

THE BIG PICTURE - Chronology, Ethnicity and Transition, Part 9

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[0 : 00] We're going to take just a very brief detour from what we have been bringing by way of the transition and ethnicity. And we're going to examine what I call the big picture.

Because if we do not have this concept in mind, there will be a whole lot of things in this world that just won't make any sense. So, if you would open your Bibles, please, first of all, to Revelation chapter 4.

And while you are turning there, I will preface this message with a few other remarks. One of which is, I was thinking the other day in connection with the elderly.

Not that I qualify, you understand. But I was just wondering, how many people do you suppose there are worldwide who are born into this world and grow up and marry?

And beget children, enjoy grandchildren, live to an old age, and die.

[1 : 12] And never, ever, really knew what it was all about. Why? Tragedy of living and dying and not knowing.

Why am I here? Where have I come from? Why is there anything? And to what purpose? What's it all about anyway?

It is amazing that there are people with whom we rub shoulders every day who never stop to ask themselves the big questions.

For many of them, closest they get to a big question is their employment or what's for dinner tonight. It's a serious business to be a human being.

To be made in the image and likeness of God and to be entrusted with a thing called volition, which means we are charged with accountability, which means that there will be a time of reckoning.

[2 : 17] There are but two possibilities insofar as what everything is all about. It's concerned, the big picture stuff. And the first, of course, is you are a fluke.

You are here just as a cosmic accident. Utter randomness. There is no plan, no purpose, and no goal.

We are all just the fruits of a cosmic accident. And this, of course, translates into your life meaning that there is no meaning.

And there is no destiny beyond the present. This is atheism. And it is reflected in a picture that I saw that had been plastered on hundreds of buses traveling throughout London, England.

And a big sign on the side of the bus simply said, In the beginning, man created God.

[3 : 22] And you would be surprised how many people believe that. And England, of all places, which could very well be considered the country of the father of modern missions, sent forth missionaries all throughout the world.

And today, I don't know of anybody that is in more desperate need of missions than Great Britain, unless maybe it's France. And good old U.S. of A. isn't all that far behind.

And these were places that were one-time citadels of the truth. And something has happened. Something very dramatic and very powerful has happened. And that will become, I think, apparent as we move on.

Possibility number two, of course, is there is a fixed plan. And all that exists has an intelligent creator behind it.

It is he who gives life and breath to all. It is he who assigns value and dignity to human life, purpose and meaning and destiny. The anthropic principle screams loud and clear that intelligence and intention are behind it all.

[4 : 34] And it is going somewhere. There is a designed end in sight, accompanied with accountability for all humans, created in the likeness and image of God.

Life does have meaning and purpose. And those who do not believe that are left with a void leading to despair that has caused many to take their own life.

Not being oriented or adjusted or aware of life and the ultimate cause and purpose of it can only leave one with confusion and no sense of significance.

Talk about just drifting, just being afloat with no anchor and no destination, just there. That's exactly where many people are.

They are just here. They have no answers. And the tragedy of it is, many of them seem to have no questions.

[5 : 39] They just go through life humdrum without ever trying to even connect dots to understand what it is all about.

So these are left to merely wonder and wander about with no answers. And if there are answers, where are they to be found and who provided them?

And that's why I want you to look at Revelation chapter 4, a passage that we have dealt with before some time ago, but I want to use this as a basis for more material that we'll be following around the first of the year.

To the best of my knowledge, here in this brief passage in the last book of the Bible, we have spelled out why there is something rather than nothing.

And I have been through this blessed book a number of times over the last 62 years since I have become a believer in Christ.

[6 : 40] And I have not found the answers that I was looking for any place else other than what we are going to be reading right here. So I'd like you to begin, if you would, follow along with me.

In chapter 4 of Revelation, After these things, John says, this is a scene that is recorded in heaven. And he has been ordered by God to record what he has seen.

And John tells us, After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.

Immediately I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and one sitting on the throne. And he who was sitting was like a jasper stone, and a sardius in appearance.

And there was a rainbow around the throne, like an emerald in appearance. And around the throne were 24 thrones.

[7 : 53] And upon the thrones, I saw 24 elders sitting, clothed in white raiments, and golden crowns on their heads.

I'll just stop here and inject one comment, and that is, to the best of my knowledge, no one has been able to satisfactorily identify these 24 elders.

The jury is still out on their actual identity. We can assume that they are human beings, and the basis for that assumption is the fact that these 24 elders will be participants or recipients of redemption and of salvation.

That almost guarantees their humanity rather than being angels of something else. And then in verse 5, And from the throne proceed flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder.

And there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God. And before the throne there was, as it were, a sea of glass like crystal.

[9 : 11] And in the center and around the throne, four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind. And the first creature was like a lion.

And the second creature, like a calf. And the third creature had a face like that of a man. And the fourth creature was like a flying eagle.

And the four living creatures, each one of them having six wings, are full of eyes around and within. And day and night, they do not cease to say, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come.

And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power.

For, or, because, thou didst create all things, and because of thy will, they existed and were created.

[10 : 49] That verse, verse 11, sums it up as well as anything that I have ever been able to discover in all of the years that I have been studying the Scriptures, and all of the commentaries that I have been reading, and all of the philosophers to whom I have been subjected over the past years.

Everybody, of course, has a very legitimate question about where did all these things come from, and what is this all about anyway? And here, the answer is given in just this one verse, and it says that God, the Creator, has created, brought all things into existence, and He did so because He was pleased to do it.

No other justification is given or needed. King James, I think, renders it, it was in accordance with God's good pleasure. He did it just because He wanted to, and of course, we have to come back with the question, why did He want to?

We aren't told why He wanted to, we're just told that He did. But it is an amazing thing to consider that this actually is even going back before Genesis 1.1.

I mean, how can you go, how can you go before there was a beginning? Well, before there was a beginning, there was God. He is the uncaused first cause, and this God in His character and in His nature is a spirit being identified by Jesus in John chapter 4 about God being spirit, which means God is immaterial.

[12 : 28] And we know that Jesus, per se, in His humanity, did not exist then as a human being, although He existed from eternity past as the Son of God, the eternal Son of God.

But He was not Jesus, He was just the Son of God. And He didn't become Jesus until the Incarnation when the angel said, you shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.

So here we have a spirit being who is a Father, God, and we have a spirit being who is the Son, Jesus, who would become Jesus.

He was just then the Son. And we have the eternal spirit. And these three beings transcend anything and everything having to do with creation. They existed before there were even angels.

As far as we know, angels were probably created before humans were. But all of this stems from these three beings comprising one God, not three gods, dwelling together in a concept and in a state that we cannot imagine because there was no materiality at all.

[13 : 45] There was no universe. There was no planets. There were no stars. There was nothing. There was no materiality, no physicality at all. Can you imagine such a thing?

Neither can I. But that's the way it was. And these three spirit beings in council held among themselves decided, according to their good pleasure, to bring other beings into existence who would be also immaterial beings.

And they we assign to angelic beings who are ministering spirits, not physical. and then at some point later he decided or they decided to create humans that are made a little lower than angels yet in the image and likeness of God different from angels.

So all of this predates Genesis 1-1 and it is a concept that is just absolutely mind-boggling. I mean, Jesus made statements such as the Father loved the Son before there was a world.

Thou lovest me before I came into the world or before there was a world. And there is interaction between the members of the Godhead before there was anything that we could even identify as creation.

[15 : 20] This is amazing stuff. You know this? Stop and think about this for a moment. This is before there was a beginning and when we talk about beginnings we have necessity think in terms of physicality because everything that we identify and everything we're familiar with is wrapped up in flesh and blood.

Let's face it. But there is a whole new dimension that is involved and we are participants of it and it is called the spirit part of our being which is immaterial.

So what we've got is a concept of creation and order that has come into existence for a planned purpose from the very beginning nothing of which took the creator by surprise knowing full well there was going to be conflict and yet because he had a game plan chapter 5 will reveal that so let's look at chapter 5 we've got creation and I want you to notice in verse 10 at the end of the verse it says that they will cast their crowns before the throne saying or speaking keep that in mind and then look at chapter 5 because this is the follow up to it and I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a book written inside and on the back sealed up with seven seals and I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice who is worthy to open the book and to break its seals and no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look into it and by the way

I just want to insert here that earlier when we did our study in Revelation we concluded and I think most scholars would agree that this book involved the title deed of the earth and it was the title deed of the earth that was originally assigned to our first parents Adam and Eve and they forfeited that responsibility and it was Lucifer the son of the morning that took it up and he now possesses the title deed of the earth he is referred to as the god of this age and Christ referred to him as the prince of the earth in three different places so if you wonder why the world today is in such a mess you need to consider who's running it and it is the adversary who is running it and this is principally responsible for all that we see taking place today that is certainly negative so John says no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the book or to look in it and I began to weep greatly thinking the idea of course is a lost cause because no one was found worthy to open the book or to look into it and one of the elders said to me stop weeping behold the lion that is from the tribe of Judah the root of David has overcome so as to open the book and its seven seals and by the way he is here depicted as a lion but earlier in his coming he was depicted as a lamb you cannot get much more of a radical difference between two entities than a lamb and a lion so the first time our Lord came he came as a sacrificial lamb but the second time there won't be any of that lamb business he will be coming to execute judgment he will be the lion of the tribe of Judah and verse 6 says and I saw between the throne with the four living creatures and the elders a lamb standing as if slain having seven horns and seven eyes which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth and he came and he took it out of the right hand of him who sat on the throne and when he had taken the book the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the lamb having each one a harp and golden bowls full of incense which are the prayers of the saints and verse 9 says and they sang that's an interesting expression and they sang because in verse 11 of chapter 4 they were saying but here they are singing what accounts for the distinction and the difference between the saying or speaking and the singing something has happened in the meanwhile to change that and what has happened he goes on to explain they sang a new song worthy art thou to take the book and to break its seals why because or for thou wast slain and didst purchase for God with thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation so this new song that they are singing raises the question what was the old song what would they have been singing before well it could not be a song of rejoicing it had to be a song of lamentation

why because of the fall because of all that had happened to this planet because of the wreck and the ruin that had been delivered upon it by Satan and by our first parents they brought this world into a state of fallenness and it is a sad song we live in a sad song world we are garnered about with death and disease and destruction and immorality and war and conflict and all of these things that accompany a fallen world in many respects there is nothing there to sing about but we need to know as Paul Harvey used to say we need to know the rest of the story and the rest of the story is redemption is realized and thou worthy art thou to take the book and to break its seals for thou wast slain and didst purchase for God with thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation that is the redemption that we enjoy even today and thou hast made them to be kingdom and priests to our God and they will reign upon the earth this is the good news that is going to follow the death and destruction that has been brought upon this planet and it's something that we live with every day every time I have a funeral which is more often than I like

[22 : 47] I am reminded of the fall and of the adversary and bless God I am also reminded of that triumphant day when the tomb was opened and the son of God came forth and was able to say victoriously that because he lives we too shall live this is God's game plan and sometimes this world gets to be a place that is very hazardous to your health it's got a lot of disappointment a lot of rejection a lot of sadness a lot of pain and a lot of sorrow what do you expect when man has gone astray from the God who created us what do you expect these that we are experiencing now are the predictable fruits the outworking of what it just becomes natural it is our fallenness and we are fallen people but we have a brighter day that looks ahead and the time is coming when all of this is going to be turned into shouts of joy and exultation even as John describes it here in the revelation so where are we going to find information about this kind of thing anybody who I think has any introspection about them at all will have to stop and occasionally ask themselves questions like and you know there probably isn't a more opportune time for doing this than when someone has left our presence and gone on and people sit there in the funeral home and folks are filing by and everybody's giving their hugs and paying their last respects and reflecting on memories about the deceased and everything and each time one of these things occurs it ought to cause people who were there in attendance so what is this thing called death and why do people have to do it why is this assigned to humanity where did this come from and is there anything after this these are really important questions we were talking earlier

I think as Nathan mentioned earlier something about things that people don't want to talk about and you know what are the two what are the what are the two areas that are considered no-nos in discussion when families get together for Thanksgiving and Christmas and things what are the two things that you don't talk about politics and religion off limits we don't want any arguments going on over the dinner table okay and you know something the adversary loves that and I'll tell you why you cannot get more involved with the way the world is and the things that are happening on a day-to-day basis on a temporal footing other than politics politics because politics addresses what's going on in the world politics has to do with temporal values think about it we are talking about orderliness we're talking about law we're talking about government we're talking about living we're talking about all of the things that involve life everything from the red traffic light on the corner to the impandeling of a jury for a murder trial this is all politics and it's all temporal but it's the most important thing going on because it is what governs our lives it is what makes decisions for us it's what makes demands from us it's what we attune to it's inevitable and I don't care what you think about politics like I don't like politics

I don't want well that's somebody's what they're saying is I don't like living in this world I don't like life and living that's that's politics and by the way it doesn't make any difference where you live doesn't make any difference if you're in France or USA or Italy or where it doesn't make any difference it's politics it all has to do with things temporal connecting with this world that's the temporal and what about religion that's the eternal hey when you talk about politics and religion honey you have just covered the waterfront that's everything and if you're going to divorce yourself from one of them that's like saying well I only want to live a half a life which is kind of silly because nobody in reality can do that what you need to do what we all need to do is to be as informed and intelligent as possible about politics and religion and talk about it talk about it because minds only get changed on the basis of information and if we are intent on withholding information nobody's mind gets changed about anything and you know this works for good or ill it can be information about bad stuff it can be information about living in a living in a communist country regime where the government is in charge of everything and freedom is a joke and all the rest of that's still you know people have to get informed and this is this is this is my heart why I try to put so much emphasis on dispensing information because you cannot act on what you do not know that makes information really really critical now today we're dealing with a concept called fake news what is fake news fake news is simply bad information it's all it is but the point is why do people put out bad information because they know there are a certain number of gullible people who will buy bad information and they will act on it that's the whole point of information and by the way it works exactly the same way with the gospel and with spiritual when you proclaim the gospel you are doing nothing more than dispensing information you are giving people information that enables them to make some kind of a judgment or decision based upon what they hear that's what preaching the gospel is just giving information so these two areas make up the whole of our being it is the temporal and the eternal now let me ask you a question what else is there what is there besides the temporary and the eternal nothing I can think of so why bail out of either one of them get involved get informed that will make you more in a position to make a contribution to your fellow man spiritually and every other way we have just got we it's I think it's ironic you know one of the names of this age is called the information

age you know it the information age never in the history of this nation has there been such a plethora such an abundance of information about everything as what is available today now follow me and never in the history of this nation has there been such incredible ignorance on the part of people as to the constitution of the United States politics that governs this nation eternal life salvation through Jesus Christ or anything else we've never been so woefully ignorant as we are today now that is amazing and you know something I'm going to say something now that I think some people will dismiss and say oh I think he's gone off the deep end now but the adversary is more behind this than anything and there are multitudes of people who are walking in lockstep with the game plan of the adversary and they don't have a clue they are they are

Karl Marx's useful idiots and they don't even know it wow well this this hey this is this is our world this is the only one we've got and granted we don't want to put all our eggs in this basket because this world is not our home we are strangers and we are just passing through but I think those of us who are in Christ are responsible to make some kind of a positive mark for God while we're here and if you can find some way to do it other than the temporal and the eternal let me know I might be interested but that's all I can find that's all I think that there is so we are cast upon a situation where we recognize that God has a game plan and we are smack dab in the middle of it and the nation of

[33 : 18] Israel is smack dab in the middle of it and I'm talking about Israel and the body of Christ together in this thing and the Jewish people are just so bless their heart they are the apple of God's eye and they're still the chosen people and all of that I wouldn't deny that for a moment God love them but they are operating out of a state of judicial blindness because blindness has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles become in and these dear Jewish people have suffered so much by way of persecution and the Holocaust and all the rest of it and even now even now their religion Judaism as I mentioned before is defunct it is a non-legitimate religion standing before God that's just just amazing and you know what they don't even know it they don't even know it when did that happen how did it happen and we explain to you it happened when the veil in the temple was rent in two and when

Jesus on the cross said it is finished he meant that he was done with the whole sacrificial system of Judaism and if you know anything about Judaism the animal sacrifice was at the very core of it and now Jesus is saying that's all passe and God has done something that is so off the chart so unthinkable so wild so unpredicted so unexpected in this game plan of his he has deigned to set aside his chosen people for another time when they will be brought front and center because he has unfinished business with him and instead he has ushered in a whole new entity just like he just dropped it out of nowhere and it started with the most unlikely individual in the whole world and his name was

Saul of Tarsus Saul of Tarsus are you kidding me God called this man who was a hater of Jesus and a hater of all of the followers of Jesus and brought him to himself on that mysterious Damascus road experience and with this one individual he started a whole new thing that the world has yet to adjust to now this is amazing because this happened 2000 years ago and you know from some of the things I read and some of the commentaries I read and some of the criticism that the apostle Paul takes is just unbelievable and I'm satisfied that the real problem these people have is with an inadequate view of the inspiration of scriptures because if they had the view that they need they would see Paul not as some kind of a renegade and well

I remember talking with a rabbi one time and he was a very congenial fellow and very likable fellow we had a nice conversation and he said he said well I know he said a lot of you Christians think that we don't don't care much about Jesus he said but I want you to know that myself and I speak for a lot of other Jews too we don't really have a problem with Jesus we see Jesus as a great rabbi a great moral teacher he left behind a lot of valuable principles etc but the one we really have a problem with is Paul the apostle and I said oh why is that and he said well he completely departed from the whole scope of Judaism and everything and went off on a tangent on this wild stuff and I thought uh huh well you know what the man was very honest and he was speaking out of his convictions and when you stop and think about it try to put this together and try to look at it with a

Jewish mind and you can see why this man Saul of Tarsus who was as Jewish as you could get circumcised the eighth day of the tribe of Benjamin a Hebrew of the Hebrews all the rest of it and he seemingly kicked that all over and went with this whole new thing and it was a departure from everything that the Jewish people knew and that's why we have a part a problem with with Paul and we went on to discuss a little bit and I said well I can understand it you know but he didn't realize it but he had a big problem with Jesus too and I didn't have time to talk with him about it but do you know what we're talking about now this is in part the blindness of the human mind and I want to close with this because I want to open for some Q&A; this idea of blindness is such a powerful powerful thing and when we come into the world we are born we are born defective we are all born with a terminal disease in us and this terminal disease is sin and it will result in our death and this disease incorporates the whole of our being it includes your thinking processes as well as your kidneys and your liver and your brain and your eyes and all of these physical things that you inherited from your parents you also inherited and it came through them your thinking factors and your logic we all think with a warped logic got that a skewed intellect now some of your wives are thinking so that's his problem well we we all have it we you see in our fallenness so much about us is wrong and needs to be fixed that's our brokenness and that's why Jesus died is to take care of that and to fix that and Romans 8 makes it clear that when the time comes and and we are regenerated so that we have a glorified body that's when it's going to be fixed but until then we've got we've got to limit ourselves with thinking the way we think and there is only one corrective for our skewed intellect and that is truth and there's only one repository for that truth and that is the word of God this is why Christians this is why

[40 : 48] Christians of necessity place so much emphasis on the Bible and and you've heard me say that nothing works like the word works and it is this book that enlightens and it is the only source of enlightenment that we can depend upon that will give us the real scoop and the truth of God's word is intended and designed to counteract our skewed thinking and our flawed logic because we all have that and we all need a mental adjustment and we get it from the word of God and this is what growing in the grace and knowledge of Christ does for us so with this skewed intellect we reach all kinds of harebrained conclusions about all kinds of things and we are told that Satan as the adversary is the one who in addition to our being born that way he blinds the minds of those that believe not so there is a double whammy that is dumped on humanity just by virtue of our being here let me put it this way the deck is stacked against you but God has provided a corrective question is will we avail ourselves of the corrective or were we content to just go with the way the deck is stacked most of the world would choose the latter my thinking is life is too short to live it that way so we come to the word of God and we get the truth that is designed to offset the skewed logic that we all have and that's what enables us to understand our need for salvation the provision that God has made in Christ accepting him as our savior and all the rest of it and you know what's at the base of it all information at the base of it all

Werner Gitt a German who worked on the staff of Answers in Genesis authored remarkable books and it's on the video too and I shared it with some of the folks in the congregation here but I had trouble keeping half of them awake and it was entitled In the Beginning Was Information and I thought what's that all about and the beginning was information and it was absolutely stunning what this man was able to demonstrate about information how it is received how it is processed and well if you're interested let me know and I'll see to it you get the video that you get the book but it is remarkable and it deals with what we're talking about because it is at the core of our being and it is designed to address the incorrect thinking that we have remarkable stuff well

I'm going to we'll devote five minutes if there are cues and questions and we'll have to I don't know what it is with my voice I hope I'm not coming down with the laryngitis but it's not normal so does anybody have a question or comment well if we don't I guess we're all thinking lunch oh there's a question all right you can always count on me to have to say something yeah I'm going to have to disagree with you daddy you sound just like your mother and I'm talking about when you get together for meals talking about religion and politics and here's my thinking you know that we've got a few people in our family that are on the other side of the fence as far as politics

I don't think that Thanksgiving and Christmas and big family get togethers are the time and the place to deal with that because in our situation and maybe this is not the same with other people but in our situation if if you go ahead and give your point of view and the other people give their point of view and you disagree it can become really heated and then it's no fun being there and nobody wants to go yeah I hear you and you can discuss this outside of that place so that everybody can enjoy a family meal and a family time to get together and I know you're thinking well but they need to hear this but if they don't want to change their mind and you are set on you not changing your mind then it just gets an angry thing and nobody wants that I hear you I hear you honey I would say my response to that would be that we need to be able to talk about issues that we disagree with in a spirit of what shall I say in a spirit of toleration toleration for the other person's point of view even though and let me put this let me make a distinction here we do not have a right to tolerate what we believe is untrue but we do have a responsibility to tolerate with the right kind of attitude that others have

I think we ought to be able to discuss these things with people who disagree with us whether it's in the family around the table or whatnot and be able to do it good naturedly without tempers flaring without getting emotional without name calling and all the rest of it because I think that is part and parcel of what spiritual maturity is all about and if we can't do that then the base of our problem is a spiritual problem well I agree but as you were saying right here you are pretty much saying anybody who disagrees with you on politics right now is an idiot that was your words and so you can try to talk in a nice calm way but even you here can get angry about it because you're saying you need to know this and yeah but if they don't agree you even did it yourself trying not to so it's very very difficult well I would agree

[47 : 40] I would agree that it is difficult but that doesn't mean that doesn't mean that it isn't doable and I just think that a lot is lost by just hushing up and not talking about things like that we need to be able to talk with each other with people who disagree with us without consigning them to idiocy you know I'm not saying the people who disagree with me are idiots I will say people who disagree with me if my position is a biblical position and they disagree with me then I assume that they are uninformed so far as intelligence is concerned they may be a whole lot smarter than I am there are a lot of people who are very smart who are uninformed Joe okay let's go to the scripture to maybe help this situation out what did Paul do in the letters to the Corinthians Paul and he loved the Corinthians that was his church and he they were doing immoral things within that church they were very they were a carnal a very carnal people because the Corinthians was a carnal city and so these people that came out of this carnal life to be

Christians in this carnal situation they wanted to continue some of these immoral and sexual things immoral things and they did but Paul wrote a very strong letter and he reprimanded them and told them that was wrong and that's not right and you shouldn't be going on this way this you need to change he told them that and he did it in a way especially his second letter he kind of complimented them versus the first letter how they had changed they had done the right thing but they wouldn't have done the right thing if he hadn't told them so somebody has to tell them and the same thing in Galatians the six chapters of Galatians there they were perverting the gospel of grace which Paul would talk they were taking his message and the Judaizers were coming in and changing and saying you got to do this and that you got to be circumcised you got to do this it was all wrong but my point is Paul spoke out for doing the right thing what they should do if somebody hadn't told them and spoken out where are those people going to be it's an opportunity like you said at funerals to let people know thank you

Joe I appreciate that and what it amounts to by and large what it amounts to is this do you care enough to tell people the truth or do you just dummy up and say well they wouldn't believe it anyway so just leave them you know that's the coward's way out and that's the way that is usually taken speaking the truth speaking the truth got every prophet of God in the Old and New Testament in big trouble and sometimes it cost them their life sometimes there is a huge price to pay for doing the right thing we tend to think that only evil doers and wrong doers should suffer punishment for doing those wrong things and theoretically that's true but when the truth is spoken in an arena where it is not receptive and not agreed to and in fact fought against the price that you pay may be significant and very often and this listen this is precisely what's taking place on our university and college campuses today don't let these people in don't let them speak free speech applies to us not to them because they don't agree with us so shut them up shut them down don't let them speak or in some cases kill them and that's exactly what

Stephen said when he paid the ultimate price and he said which which of your fathers did not which which of the prophets did not your fathers persecute and sometimes they cost them their life and it cost Stephen's his life speaking the truth speaking the truth whether your name is whether your name is Stephen or whether it's Jesus Christ or whether it's Paul the apostle speaking the truth can be hazardous to your health but do you care enough to do it anyway that's the difference so I suspect that we have not solved this situation but at least there has been I trust a little bit of information dispensed something to think about I'd like to take your question John but our time is gone I'm already over so thank you and thanks for tolerating me with this voice

I don't know what's going on with it but it's not my own would you stand please our father we recognize that things we've talked about today are very important and in many cases they are so important that they can be divisive and yet we do not have the right we do not have the right to shrink from communicating truth to those in our presence whether they are family or distance around the world or wherever we have information to communicate because it's information that you've provided and we want to do so in a godly way we want to do so in a way that honors those who even disagree with us but we recognize that while we have an obligation to be respectful and courteous and kind to all people we do not owe that to what we believe to be error we owe it to people but not to people's beliefs especially when they're contradicting in the word of god so thank you for what we have learned this morning we trust that some information has been dispensed and that others will gain more information from the handouts thank you for the presence of each one here today and thank you for the lord Jesus Christ being at the very center of our lives in every way we are so grateful in his name we pray amen for GAN

[54 : 07] Yeah.