

America's Continuing Crisis, Part 3

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 August 2021

Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

- [0 : 00] As I was reflecting and praying and thinking in my study just a few minutes before the service began, the thought occurred to me in connection with this morning's message.
- After having been here and ministered to you for over 50 years, this morning, essentially, I'm speaking on the same thing I spoke on 50 years ago.
- Nothing has changed. In reality, that's true because people haven't changed. Not since Genesis, we have not changed. Humanity has remained the same.
- And we need to understand that. So, in connection with what we've got in the bulletin, and I'm just going to, for the record, read it again. I know you've probably already read it, but I trust that it will kind of set the pace for what we'll be talking about.
- With America's continuing crisis, this is part three, and it is my intent that this will be the conclusion of this brief series of messages. We've got other things that we need to address.
- [1 : 14] Moral, spiritual, and political turmoil, the likes of which we have never faced before, continues apace. It seems like a new abnormality is introduced monthly.
- There yet remains only one solution to the chaos. It is voiced by the prophet Jeremiah, who addressed the crises of his day 600 years before the birth of Christ.
- Clearly, the interpretation of Jeremiah's prophecy refers to Judah of the southern kingdom. But the application fits America like a hand in a glove.
- The word that Jeremiah used repeatedly, as did Amos, is the word return, and return to the Jews of that day.
- That's what they preached. And Jeremiah reminded them that this generation is not like that of the past, which walked with God and were blessed by God. And you need to get back to that.
- [2 : 19] It's the same word that applies to America today. So, with that in mind, I have the unhappy responsibility of addressing these issues that are so burdensome to our nation.
- In fact, they comprise threats the likes of which we have never faced before. So, it is inevitable that some repetition is acknowledged, and it is intended.
- I told you some time ago that in my waning time as your pastor, you are going to find me emphasizing and reemphasizing things that I consider to be most important, because that's what I want to leave you with.
- So, if I sound a little repetitious, it isn't because I can't think of anything else or don't have anything else to bring. It's that I regard these issues so important that I want to make sure they are firmly set in your mind and heart so you will be able to apply to them and appeal to them as time goes on.
- Issues facing our nation are many, and they are grave. Such division among Americans has not been so serious since the Civil War divided us 160 years ago.

[3 : 46] Issues that divide us are items that one would have thought could not possibly be subjects of division, because some of these things are flatly so nonsensical, there is no way we could have believed that America could ever fall into that kind of mindset.

It just couldn't happen. But it has. And these things are wreaking social and moral havoc throughout this great land.

Time would fail me to address them all. And in addressing those we intend, our only goal is to reveal what God's position is on them, because his is the only one that really matters.

And after all, what else would you expect a preacher to do? So in beginning at the beginning, I repeat my oft-repeated mantra, the issue is authority, always has been, always will be.

I hope you'll never forget that. That is as bottom line as you can get. The issue about everything is authority. It always has been.

[4 : 55] From Genesis 3 to this present day, the issue is all about authority. Whoever you are, what or whom you believe and accept as your ultimate authority will determine the conclusions you reach and the positions you will take about everything.

For very many here in the USA and the world abroad, the only ultimate authority that is recognized is oneself. In no single class of humanity is this more obvious than with the avowed atheist, followed closely after by the agnostic and the secularist.

All three groups are found worldwide in greater numbers than ever before, and they wield far more influence than ever before imagined.

Our previous messages appealed to Jewish prophets, Jeremiah, Hosea, and Amos, and we were very careful to point out that we are not at all suggesting that what those passages are referring to is the United States of America, because they weren't.

They were referring to Israel as it existed at that time, and to Judah, even though they were a divided nation. They were both subject to the prophets that God raised up and graciously sent to them, warning them of the error of their ways and what the consequences would be if they did not return to him.

[6 : 27] They did not, and the axe came down, just as he said it would. So what we have in the warnings that were given by the prophets to be interpreted exclusively of the Jewish people in that day, while they are not to be interpreted of us today, there is plenty of room for application.

And as we have tried to point out in sessions in the past, that in the passage of Scripture, the interpretation is always one. And the one that it is, is the meaning that the writer of the passage intended to convey to those to whom he was writing.

That is the interpretation. And it is always singular. It is one. Applications are manifold. And what we are going to be saying today could very well be applied to France, or Great Britain, or Germany.

And I picked those three in particular because, in many respects, they stand more responsible than other nations of Europe. We may be able to see why, but I don't know that time will allow.

So, the America we know today is the result of a dramatic shift of consensus among the population, and it began shortly after World War II in the 1960s.

[7 : 56] The common enemies that united us were the conflicts occurring in Europe and Asia. And they did unite this nation like it probably never been united.

Perhaps since, well, I would like to say since perhaps the war for revolution and independence in the 1770s, but you must understand that there was not nearly as much division then, I mean, not as much togetherness then as we would like to think, because historians have rather significantly established that when the time came for questioning about whether we should withdraw from Great Britain and break our ties with them and become an independent nation, there were only about one-third of the nation who believed we should.

And there was another one-third of the nation who believed we should not, but we should stay with the king. And there was another third, the final third, that had decided to wait and see how this thing shakes out, and then they would see which side they joined.

They were kind of ambivalent. So the nation was not at all as united as we would like to think, but I remember just as a young lad, I don't think there was ever such unity among the people in this nation as there was from 1941 and the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1945 with the atomic bomb being dropped that ended World War II.

Although it was a horrible, horrible time of international conflict and bloodshed, it did bond the United States people together in a way that we had never been bonded before.

[9 : 45] And it may be difficult for some of you to realize this, but again, as a youngster, I can remember hearing the adults talk around me, and it was not at all certain that we were going to win that war.

That's how much it hung in the balance on certain occasions. So that national consensus of togetherness was social and moral and even to a noticeable extent somewhat spiritual.

That culture, that culture, that was the culture that produced Billy Graham. 1948.

that caused many to express an appreciation for the message of Christianity and at least a positive consensus for moral and spiritual values.

That has all changed. You need to understand that. That has all changed. The values are still there and there are still some that hold them, but they are in a decreasing minority.

[10 : 53] It's not a matter of unity at all. It's great division. secularism and atheism that has been promoted very, very heavily in academia has taken its toll.

The culture of attitudes that has changed so dramatically into what is reflected today has created a culture Billy Graham wouldn't recognize if he were here today and actually he hasn't been gone that long.

But it's a different world now than it was when Billy was preaching and bringing people to Christ like he did. So the nation continues to struggle with what's going on and we asked the question last week and our conclusion is can America return?

Can we get back? And our previous message then concluded with it is possible because with God all things are possible but is it probable?

Now we would all certainly like to think the former and that because it is possible and because all things are possible with God maybe the string hasn't run out on the U.S. of A.

[12 : 29] Maybe we can still turn this thing around. Maybe God is willing to turn it around. And I must admit it does look rather bleak and I'll give you the negative connotation first because you need to know this and it is a possibility I'm not a prophet but I try to assess what's happening and sometimes I turn out to be right sometimes turn out to be wrong so what?

But if this thing is not turned around you are going to see America going down the slippery slope faster and faster and it could very well be the beginning of the end of the big wrap up and I'm talking about the translation of the church the tribulation and all the rest that's going to follow I'm not saying that's the way it's going to be I'm saying that is a negative scenario and I'll tell you one thing eventually that will be the way it's going to be I just don't know if this is it or not but that will be the way it's going to be in the final analysis and if it is turned around it will only be because God has intervened and if God intervenes I suspect it will only be because of that well-worn passage that so many of you know in 2 Chronicles 7:14 and again there's an application there the interpretation is Israel and the need was for Israel to repent but the application is if my people which are called by my name will pray humble themselves and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then I will hear from heaven will forgive their sin and will cleanse their land that is a valid application that applies to individuals and to nations but it begins with us and we don't know to what extent what number would be involved people willing to do that we do comfort ourselves those of us who gather here on Wednesday night consisting of about 12 or maybe 15 or 16 when they're all here we do comfort ourselves in the fact that we are confident that there are groups like ours meeting all throughout this country with the same concerns that we have about this nation and are begging and pleading

God for intervention and for wisdom in dealing with the issue and that's something that we really do need we need wisdom dealing with the issue you understand I trust you do understand that Christians today are not so easily tolerated but in some cases we are we are actually considered an impediment an obstacle to those who want to take this country in a certain way that we're confident we don't want it to go and that makes us an enemy and these people have a visceral hatred for the things of Christ and for theism in general and for churches in general especially those that proclaim the word and we are not welcome among these people and we need to understand as I've often told you they regard us as the enemy but we must not see them as the enemy we must see them as captives of the enemy because they are and we also need to remind ourselves that before we came to faith in Christ we were on the other side and it's only the grace of

God that enabled us to change sides and give us a new perspective and a new agenda and new ideals and new standards new everything because that's what happens when you come to faith in Christ so even though quite frankly they they abhor us they hate us we must not hate them we must see them for blinded as Paul says they are and that passage in 2nd Corinthians I've quoted so much if our gospel be hid it is hid to those who are lost whose minds the God of this age has blinded lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine unto them we must ever look at them that way and I must confess it gets difficult sometimes I clipped a cartoon out of the newspaper I meant to put it on the bullet board

I guess I forgot it one other thing I forgot it's the couple you know Loretta and whatever the husband's name is they're standing there in this television appliance store and she turns to the husband and she says she turns to the salesman and says about her husband she says my husband is looking for something to yell at they were in the process of buying a TV and I must confess and Maria is my best witness I have talked back to my TV more over the last couple of years and I have an entire existence of it and I suspect with good reason so with America's continuing crisis we have to be careful how we respond and I was really struck by today's our daily bread I don't know I know some of you get it and read it copies are available out there and I thought man this really fits in with this morning and if you didn't read it this morning

[18:29] I'm going to share it with you John Lewis when John Lewis an American congressman and civil rights leader died in 2020 people from many political persuasions mourned in 1965 Lewis marched with Martin Luther King Jr.

to secure voting rights for black citizens during the march Lewis suffered a cracked skull causing scars he carried the rest of his life when you see something that is not right not just not fair Lewis says you have a moral obligation to say something to do something he also said never ever be afraid to make some noise and get in good necessary trouble hmm Lewis learned early that doing what was right to be faithful to the truth required making good trouble never quite heard it put that way before make good trouble think of that now we're talking conflict that's what trouble is making good trouble he would need to speak things that were unpopular girl ak

Amos named the trouble. He got in trouble too, by the way. The prophet made good, necessary trouble. But this trouble aimed at something good, justice for all. Let justice roll on like a river, Amos exclaimed. When we get into good trouble, the kind of righteous, nonviolent trouble justice requires, the goal is always goodness and healing. Are we willing to make good trouble? Are we willing to be vocal? Are we willing to speak out? It needs to be done with love and with compassion, not with threats and not with violence. But as Dr.

Lutzer put it in his recently published book, copies of which are back there, we will not remain silent. There are a great many people who assume that silence means agreement, or at least you're not opposed. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so. And it needs to be done with the right attitude and the right motivation. But it needs to be done. We are supposed to be salt and light. Those are two very important things. But if the salt, Jesus said, if the salt has lost its saltiness, wherewithal shall it be salted. Salt is insipid. It can't add the flavor, the spice that it's intended. It's just flat. It's nothing. And maybe we've been too flat, too insipid for too long. Too many of us are just willing to shake our heads and say, isn't it terrible what's happening? Well, what are you doing about it? What are you doing about it?

What are we doing about it? What am I doing about it? Do we even have a right to remain silent? Someone has said that if you walk down the street late at night and you see somebody's house on fire, it's not my house, not my concern. Don't you have some obligation? Don't you possess the milk of human kindness to sound an alarm? Of course you do. Something that definite, I guess we could handle. But there are so many issues involving what's happening with the crises of our country that, and we hear so many discordant notes and we hear so much conflicting opinions and ideas. And it's just, well, it's, sometimes it's very difficult to sort out things. And you know what? Confusion tends to breed inactivity. Because nobody knows what to do. Everything's up in the air. Maybe I should this, maybe I should that, maybe something else. You hear all of these conflicting reports. And I thought, how ironic is it?

[24 : 17] How ironic is it that this current nation, by all standards, is the most uninformed and ill-informed as we have ever been in our history. And this is described as the information age. Now that is just amazing. And the news that is out there is so often unreliable, undependable, proves to be untrue, and it just gets, it just leaves us kind of hand-wringing and not knowing what to do, and we just kind of feel exhausted. And we're ready, we're fully ready to get up and be uninvolved.

Well, good trouble. Good trouble. America's continuing crisis, and I don't even have time to name them all, but I'm just going to name some, because they are the most critical and the most important.

These are issues that are threatening the very existence of this nation as we know it. And I want you to understand, I am not considering this in the least to be an exaggeration. If anything, it might not be emphasized as much as it should. I'm not interested in making mountains out of molehills, but I am convinced that we need to recognize a mountain when we see one.

Number one, and this is a biggie, compromise ballot box. Do you any idea how critical that is?

A compromised ballot box. It should be the goal of every state in this union, because elections are within the purview of the states, not the feds, even though it may be a federal election and we're voting for federal office holders. It's still within the purview of the states, not the federal government. And every state ought to be so devoted and so committed to an accurate vote tally. And by, by what I mean as committed is that both losers and winners need to declare their contentedness with the outcome. Elections should be commandeered and carried on in such a way that no one seriously questions the outcome. Period. Okay, we got our man up and he ran for this office and he lost. And we're sorry that he lost, but we're convinced that he lost. You ought to be able to live with that.

[27 : 30] But when the tally is such that there is so much question, doubt, all kinds of accusations made, all that does is stir up more unrest and discontent. And it's paralyzing to the public.

The vote needs to be carried on in such a way that there's just no question as to the outcome. And that ought to be a goal. And no one should be willing to settle for anything less. And it's got nothing to do with whether you're a Republican or a Democrat. That ought to be the very least that you would want for your constituency. And a compromised geographical integrity with an open southern border.

And I'm not a prophet or the son of a prophet, but I'm going to make a prediction. What we see going on in the south and the opening of that border and thousands of people coming through from all, I think they've estimated so far they've counted people from 75 different countries coming through the southern border. They're coming from all over everywhere. And I honestly can't say that I blame them. When you consider what hardship and what deprivation so many of these people are living under, and some of them in threat of their daily lives on a routine basis because of the crime and corruption that they're fleeing, I can't honestly say that I blame them.

But we still have to have the integrity of the borders. And I am convinced that what this is all getting at, even though those who are promoting the open southern border may not agree with it, may not even know it, but I'm convinced this is nothing more than a major step toward globalism.

It's coming, and it may not come real fast, but it's coming. And it will come to fruition as more and more nations are willing to surrender their sovereignty and their borders.

[29 : 47] And this could very well be the beginning of that, because after all, the U.S. of A. has been a leader in a whole lot of things. And the Antichrist would love this, because this is exactly what's coming to pass, and this is going to be under his jurisdiction when it happens.

And the third one is, I can't believe I'm even saying this, because it just sounds so stupid, so bizarre, so nonsensical.

It sounds like societal suicide. Defund the police? Are you serious?

Defund the police? Cut the police? Cut the police? Cut the budget for police departments? Cut the personnel? Listen. Well, I can't stay here.

It would be too... Oh, well. I don't have words. I don't have words to describe this. It's just, it's not even worthy of refutation.

[30 : 56] Islamic governess. Islamic? Governess? Is it true that Sharia law has actually been adopted in some parts of this nation?

Yes, it is. That's unthinkable. That's almost as bizarre as defund the police. That's crazy. You understand what Sharia law is?

It's the law that governs Islamic nations. And do you understand that in Islam there is no church and state?

They are one and the same. The church is the state. The state is the church. That's under Islam.

There is no way in the world that anyone can be a serious proponent and follower of Islamic law and be loyal to the United States of America as a citizen.

[31 : 58] It is impossible. It's a contradiction in terms. It just can't be done. And yet, this is what's taking place. And diversity.

And the quest for diversity is part of the rationale that is for it. Five. Gender dysphoria. Yes, it does get more absurd as it goes along.

I told you we could use a new abnormality of the month. There's a new one that comes up. It seems like every month. What gender dysphoria. Can you imagine?

Can you imagine a child, teenage child or even younger, just deciding that they no longer want to be the sex with which they were biologically born, that they want to change their sex?

And they should be able to do so. And you can find reputable people in the medical field that will actually perform surgery to change or adapt body parts to accommodate them.

[33 : 02] You can't get any closer to insanity than that. That's just plain nuts. And do you know what all of this is related to? Every bit of it.

What I mentioned at the beginning, it's all about authority. Always has been. Always will be. Because when you adopt, when you adopt the mentality that so many have in this nation, and buy into the evolutionary hypothesis as so many have, and by the way, that is the principal mode that governs this country insofar as research, development, etc. is concerned, it's the prime mover of the whole medical community, and medical research is all predicated upon the idea that we all come from a common biological source.

That is one of the greatest lies that Satan has ever been able to perpetrate. And it is deeply and fully entrenched, especially in academia, where we like to think our best and brightest come from.

So when we talk about authority, the commonality that lies at the base of it all is who or what is the authority. Because it is the parent of all spiritual and moral abnormalities.

It is authority. And that means origins is at the forefront. Origins.

[34 : 45] When Charles Darwin came out with his works on evolution, the origin of species, and so on, the late 1800s, it sent shockwaves through the whole Christian community.

Because much of what he presented really looks pretty convincing. But if you've ever read it, origin of species, and I would suggest that you do it, it would be a good exercise for you.

What you should look for, found so many times throughout his position, is phrases like, we may well suspect, or it would appear, time and time again, he uses these phrases, these are not evidences, they are inferences.

they are possibilities that he's suggesting. And yet, academia has taken this and run with it. And do you realize, do you realize that there probably isn't any single thing that has been so responsible for racism as the evolutionary hypothesis?

You understand that? Yeah. Yeah. Because the way it was presented, the way Darwin presented it, and the way his followers after him presented it, is simply that we, of the white race, are at the top of the evolutionary ladder.

[36 : 24] And those of color, like, well, back then, they were called Negroes. And, that was acceptable, that's what they preferred to be called, and then, Negroes changed to black, and now, it is African American.

and, and I, I, I, I don't fault them at all, because, these people, as a race, have undergone, treatment, and, a lifestyle that, that, that you, as a, as a white person, can't even imagine, I can't imagine either.

I'm talking about the deprivation, coming up through slavery, and the Civil War, and all of that, which followed it, and a lot of it, was, scientifically, that's the word, scientifically connected, with evolution.

And, you understand that Margaret Sanger, the founder, of, Planned Parenthood, yeah, Planned Parenthood, saw an obligation, to, eliminate, as many, non-whites as possible, through abortion.

You realize, how racist that was? And, for anybody, and everybody, I, I've often said this, and I, it's not going to happen, but it'd be, one of the most wonderful things, that ever did happen.

[37 : 56] If every person, in the United States, could sit down, with a simple, DVD video, by Ken Ham, on one brain, one blood, racism, would be dead, by midnight tonight, that'd be the end of it.

There isn't anything, more nonsensical, more irrational, more unscientific, than the idea, that there is, a superior race, and an inferior race, that is, total, absolute, garbage.

And, it was Darwin, that was the father of it. and Hitler picked up on it, with his, Aryan race supremacy, and all the nonsense, that went along with it.

And this is the kind of stuff, that, that African Americans, have been living under, for who knows how many years, I mean, ever since, you know, and yet, I've yet, heard, any African American, to admit, that, there are African Americans, themselves, who have, contributed to their own problem.

How so? You see, just like, Caucasians, we are our own worst enemy, for, the African Americans, they're, their own worst enemy too.

[39 : 16] It works that way, all throughout humanity. That's the way it is. But we know about, men like John Newton, who ran a slave ship, was the captain of a slave ship, and, his efforts, that, affected, Great Britain, and turned things around there, and his friendship, with those who, that, handful of people, that started fighting, against racism, in England, and eventually, it worked its way over here, and eventually, we ended up fighting a war over it.

And scholars, and historians, to this day, say, no, it wasn't about, it wasn't about slavery at all, it was about states rights. Well, it was about a whole host of things, and slavery entered into it, and there is absolutely, no question at all, that blacks were considered, inferior, and chattel property, and you could buy them, sell them, you could break up families, you could do whatever, most inhumane kind of treatment, that you could imagine.

And yet, I haven't heard any of them, contribute to the fact, or say, that they contributed to the fact, because, when the white slave ships, would land in Africa, to take back, a fresh batch, of captured slaves, it wasn't the white slave owners, that would go out, into the wilds, to capture these, African Americans, and bring them to the shore, no, no, it was, fellow Africans, who went out, and secured, other Africans, and brought them captive, to the slave ships, and sold them, to the white masters, and then they took them off, to Europe, or to the United States, can it be, that they were somewhat complicit, in their own slavery, of course they were, like I've said, we are our own worst enemy, and they are their own worst enemy, it's a human problem, you understand that, it's a human problem, it's not a social problem, it's a human problem, it's the human heart, that subjects, all of these things, it's just, so, if you do not have, the existence, and the authority, of a creator, for whom creatorhood, creatorhood, demands, authority, it's kind of like that, passage in Romans 9, about the potter, and the clay, does not, the potter, have power, over the clay, to make it what he will, and does the clay, have any comeback, of course not, and we are like, the clay, and God is the potter, and he is the authority, and he makes the calls, and we are the ones, who are to subject ourselves, to that authority, not only to honor him, but, it's in our own best interests, to do so, if you do not have, an intelligent, purposeful creator, then you do not have, a purpose for living, if there is not, intentionality, for our being here, if there is not, objectivity, and if there are not, goals for creation, then life has no meaning, life has no purpose, and do you know, this is exactly, the position, that some take, and that's why they say, this life, and this go around, is all there is, and when you die, that's it, there's no heaven, there's no hell, there's no hereafter, of any kind, there's no accountability, it's all over, and that's what, no God requires, so if you think, your life has meaning, and purpose, it has none, other than, what you give it, that's all, and, that determines value, and inherent worth, that is assigned to it, or withheld, now listen, when you think, in terms of this, no God, or the nonsense of, because gravity existed, the universe was able, to create itself, when you think, in those terms, why not abortion, why not, what's the big deal, it is no big deal, why not, same sex marriage, why not, you can't give, a good logical reason, for denying it, or disapproving it, and that's exactly, where so many, are coming from, and listen, whenever you talk, to somebody, or you hear, these arguments, about same sex marriage, or why should you care, whom I love, and all of the rest of it, when you hear that, always see, if you can determine, what their world view is, because that's, where they're coming from, and it's only natural, what you accept,

as your ultimate authority, will determine, the positions, that you take, the standards, that you hold, the action, that you engage in, the agenda, that you set, all of those things, are determined by, what you regard, as an authority, it's not rocket science, it's really quite easy, to understand, but so many people, don't make the connection, and you wonder, you hear thus and so, how could they possibly, believe that, I'll tell you how, they can believe it, find out what their world view is, it fits right in with it, this is exactly, what's going on, all over the world, is a major shift, away from theism, to secularism, and to atheism, and to agnosticism, and agnosticism, has become very, very popular, it sounds so pious, for some to say, look, there may be a God, there may not be a God, you don't know, I don't know, nobody knows, because, it can't be known, objective truth like that, is not available, you can't know it, and you can't take a position, that there is a God, or that there is not a God, but if that is true, if objective truth, cannot be known, then how is it, that you can know, that objective truth, cannot be known, it's a self-defeating statement, it doesn't hold water, it may sound good, like somebody's very broad, and general look, there may be a God, there may not be a God,

I don't know, you don't know, and all they're doing is, well, just so much nonsense, and you know what that's tied to? That's tied to what we've talked about earlier, that in our fallenness, our logic, and our intellect, and our comprehending values, fell with it, that's how and why people hold such bizarre ideas, and convictions about things, that make no sense at all, because once you deal away with that, with that North Star director, everyone is on their own, and you've got an individualism, that we're dealing with today, that is part of the political correctness, so that you can believe there is a God, and you can believe that there is not a God, and even though your views are contradictory, you're both right, what?

[47 : 06] How can they both be right when they completely contradict? Listen, that's the new thinking today. That way, nobody has to be wrong.

Everybody is right. Isn't that nice? That's where we are. This is what we're dealing with. It's a kind of moral relativity, that says anything goes, and no one, no one has the right, to deny anyone else, or put down anyone else, or disagree with anyone else, because everybody else's opinion, and values is just as good as yours, no matter what they are.

And they think in doing that, they are creating a live and let live world, and all they are creating, is massive confusion, without any direction. That's where we are, right now.

That's where we are. And we've got this small contingency, that is referred to as, the religious group, although most of us, would not choose that name, but that's the way they label us, because that's all they know, and they are this fringe issue, that hold these kooky ideas, about God, about Jesus, and about some resurrection, that's supposed to have taken place, and all of the rest of the stuff, that we know is just not scientific, and cannot be taken seriously, but let them have it, if it humors them, that's okay.

This is where we're at. So what are we going to do about it? Well, like John Lewis says, I think we ought to be willing, to make good trouble, and that is, we just won't be silent.

[48 : 48] And you know something? If we really love people, like we say we do, and like we're supposed to, how can you hold your peace?

How can you be silent, if you really care? Do we care enough, to tell people the truth, even when we know, there will be a price to pay, for doing so?

Is it worth it? There's untold numbers, of martyrs who have gone on, that would tell you, if they had it to do all over again, they most certainly would, because, it is worth it.

It is worth it. It's worth it to stand up, it's worth it to speak up, it's worth it to take action, it needs to be done, with the right attitude, and the right motives. We are thinking in terms of, snatching brands from the fire, and that's what we need, to keep in mind.

It's not a question, of winning arguments, not a question, of putting this political person, in their place, or showing this one up, or that. The compassion, that needs to be there, will speak volumes.

[50 : 05] We need to check our attitude, make sure that it's, what it ought to be, and we need to, speak the truth. We are told, speak the truth, in love.

If all you have is love, and you don't have the truth, you're not going to get very far with that, you'd just be kind of gushy. But if you have truth, and don't have love, then you've got a poor motivation problem.

We are in a, completely unique situation, as the body of Christ. And it's got nothing to do with, what church you go to, or denominations or anything. It's got everything to do with, whether you are really in Christ, whether you really know, the Lord Jesus Christ is your savior, and whatever other religious handles, you put on it, it's incidental.

But, listen, from a human standpoint, you need to think of this. We, as believers, as all this world's got, think of that.

We are, the world's last hope. That puts a burden on you. It should. Puts a burden on me.

[51 : 16] I can't, I can't explain some of the feelings that I get in connection with trying to get the word out. And sometimes you feel like, sometimes you feel like, God is saying to you what he's told to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah, I want you to do this, I want you to tell the people this, and tell them that, and tell them what's going to happen, if they don't, and give it to them straight, and oh yes, by the way, Jeremiah, one more thing. They're not going to believe you.

Well, gee, what, what's the point? What's the point? Well, the point is, let the redeemed of the Lord say so.

If we have the truth, we dare not be silent. If we care, and if we love, we need to open up, and let the truth be known.

Take the heat. Take the ridicule. Take the ostracism. It is part and parcel of standing up for Jesus Christ.

[52 : 21] And never forget this. Why in the world would you expect anything else? Who do you think you are? This world is not our home.

We are in a minority. We've always been in a minority. God started with a minority when he chose eight before the rain came.

God's always worked through a minority. Taking the heat is part and parcel of being a redeemed believer in Jesus Christ. We can expect ostracism, ridicule, persecution, goes with the territory.

So what? It's a price we can happily pay because the payoff is more than worth it.

If it is nothing more than well done, thou good and faithful servant, that is more than enough. I can't imagine anything more welcome than that.

[53 : 32] Well, thank you, John Lewis, for his memory. Makes some good, necessary trouble just by telling the truth.

And you know what it got him? Got him a cracked skull causing scars he carried for the rest of his life. And Jim, you probably knew him, didn't you?

Probably knew, yeah. You knew John Lewis. Okay. I would like to open this for Q&A, but I know if I do, we'll be here for a while and I'm not going to do that.

And I want to say this, though, before we dismiss. for over a year, we've had to dispense with the widow and widowers because of the COVID thing and all the stuff going on.

So we've been talking about it late and several of us have concluded that it's time to get that thing reorganized. And this time, we've added to it and we are opening this for, we're calling them senior singles and we'll allow you to determine what senior is or what it is not or where that starts.

[54 : 46] I'm not going to touch that. But anyhow, we're planning to have a great time and get together and if you would like a ride to where we're going, it's out in Leffles Lane and we're planning to be there for lunch.

So you'll be here at the church at 11 o'clock? 11.15? 11 o'clock. If you'd like a ride and like to double up in cars, be here at the church Thursday, upcoming, at 11 o'clock.

We'll go out to Leffles Lane and we'll just have a nice luncheon, a great time of fellowship, very relaxed, very informal and we will solve some more world problems.

We'll get our conclusions to you, Jim. You can take them back to Congress right away. Okay? I'm sure that'll work fine. Anything anybody has to mention or to share before? Yes, Lois? I wanted to say the symphony orchestra's part of it is putting on music on that lunch at the park and if anyone has children or grandchildren, it's going to be based to entertain the children and give them knowledge and music this Friday.

This Friday? 11.30 to 1. 11.30 to 1 and that's down at Cliff Park and we've been there for several, but that's another thing that went by the wayside with the COVID thing and that's going to be resumed or at least, you know.

[56 : 05] We've had two already. Friday. Okay. Friday. We've always enjoyed those. They have the lunch, they serve a lunch there? They have box lunches. Box lunches? Great. Okay. Makes a wonderful family outing and a good time of relaxation.

Just bring your lounge chair or whatever and enjoy the music and the atmosphere and it's just a great time to be together and there's no charge for it.

It's just open to the public and you would enjoy it. Anything else? Marie? If you might, you might as well let us know in case there would be a different number than you do.

Oh, yeah. Thank you, Sam. I appreciate that. If you can make it Thursday for the senior singles, either give your name to Marie or to me because we need to give them a heads up as to how many to expect.

We're looking forward to a good time. Would you stand, please? We'll be dismissed. Our Father, we've discussed some very heavy things this morning.

[57 : 03] We see our nation at a kind of critical point. Seems like we've been there for a long time and it just seems to exacerbate as the weeks go on.

And we simply want to appeal to you on behalf of this church and on behalf of other believers throughout the country who are deeply concerned about things that are happening and direction that's being taken.

And we can only humbly ask for your gracious intervention with wisdom and power that only you can bring that will be based upon pure and honest motives because those are the only kind you have.

In the meanwhile, help us to be faithful. Help us to be courageous. Help us to stand up for the truth. Help us to do it with the right attitude, not hateful or vindictive as we often see opposition demonstrating toward us.

We recognize that they are coming from a position of spiritual blindness and they are completely unaware of what the truth of the whole matter really is.

[58 : 20] And we who have that truth have a special obligation to disseminate it and to communicate it as best we can with all the love that we can muster.

Thank you for your gracious presence with us even this morning and for congregations like ours all throughout this land who are meeting with the same kind of concerns that we are. Bless them, we pray, and give them as well as us the light that we need and the courage that only you can provide to go forward.

In Christ's name we pray. Amen.