

Revelation 16
Why God Does What God Does
Pastor JD Farag

KAPONO: We want to give You thanks for this day. We want to give You thanks for this place. What a blessing to have, to be where we are, Lord. So we thank You for the people who are here joining us live. Lord, we thank You for this time of worship and for those online as well.

Lord, would You speak to us this morning as we get into Your word? Would You make things, this passage, as Red Sea clear Lord, that we may not miss anything that You have for us, but rather soak it in, Lord, that we may be transformed by Your word from the inside out. So we ask these things, Lord, in Your mighty name, and the only name we could ever ask such things. We say, Jesus. We pray. Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen and welcome. You can be seated. Thank you. Glad you're here. Those of you online, glad you're watching. Before we jump in, though, I just want to quickly mention that our prayer meeting is going to be this upcoming Tuesday. It's the 4th, 7:00 p.m. here in the sanctuary. I'm going to begin with a brief teaching, key word brief, a brief teaching titled 'When God Delays Answering Prayer.'

And actually, it was birthed out of the text that we have before us today, which is Revelation *Chapter 16*, the first nine verses. Now, *Chapter 15* was preparatory. It was a preparation as the angels were given the golden bowls filled with the wrath of God.

Now as we turn this corner into *Chapter 16*, the angels are going to now pour out the wrath of God from these bowls. So I'm just kind of forewarning you. It's a pretty intense passage, but it's in our Bible for a reason, and I hope to explain what that reason is. So for the reading of God's word, if you're able, I'll ask you to stand. If not, where you're seated is fine. You don't have to, just if you're able to and want to.

John is writing as he was commanded to by the Spirit and says, *verse 1*, **“Then I heard a loud voice from the temple saying to the seven angels, “Go, pour out the seven bowls of God's wrath on the earth.” The first angel [Verse 2] went and poured out his bowl on the land, and ugly, festering sores broke out on the people who had the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The second angel [Verse 3] poured out his bowl on the sea, and it turned into blood like that of a dead person, and [Everything] every living thing in the sea**

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died. The third angel [Verse 4] poured out his bowl on the rivers and springs of water, and they became blood.

Then I heard [Verse 5] the angel in charge of the waters say: “You are just in these judgments, O Holy One, You who are and who were; for they have shed the blood of Your holy people and Your prophets, and You have given them blood to drink as they deserve.” [Verse 7] And I heard the altar respond: “Yes, Lord God Almighty, true and just are Your judgments.” The fourth angel [Verse 8] poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was allowed to scorch people with fire. They were seared [Verse 9] by the intense heat, and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, but they refused to repent and glorify Him.”

Told you. (Chuckling) Let's pray. Father, please. Oh, how desperately we need the Holy Spirit at this time to teach us and enable us to navigate through the text that's before us today. We need the Holy Spirit to be our teacher and our guide and give us eyes that we might see, ears that we might hear, and hearts that we might receive.

Lord, and I know I pray this seemingly weekly, but I pray it again today, especially today, given the intensity of the passage, that the enemy would in no way be allowed to get our minds to wander or distract us, but instead, that the Holy Spirit would enable us and empower us to focus and concentrate. Because You want to speak into our lives through this. Even though we're not going to be here for this, there's a lesson, many lessons here for us in this. So will You teach us those lessons? We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

You can be seated. Thank you. So I want to talk with you today about why it is that God does what He does in our lives, especially those times when it just doesn't make any sense. And we know that His ways are not our ways. We know those passages in Isaiah well. We quote them often. I mean, we know that we're incapable of knowing all of God's ways, all of God's whys. Who can know the mind of the Lord?

Okay, we get that. But we are still promised in God's word for God's wisdom and for God's understanding. And it's there for the asking and replete throughout Scripture, particularly in the Proverbs. Just a couple off the top of my head. I can't quote you chapter and verse.

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Those brain cells gone died a long time ago. But it brings glory to a king to search out the matter.

I think about James, who makes it very clear in no uncertain terms that **“you have not because you ask not.”** Well, what did you ask not for that you have not? **“Wisdom from above that's first pure and peaceable and gentle and easy to be entreated, and full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality or hypocrisy, bearing fruit unto righteousness.”** See, you don't have any of that because you never sought that or asked for that.

So we're promised that if we ask, God will give it to us, and He won't hold back. He's not stingy. He'll give us the wisdom from above generously. Upbraideth not, the King James renders it. Withholding not, none of it. Giving to us all of it. All the wisdom we need, there for the asking. Just ask. Jesus said, just ask Me for anything, and if it brings glory to the Father, you got it. I mean, that's a loose paraphrase, but basically, if it's good, it's God, and He will not withhold any good thing from you.

In Romans 8, we talked about, last week, where Paul writes and frames the question just, you know, by the Spirit, just brilliantly of course, perfectly. But if God was unwilling to withhold from you His only begotten Son, who He gave to you to die for you, is there anything He wouldn't do for you? Makes sense.

And then what about in Hebrews? We're told that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Actually, the brain cells are coming back because I got a couple more. Is that okay? I'm just thinking about when Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount said, **“Ask and you shall receive; seek, you shall find; knock, the door shall be opened unto you.”** And we leave it there, and we go past it, and we leave it at that to our own peril, I might add. Why? Because in the original it carries with it the idea of ask, keep on asking; seek, keep on seeking; knock, keep on knocking. In other words, don't give up.

And my favorite, and I'll cap it off at this, is the parable we affectionately refer to as the persistent widow and the unjust judge. And I mean, she's texting him. He blocks her. She gets a new number, texts him again, calls him. Blocks her. Goes to his door, knocks on the door. She wants justice, but he's an unjust judge. But she's so persistent and tenacious that the judge — not that God is like that. Like, the only way I'm going to get JD off my back is if I

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just give it to him. He's basically — the point of the parable is if an unjust judge will grant justice, how much more will your Father in heaven?

The point being: Be persistent. The judge finally just says, man, the only way I'm going to get her to stop is if I give her justice, which he did. Tenacity, persistency, seeking God. Clearly, You've allowed this situation into my life. It's kind of disorienting. It's troubling. It's painful. It's difficult. I don't know what to do. I need guidance. I need wisdom. That's asking, that's seeking, that's knocking.

What? God's not going to give it to you? He gave you His only begotten Son. What's He going to say? No, not this time. You're on your own, kid. That's not who God is. Now, why am I going into all of this? Because the text that we have here requires that we seek wisdom and understanding, lest we fall prey to misunderstanding.

Let me explain. First of all, these are the final bowl judgments. Oh, thank God. We survived the seals and the trumpets, and now the bowls. And I could only take four, couldn't take no more. But next week you have to come because we're going to take the rest, Lord willing. But this is it.

In fact, I love the end of *Chapter 16*. Spoiler alert. After the final bowl is poured out, God says, it's done. Ho! Reminiscent of Jesus on the cross. **“It is finished.”** So these final bowl judgments of God's wrath — and remember this is different in the original language of the Greek New Testament than the wrath of God that we read in the seal judgments. That's *orgē* or *orgē* in the Greek, which is kind of unrestrained.

In fact, it has some other connotations. This word for wrath here is *thymos* from where we get our English word for *thermos*, and it carries with it this idea of a boiling over, hot, raging, explosive anger. And would you agree with me that it's passages like this that people point to when you're trying to share Jesus with them as God is a God of wrath?

Well, now, wait a minute. If you're in Christ, you're good because God took all of His wrath, His anger, and He place it on His only begotten Son, whose blood was shed in your stead.

“So there is therefore now [Romans 8:1] no condemnation [No wrath] for those that are in Christ Jesus.”

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This is why we won't be here for this because the Bible makes it clear that we're not appointed to wrath. Why are we not appointed to wrath? Because we're in Christ and He took that wrath of God that we deserved.

But it's passage just like this that people point to and argue about concerning the nature of God. And this is so foundational that I have to take the needed time. Otherwise, God forbid, anyone leaves here today or ends the video online today misunderstanding why God does what God does here.

You see, the bowl judgments increase in their severity and intensity for a reason. This is towards the end of the 7-year Tribulation. And absent a true biblical understanding of who God is, what ensues is a worldly misunderstanding of what God does. I'm going to say the same thing in a different way. If I don't know the true character and nature of who God is, I will never be able to understand what God does. See, when you don't know, you fall back on *[Watch the play on words]* Who you do know.

Let me say that again. When you don't know, you fall back on who you do know. Well, who do you know? I happen to know people in high places, very high places, God, the creator of the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that in them is. And that's going to come up here in a minute. And I know that He's a loving God, and He's a just God, and His judgments are righteous and fair and true. "Yeah, but this seems so disproportionate, like the punishment is disproportionate to the crime." "No, it's not."

In fact, that's one of the reasons why they're increasing in severity. God is turning up the heat. What's going to come leaping out from this chapter is — it's hard to wrap your mind around it, but mankind is cursing and blaspheming instead of repenting, and they're hardening themselves instead of humbling themselves.

And this is why God has to now turn up the heat, literally, with the sun. You know, the same heat can either soften or harden. And man is not only hardening, but also blaming God, cursing God, blaspheming God as some of your translations render it. These first nine verses with the first four angels pouring out God's wrath have to be prefaced and balanced with God's grace and justice. Because if you don't see it or get it, then you're going to always see God as a god of wrath. Yeah, I did that pretty good, actually, effects, you know, added.

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Again, in conversations with people about the Lord, is this not always put in your face about the Lord? They always draw upon the wrath of God, you know? Well, wait a minute. This is the grace of God. “I don't know what Bible you're reading. I don't see grace anywhere here.”

Oh, yeah. See, the first angel — we don't know the amount of time in between. But when that first angel pours out his bowl, and then the second angel pours out his bowl, then the third angel, and so on, you would think that at some point someone would finally surrender and repent. That's the point. That's God's grace.

How so, you ask? He did everything and stopped at nothing because **“It's not His will that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”** And many will, by the way, in fact, countless multitudes will, especially by this time. Sometimes God has to turn the heat up in our lives, doesn't He? “Well, that didn't work. Get angel four. Come here. JD needs the heat turned up.” “Oh, God! Now you got my attention. What?”

Well, you could have saved yourself so much, you know, needless, unnecessary pain and hardship and suffering and even confusion, had you but sought Me and repented.” By the way, let's clear up this repentance thing because this is a thing. I don't know how it happened. I just know that it happened. Somewhere along the line, someone somewhere took repentance and turned it into something it's not. What's repentance? A change of mind. A 180. You do a U-turn.

Why do I point that out? Because this is now used in lordship salvation as a prerequisite that your salvation is predicated upon whether or not you've truly repented. See what you've done? Now it's not grace, it's works. There's something I have to do. And that's not the Gospel. It is done. There's nothing you bring to the table of salvation.

1 Corinthians 15, the first four verses. Jesus — this is the Gospel — Jesus came, He died, He was crucified, He was buried, He rose again on the third day. And then the first time Paul, the Apostle Paul, mentions the Gospel to the Thessalonians, he adds, **“and He's coming back one day.”** That's the good news.

What does the word “gospel” mean? Good news. Your debt has been paid. The death penalty has been carried out by another. You're free to go. **“And whom the Son has set**

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free is free indeed.” Free from what? Free from the coming wrath of God on those who reject the free gift of salvation and eternal life in Jesus Christ that He paid for in full and purchased. And it cost Him everything, even His life.

Okay, that was my introduction. We're okay. I found four reasons that I hope will explain why God does what God does in our lives. And I'm hoping that they'll be an encouragement to you. And I'll take it a step further and suggest that I'm also hoping that it will clear some things up for you. I want it to be an encouragement to you, but I also want it to clear up some things for you. So the four are as follows in order: Why God does what God does.

Number 1: To be protective of me, in *verses 1 and 2*. To answer prayer for me, in *verses 3 and 4*. To show He's fair with me, in *verses 5 through 7*. And 4: To bring repentance in me, *verses 8 and 9*. Again, to bring about the much-needed change in my life because I'm going down the wrong path, and God loves me too much. So much.

Well, let's start with the first one in *verses 1 and 2*: To be protective of me. How many warnings? Don't take the mark. Don't worship the image. Here John writes about the pouring out of the first bowl, which very interestingly results in these ugly, festering, loathsome, as some of your translations render it, sores on the skin. Only on those with the mark who worship the image of the beast.

Now, we've talked about this in prior Updates. But *verse 2* makes it very clear that nobody accidentally takes the mark unwittingly, unknowingly. No. They take the mark of the beast by pledging their allegiance to and their worship of the image of the beast.

It's very clear. We saw it in *13, Chapter 13*. There's a lot of misnomers, sadly, surrounding this. I mean, I think Satan has been met with smashing success in getting Christians just derailed and sidetracked and distracted with nonessential things, chief of which is who's the Antichrist? I don't know. But it doesn't matter. I'm not looking for the Antichrist. I'm watching and waiting for Jesus Christ. Yeah. So have a nice afternoon. You want to get all worked up about — I wonder what — I wonder how it's going to...

No, listen. Remember the 144,000? They were protected and sealed. You know, sometimes God will allow things into our lives. And He'll do what He does if for no other reason other than to show me that He's protective of me. He's protecting me, by the way.

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How many did not have these ugly, festering sores break out on them? Multitudes. Why? Because they didn't take the mark. Many of whom lost their lives, were martyrs, martyred for their faith. Beheaded. Actually it's specific. But God protects them.

Remember the plagues? By the way, the parallels. We'll see. I don't want to make any promises. Maybe next week. There's a lot of parallels between the ten plagues of Egypt and these seven bowls of wrath. But isn't it interesting? When the plagues hit, God protected His people. All of the Egyptian's livestock dies. All of the Israelite's livestock no die. God has His protective covering over us.

You know He's given angels charge concerning us. I hope that doesn't weird you out, but you've got angels all around you. I feel sorry for mine. In fact, when I meet them, I'm going to apologize to them. Sorry you were assigned my file. These are angels in the spiritual realm that are protecting us. You hear those accounts, you know, "They should have never survived this accident." Oh, huh. God's guardian assigned angels protected them because God wanted them protected.

You know, we can go through things and still see and experience the protective hand of God. There's a hymn of old that I think goes something like, ♪ Stay under the spout where God's blessings come out ♪

I think sometimes, you know, those trials that we're in are there — just stay under that spout where God's protective covering comes out. So they disobeyed God and despite repeated and unheeded warnings from a loving God who warned them ahead of time. Why? Because He was to protect us from what He knows will ultimately destroy us.

I love how one said it and even authored a book by this title. They're not the Ten Commandments. They're 'The Tender Commandments' from a loving heavenly Father who says, I love you so much. I don't want you to do that because I can't stand to see you suffer needlessly and unnecessarily the consequences of what doing that will bring into your life.

Covetousness: The 10th one. You know that's the only one that's not outward. That's the only one that's inward in the heart. It will eat you for lunch from the inside out.

Covetousness. So let's just take that one. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife and Mercedes and all that. Is this God saying, thou shalt not because I am God, and I said so?

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And if thouest does doest this, thou shalt surely die! That's the world's view of God. I'm sorry if that was a little over the top. But you get the point, right?

No, it's more like this. It's actually the opposite. It's more like, don't do that because I love you, and I'm trying to protect you from the consequences that will always ensue when you do. Don't covet because it'll just eat you up from the inside. Don't steal. Don't murder [*Not kill, murder*] You'll be haunted and hunted for the rest of your life. Don't commit adultery. It'll destroy your life, your family. You can take every ten of those commandments and they are tender commandments from a tender, loving, heavenly Father that is warning us about that which has the propensity to destroy us.

Let's move to the second one. This is in *verses 3 and 4*. And by the way, this was the impetus for what I want to share on Tuesday night at our prayer meeting because it has to do with God answering prayer in His time, in His way, and for His glory, not my time or my way. It's been said God is never late, but so too, is God never either early. God's timing is perfect.

So let's talk about this second angel because this speaks to the lesson of God answering prayer for me. He pours out his bowl, and it results in the oceans turning into blood and everything in the ocean dying because of it. And then you get to the third angel pouring out his bowl and that results in the fresh water also turning into blood, as opposed to only a third in the seal judgments. Remember in *Chapter 8*, only a third? Now it's all the water.

Okay, Pastor, how do you get answering prayer for me out of that? Oh, I'm so glad you asked. You asked, didn't you? Just say yes, and I'll move on. Okay. To the question of how this relates to God answering prayer for me, we have to rewind to the prayer of the martyrs or saints again, as some of your translations render it, in *Chapter 6*, specifically *verses 10 and 11*. Let me read them and then expound on them.

Verse 10, Revelation 6, **“And they...”** Who's they? The martyrs, those who rejected the worship of the image of the beast and the mark of the beast. And it cost them their lives, and they were beheaded, and their blood was shed, and they were killed and martyred because of it. That's who “they” are.

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So **“they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, [*Hang on to that*] until You judge and avenge our blood [*Blood*] on those who dwell on the earth?”**
[Now verse 11] Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer...”

Oh, I don't like that answer to prayer. See, God is always answering your prayer. That's not the issue. The issue is we don't like the answer that God has given us to our prayer. So He's going to answer your prayer in one of three ways. Yes. I love it when He does that. No. I hate it when He does that. Or even worse, wait.

“Just a little while longer.”

“How long?”

“A little while longer.”

“Okay. Can You give me a time?”

“No. Just a little while longer.”

“I don't like to wait.”

“I know.” It's just a little while longer.

“...until [*Keyword*] both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed [*Hadn't yet*] as they were, was [*And here's this word again*] completed.”

In other words, I'm almost done. Just wait. Just hold tight. Just hang on a little while longer. I will. Yeah, but when? A little while longer. Just wait. You'll see.

I should save this for Tuesday night, but this is all you're getting out of me, by the way. You know, it's cliché. I know you know, 'God's delays are not God's denials.' Praise the Lord. But when you're in the heat of the battle, in the midst of the furnace, and you're crying out to God, and God says, wait just a little while longer, that's hard. It's almost done. But not yet. But it will be. Just wait. Just wait. Rest. Some of your translations render that differently. Trust. Wait a little while longer and know that God's going to take care of it. He will avenge your blood.

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You know what we just read in *verses 3 and 4* is the answer, a little while later, to the prayer in *Revelation 6:10-11*. Everything turns to blood. Why? He's avenging their blood like He said He would. I'm sorry I'm yelling. I'm not — I just, I can't go to the next one until I'm sure you understand that God is going to answer your prayer.

“Yeah, but, Pastor, I've been praying for years.”

“Don't stop. Keep texting.”

“Yeah, they keep blocking me.”

“I know. Just never, ever, ever, ever give up. Because God will answer that prayer.”

A classmate of mine, friend of mine, when I came to Christ, I beat him over the head with the Bible and just, Jesus this, heaven this. You're going to hell, man. It was bad. And then I moved out, got my own place. And I just kept praying.

15 years go by, and I get a call. He says, I just wanted to let you know that I gave my life to Christ. And being the calm, you know, soft spoken, humble, godly pastor that I am, my response? What took you so long? What is wrong with you? Are you kidding me? 15 years man! Never give up.

Let's talk just real quick about the wayward daughter, the prodigal son. Never ever, ever, ever, ever, ever give up. You hang in there. You wait. You rest. You trust. The Lord loves them more than you ever could and wants them right with Him more than you ever will. Okay, I think I beat that one pretty good.

Verses 5 and 7 has our third one, and this is a biggie, of course, to show He's fair with me. Don't you find it a little bit curious that these verses, which, by the way, are going to be repeated again, are kind of like almost out of place. I mean, we've just had these, you know, judgments poured out and all this stuff happen. And now we're told righteous and just and fair and true are Your judgments, O God, O Holy One. Why is — why this? Why now? Why here?

Because this is perhaps one of the most common, like we just talked about, if not the most common false accusations against God, such that man blames God for being unfair and unjust. You know, it's interesting. And we just read it in the passage. But they're blaming

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God. They're cursing God. They're blaspheming God. They're slandering God. They're falsely accusing God.

“What right do You have to do this?”

“I created it.” *[No. Think about it]* The sea. “I have every right to turn it in the blood. I created the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that in them is. It's mine to do with as I please. And by the way, there was a prayer lifted up to Me about avenging the blood of those whom you killed. And I'm answering that prayer this way. And it's just and it's right and it's true.”

And by the way, I am so thankful. This is what I love about the word of God and the God of the word. We read things like, and they deserve it. It was deserved. You know we're not going to get what we deserve. That's mercy. And we're going to get what we don't deserve. That's grace. I'll take both. Thank you very much. But that is only in Christ.

If you're outside that spout, we're God's mercy and grace comes out, you deserve it. The sun you worship as god, well, God is going to let you know that He's the god of the sun you worship as god. That's why it's so intriguing. The parallels we're going to see next week. The frogs, not Farags. Frogs parallel to the plague in — they worship frogs as gods, not Farags. Frogs. You like frogs, do you? You know, I created those things, by the way. And you're worshipping the creation. And not the creator.

Romans 1. So you like to worship the sun, do you? Watch this. Zap! I created the sun. I flung it into its space at just the right temperature. You know, they have found that if the sun was even just a little bit hotter or a little bit colder, we would either freeze or fry.

See, God knows. So He has every right. He has a blueprint. He has the schematics, if you prefer, to the heavens, the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars. By the way, do you know that He created light on the first day? **“Let there be light.”** But He didn't create the sun till the fourth day. I just thought you — I shouldn't have probably did that because now you're going to — I lost half of y'all on that. You know, in heaven, no need, no need. He is the light. Oh, I can't wait.

But see, they worship the sun. Sun worshipers, moon worshipers. They worship creation. The environmentalists, I assure you, are not going to be very happy during the 7-year

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Tribulation. So much for global warming. This wasn't global warming. This is global warming, right here. And the audacity to blame God.

Did you catch the detail when I was reading the text, that they cursed the God who created and controlled? How stupid is that? I mean, first of all, I created it, and I control it. And you're cursing Me for it? Man, if — which is why I'm not God, and neither are you — man, I'd — oh, really? I'd turn that thing up full blast, man. Oh, you blame Me, do you?

You know the reason it's repeated and the reason why I spent the time that I did emphasizing the justice, the fairness, the righteousness of God's judgments is because God's judgments are fair and just and right. Well, I thought God is love. He is. Not God has love. Of course He does have love. But God is love. That's just who He is. But God cannot be love if God is not just. Because that's not love.

I use the example. I'll just give you an abbreviated version. The judge, unjust judge — not the same one — goes into the courtroom. “I'm having a great day today. I feel — I'm feeling happy, happy, happy. Okay, what's the next case? Bring it up.” Here's the perpetrator of the crime. Here's the victim of the crime. “You know, yeah, let's let it go this time. I'm just feeling the love.”

Wow, you're so loving. No you're not. That's not love. What about the victim? How do you reconcile God is love with God is just? I just did. God in His love, who is love and just, just meted out righteous judgment because of His love.

This is the Corinthian church, remember? I won't belabor the point. We've talked about it before. They thought they were such a loving church. “We accept everybody just as they are. Just come as you are.” And you've got a guy having sex with his stepmom. And they're just, hey, we just love on everybody.

And Paul has to write them and rebuke them and say to them, you think that's love? That's not what love is. You think, oh, we just want to love the guy. You want to love the guy? I'll tell you what love is. Kick him out of the church like yesterday and give him over to Satan for the destruction of his flesh. Whoa! Where's the love in that?

No. If you really care about him, you'll give him over, that he come to his senses. Which he does. By the way, this church is extreme. So the second letter he writes of the Corinthians

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— actually, there was one in between which God didn't deem necessary to include it in the canon of Scripture. But *2 Corinthians*, the guy repents. It worked. Wow, you love me enough to kick me out of the church and hand me over to Satan for the destruction of my flesh because you cared about me. No, you tolerating it; that's not love. That's self-love. You tolerate; that's self-love. You care about me enough and love me enough to speak the truth in love because of love.

Is that not how it is with our kids, parents? How hard is it? You're beat tired and your kid's mouthing off. And I mean, you — you love them. But you love them so much that you have to do something. And that's why we do what we do as parents. How much more our Heavenly Father? Life isn't fair. God is.

A number of years ago, I remember my first church. I was thinking about this. You know, people always say, hey, how's life treating you? How's life treating you? I thought about it. You know, I thought, you know, I'm being disingenuous at best and dishonest at worst with my answer. You know, like, hey, I'm doing good. Actually, that's not true. How's life treat me? Horribly. But God isn't. God's treating me fairly and lovingly and good.

“So how's life treating you, JD?”

“Terrible. But God is good.”

It really messes them up. You should try it. You know, just because you know how that works, right? It's real surface, you know?

“Hey, how you doing?”

“Fine. Praise the Lord. How you doing?”

“Fine. Praise the Lord. Hey, we'll do lunch.”

“Okay. Bye.”

You don't really care how they're doing. You're just being considerate and courteous. What about this?

“How are you really doing?”

“Well, you got a minute?”

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“Well, would you look at the time? We'll do lunch. My people will contact your people. We'll get together.”

Let's move on to this fourth one, and we're done. Brings hope to the heart, doesn't it, when you hear those words? It's in *verses 8 and 9*, and it's to bring repentance in me. Why does God do what God does? It's to bring much-needed change in my life. I'm off track. I need to turn around. I need to turn back to Him. Do a 180.

I love David in *Psalms 119*. Two times he says, **“It was good that God afflicted me.”** Have you ever thanked God for affliction? But he explains why. Why God does what God does when He afflicts us is to get us to repent, to turn back to Him. He said had it not been for God afflicting me, I would have gone astray. But now I'm back on track. It was good that God afflicted me because now I keep His law, His statutes, His word.

Perhaps you've heard it said that God comforts the afflicted. But what you maybe haven't heard is that He afflicts the comfortable too when we get too comfortable warming ourselves, like Peter, by the side of the fire of the world.

You know I was thinking about the denial of Peter, which Jesus said he would, and he did. But had he not been there, he wouldn't have denied Christ. I think we get too warm and cozy and comfortable with the fire of this world.

So this is the fourth angel, and he pours out his bowl on the sun. And this is what scorches people with fire. I – by the way, for those who argue, you know, it's all metaphorical, symbolic, you know, it's all figurative.

Okay, okay. No, this is going to happen, man. This is literal. God who created the sun, who controls the sun, is going to turn the heat up on the sun, and it's going to scorch people with fire. Why? Because He wants them to repent, but they don't. Imagine they — we're told, but they still refused to repent and glorify God.

Did you catch that? In other words, this isn't — they just persisted in their refusal to repent and glorify God, the creator of the sun that was now scorching them to death. Not only are they refusing to repent, they're instead cursing and blaspheming the name of God, blaming the very God who created and controlled the very sun they worshiped.

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The lesson here becomes quite clear in that God is the creator and has every right to do what He does, the way He does, if for no other reason than to bring man to repentance, which is His will because it's not His will that any should perish.

By the way, replete throughout Scripture, we also see where God makes it very clear that He takes no delight in the punishment or the pouring out of wrath on the wicked. It's not like God's saying, man, I can't wait for angel number 4, man. You guys might want to come in a little bit closer for this one.

No, I mean, like, I always try to frame it in the context of a fallen earthly father, which took me a while, by the way because I viewed my Heavenly Father through the lens of my earthly father. And it took me years to be quite open with you. But once I started — then I became a father. Well, that changed everything. Oh, there's a lot of these moments in parenting as a father. Oh, now I understand.

Now, remember when you were kids and your parents would say, “You wait” — I can still hear my mom in her high-pitched voice with her thick accent. “Wahido! You'll just wait till you have children of your own.” I'm like, “Yeah, yeah, yeah, whatever.” Then I had children of my own. And I'm like, “Oh mommy!”

I'm done. Don't you love the smooth closing. I can't — I don't know how to recover from that. How much more our Heavenly Father? I mean, He wants — He doesn't look for opportunities to discipline us. You know, the writer of Hebrews says, don't despise the — I said I was done. I actually just came back to life.

[Laughter]

You were just about to come up. Sorry. Just a second, Kaponono. We're almost — this will be my final closing, but very important. Please hear me out on this. You know, as a fallen earthly father, when it comes to bringing about repentance, change in behavior, I don't wake up in the morning looking excited about, looking forward to — man, how can I just pour out my wrath on my kids today? Contrary to what they thought. Like we enjoy this. You think we like this? This is harder on me than it is on you. What child will ever believe that? Until they have a child of their own. This is going to hurt me more than — it does. You think we take delight in this? No, we hate it. We take no delight in it.

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But why do we do it? Because we love. We want to bring about change, repentance. We want to correct and direct and protect. And that's why God does what God does. Now I'm done. That was a much smoother closing.

Kapono, come on up. I better quit while I'm ahead. Why don't you stand up? We'll close in prayer and song. O Lord, passages like this are just, first of all, it's tough stuff, but it's so good because when you peel the layers back, one can't help but just find Your love and Your grace and Your mercy and Your patience and Your kindness with us. Oh, how long suffering are You. You don't delight in this. But You're just, so You have to. And Your love, so You have to.

So Lord, so be it. I pray for any today, whether here or online that are just in that place, man, where it's one big question mark of "why." Lord, I pray that instead that "why" question will not be why are you allowing this God, but what are You wanting to show me in this God? Changes the "why" to the "what." What do You want us to learn? What do You want us to change? What do You want us to see? Lord, thank You for Your love. But thank You that You are true and right and fair and just too. In Jesus' name. Amen.