

SHOCKING YOUTH MESSAGE STUNS HEARERS — SO SHOCKING AND BIBLICAL THE PREACHER WAS NEVER INVITED BACK

Matthew 7:13-27

Paul Washer

It's a tremendous privilege for me to be here this afternoon with you. Before we begin with any further speaking, I would also like to go to the Lord in prayer. I would ask you to pray. There is so much going on here this afternoon, so much that you don't understand, but I'll tell you where I'm coming from. I'll preach as a dying man to dying men and women and youth. I'll preach as though I will never preach again, and I will tell you things that you will misunderstand. I will tell you things that make you so angry with me, and I'll tell you things that you will deny. And I will tell you things and you will say I have no right to tell you what I'm telling you. But before you come to any conclusion about what is being said here this afternoon, you ask yourself one question.

You see, preaching is a very dangerous thing. It's dangerous for me because the Bible says that false teachers will undergo greater condemnation. If what I tell you today is not true, I'm in a great deal of trouble and have every right to do this with fear and trembling, because I will stand condemned before God. But if what I tell you today is true, then you're the one with cause for fear and trembling, because if I correctly interpret this passage of Scripture that I'm going to give you, it is as though God was speaking through a man. Your problem will not be with me; it will be with God and His Word. So, the only question that has to be decided here this afternoon is—Is this man before us a false prophet? Or is he telling us the truth? And if he is telling us the truth, then nothing else matters except conforming our lives to that truth.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father . . . Father, I am so small and so pitiful, Father, in so many ways. You know, Lord, You know, though dear God, should false fire be the only thing ever placed on Your altar, or could fire come down from Heaven amidst all the noise and the clamor and the activities . . . could fire come down from Heaven and these dead bones live, You know me. In Your sovereignty, I pray and I beg before the throne of God that You would be gracious to us, that You would open up hearts and minds. Lord, we can't wait for them to open theirs; they never will. Open up their hearts and minds and cause them to see biblical truth. Breathe on them. Grant them repentance.

Grant them faith. Bring them into Your Kingdom, Lord, for Your own glory, for the sake of Your own great name, do this thing, Lord. As the brother said, let it be so, Lord, so that no man will take credit for it, so that no man will lay his hand to the ark of God and, if he did, that You would strike him down dead, Lord. Oh, God, move among us, please, because we have no other hope. We have no other hope. These children have no other hope except that You move. Amen.

I'll be teaching from Matthew chapter 7. If you have your Bibles, follow with me. In Matthew chapter 7, verse 13, Jesus said:

Enter through the narrow gate for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Beware of the false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits. Grapes are not gathered from thorn bushes, nor figs from thistles, are they? So every good tree bears good fruit, but every bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor can a bad tree produce good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. So then, you will know them by their fruits. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven will enter.

Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name cast out demons and in your name perform many miracles. Then I will declare to them, I never knew you. Depart from me, you who practice lawlessness. Therefore, everyone who hears these words of mine and acts upon them may be compared to a wise man who builds his house on the rock. And the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and slammed against that house and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded upon the rock.

Everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who builds his house on the sand. The rain fell and the floods came and winds blew and slammed against the house and it fell, and great was its fall.

I stand here today . . . I'm not troubled in my heart about your self-esteem. I'm not troubled in my heart about whether or not you feel good about yourself, whether or not life is turning out like you want it to turn out, or whether or not your checkbook is balanced. There's only one thing that gave me a sleepless night. There's only one thing that troubled me all throughout the

morning, and this is this. Within a hundred years, a great majority of people in this building will possibly be in hell. And many who even profess Jesus Christ as Lord will spend an eternity in hell.

You say, Pastor, how can you say such a thing? I can say such a thing because I don't do my Christian work in America. I spend most of my time preaching in South America, in Africa, and Eastern Europe. And I want you to know that, when you take a look at American Christianity, it is based more upon a godless culture than it is upon the Word of God. And so many people are deceived, and so many youth are deceived, and so many adults are deceived into believing that, because they prayed a prayer one time in their life, they're going to Heaven. And then, when they look around at others who profess to know Christ and see those people also just as worldly as the world, and they compare themselves by themselves, nothing troubles their heart. They think, well, I'm the same as most in my youth group. I watch things I shouldn't watch on television and laugh about the very things that God hates. I wear clothing that is sensual. I talk like the world. I walk like the world. I love the music of the world. I love so much that's in the world, but bless God, I am a Christian. Why am I a Christian? I don't look any different than most of the other people in my church. Why am I a Christian? Because there was a time in my life when I prayed and asked Jesus Christ to come into my heart.

I want you to know that the greatest heresy in the American evangelical and protestant church is that, if you pray and ask Jesus Christ to come into your heart, He will definitely come in. You will not find that in any place in Scripture. You will not find that anywhere in Baptist history until about 50 years ago. What you need to know is that salvation is by faith and faith alone in Jesus Christ. And faith alone in Jesus Christ is preceded and followed by repentance . . . a turning away from sin, a hatred for the things that God hates and a love for the things that God loves, a growing in holiness and a desire not to be like Britney Spears, not to be like the world, and not to be like the great majority of American Christians, but to be like Jesus Christ! [*The audience then erupts in applause*].

I don't know why you're clapping. I'm talking about you. I didn't come here to get amens. I didn't come here to be applauded. I'm talking about you. People so many times come up to me and say, "Oh, I'd love to follow you into Romania"; "I'd love to follow you into the Ukraine"; "I'd love to preach where you preached and planted churches in Peru in the jungle."

And I tell them, "No, you wouldn't."
They say, "Yes, I would."

I say, "No, you wouldn't."

"Why?"

"Because you'd be excommunicated from the church down there." What we need to see . . . I'm not trying to be hard for the sake of being hard. Do you realize how much love it takes to stand before 5,000 people and tell them that American Christianity is almost totally wrong? Do you know what it's going to cost me to never be asked back again to something like this? To be unpopular? Do you know why you do it? You don't do it because you get paid well. You don't do it because men love you. You do it because you love men and because, more than that, you want to honor God.

I want to tell you something. We're going to go into Scripture, and I want you to look at it as it really is. It's not comparing yourself with others who call themselves Christians. Compare yourself to the Scripture. When someone, a young person, comes to a pastor or a youth minister and says, "I'm not sure whether or not I'm saved," the youth minister will usually throw out a cliché: "Well, was there ever a time in your life when you prayed and asked Jesus to come into your heart?"
"Well, yes."

"Were you sincere?"

"Well, I don't know, but I think so."

"Well, you need to tell Satan to stop bothering you. Did you write it in the back of your book . . . the back of your Bible like the evangelist told you when you got saved, write down the date so that any time you doubted you could point him to the Bible?"

What superstition has overcome our denomination? Do you know what the Bible tells Christians to do? Examine yourself. Test yourself in light of Scripture to see if you are in the faith. Test yourself to see if you're a Christian.

Do you realize if I dismissed us right now and told everyone to go knock on every door in this city, do you know what we would find out? Ninety-nine percent of the people, at least, in this city believe themselves to be believers. If you go back to your hometown and knock on every door . . . because I went back to my hometown after I got saved and knocked on every door, and you know what I found out? Everyone in my town is a Christian. Eighty-five percent of them do not go to church, and those who

do go to church are not concerned about holiness. They're not concerned about serving. They're not concerned about being separate from the world.

They're not concerned about the Gospel being preached among the nations. But, bless God, they're saved.

Why are they saved? Because some evangelist who should have spent less time preaching and more time studying his Bible told them they were saved, and he did it so he could brag about how many came forward in his next revival.

I love you, and there are men here who love you. And I want to go into Scripture now, now that I've shocked you into light. I want you to listen to me. Listen to the Word of God and begin to ask yourself some questions. First of all, *Enter through the narrow gate for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it.* There is a narrow gate.

And you know, historically—one of the reasons I'm a Southern Baptist is that the Southern Baptists have always been quick—when other denominations have failed to realize this—the Southern Baptists have always been quick to realize that there is one gate; there is one God; there is one mediator between God and man; and His name is Jesus Christ. It's not multiple choice.

Not every road leads to Rome. As a denomination, we have always told people what Jesus told people: *I am the way, the truth, and the life, and no one comes to the Father except through me.*

So, I praise God for that, that the only way any human being on this earth will ever be saved is through Jesus Christ, and that is all. Because you need to realize the Bible says, *For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*, and you have no idea what that means, that we were born radically depraved and God hating, that we would have never sought God, never come to God. We have rebelled against God, broken every law. It's not just an issue that you have sinned. The issue is you've never done anything but sinned. The Bible says in the prophets that even our greatest works are like filthy rags before God. And because of that, you know what we deserve? The wrath of God. The holy hatred of God.

You say, "Now, wait a minute. God doesn't hate anybody. God is love." No, my friend. You need to understand something. Jesus Christ taught, the prophets taught, the apostles taught this—that apart from the grace of God revealed in Jesus Christ our Lord, the only thing left for you is the wrath, the fierce anger of God because of your rebellion and your sin.

When I speak in universities, they're always quick to point out, "No, God cannot hate because God is love." And I tell you God must hate because God is love. You see, I love children; therefore, I hate abortion. If I love that which is holy, I must hate that which is unholy. God is a holy God. That's something that the Americans have forgotten. Many of the things that you love to do, God hates. Did you know that?

Pray for revival. You're going to have a youth meeting; you want God to move, but before you go there you watch programs on television that God absolutely despises. And then you wonder why the Holy Spirit hasn't fallen on a place and why you have to create false fire and false excitement. Because God's not in it. God is a holy God and the only way you and I could ever be reconciled to a holy God is through the death of God's own Son when He hung on that tree.

Now listen to me, if you're saved here tonight, you're not saved because the Romans and Jews rejected Jesus. You're not saved because they put a crown of thorns on His head. You're not saved because they ran a spear through His side, and you're not saved even because they nailed Him to a cross. Do you know why you're saved if you are saved? Because when Jesus Christ was hanging on that cross, He bore your sin. The sin of God's people and all the fierce wrath of God that should fall upon you fell upon His only begotten Son. Someone had to pay that price. Someone had to die. It was God the Father who crushed His only begotten Son. According to Isaiah 53, it says, *It pleased Yahweh to crush Him.*

People say the cross is a sign of how much man is worth. That's not true. The cross is a sign of how depraved we really are, that it took the death of God's own Son. The only thing that could save a people like us was the death of God's own Son under the wrath of His own Father paying the price, rising again from the dead. Powerful to say, this is the Gospel of Jesus. Now what are you called upon to do? You say you go through the narrow gate. How do you do that? Jesus said, *The time is fulfilled. The Kingdom of God is at hand.* What must you do? In Mark, He tells us . . . repent and believe the Gospel.

You say, "Brother Paul, I got saved by praying and asking Jesus Christ into my heart." And I'm sure you did, but you weren't saved by a magic formula or some words you repeated after someone else. You were saved because you repented of your sins and you believed, and not only did you do that in the past, you continued to do it even until now, because when Jesus . . . a proper

translation of that verse He gave is this: *The Kingdom of God is come. The time is fulfilled. Now, spend the rest of your lives repenting of your sins and believing in Me.*

Conversion is not like a flu shot. “Oh, I did that. I repented. I believed.” The question is my friend—are you continuing to repent of sin? Are you continuing to believe? Because He who began a good work in you will finish it. He will finish it.

Now, we as Southern Baptists preach that you’re supposed to go through that one and only gate which is Jesus Christ. But we as Southern Baptists have forgotten something. And I want youth ministers and pastors and everyone to listen to me, parents, we have forgotten a very important teaching in the Gospel. It says that, not only the gate is narrow, it says the path is narrow. What we basically do is lead someone to Christ, lead someone in a prayer and then they spend the rest of their life living just like the world, and if you deny me on this, I can bring the statistics to prove you wrong. Gallup poll, Barnard polls, every kind of poll you can possibly look at, when it questions the morality of the church in America against the morality of those who claim to be lost in America, the polls find no difference. Now that is statistics. It has nothing to do with religious interpretation. Those are statistics.

Book after book is being churned out by theologian and philosopher and sociologist alike. What has happened to the church? We find out that abortion in the church is just as prevalent as outside in the world. We find that divorce is just as prevalent. We find that immorality . . . you know as well as I do, there are youth here right now who are practicing immorality and yet worshiping God in the same breath. You know there are youth here that are doing drugs and yet coming to youth group. You know, watching and doing things that are not appropriate for a Christian, and yet they’re coming to the youth group, believing themselves satisfied, believing themselves saved, and no one is saying anything except this: They’re carnal Christians. They’re really Christians; they’re just carnal. That was a doctrine that started in a Baptist seminary, that is not a Southern Baptist seminary, several decades ago. It is not biblical and it is not historical.

My dear friend, there is no such thing as a carnal Christian.

You say, “Now, wait a minute, Brother Paul. First Corinthians chapter 3, *Are ye not carnal*. Paul said that.”

No, that’s not what Paul said. You need to read the whole book to find out what he meant. You see, one of our problems, youth, listen to me . . . most of our Christianity is based on clichés that we read on the back of Christian tee shirts. Most of our Christianity comes from songwriters and not the Bible. Most of what we believe is dictated to us through our culture and not by the Bible.

The Bible never teaches that a person can be a genuine Christian and live in continuous carnality and wickedness and sin all the days of their life. But the Bible teaches that the genuine Christian has been given a new nature. The genuine Christian has a Father who loves them and disciplines them and watches over them and cares for them.

My heart is breaking because you know as well as I do, young people, let’s not be hypocrites about it. Let’s not hide it. There are so many. You know them. You might be one of them, or you at least know that they’re in your youth group. They come to youth group. They do all this stuff, but in their heart, they’re as wicked as wicked can be. There is no difference. There is no light. Everything that the world does, they do, and it’s appropriate; it’s okay. My friend, that’s not Christianity. They’re not in danger of losing their reward. They’re in danger of hell. They know not God.

What don’t we teach? When was the last time you heard someone say there’s not only a narrow gate into Heaven but a narrow way? Jesus indicates that one of the principal signs of being a genuine Christian is that you walk in the narrow way. Do you know what the sign for being a genuine Christian in America is? You prayed a prayer one time. Isn’t that amazing? What are you asked if you doubt your salvation? Did you pray a prayer one time? What does Scripture teach? Examine yourselves. Test yourselves in the light of Scripture to see if you’re in the path, because a Christian will be different.

Now, am I saying that a Christian is without sin? No, because, in First John, we learn that Christians do sin, and if any man does not acknowledge his sin, he knows not God. He’s not walking in the light? So what is the difference? What am I really getting at? What I am getting at is this. If you are genuinely a born-again Christian, a child of God, you will walk in the way of righteousness as a style of life. And if you step off that path of righteousness, the Father will come for you. He will discipline you. He will put you back on that path. But if you profess to have gone through the narrow gate, but yet you live in the broad way, just like all the other people in your high school, just like all the other people who are carnal and wicked, the Bible wants you to know that you should be terribly, terribly afraid because you know not God.

I fear men who have spent most of their life telling other men that they are saved. I fear you if you’ve done that. You don’t tell men they are saved; you tell men how to be saved. God tells them they are saved. What we have forgotten to believe is that

salvation is a supernatural work of God, and those who have genuinely been converted, regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit is going to be a new creature. The Bible says, *If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature*. So we find out here in Scripture that there is a narrow gate and a narrow way.

We go into verse 15. *Beware of false prophets who come to you in sheep's clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits*. One of the things you need to realize is this—something a wise man told me a long time ago. He said, “Paul, your best friend is the one who tells you the most truth.” In America, we have become so thin-skinned that no one can rebuke us. No one can tell us we are wrong. And ministers and leaders alike have bought into this lie. We do not want to offend. We want to be seeker friendly. What you need to realize is there is only one seeker and His name is God, and if you want to be friendly to someone in your church, you need to be friendly to God. And you need to be more concerned for the glory of God than you are for the attitudes of men. But another thing you need to realize is the person who loves you the most will tell you the most truth.

One of the greatest distinguishing marks of a false prophet is that he will always tell you what you want to hear. He will never rain on your parade. He will get you clapping. He will get you jumping. He will make you dizzy. He will keep you entertained, and he will present a Christianity to you that will make your church look like a Six Flags over Jesus and keep you so entertained you are never addressed with great issues such as these. Is God working in my life? Am I growing in holiness? Have I truly been born again?

Listen to me. If everyone in this town believes themselves saved, and we know that's not true by Scripture because the Bible says that few will enter in, how do you know that you're saved? How do you truly know that you are saved? Because someone told you? Because you prayed a prayer? Because you believed? Well, let me ask you a question. How do you know you believed? Because everybody says they believe. How do you know you're not like them? Do you know how the Bible teaches you that you know you are saved? Do you know how Baptist theology, up until about 50 years ago, would have told you how you know you have been saved? You know you have been saved because your life is in the process of being changed, and your style of life is one of walking in the paths of God's truth.

And when you step off those paths in disobedience, as we all do, God comes for you and puts you back on the path. One of the greatest evidences that you have truly been born again is that God will not let you talk as your flesh might want to talk. God will not let you dress as the sensual world and the sensual church allows you to dress. God will not allow you to act like the world, smell like the world, speak like the world, listen to the things that the world listens to. God will make a difference in your life.

He says here, as we go on, verse 16: *You will know them by their fruits*. How will you know a false prophet? In the wider application here and all of Scripture, how will you know if someone is a genuine Christian? By their fruit. By their fruit, my dear friend. Look at your life. Look at the way you walk. Look at the way you talk. Look at the passions of your heart. Is Jesus in there somewhere? Or is He just some accessory that you add on to your life? Is He just something that you do on Wednesday or Sunday? Is He something that you give a mental assent to? Is He an accessory or is He the very center of your life? And what is the fruit that you're bearing? Do you look like the world? Act like the world? Do you have and experience the same joys that the world experiences? Can you love sin and relish it? Can you love rebellion and relish it? Then you know not God. You will know them by their fruit. God has the power to change them.

Let's imagine for a moment Jesus teaching this passage, and you're sitting out there listening. And He looks at you. He says, “Thistles, thistles. Do you find thistles on fig trees?”

And you respond, “Of course not, Jesus. I mean, you're not an agriculturalist; you're not a farmer. I mean, you're a carpenter. But everybody knows, Jesus, you don't find thorns on fig trees.”

“Well, then, let me ask you another question. Do you find figs—good fruit—on thorn trees?”

“Why, no, Jesus. That's absolutely ludicrous. I mean, you're never gonna find thorns on a fig tree, and you're not gonna find figs on a thorn tree, Jesus. To say that could be possible—anyone who tells you that, Jesus, you can mark it down . . . they're either crazy or they're a liar.”

And then Jesus responds to you. “Well then, those who call themselves my disciples and bear bad fruit, would not it be the same to say that they were either lying or out of their mind to make such a statement?”

Let me take it a little further. Let's imagine that I show up late and I run up here on the platform, and all the leaders are angry with me and say, “Brother Paul, don't you appreciate the fact you're given an opportunity to speak here and you come late?”

And I'd say, "Brothers, you have to forgive me."

"Well, why?"

"Well, I was out here on the highway, and I was driving and I had a flat tire and I got out to change the tire, and when I was changing the tire, the lug nut fell off, and I wasn't paying attention that I was on the highway and I ran out and I grabbed the lug nut, and as soon as I picked it up in the middle of the highway, I stood up and there was a 30-ton logging truck going 120 miles an hour about ten yards in front of me, and it ran me over and that's why I'm late." Now, there would only be two . . . I know no one studies logic anymore, but there would only be two logical conclusions. One, I'm a liar or, two, I'm a madman. You would say, "Brother Paul, it's absolutely absurd. It is impossible, Brother Paul, to have an encounter with something as large as a logging truck and not be changed."

And then my question would be to you—What is larger? A logging truck or God? How is it that so many people today profess to have had an encounter with Jesus Christ, and, yet, they are not permanently changed? Let me give you a few things to think about. You know I'm telling you the truth. How many times do you go and rededicate your life over and over and over again? How many times do youth groups go to things like this and get fired up and go back to the church, and it lasts about a week and a half? And yet, "Oh, it was a great move of God." No, it wasn't. If it doesn't last, it wasn't a great move of God. It was emotion. It was so many things, but it wasn't a great move of God. Has God worked in your life? Is God working in your life? *You will know them by their fruit. You will know them by their fruit.*

Now, we go on, verse 19: *Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire so you will know them by their fruit.* Look at this. You need to understand something about Hebrew literature. When you and I want to emphasize something, do you know what we do? We raise our voice. If we're writing, we put it in bold letters, or we capitalize it. But to a Jew, it's different. When he wants to emphasize something, he repeats it and he repeats it.

That's why you find Hebrew parallelisms in the Book of Proverbs. *The wicked shall not live in the land. The wicked shall be destroyed.* He's saying the same thing, just in a different way to give greater emphasis. That's what Jesus is doing over and over again here. *You will know them by their fruit. You will know them by their fruit. You will know them by the path that they walk in. You will know them by their fruit. You will know them by their fruit.* And He says, *Anyone who does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.* What is He talking about? My dear friend, He is talking about the judgment of Almighty God that will one day fall upon the world, that will one day fall possibly upon you.

Oh dear friend, I cannot look into your heart. I am so easily deceived by my own heart, but there is One who is not deceived. There is One who is not deceived, and He is not deceived by a contemporary Christian culture. He knows. *You will know them by their fruit.*

And He goes on and He says this, verse 21: *Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my father who is in heaven will enter.* Do you know what your profession of faith in Jesus Christ is worth? Absolutely nothing. Yes. Did you read that passage? Study it. *Not everyone who comes to me and says, Lord, Lord . . . not everyone who professes, Lord, Lord, will enter into the kingdom of heaven.* There are many people who are going to profess, "Lord, Lord," but they are not going to enter into the kingdom of heaven. My dear precious child, are you one of them? "Lord, Lord."

Now, again, let's go back to Hebrew literature. He said, *Lord, Lord.* He didn't say, *Lord.* What does that mean? This fellow who is making this profession, he is not someone who just all of a sudden decided, "It's judgment and I better profess Him to be Lord." This is a person who emphatically declares to other people that Jesus Christ is Lord. He walks around saying, "Lord." He dances up in front while the musicians are playing, saying, "Lord." He sings the songs, "Lord." But Jesus said to him, *Depart from me. I never knew you.*

Do you know, Billy Graham is one of the kindest, lovingest men; yet, Billy Graham has said he believed that a great majority of people who attend Bible-believing churches are lost. He said that he would be happy if even five percent of all the people who made professions of faith in his campaigns are even saved.

When I'm in Nigeria . . . I was there last year visiting a mother whose son was in our church and was martyred by the Muslims. In Northern Nigeria, when someone professes faith in Jesus Christ, you pretty much know they can die because of that profession. But in America, oh, consider the cost. Think. Examine your life in light of Scripture. Do you know the Lord? Do you know the Lord? Because not everyone who says to him, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of Heaven, but what does it say here? Look

what it says. *Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.*

What is the sign that someone has become a genuine Christian? I wish that we would start teaching this again. What happened to our theology? What happened to our doctrine? What happened to our teaching? It went right out the window. No one wants to study doctrine anymore. They just want to listen to songs and read the back of Christian tee shirts. What happened to truth? Truth tells you this. The evidence—the way that you can have assurance that you are genuinely a born-again Christian—is that you do, as a style of life, the will of the Father.

You say, “Oh, you’re talking about works.” No, I’m not. I’m talking about evidence of faith, and it goes like this. Your profession of faith is no proof that you’re born again because everybody in this whole country professes faith in Jesus Christ. Barnard tells us that 65 to 70 percent of all Americans are saved, born-again Christians. The most Godless country on the face of the earth. Kill 4,000 babies a day but, bless God, 70 percent of us are born again. How do you know that the faith you have is not false? A style of life that is concerned about doing the will of the Father, that practices the will of the Father, and when you disobey the will of the Father, the Holy Spirit comes and reprimands you either personally through the written Word of God or through a brother or sister in Christ, and God puts you back on the path again. If you’re a genuine Christian, you cannot escape Him.

Let me give you an example. If I was your pastor and you were, let’s say, 14 years old and I came back from preaching at one o’clock in the morning and I saw you standing out there in a park or on a corner with a bunch of hoodlums, doing things you shouldn’t be doing and you’re a member of our church, I would tell you, “Get in the car.” I would take you home to your father. I wouldn’t be mad at you. I’d be mad at your father. I would tell him, “Sir, you are a derelict father that you would allow your child to be out in such circumstances.”

I want you to know something. God is not a derelict father. If you can play around in sin, if you can love the world and love the things of the world, if you can always be involved in the world and doing things of the world, if your heroes are worldly people, if you want to look like them and act like them, if you practice the same things they practice, oh my dear friend, listen to my voice. There’s a good chance you know not God, and you do not belong to him.

Now, we bring this to a close, verse 22: *Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles. Then I will declare to them, I never knew you.*

You say the most important thing on the face of the earth is to know Jesus Christ. That is not true. The most important thing on the face of the earth is that Jesus Christ knows you. I’m not going to get into the White House tomorrow because I walk up to the gate and tell everybody I know George Bush, but they will let me in if George Bush comes out and says, “I know Paul Washer.”

You can profess to know Jesus, but my question for you . . . do you know Jesus? Does Jesus know you? And look how he describes the lost man here. He said, *Depart from me you who practice lawlessness.* In Greek, *anomia*—a negative particle, a, “not”; word *nomos*, “law”—“no law.” And this is what it means. Let me give you an accurate translation of this. *Depart from me—Listen to me, if I could come out there and hug you while I was telling you this, I would. Listen to me. He says, Depart from me those of you who claim to be my disciples who confessed me as Lord and, yet, you live as though I never gave you a law to obey.*

I just described a great majority of North American Christianity. If anyone starts talking about law, if anyone starts talking about Biblical principles on what we’re supposed to do and not supposed to do, how we’re to live and not supposed to live, everyone starts screaming, “Legalist.” But Jesus said, *Depart from me those of you who live—you called me Lord, but you lived as though I had never given a law.*

In American Christianity today, pass through the gate. Praise God. Live like the rest of the world and it’s okay. You’re just carnal. Maybe one day you’ll come back. Do you know what happens because of our bad evangelism? We have gazillions of children saved in vacation Bible school, and when they hit 15 years old, they enter into the world and live like demons, a great majority of them. And then when they’re around 30, they come back and rededicate their life. Maybe they just got saved. Because, folks, it’s more than just telling someone you’re saved because you acknowledged that Jesus is Lord. Satan acknowledges that Jesus is Lord. Is your life in a process of change?

And then He drops down and He talks about two people—two foundations. Do you know what this passage in contemporary . . . See it’s important to study theology and it’s important to study history. The contemporary interpretation of this passage about the rock and the sand is basically like this. If you’re a Christian, you need to build your life upon the rock because, if you build your life upon the sand, you’ll be an unhappy Christian and your life won’t go right. That is not what Jesus is teaching and history backs me up on it. It was hardly ever interpreted that way.

Do you know what the interpretation is? It goes like this.

There are two ways. There's a narrow way and a broad way. Which one are you on? There are two types of trees. There is a good tree that bears good fruit, and it's going to Heaven. There's a bad tree and you know it's bad because it bears bad fruit, and it's going to hell. It's going to be cut down and thrown into the fire. There are those who profess Jesus is Lord and they do the will of the Father who is in heaven, and there are those who profess Jesus Christ is Lord and they do not do the will of the Father who is in heaven, and they go to hell—not because of a lack of works, but because of a lack of faith demonstrated by the fact that they had no works.

And then he goes on. He says, not two Christians building their house on two different foundations. No. This is a saved man and a lost man. The lost man hears the Word of God preached but he lays no foundation. You cannot see in any way in his life how the Word of God is forming and building and sustaining his life. His life is not—how many people in the Southern Baptist Convention, regardless of all our numbers, regardless of everything we say, if we were to simply take this passage and compare the people to this passage and say—Are you building your marriage on the Word of God? Are you raising your children on the Word of God? Are you doing your finances on the Word of God? Are you living, separating yourself from the things of this world based upon the Word of God? How many would be able to answer positively?

No, none of that. “I profess Jesus. He's my Savior. My Sunday school teacher told me so.” Oh. I know, like Leonard Ravenhill, an acquaintance of mine before he passed on, used to say, “I preach in a lot of Baptist churches once.” I preach in a lot of places like this once. I could have got up here today with a vocabulary that would have astounded you and preached you things that would have lifted you up and floated you around this room. I could have told you stories that would have made you laugh and stories about dogs and grandmas that would have made you cry, but I love you too much for that. I know . . . I know, because the Word of God is true, that there are people who believe themselves to be saved and they are no more saved. They're not.

I know that there are some of you who look around and you think, “Well, I'm saved. I mean, look, I look like everybody else in my youth group.” What makes you think your youth group is saved? “Well, I'm like my parents”; or, “I'm like the adults in my church or the deacon or the pastor.” What does that matter? You won't be judged by them on the day of His coming. My question for you, beloved, my question for you, little child—I mean, you could be my children, and I pray someday when my little boy grows that there will be a preacher who will stand before him and say, “Enough of this!”

Let's get down. What does the Word of God say? How does your life stand in front of that blazing fire which is the holiness of God on that final day? Beloved, precious little girl, beloved, precious young man, on that final day will your confession hold true? Are you saved? And I'm not talking about, “Well, I think I'm saved.” You know, *there's a way that seems right unto a man, but it leads unto death.*

“Well, I feel in my heart of my hearts that I'm saved.” Well, let me ask you a question. Did you ever read that *the heart is deceitfully wicked; who can know it?* Shouldn't you go to the testimony of Scripture?

“Well, I know I'm saved because my mom, my dad, my pastor, everybody else told me I was saved.” Well, I'm telling you this. What does the Word of God tell you?

We talk so much about being radical Christians. Radical Christians are not people who jump at concerts. Radical Christians are not people who wear Christian tee shirts. Radical Christians are those who bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit. Radical Christians are those who reverence and honor their parents even when they feel like their parents are wrong. Radical Christians are those who do not—now listen to me. This is going to make you mad, and I'm talking to boys and girls. Radical Christians are those who do not dress sensually in order to show off their bodies. If your clothing is a frame for your face, God is pleased with your clothing. If your clothing is a frame for your body, it's sensual and God hates what you're doing. Everybody wants to talk about a prophet, but no one wants to listen to one.

I'm talking about Christianity. I have spent my life in jungles. I have spent my life freezing in the Andes Mountains. I have seen people die. A little boy, Andrew Myman [phonetic], the Muslims shot him five times through the stomach and left him on a sidewalk simply because he cried out, “I am so afraid but I cannot deny Jesus Christ. Please don't kill me, but I will not deny Him.” And he died in a pool of blood. And you talk about being a radical Christian because you wear a tee shirt, because you go to a conference. I'm talking about holiness. I'm talking about Godliness.

I wish—you know what a move of God would be in this place? If all of you came under conviction, if I myself came under conviction of the Holy Spirit, we fell down on our faces and wept because we watch the things that God hates, because we wear the things that God hates, because we act like the world, look like the world, smell like the world, because we do the very things,

and we know not that we do these things, because we do not know the Word of God. Because, even though we claim as a denomination that the Scripture is the infallible Word of God, basically all we get is illustrations, stories, and quaint little novels. Oh, that God will glow on this place, that we would turn away from our sin, that we would renounce the things that are displeasing to God, and, then, that we would run to Him and we would relish Him and we would love Him.

Oh, that God would raise up missionaries. I don't wish the same things your parents want for you. They want for you security and insurance and nice homes. They want for you cars and respect. I want for you the same thing I want for my son, that one day he takes a banner, the banner of Jesus Christ, and he places it on a hill where no one has ever placed a banner before, and he cries out, "Jesus Christ is Lord," even if it costs my son his life. Oh, when he's 18 years old, if he says to me the same thing I said when I was a young man, "I'm going into the mountains. I'm going into the jungle." And they said, "You can't go there. You're insane. It's a war. You're gonna die." I'm going. When that little boy puts on that backpack, I'm going to pray over him and say, "Go! God be with you, and if you die, my son, I'll see you over there and I'll honor your death."

Oh, God, let's pray, let's pray.

Oh, God, I don't care about reputation. I don't care what men think. I want You to be honored. I want these young people to be saved. I want those that are saved to stop looking around at a cultural Christianity that You hate and will spew out of Your mouth, and that they will look at the Word of God and say, "I will follow Jesus."

Oh, God, I pray for youth ministers and pastors and I pray that You'd fill them with the spirit of wisdom and love and boldness and discernment. And dear God, whatever the cost, I pray that you will raise up missionaries. I can't help but look at these kids and think of my own little boy. Oh, God, that You would save Ian and that You would raise him up and send him into the worst part of the battle. Oh, dear God, raise up missionaries here. Raise up missionaries. Raise up preachers and pastors and reachers and evangelists that know the Word of God. Oh, God, work in this place, please work in this place, dear God. Please. Please. Please. Please.

Now with every head bowed, is there anyone here tonight that would say, "Brother Paul, I have been living a lie. I claim to be a Christian but I love the world, and I look like it and smell like it and I hate myself for it, and, Brother Paul, I am so tired of this Christianity that I'm living. I'm just sick of it. I'm just sick of it. I want to be saved. I want to be saved." I just want you to stand up. "Brother Paul, I want to be saved." Amen. Is there anyone else? Amen. Amen. In a moment, we're going to have an invitation. Those of you who stood up—I'm going to come down here and I want you to meet with me. I want to talk to you. Now, you may be seated, thank you.

Now, I want to talk to those of you who claim to be Christians. Does your life honor Jesus Christ? Are you looking in His Word to find out how you're supposed to live? I pray with all my heart, the only thing that's going to save the church in America, there's only two possibilities. One is a total reformation in our preaching and our study of the Word of God, and the other is fierce, horrifying persecution. That's the only thing that's going to save the church in America. Oh, I pray, I pray that you would return to the Word. I pray—listen to me, young person. You need to know. You need to say, "Okay, how am I supposed to live before my parents?" Go into the Word, find out, obey it. "How am I supposed to dress?" Go into the Word, find out, obey it. "How am I supposed to talk?" "What am I supposed to listen to?" Bring every thought, word, and deed into subjection to Jesus Christ.

Now, I'm not going to ask you to stand because I am so tired of people coming forward and making those commitments, and those commitments last them two minutes. I'm not here so I can write up in my magazine that a gazillion of you came forward. I want you to go home and I want you to live for Jesus Christ with all your heart. But if you need counseling, you say, "Brother Paul, I want to—I want to live for Jesus Christ. I don't know how. I don't know how." In a minute, we're going to give an invitation, and I do want you to come forward, not to make a commitment. You want to make a commitment, you make that commitment right where you're seated. If you need to tell somebody, you go tell your pastor. You go tell your youth minister, and you know what, we'll know if that commitment lasts. You know how? Because it will last, we'll know if it's from God.

Let me tell you something. For everyone who's here right now, I want to tell you something. If you made a decision to follow Jesus Christ, if you made a decision to get saved in these last two days, I want to tell you something. If it was genuine, it will last. If after a few weeks you go right back into the world, live like the world, act like the world, I want you to know something, you didn't get anything here this weekend. You got emotion, that's about it. If you really got something from the Lord, I want you to know something, it will last. And even if you try to run away from it, you won't be able to do it. You won't be able to do it. Oh, I love you so much. I love you so much.

I would ask that we all stand. If you need counseling about a decision that you have made but it's not clear, I want you to come forward. And I'm going to come right down here. Those of you who stood up—there were many of you over there who say, "I

need to know Jesus Christ,” I want to come down here right now and I want to meet with you, and I want to go back over here with you and some other counselors and I want to talk to you. And I want to tell you something, not a five-minute deal, not a ten-minute deal. If you need to talk all night, we will stay. That is the attitude of every counselor in this place. We will stay all night if necessary, all night. God love you. God love you. Let me pray for you.

Dear God, please, Lord, there has been so much movement. Last night, Lord, I don't know how much of it was real, and I know that I saw people last night weeping. I saw people trying to make commitments, and I believe that there was a great deal of what happened last night because of You. I saw this morning a young man preach, Father, give his testimony, and I saw real working of the Holy Spirit. I don't know how much of all the decisions were real, but there was real things going on. I pray right now, Father, I don't know how much will be real. Only time and eternity will show us that. But, oh, dear God, please, please, work, in Jesus' name. Amen.

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