

# Normal Christian Living

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Amen. Let's take our Bibles and let's go to the book of Philippians, would you do that? Philippians 1. I'm planning to return to 2 Timothy, I have a couple more things I want to share first but hopefully in, uh, shall we say, three weeks we'll be back in 2 Timothy continuing our study through that New Testament epistle, but this morning, uh, thinking about, um, beginning off the new year getting back on track and even though I know we have a number of the faithful brethren out, it's kind of a holiday weekend, folks travel and do stuff and folks are gone, they'll be back but, uh, nevertheless, for us, I want us to look at this and, um, recommit ourselves afresh to what call God has called us to be and called us to do and primarily as a body together because that's the way this is written. It is an encouragement for the individual Christian but it's written for us together to hold hands, to lock arms and to be encouraged together to go on for Christ.

Uh, the context, Paul is, uh, writing this and as often is true, he's, he's suffering, he's dealing with imprisonments and, uh, many trials against him for being a faithful preacher of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and he does not want his churches that he's started, all these local congregations, he does not want them to be alarmed, uh, paralyzed by fear or discouraged that as a Christian in this wicked world we have some troubles. But I tell you what we do have, are you listening, church? We have each other. The local church is not just important, matter of fact, the local church is not just essential, the local church is the centerpiece of God's purposes and God's glory for time and even for eternity. So let's look at it together this morning in Philippians 2, uh, chapter 1, I'm sorry, beginning in verse 27 going through the verse 30. Paul writes,

27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28 in no way alarmed by your opponents which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. 29 For to you it has been granted [actually that means a grace gift] it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

I think it's safe to say that all of us are citizens of the United States of America and I think we are proper, properly proud of that, we are patriotic people, but we grasp deeply that we have a citizenship greater and higher than that. Matter of fact, when we talk about being proud of our country, today we probably mean moreso that we are proud of the idea of our country and what we were, not necessarily what we're becoming. But Paul writes here about the higher citizenship. We belong to another kingdom. We are, we're members of another family that is greater and more important, and actually what he's talking about here and this is what I've entitled the unpacking of this text, "Normal Christian Living," and basically he's saying, "Here's what normal Christian living in an antichrist, God-opposing world is like." For you young people or moms or dads or anyone that's here, banish from your thought that we now live in a country where our Christian convictions and morals are generally embraced by the society. That used to be true.

Un, Francis Schaeffer, who's been with the Lord a long time, was, he considers himself a Christian philosopher and I think he was a godly man and a good man, and he used to write about how though certainly not all the founding fathers and, and, uh, America in its original, um, composition, everyone wasn't a Christian but he said it was very very clear and we had a strong Christian consensus. There wasn't hardly any pockets in our nation for the first 150 years or so that would rise up and really, uh, work against or oppose basic biblical principles or basic biblical morality. Well, that's no longer the day, amen? Now radicalism, I mean, leftist radicalism is in the main square, in, in the seats of government. Bizarre things. Vile things.

So brothers and sisters, this, here's what I'm gonna say: what Paul and these early churches faced in a rabidly antichristian culture is what we are beginning to face in our country. You do understand what we enjoyed as a country for our first 150-175 years maybe, where our Christian faith and our Christian convictions generally was embraced by the culture, even though they weren't all, all individual Christians, that's over. Now we're much like and moreso every day, what the early church faced. So what's normal in that context, and I might remind you that phrase that I use often, I first heard it from Dr. Vance Havner who said, you know, if, uh, uh, if we just act normal, most Christians and most churches are so subnormal then they think we're abnormal. And now, now let me throw that out again as far as my, our, our introductory thinking here. You have to grasp it was true in biblical days, it was true in the Old Testament dispensation, and it's true today that we have to deal with a lot of opposition and undermining from professing Christians and professing churches.

I was a part of a service the last couple of years where another minister who's, who's the pastor of a large congregation was a part of the program, and, uh, if he had stood up and said, "Jeff Noblit, I hate your guts," he couldn't have said it any louder by his body language, his actions, his snobbery toward me. He just did not like what we are and what we're about. I'm not, I've been through this so many times, it doesn't bother me, by the way, and, and I've come to expect it. So you need to also expect not just the world but many who claim to be God's people have, have, I mean, folks, look, are you listening to me this morning? It's hard to verbalize this because it's, it's hard to comprehend that even

in Southern Baptist life there's now the open discussion of rethinking things like homosexuality. The, the, the, the men in Southern Baptist life that were, uh, mentors for me, let's say as a young minister, and I disagree with some of the things they did in their churches and I think they'd tell you privately they weren't happy with a lot of it too, but nevertheless, those men would have, they would have burned the thing down if they saw that coming, and this is just like 30 years to 40 years, just the downgrade. So now we get into what really parallels quite closely with what the early church faced – now listen to me – and what the, the church faced in the majority of, of generations since she began 2,000 years ago.

All right, first of all, let's talk about conduct that exemplifies our citizenship. Paul wants to say to the church at Philippi, "Now, now conduct yourselves not as a good American, at one time you might could have said that and that would've been consistent with Christian truth. Not anymore. You don't conduct yourself as just a good American, you conduct yourself as a citizen of God's kingdom." Notice how he words it here in verse 27, look at it again, "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel," and as the text unfolds, what he's pointing out is there are those who are citizens of Satan's kingdom and the world's kingdom and they're against us, and then there are those God's, uh, rescued by grace and by his doing alone, amen, by his doing alone we are citizens of God's family and God's kingdom. So look, are you listening? You didn't sign up to be against this world, God rescued you and made you a part of his family so you are in opposition to this world.

Conduct yourself. It's the idea of citizenship. It's the idea of perform your duty and as you perform your duty and live out your Christianity, now again, primarily this is in the context of how we serve together, strive together, love each other, care for each other, correct each other, what families do, that's what families do, and as we do that biblically and right, then we're showing the world we're citizens of another kingdom. We're showing the world we're citizens of God's kingdom. Now for this church, the church at Philippi, this is a Roman colony. They, they were proud of their Roman citizenship. Rome was the powerhouse of the world and I think Paul is saying but much much more be thankful for and live consistently with the fact that you're citizens of a higher kingdom, the kingdom of God.

A couple of cross references that spell this out so clearly. Philippians 3:20, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ." Ephesians 2:19, "So then you are no longer strangers and aliens," that's, that's strangers and aliens to God, "but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household."

Now subpoint 1 under this conduct that exemplifies what our true citizenship is. Let's look at the motivation for our conduct. We see, he says it quite succinctly there in verse 27 when he says live worthy of the gospel, make sure your life makes a statement of Christ and his gospel, make sure, church, that as you function as a church body, you're functioning together in agape love God's put in your heart at the new birth, and is the kind of devotion and care for one another that is worthy of a gospel-changed person. Are

you living the kind of life that looks like the gospel has changed you. And by the way, a foundational mark, foundational mark of the gospel changing you is you love God's church, and in our context, it means you abhor so much that's out there that's calling itself church life today that looks more like a, a country club or a Sunday amusement center more than a real church. You love what God loves and you begin to abhor what God abhors. Paul had told the church at Thessalonica that he had been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel. It's the same kind of idea that it, by God's grace we are bearers of the gospel, by God's grace we are reflectors of the gospel to the world. Live worthy of it, he says.

Now, of course, the gospel is God's good news to man but the evangelizing element is not really what he's talking about. He's talking about the character, the change that has happened in us and, us individually and us as a corporate family. In Titus 2:10, he kind of gives another insight and amplifies this truth, he says that they may "adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect." Adorning, that's, that's like putting on clothing. You and I are to live together as a church family and in our individual lives in such a way that we put proper clothing on Christ, you might say on Christ's reputation and on the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It's interesting and this just jumped out at me, if you look at Titus 2, I'll just kind of hit on this and run, but you have a weighty teaching there on husbands and wives, and, and you have a weighty teaching there on a wife's subjection to her husband, and, and I think what he's getting to there is that – listen to me – when God's changed you, you begin to joy in and embrace the wisdom of the Creator to cause our families, our churches and our culture to function in a structured and orderly way. God has a way he wants things to be structured and a way he wants things to function. When you're saved, you grasp that. You, you embrace that. God meant for men to be married to women and women to be married. God made it that way. There's no other way that's acceptable. When you get saved, you begin to embrace that structure. God made husbands to protect and care for and look after and consider and love their wives. God made wives to be in subjection to their husbands in all things. That's God's structure, that's God's order. When you're saved, you begin to embrace that.

You may say, "Pastor, I'm embracing it but I'm struggling." Well, keep fighting. We don't give up, amen? And on and on we could go. We respect the civil authorities, not if they ask us to do something that's clearly unbiblical, of course, but we have a respect for them. So as the world looks at us and sees us embracing the Creator's ordained design for the way things are to be structured and the way things are to function, then the world looks at us and says, "They must be citizens of another kingdom. They must have wisdom we don't have."

As our men go out in the workplace and our ladies go out in the workplace, and hopefully it's not taking too much of our ladies' time because God's given them other assignments, but when you go out in the world and you work for your employer like working unto the Lord, you're saying, "We, our God's given us wisdom as to how this is supposed to function." And the other workers look at you and say, "That's not the way we think." No,

we're citizens of a different kingdom. We think differently about things. We're learning to restore the structure and order that God's ordained.

Anyway, Titus 2 brings out that element. I think that's so powerful but in a general sense, Titus said that we adorn like putting on clothing the behavior that is becoming to Christ and his gospel. If you would, uh, keep your Bible ribbon there in Philippians 1 and go over to Colossians 3. Would you do that? It's just one book over, about, what, eight pages or so over to the right. Colossians 3. We'll just kind of buzz through this as it amplifies this very idea of you're citizens of a new kingdom, Christ is Savior, now live that out. And brothers and sisters, that's why the Bible teaches that we didn't just repent when we got saved, we're repenters because you go out into the world and pretty soon you start thinking kinda like a person who's not a citizen of heaven, and you can fall into behavior that doesn't look like a citizen of heaven, and then the Spirit of God convicts you and you have to repent again and get back on track. Don't quit repenting and don't quit getting back on track.

Here's one way he says it in Colossians 3, beginning in verse 8. "But now you also, put them all aside," in other words, to be a citizen of heaven you ought not to be known for these things, "anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth." Verse 9, "Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self," the new one created when you were born again, "who is being renewed," a present tense verse, you're in the process of being renewed, "to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him." Now verse 12 of Colossians 3, "So, as those who have been chosen of God," now he could have said believed on Christ but he's again giving us that perspective of God's sovereign eternal perspective that if you are a believer, you're one who was chosen by God. And he said what should characterize you, verse 12, "holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience," now this is church family life right here primarily, 13, "bearing with one another," that's folks in your local church, "forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you." Again, Paul always comes back to the local church. Always. And so he says now as a local church family, live out these things, these virtues, so that you will be proper, you will properly be adorning and showing you're a citizen of another kingdom.

Well, that's the motive for our conduct, or part of the motive for our conduct. Now let's talk about the manner of our conduct and this, this really gets down to brass tacks of where you and I live. Go back to Philippians 1 and look at verse 27 again and that last phrase...well, let me just basically read all of verse 27 again to get the flow of the context, "Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent." It's kind of interesting, he said, if Paul is still functioning as their pastor, we know pastors were appointed in these churches after they'd been established awhile, but basically you could say Paul is saying, "I may have be, be away as your pastor but you do understand you're still in God's household and citizens of another kingdom whether I'm there or not. Don't let my absence be a temptation for you to drift off from your earlier convictions."

I never do this but I'm gonna take this jacket off before I have a nuclear meltdown right here on the pulpit.

Make sure you are conducting yourself whether I'm with you or whether I'm absent from you, and then he says this very interesting thing in verse 27, be of "one spirit of mind, or with, with one mind, rather, striving together for the faith of the gospel." And I, I've broken this down into three things that spell out the manner, the, the actual living out of our citizenship as a church together, all right? Now I've organized it this way. 1. He says be united in truth, that's the phrase there "striving together for the faith of the gospel." That speaks of doctrine, that we are committed to the same doctrine.

There is the ludicrous, there is the absurd notion in churches and in church leadership today, now you really, here's how it's usually cloaked: we don't need to worry so much about the gospel or about doctrine rather, we just need to get people saved. That's the most ludicrous, absurd statement I think I've ever heard. Brothers, our call, look, faith comes by hearing and hearing, present tense, continual building truth upon truth, hearing the things of Christ. If you want your sons and daughters and your grandsons and granddaughters to come to faith, we need to give them the most doctrine and the most truth possible, not the least amount to get them to go through a hoop jump, go through a shallow motion, and then check them off, "Well, they're saved now," and then you have what we have in Baptist life today, 16 million members on roll and about 5 million who ever come to church, because we check boxes off, we gave them a tiny tiny half-thimble full of truth, got them to go through a motion, checked the box off and, woo, we feel good now, they're going to heaven. That, well, as far as the Bible is concerned, that shouldn't give you any hope they're going to heaven.

It's the most truth, that's why expositional preaching is so important. Line upon line. Truth upon truth. Precept upon precept. Giving the people of God the truth of God and then the Spirit of God has something to work with to bring them to repentance toward God and faith in Jesus Christ. Being united in doctrine, folks, is essential. Doctrine matters. The faith, definite word there. The faith of the gospel. We, we, we reject all syncretisms. You know, the folks who would say, "Well, you know, if we take the basic tenets of Judaism and the basic tenets of Islam or Buddhism or Confucianism, and they're all about the same." No, they're not. No, they're not. No, they're not. We hold, as Jude said, to the faith, body of doctrine, once for all delivered to the saints. It matters.

If I was visiting a church and I caught them saying the old doctrines of the faith that our forefathers, by the way, bled and died over, don't you think it'd been easy for the early Baptists to kinda fudge on immersion when they were killing them over being immersed? But they didn't fudge on it. If I was in a church and the leadership was saying, "Well, well, we're not worried about the, we just want to get people saved." I'd say, um, "Anybody see the exit sign? This is not where I ought to be." You want to sit in a church where the preachers' hearts are aflame with the doctrines of the faith.

Well, united in truth. 2. The manner of our conduct. So we come to church committed together to the true doctrines of the faith once for all given to the saints. Do you know

what our Statement of Faith is? It's on our website. You can look it up there and it's not just words on a page, it's what we believe. Secondly, united in spirit. Notice how he words it here in verse 27. "I, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit." Now this, this is not the Holy Spirit here, however this requires the illumination and power of the Holy Spirit but this is more the idea of being united on one team. Uh, when these boys go to, uh, a university to be recruited and the coach sits down and he says, "Okay, here's our philosophy of the, of football. We run these kind of formations. We run these kind of defenses. And here's how you fit in." What's he saying? He's saying we're all of one spirit here. We're all on the same team here. We're all united. And certainly the fundamental doctrines of the faith is the foundation, the Holy Spirit has to empower that, but we have to be agreed as how are we gonna get this job done God left us as a church to get done.

Now let's, let's look at our wheel illustration again because this has been our strategy, our structure, if you will, that we've committed to so that we'll all be of one spirit all on the same team. So the hub of the wheel, the middle, is preaching the word, congregational worship. We're all on the same team on this. We're all united in spirit on this, that the foundation stone of local church life is the congregational meeting under the preaching and the receiving of the preaching of the word of God. There, there's no option there. There, there's no Plan B there. Anybody doesn't agree with that, go ahead and stand up. Anybody? Well, good, we're all on one spirit about that, amen? That's, and by the way, that means we're not going to chase any ludicrous, ridiculous, worldly, novel concept of showing movies in God's worship service. That's the hot new thing, you understand that don't you? Are you, listen, are you kidding me? This whole book we hold as fully authoritative and absolute, it's absolutely sufficient for all faith and practice, and instead of pouring my energies into this book to give you everything I possibly can out of this book, I'm gonna look at some sort of ungodly movie produced by ungodly people with ungodly actors with an ungodly message? I'm gonna neglect this to give you that? Unbelievable to me. God's never promised that he would use Disney to convert your soul but he has promised he'll use his word. I don't want to produce followers of Dumbo, we want to produce followers of Christ.

We're in one spirit about that. Preaching the word is the hub of the wheel of our ministries, and then look, look at, um, the, the right top spoke. Those are big fixed spokes, aren't they? That's a strong wheel. Every member ministry through small groups. We're united in spirit about that. Let's go one step further. Brother David is sitting down here and he, he directs our small group ministries and now Brother Nathan is coming along as a cohort to work under him, and, and I wrote that small group ministry strategy statement, I don't know, a few decades ago, 30 years ago or so, 35, I don't, I don't remember, I honestly don't remember. Let's say David come in and David said, "Pastor, you know what? Now our strategy statement for small groups is biblical but I've got my own twist I want to put on it, you know, put something about deer hunting in there or something, do... I want to put my own twist on it." Well, first of all, I'm gonna say, "I'm 100% confident if David wrote the strategy statement it'd be biblical," but we don't need two biblical statements. If we do, we're no longer united in one spirit, we got two good things but we're kinda working against each other. You can't run a spread offense and an

old fashioned wing 10 at the same time. You see what I'm saying? You gotta be united on this thing. And on and on we could go.

Local church centered missions and we amplify that by personalized strategic world missions. We gotta be one spirit about that, that that's what we're about. Home life discipleship. We don't have any structure for that because the Bible doesn't give us any, but what we're saying is it needs to be real at home. What the edifying and the encouraging and the instructions and the admonitions we get in small groups and in, in the preaching service should go home with us. And I don't know how to say that other than it just has to be real there too, or, or the wheel has a flat part on it. It doesn't roll along very well.

And then the, the vision statement in our church is actually that little statement under the bottom there, a church God uses as a pattern for others. Again, I'm guesstimating we voted as a church 30 years or so ago that that would be our vision statement. Actually that's not exactly the vision statement because the vision statement is to be a biblical church that God might use as a, as a pattern for others. Here's what I'm saying to you, we gotta be one on that. We ought, now we don't all have the same job, we don't all have the same available time perhaps but I expect every single one of us to say, "Pastor, we're all together on that, preaching the word, every member ministry through small groups, personalized strategic world missions and home life discipleship. Those are so clear in the Bible. We won't get rid of everything else to make sure those spokes in that hub stay strong." That's united in spirit. That's a team spirit.

Now we have a big Fourth of July picnic and I like it. Do you like it? I like it. But we don't have to have one. Matter of fact, when you have to have stuff like that, you just should not have it until your people mature enough to where they enjoy it but they don't have to have it. If I had to put on a big shenanigan picnic, blow off firecrackers and feed you ice cream to get you keep you coming to church, I don't need you and neither does Christ. We've got something better than that that glues us together. That's, that's what the world uses to keep people coming. I'm trusting God to use his Spirit through his word to keep you coming.

So we're united in spirit on this. We may do other things but are you listening, we must do those things. You just don't know the hours and hours and many many hundreds of times I've taught pastors or preached to pastors and they'll ask questions about, "Well, what about this, this, this?" And I say, "That's not wrong but are you doing those well? Get those down well and then move on to something else." Then I smile real big and say, "You never will get through with those."

Next Sunday, we start small groups back and with the exception of any legitimate concern about the virus, I expect you to be back in there doing what we've agreed to do as a team because the church is nothing if we're not connecting together to admonish, to encourage, to love, to care for each other. I'm not – listen, are you listening to me – I'm not asking you do you feel like coming back together, I'm saying it's right to come back together and when you come back together, you'll start feeling good about it. Well, to



commend you, you, you've been solid on these things and I think now we could even say decades not just years, but this Sunday morning let's reunite our hearts to be of one truth and to be of one spirit about what we're doing as a church.

Then lastly here, number 3, united in service. He uses a graphic illustration here in verse 27, "I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit," matter of fact, scholars say that could be mind, thought and reflection, you're all kinda on the same page together, "with one mind," and here's the phrase about service, "striving together for the faith of the gospel." He takes that phrase "striving together," it's a phrase really out of the gladiatorial world of the day. You know, they would have two trained gladiators and they would put those gladiators in the Colosseum and they were trained fighters and they would fight to the death. Yet here we're not, it might be an out Baptist analogy to talk about church members fighting each other to the death but that's not what I'm saying here. What he means is we lock arms together and like gladiators together we go forward with what God has called us to do.

So we're beginning 2022 and we have the doctrine we are convinced is from God. I didn't come up with it but looking at our forefathers century after century after century after century of godly and good men who sort of compiled the doctrines of the faith from the Bible and we have embraced those and we have our, we have the truth down we think with the exception of some minor tweaking from time to time just to verbalize it better. We're of one spirit. We've got the wheel, we've got our, our, our biblical structure and spirit of how we're going to be a team together, but you know, are you listening to me? Satan, I'm convinced, is probably not going to start a movement in this church against our doctrine or against our purpose and strategies, what he will do is get you so busy and so tired in the world you're not against it because you don't have much energy for striving together to get it done.

Church, this ain't cool today, this is not relevant, this is not the happening way to do it, but you're gonna have to continually find the good things in the world to say no to so you've got the time and the energy to be a co-gladiator. That's the picture Paul uses as we work together for this, for the glory of God. Now for Grace Life Church of the Shoals, what a powerful motivator that we have hundreds of pastors and churches who have purposely connected to us so that we might can encourage and help them. And I would not be exaggerating to say that there are thousands of churches that in some form or fashion are watching our ministry and learning from our ministry that we don't even know about. So to whom much is given, much is required so let's commit afresh one doctrine, one spirit, and one together in service as gladiators arm-in-arm working for our Lord to exemplify that we are indeed citizens of another kingdom, we are indeed living worthy of the gospel.

Now you may be getting older and you're more tired and I understand that, but mark out of your life adequate time to keep the main thing the main thing in your life. Some of you are young folks and I understand young guys have to, um, put the nose to the plow, as Charles Haddon Spurgeon actually said, that if, if a pastor will keep his nose to the grindstone in the earliest years of his ministry, he won't have so much grinding work to

do in the latter third of his ministry. I've found that to be true. And some of you young men, young ladies, you're gonna have to be intentional and say, "I'm doing those things." I don't know how to say this any other way: you don't want to go to heaven with a pastor who's laid it out for you like that and then you neglected it. And there's a lot of places where it's kind of muddy, kind of, you know, the church is doing this and that and every four or five years they reinvent themselves and have another approach to this. We've been like this for decades so at the judgment bar of God when you stand there and he says, "What did you do for Me in your church?" You can't say, "Well, it wasn't real clear, you know? We did movies for awhile and we did skits and drama for awhile, and we did this and we did that." Jesus will say, "That's not what you heard. You knew what biblically you were about. Did you give yourself to it?"

Now comparing ourselves with other churches you do real well. I think it was Dr. Havner again who said that's like the folks at the cancer ward comparing themselves to the folks at the funeral home. The Bible says if you judge yourselves by yourselves, you're unwise. So let's recommit ourselves. I'm recommitting myself to these things and I want you to recommit yourself to these things. I don't know exactly what that means for you but it would be healthy to say, "Lord, I'm gonna bump it up a notch in 2022." Now I really, now, now, boy, I'm just, I'm just, is anybody here but us this morning? I really stay burdened for our ladies. Most of you ladies are doing far too much and it, it, a majority of the time it's not your fault. We expect too much out of our ladies, then they walk into the church and hear their pastor scream at them like this, this morning. You're gonna have to get proactive to take some things out of your lives to be available to do what your citizenship requires.

We know what we believe, we know how we're getting there, now let's strive together for the glory of God. You know what's fun about this? What I'm in my 41<sup>st</sup> year of ministry here, actually if you take from the time I got here because I wasn't on staff when I first got here, I'm actually in my 42<sup>nd</sup> year of, of service here. You know what's cool about this? This is as valid today as it was 43 years ago. If pastors would just learn that, you don't have to do cool or relevant stuff, just do the truth. Just do the truth. "Well, pastor, you seem kind of dogmatic about these things." Oh no, no, no, I'm bulldogmatic about it. I do love you and I do appreciate you. Well, I'm telling you what the enemy is raging but what a great day to be a part of the church because you know what? Against the black backdrop of this culture, the light shines more brilliantly. Let's keep shining it.

"All men will know you're My disciples by the love you have one for another," that's local church, that's small groups, that's encouraging, upholding, praying, caring, correcting, holding each other accountable, all the things families do together. I'm saving the last half of the sermon for next week, all right?