three words? Lest thou forget.

Lest thou forget. Look at verse 23. Take heed unto yourselves. Lest thou forget or ye forget the covenant of the Lord your God, which he made with you.

The nation of Israel enjoyed a very unique position with God at the time. Did they not? He was their God. They were his people. God had made a covenant with them.

A special covenant. They were going to be a special nation. They were going to be a special people. A special nation. He was giving them a land of their own. All of this was God's blessings upon them.

He said, don't forget that covenant that God made with you. Don't forget who you are. And one of the things with college kids in my churches, and I try to meet with them as they go off to the university, and one of the things I try to drive home with them is, don't forget who you are in Christ. [21 : 25] Of all the other things that are going on at the college university level, don't forget who you are. And you know, in our lives, and I think it's true for a lot of us, very often we have our Sunday self, and then we have our Monday self.

And sometimes our Monday self isn't totally a reflection of our Sunday self. Correct? And we forget who we are on Monday. And we leave that others for Sunday.

And the fact of the matter is, the world needs to be seeing and hearing Christ in us seven days of the week. But he said, lest you forget. And he says that again, over and over and over again, as he speaks to the children of Israel, lest you forget, do this.

Lest you forget, do this. Look over at chapter six. And this would even come down to fathers. In nation of Israel, it would be the fathers. And to us, a father stepping up and taking their place. Verse four, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And as a godly father, he's saying, listen, here's where you need to be.

[22 : 44] Here's where you need to be. Your relationship with God is not on a part-time basis. You need to have a relationship with your Lord 24-7. And it needs to reflect in your life 24-7.

And that's what he's saying to the men of Israel. Here, don't forget who you are. Don't forget who you are. You need to love the Lord thy God with thy heart, with thy soul, and thy might.

It needs to be you. Verse six, In these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart. And now look at it. Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy what?

And children. What a responsibility God, through Moses, was giving to the men of Israel. What a responsibility. Lest they all forget.

It's your responsibility to be training them. Training them when? Look at it. It says, Teach them diligently unto thy children, and shall talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, when thou walkest by the way, when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.

[23 : 57] And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as fontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates. At what point in time did Moses tell the men of Israel, You can punch out now?

Never. There was not a time clock in the door of a Jewish man's home. Well, I don't, there was a, wasn't there a commercial a few years ago? I'm sorry, kids, I'm, I'm going to be busy.

I'm going to take the afternoon off. As being your dad. You, a godly man is, is, is teaching his kids, teaching his kids verbally, and teaching his kids by his actions.

How he conducts his business. How he conducts his life. All of that ought to be a reflection of Jesus Christ, who is that life. Correct?

Correct? And, and so, that's what he's telling them there. Teach those kids. Now, go over to the book of Judges.

[25 : 12] Judges chapter 2. Now, Moses, shortly after this, yeah, after what we read in Deuteronomy, Moses would gather the children of Israel together, and he would bring out Joshua.

And, and Moses would pass the mantle of leadership over to Joshua. And if you know anything about Moses and his time as the leader of Israel, it was not always the smoothest of routes.

And, and the children of Israel were great at complaining. Over and over and over again.

And, and Moses would bring, bring out and bring up Joshua, and he would pass the mantle over to Joshua, and he would say to the people of Israel, as you have obeyed me, now I ask that you obey Joshua as well.

I'm thinking if Joshua was aware of anything that's been going on in the last few years, he'd have said, sir, I respectfully resign. Because the children of Israel have not been the most faithful to Moses, were they?

[26 : 29] And now he says, as, as, in the same way you obeyed me, you obey him. Yeah, right. You know, but, but look at this. Judges chapter 2, verse 7.

Judges chapter 2 and verse 7. Look what, look how the word of God describes the children of Israel in the life of Joshua. It says, and the people, that's the nation of Israel, the people served the Lord all the days of what?

Joshua. They served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the Lord that he did for Israel.

For those years, these people, these elders, these people who had seen the hand of God as he delivered and as he provided for the nation, for them, as God protected them and provided for them, as he led them, the people of Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and then even all the days of the elders who overlived or outlived Joshua.

Why? Because they had seen the hand of God. They had seen what God had done for them.

These people, they had a commitment. They had a commitment that guided their lives and was in their day-to-day walk and their day-to-day life and the way they conducted themselves and it says they served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua.

[28 : 16] Now, if you need to keep your finger here, you go back a page to Joshua chapter 24. Joshua chapter 24. Look here.

Joshua 24. And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua 31. I'm sorry. 24, 31. And Israel served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the days of the elders that overlived Joshua and which had known all the works of the Lord that he had done for Israel.

Now, understand, what we're talking about here is generation number two. Generation number one served the Lord all the days of Joshua and all the elders who overlived Joshua because they had seen the hand of the Lord.

Correct? They had seen the work of God. Joshua, then generation number two, they come along and they served the Lord all the days of Joshua and those who overlived Joshua because they had what?

heard, heard of the work of the Lord. They hadn't seen it but they heard about it. They heard about it.

[29 : 44] Generation number one was told, generation number one was specifically told, lest thou forget what were they to do? Teach.

They were to teach they were to teach and in teaching what happens? The student heard.

Generation number two comes along and they've heard.

Generation number one had a commitment to the hand of God. They had a commitment to God to serve God. They had that commitment. Generation number two comes along and they have a preference.

They have a preference not based on experience. they didn't see it. They didn't see it but they heard about it and hearing about it they served and they served Joshua and they served the elders that outlived Joshua.

So you have generation number one had a commitment. Generation number two had a preference. And there's a difference. There's a difference.

[30 : 52] A commitment means I'm in 100%. A preference is well I could go along with that or I prefer that but there's other choices here but okay I prefer this one right now but I could be swayed.

Right? Alright. Go back to Judges chapter two again. Judges chapter two. Joshua dies. Joshua dies.

Look at verse 10. And also all that generation were gathered under their fathers. What generation? Generation one? Generation two? All that generation who had served God, served Joshua, served God, those who heard and those who saw and those who heard.

Look down here now at verse 10. and all that generation were gathered under their fathers and there arose another generation. What do we have here? Generation number three.

[31 : 59] Generation number three. How would you characterize generation number three? Not very good.

Look what it says. There arose another generation were gathered under their fathers and there arose another generation after them which what? Knew not the Lord nor yet the works which he had done.

They hadn't seen and they hadn't heard. They hadn't seen, they hadn't heard.

Generation number one had heard Moses heard. And he said, lest thou forget, you need to be training this generation. You need to be training your kid.

You need to be training the future lest they forget. Lest they forget, you need to be training.

Generation number one had apparently spoken to their kids because their kids had heard about it.

[33 : 05] Correct? Correct? You can be a bobblehead. They heard. And so generation one did their job.

Generation two had received and they served. But what happened down here? Somebody dropped the ball. Somebody dropped the ball.

Why? Because these kids, what's it say? They never heard. They never heard. And it says, which knew not the Lord.

You know, how do you it's hard to fathom. They knew not the Lord. In a nation that God had called out, separated, raised up, called out, sent and protected, these people didn't know.

They didn't know. Do you remember when Samuel, when Samuel's mother takes him and she pledges to God, if God would just open her womb and give her a son, she would give that son to the Lord to minister.

[34 : 15] And so she has a son, his name is Samuel. What does she do with that son? When that son is weaned from his mother, she takes him and presents him to Eli in the temple.

Eli's the high priest. And she presents Samuel to Eli to minister there in the temple. And what it says about it is that day is the word of the Lord was rare at that time.

Was rare. Why? Well, it was rare because Eli and his sons had so corrupted the priesthood that God didn't speak to them anymore. Only on rare occasions did God actually speak to the high priest.

And it was rare. And Samuel was given a task. Samuel was probably 12, 13, 14, I don't know, somewhere in there it's guessed, that when the Lord comes at night and speaks to him and he says, Samuel, here's what I want you to do.

Tomorrow I want you to go into the high priest and tell him that I'm about to kill his two sons and him. That's a big task, isn't it? Big task.

[35 : 22] What do you think Samuel did? Next morning when Eli said, I don't know. Eli said, whatever it is, you tell me. And he did. He did.

In all the days of Samuel, he faithfully served God. And here you have these people, they didn't know. They didn't know.

We mentioned this morning in Sunday School Hour, in our years, 20 years of doing this traveling and dealing, working with kids across the northeast and west, we have an increasing number of kids who absolutely have no concept of who Jesus Christ is.

They don't know that he's real? You mean that was a man? He was a real man? All they know about this man, all they know about this is, that's the name my dad yells at when he's upset at me. They have no concept of that. We have an increasing number of kids, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 years old, who have never been through the door of a church in their life.

[36 : 31] And someone invites them to come to Bible school. And that's just in the last 20 years. Way back in the, probably the early 70s, I was involved in a group and we were up in northern Pennsylvania having a Bible conference and I had walked outside for something and this little boy came up the sidewalk and he said, what's going on in there?

I said, well, we're having a Bible conference today. What's that? I said, well, we talk about God, we talk about Jesus and who's that?

Who's that? He'd never heard of that before. What do you do in the church? I don't know. Who are you talking about? We're talking about Jesus. Who's that? And I'll tell you, oftentimes we get into a church and we'll say that and people say, oh, you're crazy.

You're crazy. But that's true. That's true. And that's where we are in Christian America. Where many young people have no idea who Jesus Christ really is.

No idea who Jesus Christ is. And unfortunately, increasingly, even some parents are turning up now. But where was I? Eleven. Thank you.

[37 : 45] That's why I bring my wife along. She keeps me on tab. It says, And the children of Israel did what? Evil in the sight of the Lord, and they served Balaam.

And they forsook the Lord God of their fathers, which brought them out of the land of Egypt and followed other gods of the gods of the people that were round about them and bowed themselves unto them and provoked the Lord to anger, and they forsook the Lord and served Baal and Ashtoreth.

Generation somewhere, somewhere, generation number two failed generation number three.

Somewhere along the line, somewhere in generation two, they dropped the ball, and now that they're all gone, we have a whole generation of people here who know nothing about the Lord. They've never been taught in the ways of the Lord. It's not that they forgot, they were never told. These generation number two knew, they had heard, but somehow they failed that generation. [39 : 07] people with people with gray hair, no hair, and we used to say blue hair, but even the kids have that nowadays, and the kids have that nowadays, so we can't have pink hair, but we see an increasingly aging church, and an increasing number of churches that have, well, why don't you have sons?

We don't have any kids. We don't have any kids. Do you have any youth? No, we don't have a youth group. We don't, what's happened? What's happened?

Oh, it's true. Kids get married and they move away. That's true, but not everybody does. Not everybody does. But where are they?

Where are they? And listen, I'm not stepping on your toes. What I'm telling you is what we have observed in churches the last 20 years all over the country.

Large churches, small churches, that we are losing a generation, and I think part of the reason is because we as parents have failed to train those children up in the ways of God, to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

[40 : 46] We have brought them up playing baseball, soccer, basketball, band, you name it, they have it, and we've forgotten the most important thing, and that's the Lord Jesus Christ.

One thing I encountered in my ministry over the years was we would have a club program, and I pastored, one church I pastored was 500 people, the last one I pastored was about 250, and we'd have club programs, we had all of that, but what I found was we saw the diminishing beginning. We'd have a club program that would go from the Tuesday after Labor Day to the first week of June, and you'd have all those, every week you'd have these kids there for that.

Now, they have to start around October 1st, and they have to close by the end of March or middle of April. Why? Because soccer and all these other things, and my kids, Pastor, you just don't understand, you don't understand, my kids need to play, they need to play hockey, they may grow up and get a full ride scholarship.

You know how few kids get full ride scholarships? Get any scholarship. But we found out, and this is what we started saying, if a parent or a person in the church has a choice to make between church and anything, guess which one wins?

[42 : 16] Anything. Anything. Anything. We've lost sight of what we have here. We've lost sight of the word of God. We've lost sight of the responsibility that we have as parents that we need to be in church.

We need to have our kids being taught. We need to be teaching them at home. Remember that old thing that used to have called family devotions? We need to get back to where we as parents are truly being godly parents and raising up our kids in the nurture and admonition of the Lord because if we don't, the church in 10 or 20 years, don't worry about what kind of freedoms we're going to lose.

The church is going to be gone and it will have died from within. It will have died from within. It won't die because the government has suppressed it.

It will die because we have failed to teach our kids in the word of God and ground them in the things of God and the word of God rightly divided and they've gone off and they go off and they get away. They just go away. And we need to bring people back to this. Back to the word of God.

[43 : 38] Forget, that's why, and this is not a commercial but it is, but that's why about nine years ago I went to the board of Bible doctrines and I said, Bible doctrines ministry started in 1982 in Evansville, Indiana.

Well, actually, I think probably in Tip City. Yeah, Tip City. And then grew in Evansville and then moved to Grand Rapids and the rest is history.

But it was started around the idea of producing Sunday school material. The Bible briefs, if you know Bible briefs that Lee produced, those were all written as Sunday school lessons.

That's what they were written for. And over the years, it just went by the wayside. And about eight years ago or so, maybe ten years ago, I said to the board, we are totally missing a key area, demographic, if you use that term, and that's our young people.

All of our literature that we were printing at the time, all of it was for adult Bible study. Nothing for young people. Nothing for young people. I said, we need to step out in faith.

[44 : 59] We need to get someone in here who can help us in that area. And I talked to a couple young men. Both of them said they weren't interested. And a year later, one of them was Matt.

A year later, we were at Matt's church in Boyd, Wisconsin, doing a vacation Bible school. Matt came to me and he said, is that offer still open? I really feel that's what the Lord wants me to do.

And Matt joined our staff and began to produce material along with some helpers that he has. And we now have, as you saw on Sunday school, we now have probably 25 or 26 quarters of Sunday school material written for all ages.

And like Susan said, in church this morning, it would be wonderful to stand up here and say how grace-believing churches have just jumped on board, but they haven't. But because they've been, I'll tell you why.

Because for too long, they were satisfied with the fluffy stuff to get somewhere else. and that's what they use. And they're not getting into the word of God. And we need to ground them in the word of God, not marshmallow, and not tomatoes and pickles.

[46 : 13] But we're doing that. And we're reaching families and our literature. We write our literature, which actually is available for home school, Christian school, Sunday school, family devotions, trying to get the families back into the word of God.

Back into the word of God. And Paul and Rebecca coming on board, taking over the vacation Bible schools for us, and then getting into Paul's ministry of where's godly men, men mentoring boys in life and in the word of God, and moving in that direction.

Because I'll tell you, don't worry about America. If the church falls, it's gone. It's over. And it's not too late.

It's not too late. But we've got to be busy. Lest they forget. Lest they forget. We need to get back into the word of God and train our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Let's pray. Father, thank you for today. Thank you for this opportunity to come and challenge all of us, all of us, myself included, in how important it is that we focus our attention on your word and bring it to present generations with the idea of reaching future generations with the word of God and the word of God rightly divided.

[47 : 53] God's love. Father, thank you for this time. Thank you for this assembly. Thank you for its ministry here and beyond. Continue to use it and bless it. And Pastor Nathan and his family use them in a mighty way here to truly raise up a church that's standing for the word of God.

Thank you for this time and we pray this in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

All right, thanks, Joel, for sharing with us today.

That was a great message. I really appreciate it. Before we head out, just one reminder, next Sunday at Sunday School, we're going to have a special hour.

We're just going to talk about our fair outreach ministry. That's in August. We're going to be doing the fair. If you've signed up for that or still are interested in that, we're just going to talk about what our plan is for the fair.

We're also going to do another one the following Wednesday, so a week and a half. Not this coming Wednesday, but the Wednesday after that. That's in your bulletin, by the way, the exact dates.

[49 : 08] So two special days, one Sunday morning, one Wednesday night. If after that there's others that still weren't able to make those and would still like another time to learn about what we're doing at the fair, please just let me know and we'll see if we can make that happen.

All right, thanks everybody. If you want to chat with Joel, he'll be around and you can find out more about Bible doctrines to live by. ■■■■■ movie by to Michael in Joel provided for counseling.

Thank you.