

Current Events - We should not be surprised

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- [0 : 00] If you will note in your bulletin, there is a brief article written concerning this morning's message, and I should like to just reiterate that, get it on the table for our consideration.
- The message is entitled, We Should Not Be Surprised. First, Western culture in general, and the American culture in particular, have been in a moral freefall for the past several decades.
- Radical changes got underway shortly after World War II that have only accelerated since then to the present day. While we as Christians sadly lament so much that is happening, it should not surprise us.
- And why we should not be surprised is the topic of the morning. We will conclude with the only possible remedy. Would you pray with me, please?
- Father, we deliver ourselves to you once again for the outworking of your will in this morning hour. We recognize that our nation is facing grave situations, perhaps even more so than we know.
- [1 : 20] We recognize that oftentimes men do their best in positions of influence and authority, but sometimes a nation state is just overwhelmed by the sheer volume of evil that is out there.
- We know full well that we are not sufficient to it. And we call upon you because you are the only one who could possibly intervene and really make a difference.
- And we as believers in this small local assembly want to be involved to whatever degree and in whatever way you want.
- So we pray that there will be an openness on the part of each of us as individuals and on this congregation as a body of believers to be completely at your disposal in whatever way we can.
- Thank you for the truth that you have communicated in your word that should prevent us from being taken by surprise regarding what is happening.
- [2 : 29] So we pray for an understanding not only of the issues, but of the only remedy that is available. We commit this time to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's open the scriptures first of all, please, to 2 Timothy chapter 3.
- We have several portions that we want to consider this morning, each of which is vital and has its own contribution to make to this whole subject. It is a passage that we are well familiar with.
- I'm sure you've read it many times, as have I. And yet it bears repetition because it is so descriptive of what is taking place even around us right now.
- In the beginning verse, the apostle, inspired of God, talks about the last days. And before I read the passage, I want to explain briefly something about the last days, because there is a common misconception as to what constitutes the last days.

[3 : 35] I suppose the typical interpretation of the last days has to do with the few months or maybe even a few years that will transpire immediately prior to the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, there's no question about it. Those would be the last days. But as scripture uses this term, the last days, it is generally referring to everything that has occurred on this side of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

Because it is the death of Christ and his subsequent resurrection that actually constitutes the splitting of human history into the former days and the last days.

So insofar as biblical chronology and time is concerned, everything that took place in our world prior to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is referred to as the former days.

Everything that has taken place since the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ is the latter days or the last days. So keep that distinction in mind and it will help you understand what is taking place.

[4 : 58] Don't think for a moment that the items that are described here in 2 Timothy 3 are only reserved for a few months or a couple of years before Christ comes.

This content has been going on. And in a sense, much of this content was also going on in the former days. However, the burden here for this passage is, since the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, in the latter days, you are going to see an intensification, an increase, an upsurge in these events.

And one reason will be because the world's population has increased so dramatically. And the more people you have, the more opportunity there is for godliness among the saints, and the more opportunity there is for evil among unbelievers.

So bear all that in mind, if you will, as we read this passage here from 2 Timothy 3. 3 Timothy 3.

Lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power, and avoid such men as these.

[6 : 39] For among them are those who enter into households and captivate weak women, weighed down with sins, led on by various impulses, always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

So the reason that we should not be ashamed is because of what today's bulletin tells us, and because of what this scripture passage tells us here in 2 Timothy 3.

And before we go further, I want to turn to another familiar passage, and that is 1 Corinthians 6. So let's go there, please.

1 Corinthians 6. 1 Corinthians 6.

1 Corinthians 6. Not too long ago, the entire homosexual community was looked upon with disdain, disfavor, rejection, disapproval, etc.

[8 : 13] In an incredibly short period of time, very short period of time, the gay lobby and machinery and supporters have succeeded in conducting the most enormous sociological reversal in the history of the Western world.

To go all the way from disdain and disapproval to acceptance, affirmation, and support in less than one generation is staggering, stunning, just absolutely amazing.

This is the most, the most, the most, what shall I say? The word I'm looking for is marketing. The most successful marketing endeavor sociologically that has ever taken place in the history of the human race.

And I do not fear that I will be contradicted by that. I do not know of any situation or instance that has been so radically, dramatically reversed in such a short period of time and affirmed by so many people.

And I'll tell you this, my hat is off to those who have engineered it because they really pulled off something that nobody else has been able to do. It just goes to show you what the flesh is capable of accomplishing.

[9 : 54] Does it not? So, here in 1 Corinthians chapter 6, and let's begin reading with verse 9. Or do you not know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?

Do not be deceived, neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers.

Shall inherit the kingdom of God? And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the spirit of our God.

The reason that we should not be surprised is because these descriptions of immorality are actions that are produced by people who are simply being what they are.

They are doing what they are. What else would you expect? This is their nature. And they are simply acting out of their nature.

[11 : 17] In essence, we have no right to expect anything else. And what we certainly ought not to expect is we ought not to expect this crowd living here in 1 Corinthians 6, we ought not to expect them to embrace or adopt our standards or seek to live with them.

And this is one place, I think, where Christians really ought to check themselves, because I believe we can be faulted in this area. We who name the name of Christ embrace a certain lifestyle.

We view certain standards as God's standards. And even though we fall far short from living up to them perfectly, we respect them and we acknowledge that we ought to live up to them.

Even if we don't, there is a sense of oughtness there. That does not exist in this crowd that Paul has labeled here. Neither can it exist.

Neither should we expect it to exist. In fact, it is even a form of unreasonable cruelty to expect non-Christian people to comply with the standards of Christian people.

[12 : 33] No reason why they should. No reason why they should want to. And there is certainly no reason why they can. It is unreasonable on our part to critique those who live immoral lives, stand back, throw stones at them, if you will, verbal barbs or what, register our disgust and dismay, and they ought to be in jail, and something ought to be done to them, and blah, blah, blah, and all the rest of it.

When in reality, what do you expect? You expect them to live like you do? They don't have the capability for that. Not only do they not have the desire or interest to live that way, and they think, by the way, that you are really hokey for trying to do so, they don't have the ability to.

It isn't as if these people just thought to wake up and smell the coffee and clean up their act and start doing right. It's beyond them. They don't have the ability to do that.

And if you are able to reflect back on who and what you were before Christ came into your life, you didn't have the ability either. You were just like them. And Paul, when he addresses his Corinthian audience here, he says, And such were some of you.

You know what I'm talking about? Because you used to live that lifestyle. You used to do that scene. You used to be into that. You used to be into the drugs and all that went with it.

[14 : 04] You were part of that culture. But something happened. Jesus Christ intervened. And you became a new person in him.

And that's what enables you now to live a different life. But don't expect those who haven't experienced what you have to be able to live like you do.

They won't. They can't. It is beyond them. That's the first thing we need to keep in mind. Now, by that, I don't mean that you affirm them in their immorality.

I don't mean you just give them a pass. I don't mean you say, well, that's okay. You can't do anything else. I understand. A condescending attitude. Nobody is adopting that.

I'm just saying that we need to remember the pit from which we were digged and see them the way we were. Because, by the way, let me remind you, they are not the enemy.

[15 : 09] They are prisoners of the enemy. And so were we. So, but for the grace of God, there go we. That's the only thing that separates them from us is the grace of God.

So, I want to buttress that by another passage in Romans chapter 8 and beginning with verse 1. Would you turn there, please? Just back one book from 1 Corinthians to Romans chapter 8.

And this, too, is a very insightful passage because all through the New Testament, very dramatic distinctions are made between the them and us, between the saints and the ain'ts.

And they are quite clear in their description. Romans chapter 8. There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Implication? What is there for those who are not in Christ Jesus? Condemnation. Judgment. That's what we were saved out from when we came to faith in Christ.

[16 : 18] And as a result, there is therefore now no condemnation, that is, no judgment, for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

But what about those who haven't been set free? They're still there. They're still in that bondage. They are blind, they are helpless, and they are hopeless. And they don't even know it.

That's part of the intensity of the blindness. For what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did, sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.

And as an offering for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

And what is the requirement of the law that is fulfilled in us? Do you know what the law requires? The law of God, whether it's the one written in your hearts, or whether it is the one written to the Jewish people consisting of 633 commands, whichever law you take, what the law requires is absolute, total, complete compliance.

[17 : 49] Where are you with that? Well, if you are in Christ, that's what you have.

And it is not behaviorally oriented. It is not performance oriented. It is positionally oriented. If you are in Christ, you possess absolute, total compliance of any law that expects anything from you, or demands anything from you.

Because Christ said he came not to abolish, but to fulfill the law. And he did fulfill it in every single respect. And if you are in Christ, you possess what he is and what he has.

You possess his righteousness. His righteousness is of such a nature that God the Father could look upon him and say, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased.

We are made accepted in the beloved. Ephesians 1. We are not acceptable as we are. We are made accepted in the beloved.

[19 : 10] That means when you are in Christ, God looks upon you with the same favor and the same acceptance as he looks upon his own dear son.

That's what it means to be in Christ. You share everything he is. You are an heir of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. That is incredible.

But what about those who are not in Christ? Well, they are outside of Christ. And they are under condemnation. And they do not meet the demands of the law. And they do not have the facility for doing so.

Let's read on. Verse 5. For those who are according to the flesh, And this doesn't mean flesh as in tissue and flesh and bone, as in our bodily substance.

This means that inner fallen nature with which we were born. This is our Adamic flesh. This is that part of our being that allows us to sin and makes us want to sin.

[20 : 16] This is where all the self-centeredness comes from. This is where all the human evil comes from. This is where murder and adultery and everything else comes from. The scriptures call it the flesh.

And it is our unbridled lust inherited in Adam. Those who live, verse 5, According to the flesh, Set their minds on the things of the flesh.

That's the only thing that interests them. That's all they have an affinity for. That's where their total interest lies. It is in pleasing self.

Whatever it takes. Drugs, sex, alcohol, immorality of any kind, One night stands, whatever. That's their only interest.

That's the thing that consumes them. That's what they work all week to get a paycheck for so they can engage in these things. And for them, in their estimation, that's living.

[21 : 20] We would say they don't know what living is because some of us have been there. And we thought we were living then too until we came to Christ. And then we found out that all the while we thought we were living and having a good time, We were nothing but anesthetized.

Intoxicated. Anesthetized in our sin and not even knowing it. So, Paul goes on.

They set their minds on the things of the flesh. That means that's their only agenda, their only priority. That's all they're interested in. But those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit.

For the mind set on the flesh is death. That's what it always results in. It's spiritual death while it is there.

It is physical death when it ends. But the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace. You couldn't get more opposite than that.

[22 : 34] Because, now look at verse 7. Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God.

Now, you would be surprised how many people would deny that. When in reality, they are hostile with God. The word actually conveys the idea that they are in a state of war with God.

And if you were to say that to some of your immoral acquaintances who live the kind of lifestyles that we've been talking about here from the New Testament, they might be very angry and offended and say, What are you talking about?

I'm not hostile with God. I think God's pretty cool. I mean, He's okay. Assuming that they believe in God. But they would be offended at the mere suggestion that they are at war with God.

Are you crazy? At war with God? Not me. I think He's, you know, and on and on they would go. And that is part of the blindness. Because, listen, if you are not in favor with the person of God's Son, Jesus Christ, and have not committed your life and your destiny to Him, you are at war with God.

[23 : 57] Maybe it's a cold war. But it's a war. You may not go around spouting atheist remarks and cursing God. But if you are not in Christ, your official position is at enmity with God.

And it doesn't change because you don't know it. It's still a reality. We have, therefore, being justified by grace, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Everyone, without exception, who is not at peace with God is at war with God. There are no neutrals in this battle. No fence sitters.

Because to refuse to accept is to actively reject. And that's what the Savior meant when He said, He who is not with me is against me.

Don't scratch your chin and say, Well, I can't quite decide. Which to have not decided is to decide. You understand that? The mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God, for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for or because it is not even able to do so.

[25 : 26] To suggest to an unbeliever that he live a godly life or live up to your principles and your standards as a Christian is to ask a two-year-old baby to lift a thousand-pound weight over his head.

He just has no ability whatever to do that. And the fact that they don't know that or don't understand that concept is part of the spiritual blindness of which Paul speaks when he writes to the Corinthians in chapter 4.

And he said, If our gospel be hid, and it is hid to some people, it's unknown. It is hid to those who are lost, whose minds, that means their thinking ability, their reasoning and logic powers, are blinded by Satan, the master deceiver, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, which is the image of God, should shine unto them.

And there is no one so blind as those who are blind and don't even know they're blind. That's blindness.

That's what he's talking about. It is not even able to do so. And those who are in the flesh cannot please God. Well, if you don't please God, anyone who does not please God, what's left?

[26 : 56] A displeased God. Again, there's no middle ground. God is either pleased or he is not pleased. And if you are in Christ, he is pleased.

Not because you're wonderful, because you're not wonderful. Nor am I. But Christ is wonderful. And through a process that none of us understands, the God of grace performs an act upon the believing individual, whereby he penetrates the human heart and psyche, and he actually renews what is there.

He regenerates. He calls us to come to life, that which is spiritually dead within us. And that's our essence of life.

That's what gives us new life in Christ. Romans 1 and verse 26, if you would please. We're in the book now. Let's just come back a few pages.

You realize that so thorough and so complete has the sexual revolution and the homosexual revolution been successful to a degree, they have actually succeeded in labeling a portion of scripture I'm going to be reading to you now as hate speech that should not be allowed to be read in public.

[28 : 32] And I don't know if you're aware of it or not, but there are ministers in Canada who have already done time in jail for reading from these portions of scripture.

Can you imagine that? And it's coming here. Romans chapter 1. I'm going to begin with verse 26. Romans chapter 2.

God gave them over. Surrendered them to their own lusts and ambitions. Which is one of the most solemn things that God can do is to leave a person to his own devices.

I sure don't want to be left to mine because I've already had a taste of what my devices are like. And they're not very stellar. For this reason, verse 26, God gave them over to degrading passions for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural.

Let me stop right here and just say this is the word that the homosexual community despises with a passion.

[30 : 12] They don't want to be thought of as unnatural. And there's another word that they really hate. And that is the word pervert or perversion.

In fact, the sociological upheaval that is taking place in the Western world right now is so dynamic and so successful and so far reaching, they have even succeeded in doing something I would not have even thought was possible for anybody to do.

And that is, they are rewriting dictionary definitions and getting away with it. Can you believe that?

Can you? The word tolerant and intolerant has taken on an entirely different meaning. But they have given it as opposed to what Daniel Webster gave it over a hundred years ago.

And they're actually getting away. Nobody's challenging it. You don't expect the liberal media to challenge it. They're in bed with it. They applaud it.

[31 : 28] And you're not challenging it either. You know why you're not challenging it? Because you don't want to be called bad names.

So you just dummy up, shake your head, and walk away. And this is what the Christian community has been doing for decades.

Well, it's not my job. Well, I'm not capable. I'm not, you know, I'm not this. I'm not that. And I don't approve, but I just keep my mouth shut. Don't keep your mouth shut. God gave you a mouth to speak with.

Use it. We do not have the prerogative to dummy up and look the other way and say, I certainly wouldn't do that, but who am I to tell other people what, you know, this is where we are.

And we're getting the results of being intimidated into silence. And the steamroller goes on and on and on.

[32 : 35] And we shake our heads and say, isn't it terrible what's going on out there? How can they do that? Well, be reminded, they can't do anything else.

It has been said, all that is necessary for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing. We just stand by and watch it and shake our heads and say, somebody ought to do something.

Isn't there a law against that somewhere? How can they get away with that? We just won't open our mouths because all of us, and I'm including myself because when I point my finger at you, guess where three others are pointing?

Right back at me. We've all got a sociological yellow streak running up our back that causes us to keep our mouth shut because we think, well, I'm not an expert and it's not my place and it's not my, yes, it is.

Let those who name the name of Christ say so. We've been silent too long in too many of these areas. We need to be speaking out.

[33 : 58] And you can't count on the media to do it because the media is part of the problem. The media is in bed with this group. They are bosom buddies. And apart from a very limited exposure that you get on certain TV channels, you know who of them I speak.

You wouldn't even be hearing about a lot of these things because the media just doesn't cover it. People are scared to death that they're going to be called homophobe.

You're unloving. You're intolerant. You're narrow. You're a bigot. Who wants to be called those things?

Even if you know you're not. You don't want to be called that. Who does? Nobody in their right mind. They know the buzzwords.

They know the words that scare you to death that will make you get in line. Racist. You're racist. The reason you oppose the principles or the policies of the man in the Oval Office now is just because you're a racist.

[35 : 09] You just hate black people. So you hate everything he does. That's called playing the race card. And they are experts at it. And they know there isn't anything that will shut your mouth.

More than that. And that's what they want to do. Close your mouth. No opposition. They want smooth sailing. And we're giving it to them.

Romans 1.26. 27. And in the same way, also, the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another.

Men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own person the due penalty of their error.

And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer. See, when you acknowledge God, the automatic acknowledgement that goes along with acknowledging God is He's in charge.

[36 : 28] If He's in charge, you're not. If He's in charge, He sets the agenda. He sets the standards. And it is ours to comply. But as long as you don't acknowledge God in this, then it's, well, you have your truth and I have my truth.

And who am I to force my opinion on you? Of course, I will stand idly by, closed mouth, while you force your opinion on me.

and I won't say anything in response because I don't like the names I'd be called. And you know, that doesn't even come close to what you can call persecution.

People saying unkind, untrue things about you because of your position doesn't come close to being skinned alive, literally, or boiled in oil, literally, or drawn and quartered.

Do you know what it means to be drawn and quartered? Do you know how many martyrs for Jesus Christ were drawn and quartered? Drawn and quartered is when you tether a horse to each of your legs and a horse to each of your arms and then you drive the horses away and they pull you apart.

[38 : 03] Now, that's persecution. And against somebody calling us an uncomplimentary name, doesn't quite compare, does it? Are we unwilling to suffer even the least bit of discomfort or misrepresentation compared to what others who sailed through bloody seas have gone through?

This generation of evangelicals, we ought to be ashamed of ourselves. We've caved.

We've sold out. We've dummed up. We've stood aside and said, well, nothing I can do about it. It's too bad.

It's just, isn't the evil in this world awful? Isn't it terrible what's happening? I tell you, I'm just so glad I'm a Christian. And that's about the most we get.

just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind to do those things which are not proper.

[39 : 20] And then, a lengthy laundry list of uncomplimentary things follows, which I'm not going to take time to read, but they're all pretty much self-explanatory and they are all there.

Such behavior has become more and more accepted, even applauded by vast segments of the general population and fueled by the media.

And I do want to return the passage for just, just the last verse, verse 32. And this, this is striking. This, verse 32, same passage. And although they know the ordinance of God that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them.

That means they're their cheerleaders. They egg them on. They say, hey, that is so cool. Same-sex marriage is so cool. Why should anyone be deprived of love?

After all, it's all about love. Don't you think other people besides yourself should be able to be happy?

[40 : 44] And don't you think they should be able to pursue unmolested whatever it is that makes them happy? don't you want to be happy?

How could you deny happiness to someone else just because it's different from your kind of happiness? Does that make it wrong? These are all the specious arguments that are being used now.

And they're being used in such a way that it puts anyone who is not in favor of them in a category judgmental, homophobic, unkind, unloving, you have no compassion, and on and on.

And they know the words we fear. And they use them expertly. It's amazing. And you know what? We don't have a plan.

We don't have any kind of an organized plan. We don't have any kind of a particular agenda for combating this. We've got a few Christian organizations here and there. We've got Concerned Women for America and the Family Research Council and a few things like that.

[41 : 54] But they are a minuscule drop in the bucket to what the enemy has when it comes to marshaling forces and supporting with millions and millions of dollars and being bankrolled by those of persuasion who want to egg it on.

Our Christian response is revulsion. rejection, disgust, is now labeled hateful and bigoted and narrow and all the rest.

And these accusations are nearly as bad and as much feared as being called a racist. And that thing works so well.

If you want to shut up the average congressman or senator, just threaten him with that word. Just threaten him with that word. Because you know what?

They've learned one thing. Well, they've learned more than one thing, but they've learned one thing especially. And that is, if you are labeled something or called something, it doesn't have to have a shred of truth in it to just be called the name.

[43 : 09] even though the one who is calling you the name knows there isn't a bit of truth in it, they'll use it anyway, and it works.

It is a despicable thing to do. It is deliberately speaking lies that you know are lies and will mislead people, but the name of the game in politics is it doesn't matter whether it's true or not.

That's beside the point. All that matters is can you get enough people to believe it to throw an election? That's all that matters. Doesn't have to be true.

Just making the accusation can be enough to put a cloud over them and get the desired effect. You don't have to be a child molester at all.

You don't have to have ever in your life laid an inappropriate hand on a child. So what would you think if somebody says on the internet you're a child molester?

[44 : 19] You would be hurt. You would be repulsed, revolved. You would be angry. You would say there's not a bit of truth. How are you going to defend that? How are you going to prove you're not?

There's not a bit of truth in it. You get any consolation out of that? You know that it isn't true. But you see, all you have to do is be called one.

It doesn't matter whether it's true or not. And you know what people are going to start saying? Well, I never would have thought that of him. He seems so decent and upstanding. But you know, where there's smoke, there's fire.

Isn't this tragedy? This is what we're living with. This is a day of untruth, untruth abounding. True compassion does not acquiesce and approve immoral behavior, but confronts it, and sometimes by paying a great price for doing so.

My last reference is in Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 3 through 14. Ephesians 5. I'm not sure that I even like this passage because it makes me uncomfortable.

[45 : 32] You know what it tells me? It tells me I need to do something. And I would rather just sit idly by and let somebody else do it. Let George do it.

Okay? He's more qualified. He's more equipped. He's more equipped. You know, verse 3, Ephesians 5.

But do not. Now, remember, he's talking to believers. And he's already identified his audience as being believers. And he's saying this is what you were, what you used to be, before you came to faith in Christ.

But now, in God, you who sometimes were far off or brought nigh by the blood of Christ, and so on. And then he says in verse 5, Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children, and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you as is proper among saints. And there must be no filthiness and silly talk or coarse jesting, these dirty jokes, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

[46 : 49] For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man who is an idolater has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words.

For because of these things, the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore, do not be partakers with them. For you, you believers there at Ephesus, you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

Walk like it. Walk as children of light. In the fruit of the light consists of all goodness and righteousness and truth, trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord.

And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, darkness, but instead expose them.

How do you do that? How do you expose them? We saw from our Sermon on the Mount messages that believers, and this is true not only of the Jew in that dispensation, dispensation, but believers in every dispensation constitute the earth's salt and light.

[48 : 14] And the point we made from that is believers in a fallen world are not only salt and light. We are all the salt and all the light there is.

There isn't any provided by the world. Zero. Zilch. None. They don't have any light. They're darkness. We are salt and light. And when you take light and you shine it on an object, it exposes it.

It reveals it. It shows what it is. That's what we are to be doing. Expose it. Call it out. Call it what it is.

Don't back down. We have no cause and no right to be unkind. To be cruel. To be nasty.

To be vicious. The other side specializes in that. But we are to be firm and loving and unyielding when we know we are right and we are supported by the word of God.

[49 : 24] We are not to engage in shrill screaming, yelling invectives at people, making threats or anything like that. Let the other crowd do that. That's not what we are called to.

But we are called to be consistent witnesses of our Lord Jesus Christ, calmly, honestly, kindly, unwaveringly.

We don't have to yell and scream. We just let the truth speak for itself. and we ought not to be afraid to speak it. Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness.

In other words, it isn't enough. Listen, it isn't enough that we just don't do these things. we are also supposed to expose them.

And that can cost you. One of the most glaring examples I want to leave with you as we conclude is that there is a price to be paid for standing up and standing tall and not caving.

[50 : 42] And when John the Baptist went into the presence of Herod the king and said, you are not allowed to take your brother's wife.

That's adultery and the law condemns it and I'm here to put you on notice. This is wrong. This is sinful. Herod had one or two choices.

You either repent, you bow your head, swallow hard and say, you know what? You're right. I just caved in in a moment of weakness.

I was enticed by the flesh and blah, blah, blah. I was out of line and I need to repent of my sin. Don't worry about Herod doing that. Make a long story short, you know all about Salome, the head on the charger, all the rest.

and John the Baptist paid for exposing the sin of Herod with his life.

[51 : 52] So, people who have stood for the truth have lost status, they've lost money, they've lost their job, they've lost their reputation sometimes, but that goes with paying the price for righteousness, and we ought to be willing to pay it.

In his message last week, our representative, Jim Jordan, recounted just a few of the enormous prices that our founding fathers who signed that Declaration of Independence paid in order to take that stand.

Well, we serve a much greater entity even than these United States. We serve the God of Heaven, and we ought to be willing to stand up and say, this is what God thinks about that.

Now, listen, don't give them your opinion. To begin with, it isn't worth much. Give them. This is what the Bible says.

And they may ridicule, they may pay poot, who cares about the Bible, it's just a bunch of old musty book written by a bunch of old men that wore bath rubs and had beards, and it doesn't mean anything.

[53 : 21] I don't buy that, that's all outdated. They may say all that. And their response is not our responsibility, but we are responsible to give them the truth. And the last thing in the world we want to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ because I do.

No, no, no, no, no. That's not the message. We are not part of the message. Everybody needs to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ because it is the right thing to do.

It is what God requires. And all those who do not, he labels as sons of disobedience. and we need to tell people that. And we need to be fearless in doing so.

As I said, we need to be kind. We don't beat them over the head with our Bible. We don't badger them. We don't intimidate them. We don't threaten them. We just give them the truth. That's what love does.

This is tough love. This is tough love. Do you care enough about people to tell them the truth? and it may never blossom in their heart as long as they live.

[54 : 29] But you don't have any control over that. On the other hand, God may use your testimony to eat away at them until the hound of heaven wears them down and they see the error of their way and they embrace Christ.

That's the only remedy. The gospel is the only real hope this nation has. And I'm talking about a real genuine heaven sent revival.

I've never experienced that in my lifetime. I've only read some stories about it. But when that happens, people not only get right with God, they get right with each other. Old grudges are dealt with, forgiveness is extended, apology and restorations are made.

That's the real ticket. None of this superficial stuff. When God reaches down and a revival is real, there are people whose lives and families are changed for eternity.

That's what this nation needs. I don't know whether God may be willing to grant it or not. But if he does, it will be because those of the household of faith started recognizing who we are and what we are to be about.

[55 : 45] Let's pray. Father, we know that things going on in our world today that dishearten us, how much more must they dishearten you?

We know that you have given men and women volition, the power to make decisions and choices. We know you've also built into that the law of cause and effect, and that we have to live with our actions.

And we don't know to what degree you may be pleased to use us here as individuals or as a corporate body in the cause that we've been mentioning. But we just want to make ourselves available to you and willing and sensitive to your leading, whatever you may want to do, through whomever you may want to do it, whatever way you want to do it.

we just trust that each one of us wants to be open and available to you, sensitive to what you want to do.

We don't have any idea what that might be. We leave that to your great wisdom. Thank you for being in Christ. Thank you for the peace and the joy that comes through believing.

[57 : 03] Remind us that those of us who have the light, our responsible for shedding it abroad. Thank you for the enormous privilege we have.

We don't believe that you've ever called us to do anything that you haven't enabled us to do. To this end, we pray in Christ's name. Amen.