

Prophecy Update
Playing Both Sides Against the Middle
J.D. Farag

KAPONO: Lord, thank You. Thank You. Thank You. Thank You, Lord. Thank You that we can gather in this place that You have provided for us, Lord, that You have kept for us, Lord, that You have protected. Thank You that we can come here, Lord, and hear Your word.

Sundays are sometimes a day of reflection, Lord, as we reflect on the week. Here this morning, Lord, would You quiet those thoughts and direct our attention to You, Lord, so that we would not miss what it is that You have for us this morning, Lord.

So bless this time. Bless the word, Lord. Be with Pastor JD as he delivers Your word, Lord, this morning. We ask this in the mighty name of Jesus, Amen.

PASTOR JD: Amen and amen. Good morning. Welcome. You can be seated. I want to welcome those of you that are joining us online as well. We're so glad that you are.

This is our First Service on Sunday mornings. We have two. It's the weekly Bible Prophecy Update that we do and have done for many years. And then Second Service is the sermon. It's a verse-by-verse study through the Word of God.

We're currently in 2 Peter, and last week we finished Chapter 1. Today we'll commence with Chapter 2, and we're going to look at how it is that we can be on guard against false teachers, and in so doing, not let them get to us. And I mean that in more ways than one.

So you might want to make a note of it: 11:15 a.m. Hawaii time. And for those of you that stay for both, what is the matter with you, you poor people? Gluttons for punishment, I guess. But no, you're of course, welcome and encouraged to do so.

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Those of you that are watching by way of YouTube or Facebook, we want to encourage you to go directly to the website at JDFarag.org. There you will find the uninterrupted, uncensored entirety of today's Update.

And with that, we're just going to get started here.

Lord, we need the Holy Spirit, as Kapono just prayed. Settle our hearts, quiet our minds from all the voices clamoring for our attention. Lord, the only voice we want to hear is the still, small voice of the Holy Spirit.

So Lord, thank You. We want to give You our undivided attention, in Jesus' name, amen. So what I want to do is borrow the idiom of "Playing Both Sides Against the Middle" as it relates to Bible prophecy.

And this because the enemy in these last days is being met with a measure of success in creating and manipulating opposing sides in order that those two opposing sides destroy and devour each other.

Perhaps a definition, along with an explanation and illustration will help to better understand this idiom, especially in the context of Bible prophecy.

To "Play Both Sides Against the Middle" is defined as a scheme. It's a scheme to manipulate and control two opposing sides to get them to argue and fight with each other to the benefit of the perpetrator.

Another way to explain it is that someone playing both sides against the middle will pretend to support or favor two opposing sides in order to gain an advantage or to get all the benefits that they can from the crisis and conflict that they themselves created.

Does this sound a little bit familiar? Good.

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By way of an illustration: A politician will play both sides against the middle by setting opposing parties or interests against each other so as to advance their political agenda, their nefarious agenda.

Dare I say that what we're witnessing today is the devil's scheme of playing both sides against each other in order to advance his evil prophesied end.

I'm thinking about the Apostle Paul writing to the church in Corinth, and he says, "Don't be ignorant of Satan's devices." I love it in the King James, "The wiles of the devil." You've got to get that King James growl in there. The wiles, the strategies, the tactics, the devices.

And this is one, and it's a biggie. And here's why. "The devil knows he has but a short time" to bring about doubt, discord, deception, division, and ultimately the destruction of mankind. And I know those all begin with 'D.' If you've got a few more 'D' words you want to add, that's fine, all of the above.

But this, in three main areas which I would like to focus on today, and they are in order: politically, economically, and last but certainly not least, medically.

To the question of how this applies to Bible prophecy, let me simply say that this describes the prophetic picture painted in Scripture. Let me explain. Scripture is replete with passages and prophecies that describe what the world and perhaps more importantly, the church will look like at the time of the end.

Now, presupposing that we don't have double vision, we'll see in that prophetic picture lukewarm compromise, wavering faith, and double-minded doubt, all of which were prophesied in the pages of Holy Writ.

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James, Chapter 1 beginning in verse 5. **"If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him. But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt [And here's why] because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. [Back and forth] That man should not think he will receive anything from Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all he does."**

What James is saying here is that being double-minded is to, and stay with me on this, position oneself in the middle ground between two sides: faith on one side and doubt and unbelief on the other side.

And here's the result: One will be relegated to a wishy-washy instability, riddled with doubt and disbelief by virtue of how they've become confused and conflicted. They're confused and conflicted because of having one mind for Earth and a double-mind for Heaven, pursuing the proverbial "best of both worlds."

If you'll kindly allow me to, I'll start with how we allow, and yes, we allow the enemy to do this. We allow the enemy to successfully play both sides against each other politically. There's an interesting account in *1 Kings 18* that speaks to the matter of two opposing sides wavering back and forth between two opinions.

Of course, I'm speaking of Elijah. I love Elijah. Can't wait to meet him, by the way. If you want to meet him, you're going to have to wait in line because I'm first in line to meet him. Man, this guy: amazing guy mightily used of God. So this is the account of Elijah who confronts by way of a contest those who are double-minded and wavering back and forth, tossed to and fro between Baal and God.

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Verse 21, 1 Kings 18. **"Elijah went before the people and said, 'How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow Him; but if the Baal is God, follow him.' But the people said nothing."**

What were they going to say? Game on. Because that's what's going to happen next. And you know the account of the contest between Baal and God. Spoiler alert. Well, anyway, you know how it goes.

I'd like to draw your attention to the meaning of the word "waver." Some of your translations render it falter, hesitate, vacillate.

This is the word that Elijah uses, and I want to expound on the meaning of it in the original language of the Old Testament Hebrew. It carries with it the idea of hopping or dancing by standing on one leg, then shifting one's weight to the other leg.

What Elijah is asking is, how long are you going to dance around, shifting back and forth, or if you prefer, arguing back and forth in your lukewarm, double-minded instability?

For those asking how this applies politically and prophetically, may I humbly suggest, sadly, that this describes with great accuracy the current political discourse in the world today?

And here's how I get there. Christians are being manipulated and divided in the political arena, the likes of which we've never before seen and are likely to never see again, and it's evidenced by the back-and-forth between the two sides.

Do you realize what's happening? By doing this, the church plays right into the hand of the enemy.

How so?

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Well, he's getting us to do his dirty work for him instead of him.

How so, and what is that that we're doing for him?

Oh, we're confusing, distracting, dividing, and destroying.

1 Corinthians 14:33, the Apostle Paul says by the Spirit, **"For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints."**

Jesus in *John's Gospel, Chapter 10:10* said, **"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."**

In *Mark's Gospel, Chapter 3:24-26*, and by the way, Satan knows these verses. He knows how to play this against us. He knows Scripture better than we will ever know Scripture.

And don't you think - I mean, wouldn't it stand - I'm not angry. I'll stop yelling. Wouldn't it - let me just - wouldn't it be - wouldn't it stand to reason that if the enemy knows this and he does, that he will use this because this is the key.

Listen to what Jesus said. **"If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan has risen up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand, but has an end."**

Here's what I'm thinking. Satan knows that he can destroy, steal, kill, and destroy, in that order, by the way. And if he can just get us divided, down we go, destroyed we are. Mission accomplished. So he has to sow discord, bring about division.

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But he has a problem. He's got a lot of problems. But the problem in this context is that the gates of hell, Jesus told Peter there is Caesarea Philippi, Mathew records it. **"The gates of hell will not prevail against the church."**

So Satan knows that verse too very well, all too well. So he knows he can't destroy it from without. So how is he going to destroy it?

Oh, from within, from within. Bring division from within, and then it's just a matter of time.

This verse in *Galatians Chapter 5*, actually verses 14 and 15 - I guess I'll just say it. I don't like it. I know that's probably not very pastoral for a pastor to say I don't like a particular passage in the word of God. But I just don't like this because of the implications of this.

Listen to this. **"For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'** *[And then he says this]* **If you bite and devour each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other."**

That's it! It's exactly what's happening. Satan's just sitting back in his recliner, and yes, Satan has a recliner, eating his popcorn, and yes, he likes popcorn, apparently, watching the show, watching us destroy and devour and divide each other because he's playing both sides against the middle. And it's working, especially in the political arena.

Okay, I need to stop yelling again.

Here's a question: Would you agree that Christians in these last days are being destroyed by each other, specifically in the area of politics?

The reason this is happening is because the devil is scheming in playing both sides of the political aisle against each

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other. And as such, we see people as Republican or Democrat, Left or Right, conservative or liberal, instead of seeing them as saved or lost.

Well, I have to ask another question, and I just humbly ask this. Please hear me out and hear my heart on this. When someone says that they vote for the lesser of two evils, aren't they still voting for evil?

If so, then what ensues is what always ensues, which is that of being played against each other in a textbook case of "us versus them."

See, now we've picked sides. It's Left against Right. You know, I just can't take it anymore. If I get an article and it starts off with the words "The Left," I stop, I don't read any further.

Us against them? Oh, so it's - oh, so they're the enemy? No, they're not the enemy. They're the mission field.

They're demon rats.

Stop saying that. How are - so you know what's just happened? You cannot share Jesus with them after calling them that, can you? Because see, now you're on the opposite side against them, and here's the problem.

We don't wrestle against them. We don't battle against them. We wrestle against not flesh and blood, people, human beings. We wrestle against powers of darkness in the realm of the spiritual, the supernatural.

Four entities the Apostle Paul lists in *Ephesians 6*, and they have different rankings. And one of the greatest things in terms of successes that Satan's ever done - that was poorly worded.

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It's not great. It's horrible. But one of the things that Satan has been met with in a large measure of success is to get us to battle against each other, flesh and blood and not him.

Our battle's against him and those powers of darkness, wickedness in high places, these principalities in the spiritual realm.

That is what we, and key word, by the way, and don't miss this, "wrestle." That takes it to a whole new level, especially for those of you that have ever wrestled. That's, I mean, every muscle in your body is engaged in the wrestling match. And it's exhausting. It's not just a battle. It's a wrestling match. And it's not with people. It's with the powers of darkness.

When, not if, when this happens, and it is happening, the devil couldn't be happier because he's accomplished his goal of rendering the last days church impotent, feckless.

This brings me to the second area that the enemy has manipulated and played both sides, which is that of the economic or if you prefer, financial. Like with the political arena, so too in the financial arena, we're being played.

However, the opposing sides are two worlds or two masters. And what I would argue is one of the most profound passages in the entirety of the Scriptures.

Jesus in *Matthew 6* speaks to this, *verse 24*, Jesus speaking, **"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other.**

[And then he says] **You cannot serve both God and money."**

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It's one or the other. You're trying to play both sides. You cannot. It's one or the other. Notice he doesn't say, 'you should not,' 'thou shalt not.'

No, you cannot. You cannot serve two masters. It's either one or the other.

Now, Jesus is saying this, preaching this really in the context of one having double vision, double treasures, and double masters. The masters are either God or money, and they're either here on Earth or in Heaven.

Jesus says that when one's eyes are good, the whole body is good. So your eyes are either good or they're bad, good or evil. One's treasure is either on Earth or in Heaven, and one's master is either God or money.

And the common denominator between the political and the financial as it relates to Bible prophecy, and please listen to me on this, both have this effect of investing us in this world and tethering us to this world.

And again, the devil can't be any happier because we're double minded, we're conflicted. He's played both sides.

Matthew 6:19-21 Jesus says, **"Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.**

[And here's why, verse 21] **For where your treasure is there your heart will be also."**

Where's your heart? Oh, I can tell you where your heart is. Where's your treasure? Because that's where your heart's going to be.

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If you were to ask me what I thought was one of the main reasons that Christians don't talk about or get excited about the rapture, this would be it.

And the reason being is their heart is here on Earth because their treasures are here on Earth. And herein lies the problem. Satan knows this and takes advantage of this by playing both sides of eternity against us in order to keep us earthly-minded and double-minded.

He's playing both sides against the middle. This brings me to the third area. The enemy has manipulated and played both sides against the middle, and it's that of the medical.

In the book of Revelation, there are seven letters from Jesus to seven churches. These were literal churches in Asia Minor. We know it today as modern-day Turkey.

They were all close in proximity, one to the other. You can visit the remains of these cities. Well, actually some of them are still cities today. They are sort of in a postal route.

And Jesus has John write these letters that were sent to these seven churches. And in so doing, they're representative of a prophetic picture of the church in the last days.

So it's the seventh letter that I want to talk about today. It's the last of the seven churches. **"To the church OF the Laodiceans."**

Why do I say it like that? Because the other six churches, it's not to the Church 'of' the Ephesians.

No, it's "to the church in Ephesus," "to the church in Smyrna," "to the church in Pergamon," "to the church in Thyatira," "to the church in Philadelphia."

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But when he gets to this last church, it's not to the church in Laodicea. It's "to the church of the Laodiceans."

This is the church that you remember Jesus is knocking on the door of to get back in to sup with them and them with Him. Laodicea is actually the name describing the nature. Because Laodicea comes from two English words: laity and dioceses or decision or rule.

In other words, the Laodicean church was calling the shots. They were making all of the decisions, not Jesus. He wasn't even there. He's on the outside now.

So this last days, lukewarm church of the Laodiceans belonging to the Laodiceans, is a prophetic picture of what the church is going to be like at the time of the end.

I want to read beginning in *verse 14, Revelation 3*. Jesus, John is writing by the Holy Spirit, Jesus is dictating this letter, and He says to them, **"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.**

Because you say, 'I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing' -- and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked -- I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eyes salve, that you may see."

It's important to understand that Laodicea was extremely wealthy. And like other cities, they had a worship center for Asclepius, the god of medicine, and the city of Laodicea was known for their temple of Asclepius.

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But what made them world renowned was their medical school, which was an extension of that temple. They were famous throughout the known world at the time for their eye medication, which had come from their medical school, and they would export it around the world. And as you might imagine, that's where the bulk of their wealth came from.

And Laodicea would also be the banking center of the region at that time, very wealthy. They were also known for their garments and clothing. They were actually famous, as one said, the fashion runway of the world. And they were also famous for their entertainment, the Coliseums that they built. However, Laodicea had a very serious problem politically because the city was built in such a way that made it vulnerable militarily.

And it's for this reason that Laodicea would end up making compromises. Let's meet in the middle. They would compromise with their enemies so as to not be attacked and destroyed. And to make matters even worse, Laodicea has serious problems with their water supply, which also made them vulnerable to attack.

In their efforts to obtain water, they constructed this elaborate and expensive six-mile aqueduct from the hot springs of Hierapolis.

You can actually, if you want to, go online and see. I mean, it's breathtaking, beautiful, these natural hot springs in Hierapolis. The Apostle Paul in the Book of Acts makes reference to Hierapolis, so close in proximity to Laodicea.

So they would bring this water from the hot springs of Hierapolis. But the problem was by the time the water got to Laodicea, it was lukewarm and worse yet, polluted, which in

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turn made them sick to their stomachs and nauseated, making them vomit.

We talked a little bit about this on Thursday night when the prophet Jeremiah is pronouncing this judgment, prophesied judgment on Moab. We know it today as modern-day Jordan.

And because that's wine country, he would draw upon wine making as an analogy and an illustration that would - and they would get it. You're settled in your dregs. You've never been emptied from vessel to vessel, and you've become bitter and settled and comfortable.

You've never been emptied and poured out. You've never been refined. And they would've understood that comparison and that analogy.

And so too here with Laodicea, they would have got it. Lukewarm water? Yeah, we know a thing or two about that.

Getting sick from the polluted water and vomiting? Yeah, we know a thing or two about that.

Eyes salve? We happen to know a lot about that, world famous for that.

And the Lord is speaking directly to where they're at. Why? To get them to repent. Repent. In fact, the detail in the letter is be zealous to repent. Zealous to repent.

You probably already know where I'm going with this, so I'll get right to the point for a change.

This is the prophetic description of the church today. And this for several reasons, chief of which is its lukewarm compromise politically, trust in worldly wealth materially, and its trust in science vis-à-vis the advances medically.

It should be noted that this is the last of seven churches, seven the number of completion, and as such represents the

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last days church right before the rapture of the church, because *Revelation 4:1* John is told to come up here at the sound of the trumpet, and he's caught up.

And everything from *Chapter 4:1*, right after this letter to the Laodiceans, the Church of the Laodiceans in *Chapter 3*, everything from *Chapter 4:1* is yet future.

Here's the bottom line. The devil is revving up; I chose that wording for a reason, the manipulating and playing of both sides against the middle, particularly medically.

But God. But God is meaning for good that which the devil means for evil, and anointing people's eyes with His eye salve so they can see.

Once again, and I love it when God does this, God has allowed the devil to play into His own hand by allowing the devil to overplay his hand, so to speak.

How is the devil overplaying his hand?

Well, he's doing it by way of what's known as controlled opposition.

What's controlled opposition?

I know this is deeply profound, but it's when you control the opposition.

[Laughter]

It's controlling the opposite sides against each other. Vladimir Lenin, the architect of Russia's 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, said it best this way, "The best way to control the opposition is to lead it ourselves."

Oh, I get it now. I see what's happening. This is exactly and prophetically what the enemy is doing in these last days, and we were told it would be so. He's creating and controlling two opposite sides against each other.

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And this is what I want to expound on for the remainder of our time together today. But in order to do that, we'll go ahead at this time and end the livestream on YouTube and Facebook and redirect you, if you're not already there, to the website. So within the last several weeks, it's probably been a couple three months now, there's been a significant uptick, for lack of a better word, in so-called experts switching sides and now being on the opposite side of the very death shots they once promoted.

Are you with me?

I mean, you've got video of them saying, "Get vaccinated!" And then fast-forward, "Stop the vaccinations!"

Oh, wait a minute. I'm so confused, or as we say here, locally, confusamacated, no pun intended, actually, pun intended. I'm confusamacated.

Wait a minute. You just got done telling me to get this injection, this poison that's killing people. And now it's killing people and you're saying, "It's killing people. Don't get it!"

Mm hmm. Mm hmm. Things that make you go Hmm. So with those things that make you go Hmm, you petition the throne and seek the Lord. I've spent a considerable amount of time as of late seeking the Lord on this, and the take-away from this is that all of it's been scripted.

It's a manipulation of two opposing sides on the most divisive issue in the history of mankind. And it's scripted to deceive the world in this the last hour of human history as we know it.

Now I know that was kind of packed full. But listen to Jesus again. A prophecy from the Savior Himself, that He would have

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to intervene at the time of the end in order for His people to survive this destruction, this deception.

It's *Matthew 24*, and actually, I want to give you a little bit of the back story here, because this comes on the heels of, in response to a question asked by the disciples.

"Jesus, what is going to be the sign of Your coming and [two-fold question] the end of the age?" And Jesus famously answers, and you know this well, He says, **"There will be wars and rumors of wars [Threats of wars] There will be famines and earthquakes in different [Diverse, various] places."** [*Unusual places*]

He says [*This is key*] **"Nation will rise against nation [They're divided now] and kingdom against kingdom."**

The word in the original is 'ethnos' from which we get our English word 'ethnic.'

Oh, say no more. It's Black against White. It's, it's - they - (Frustrated sounds)

This would be a good time for a little bit of levity. If you don't mind, just indulge me. Did you know that your pastors, starting with me as the senior pastor, are racist? It's actually reverse racism. You know why?

So I'm an Arab, Pastor Leitu is Samoan, and Pastor Mac is African American. We don't have any White pastors. Don't tell anybody. Just saying.

[Laughter]

You're racist! Oh, actually, I'm not. We're all part of the same race: the human race. As one said, "It's not a skin issue; it's a sin issue."

Oh, but here's Satan right on time. You can count on it. He's going to pit Black against White. He's going to pit race

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against race, ethnic group against ethnic group, nation against nation.

And by the way, (Frustrated sound) the U.S. against China. Hey, God loves the Chinese people. Ukraine against Russia? No, God loves the Russian people. I've been to Russia twice. I love the Russian people. And he's got us to now hate them. We hate them because now we've been turned against them.

So Jesus says these things, and He includes in that list that they're going to be so divided. Everyone's going to be against everyone. And He likens them to birth pains, which come in greater frequency and intensity right before the birth. He's likening His return as a baby being born with the birth pangs.

So when you get further into *Chapter 24*, He says this, **"If those days had not been cut short, no flesh would survive, but for the sake of the elect [*Israel during the tribulation*] those days will be shortened."**

I want to include *verses 24 and 25*. **"For False Christ's and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. See, I have told you beforehand."**

John 13:29 (13:19) **"I'm going to tell you, [*Jesus says*] what's going to happen before it happens, so when it happens, you'll know that "I am."**

I am the "I am."

You'll believe because I'm going to tell you what's going to happen before it happens, and it's going to happen. And when you start seeing it begin to happen, exactly as I told you it would happen, you're going to believe. That's the litmus test if you prefer. I have told you beforehand.

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Hang in there with me, okay? And you do. You're so gracious to me.

Both opposing sides being played against each other are two sides of the same coin. Both sides of the issue, whether political, financial, or especially medical, are two wings of the same bird flying in the same direction.

I've made this comment before. I think this would be appropriate to make it again.

Please, it's not Trump versus Biden. If you could only see them backstage after their performance. Obama is there. Bush is there. Clinton is there. Trump is there. And Biden is there. And they're toasting a glass of champagne.

Have you seen videos concerning this so-called vaccination with Clinton, Bush, and Obama from 2021? Come on. Please don't be so naive and believe and be deceived. Don't be ignorant of Satan's schemes. They're both sides of the same coin. There are two wings on the same eagle.

Please, I'm - this is an exhortation and it's for me as well because it wasn't that long ago where I was singing a very different song, as many of you know. And I confess I was wrong, I was deceived. But now my eyes are open because I have His eye salve.

During my short break during Christmas and New Years, I had to go into the eye doctor because my vision's, you know, kind of blurry, double vision.

So I went in and got an eye exam, and it turns out, I have astigmatism. And so, like, right now you're kind of, you know, double and blurry. By the way, both of you look marvelous.

[Laughter]

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So I can't wait to get my glasses. I mean, I have reading glasses, but all that does is magnify, not focus, right?

By way of an example, I just - when you have that clear focus, you see clearly. Your eyes now are open and you're able to see. You have eyes to see. I have eyes to see now, what I could not see before. It was all blurry, and the line in between was blurry.

Well, now I see it very clearly. I see exactly what's happening. So we take sides or worse yet, we waver between two sides when the only thing that is going to matter at the time of the end is: Am I on God's side?

It's like *Joshua* in 5:13-15, who asks the commander of the Lord's Army whose side he was on, their side or their enemy's side?

Let me read the account. Verse 13, **"And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted his eyes and looked, and behold, a Man stood opposite him [On the opposite side of him, the opposing side] And with His sword drawn in His hand. And Joshua went to Him and said to Him, [Loosely paraphrased, Whose side are you on?] 'Are you for us or for our adversaries?'**

[Answer, verse 14] So He said, [I love this] 'No...'

Wait, that wasn't a yes or no question. This was multiple choice.

He says, **"No, but..."**

And you'll notice that it's capitalized.

Why?

That's Jesus. It's known as a Christophany, a pre-Bethlehem appearance of Jesus the Christ. And we know this because of what *Joshua*'s about to do when he realizes this.

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So He says, **"No, but as commander of the army of the Lord I have now come.'** And Joshua fell on his face to the earth and **worshiped, and said to Him, "What does my Lord say to His servant?"**

Forget the question I just asked you. It's inconsequential and irrelevant and immaterial at this juncture. See, if this was an angel, the angel would have never accepted the worship, as we see in Scripture on many occasions. This was the Lord Jesus Himself.

"Then the Commander of the Lord's army said to Joshua, 'Take your sandal off your foot, for the place where you stand is holy.' And Joshua did so."

Oh, would to God it would be said of us, **"and they did so"** in our falling on our face on holy ground and worshiping the Lord Jesus.

The time has come to no longer allow ourselves to be played on opposite sides against one another. The time is at hand. Stop playing and stop being played. Get out of the game.

You know, I spend a lot of time praying before an Update, just really inquiring of the Lord, and my hope and my prayer is that today's Update will be freeing because that's what the truth does.

See, I know I've heard truth when I feel free. And conversely, I know I've not heard truth when I'm all tied up and bound up and weighed down.

If somebody lays a heavy trip on me, puts the onus on me, and I'm burdened down by it, that's not the truth. If it's the truth, there's freedom.

Here's the truth: Get out of the game. Stop playing the game. The freedom that you will experience will - I mean, there are

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no words to describe it. You're out of the game. You're not playing around anymore. You're not dancing around.

Why are you not dancing around? Because the trumpet is about the sound. Stop playing around, going back and forth.

The Commander of the army of the Lord, Jesus Himself -
Interesting, all seven letters end the same way. **"Let him who has an ear, hear what the Spirit is saying to the church."**

Wait. Let him who has an ear? I've got two. Well, double for you then.

And I know this is a silly illustration, but you'll get the point. Have you noticed that we were never created with ear lids? I'll let you think about that for just a moment.

I have an ear. I actually have two. This is rhetorical. If you really have an ear - because see, we have ears, but that doesn't mean we hear.

Growing up as a little boy, I gave my mom such a hard time. I know I'm going to see her in Heaven. Oh, I can't wait. I'm actually going to see her at the Rapture because the dead in Christ rise first.

Oh, I gave her such a - she used to say to me in her thick accent. Wahido! (Said with a high pitch) She would hit that certain octave.

"You wait til you have children of your own."

I'm like, "Yeah, whatever."

Then I had children of my own. "Oh, Mom, you were right."

But when she would hit a certain key or octave, I tuned her out. All I heard was, "Wahido!"

And then after that - I know she was yelling at me, but I wasn't hearing what she was saying to me. All I heard was

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(High pitched garbled sounds) That's what - Yeah. If you got a better illustration, I'm open to it.

But that's what Jesus' saying. You've got ears. But that doesn't necessarily mean you're going to hear what the Spirit is saying.

This is what the Spirit is saying to the church. This is what the Commander of the army of the Lord is saying to us, His church, His servants. Take off your filthy, worldly sandals. Get out of the game because where you're standing right now is holy. Where we stand in this, the very last hour of human history as we know it, is holy.

It's an exciting time to be alive. We are that generation. We are those people who, like Paul, would say to the Thessalonians, would be alive and remain and caught up to meet the Lord in the air.

Oh, I can't wait.

No time to play around. You know that saying, "It's not a playground, it's a battleground."

Well, I even would take it a step further and say, "Be careful what battleground you're battling on, what fight you're fighting."

Are you battling against that other political party? Are you fighting those who are on the opposite side of the position in which you stand?

That's not the right fight. Jesus said when He was arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane.

No, it wasn't when he was arrested. Oh, forgive me.

It's when He was standing trial before Pilate, and He was being queried about His Kingdom. I understand You're a king. Where's Your kingdom?

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Jesus said, **"My kingdom is not here. If My kingdom were here, My disciples would fight."** They're not fighting.

This whole movement now within the church, and we'll maybe touch on this in Second Service in *2 Peter* because Peter, by the Holy Spirit, devotes his writing and energy, his last and final words, his final will and testament, if you will, to a warning about false teachers and false teaching and the destruction that it wreaks, the havoc that it wreaks within the church.

And it's alive and well that we're supposed to fight and take dominion over the seven-mountain mandate in every arena of life: Educational, Governmental, Financial, Medical.

Oh, are you trying to fight for the kingdom here on earth? Is that because you're too invested in and tethered to this world and the things of this world? Oh, you're still playing the game.

I can say this honestly; the Lord knows my heart. I actually feel very sorry for you. That's a really hard way to live. If you only knew the freedom that awaits when you taste from that cup. That's not the fight.

It's the good fight of faith, the Apostle Paul said. We're in a war, certainly, but it's not winning or losing. It's winning souls for Jesus. We've got to get people to Jesus as quick as we can while we can. That's all that's going to matter at the end of the day.

When that trumpet sounds, whatever political persuasion you're of... Okay, oh, Lord, I almost got away with this, not having to say this.

Real quick. Please hear my heart.

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I get excoriated whenever I say anything - actually, all I have to do is just mentioned the name Trump. (Attacking cat sound)

Why don't you talk about Biden? Did you vote for Biden? Are you pro-Biden?

Stop. Stop. If Joe Biden is still human and I have my doubts. No, I'm serious about that, for real. There's a lot of these guys they're already transhuman, you know.

If he's still human, he's redeemable. He can get saved. And the same for Donald Trump.

How dare you! He's a Christian.

No, he's not. No, he's not. (Frustrated sound) Is that good enough?

You know what the purpose of these Prophecy Updates is? So I can have a vehicle by which to yell and scream and spit on everybody.

No, that's not what the purpose is. The purpose is to end with the way it ends, and this is the way it ends: The good news of salvation in Jesus Christ, the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and a simple, childlike explanation of salvation by way of the ABCs of salvation.

Because that's all this going to matter. That's all that's going to matter. When that day comes on that great and final day when that trumpet sounds, this is the only thing that's going to matter: What did you do with the person of Jesus Christ?

You're either saved or you're lost. You're either born-again or you're not. You're either going to spend eternity in heaven or you're going to spend eternity in hell.

(Gasp!)

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Yeah. That's what the Bible says. W

ell, what's the good news?

The good news is that Jesus was crucified, He was buried, and He rose again on the third day, and He's coming back very soon one day.

What are the ABCs?

Just a simple, childlike way to share your faith should the Lord ever present you with the profound privilege of doing so. This is a template you can use. Please don't make it a formula. It's just a tool to be equipped with and have at already.

The A is for acknowledge or admit that you're a sinner. Because unless and until you do, why would you be interested in the Savior?

Romans 3:10 says, **"There is no one righteous, not even one."** You might be a good person, but you'll never be good enough. And *Romans 3:23* tells us why. It's because **"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."**

We've missed the mark. It's an archery term. That's what the word "sin" means. We've missed the bull's eye of God's perfect standard of righteousness.

Now, *Romans 6:23* is the sentencing phase, if you will, and we're all sentenced to death. That's the bad news.

"For the wages of sin is death, but [Here's the good news] the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."

That's the A.

Here's the B, and the B is so central because it comes as a result of the A, admitting, acknowledging. And it's to believe in your heart that Jesus Christ is Lord, just believe. **"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son**

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that whosoever would believe, [Put your trust in Him] would not perish but have everlasting life."

Romans 10:9-10 says, **"If you believe in your heart that God raised Jesus from the dead, you will be saved."**

There's no question mark. The jury's not out, the verdict's in. You will be saved if you believe.

And then what comes from believing in your heart is just the expressing, the calling, the confessing, which is the C.

Romans 10:9-10 also says, **"If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. [And here's why] For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved."**

And lastly, *Romans 10:13*. I love *Romans 10:13*.

By the way, this month I'm 41 years old. I look pretty good for 41, don't I? I got saved in January, 41 years ago.

That's the only birthday I want to talk about at this point.

It's when I was born-again, when I called upon the name of the Lord; never looked back.

"All who call upon the name of the Lord will [Will] be saved."

I

implore you today. Get out of the game. It's not whose side are you on. It's are you on the Lord's side? Get out of the game. Stop being played. Stop playing the game. I promise you, on the authority of God's word, you will be set free.

"And whom the Son has set free is free indeed."

Today's "But God Testimony" comes from Amy Finley Reeves, who writes, "Dear Pastor JD, I have been listening to you for the past two years, ever since the beginning of the COVID lockdowns.

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I cannot tell you how much I have enjoyed your sermons as well as your Prophecy Updates. However, my favorite part of your message is the "But God Testimonies." They always give me hope and encouragement in these dark times.

About a year and a half ago, I was diagnosed with PBC, Primary Biliary Cholangitis. *[I hope I'm pronouncing that correctly]* It's an auto immune disease that causes progressive destruction of the bile ducts.

After a liver biopsy and extensive blood tests and lab work, my gastroenterologist determined that I was in stage two liver failure and placed me on an experimental drug to hopefully bring my numbers out of the critical range.

He explained that there is no cure for this disease, and I would likely need a liver transplant within the next 5 to 10 years.

Then he highly suggested that I get the COVID vaccine due to my compromised immune system. In addition, in the state of North Carolina, I would need to be vaccinated in order to have a liver transplant.

Earlier that year, I had already written to you and received my religious exemption, so I kindly explained that there was no way I was taking the so-called vaccine. At the beginning of COVID, God placed *2 Timothy 1:7* on my heart, and it became my prayer. **"For God has not given us a Spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control."**

Fortunately, my doctor is a Christian and he did not push the matter any further. I also informed him that I was from the great state of Alabama, and if I needed a transplant, I would gladly move home and assured him that would not be necessary because God was going to heal me.

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After receiving this news, I went home and prayed. I ask God to give me a "But God" story to share. If He would heal me, I would share my story and give Him all the glory.

He led me to this scripture verse: *Jeremiah 17:14*. **"Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed. Save me, O Lord, and I will be saved. For you are the one I praise."** Which I would recite over and over for the next year.

So here is my "But God" story. I recently moved back to Birmingham, Alabama, and made an appointment with a new gastroenterologist. *[However, you pronounce that doctor's name]* It took a while to get in to see him, but I was not worried. I had given this completely over to my Lord and my Savior and knew, regardless of the outcome, He was in control.

After another ultrasound and more blood work, I met with my new doctor. He looked over my blood work and informed me that all my levels except one was in the normal range and the one that was not was only 20 points off. He also doubted that I would ever need a transplant.

I told him that God healed me. He is the great physician, and He is worthy of all my praise. To God be the glory! Amen and amen.

[Applause]

P.S. Thank you for being a light in this world. I have fallen in love with the Bible because of your incredible studies of each book. I have one thing on my bucket list before Jesus comes again, and that is to come to Hawaii and meet my favorite pastor.

[Audience says, "Aww!"]

[Applause]

[Come. Or not] [There may not be time and she says that]

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If not in Hawaii, then I will see you in Heaven. Maranatha.
Your sister in Christ, Amy Finley Reeves."

[Applause]

Why don't you stand? There's a saying, "Here, there, or up
in the air." I choose the latter. I think you do too. Lord,
come quickly.

Father in heaven, thank You so much. Oh, Lord, You need to
take it from here, Lord, as only You can, and are always so
faithful to. I've done my best to rightly divide Your word of
truth. Because Your word is truth, and You, Jesus, are the
truth.

So Lord, the Holy Spirit now needs to take it from here, and
Lord, make application of it to our lives. Bless it to our
hearts. Because I truly believe that this is a serious matter
and it's where we live in this world today. We're in the
middle of being played against each other.

Oh, Lord, I just pray for true freedom from that. Please,
Lord, set us free, Jesus. Set us free. And thank You, Lord.
Thank You, Jesus. We love You so much. In Jesus' name.
Amen.