

October 4, 2020 - Teddy Tash

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Date: 04 October 2020

Preacher: Ted Tash

[0:00] We welcome you to the media ministry of Bethel Community Church. Knowing Jesus, making Jesus known. They get on stage and they kind of do the whole show sitting down.

I always think like B.B. King towards the end of his life. He still toured a lot and he would just kind of sit up there in a big old chair and play the guitar or whatever. Well, after the father-daughter camp out and spending the last two nights in an air mattress with a two-year-old and a one-year-old, I think I could probably do this from a recliner and be just A-OK.

I think that would be just fine with me. But no, we did have a great weekend. Sorry to miss out on Pinecrest last weekend. I heard you guys had a great time, which I'm thankful for. Wish we could have been there, but we couldn't make it.

But good to be here this morning. If you want to turn in your Bibles or on your phones to Philippians chapter 4, we're not going to be there right away.

So if you want to, you know, just kind of keep your finger there or set your Bible on the chair next to you, we're going to end up there in just a little bit. But we'll kind of have a lengthy introduction before we get there.

[1:18] But if you want to go ahead and turn, like I said, to Philippians chapter 4, I'll go ahead and pray and then we will get started. Father God, just thank you so much for this day.

Thank you that we could be here. Thank you, Lord, that we have the freedom to gather. Never have we been more thankful for that than now. You know, what a crazy year, Lord.

We know you're in control. But thank you that we can still gather. Thank you that we can worship freely. Lord, we, like I said, don't take that for granted. We pray that as we look into your word, Lord, we would see it as a source of truth.

And we would have a craving and a desire to be men and women of your word. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. There's a word that's been thrown around quite a bit lately.

And it's in pop culture and on the news. And it's a word that you don't really use a whole lot. In fact, if you look on Google, if you type in define and then whatever word you're talking about, you can actually look at the usage metrics, how many times a word has been used and kind of the trend of the use of a word.

[2:28] This is a word that had been on a steep decline for the last hundred years. And recently we've seen an uptrend in its usage. And it's the word lawlessness. Lawlessness.

And it's been thrown around quite a bit. But if you were able to make it through the debate, that was rough. But that word got brought up a few times. You know, if you follow the president on Twitter, not saying that's a good thing or a bad thing to do, but if you do, you'll see once or twice a week he tweets out in all caps law and order.

This is a trending topic. And right off the bat, I want to just say that I'm not taking any political stance here. I have a political stance, but I'm not taking it here.

I'm not going to shout it from the pulpit or anything. But these are things that are happening. And I think we should look at it objectively. So this term lawlessness, it's been thrown around.

And I would say that now, maybe more than ever in recent memory, there is an attack on this concept of law and order.

[3:38] And this attack stems from an attack on absolute truth. And we're going to get there. And I want to explain that. But this idea of lawlessness or an attack and assault on law and order.

And this is important for a couple reasons, which we'll get to. But just to kind of explain it, you know, there was some riots that were going on in Kenosha, Wisconsin. Kenosha is a nice place. We've camped there a couple times. It's right on Lake Michigan. It's beautiful in the summer. It's like 70 degrees. The water is like 70 degrees. It's a really nice place. But there was this, you know, riot, protest, whatever, that was going on up there.

And there was this young man, Kyle something or another, that, you know, maybe he got attacked by the mob. Maybe he didn't. Who knows? He shot and killed a couple people.

And there was this big outcry from the protesters saying, hey, he should be arrested. He should be tried. You know, he killed these people. But yet that same side who wants to enforce those laws on him is okay with, you know, burning down a building, breaking into a business, robbing, looting.

[4:47] And it's lawlessness. And that's a problem because which laws do you enforce? How do you pick and choose? How can you say, well, it's wrong for him to do this, but it's okay for us to do this? And so this attack on law and order comes from an attack on right and wrong.

I think that's where it stems from is there's this attack on right and wrong. And this is an old attack. It's an attack as old as time in the Garden of Eden. What did Satan say to Eve?

Well, it's okay if you have the fruit. You know, God didn't really say that you shouldn't eat it. Well, maybe he did say that, but he didn't really mean that. And it was an attack on right and wrong.

And again, in that instance in the Garden, it was an attack on the truth. This idea of right and wrong is tricky because without absolute truth, right and wrong is not really objective.

What's right for me might not be right for you without absolute truth. You can make a case that I think it's a poor case, but you can make a case that what Hitler was doing was right for him.

[5:54] He was trying to do the best thing for his people, you know, and if you had blonde hair and blue eyes, you were going to be in good shape. If you were Jewish, it probably wasn't going to be too good for you. But where do you draw the line?

How do you define what is the compass by which you find what is right and what is wrong? And it's an attack on morality.

You go back into Israel in the book of Judges. And how does that book end? What does it say? It says, everyone did what was right in their own eyes.

You know, and how did that work out for society? Not great. Everybody did what was right in their own eyes. And without truth, without absolute truth, that's what happens.

It's lawlessness. There's no right, no wrong. There's no morality. Everybody's just looking out for themselves, doing what's right in their eyes. They don't want to be under the authority of something that's absolutely true.

[6:54] It's interesting. I heard at Pinecrest that Keith Treebolt spent quite a bit of time in Isaiah 5. And Isaiah 5 kind of covers this concept. I'll read verse 20 and 21 to you.

He's talking about right and wrong and morality. It says, Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter.

Woe to those who were wise in their own eyes and prudent in their own sight. So I think, can we agree that there is an attack, an assault on truth out there? Can we agree on that?

I think that we're seeing that. The problem with this attack on truth is that it's not without casualty. It's not without consequence.

And I think a big, there's many consequences of it, but the one I want to focus on, and I think the one that relates to us most as a church and a group of believers out in the world, is that it has led to an attack or an assault on man's purpose.

[8:01] What is the purpose of humankind? Do we even have a purpose? Are we just a group of people on a planet, in a solar system, in a galaxy, in a universe?

Is there any meaning at all? And this attack on truth, when you remove the word of God from society, it leads to this attack on man's purpose.

You know, if you look at the opinions, or if you were to take a poll on what is man's purpose, what is the point of life, what is the meaning to life, the answers will kind of funnel into two different categories.

The first would be, well, have as much fun as you can, do as much fun stuff as you can, just have a good time. There was a word that was created a few years ago called YOLO.

I don't know if any of you heard about it. For those over 40, I will explain. It means you only live once. YOLO. You, I don't know how to spell it. Y-O-L-O.

[8:59] You only live once. And the idea is you would do something daring, something fun. You know, you jump off a building, say, you know, YOLO, and have your little wingsuit, and have as much fun as you can.

And we know that that's not, that's not the meaning to life, right? Another maybe more noble answer that you'll get, and this is kind of the other camp, besides have fun, is, you know, do good, be a good person, leave a legacy.

You know, maybe leave some money for your kids and grandkids. Leave, leave a good impact on the earth. And we know that that's not, not the meaning to life either.

There's a little exercise I want to do. Dave did this, I don't even know if you remember doing this, in Sunday school like four years ago, and it left an impression on me. Everybody in here has a set of parents, right?

You can't be here unless you have a mom and a dad. So everybody's got two parents. Okay, every person, mom and dad. Each of your parents had two parents. So that'd be a grandma and grandpa, and then another grandma and grandpa.

[10:02] So that'd be like two, three generations, however you define it. So your grandparents had kids, that would be your parents. Your parents had kids, that would be you. So four grandparents. Each one of your grandparents had two parents, so that'd be eight great-grandparents.

Are we all following here? So we have eight great-grandparents, all of us do. So that's what, three, four generations, something like that, the great-grandparents, grandparents, parents, you. Anyone in the room able to even give me the names of all eight of their great-grandparents?

I can't. I know for sure that I can. I can maybe give you like two, maybe. My mom's here, so she could fact-check me, but I don't think, I know for sure I can't give you all eight.

And if there's anybody in here that knows all eight of their great-grandparents, can you even tell me one thing about them? You know, what they did for work, what they liked for breakfast, what they liked to drink, what their hobbies were.

I mean, it's three, four generations. To put it in perspective, if you have kids, their grandkids, you know, I have Lily and Daisy, their grandkids probably won't even know my name. You know, if you have grandkids, think about it this way, your grandkids' kids won't know your name.

[11:11] Yeesh. So we know that doing good, leaving this legacy, that's not it. Ecclesiastes says the dead are gone and they're forgotten. I mean, that's a biblical truth.

So we know that that is not man's purpose. But this assault on truth has led to an assault on man's purpose. These ideas, that's not what the real purpose is.

And in fact, if you look at, you know, what the science says and what the philosophers would say, there's sort of this one philosophy that has guided the world's view of man's purpose since about 1940 or so.

So about the last 80 years, the philosophers would say that the purpose of man's life is that there is no purpose. It's this concept of absurdism or just life is absurd.

You can do whatever you want, doesn't matter. There's no meaning, no impact, no purpose.

Sounds like a great, great way to live, right? No, it sounds terrible. They draw this concept.

[12:11] There was a guy in Greek mythology named Sisyphus. And he was sort of cursed to this life of rolling a boulder up a mountain every day. And at the end of the day, the boulder would roll right back down and he was right in the same place he started.

He got nowhere. He rolled it up, did all the work, but there's no effect, no consequence of it. It just rolled right back down. And so these folks that came up with this concept of absurdism said, well, maybe over time, Sisyphus got a little bit of enjoyment out of it.

Maybe he took a little different path and had a little fun. Maybe he found, if he did it really fast, then he could rest the rest of the day. But really there was no consequence, no meaning, no purpose.

It just went up the hill, rolled back down there. And guys, as believers, doesn't that make you sad for the world that that's the best they got? You know? So listen to me.

Get this. This is important. This is important. Without this, without the Word of God, there is no purpose. And there is no compass or North Star or map, whatever you want to call it, by which to even begin searching for a purpose in life.

[13:24] When you remove the Word of God, when you attack absolute truth that's found in the Word of God, man has no purpose and no compass by which to even begin searching for a purpose.

Those would be like the first two points. There's an attack on truth. That attack has led to an attack on man's purpose. The third point, and this is the good news, is that there is a source of truth. And it's the Word of God. Truth is found only in the Word of God. I'll say that again. Truth is found only in the Word of God. As we know from John chapter 17, that's Jesus' high priestly prayer. He says, Sanctify them with the truth. Your Word is truth. Psalm 119, which we sang out of With Thy Word is a lamp into our feet.

Psalm 119, verse 160, it says, The sum of your words is true. It says, I've read them, I've added them all up, I've reasoned with them, I've crunched the numbers, and what I've found is that they were true.

[14:34] The sum of your words, the entirety of your word, is truth. So truth is found in the Word of God. Now remember, we said there was an attack on truth, so that means there is an attack on the Word of God.

Romans chapter 12, verse 2 says, Do not be conformed to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what is the perfect and acceptable will of God.

So this world has a pattern. Don't be conformed to that pattern. You say, okay, I don't want to be conformed to that pattern. Well, how do you do that? By renewing your mind.

Okay. Well, how do you renew your mind? That word renew means to renovate or to completely change for the better.

You know, you think about doing a project on the house, you tear out the kitchen, you get some new countertops, you completely change it for the better. It says, Don't be conformed to the pattern of the world. Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

[15:46] How do you do that? I'm glad you asked. You can pick up your Bibles, Philippians chapter 4, or unlock your phone, whatever. Philippians chapter 4.

How do we renew our mind? How do we be transformed instead of conformed to the pattern of the world? I'm not saying that this is the only way you could renew your mind.

I'm not saying this is the best way you can renew your mind, but this is what came to my mind and my heart while preparing this is Philippians chapter 4, verse 8.

It's Paul writing, and he says, Finally, brother, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there's any virtue, if there's anything praiseworthy, meditate on these things.

Think about these things. Set your mind on these things. things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, good report, virtuous, excellent, praiseworthy.

[16:57] Think about these things. That's how you renew your mind. Well, where is that found? Where are things that are true and just and pure, where are they found? Well, Facebook, of course.

Right? No. No. I'll tell you, I don't do much social media. I have an Instagram that I never look at, and I have a Twitter that I do look at a little bit. And there is nothing pure on Twitter.

There is nothing of good report on Twitter. I have tasted and I have seen, and there is nothing virtuous out in the Twitter world. And I would take this a step further.

Things that are true and lovely and noble and pure, they're not found on the news either. And I'm not just talking about MSNBC or CNN. I'm talking Fox News too.

Turn it off. There is nothing good on it. There really isn't. There is one source of truth. One source of things that you should meditate on and dwell on and expend your mental energy on.

[17:54] And it's right here. It's the Word of God. That's the source. So there's an attack on truth. There's an attack on man's purpose. But we have the source of truth, and it's the Word of God.

I have one more point, which is what then is man's purpose. But before we get there, I do want to make a quick interjection that's kind of off topic a little bit.

You know, James 4 says that we are at enmity with the world. It says if you're a friend of God, then you're at enmity with the world. We know that the world is attacking God's Word. But even with those things being true, I think if you remove sort of your Christian lens by which you filter the world, and you ignore, you know, the very vocal one or two percent that's out there protesting and throwing firebombs and stuff, if you just think about just your average Joe Blow unbeliever, you know, just your guy that gets up and goes to work and has a family but just not saved, I think that you can see out there in the world just this longing for truth, just a grasping for truth.

It reminds me of Paul, you know, when he was traveling around and he went to the town, they had an altar to the unknown God that said, we know there's a God out there, we don't know what he is, so we have this altar to this unknown God.

You almost see that out there now with unbelievers. There's just this longing for truth. You know, I listen to quite a few podcasts.

[19:35] We do a lot of driving now with traveling for work, and so I get to listen to a lot of podcasts. Man, I've noticed just in the last month three distinct examples on these podcasts of unbelievers talking about, explaining, dwelling on just these sort of universal truths, kind of these, I was talking with Dave yesterday, he called them like principles.

They're just principles of truth that are biblically based, but the world is grasping for them, and they don't maybe know that they're biblically based.

I'll give you an example. I think we've all heard the phrase, work smarter, not harder. Right? If we heard that phrase, work smarter, not harder. That comes from Ecclesiastes.

It says if the axe is dull, if your axe isn't very sharp, you're going to have to work a whole lot harder. You're going to have to use all your strength, is what it says. It says wisdom brings success.

So instead of working so hard with a dull axe, use your brain, use some wisdom, go sharpen the thing, you won't have to work as hard. Work smarter, not harder. It's a biblically based truth that the world would readily accept.

[20:43] Does that make sense? And I've noticed that over and over again in these non-Christian podcasts, people just searching and grasping for truth. So as believers, I think that's something that we have to share with the world, the truth that is found in the Word of God.

I think that, not all people obviously, but I think there are some out there that are genuinely seeking that now more than ever. So to get back on track, with head, there's an attack on truth, which has led to an attack on man's purpose.

There's one source of truth, which is the Word of God. So what does the Word of God then say about man's purpose? What is the meaning to life? Why are we here? What are we doing?

There is a lot of verses that would talk about that. We're not going to talk about all of them. But there's four passages that I kind of like to look at. If you guys wanted to turn to Ecclesiastes chapter 3, we're not going to start there, but that's the one I want you guys to be at.

Actually, sorry. Ecclesiastes chapter 12. I apologize. Ecclesiastes chapter 12, the very end. But I do want to look at or kind of explain maybe four different passages and what they say.

[21:57] They give kind of five different things about man's purpose, what the Bible would say about man's purpose. And the first is in Romans 1.

Like I said, you don't need to turn there. But in Romans chapter 1, verses 18 to 21, it talks about the wrath of God being revealed against mankind.

And to kind of summarize it, I'll give you the Teddy Tash version of it. God has shown mankind himself through creation.

And it says very clearly that there are two things in particular that are clearly seen and understood by everyone. Non-believers, believers, everyone.

It says that these things are clearly seen and they are understood and it is God's eternal power in his deity, his divine nature, that he is God. So whether that's through a sunset, through the beach,

through the mountains, through the human body, whatever it is, through creation, God has revealed himself to be eternally powerful and to be God, to be divine in nature to all mankind and all of mankind has clearly seen and understood this.

[23:11] That's what it says. And it says, his wrath is revealed because men suppress this truth or they hold this truth back and they were not thankful nor did they glorify God but their foolish hearts were darkened and they worshiped the creature rather than the creator.

So I think it's fair to say from looking at that some of the purpose to man's life is to give thanks to and to glorify God. It says that his wrath was revealed because the creatures worshiped creatures instead of creator and did not give thanks and did not glorify God.

So I think it would be fair to say some of our purpose here on earth is to give thanks to and to glorify God. Micah 6 verse 8 we sing that one sometimes it says to do justly to love mercy and to walk humbly with God.

So to walk with God give thanks to God glorify God walk with God. In Ecclesiastes 3 again you don't need to be there but Solomon you know set out to discover what the meaning of life was and he says this in 3 12 and 13 it says I know nothing is better for them which man to rejoice do good and that every man should eat, drink and enjoy the good of his labor.

It is the gift of God. So he would say you know rejoice do some good but then enjoy the gifts from God. So give thanks to God glorify God walk with God enjoy the good gifts from God.

[24:48] And then finally in chapter 12 Ecclesiastes 12 kind of lays it all out on the line. Now you know Ecclesiastes was written by Solomon Solomon was the wisest man to ever walk the earth he was probably the richest man to ever walk the earth and he didn't hold back you know YOLO that would describe Solomon and he sets off on this purpose or this adventure to find the meaning to life and he does everything whether it's drink whether it's women whether it's fun whether it's laughter whether it's houses riches whatever he does it all he does it all and it's funny he agrees with the philosophers he says without God there is no meaning to it it's all vanity vanity of vanity it's chasing after the wind there's no meaning apart from God so he boils it all down he says

I've tried everything there is and this is what he says verse 13 of chapter 12 he says let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter fear God and keep his commandments for this is man's all fear God keep his commandments this is man's all you know Solomon he did it he did it so we don't have to fear God keep his commandments that's that's the conclusion of the whole thing that's the point fear God and keep his commandments so sort of these five things here give thanks to God glorify God walk with God enjoy good gifts from God fear God keep his commandments how do we do these things it's the same thing from Philippians 4 8 you gotta be in the word of God you gotta know what it says if you don't know how to give thanks to God or you don't know why to give thanks to God read this book it'll tell you why you'll read a verse like there's therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus oh thank you God yeah

I should be thankful for that you say well why should I glorify God I don't know read through the Psalms a little bit you'll find some reasons to give glory to God you know well how do I walk with God I don't know why don't you go look back in the Old Testament some of the guys who walk with God guys like David who said you know he was a man after God's own heart Enoch who walked with God read that this book will tell you it's the road map it's the guide enjoy the good gifts from God how do you know what the gifts from God are if you don't read the book Ephesians 2 8 and 9 what does it say it says that you're saved by faith and what's that faith that faith is a gift from God oh thank you Lord you knock out two without one you can have a gift from God and thank the God and then fear God keep his commandments where are his commandments found it's in this book two last little points the first one you know there's that verse that says that teachers will incur a stricter judgment as a teacher

I don't like that verse too much but if you are too busy to read the word of God then you are too busy do you agree on that if you are too busy to read the word of God you are too busy this is the road map this is the guide without it there's no purpose without it there's no truth because as believers we are the only ones that have this book and read it and know it and have the spirit to help us understand it we are obligated for others sake and for our own sake and for the Lord's sake

to be in this book Dave if you want to come on up the last thing that I would say is in this life if we want to do anything and I would have you ask yourself that honestly do I want to do something with my life or do I just want to sort of exist and live and then you die if you want to do anything with your life you got to abide with Jesus

John 15 chapter 5 we covered this in Sunday school a few weeks back but Jesus is speaking he says I am the vine you are the branches he who abides or remains or dwells in me and I with him bears much fruit and get this for without me you can do nothing if you want to do anything with your life if you want to do anything at all for eternity you have to abide with Christ without him you can do nothing he doesn't say you can do a little bit or you can get so far or you can almost make it he says you can do nothing none zero nothing how do you abide in the vine how do you dwell with Jesus it's right here his word is true father god thank you for loving us thank you that you have given your word to us lord man we would be lost without it god we really would we thank you that you sought after each one of us and drew us to yourself lord that word means dragged you dragged us straight up just like drawing water from a well the water has no choice lord you dragged us right out of there lord we thank you for that thank you that you have given us things that are true and lovely and a good report that we can dwell on lord that we can meditate on god I pray that we as a church here would renew our minds that we would not walk in the pattern of this world lord we would find purpose eternal purpose in you and in your word god we just love you so much in

[31:00] Jesus name not know you