

Ask Jeff

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sermonaudio.com

Preached On: Wednesday, July 5, 2023

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Good evening. It is 6:30 central standard time here in the big O otherwise known as Opelika, Alabama and it is my privilege to welcome you to our midweek Wednesday night large group adult Bible study. For those that are listening on 97.7 FM, you're a few days delayed, but for everybody else we are in real time online here in person and tonight our entire Bible study, if this is new for you, if you're with us for the very first time either in person or online, our entire Bible study is going to every subject matter everything is going to be guided and driven by you.

Now before we get to the questions let me go ahead and kind of somewhat communicate not only how we do it here tonight on Wednesday night but how we do it each and every single day. We answer Bible questions, we point questions and concerns to the scriptures tonight, however each and every day we have a YouTube channel where we have a quote question of the day. If you have a question, you can submit to both avenues, both the daily and the Wednesday night. Our daily question typically lasts two to three minutes in length. It's very short, very sweet, kind of get to the point. Not like Wednesday nights, which a question on Wednesday night can last two minutes, or it can last 60. It just depends on how y'all follow up and do all that. But if you want to be a part of the YouTube channel, two avenues, both web based, the church website, fbcopelika.com/askjeff or askjeff.net. Either one of those websites will take you to the daily question box. Once it's submitted there, we'll put it online each and every day. Wednesday nights here live tonight. The way that we participate is either by texting or by raising our hand. Text messaging in house, out of house, 231, well, 334-231-2313. You can text from the front row, back row or another continent, it does not matter, everything will be in real time. It goes to the computer to my left, your right, eventually ends up on this screen.

Now here's the beautiful thing about text messaging: you are completely anonymous. Your number doesn't show up. Your name doesn't show up. We don't know who you are, where you are. You can be right here in this room and you can have your phone under the table texting and you are completely anonymous. Now, some of you don't care if you're anonymous or not. You just want to put your hand in the air such as last week. I don't know if the food this week will affect you as it did last week, but all of a sudden your hands just went shooting in the air. So, if your hand goes in the air in house, you have the floor, you have the opportunity to take the conversation any direction you would so

desire, however, you lose your anonymity in the room, but your image or your voice will not be seen nor will be heard online or on the radio. So you are anonymous to the world out there, but not in here, but we're all friends, so it doesn't matter. That is how it works here on Wednesday night. Anything we talk about is quote up to you.

So without further ado, I will... Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

OK. There you go, so the question is what exactly does it mean when the Bible says that Jesus is our intercessor? The book of Hebrews chapter 7 and verse 10 talks about that he ever liveth to make intercession, he intercedes on our behalf. Obviously, strict definition, one who intercedes is one who is the in-between, one who stands in the middle thereof. But the question you ask, sir, if I understand correctly, is exactly how does that interceding take place? Does he, quote unquote, remind the devil of what he has done on behalf of us, does he remind God? How does... So again all kinds of passages in the New Testament talk about that he is our intercessor, however to look at it somewhat of a more visual let's go back into the Old Testament to the book of Zechariah. That's right, Zechariah chapter 3 the second to the last book of your Old Testament. Now when we turn to Zechariah it is actually going to be speaking of an individual whose description here is the quote angel of the Lord. Now, if you've been a part of our Wednesday night Bible studies before, this would be classified, biblically speaking, as what we call a Christophany. A Christophany is a passage in the Old Testament that looks and sounds very much like the person and the activity of Jesus Christ, however, we know that he has not come in the flesh as of yet, but because Jesus Christ is God and there's never been a time that he has not been, he is always active. For example, John 1, Colossians 1 says that he spoke into creation, so he has always been, however, he has the right to reveal himself in the physical realm pre-incarnation, we call it Christophany.

Now, that being said, Zechariah chapter 3 it says,

1 And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. 2 And the LORD said unto Satan, The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan; even the LORD that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? 3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. 4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. 5 And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the LORD stood by. 6 And the angel of the LORD protested unto Joshua, saying, 7 Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.

Now the reason, sir, I took us to that passage, is I think the answer to the question is yes, you see him resisting Satan, but you also see him enacting that which only God can do, cleaning him, giving him his clean garment. So when we talk about Jesus as an intercessor, he resists or rebukes Satan, at the same time, if I can use this word, confirming who we are in relationship to God. And the kind of the feel that we get in Zechariah 3 and in other passages, for example in the book of Jude verse 24 it says, "Unto him who is able to keep us from falling and to present us as faultless," the best way that I think in the flesh we can visualize this is imagine a courtroom scene, okay? And you've got one who is accusing us of our ill, accusing us of our wrongdoing, accusing us, just like Joshua, as being filthy, right? And then the judge has the right to bring down the gavel on us, however, the intercessor steps in and basically claims that the price has been paid for our freedom and our forgiveness, and the accusation is thus null and void. And so that's kind of the visual that we get as an intercessor, that Jesus Christ fills.

Does that help out a little bit? We're good? Anybody else feeling feisty tonight before we go to the screen? Why not, sir? Go for it.

[unintelligible]

Yes, sir. Good old 2 Chronicles. You know, we don't go there a whole lot on Wednesday night. 2 Chronicles chapter 18. Is this Asa? Nope. Jehoshaphat. 18:31. Ah, it says, "And it came to pass, when the captains of the chariots saw Jehoshaphat, that they said, It is the king of Israel. Therefore they compassed about him to fight: but Jehoshaphat cried out, and the LORD helped him; and God moved them to depart from him." A very practical application to intercession, the defending of and yet the accusing at the same time, respective of the parties that are there. And you see the Lord interact on humanity's behalf a whole lot of times but in the Zechariah passage, you literally see Satan bringing a charge, much like the book of Job. Now remember in the book of Job, you know, Satan basically accused to God that Job only worshiped him because he fared well and had good tidings in life, but what did God do? God rebuked Satan and he defended Job. So again, kind of all those pictures are all picturesque, so to speak, of intercession on our behalf.

Now here's a beautiful thing, in the book of Hebrews it says, "He ever liveth to make intercession," meaning there is at no point in our lives where it ceases, he is always doing so on our behalf. Which begs an interesting question and I don't have the answer to this and nor do you. How many times has the enemy, Satan, made an accusation about you toward God? I don't know. But do you realize the more he has done so is actually a compliment to you? Something to think about, right? Are we living a life that would cause the enemy to accuse us before God? That's a great question because he would only accuse us like we see in Job and like we see with Joshua. Yes, we are filthy, we get that, but he's accusing him because he doesn't want Joshua in the case of Zechariah 3, Job obviously in that case, he doesn't want us to understand who we are in Christ, who we are in that relationship, because if he can get us to see us in a different light than we really are, then we will never live the life we were designed to live. If that makes sense.

So, anybody else before we go to the screen? We're good. It says, "If there is one, quote, Antichrist, why does it describe a beast of the sea and a beast of the land? Also, can you explain the dragon that is with the beast?"

Okay, let's just raise our hands again, if we could. No, no problem. Go to Revelation chapter 13. Revelation [fanfare] there we go. It only took 10 minutes tonight.

Now, in the book of Revelation chapter 13, we're only gonna read a few verses for the sake of context and for the sake of time, but essentially what we know as Revelation 13 is the most lengthy passage we have in scripture regarding this famous character known as the Antichrist. Now, per the question, the term Antichrist, as you well know, is not used in the book of Revelation, the term, the beast, is. Beginning of verse 1 it says,

1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. 2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Fast forward to verse 11.

11 And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth [notice per the question]; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. 12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

So what you actually see in Revelation chapter 13, I understand it's a chapter regarding whom we collectively call the Antichrist, but you actually see three personas. You see the first beast, you see the second beast, and you see the, quote, dragon. What we would commonly refer to as the Antichrist figure is that first beast, okay? The second beast that causes all to worship him and his image, there are other passages in the Bible that refer to him as, quote, the false prophet. And then you have the dragon, who is the one who chapter 12, verse 9, says is Satan himself, is the one who's behind the scenes actually making everything to happen.

Now, you and I both know that Satan has never had an original thought in his life. Everything he does, everything he does is a cheap imitation of what God has already done and already established, correct? So, we know that in scripture, alright, "Hear, O Israel, the LORD your God is one God," however, we see Father, we see Son, we see Holy Spirit, we refer to that as the Trinity, correct? Alright? Now, would it shock you at all, please note gift of sarcasm, that whom we know as Satan exercises himself in a trinitarian form? There is the dragon, the beast, and the second beast, or the false prophet. Now, there are some dramatic differences, okay? There is not one person of the trinity

that gives another person life. At the same time, we know that the Trinity collective and individually can be all places at all times without question, yet whom we know as Satan and his entities, they are limited by time and space. So dramatic differences, but a cheap imitation thereof. Oftentimes we refer to chapter 13 as what we call the satanic trinity and so we have the dragon, we have the beast and the false prophet which is referred to as the second beast here in chapter 13, all working collectively but you will see that it is that first beast, that famous Antichrist figure, that is the physical presence of the reality behind. So that is kind of those three entities all wrapped up into one, all in one chapter. We just collectively like to easily say this is a chapter on the Antichrist because it is that first beast that the world responds to and that the world interacts with in spite of all that is happening.

Hopefully that makes it a little bit clearer. Yes, sir?

[unintelligible]

Ah, great question. If Satan is a cheap imitation, those were my words, you were just repeating mine, do we have an idea of what the satanic Holy Spirit would be like? So, back to where I kind of picked off there in verse 12, if we weren't...man, I even, I'm gonna draw it out, but I feel guilty drawing it out, okay? Please forgive me for doing this, okay? So, there's a classic diagram that we use to describe the Trinity, okay? This classic diagram, I'm gonna put it up here real quick. Whoops, I need to, I write too fast here. All right, so, that God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Father's not the Son, the Son's not the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit is not God, but they are individually and yet collectively God. That's just a classic diagram that we've used throughout time to somewhat explain a very unexplainable concept, okay? Now, to parallel this, the satanic trinity, you would have the dragon, you would have the first beast, you would have the second beast. Does that help a little bit because, notice what we just read in verse 12. It is that second beast that causes everybody to pay attention to the first beast, right? In the gospel of John, chapter 14, Jesus said that the Holy Spirit's role was to point us to him. So again, you see kind of that parallel, and I hate to draw a parallel, but you understand the concepts. And who is it that's kind of behind the scenes, the dragon, but yet John 17, Jesus said, "I come to fulfill the will of the Father." You see kind of that parallel there? And I hate to draw a parallel, but I think from the context of the book of Revelation, remember, this Antichrist figure goes into the temple of God, he claims to be God, and so it makes sense that the way he orchestrates things is very similar to, but yet drastically different than.

Now, going back to this original diagram, you do understand that, and again, the Trinity's hard enough to understand as it is, but you do understand that if all you have is Jesus, you're in the presence of God. Not a third of God, all of God, right? But if all you have is the beast, you don't have the whole thing. Notice that these lines aren't connecting. In other words, they're separate entities in a loose configuration. They're not a single identity. Does that help? Again, we're dealing with a concept that is beyond our imagination yet biblically.

[unintelligible]

The Holy Spirit dwells with us.

[unintelligible]

Oh, no, no. Okay, great. So, yes, the Holy Spirit dwells within us in Satan's cheap imitation. The false prophet doesn't dwell within anybody. Okay, I apologize. I went down a road you didn't want to go down.

[unintelligible]

No, so cheap imitation of, so the Holy Spirit not only dwells within us, but directs us toward the Lord, right? The false prophet or the second beast doesn't dwell within anybody but he causes all to focus on the first beast. So external yes, not internal and very much there's a demarcation of personalities not a unification of.

Yes ma'am? Are you just scratching your head? I apologize. I've already got y'all head scratch. Yes, ma'am? I see better than y'all think I do up here. Yeah.

[unintelligible]

Yes, ma'am. Correct, there's never a point. So to clarify her comment slash question, I'm going to, for the sake of our sensibility here, I'm going to erase these. Why is my square so small? Uh-oh, ask and you shall receive. Seek and you shall find. I don't know what y'all did back there, but I appreciate you. Okay, so that being said, yes, go back to the original diagram here. There are no parentheses. There's no separation. There's a complete unification and complete identity within oneself. The reason that we do this on the outside is to make it clear that even though they are together God and individually God, they are not the same thing because then you end up with what we formally call modalism. which basically means that God kind of transfers himself from Father to Son to Holy Spirit when biblically speaking he is God, he is, I hate to say it, it sounds so crazy, he's all three at one time. That's really a bad way of saying it, but it's accurate, if that makes sense. But that's kind of a classic diagram that we've used through the years to draw distinctions, not demarcations, distinctions, but yet within unification.

So hopefully that helps a little bit on the Trinity. And I've said this before, and let me say it again, about 1,500 years, no, actually about 1,600 years ago, a very famous theologian wrote a book entitled "On the Trinity," where he tried and attempted to describe in earthly, fleshly terms how the Trinity operates, and on the very last paragraph, after 230-something pages, he basically says, "I can't do it." So don't get frustrated if it's frustrating, because it is. But we clearly see, in fact, to me probably the easiest way, you go into Matthew chapter 3, it's the baptism of Jesus, right? Jesus goes down to the River Jordan, there's John the Baptist, okay? And in doing so, when he is baptized, it says the Holy Spirit descended on him as a dove, and the Father said, "This is my Son in whom I'm well pleased," and you see kind of that collective unity, but yet distinctness at the same time. I know it's difficult and I apologize, but no parentheses.

So hopefully that helps. But yes, Satanic trinity, Revelation 13. Anybody else on that one? We're good? We got it all covered? Maybe, sorta, kinda, not really? There's a follow-up question that's being typed so this is what we call stretching. Oh, okay, I'm sorry. Oh, help us understand 1 John 2:18. Okay, 1 John 2:18 is the verse that mentions the term antichrist. So in 1 John chapter 2, this is the verse that describes or calls the character Antichrist. Remember the book of Revelation says the beast. It says, "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists [plural]; whereby we know that it is the last time." Now, when the Bible uses the phrase "last time," that is a collective phrase from the ascension to Jesus unto the return of Jesus. Okay, don't think in terms of, oh, it's been 2,000 years, we misunderstood what it said. That's a collective phrase, because when Jesus ascended, you do realize that the next thing on God's great prophetic calendar is his return. So, guess what? We've been in the last time for 2,000 years. Okay? It could have lasted 20 years, it could last 20,000 years. We're not in charge of that, but we're in the quote-unquote last time.

So the last time there shall be antichrists plural. So the distinction's being made that antichrist is the character we just spoke of. Antichrists, plural, means there are those that are picturesque of or, shall we say, types of Antichrist. Verse 19, "They went," they so we're talking about the antichrists, plural, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." So you say, well, what is somebody, how do you describe someone who is quote-unquote an antichrist? Well, turn a few pages to the right to the book of 2 John. The book of 2 John, verse 7. It says, "For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." That's what the Bible says. So someone who would deny that Jesus Christ was God in flesh is defined as, or described as a quote-unquote antichrist. And so again, singular character one day coming, multiplicity throughout the course of time in the last days, there will be those that picture him in the means by the ways that they live and propagate their teachings, etc.

So there is a clear line there, but they're picturesque of. I would also take it a step further. This question didn't ask it. I would say there are individuals not only in the biblical text but in history, that kind of even bridge the gap more that don't just describe a denial of Christ in the flesh, but actually mimic, I hate to use this term, the ministry of the Antichrist. You do realize it says he comes with signs and wonders and light, so it's ministerial, it's messianic in nature. You look at people such in the Old Testament, the book of Daniel, you look at Antiochus Epiphanes, you look at characters such as Hitler. Let's just be honest with ourselves, okay? World tyrants who want to eradicate the Jews. That's what you're seeing. And so again, that is a common thread with these characters throughout time that picture what the one true Antichrist will be.

Now, one thing you'll have in common with all those characters is they have a messianic view of themselves. Well, if you have a messianic view of yourself, then obviously God has not come in the flesh because you think you're the answer. It's a denial of him in the

flesh. Now, you also peel away the layers a little bit more in the first century, and by the way it still continues today, we have a belief system known as Gnosticism. It's kind of a formal term that basically says that Jesus Christ was not actually in the flesh because the Spirit cannot inhabit flesh, he just appeared to be in the flesh. Well, what did the Bible just say? Who's an antichrist? Someone who denies that he came in the flesh. That is why, you know you've heard us talk about through the years what we call the quote-unquote fundamentals of the faith, now the fundamentals of the faith are that the Bible is inerrant, that Christ was born of a virgin, lived a sinless life, died a sacrificial death, and raised glorious from the grave, and is coming back again, okay? You do realize that what I just described to you, minus the first part, is the antithesis to the Antichrist. If he's born of a virgin, he's in flesh, right? If he lived a sinless life, if he died a physical sacrificial death, and if he rose physically from the grave, those things are fleshly. So again, in the flesh, he paid the price per the intercession that you asked about earlier, sir. He actually submitted himself, not only to the will of the Father, but on behalf of us so that the price could be paid, what we formally call the propitiation or the payment for our sins. So hopefully that kind of flushes out a little bit with that Antichrist versus antichrists, plural, that are among us even today. So, and there are.

So, anybody else on? Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Ooh, 2 Timothy 2:26. What's the snare? Boy, are you ready to have some fun here? 2 Timothy 2:26. We're going to talk about the snare of the devil, brother. So, in 2 Timothy, we have an admonition to believers regarding how to live a life in light of, and I'm gonna use this word loosely, so forgive me, sir, a world that is quickly becoming apostate. Now, by the way, the word apostate, and remember, in 2 Thessalonians, it says the great falling away, which is, that word is actually there. Apostate literally means one who claims to be a believer, but is revealed over time to not be genuine in their faith. So an apostate is not someone who is anti the faith, it's someone who imitates the faith, twists and perverts the faith, and ends up being revealed as never a believer in the first place, and that is the sign we have in scripture of the end of the last days. It says there will be a great falling away. It doesn't say that the world will push against the church, which it always does. It basically says the church implodes internally that it is revealed that they were not really what we thought they were collectively.

Now in verse 26 of 2 Timothy 2 it says, "And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will." Now again, one single verse but a whole lot to unpack there. You go back into Ephesians chapter 6, we don't fight against flesh and blood but against principalities and powers and rulers of darkness etc. etc. etc. It talks about the armor of God that we're to wear as a defensive against all those things. What you see here in verse 26 of 2 Timothy chapter 2, I'm gonna put it in my terminology, is that the day you became a believer in Jesus Christ, there was a target that was put on you and Satan is hunting you down to destroy you at all costs, i.e., at his will, the snare of the devil, that we might be delivered from. The greatest, okay, I'm gonna put it in Jeff terminology, if that's okay, alright? As a believer in Jesus Christ, who, per your

question, sir, has the Holy Spirit within you, rarely, I mean, I know we all have temptations, I get it, but in the decisions of life, rarely are we choosing between good and evil, okay? The hardest decisions in the world are between better and best. In fact, Romans chapter 12, verse 2, talks about the acceptable good and perfect will of God. I would say more believers have been entrapped by the snare of the devil to go the acceptable route versus the perfect route than to, quote, fall into abject sin. Does that communicate? So that snare of the devil there in a time of apostasy, let me put it in realistic terminologies, is it is hard, when truth is revealed maybe about an author or a pastor or a communicator or a group that you have loved for years, when truth comes out about who they really are, it is so hard to stop listening. Does that make sense? You're in that snare of the devil. It's not about evil versus good, it's this is not healthy, this is not edifying, this is not biblically sustainable. That's a snare that we've been caught in that we didn't realize was coming. Does that help a little bit with that snare at his will?

[unintelligible]

Sin should not have dominion over you, that is correct. Now sin can ravage your flesh, brother, but it's not gonna touch your soul.

[unintelligible]

Oh absolutely. So the question is, well, I'm gonna put it in my terminology, is the Holy Spirit powerful enough to intervene to release us from the snare of the devil? Oh absolutely. Oh absolutely because you will not find a place in scripture where God goes, "Oops, I lost that battle." You won't find it. It doesn't matter. In fact, the picture we get, not only of fallen angels, but Satan himself, is they are on a leash that is held by God himself and he makes the determination of how far, when, where, etc., and he draws the limitations, the lines of demarcation, whatever it may be. And I know it's a verse that oftentimes is taken out of context, but it's true, "Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world." That doesn't mean that you can go one-on-one with the devil and win. What that means is the Holy Spirit that is within you is stronger than the devil that wants to ensnare you. In fact, let me remind us in the book of Jude, Michael the archangel didn't even go one-on-one with the devil. He took a step back and said, "The Lord rebuke you." And I think that's the key to Ephesians 6. By the way, the famous armor of God passage, if you think about it visually, the head is covered, the torso is covered, the arms are covered, the legs are covered, the feet are covered, the only thing that's not covered are the knees, and I don't think we realize, when we think about the armor of God, we're so Gentile, at least I am, we think, oh, armor, soldier, go out and fight. Well, the real picture of the, quote, armed Christian is on their knees armed with the sword of the Spirit in their hands. It's not about charging forth, it's about standing firm. He says, when you can do nothing else, stand, but the word of God is the only offensive weapon that you've got.

So hopefully that describes that, helps out a little bit. Yes, ma'am?

[unintelligible]

Yes. Correct. So the famous Lord's Prayer, Matthew chapter 6, this famous statement, "Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the power and the kingdom forever. Amen." So Matthew chapter 6. Yep, verse 13. But just for the sake of context, I know most of us know the Lord's Prayer, but I like context. It says, verse 9,

9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name. 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth,
as it is in heaven. 11 Give us this day our daily bread. 12 And forgive us
our debts, as we forgive our debtors. 13 And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the
glory, for ever. Amen.

So the question is, why would a holy God tell us to pray to him, do not lead us in temptation, but to quote unquote, deliver us from evil? Now on the surface, it does appear to be problematic, does it not? Why would a holy God tell us to pray not to lead into temptation because he does not desire that. So keep your hand in Matthew chapter 6 and turn to James chapter 1, far right. New Testament. Now, let me get to James chapter 1 here. I'm getting there. Come on. James chapter 1. I've got too many post-it notes in my Bible. Here we go. James chapter 1, verse 13. "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God." That's what it says, right? So, and lead us not in temptation, but deliver us from evil, and then verse 13 of James 1, let no man say when he's tempted, I am tempted of God. I would state that in the context of the Lord's Prayer, okay, when you take it in its totality, I think that statement, which is called summed up struggle, but in a light of James chapter 1, when we're praying, yes, we're praying to the Lord, correct, right, we're looking for guidance. I see it more not, "God, don't take me down the wrong road," as much as I see that prayer stating, "God, help me not to go down the wrong road," if that makes sense. And lead me not, in other words, do not allow me to go down that road. Steer me away from, because you just read that God does not tempt anybody to sin. At no point in your life is God gonna go, "You know, I really think you ought to go through the sin door." He's never gonna do that. But there are times where you go down that door and the Holy Spirit within you goes, "Ah, wrong door." And lead us not into temptation, in other words, deliver us from evil. When that path comes, lead me away from it. I don't think it's saying that God will offer that to you. If that helps out a little bit. We're good there? Yeah, God's never gonna take you down the sin path, I promise you that one.

Ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Oh, distinguish. What is? Oh, boy, here we go. Romans 12:2. Go ahead and turn there. Romans 12:2. Hold on. Oh, I forgot which button I was supposed to use. All right. So in Romans chapter 12, verse 2, it talks about that which is the acceptable, that which is the good, and that which is the perfect will of God, correct? Now, I think what's important here is that passage begins in verse 1. "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present yourself a holy sacrifice unto God," correct? "Do not be

conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." And then it talks about later about that which is the good, the acceptable, the perfect will of God.

So basically dovetailing the question we just had from what we know as the Sermon on the Mount, so the way I see this is that the Lord presents you an opportunity, okay? The Lord is not going to present you good versus evil because the Lord doesn't lead you into temptation. The Lord doesn't want you to sin. So in other words, there's opportunities in our life and let me just make this real practical. Let's just say you're job hunting. You're a young college student, you've just graduated, you're now out in the marketplace seeking, alright? And just for the sake of, because of, let's say you have a degree in engineering, and you have gone on interviews, and there are three companies that all basically are in the same field of engineering, basically offer all the same opportunities, and they all would fit your education, your training, and your future desires all well, right? Would you say that any of those three are evil? No. But when you start weighing those three, you start looking at maybe future, shall we say, promotional opportunities? You start looking at potentially benefit packages that are provided. You would begin to rank them as there's number one, there's number two, and there's number three. But here's the beautiful thing: they're all in the right camp, okay?

And so again, when you find the acceptable, here's the thing I want you to see: at no point have you quote sinned. At no point have you somehow gone the path of evil, of temptation. And so, again, some people may want to push back about this, but let's say you're going to go car shopping, right? Now, I'm not here to speak disparagingly or positively about anything out there, but I'm just going to be honest with you, I don't think God cares if you buy a Toyota or a Honda. I really don't. Or a Ford or a Kia. I don't think he cares. Does that make any sense? In other words, I don't think buying a Chevrolet is evil, right? All right, except some of you die-hard Ford people might think it is. I'm picking on my Chevrolet guy down here. My point is though, if you have the need for transportation, okay, and you have the means by which to purchase, there's probably not a vehicle out there that's evil, okay? However, and again, I'm a car guy, so let me go down this route. How many times, guys, do we go car and/or truck shopping and we desire things that that vehicle can provide that are not necessarily needs that we have just because we're guys? I mean, do we really need a six inch lift on a truck that will never see dirt? But it looks good. And I think God says that's acceptable. If you wanna waste your money on that, I mean, there's no problem, there's nothing evil about it. Does that communicate?

Again, it's a trivial example, but when it gets to serious matters, such as career paths, spouses, relationships, friendships, again, if we're not dealing with temptation and sin, we're all in the check marks here, if that makes sense. And so what should the desire be? The desire should be the perfect will, correct? But can I be honest with you? Don't beat yourself up for good. I mean, where do you see anywhere God beating us up because it's good? He says, "Do that which is the good, the acceptable, and the perfect will." And so the way I see it, you remember the old game show where you had the three doors to choose from? Remember that old game? I want you to imagine four doors. You've got good, acceptable, perfect, and sin. Just don't choose the sin door. You might end up with

a Ford. You might end up with a Chevrolet. You might end up with a Kia. But you're getting to work the next day. Does that make any sense? I hate to blend those analogies too much.

Yes, sir.

[unintelligible]

Sure, absolutely. Correct. That would. Personally. Yeah. Right. Right. So he's talking about praying through these decisions. I want to warn you and all of us, I think a snare that the devil uses is paralysis by over-analysis. Okay. Did some of y'all start elbowing your spouses out there? Yes. Paralysis by over-analysis is we so fret over this that we end up doing nothing. Okay? So again, yes, we get on our face, we pray about it, we seek counsel from wise believers, our spouse, in your case, yes, and we begin to, just like those engineering jobs, just like those car purchases, you begin to see things kind of be put in order and you come to the conclusion that for the sake of analogy, please take this one, that this is the right decision, okay? You know, again, you can buy the Ford, you can buy the Chevrolet, they're gonna get you to work, okay? But one will be perfect and one will not be, and y'all don't say which one y'all think it is, okay?

But again, and that is, and our prayer, our genuine heartfelt prayer should be, "God, I want to be in your perfect will." That should be it. But you know what the beautiful thing is? I don't see anywhere in Romans 12:2 where it says that if you end up going the route of good, that you're gonna fall into abject sin. I don't see that. You know what I see? I see a gracious God that says, "I can still work with that and I can still lead and direct and guide," because you're in the right side, if that communicates. You're on the right side. But don't do paralysis by over-analysis because then you end up not going through any door. Okay. But don't just sit there and go, "Oh, it doesn't matter. Let's just take whatever it is. Surely I'm going to get to work." I mean, don't take that one.

Yes, ma'am.

[unintelligible]

Can it relate to your maturity? Oh, absolutely. Oh, so this was done in my own life years ago, and hopefully it's happening in my own children's life. There are times that my wife and we sit our children down and we say, "Hey, we understand what it's like to be your age. I need you to think five years down the road, 10 years down the road, 20 years down. Look at the eventual if you go through this door, you're not necessarily in sin, but the road may not be as smooth that if you take this door." Does that communicate? It's not the wrong door. That's what I need you to hear, that good and acceptable is not sin because he said do the good, the acceptable, and the perfect will of God. Now again, we could paralysis by over-analysis here, if that makes any sense. But again, seek wise counsel, seek biblical instruction, get on your face before God, and then open the door and go if that makes sense.

So, yes. Y'all are feisty again, I like it.

[unintelligible]

Ooh, there you go, Psalm 118:8. Now this is gonna be fun, okay? Here we go, go to the middle of your...don't say, oh my, you started this mess. This is technically your fault, brother. Psalm 118. You just had to put your hand in here. Psalm 118, verse 8. Now, this verse says, "It is better to trust in the LORD than to put confidence in man." Absolutely. Now, he asked if that was not only, yes, the perfect will, but the center of God's will and here's why he asked that question. Based on the metric that you could use, by some means, this is the center verse of your Bible. You say, what do you mean by some means? There's multiple ways to find the center. Some people find the center by taking all the words in the Bible and finding the middle word. Some people do it by taking all the chapters, all that. If you take, from my understanding, and I could be wrong, from my understanding, if you take all the verses in your Bible and you just put them in a line and you go to the middle verse, it's Psalms 118, verse 8. That's the middle verse. It is not the middle words. Does that make sense, what I'm saying about that? In other words, some verses on either side are longer or shorter than others. But if you just use the verses numerically, this is the middle verse which providentially says, "It is better to trust in God than to put confidence in man." Which leads back to this question of, as long as you're before God on your face, you're seeking wise counsel from other believers, go through the door.

[unintelligible]

Verse 6, they're all good verses. It says, "The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?" Well, if you asked Tyndale, they'll kill you, dig up your body, and burn it again. They did that to William Tyndale, by the way, who was one of the first guys to translate the Bible into English. They burned him at the stake, buried him, got so mad at him, they went and exhumed his body and burned him again. Absolutely.

So, question number 2. How backed up are we, Chris? Okay. It says, "God is omnipotent, he is omniscient, and he is omnipresent. Are there any other, quote, beings that contain or ever will contain any of these traits? For example, after Christ's Second Coming." God is God and God alone and he has aspects and he has traits that nobody past, present, or future will ever have the attributes thereof. And so therefore, the simple answer here, whether you're before or after the Second Coming, there is no one that will possess those three traits. We just talked about the Antichrist that will possess three personas that appear to possess those traits, but they do not possess those traits. Omnipresent means everywhere at all times without exception. Omniscient means all-knowing, there's nothing that is not awareness of. And omnipotent means all-powerful, that can do anything at any time at his will and his pleasure. There will be characters throughout time that possess aspects of those, but not the totality of any or all of them all at the same time. The closest one we've already studied is Revelation 13. He gets real close but not quite there, but that is a good question to distinguish only God and God alone will possess all three at all times throughout all time.

"Help us understand Matthew chapter 7, verse 6. Who are the dogs and the pigs and what are quote our pearls?" Well, this is gonna be wonderfully offensive. Okay, here we go Matthew chapter 7. We're going back to the Sermon on the Mount, but you need to hold 2 Peter chapter 2 as well. Matthew chapter 7. After Jesus tells us to not judge unless you judge by the same thing, in other words, hypocrisy, he says, "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet and turn again and rend you." Now, generally speaking within scripture, that which is holy is described as entities, stuff, etc. Pearls, according to Matthew chapter 13, are people. Okay, so basically it says do not take that which is reserved for God and give it unto the dogs. Do not take those things that are valuable to God and give it over to the the swine or the pigs. Okay, here's where it gets wonderfully offensive. Okay, turn to 2 Peter chapter 2. Those of you that were here Sunday night, the the blow's already been cushions. 2 Peter chapter 2, verse 22, is not only biblical evidence for a very theological truth, but you're about to go to marriage counseling 101 and you didn't even know it. Here we go. "But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." Do you notice the pronouns that are used? The dog is a he, and the swine is a she. Now, lest you get offended, let me walk through this for just a moment. The proverb is actually based back in Proverbs chapter 16 that talks about this and you see within the scripture men defined and described as dogs, and you see women described as swine.

Now, don't get offended yet, okay? Let's talk about what this means. Do not give that which is holy to the dogs. Do not give your pearls over to swine. So let's talk about us, and we're gonna be real honest tonight. Guys, let's talk mano y mano. The Bible says we're dogs, okay? Now, I want you to think about that. What do dogs do? Whatever dogs wanna do, correct? How do they tell you what is theirs? They pee on it. Oh, we nasty creatures. Guys, we nasty. Hey, I got three of them in my house. I got proof of this, right? Guys, do we not mark territory? I mean, seriously, maybe not the same way, but we do, right? Okay? You think about a dog for a moment. A dog, and I'm gonna get graphic tonight, but I'm gonna be biblical. A dog is territorial of what it wants to have territory over but dogs wander, travel in packs, and are always looking for a better place to be. Correct? That's not a compliment, by the way. Right? Okay? Dogs have a tendency to bite the hand that feeds them. Okay? They do. Right? At the same time, dogs have a tendency to be fine, and all of a sudden, they're chewing on stuff that you have no... "Why are you chewing on that?" Right? So how do you correct a dog? Do you sit down in front of a dog and say, "Hey, little guy, I need you to quit chewing on stuff. Quit peeing on stuff." What do you do to a dog? You rub their nose in it and you kick them outside. Isn't that how you get a dog's attention? Right? How do you get a guy's attention? You rub our nose in it. True? And you kick us outside. Right? But here's the thing about a dog. Scratch their belly, feed their belly, their loyal to you as the day is gone. True, right? But understand, when it talks about that the men are dogs and don't give that which is holy unto dogs, men, we have a tendency to take that which is of God and turn it into man. We twist and we turn. How do you think we get all these false faiths that are out there? We take holy things and we dogify it. We territorialize it. We chew it, and then we vomit it up and eat it again. That's not a pretty picture, right?

Now, ladies, you're next. By the way, before I get to the ladies, guys, do you know that dogs will eat their own children? They will. It's disgusting, but they'll do it. It's nasty. So let's talk about pigs for just a moment, okay? Don't think visual imagery, please, because in our culture we have a horrible concept of that looks like or that is. We're talking behaviors here, right? Did you know that swine mate for life? Oh yeah, they don't go looking for anything better. Okay? They don't go searching the streets. They don't go run in packs to see if there's something better somewhere else. They are content with that relationship. And here's the difference, did you know that a swine will literally allow themselves to be eaten by a wolf to protect their piglets? What does a dog do? Eats them himself. All right? Why do you use that analogy? Because who's more apt to abandon their children, men or women? Don't give your pearls over to women. All right, let me flip the script. I've seen the movie "Mean Girls" and my wife says it's accurate. Men take stuff that's holy and they pervert it. Women have a tendency to take relationships and taint them.

Don't give your pearls over to swine, okay? But you know what's interesting? What does it say about the sow or the swine? They wallow in the mud. Guys, you ever had an experience where your wife has observed you being a dog and said, "Don't you remember 16 years ago you did the exact same thing?" And the poor dog's going, "Huh? I don't even remember what I ate yesterday," right? So the negative of the swine is they wallow in things. They don't let go of things. But the loyalty to... Now, again, I'm not trying to do marriage counseling 101. What I'm trying to tell you is, that passage in Matthew chapter 7, he's talking about hypocrisy and then he's talking about the things that are holy, that if you want to see something of God get torn up and twisted, put a man in charge of it, and he'll make it all about himself. Okay? If you want to see people get twisted up with each other, just do a little gossiping here and there, and women, you can turn it inside out and upside down quicker than anything. I'm sorry, I'm just calling it for what it is, right? Because the dog's not smart enough to gossip and the swine's not dumb enough to go running around. I'm being serious, okay?

Now, the reason I bring that up is, understand, it's talking about later in Matthew chapter 7, it talks about false prophets. Okay? Who is the majority of false prophets? Men, men who take the scriptures and they twist them and they turn them to benefit themselves. Don't give that which is holy unto the dogs. Right? At the same time, if you want to have fracturing within the body, people having trouble with each other, there is a reason the Bible talks about silly laden women. saying things and communicating things that are not important, not necessary, or actually true at the same time. Well, it got real, didn't it? It did. So again, going back to Matthew chapter 7, you know what Jesus did? He just called us all out. That's what he did. The false prophets tend to be men, and those who tend to cause friction and fracturing within relationships tend to be the women and he just called us out for who we are. But here's the irony. Did you know that on the farm, pigs and dogs get along really well? We are. We're really good friends but we have our deficiencies.

How was that? Was that fun? Can we move on, please? Whoever submitted that, I'm sorry. Anybody else want to talk about pigs and dogs? We're good? We're good? All right, we're good.

Moving onward, we're down to just a few minutes. 1 Timothy 2, verse 12. Thank you. We're going to talk about women learning in silence. Thank you, thank you, thank you. It says, considering that verse, how do we justify having female Sunday school teachers, Bible study leaders, pastors, etc.? All right, so 1 Timothy 2, verse 12. Famous passage where it talks about, "I tell a woman to learn in subjection, to keep silence." Here's a fascinating thing. I want you to go to verse 12, 1 Timothy 12, and I'm going to pull another Carnac. Y'all know I like to pull Carnac out occasionally, right? Here's the thing that's really interesting. There are two perspectives of this passage. There's what we call the individual perspective and the corporate perspective. We're down to just a few minutes, so I'm going to be as quick as I can. The individual perspective says this, that in no place and no time should a female ever instruct a male in anything that is spiritual. The corporate says that you can have that as long as and somewhere there is a male pastoral leadership that eventually the proverbial buck stops at, okay? So there's either a corporate or there's an individual, okay?

Now, 1 Timothy 2, verse 12, it says, "But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." earing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. All right, y'all know what I do when I do Carnac, right? Y'all know what that means, right? Look at your Bibles. If your Bible says, "I do not allow her to teach a man," then you have something other than the King James Bible. The King James Version says, "the man." You say, what's the difference? "The man" is a corporate statement. "A man" is an individual statement. In other words, all these new progressive Bibles actually aren't very progressive at all. They're actually stating that at no place and no point should a woman ever instruct a man. However, that old 400-year-old King James Bible actually says "the man," which means that corporately speaking, as long as you have male pastoral leadership, it allows the opportunity to have variation within and under. Isn't that interesting that that old, archaic, out-of-date King James Bible is actually more progressive than your new thing you got in your hand? Sorry, I had to go there tonight. But there's a big difference between individual and corporate. Big difference. And so, again, I know this is a raging debate. It always has been, it always will be. You know why it always will be? Because in Genesis chapter 3, verse 21, it predicted that it would happen. It said part of the curse was that you and I, as dogs and pigs, would struggle with each other. I just decided to go there tonight, okay?

So, but again, when it says "the man," I believe it's speaking corporately here, and that we are to, as the Bible says, and by the way, equal worth, different role, that as long as there is a subjection unto a pastoral male leadership, that you can be in conformity to scripture. It is not a one-on-one, which is ironic, because a lot of the people that advocate one-on-one take a lot of their directions from their own wives. I said that, didn't I? Isn't that funny? I just was honest tonight, guys, and I'm sorry. It is what it is. Truth is truth. It's interesting that a lot of people propagate in public what they struggle with in private.

I got a word. Thank you very much, sir. I appreciate that.

All right, time's out. I've offended everybody. I need to pray.

Lord Jesus, we do love you, thank you that you are the way, you are the truth, you are the life. God, I do pray for us tonight that we would be like Psalms 118, verse 8 that we looked at, that we would trust you rather than have confidence in man. God, guide us, instruct us in what your holy word says, not just in what somebody tells us that it says. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

If you brought kids, please go get them and please don't do a pig/dog talk tonight, please.