

Pinecrest 2021 - Sunday Morning

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[0 : 0 0] We welcome you to the media ministry of Bethel Community Church. Knowing Jesus, making Jesus known. I was glad that Daniel mentioned Samson. He wasn't the best gatekeeper around, but he was the biggest gate crusher in the history of the world.

Because at one point he tore out the gate at Gaza and carried it to Hebron. And that sounds pretty cool until you hear that Hebron is 37 miles away.

And then it sounds like more than pretty cool, you know. But anyway, he didn't seem to have his priorities straight a lot of times.

So before we get started, let's have a word of prayer. Let's pray. Father, I pray that you'd open our eyes to behold wondrous things out of your law, Lord. Help us to see the truths that you want to get across to us.

And I pray, Lord, that we might be able to apply these scriptures to our life. Because that's why they're there. They're given to us as examples. Us to whom the end of the ages has fallen, Lord.

[1 : 1 1] We're the ones who can use this book in the most powerful way. Because we can look back with perspective and see how the things of the Old Testament illustrated the truths in the New Testament.

And I pray, Lord, that we'd see more of those things today. And we thank you, Lord, that you're here and we can rely upon your Holy Spirit. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So we are on the third gate.

So we had the eye gate and the ear gate. And there are just a couple of things I needed to catch up with on the ear gate because I didn't want to miss them. And one of them is found in 1 Timothy 6 and verse 20.

If you go there, I just want to hit these real quick because these are really important. And probably really important to somebody who is in that high school, college range of life.

1 Timothy 6 and verse 20. And it says this. Let's see here.

[2 : 2 9] And he says in verse 20, Oh, Timothy, guard. Now, see that? He's guarding. Guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and the opposing arguments of what is falsely called knowledge.

Now, this would really be a great verse for you to memorize if you're in high school, if you're in college. Because we're told that about, you know, that a very high percentage of our youth walk away from their faith when they go to college.

And there are more than reasons than just that they're being convinced by a philosopher. It's easier when you're in a place where there's so much attraction for a sinful life that you could do a lot of things if you didn't have the moral structure behind you.

It's tempting to say, you know what? That professor, he kind of made sense there. There couldn't possibly be a God out there. And you know what? Science just tells a different story than the Bible. I can't trust the Bible, you know. But I can go out there with my girlfriend and do what I want now because I don't have to answer to anybody. It's true. That happens a lot of time. Don't let it happen to you. You need to have protection.

[3 : 3 8] You need to have a gatekeeper for that. Let's read this again. O Timothy, guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter. That's what you're getting from your professors.

That's what you're getting from these philosophers. And the opposing arguments, what is so-called knowledge. Now, that word, by the way, in the Latin, the word for knowledge is scientia, which means science.

It means knowledge. And so when you say they're following the science, that's what they'll tell you. You know, science says this and science says that.

So we know this and we know that. He's saying we know because we know, and that's science. And a lot of people are convinced by that because, I mean, this guy, he's recognized worldwide as being a great professor, and he has all this knowledge.

And we think that way until, like, the other day when, just a little while ago, we like to watch those wildlife shows. Sometimes you'd be better off turning down the sound because they're trying to tell you how this little animal, you know, grew an extra, extra, you know, he's got an eye that developed.

[4 : 53] Before they were in caves and they were blind, and now he's got an eye that developed. And, of course, it's more powerful and more intricate than any eye, the camera that could have been made by humans.

But one of the things that got me, I'm watching TV, and so they say, they're talking about the blue whales. Well, they're the largest animal on the earth, okay, the blue whales.

Largest animal on the earth. And so they're talking all about the blue whale. And then the guy makes this statement. He says, now, we don't, no one has ever been able to discover where the blue whale has their babies.

Now, take that in for a moment. These same people last week were telling me that they know what happened four billion years ago to create the universe. They know that.

But they can't tell you where the largest animal on the face of the earth has its babies. I couldn't even believe it. Even with our limited knowledge, because, see, that's the problem. They're so prideful.

[5 : 54] They're so smart. They know everything. They know nothing. It's science falsely called science. Falsely. They don't have knowledge.

What do they really know? They know what they see and what they've heard and what they can make up. But they have no idea. If it's going to take a million years for this animal to become this animal, what's going to happen all in between?

And why did he need to become this animal? If he survived a million years, it's that animal. It doesn't make any sense. But because the scientists tell you, well, that's what all the science is pointing to, just ask.

Next time you hear somebody ask, just say, where are blue whales give birth? And see if they can come up with an answer for you. It blew my mind. It's so obvious. This is the same person that a minute ago was telling you how these animals got, you know, how they changed from one animal to another.

I was reading in Reader's Digest one day, and they said these wolves were going down to the water to catch fish that were swimming along the shore. And they kept going down to the water to catch fish that were swimming along the shore.

[6 : 58] And then they went, you know, they went a little deeper into the water because they were, you know, there are a lot of wolves and they're not getting a lot of fish that way. So they're getting a little deeper. And slowly their nose moved up to where it became a blowhole in the top.

And that's where the porpoises come from. And we know that because they have some similar bone design in their skeletons. That's false science, folks.

If you're not, if you can't catch enough fish, by the way, you don't develop a, you know, you don't develop a spout in the top of your head. You die of starvation. And that's happened to animals for millions of years.

No, it had not millions of years. Thousands of years. False science. Don't fall prey to it. And remember, use this as, you know, a verse that can help you when you're sitting in that lecture. He's trying to make you think that you're an idiot because you don't believe all the things that he's telling you. And just remember, he doesn't know where blue whales give birth.

[8 : 06] So, anyway, the last couple of things that I had on listening. One of them is that music is a big deal with the listening.

Okay. And we have those verses from Ephesians. Tell us to be speaking to one another in songs and hymns and spiritual songs. Singing and making melody in your hearts to the Lord. We have two passages that tell us that.

Remember? We have Ephesians 5.18. We have Colossians 3.16. Both of them are talking about that. It's very important. So, those can become gatekeeper verses that will remind you that you ought to be singing.

And that... Now, remember, when you're talking about Ephesians, you're talking about the Spirit. And when you're talking about Colossians, you're talking about being richly filled with the Word. So, they're interchangeable because the Holy Spirit, that's what he uses. He uses the Word of God. And how does it get there? He wants you to go out and bring it in. He's not going to convict you of verses you've never heard of.

[9 : 05] He's going to convict you. I mean, you've got a conscience, but that's way lower than this. We're talking about something that can zone in on a problem that you have where you can get help from the Holy Spirit inside to convict you in the right way and at the right time.

Now, the third thing I wanted to emphasize about the Ear Gate today so I could finish up on that is that we have the opportunities. I mean, look back in history. Do you know you have more access to the Word of God than anyone in the history of the world?

King Solomon didn't have your access to the Word of God. But King Solomon could call somebody and have him entertain them. But you have access to more entertainment than King Solomon could ever dream of. That's why you have to be careful about that entertainment.

It'll eat up your life. It'll take you down the wrong road. We need to be careful about it. It was bad enough for Solomon. And he didn't have all that stuff. YouTube, YTube, every one of them. The fact is that we can be tempted by that, but we can also use it for good.

You know what I love to do? Nancy and I, a lot of times at night, we'll put in just... I'm talking like we're back in the old days. Anyway, we'll turn on the Bible, okay?

[10 : 17] Someone reading the Bible for us. Alexander Scorby was an actor a long time ago. He's got this English accent. But when he reads the King James New Testament and Old Testament, man, it is so cool.

And you can just... You're laying there going to sleep. And while you're going to sleep, you're thinking about the Scripture. Well, that's not very respectful of the fact that he's reading the Scripture that you're going to sleep.

No, no. That's the same problem that you have when somebody tells you, I don't like to pray at night because I fall asleep. And I don't want the Lord to get mad at me about falling asleep.

Here's the thing about when you're praying to the Lord and falling asleep. When you're dead...

There's so many parents here. It's so cool. When you're dead or you're a mom and one of your little ones crawls up into the bed with you and they're talking to you, okay?

And they're talking to you. All of a sudden, their words don't seem to mean anything. They just kind of trail off and then they're sleeping, right? And so you slap them silly to wake them back up so they talk to you, right?

[11 : 19] You're mad at them because they're not showing you respect to keep talking to you. They fell asleep right when you were talking to them. No, it's nothing like that. God loves that kind of interaction. The fact that you would say the last thing you did at night was to put on something that's going to read the Word of God to you.

If you fall asleep reading the Word of God, that's okay. You wake up in the middle of the night and it's still going, just start listening to it, thinking about it. You know, let the Word fill your life and the Holy Spirit will be able to fill your life as well.

So now we're going to move on to the mouth gate and we're going to go in a hurry so we get it done. The easiest way to set yourself apart from somebody else is your speech. You go down to, you know, let's say you drive down to Alabama.

I got a son-in-law that's from Alabama and you talk to him, you know, in about 30 seconds that he's from somewhere like Alabama. Okay, he's not from around here. We are recognized by our speech all the time.

And so it's an easy way for people to recognize you as a believer too. It's not just the fact that you have an accent. It's the fact of the words that you choose to use rather than the words that they might choose to use.

[12 : 33] The fact that you're careful about the words that you use sets you apart for most people. Because let's face it, today anything goes. In the last just couple of years, all of a sudden all the stands are gone on television.

On, you know, everybody's saying all this word, that word, the F word, that word, you know, and all that kind of thing. They think it's funny and they think it's great. Set yourself apart from that. Okay. People will recognize you in the way that you talk.

And let's look over at James chapter 3. First thing you need to know as we're talking about the mouth gate is found in James chapter 3.

James chapter 3. And we'll start in verse 1. It says here, Kind of sends a chill down my spine every time I read it.

But it's important that you study out what you're going to share. That's what that's saying right there. You're responsible for the things that you share with other people. So try to be accurate when you're referring to the word of God.

[13:44] Because, and if you don't know, you don't know. It says in verse 2, For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he's a perfect man.

Able to bridle the whole body as well. How many perfect people do you know? There's only one. It's Mark. Okay, anybody name Mark here? It's in the book of Proverbs.

Mark the perfect man. It says it right there. So he's the only one. But other than that, there's no one that is perfect we know. And he says now in verse 3, Now if we put bits into horses' mouths so that they will obey us, we direct their entire body as well.

Look at the ships also. Though they are so great and driven with strong winds, they're still directed by a very small rudder, whatever the inclination of the pilot desires. So also the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things.

See how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire. We've seen demonstrations of that just recently. Sometimes it's somebody going out and lighting a fire, you know, on purpose.

[14:55] Sometimes it's lightning hitting a tree. My daughter's recently moved to West Yellowstone, and so we're getting to go up there at different times. And, you know, you see off in the distance, these forest fires there started with one little flame.

And he's trying to describe what the tongue is like in verse 6. And the tongue is a fire. The very world of iniquity. The tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body and sets on fire the course of our life and is set on fire by hell.

For every species of beast and birds and reptiles and creatures of the sea, even the blue whale, is tamed and has been tamed by the human race. But no one can tame the tongue, for it is a restless evil and full of deadly poison.

Now, why did I read that passage to you? I'm reading that passage to you to let you know and to let me know that I cannot possibly control my tongue by myself.

And if your tongue is out of control, it's going to cause damage. And you can do it in many ways, just for your testimony, things like that, but also because you can hurt people, because you can cause destruction.

[16:10] That's why he's using the example of a forest fire, because it destroys everything. You know, you see on TV, these people, they've lived there for like 15, 20 years. They never had a forest fire problem before.

Now all their houses burnt down and their cars burnt. Everything's burnt. And it started with one little flame. We need to be, to have control of our tongue, but it can't come on our own.

And that's why it's very important for you to understand that. Ephesians 6 and verse 10 says, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Like, that's a verse to use all the time as a gatekeeper for you.

Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Think about this. Whenever you're in a difficult spot and you're saying, it's like I can't handle this problem. Be strong in the Lord and the strength of his might, because there's one thing that you know from the scripture that God can handle it.

With him, nothing is impossible. He can control the tongue. You can't. That's why we need to rely on him. And how far away is he? He's inside you. If you're a believer, the Holy Spirit's inside you.

[17:17] Talk to the Lord. Ask the Lord to help you in that area. And then apply these gatekeepers to help you in your walk with God that you do the right thing. Look over at Luke chapter 6.

Luke chapter 6. Luke chapter 6. Luke chapter 6 and in verse 45, he says this.

The good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good. And the evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth what is evil. For his mouth speaks from that which fills

the heart.

Your mouth speaks from that which fills your heart. So when you go out there and you say something inappropriate, it's because it's coming from inside you. You see, the mouth gate is not what you're taking in for the most part.

Although, you know, Daniel made up his mind he wouldn't eat the king's food. He's doing that. And you ought to make up your mind at a young age that you'll never do any kind of illegal drugs or you'll never do this.

[18 : 28] Make up your mind ahead of time before somebody, you're in a group of people and somebody's saying, hey, why don't you try this? Yes, you need to have your mind made up ahead of time. But the good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth that which is good.

And the evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart that which is evil for his mouth speaks of that which fills the heart. Make sure your heart is filled with the good things. If you're filling your heart with a lot of junk coming in out of the media, because as I said, Solomon didn't have access to this stuff.

But you can pull it in from almost anywhere. You know, you have all these devices. Back in 2015, I was talking about this subject and I had looked it up and it said that every house has, the average house in the United States had five internet devices that use the internet and you can get information on it.

It said now the average house is 25 internet devices in your house. All that stuff is coming into your house. These are all access points. That's why you have to shut down the access to your gates, your eyes, your ears, your mouth.

You need to shut these things down. So Luke 6 and verse 45 says that when you say something and you say, oh, I didn't mean to say that. Well, you may not meant to say that, but there's a reason why you said it.

[19 : 52] And it may be what's going on in your heart may not be in the right place. That's when you need to take it back to the Lord and get this thing straightened out. Now, the way you do this is the prime, this is the prime gatekeeper's verse.

I want you to get this one down. I want you to memorize it and I want you to know it and I want you to use it. I have memorized it. I know it. I use it. It's a familiar verse.

It's in Psalm 19 and verse 14. It says, Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, my Lord, my rock, and my Redeemer.

He says, Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my rock and my Redeemer. Now, what's great about this, to be a gatekeeper verse, is that it's a prayer.

You're talking to the Holy Spirit. You're praying this to the Holy Spirit and it's right there. And you're saying, Let the words of my mouth, Holy Spirit, and the meditations, the thoughts of my heart be acceptable in thy sight.

[21 : 12] You're praying that and it's also reminding you that you need to have words that are proper, that you need to have meditations that are proper and you're looking at that and you're thinking about it and the Holy Spirit is going to convict you of those things.

It's a very good conviction verse because sometime you're thinking about something that you shouldn't be thinking about all of a sudden this verse comes up. Let the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord.

My strength, it says in the King James, my rock, it says in some other version, my rock, my strength, and my Redeemer. It's important.

This is a top verse that you need to get down to help you. I've got it down. It helps me. I'm trying to share that with you so that you can get some help from these things too. Look over at Psalm 39.

Psalm 39 and we'll look at verse 1. When I was a young kid, my mom really talked to me about how important it was for me to have a testimony in front of other people.

[22 : 44] And she would always say, you know, remember when you're with people, they're seeing how you act and that reflects on Jesus. If you're telling people that you're a Christian and they're seeing certain things in your life, that's not going to be attractive to them.

That's going to be like, he says he's a Christian. He says he's, I mean, you know, he's some kind of goody-two-shoes, but look at the way he's talking. Look at the way he's acting. Look at what he's doing. And she always emphasized that with me and it caused me to be conscious of my testimony

all the time.

And that's what this verse is talking about here. It says, and this is from David, it says in verse one, I said, I will guard my ways. Okay, there it is.

You're guarding. This is a gatekeeper verse. I will guard my ways that I may not sin with my tongue. I will guard my mouth as with a muzzle while the wicked are in my presence.

That's a testimony verse. You've got unbelievers. You know who the righteous are in scripture?

They're the believers. You know who the wicked are in scripture? They're the unbelievers.

[23 : 50] They may seem nice. They're wicked because they're not saved. They're wicked because they've not trusted Christ as Savior. These people may sometimes seem evil. They're righteous because of Jesus Christ, because he paid for their sin, offered them eternal life, and they put their trust in him and received that eternal life.

But look what he's saying here. I will guard my ways. This is something that he's decided to do. I'm going to guard my ways that I might not sin with my tongue.

I will guard my mouth as with a muzzle while the wicked are in my presence. While the wicked are in my presence. I was mute and silent.

I refrained even from good and my sorrow grew worse. Sometimes we, you know, we don't say anything because we're afraid we might say the wrong thing.

The first thing we need to learn out of this verse is that we need to muzzle our mouth when we're in the presence of unbelievers. We need to do it all the time.

[24 : 52] But sometimes when you're a young man, you have a temptation to kind of be like the rest of the guys in the club. And they're using, you know, the rest of the guys that you're hanging out with.

And they're using all kinds of foul language and talking about all kinds of foul things. And you want to fit in with those guys. And so, yeah, you jump right in there with them. You see, you're not guarding your mouth.

You're losing your testimony from, they may have had a thought that, you know, he's different than me. I'm kind of got my eye on this guy. He seems to, he talks about the Bible and stuff like that. And then you get out there and you talk as they do.

And they're thinking, well, no, he's just like us. And that's what you were going for too, wasn't it?

You wanted to be like him so he'd accept you. Yeah, he's accepting you, but he's not looking at you as a testimony anymore. He's not looking at you as an example.

He's not thinking, man, I want what he has because he's got it already. And it isn't that special. And a lot of times as young believers, we think if I could just be like the rest of the kids in school, you don't want to be like that.

[25 : 53] Not worth it. It's not what you think it is. Don't give away your testimony. It's really important. I remember when I was in high school, I was a senior in high school.

I was sitting in the locker room after football practice. And all of a sudden, I realized there were like five football players, the other guys, and they were standing behind me.

And I turned around and said, what's going on? I thought they were going to throw me in a shower or something, which they had never done before, but I thought they were going to throw me in a shower. And then one guy says, hey, we've been talking.

We want to hear you say a curse word. And I said, what? He said, well, we're talking. None of us has ever heard you say a curse word, and we want to hear you say a curse word, which I did not do.

But I should have said, I mean, I think back to that time sometimes, and I think, you know, I should have just given them the whole gospel right there, you know, but I didn't. I, those guys, I mean, obviously they were seeing something, you know, I did have opportunity to share the gospel with them because I had been praying all through high school.

[27 : 02] I shared this with a lot of people, but I was praying all through high school that I'd be able to share the gospel with my fellow classmates and with the people at school because that's what you're supposed to do as a believer.

And the president of the class, the senior class, his name was Tom Davis. He's the guy who was announcing and called me Darlie Lynn. Anyway, so he came up to me one day and said, hey, we're having club day, and we don't have enough clubs, and there used to be a Bible club here.

Would you start a Bible club? This is, he's saying this to me because I had asked the Lord a long time ago. I said, Lord, I don't, you know, I'm kind of shy around people, so if you give me opportunities with the gospel, I won't turn you down.

And then this happens. And so then he comes up to me later, so we start the Bible club, and Bible club day, we had heaven tracks out there and all this kind of stuff. And then we came back, and later on he said to me, hey, this year at the graduation, we don't want some outside preachers talking.

He said, would you do the opening prayer at the graduation? And the vice president of the Bible club, I was president of the Bible club, vice president can do the closing prayer.

[28 : 18] And I said, are you, I mean, I almost had a heart attack. That's probably the first prayer they used. It had John 3, 16 in it. I mean, it was in there.

I got the gospel in there because the Lord had convicted me earlier to be a testimony, and he was saying, he was giving me that opportunity, and he'll give you opportunities.

If you live your life as a testimony in front of other people, they'll see the difference. And when you share the gospel, it'll have more power to it because they know that you've been changed by something, and there's a reason why you act or say the things that you do.

Let's turn over to Proverbs 6. Make sure that you keep yourself as a testimony in front of other people. Proverbs 6.

This is going to look pretty familiar here in a second. Proverbs 6. So, since we have talked earlier about things that God hates, what types of speech does God hate?

[29 : 25] Okay? Well, in Proverbs 6, in verse 16, he says, there are six things which the Lord hates. Yes, seven which are an abomination to him.

Okay? So, these things are an abomination to the Lord. He hates these things. All right? Haughty eyes.

We already looked at that one. Haughty eyes. God hates that. A lying tongue. That's speech, isn't it? So, that's something we have to deal with. Speech. A lying tongue.

Hands that shed innocent blood. A heart that devises wicked plans. Might be a good study for you sometime to study these six slash seven things since they're things that God hates.

It's always good to know what God hates, right? If you said, well, somebody said to you, hey, you know, your dad really hates this. Well, you might find out before you do that in front of your dad or whatever it is or if they tell you this teacher hates such and such.

[30 : 28] Well, you're going to avoid it, right? That's the way we need to be with the Lord. So, what are they? Haughty eyes. A lying tongue. These are both with the mouth. And the hands that shed innocent blood.

A heart that devises wicked plans. Feet that run rapidly to evil. A false witness once again. One who utters lies. And one who spreads strife among brothers.

So, in this we're finding we've got haughty eyes, which is an eye problem. We've got a lying tongue. We've got being a false witness.

That's basically lying twice, right? But this is lying under a legal situation. Maybe like when you turn in your taxes. That type of thing. And the last one.

One who spreads strife among brothers. Now, what does that remind you of? Doesn't that remind you of the passage in James? Here you've got the tongue that's uncontrollable. And you start a forest fire with a little flame.

[31 : 27] You're going to burn the place down. You need to think about that. That you're spreading strife among brothers. This can happen in churches. And it can really be a problem. And that's why we need to keep this verse close.

One thing you don't want to do is spread strife among your Christian brothers and sisters. You want to keep that unity. How good and how pleasant it is for the brethren to dwell together in unity.

If you're responsible for breaking up that unity, you're going to be in trouble with the Lord. You know, because he's given you this illusion. I hate that when that happens.

And you know, six months from now, if you're spreading strife, you've got no excuse because you saw this verse and you saw that God hated this and you need to take action in your mind so that you put it down and think to yourself, you know what?

A lot of things are going to happen in the next six months, in the next couple of years. But one thing I want to make sure of is that I won't spread strife among my brothers and sisters. And another thing

I want to be sure of is that I won't have a lying tongue with anybody.

[32 : 35] Because some of you might have problems with lying. We have different problems. I told you about my anger problem. And verses help me. And the other thing he says here is that you should not be a false witness.

You need to be careful about that. Little kids, teach your kids this. Don't be a false witness. A lot of times, you know, something happens in the earth and you go in there, Johnny did that, you know. Turns out Johnny wasn't near that.

But Johnny got the blame. That's being a false witness. And in legal things, things like that. But also the haughty eyes. But we're aware of these things. We need to deal with them so that we won't be caught doing them and then pleasing the Lord who has done so much for us.

Turn your Bibles, if you will, over to Philippians chapter 2. Philippians chapter 2.

Now, this is one of my favorite passages of all time. I think I've spoken on this because I spoke before, I think, with you guys about being separate in the midst, being in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation and how God wants us to act when we're in the midst of the world, when we're in the midst of trouble.

[34 : 00] You know, David, what was David? He was the champion. What does the word champion mean? Man in the middle. He was the man in the middle for God. Jesus was the man in the middle for us. There's no mediator between God and man.

It's the man Christ Jesus. He's our mediator. But look at this verse. He says in verse 14, do all things without grumbling or disputing. Okay? Wow. How many of us are guilty of that?

Is it a sin? You just read the verse. What do you think? Do all things without grumbling and disputing. We got some big work to do here.

And we need to think about that. And it would be good for all of us to memorize this verse right here. Because it can be a gatekeeper. When we catch ourselves mumbling, when we catch ourselves grumbling, when we catch ourselves, you know, disputing with people, causing, once again, you know, friction between brothers and sisters, we're going to be in trouble because we need to be without grumbling or disputing.

That's hard to do. Yeah, that's why you got the Holy Spirit on board. That's why He's there. He wants to help you with these things. Look what it says here. Do all things without grumbling or disputing so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life so that in the day of Christ, they will have reason.

[35 : 29] I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain or toil in vain. He's saying, not only will you be obeying what the Lord wants you to do, but you will be a testimony. Can you imagine if you did everything without grumbling and disputing?

Would you stand out in a crowd? Would you stand out at work? Would you stand out at home? Would you stand out in your church? We need to follow this up and think to ourselves, you know what?

This is what God wants from me. He says, if you do this, you'll be like blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. We, you know, we're pretty satisfied with how we are right now because we can look around at work and it's like, these people are involved in that.

They're thinking this. We think, well, there we go with our haughty eyes again, thinking we're okay. And then you come to a verse like this and it's kind of humbling. Because you know you've been involved in some of that grumbling.

You know you've been involved in some of that disputing. Then you start thinking, you know, that's not, I'm looking down at other people for the things that they do and they're not saved.

[36 : 36] They don't know the Lord. They are the crooked and perverse generation. They don't even know it. And we're in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation. And we're supposed to be appearing as lights in the world.

How could you do that better than doing all things without grumbling? You know, doing all things without disputing. You do that at work, you'll move up the scale.

You do that at work, you'll be appreciated. People like that kind of thing. I know as a boss, I like a guy who doesn't grumble or dispute all the time. The guy who grumbles and disputes all the time, you're thinking about, where can I get rid of this guy, you know?

I want to get somebody in here who won't cause a hassle every time we're together. You know, every time he does his job, he's like, oh man, I can't believe you're having me do that. Somebody else, he hasn't done that in two weeks.

Well, he's been out on leave for a broken back. Well, yeah, you know, grumbling and disputing. It doesn't need to happen. It doesn't matter what you do. If you have an employee, the less he does, the less he wants to do.

[37 : 36] That's what my brother told me one time. I've seen it to be true. Look over at the Ephesians chapter four. Ephesians chapter four, verse 29 and 30.

Now, this is really an important one for us to remember too. He says, let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only such a word as is good for the edification according to the need of the moment, so it will give grace to those who hear.

Man, this is like a huge thing, right here. Let no unwholesome word. You know what the unwholesome words are. You know what the, what it is, when you're talking and it's not unwholesome, it's not healthy, it's not right, it's not good.

Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only such a word as gives edification according to the need of the moment. Edification is to build somebody up. An edifice is a building. Edification is building somebody up.

Don't tear people down, build them up. That's a problem. You're in the workplace, people tear each other down all the time. I said to the guys, there's a command post, security command post, and a lot of the officers are in there at different times.

[38 : 57] And they'll be talking about another officer, and I came out and I said, what do you guys say about me when I leave the room? You know, because somebody would leave the room and they're like, trashing this guy, you know? And that's the way we are.

We need to not be like that. Let no unwholesome word proceed out of your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment so that it will give grace to those who hear.

And then look at this verse 30. Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. He's still in there. He's reminding you, He's still in there.

Don't grieve the Holy Spirit. Remember, we started the book of Ephesians with the fact that we're sealed with the Holy Spirit. Here we are, and He's reminding them that they are sealed with the Holy Spirit. And He's in there, and you can grieve Him.

This one day I'm reading this passage, and it just blew my mind. And I read it a hundred times before. I memorized it. I had it memorized.

[39 : 56] But I was reading it that day, and I'm like, do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. And all of a sudden, it dawned on me.

I, me, I can cause this emotional reaction in the person who created the universe. I can grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

Can you imagine that? I mean, just think about that. And the next time you're saying something that's clearly unwholesome, next time you're saying something to tear somebody out, think about that.

You're grieving the Holy Spirit, the one who created the universe, and He's inside you. Remember, Holy Spirit on board. He's inside you, and He's having to go through that.

And while He's inside you, you're saying something that's going to harm somebody else. Or you're saying something that's going to ruin your testimony in front of somebody else.

[40 : 56] And the Holy Spirit is grieving over that. For some reason, I never really thought of the depth of that. that I'm grieving the Holy Spirit.

The next time you find yourself saying something like that, just remind yourself, this is going to grieve the Holy Spirit. I'm not going to do it.

I'm just not going to do it. Turn your Bibles over to Ephesians chapter 5. This is pretty easy. Ephesians chapter 5 in verse 3.

He says, He says here, But immorality and any impurity or greed must not even be named among you as is proper in saints. You shouldn't be involved in immorality or impurity.

You shouldn't be greedy like Achan was. He shouldn't even be named among you. Nobody should even say that that happens with any of you. But then look at the next verse.

[41 : 57] And there must be no filthiness and silly talk or coarse jesting which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. That means that filthiness and silly talk and coarse jesting are not fitting.

That's what it says. And that's what it means. And so if we're involved in that, we are grieving the Holy Spirit because we're disobeying something we know to be true. We need to catch ourselves. It's so easy. You know, the guys in the office, they're talking about this, they're talking about that. It's easy to let yourself go along with it and all of a sudden you're saying something that's totally inappropriate and you're thinking to yourself, I didn't mean to do that.

Well, you didn't mean to do it, but you didn't stop it. Nobody made you say it. Maybe you wanted to say it so you could be the big joker. Maybe you wanted to say it so that everybody would be impressed that you're one of the crowd.

But if they've been watching your testimony, they're thinking to themselves, you know what? Deep down, he's just like the rest of us. We need to be careful about these things. It's there. Tell your kids about these verses.

[43 : 05] There must be no filthiness. That's any kind of dirtiness, okay? And silly talking, coarse jesting. When I say silly talking, I don't mean they're telling jokes. That's not, that's not, it's just all of the stuff that we know we should not be saying.

The things that kind of make you cringe when you hear somebody say it. You know they're not right, but don't be a part of it because it's not what God wants you to be doing.

All that is wrong. So turn your Bibles to 1 Peter chapter 3. Use that passage we just left for a gatekeeper to keep you from saying something like that and help your kids not to say things like that.

Your kids will come home. They're going to be with some other kids. They're going to come home and they're going to say a bad word or going to say something they shouldn't be saying or make fun of something that, you know, bathroom talk or whatever.

You know, take them to that verse, show them. That's what the Lord wants. He wants them to be careful about the things that they're saying. Where did I find it? 1 Peter. Hold on, 1 Peter.

[44 : 09] 1 Peter. Okay. So, this passage is a good passage for marriage and there's a good, there's some good thoughts in here that could be for some gatekeepers for us in our marriages.

We need to work on our marriages. We need to continually work on our marriages and this is a good passage to look at that. Now, it says down in, what did I just do with that? It says down in verse 7 of 1 Peter chapter 3, you husbands in the same way live with your wives in an understanding way.

I know that's not going to be easy, but live with your wives in an understanding way as with someone weaker. That's not, doesn't mean they're less important. They're weaker.

That's because that's the way they were made. Would you have it changed? Would you go back to God and say, God, I think you're going to need to change the way you're making women because we're weaker. Well, no, God made them that way because he wanted them to be that.

And you could say the same thing about men. You should be more responsible because you're stronger. That's basically what he's saying here. Live with your wives in an understanding way as with someone weaker since she is a woman and show her honor as a fellow heir of the grace of life so that your prayers will not be hindered.

[45 : 34] Let me tell you, Christianity elevated women in the Middle East. Elevated women in the Middle East. Didn't put them down. We're told, oh yeah, Christianity is holding all those women down. No, when Christianity elevated women in the Middle East.

From the time of Christ, things got better for women than they had been. Oh yeah, they would go back and forth depending on where there were true believers, true followers of the scripture. But, does it look like in some of those foreign countries over there that women are given honor as fellow heirs of the grace of life?

No. And that's sad and it's wrong but we need to do it. But look at this next passage, okay? This is the real important part for this sermon in verse 8. To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kind-hearted, and humble in spirit.

Not returning, now this is a great verse, I want you, if you're married, you've got to memorize this verse, okay? It's a requirement. If you want its help, you've got to do it.

If you want the Holy Spirit to be able to bring it to your heart, not returning evil for evil or insult for insult but rather giving a blessing instead for you were called for the purpose, for that very purpose

that you might inherit a blessing.

[46 : 53] In doing marriage counseling, this verse is so important because one of the most dangerous things, most harmful things in a relationship between a man and his wife is that when you get in to the escalating argument and it keeps escalating, it keeps escalating, it starts out with something small but it keeps escalating and before you know it, you're saying things that will hurt your spouse tomorrow night in the middle of the night when she wakes up and she thinks, I can't believe he said that to me.

I can't believe he called me that word. I can't believe the attitude he had toward me just didn't seem to care. You see, this is what happens.

We feel like if somebody says something to us, we've got a right to say something back. No, that's not what this verse says. That's not what this gatekeeper verse says.

It says not returning evil for evil or insult for insult because they naturally flow up and they get bigger and bigger until they cause more and more trouble and you're causing trouble for your marriage and you might make a decision, you know, try to make a decision in your heart and spend some time in prayer and I did this because I thought it was important for me to pray and ask the Lord to help me never to say something that would hurt my wife later.

I mean, we have disputes. We have differences. We're not happy all the time. Just almost all the time. But anyway, but the fact is that I think it's my responsibility to never say something that will cause her to think about it later and have it hurt her because I love my wife.

[48 : 44] Husbands, love your wives. If you love your wives, you need to memorize this verse, not returning evil for evil. Did it say that what she did wasn't evil?

No. Or insult for insult? Did it say she didn't insult you? No. But hopefully she's reading this verse too and thinking, you know what? I shouldn't return evil for evil or insult for insult.

Let's not be the person that gets it started in the first place, right? That's the best way to do this. But just think how that would help your marriage if you're having a struggle in your marriage, right?

And just think how those little phrases right there would come to your mind and they could help you. And he says this, for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.

He said, don't return evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead. And it can't be like this. Well, bless you too. You know, not one of those deals where you both memorize the verse and then you just like throw it out there like it doesn't really mean anything.

[49 : 46] You need to take this verse and put it into your interactions, husbands and wives, and if she says something that hurts you, just let her know that, you know, you felt hurt.

If he says something that hurt you, let him know and you should respond to one another, not return evil for evil, but a blessing instead. To say, you know, that kind of hurt me a little bit, but I love you so much. Is there something that I could do that could change, could help whatever it is that she's upset about or that you're upset about?

But it's very important. We need to have these things. So this, this, I just want to say that there's a verse in this list, this gatekeeper's list also here that says in Psalm 141, 3, set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth.

Keep watch over the door of my lips. And just think about that. If God's watching over your mouth and your lips, what kind of things is he maybe could filter out for us and help us with dealing with? And I've got some of them listed. Lying, gossip, corrupt communications, insults, outbursts of anger, all of these things the Lord could help you with that.

[51 : 03] Ask the Lord. Pray to him. The Holy Spirit's within you. Talk to yourself almost. Talk to the Holy Spirit and tell him that you want to change your interactions with people if you're known for outbursts of anger.

You want to change your interactions if you're trying to be selfish instead of being helpful to other people. If you're looking down with people with haughty eyes, maybe he's a new employee and you've been there 42 years.

Don't look down on a new employee. You were a new employee one day. It hurt when people look down at you and treat you like dirt just because you're a new person, wasn't it? Didn't it? We're going to put ourselves in other people's positions and think about how they're doing.

After this conference, I hope that you go home and you take some of these verses and you put them together. Just let's go over one more time what these guys did, 2 Chronicles.

This won't take long. 2 Chronicles 23 and starting in verse 16.

[52 : 08] Remember, the country was in disarray. They were so mixed up that there were two countries and they're like, you know, this part of that country and this part of this country and this over here is part of that country and I mean, they were messed up.

They're killing the kids. Their grandmother is killing the grandchildren. They've got idols all of them. Even some parts of Israel in their history put idols into the temple.

All kinds of things but nobody was going to worship at the temple. The little boy lived there.

Nobody's going to worship there. They were all going to worship at the temple of Baal. And so what happened? They decided to reset and it tells us in verse 16 what they did.

Jehoiada made a covenant between himself and all the people and the king that they would be the Lord's people. You want to go home start, you know, if I'm God's person I need to start acting like God's person.

Not like Daryl trying to act like God's person but I need to act like God's person. And in verse 17 the second thing they did so that's the first thing they did is they went and made a decision they were going to live for the Lord and be holy as he was holy.

[53 : 16] Verse 17 and all the people went to the house of Baal and tore it down. So if there's sin in your life what's hidden under your tent? If there's something under your tent at home you need to get rid of it when you get home and start a new sheet. Start your relationship over again with the Lord.

Start putting these things together to help protect you in whatever the way they can. And so they went out there and they tore down the house of Baal. They didn't just say well we'll leave that there for later we might want to come back to it.

They tore it all down. That's what we need to do. Third thing Moral Jehoiada placed the offices of the house of the Lord under the authority of the Levitical priest whom David had assigned in the house of the Lord to offer burnt offerings to the Lord as it is written in the law of Moses.

They got back to the word of God and started getting in the word of God and when they read a verse they said to themselves what does this really mean? And when it kind of like you know think about it when you're reading it and you read that verse about the grief of the Holy Spirit and so many times I read that verse and never really thought that I had didn't think about the ramifications of the fact that I had caused the creator of the universe to be grieving.

And so he's getting back to the word of God and then the fourth thing that he did he stationed the gatekeepers of the house of the Lord so that no one would enter who was in any way unclean.

[54 : 35] This is what our goal should be to get goal keep goal keepers goal keepers that would keep us I'm sorry I'm mixing up that word gatekeepers I'm thinking about hockey gatekeepers but anyway we need to have gatekeepers that can help us and that the Holy Spirit can use to encourage and convict us so that we can live for him that's what he desires for us is that we might live for him and once again we have a temple that it has three gates but it's a mobile temple and it goes everywhere I would advise you strongly one of the best verses I ever memorized for helping me is that Psalm Proverbs 414 do not proceed in the way of evil men avoid it do not pass by it turn away from it and pass on now there's no way that you're going to be at the evil stuff if you follow that you know avoid it so you're turning away from avoid it do not pass by it you don't even get close you know how it is you kind of want to see what's going on over there you know wonder how bad TV is these days you know

I'm going to see how bad it is that's not what we need we need to avoid it do not pass by it turn away from it and pass on you're on the internet you're on your computer you're on the internet something flashes up avoid it do not pass by it turn away from it and pass on you need to remind yourself of that the Holy Spirit needs to be able to remind you of it and the way that can happen is if you memorize that verse and put it into the system if you don't program the system you're not going to get anything out of the system the system set up you here Holy Spirit inside bring me the word and I'll bring it back to you when it's needed I hope that this I really enjoyed being here and talking to you guys about this stuff and sharing and really love Bethel and their whole attitude and the group of people there some of whom I've known for years I haven't told the story yet I always do tell the story about how Kevin used to rob us over there at the chapel so Valley Park Chapel is right down the road from where he lived but he went to Maplewood and when we had a children's meeting out at Valley Park he'd come the first day and they'd say bring your friends bring people and you'll get prizes you know so the next day he'd show up with two or three of his brothers and sisters and the next day he'd show up with two or three more of his brothers and sisters next day

I mean they took home all the prizes so but no I love your brother appreciate your ministry and everything you can't believe everything you hear you know so anyway yeah I love being with you guys and hope that some of these things will be brought to your remembrance that may be able to spend some time praying about it and memorizing them especially that one you know let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in thy sight not my sight oh Lord my rock and my redeemer those little sheets that I handed out to you those little worksheets I hope you work through them you'll just maybe get some more reinforcement about the things that I said and they do mention some things that I didn't talk about here and also if you like that I don't know how many of you are homeschooling your kids and you might not have a Bible program I've developed this devotional

Bible study reading sheets it's just like those the person who does it they find the answers from the scripture I don't tell them the answers I leave blanks on the important things and they find the answers I might say what does this verse mean these are on Amazon it's seven dollars a piece I would anybody who wants these I mean I've just brought the ones that I had at the house I should have ordered more before I came here but anyway also if you'd like to just have them online if you give me your email I'll send you the New Testament I've also completed the Old Testament and I've got about 200 little Bible studies I'd send to you too if you're interested in that I'd just send them to you for free these things aren't I tell everybody you know if you use these you can use them for small groups you can use them for Sunday school classes you can copy them because I give permission in the front you can copy them just don't change them and I put that in there that they're free to be copied and used that's why I'll send you the

I'll email you all those other ones that I've done it's been about a 20 year run to put that all together so if you're interested in that let me know if you'd like one of these books and you have an older child that's maybe you don't have a Bible curriculum for them then you could do this or if couples want to do them like I say they're on Amazon too for seven bucks but which seems to be pretty cheap so that's good and I'm not trying to make any money off this deal so anyway I'll close with this in 2nd Timothy chapter 2 in verse 7 it says consider what I say and the Lord will give you understanding in everything let's pray Father we thank you for this opportunity that you've given us to get together and just look into your word and I pray Lord your blessing upon this assembly they are a light Lord in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation and I see that light and I appreciate that light Lord and I know that you do and I pray your blessing be upon them and their leadership and the children and the grandchildren and Lord for the young people who are getting into that college

[60 : 15] I pray Lord they might fall by the wayside because of so called fake science Lord the knowledge the scientia Lord that because they just don't know anything I pray Lord that you would help us to reach out to other people and make a difference I pray Lord that you would have your Holy Spirit convict us when we're going to say the wrong thing Lord let the words of my mouth let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in your sight oh Lord our rock and our redeemer we pray these things in Jesus name amen amen to the Lord as you I got you.