

Romans #26 - Rebels With A Cause Die To Yourself

- All righty, we're in the book of Romans. I'm so excited. If you've got a Bible go to the book of Romans chapter 12, one of the most amazing books in the history of the world. This is gonna be so fun, at least for me. And I'm glad you're joining us. Here's the big idea. As we enter into Romans chapter 12, Christians are to be rebels with a cause. As everyone is rebelling against God, we're going to rebel against the world. While they take their pants up, we're gonna put our pants on. As they're picking up a bottle, we're gonna pick up the Bible. As they are picketing and protesting, we're gonna be worshiping and praying, amen We got our own little counter-cultural rebellion started as God's people. And the big idea is this, that at some point in your life, as an individual, married couple, family, and or church family, we need to decide what kind of people we're gonna become, what kind of lives we're going to live? What kind of legacies we're gonna leave. That's where Paul drives all of his great book of Romans to this point of decision in chapter 12. So, let me catch you up to speed. The first 11 chapters of Romans are primarily about our relationship with God, our vertical relationship with God, how God loves us, seeks us, saves us, forgives us, pursues us, adores us, never leaves us nor forsake us. From chapter 12 through 16, the remainder of the book that will be in this summer he talks about our horizontal relationship with one another. And the point is simply this, once you have a relationship with God, you now have an example for all of your relationships, and you have the resources for all of your relationships. So, God forgives us, so we forgive one another. God loves us, so we love one another. God pursues us, so we pursue one another. God is generous toward us, so we're generous toward one another. The big idea is simply this, that the way God treats us is the way that we get to treat one another and set culture as a family and church family. Now, this overview of Roman sounds familiar it's possibly because the apostle Paul is echoing the Lord Jesus. They came to the Lord Jesus when he was walking on the earth and they basically asked him, which is the greatest commandment, because in the first five books of the Old Testament, there are 600 laws or commands lists of do's and don't do's. And they said, well, this is a very long list could you tweak this for us? Summarize it, boil it down. Jesus said, "It actually comes down to two things, love God, love others. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength and love your neighbor as yourself. Jesus said, it's all about your relationship with God and then your relationship with God informs and transforms how you relate to others. Paul takes this same model of Jesus and outlines this incredible book of Romans. And so, where we find ourselves today is in Romans chapter 12. And up until this point, everything has been driving toward what is called cooperative commands. Up until chapter 12, most of what we have learned is what God does. From 12 through 16, we learn what God does innocent through us, how we cooperate with God. The first thing we learn is to die to self and live for God. Now, this is gonna be counter-cultural and revolutionary, because if you don't know Jesus, who do you live for? You live for you. You wake up every day. You look in the mirror, you like what do you want? What do you think? What do you need, right? What do you feel? How do you desire? Once you wake up and you meet the Lord Jesus, you're okay. What do you want? what do you think? What do you need? What do you feel? What are you desire? Our shift goes from living for ourselves to dying to ourselves and living for God. This is

what he says, Romans chapter 11, verse 36 through 12 one, "To him be the glory forever, amen." So, he wraps up the first half of the book and then he transitions, "I appeal to you, therefore brothers. So we're to love one another as Christians, like family by the mercies of God" Here's the good news. God has mercy. You didn't get it right the first time, God has mercy. You didn't get it right the 72nd time, God has mercy. You got it right for a while, and then you blew it last night in old town. I, you know, God has mercy welcome we're glad to see you. God has mercy to present your bodies as a living sacrifice holy acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. So the big idea here, he's gonna talk about from 12 through 16, how do we worship the God who has saved us? How do we worship the God who has saved us? So, we're gonna talk about what worship is and is not, and we're gonna apply it through the remainder of the book. But let me deal first and foremost, with some things that I call worship myths. I hit these with The Real Men on Wednesday night. And if you're a guy we'll see you on Wednesday night, we got two weeks left live and online. You don't wanna miss it. There is an army of men assembling in the name of love and service. It's a wonderful amazing thing to see. And I'll share with you what I shared with the men. Five worship myths. Number one, that worship is solely for Christians. Worship is not something that Christians do, it's something that humans do. If you're breathing, you're worshiping. That everyone worship someone or something somewhere in, in some way. People worship in different places in different ways, but they're pouring themselves out. They're giving themselves too. They're devoting themselves to someone or something. We can't help, but we're made to live for someone or something, and if it's not Jesus, it'll be someone or something else. Number two, the other myth is that worship is something that starts and stops it doesn't. You're constantly worshiping. You were worshiping before you came here. You'll be worshiping after you leave here. You'll worship when you go to work. You'll worship when you go to school. You'll worship when you go to the grocery store. We're always worshiping, we're living for someone or something. The desires we have, the decisions we make, the thoughts that we are entertain, the dollars that we invest or divest that ultimately all of that is connected to the heart and decisions of worship, who or what is in the position of priority. In addition, there is this myth, that worship is something that only happens in church and it starts and stops. Worship never starts and stops, and it exists outside of the church. Another myth is that worship is just a genre of music. Is it just a genre of music? No worship does include singing and stick her up. We're gonna bring the band up at the end. They're gonna do a great job. You're gonna be so happy that I'm gone, and you're going to love listening to the band. We do believe that worship includes the singing of songs to the glory of God. But worship is bigger than just singing. It's not just the songs that we sing, it's the lives that we live. That worship includes our singing, but it encompasses all of our living. And then the last myth is that worship is something that is for women and children, but not for real men. So most churches, it's probably predominantly women and children. So, most men like I don't go to church, church is for women and children. God is for women and children. Worship is for women and children. Now, we're glad that women and children know love and worship God, but worship is also for real men. So let me ask you this. So guys, let's just do this. You got nothing else to do. So let's just do this. If men don't worship in church, what are some other places in ways that men worship, where do go?

- The bar.

- They go to the bar. Okay, here's an honest answer in church. Thank you, sir. The bar, okay. So, some people go to the bar and what it is for them that becomes their community and what they're doing there. They're offering their body as a living sacrifice and they're sacrificing their liver, and their job, and their marriage. It's a living sacrifice. Thank you, sir. Okay, where else do men go for worship if they don't go to church?

- Golf course.

- They go to the golf course. Many men they worship their handicap, they just do it, and they're always trying to reduce it. And some men can't make it to church cause they're at the golf course and they're spending their time, and their energy, and their money. And instead of tithing to God, they're tithing to the country club, right. Oh, welcome to Scottsdale shots fired, okay. Where else do men go to worship God if they don't go to church?

- Stadium.

- They go to the stadium. Have you been to a college football game just see, you know? College football is a cult. Just go, you'll see it. They have a grill, they have a sacrifice. There's a guy in the end zone dressed like the mascot, he's the high priest. Everyone else is singing the song. It's a cult just so you know. We're all wearing the same colors. I mean, it's a cult. And if our team wins, yay, resurrection. If our team loses crucifixion. If we're losing, but we come back in the fourth quarter, yay our god rose from the dead. And there's even, you know, in Judaism, there's a pig and ball, but in football, there's also a pig and ball. We just carry the pig over a chalk line and it's a weird religion, okay. Where else do we then go to worship if they don't go to church?

- Work.

- Work, some guys keep working. They're working all the time. They're offering their body as a living sacrifice to their job, to their career, to their income, to their place on the organizational chart. The point is simply this we're all worshipers. We're always worshiping. The only difference between human beings is who or what or how or when, or why we are worshiping. And what he's distinguishing here is what I'll call old covenant worship before Jesus, new covenant worship after Jesus. So in the old covenant, you would go to church, the synagogue, the temple, and you would bring a sacrifice. So if you were in the old covenant, you would never come to God in worship empty handed, and the worship includes, involves a sacrifice. So, you would bring an animal and that animal would be the sacrifice, the sacrifice would die. So, in place of you as a substitute for your sin, the wage for sin is death. The animal, the sacrifice, the substitute would shed its blood and give its life for you for your sin. That was to foreshadow the forthcoming of Jesus the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Behold our Passover lamb has been slain that Jesus comes to die in your place for your sins as your substitute, as the sacrifice who dies. He then rises from death. He conquers sin. He forgives sin.

He conquers death. And then ultimately you and I are not to give a sacrifice that dies. We are to give our life as a sacrifice that lives. So, in the old covenant the sacrifice dies. In the new covenant, Jesus is the sacrifice and your life is the living sacrifice. Let me ask you this. Is it sometimes this'll be a little controversial, but is it sometimes a little harder to live for God than die for God? It is. See when someone dies for God, we call them a martyr and we honor them rightly so. But if somebody comes up and they says, deny Christ, or we're going to end your life, you said, I can't deny Christ they kill you it's over, you see Jesus, you get rewarded. Now, let's say that you have to live for Christ. Sometimes that's harder, right? Let's say you're 20 years of age and you meet Jesus in college. And then all of your professors start to assault and berate you, and then to see your grade point average diminish. And then you graduate, and then you work in a field where you are then opposed because of your Christian faith. And then you're trying to raise your kids and your family has disowned you and they have harassed you, and they have opposed you. Now, for the next 60 years of your life every day, you're a living sacrifice. You're making sacrifices in your relationships. You're making sacrifices in the upward mobility of your career. You're making sacrifices in your earning potential. You're making sacrifices in your reputation. The point is this, if you're going to worship God, it is going to cost you something. And I'm just telling you this, the way that culture is trending, the price of following Jesus just got much higher. It's not just gas and home prices that are up, so is the cost of following Christ. And we're going to offer our bodies if we are true believers as a living sacrifice. And so he helps us to figure out who or what or how or when, or why we worship. And I'll give you three questions from this section of Romans. Glory, he says, "To God be the glory both now and forever, amen." So the glory is this who are, what is in the position of preeminence and prominence in your life. Who or what is the thing I can't live without my life will have no meaning if it goes away. What's on your heart when your feet hit the floor in the morning? What's on your mind when your head hits the pillow at night? What is the thing that you fear the most? What is the thing that you long for the most? What motivates you? What inspires you? What drives you? Who or what is in the position of glory, that all things are for it and if you lose it, your life is altogether cratered and shattered? Who or what weighs heaviest in your life, that's the glory question? If it's not God, it's someone or something. The second question is amen. He says, "To God be the glory both now and forever, amen." Amen is cheering for your team. In a sporting event when everybody jumps out of the seats that's their way of saying amen. When a band comes out for the Encore and the crowd is just in a frenzy, and they're cheering, that's their way of saying amen. Who or what team are you cheering for? This can be your political party, your sports affiliation. This can be your investment portfolio. This can be your cost per square foot valuation of your home. This could be your kids. This could be your spouse. This could be your band. This could be anyone or anything. Who or what is the team that you are on and you are cheering for. And then this question living sacrifice, who or what do you make the biggest sacrifices for? Look at your schedule, where does your time go? And the best in first of your time. You only have so much time. So you're gonna sacrifice some things, so that you can allocate your time toward those things that are in the glory position. How about your money? Look at your budget, where your treasure is your heart is. Look at your budget. Where is God versus other things? Do you give first and best to God or first and best to someone else? Look at your energy. You only have a limited supply of life energy, where do you

invest it? Who or what gets the first and best of your time and your energy and your money? What occupies your thoughts? What motivates your heart? These are the questions that we asked to find the gods that we worship. Now in saying this, he gave us a clue a bit earlier in the book. In Romans chapter 1 verse 25, he said, that every one is a worshiper and what divides humanity is not race, or color, or creed, or nation, or income, or gender, but worshiper. And that there are two kinds of worshipers those who worship the creator who are and steward and enjoy creation as an act of worship, or they invert and they worship created things rather than the creator God, that's what he told us in Romans 1:25. And so let me say it this way. If you take a good thing and you make it a God thing, it becomes a bad thing. Usually, usually our problem is that we're not worshipping a bad thing, but we're worshipping a good thing in a bad position. I'll give you an example. So, let me ask you this give me some examples of addictions or compulsion's or self-destructive behaviors that people tend to get into, just give me a few.

- Alcohol.

- Okay, Alcohol is the first one. That's a good pick. Ultimately, does God allow us to consume alcohol, yes or no?

- Yes.

- Okay and if you're Baptist you're wrong. Yes, he allows us to consume alcohol and the Baptist shows like it's grape juice. It's like, if you've been drinking, that's a terrible translation. Okay, so yes, the Bible says that God gives wine to gladden the heart of man. Did Jesus make alcohol wine? Yes, it was his first miracle. So, our God Jesus made and drank wine, okay, so therefore it is not a sin. But can you have alcohol replace God in the glory? Yes. And what happens then is alcohol becomes your functional savior. You've had a hard day just pour a toll drink. You don't need to be filled with the holy spirit, you can be filled with alcoholic spirits it's a counterfeit. That ultimately now what you are doing is you are worshipping alcohol instead of the creator. This is how you become an alcoholic. You worship yourself into addiction. And the problem with alcohol is this, like all other addictions, they lie. They tell you they're going to make it better and they only make it worse. They tell you that they're going to give you life and they only bring you death. And so for some people, they say, you know, what to worship Jesus I can't consume any alcohol because for me, as soon as I touch alcohol, it takes the glory position, the God position in my life. I had one friend of mine who's a recovering addict. He recently said, "Alcohol is undefeated in my life. Every time I touch it, it wins I lose. So, I can't touch it." So, what happens is he used to worship alcohol and he used to replace the creator with the created, and now every time he's tempted to drink and he doesn't. What he's done he used to worship his way into addiction, now he's worshipping his way out. As opposed to grabbing the bottle, he's going to cling to the Lord. Hey, and so this is what happens. So for the alcoholic, they worship alcohol. For the control freak, they worship sovereignty. They don't trust that God's sovereign. If you're a control freak, you have a God problem. You don't trust the real God to be sovereign, you trust yourself. So you think if you were sovereign, you'd be safer And that's taking yourself and putting yourself in the God position. The person who is a glutton that eats too much, their God is

their stomach. The apostle Paul says, "They worshiped their way into trouble." And the way you worship your way out is you offer your body as a living sacrifice, which means you eat vegetables and go for a walk that's how you repent, something to pray about, okay? And the point is simply this even some of us, what we worship, we worship other people. We call this codependency and people pleasing. It's, you know, whatever you want, whatever you say, whatever you like, whatever you need, I just need to be aligned with you. You just tell me and I'll do whatever pleases you, that what pleases the Lord. And sometimes we even worship our own kids. I seen this all the time, even a bad, excuse me. Say this even a good kid is a bad God. Even a good spouse is a bad God. And sometimes we look at our spouse and we're like, you're the most important? No, no, no, that should be the Lord. Look at the kids say, hey, kids, you need to make my life meaningful and valuable and purposeful. I was like, no, no, no, no, no, that's God's role. We could take created things and put them in the creator's place. And as a result, we're still worshiping, giving ourselves, making sacrifices. I'll give you one example. I've shared this analogy before, but I've been a senior pastor 25 years and early on, I was doing college ministry primarily with young college kids, many of them were brand new Christians and of course they come from the world. They're living in sleeping together. They're breaking the commandments, they're dating, relating and fornicating. It's just a disaster. And so I'm always telling them, you know, that to offer your body as a living sacrifice means that you don't just give your heart to Jesus, but your body. See a lot of us are like, I gave my heart to Jesus. Well, what about your hands? Oh, those are mine. No, they're not. What about your belt. Oh, that's mine. Note Jesus is Lord over all, that means he gets your hands in your belt. See, a lot of us wanna give our hearts to the Lord. We don't want to give our bodies to the Lord. That's why some of you love Jesus and are sleeping with people you're not married to. And so there was one occasion where this college girl came up to me and she said, "I don't know what the big deal is Pastor Mark." I love Jesus. I'm a Christian. I've accepted Jesus in my heart and I'm dating a non-Christian. I just moved in with him and I'm sleeping with him, but we're not hurting anybody. And we're not, you know, we're not causing any harm. She said, "I don't know what the big deal is." I said, now here's how God sees it. I said, so there is your boyfriend and there is Jesus. These are now the two most prominent men in your life. Is that true? She said, "yes, it is." I said, okay, so which one is in the glory position? She said, it's Jesus. I said, well, does Jesus want you to date the non-Christian boy, answer?

- No. Come on dads backed me up, answer. No, see these things are not clear when you're a college boy. You're like, it's not clear when you're dad you're like crystal clear. I see this so clearly. So, I said to her so does Jesus want you to date this boy? She's like, no. I said, does Jesus want you to live with this boy? She said, no. I said, Jesus wants you to sleep with this boy. She said, no. I said, okay, so you had a decision Jesus or the boy was gonna be in the glory position in your life. I said, you know what just happened? You put the boyfriend in the glory position. That's what you just did. Jesus says something, the boyfriend says something and you choose the boyfriend over Jesus. And I said, so here's how Jesus sees it. Your apartment is a temple. Your bed is an altar. Your boyfriend is a Pagan high priest. And when you lay down, you are offering your body as a sacrifice. It's demonic, and it's spiritual, and it's worship. Okay, you and I need to think like God thinks so that we can live, like God says. And so

oftentimes we look from our perspective. We need to look from his perspective, that's what Paul is here doing for us. Once we understand that all of life is worship and all decision-making, all value holding, all dollar spending, all words speaking is ultimately worshipping then we are told to worship God with our head, our heart and our hands. And that's where he's gonna go in this remaining section of Romans, Romans 12:2. First of all worship with your head. Do not be what's the word? Conformed to this world, this fallen, sinful, fleshly, foolish, deadly, world, but be next word? Transform, those are your options conform and transform. By the renewal of your mind that by testing you may discern. And you've got to test things. Don't believe everything you read online. Don't believe everything you read in the news. Don't believe everything you think. Don't believe everything you feel. Don't believe everything your friends think and feel, test to discern is it true or false or right or wrong? What is the will of God? What is good, acceptable and perfect. Good, acceptable and perfect. Somewhat he says here is this, okay if your whole life is worship, now first of all with your mind, you've got to make a decision that you're going to be conformed or transformed. You're going to be conformed to the pattern of the world, or you gonna be transformed by the word of God those are the two options, okay. So, just let me ask you this. What are some of the things that are at work, powerful cultural forces and pressures in our world that are seeking to get you to conform to a godless baseless world. TV, social media, media, news, government, education. If you believe any of it, if you follow any of it, you're being conformed, okay. Let me say this that ultimately you can't be a loyal servant of Jesus and a gullible follower of worldly conformity you just can't. But ultimately, all of social media is to get you to conform. They're going to berate you, and harass you, and lie about you. Somebody asked Pastor Mark, how do you know this? I know a guy. So, they're going to see to pressure you to conform. And ultimately what the world loves, those who are non-Christians and ultimately Satan, as a work behind the world. What they love is when a Christian or someone who professes to be a Christian conforms to the world. They will cheer you not Gere you. They will celebrate you not oppose you because you are an apostate. We learned that just a few chapters ago in Romans. We are in the middle of a massive generational apostasy, woke Christianity, progressive Christianity, liberal Christianity, red letter Christianity, LGBTQ alphabet soup Christianity, tolerance instead of repentance Christianity far going to the left social cultural Marxism critical theory, nonsense demonic garbage Christianity is all apostasy and a mass apostasy is on the way. Okay, I'll call the shots. I'll take the shots. All that is is conforming to the pattern of the world. If you're following someone who has not the spirit of God and believes not the word of God, you are not a faithful servant of God period. And what happens is there is some of your translations will say, there is pressure from this world to be conformed to a pattern of living. If you step out of line, you will be punished. You will be throttled. You will be named called, and you will be opposed. So, let me just riff for a minute. So, here's how the pattern of the world works. Two people are having sex. They have no intentions of getting married or having each other. They get pregnant, they have two choices. We're gonna kill the child, or we're gonna birth the child. They birthed the child. Then they read that they're basically told from the culture that the child is a good person. They're a blank slate with a clean heart, which is not true. The only person who ever thinks that is a person who's never tried to raise a child, okay. The evidence doesn't hold up in court. And so, what you're told is they're good. They're just good. And they're gonna evolve and get better. All they need is a high self-esteem, which is

pride, which is demonic, which is satanic, which is not helpful. So, we have kids who are horrible with a high self-esteem. So, we give Johnny a participation trophy. We tell him he's amazing, everything he does is incredible. We put his D plus papers on the wall and we just shed tears for his amazing achievement, okay. So, then Johnny reaches the age or Sally, when he reached the age where the parents are like, we're sick of them. They're driving us crazy. They're horrible. We have the terrible twos. We have the terrorism threes. We have the tragic fours. You're five, we're gonna put you in school because obviously the institution will know what to do with you. This is where the brainwashing begins, and this is where the cult entry initiates. And so, what tends to happen is people who create education. They write curriculum. They don't have any children, okay, they don't, because let's see you're not heterosexual, little secret, you don't make people, you can't. It just the plumbing doesn't work. So what happens then is, or if you do have people and you kill them, you're not putting them in the future. So, what you'd go get a degree, so you can write curriculum to then steal other children from people and then brainwash them. We call that curriculum and education. So, now you go to school and you're told gender's a spectrum you should just try them all. And sexuality is something to explore starting at age 10. And then there is no God, and you're a good person. You need to have a high self-esteem. Well, then we hit the teen years and then it's just total craziness. You're just gonna drink. You're gonna do drugs. You're gonna be suicidal. You're gonna cut yourself. You're gonna consume social media. You're gonna care about what people think about you online. You're gonna take selfies where you're lying about your life pretending like it's awesome. And you're gonna have a lot of broken hearted ness, a lot of sexual deviancy. And then at 18 the parents are like, we're just exhausted go to college. And now we say, okay, now you're an adult. You're 18 make all your own decisions, which is not true. If you ever met an 18 year old, they're not fully cooked. They're just not, they're not ready to make a lot of decisions. So, then we send them to college to a university, which is really a cult that you pay for. And so you go to the university this is all true, okay. You go to the university and then you're just totally brainwashed. Every single class is anti-christ, anti-God, anti-repentance, anti-health, anti-holy spirit, okay. All right, so there's a guy who's bitter that he paid for his kid's college. Okay, so then you're in class and now you're just filled with poison, and critical theory, and self-righteousness, and protesting, and self-destructing. And you're drinking, and you're rebelling, and you're arrogant, and you're foolish, and you're perverted, and you're going into debt, massive debt. You're going into the trifecta debt, credit card debt, car debt, school debt. Then you graduated with a degree that there's no job for it. They didn't tell you that. And then you spend your twenties doing what? Nothing getting drunk, racking up debt, going to old town. Congratulations you made it here, right? All of a sudden now you're sleeping around. You're living with people. You you're getting a broken heart. You're picking up a venereal disease. You're you're attempting yourself with certain addictions. You're racking up your debt at around 30, or like that's time to grow. And so what you do is you find somebody who lacks discernment and thinks you're a good idea, and then they get address. You get a suit depending upon what team you're on. Maybe vice versa, no judgment, so that it looks official. You get somebody with a piece of paper to make it legal and you get married. You have no premarital, you're broken. You've got a lot of hurt and trauma. You've now doubled up, you're dead. You have no idea what you're doing. You're married for a few years and you're like, this is terrible. You don't know yourself. There's only know yourself as

you're terrible. You're terrible. You're both right. You both need Jesus. But instead what you say is, let's add a kid. So then you get pregnant. You had a kid. And now all you do is you just spire up the drunk carnival again. Some of you I've just explained generations of your family. Hey, where's the drunk clown leading the conga line, come on kids get in line, follow grandpa. So, what happens then you're raising your kids and you're totally not loving your life, it's not working. So then you hit your forties and fifties, and you get a free midlife crisis. You're like, I'm going back to my twenties. So, you got hair plugs in a Camaro. You trade your spouse in for two people whose total age is a third of your original spouse. You get a condo and you go on Tinder and you lie, and that's what you do. So, then you just waste all of your time, and your energy, and your money, and you obliterate your family then eventually you retire. Then you sit around just grumpy, bitter, jaded, complaining about politics. You know, I got the government ruined my life. And so, you're voting for someone to make up for your life of mistakes while you're just grumbling, following things on the internet. Welcome to Scottsdale. Okay, so true or false this is the pattern of the world? It's totally true. You should see people's faces, somebody were like picking on me. I'm ministering to you. This is revelation. Tell your parents. I tell everybody, this is the pie. It's not working people. People aren't healthy, they're not joyful it's not working. Everybody's arguing and fighting and blaming, and no one's repenting and worshiping and changing. So, what he says is don't be conformed to the part of the world be transformed by the renewing your mind. You got to think differently change starts in the mind. And the first two most important things you can ever learn is Romans 1 through 11 who's God, 12 through 16, who am I? Those are the first two things you gotta figure out, see what we do. We go to school and we learn about our personality, but we don't learn about our God. We write essays about ourselves. We don't write essays about our God. The problem is we start with us we don't start with him, and as a result we don't even know who we are. So Paul says, this other option is not to be conformed, but to be transformed. So, here's what this means friend to be a Christian is to be a freak minority subculture. You're the outlier. You're the outcast. You're the odd ball. You're the weirdo. Just wear it proudly. Everyone else is, right? So, here's my deal like I've been faithful to my wife we're heterosexual. I read the Bible and I like it crazy, okay. But you know what? I'm on team Jesus and I don't mind leaning over the plate, taken one for my team because at the end of the day, everything else is failing and Jesus and the word of God for generations has proven itself to always be working. See, I love you, and I want you to be healthy and holy and happy. And for that to happen, you need to have a transformed mind, not a conformed mind, but Paul says, elsewhere is the mind of Christ. So, how do you get a transformed mind? Let me tell you that being conformed as an external circumstances, pressure aerating, lying, manipulating transformed is internal. It's the holy spirit, new heart, new nature, new desires, new passions, new pleasures, new mind. The reason that the non-Christian doesn't understand the Christian is because they have not been transformed internally, they've only been conformed externally. So here's the big idea. The Holy Spirit wants to transform you internally. The culture wants to conform you externally. The point is simply this you're going to get in trouble. Just figure out what kind of trouble you're going to get it. Are you gonna get in trouble with him because you're being conformed or you get in trouble with them because you're being transformed. You're gonna get in trouble. The question is who you gotta get in trouble with and what do you get in trouble for, okay. If there is a conflict between the world and the Lord, my friend, you have to

pick a team. And once you pick a team, there's going to be a price to pay, a sacrifice to be made, which is an act of worship. And what ultimately he's saying is this. We can live kingdom down or hell up. We could live by the spirit. We could live by the flesh. We can be transformed by God or conformed by the world. He told us back in Romans 7 and 8, that this ultimately comes down to living in what he calls the spirit or the flesh. The flesh is the conforming to the world, the spirit is being transformed by the Lord. Paul articulates this in greater depth in Romans 5:16 through 26. Let me just read it to you. "Faith comes by hearing the word of God" we heard in Romans. Walk by the spirit, so lifestyles, daily choices, the decisions we make, the places we go, the relationships we have, the sex we have, the money we spend, the alcohol we consume, right? The worship is often very practical daily decisions that involve our physical body, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. Does a born again, Christian still have desires that are temptations of the flesh, yes we do. For the desires of the flesh are against the spirit there's a conflict, and the desires of the spirit are against the flesh for these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do. So, if you are a born again believer your deepest desires, your deepest nature, your deepest longings are to obey the Lord. You have lesser desires and temptations to be conformed to the world. You're living in the midst of this battle between the transformation that is in you, and the confirmation that surrounds you. And so here's what he says. Now, the works of the flesh are evident, meaning this is pretty obvious. Tell me if you've heard of any of these things. Number one, sexual immorality. Is that still a thing? I wasn't sure. Thanks for confirming that. Impurity, sexuality, idolatry, sorcery, which is false religion and spirituality. Empathy, strife, jealousy us against them. Factions, divisions, you know, narrative creating, name calling, worry that's our whole world. Fits of anger. And I would say right now America has two emotions that's our entire emotional spectrum, angry and sleep, that's all we got. Nobody's happy. Yes, people already doing they're like, I'm doing great liar, liar. No, one's doing great. No, one's doing great. He goes on rivalries, dissensions, divisions, conflict, head on collisions, envy. Oh, something good happened to you. I need to destroy you because I'm jealous of you and I can't rejoice with you. Drunkenness, orgies, and somebody would say, I haven't done any of that. So, he has this little junk drawer and things like these, what he's saying is gotcha. Okay, you did something and if you didn't, you're religious, you're proud gotcha, okay. So, that's the works of the flesh. Is that our world today? Is there a conforming pressure to just be a pervert, get angry, join a team, declare war, vent? Yes, is there an alternative way to live? Yes, oh, I just thought of this. This is an alternative lifestyle, okay? It's called the fruit of the spirit. It's our version of the alternative lifestyle, but the fruit of the spirit is love. You know what? Last year we ran really low on toilet paper and hand sanitizer, but every year we run low on love. How many people right now you feel like the world could use a little more love? I could, I'll give you a hug afterwards. All right, joy is our world filled with joy? No, because you know what? The world can't produce love and joy. Only the spirit of God can produce love and joy. What holds people together in the world is unholy alliances, not happy alliances. Patience, oh man testimony in the front row of laughter. Okay, patients, we don't live in a patient world do we. Oh no, no we just don't patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control against such things there is no law, and those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh. Since Jesus died, we need to put the flesh to that with its passions and desires. If we live by the spirit, let us keep in step with the spirit. Let us not

become conceited provoking and envying one another. What he says is, you know what? We expect them to behave a certain way out there, but we're a counter-culture, we're a subculture working them culture in here. They are of the world. We are of the Lord. We don't hate them. We love them, but we want to live by the fruit of the spirit to give them a counter-cultural way of living an alternative lifestyle invitation. When they ask, why are you joyful? Why are you happy? How come you forgive each other? Why do you guys get along? His name is Jesus and you need him too, okay. And so a couple of things, that God ultimately wants mindful Christians not mindless Christians. And the problem in our world is there is far more feeling than there is reflecting. And everyone is driven by their emotions and their passions, and this is the whole point of social media and little clips and just things out of context, just to get you to emotionally fire and respond. And that what he says is to be transformed by the renewing of your mind. So, you can test to see what is true and false, and you can discern to see what is right and wrong. So let me give you an example. There's nothing wrong with being passionate, but you need to be a mindful Christian, not a mindless. There's a lot of mindless, shallow, baseless, self-help not God help, man centered not God centered, Bible light, not Bible heavy teaching. And as a result, there's just an entire generation of mindless Christianity, and mindless Christianity is conformed to the pattern of the world and cannot be transformed by the spirit in the word of God. I'll give you an analogy. Some years ago, I grew up poor and I had a buddy he lived on a lake and he had more fluent family. And he was like, hey, I've got a sailboat house. I was like, that's crazy. He's like, would you like to go sailing? Oh sure, that's what I wanna do. So I go to his house, we jump in the boat and it's this little sailboat. And my buddy was a master. He was like an artist. So the sail and the rudder, he's got a hand on each and he just literally is an artist. And he just takes us all around the light. The seal is with power and it's directed by the rudder. It was amazing. It's like, do you wanna try? I was like I do. I was not a good, I'm lucky to be alive. I'm lucky to be here is a miracle. I was not, I couldn't figure it out. I could either do the sale or the rudder. I couldn't do both at the same time. So I get the sale up and I'm like, we're going so fast. He's like, yes toward the dock, okay. I go, oh yeah, rudder, rudder, rudder, rudder. Then I'm scared. I'm scared now. So now, I'm really scared. Like, okay all right, rudder, rudder, rudder, rudder. He's like, you got to put the sail up. Oh yeah, I was either straight, but no power or powerful with no direction that's most Christians. There's a whole generation. The seal is up nobody's got their hand on the rudder. We're passionate. We're emotional. We're excited, we're protesting. We're online. We have causes. We got these to do. Where are you going? I don't know, but it's fast, okay, that's a problem. That's a problem. And so passion is great, but mindful Christianity is the rudder to direction, okay. One of the reasons that I'm so passionate about you learning the Bible is so that you can be mindful Christians. This is why the sermons are long. This is why we tend to go through books of the bible. I wanna thank you for the honor of being your pastor and teaching you the Bible. What I like to do, I like to give out study guides to help you learn the word of God, so you can be transformed by the renewing your mind. The third edition of the Roman study guide just came out and got a real faith. If you go to the store, it's free. Download it great. If you wanna give a gift, we'll send you a copy. There's daily devotions you can sign up for five days a week. I will send you an email to your inbox. I love helping you learn the word of God. I don't know of any better way to have a transformed mind than to learn the word of God by the spirit of God, that's just my whole conviction. And so if you're new, let me

just tell you this. This is the book that God wrote it's perfect. It's the only perfect thing on earth. The reason we don't edit it is because you got it right the first time and it's not old. It's timeless that's means it's always timely, and people don't change and God doesn't change, but God uses his word to change people to become like his son Jesus Christ. And I'll just tell you a little story, my background and why I'm so passionate about you being transformed by the renewing of your mind, through the Spirit of God and the word of God. I was in college, actually in high school. I'd met grace my now wife, and I wasn't a Christian. She gave me my first Bible and then went off to college. And some of you know the story, I became a Christian reading the Bible, God saved me reading the Bible. And so then I met a state university. Okay, question state university does it exist to conform or transform? It's a conforming institution, meaning everything is against God and the word of God, and if you don't conform your grade point average goes down, you're punished. There's a sacrifice. So, I'm reading the Bible. I become a Christian. So, I go to my first pastor and I said, okay, pastor, I had the Bible in one hand and I had something called the systematic theology in the other. Biblical theology is where you look at the books of the Bible chapter by chapter verse by verse, which is what we tend to do the most. And then systematic theology is where you take the topics, and you pull the scriptures out and you categorize them you drop them into topical buckets. Both are good, no complaints sorority already either. I've actually, co-authored a systematic theology with a thousand footnotes I'm not opposed to it. That being said, I had a systematic theology in the Bible and I asked my pastor, great guy taught through books of the Bible. I said, is this a good book? And he pointed the bottle. He's like, have you read that whole book? I said, no, sir. So he said, okay, then give me this book. So he stole, broke a tape, one of the 10 commandments. He stole my systematic theology, my pastor stole my systematic theology, I said, he said, you go read your whole Bible first. I was like, okay. I didn't know. Okay, I'm a new Christian. I'll do what I'm told. Once you've been a Christian for a while, you don't do what you're told. But I'm a new Christian, so I do what I'm told. And so I started reading the Bible and I read it as fast as I could. I was really intrigued by the spirit of God, awaken this desire in me to learn the word of God weeks or months, I don't know how long I read it. And so I went back to my pastor. I was like, I read the whole thing now. I'll be honest with you. I didn't read it all with equal devotion. Like I read the genealogies and I was like Hebrew phone book, I'm out. I just kind of read fast, like, okay. And then I get to this stuff, like get a goat. And I'm like, I feel bad for the goat. I don't have a goat moving right along. So there's stuff I read quickly. I'm not gonna lie to you. And I got to revelation I was like drug test, okay. I like, I don't know why we're talking about here, okay. So, I go to my pastor and I'm like, okay, I read the whole Bible. I said, can I have my systematic theology back? He said, "no you can't." I said, well, what do you want me to do? He's like, here's your assignment? Pick a short book of the Bible, study it until you know it from heart, you've memorized verses and he taught me how to study a book of the Bible. And he said, take some months and do that. He said, just think about it. He said, you're 1920, whatever I was, he said, there's 66 books in the Bible imagine if you took six months for every book of the Bible, he said, by the time you're in your 50's, you will have gone through the whole Bible. At the time I thought 50 that's so old. And I'm like, it's not that bad. So, I pick 1 John, I read the whole thing and I actually loved it. I was way more excited about it than my classes. So I go to my pastor I'm like, all right, buddy, pastor, buddy, what now? He said, "pick another book and do it again." I said, how long do you want me to do this for? I

said, "you do this till you die." So, that's what I've been doing. I pick a book of the Bible and study it, teach it to you pick another one, okay? And you know what? It happened at the same time that I was in state university, what was the university trying to get me to do conform to the pattern of the world, but I'm being transformed by the word of God. The Spirit of God will use the word of God to transform the child of God, that's how this works. So in every class, so I go to my sociology class and they're like, we're all good and evolving. And I'm like, Nope. I go to my gender class. They're like, here's a spectra boys and girls. Gender class was the worst 15 minutes of my life. I'm in my philosophy class and they're like, all ideologies are just perspective there is no truth. I was like I met a guy who said, "He was the truth." So in every class, the conforming pressure is there, but the transforming power is greater. See, let me tell you this parents, I didn't say this in the earlier sermons, but the Holy Spirit brings it to mind. If you want to raise mindful Christians, you need to raise Christian children who are not naive, but wise. Naive Christians don't know the difference, wise Christians do. When our kids were little, I'll give you an analogy it just comes to mind. We'd be watching shows sometimes, you know, Nickelodeon, Disney, all that stuff that's just garbage tastic part of the brainwashing program, okay. But what we would do is I would hit pause and we talk about it. Hey, what about that? And what I wanted them to do is to have mindful Christianity for them to discern truth, and error, and wisdom, and folly. My kids knew a lot, but they didn't do a lot because they knew what was right and wrong. Sometimes the only way to know right and wrong is to let them see what is wrong, okay. And so what God wants is he wants mindful Christians, not mindless Christians. That being said, then we worship God with our heart. The internal reflection of, okay, who am I? How did you make me? Let me assess myself. Romans 12:3 "For the grace given to me, that's one of my favorite lines in the whole Bible, because my wife name is grace. I quoted that to her yesterday she was making me like, she's like, "For the grace given me." I just, I thought it was cute. So, "For the grace given me, I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly." We tend to think better of ourselves not lesser of ourselves. We call this self-esteem. It's also called in the Bible pride. The Bible has nothing good to say about pride. It's demonic. It was Satan sin. And it's the mother of all sins, always pregnant with evil. But to think with sober judgment, some people they think like they're drunk, the opposite of sober is drunk. "Each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned him." What he's talking about here is in your heart, figuring out, okay, God, who am I? Okay, I know who you are now. You're Jesus Christ. Okay, who am I? And what he says is to assess yourself with sober judgment, you ever met somebody that they're assessed with themselves seems a little drunk. You're like, how are you doing? Sometimes I'll meet with married couples. And let me just tell you this. Usually the husband is the drunk one when it comes to evaluating the relationship. So you're supposed to be like, how you guys are? We're doing great. You look at her, she's like, she's tapping her gun. She's not blinking. She's not blinking. Like, right, I don't think that's a sober assessment. She's actually got it loaded. Like I don't think you guys are doing great. So, that's what happens is we're not the best person to diagnose ourselves. So, sometimes other people in the community of faith help us to, how are you doing? I've met people that are like, I'm doing great. No, you're not. I'm healthy, no you're not healthy. I'm wise, the wise person never says that, right. And so it's soberly assessing yourself. Who am I? Who did God make me to be? Everybody's talking about here is if you're going to serve, you need to have humility, and this is knowing who you

are, and the place that God has created for you to occupy. And what kills us is what he says, an overinflated view of self. Let me say this. Some of you aspire to things that will hurt you. Some of you aspire to positions that will destroy you. What humility allows? Humility allows you to be content with whatever position God has given to you, that Jesus Christ is humble. He was willing and able to serve and reign in the past, and in the present is king of Kings. Lord of Lords. See, was humble enough to receive glory honor and praise. He was also humble enough to come into human history, to live without sin, to work a carpenter's job and to die on the cross for you and me to save us. What humility allows? It allows number one, you to welcome God to serve you. Some people will say that Christianity is easy, all you gotta do is accept Jesus. Actually, it's hard because you don't participate, you don't add, you don't earn, you are a beggar. You're like I got nothing, and I need everything, that takes humility. It takes humility for you to allow Jesus, to serve you and to allow others to serve you. How many of you you like to serve, you don't like to be served. I got it. I'll pay. I'll pay for half. Let me at least contribute. You're like, no, I got this. No, no, no, no, no. I got to do something that's pride. And humility also allows us to serve others. Jesus said, I didn't come to be served, but to serve. Humility allows us to be served by God and others, and to serve others on behalf of God, and that ultimately is what worship is. Let me say this. You can't be healthy, unless you allow God and others to serve you, and you can't be healthy unless you're serving. And what he's talking about is just being content with your position. See, ultimately, if you're on team Jesus, let me just say this who cares what position do you play, right. If you're on team Jesus, or like I read the book, it goes well for us in the end, like we're all gonna dance in the end zone. It's going to be awesome. So, who cares what position I play? Some people are like, I gotta be the quarterback. Why, why just figure out who you are, and how God made you to be and be content with the things that he's assigned for you to do. See what Paul says elsewhere he says, I've been rich and I've been poor. I'm fine either way. He says, I've been in power, and I've not had power. I've had people love me and write against me, either way if that's what God has for me, I'm contending with that. Let me just say that our whole world is lacking in contentment and just saying, this is who I am. Maybe I live in a penthouse. Maybe I live in an outhouse either way I'm concerned. How many of you right now, really contentment is just something you just don't have. And the result is that you're offering your body as a living sacrifice to get things that God doesn't want you to get to do things that God hasn't asked you to do, and to become someone that God didn't create you to become. And the reason that God may be stopping you is because he loves you, and he's saving you from you. And so once you understand in your heart who you are, then what you can do is you can worship God with your hands and just say, okay, who am I? What's my place on the team? What's my role? Jesus, I'm here to serve what would you assign for me to do, that's where he concludes worship God with your hands. Romans 12:4-8 "For as in one body." So as a metaphor analogy, the church were like a body. We have many members are parts, fingers, toes, ears, eyes, we're all different. We need each other, and members do not all have the same function. The reason that we're different, we're better different. You go to church and they're like, we've got 57 preachers that's a weird church. That's like a guy with 57 likes, congratulations. You're not gonna fall over, but you really need a head, you know. In Christ an individual members of one, another having gifts, spiritual gifts, spiritual enablements, and endowments that differ according to the grace, given us, let us use them. Whatever your thing is, just do your

thing. If prophecy in proportion to our faith of service in our serving the one who teaches in his teaching, the one who exhorts or encourages in his expectation or encouragement, the one who contributes in generosity. The one who leads with zeal and the one who does acts of mercy with cheerfulness. So, the first thing he's saying here is that as a church family, we're like a body and we all need each other. We're interdependent, mutually necessary, and if one of you is missing or not functioning, we're all suffering. Let me say this people don't just have gifts, people are gifts. You don't just bring a gift, you are a gift. My kids, they have gifts, but my kids are gifts. In the family of God, you're the children of God. You don't just have gifts, you are gifts. And we love you. And thank you. It's an honor to have you. But, how many of you in your physical body God's will use physical experiences to illustrate spiritual truth? How many of you have had something go wrong or out of kilter in your body? And you realize it all kind of works together. I had this recently, if you saw me recently on a few weekends, I was a low, I was walking a little weird it's cause I really, I tweaked, I hurt my back. Now, somebody asked how'd you do that? I was sleeping. I don't know what happened. Like welcome to 50 the check engine light comes on, I don't know. I mean, everything you buy comes with a manual because the attorneys got a ball. Like he buy a, you know, a hairdryer they're like, don't eat it or use it in the shower. You're like, oh, well, thank you. I was gonna eat it in the shower. Oh my God, like, you know, so a mattress doesn't even come with an instruction manual and like I had that figure it out. So because with a mattress, there's two things there. Like what if I lay down and put it on me that's not very good. Let me try this way. Oh, that's so much better. So, they know we're going to figure it out. It's a fairly simple mechanical process. So, I crawl into bed and I wake up Grace was like what happened? I was I roll over, because when I was in high school, I played football and I was running the wishbone and some kid, he speared me with his helmet right in the middle of my back. So me ask best mark, where you go to football. No, that's where I'm working this job on Sunday. I wasn't that gun. I'm free, I'm free on Sunday. So every once in a while, like tweak it. So recently I tweak it and you know what happened all of a sudden it's like, oh, infact its everything. Now, all of a sudden, my back is the muscles are tightened up, but now the muscles in my leg are tightened up. Now, my neck is out of kilter. So I literally, I recently finished a sermon on a weekend. I was like I literally leave this town. Like I'm 175 years old. Everybody's like, are you okay? No, you got wounded rolling over in my bed. Every day part works together. We all need one another. And what he's saying is each of you has a gift or gifts, and there's four gifts lists in the New Testament. Romans 12, we just looked at 1 Corinthians 12, 1 Peter 4, Ephesians 4, the lists are different. Some people think you put them together. You get a total compiled list. I don't think that this is an exhaustive list by compiling them. I think they're examples. I think anything that you can do, any ability, skill, talent you have, if the Holy Spirit uses you to serve others on behalf of Jesus, it is a spiritual gift. It is a ministry. And so what we'll do here, we'll do just this little list and just some of you this will explain it, but the key is figure out who you are, and what God made you to do and what this is. What are you passionate about? What are you good at? What are other people appreciate about you? Serve somewhere if it doesn't work, try something else, but he starts with prophecy. This is the person who is very passionate. They have strong opinions. They're very divisive. They lead with courage. There's a strong reaction. People try to stop them from proclaiming the word of God. They come out of the woods. They're a little untaught and they're a bit unpredictable. No, anybody like that? Okay,

pray for me that's the gift of prophecy. Hey, that was fun, okay? How about serving? How many of you you're like, I don't care? What you need? First of all to get you're like, what do you want to do? They're like, what do you need? That's the gift of Surrey, I don't care this, whatever. This is my wife, Grace. She just likes to serve and help. She doesn't mind what I've showed you, whatever. And I have the gift of being served, so it's incredible in our marriage. The gift of teaching he talks about these are people who like to research and study, summarize, and then communicate, and they love it when the light bulb goes off. Those are the gifts of teaching we tend to be I've also got to give to teaching, tend to be more introvert. We like dead people who write books, and then we go tell living people what they said, that's what we like to do. And so, you know, we've accepted footnotes in our heart and they know we like to read, we did some of your like books. So yeah, we love that. Some of the teaching gift they're good one-on-one like counseling or mentoring. Some are good in a small group asking questions. Some are good in the class lecturing. Some are good in a big group that's the gift of teaching expectation or encouragement. Encouragement is literally to put courage into someone. Grace's daddy Gib was a pastor we named this church in honor of him he passed away some years ago, and he was the founder and pastor of something called the Trinity Church and he had the gift of encouragement. And I forget, I was talking to grandpa Gib Gracie's dad. And I said, dad what do you think your gift is I'm brand new Christian? He said, I have the gift of encouragement or expectation. And then I met a guy in his church he had a smaller church. There really was a lot of people that he counseled broken people. And so I asked this guy, I said, so tell me your story. He's like, well, I was a drug addict for 18 years trying to get clean and sober. I was like, wow, how'd you do that? He said, well, every week Gib bought me breakfast for 18.

- Wow. I was like, so you were high at breakfast every week for 18 years? He's like, yeah and Gib would talk to me and say, Jesus loves you there's hope for you. I believe in you. You're going to get clean and sober. If not this week, then next, I'll see you next week for 18 years. And he said, then one day I believed him, and I've been sober ever since. Seeing you hear that and you say that's a lot, but if that's your dad, aren't you glad that somebody with a gift of encouragement hung in there. Okay, that's those are the people who they encourage. They exhort, they see the future. They have hope they share their faith. Then there's also the gift of generosity. Most people don't have the gift of generosity. Some people do meaning they love to gift. Okay, how many of you have the gift of generosity? You love the gift. Put your hand down because the people with the gift of receiving, they're like, awesome. I've got a pocket for you. Watch out, okay. And here's the deal Jesus said, "It's more blessed to give than receive." And so there's something called prosperity theology. Let's say that you give to get a blessing. Here's the truth you don't give to get a blessing. Giving is the blessing mean? It's like, you know what, because everything I have is a gift from God and he gave it to me to share it with you. Now, my doubly blessed because I get to receive it and share it. My son Gideon, who's our son, who's getting his 15. He's always had the gift of giving. When he was a little boy, I'll tell you a crazy story. One day, some rolling up a whole bunch of cash you'd like a hundred bucks, like a big wad. And he put it in his pocket, he's going to Christian School. I was like, what is that? But he's like, walking around money. I was like walking around? Where are you walking man, little guy. And he said, no, I always need some walking around money. And he's like, okay. So, then we

get a call from the teacher she says, Gideon is such a great kid. She said, he's always got a lot of money. I said, he rolls deep that kid, you know? And she said, but every day there's some kids that forgot their lunch money and Gideon finds out who they are, and he always buys them lunch and if they need supplies, he buys them. And he said, he's always asking the kids what they need and he is always giving to their needs. So if you love people, you don't want to use money. Excuse me, let me say this. If you love people, you don't wanna use people to make money, you wanna use money to love people. It's a way that we give grace, it's generosity. And then he talks about leadership these are the people who call the shots and they take the shots. And a leader is really motivated by deep profound love for the people, and they're willing to go out front and say, I will take the arrows so that we can advance the mission because these people are priceless. That's leadership, and that's my heart for you and you need to know that. And then lastly, he talks about mercy, compassion, empathy. These are the people who sympathize, they empathize, they have compassion. Sometimes these are the people they know exactly what to say and sometimes they know there's nothing to say. I'm just gonna practice the ministry of presence and be here with you and for you in it cause I love you. And what he says is I love the last word in chapter 12, verse 8 cheerful now. What he's saying is if we're transformed rather than conform, and we worship God with our head, and our heart, and our hands. And we spend our life serving others, as God has served us joining Jesus in his work of ministry, he says, "There's cheerfulness." It's the Greek word for hilariousness. It's the best life. It's a joyful life. It's a happy life. That's why during this crazy season that we've lived through in the last year, this has been a happy place. This has been a joyful place. This has been a cheerful place because we're being transformed, because we're filled with the Spirit because we're seeking to serve one another as Jesus Christ has served us and the Christian life is not the easiest life, but it's the most joyful life cause there's only joy in life, in the spirit, amen. And so what we're talking about is worship, I'm gonna bring the band up. You've been worshiping by listening. Now, you're going to be worshiping by singing, and then you're gonna depart to worship by serving. And let me just tell you this. I know it's hard. I know the world is dark. I know things are difficult. I know Christianity is under attack. I know Jesus is diminished in popularity, but the good news is this. I've read the word of God. And in the end, Jesus returns, he conquered Satan, sin, death, hell the wrath of God. He brings a kingdom that never ends. And if you are serving Jesus, it says, "to him be the glory forever and ever, amen." That you're on the winning team, that goes forever. That now I'll close with one thing. Yesterday, I was prepping the sermon. I go outside to prepare the message and the messenger, I'm praying and I'm preparing the word of God, and this came up. It was about a five or six foot Mojave rattler came up to me. And I'm literally praying. I'm like, okay, Lord, I wanna get your word out. And I want to love your people. Here comes a deadly snake. And I thought, isn't this illustrative of the Christian life. We're in the word of God trying to advance the kingdom of God, and a deadly enemy shows up. The Bible says that Satan is like a snake. The demons are like snakes. So, here's what I did. I chopped his head off and then in a tribute to the Lord Jesus, I built a fire because that's where Jesus is gonna throw the snake. When all is said and done and I threw the snake on the fire and prep, the sermon "Jesus Is Gonna Win You're Gonna Be On The Stick."

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