

Bible is God's Word 1

Repenting & Being Conformed to Christ

(preached 10/10/21)

Please turn to 2 Timothy 3.

Sermon #1: Words Matter

- The Church is meant to be the conscience of both the State AND the community.
- If we're truly a Light meant to shine into darkness, we cannot do that by being silent and only quoting how much God loves people.
- We must speak the words of the Scriptures to decry evil and exalt righteousness.
- Swinging the Sword of the Spirit is when we speak, out loud, the words of the Bible so that other people can hear them.
- Actions don't speak louder than words—the Words of the Bible, the Constitution, party platforms, and our personal opinions carry the power of life and death.
- The most effective Christian backs off from allowing their tongues to be used by a political party or human philosophical thought, and instead allows it to be used by the Spirit of God.
- Jesus IS the Truth. He's not separate from His Word, His IS the Word!

Sermon #2: Truth is Absolute & Transcendent

- The truth recorded in the Bible is above our opinions, feelings, party platforms, our experiences (past or present), nature, nurture, choice, circumstances both regular and extenuating, government and its laws, current or past societal trends/morals, other religions & their books, etc.
- All "data" comes from the spirit world and you and I are like people getting on YouTube to look something up: we didn't create nor broadcast the content, someone else did and we're accessing it.
- There are different religions because Lucifer and his angels rebelled and formed their own kingdom.
- They create and broadcast their own doctrine—religious or otherwise—from their kingdom therefore causing many conflicting and various streams of information.
- They've created a spiritual barrier between the heavens and the earth, the ultimate big tech censorship to try and stop us from seeing the truth, Who is Jesus.
- God opened a door through the barrier in OT times to Israel, not only making covenant with them but giving them the Scriptures to record.
- Jesus made the same door open to anyone, Jew or Gentile, to have the same access to Him and His Word!
- Satan & His angels cannot stop or censor this—we now have relationship with the Lord and He's given us His Word, the Sword of the Spirit.
- A Christian casts off the doctrines of the world and understands there is only one source of truth Who is the Lord.

- A Christian doesn't attempt to mix the doctrine of Scripture with other things like other religions, new age, political party doctrine, etc. A little leaven spoils the whole loaf.
- Christians are not to be molded by the philosophies of modern society.
- Neither Jesus nor His Word have changed!
- God is the Potter and we are His clay. He breaks our former worldly mold and reshapes us into that of His Son Jesus.

Sermon #3: From Peacetime to War

- Revelation 20 shows a transformation Jesus undergoes: from the Lamb Who was slain to a conquering, militaristic King & Lord Who leads an army into physical battle!
- Death no longer has dominion over Him and He is no longer subjecting Himself to His own creation—humanity—like He did the first time!
- He's coming back to kick tail and take names!
- When He returns it will be a time of war and not peace, and Revelation 19 says His robes will be stained with the blood of his enemies, and its not being symbolic.
- What about us in the here and now?
- We're no longer in peacetime and we are not peacetime Christians who can just talk about how God loves and wants to promote us.
- Our country is being taken over by wickedness and lawlessness, and it's time for the church to fight with the spiritual weapons God has provided and put on His whole armor.
- We're deceiving ourselves if we believe that, if we're quiet and stay in our lane, that Satan will leave us alone.
- That may have been true once upon a time, but in the last 1.5 years we've seen the government in the US, Canada, Europe, and Australia openly persecuting the Church using Covid as their excuse.
- A Pastor in Texas, of all places, was interrupted during a Bible Study at his church by the Health Department who made a list of demands upon him. When he refused to comply, the police came into his church and led him away in cuffs.
- This didn't happen in Iran or Afghanistan, it happened in the USA...in Texas.
- Even in "the Bible Belt" Satan will cross any line we think we've drawn in the sand.
- He's not going to leave us alone nor is he going to stop his relentless assault upon our country.
- It's time for the Church to speak up and the Sword of the Spirit is our weapon! The spoken Word of God!

TODAY we must ourselves allow the Sword of the Spirit to cut into us...the Church. This Godly weapon isn't just for others, but for us:

Romans 12:2 (ESV)

² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

CONFORMED. The word “conformed” means shaped and the classic example is a potter forming wet clay into the shape or vessel he desires. Being conformed is done through doctrine/teaching and this famous verse shows there is plenty of indoctrination coming from the world which also seeks to shape us into its likeness.

SANCTIFICATION. The process of Sanctification is repenting of the doctrines, beliefs, “facts,” and philosophies of the world and take God’s Word into our hearts as truth.

WORLDLY DOCTRINE.

- The world tries to tell us what is morally right and wrong.
- The world has created its own past to tell us we came from it, and it’s tried to create its own future where the world ends in a climate apocalypse and humanity leeching the resources of earth until there’s nothing left.
- It uses these “facts” to shape us and the way we should live right now, and its succeeding.

Some who refer to themselves as Christians have allowed the doctrines, teachings, history, and prophecies of the world to shape who they are and have rejected God’s Word as the complete truth.

2 TIMOTHY 3. Now we go to 2 Timothy chapter 3 and here is the background of this letter: Paul is in prison in Rome and he’s about to be executed for sharing the Gospel. Some say he wrote 2 Timothy mere hours before his death. Paul’s intent in his very last epistle is to warn Timothy—who is his protégé—about things to come.

2 Timothy 3:1-9 (ESV)

- ¹ But understand this, that in the last days there will come times of difficulty.
- ² For people will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy,
- ³ heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good,
- ⁴ treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
- ⁵ having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.
- ⁶ For among them are those who creep into households and capture weak women, burdened with sins and led astray by various passions,
- ⁷ always learning and never able to arrive at a knowledge of the truth.
- ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these men also oppose the truth, men corrupted in mind and disqualified regarding the faith.
- ⁹ But they will not get very far, for their folly will be plain to all, as was that of those two men.

LAST DAYS/HOW THINGS GOT LIKE THIS. The context is the Last Days right before the return of Jesus...which we are in right now. These verses are hard to read but let's ask ourselves ***how things got like this***...in other words, what has inspired for people—men and women—to be like this?

JANNES & JAMBRES. Paul answers the question in verse: Jannes and Jambres were the two priests who opposed Moses and Aaron when they appeared before Pharaoh represented Father Yahweh who said “Let My People Go.” They were the ones who threw their staffs onto the ground that turned into 2 snakes, matching Moses who did the same. For the record, Moses’ serpent devoured theirs....

OPPOSE THE TRUTH. What was the purpose of Jannes & Jambres? To oppose the truth.

- Why did they do so, even after Moses’ serpent ate theirs up to show Yahweh was the only real God?
- Verse 8 shows us: they were corrupted in mind and DISQUALIFIED regarding the faith.
- What happens to people like this in the eyes of God?
- Verse 9: they won’t get far and their folly will be seen by all.

WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE THAT WE’RE LIKE MOSES AND AARON, AND NOT LIKE JANNES AND JAMBRES.

Is it possible for a person to call themselves a Christian, yet stand opposed to the truth? Absolutely and I see it all time. I’ve seen several self-proclaimed Christians post on social media that they regard abortion as an act of love and believed God supports the LGBTQ lifestyle, and that Jesus was a socialist.

Any self-proclaimed Christian who believes this way is directly opposing the truth and is more like Jannes and Jambres.

CORRUPTED. ***Their minds are corrupted and conformed to the doctrines and morality of the world, and not that of Jesus Who is the living and active Word of God.***

REPENT & SEE TRUTH B4 JUDGMENT. My hope for “Christians” like this is that they repent and that their eyes are open to the truth which lies within the written word of God, the Bible. My prayer for them is that they come to see their folly before the Judgment Seat takes place, where verse 9 of 2 Timothy 3 will come to pass for them if they don’t.

I won't stand for this at Gateway. I can't control what you believe, but I can preach the truth from this pulpit and to you personally. James warns that we shouldn't all desire to be teachers because there's a stricter judgment—from God—upon those who would lead and feed a flock.

LEAVEN. If we teach and preach mixing the “leaven” (doctrine) of the world with that of God's Word, it'll be bad for us when we appear before Christ. I, for one, take this seriously and desire for Jesus to tell me “well done good and faithful servant!”

ANY TEACHERS, PASTORS, OR LAY CHRISTIANS WHO MIX GOD'S WORD WITH THE DOCTRINE OF THE WORLD ARE GOING TO HEAR “DEPART FROM ME YOU WORKER OF LAWLESSNESS! I NEVER KNEW YOU!” FROM JESUS.

Back to *Romans 12:2* which I quoted first today:

Romans 12:2 (ESV)

² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.

DISCERNING GODS WILL. *Neither you nor I can discern the will, plan, desire, or perspective of God if we don't believe that the Bible is the truth.*

- We don't know what is truly good (morally), acceptable to God, unacceptable to God unless we've allowed the Sword of His Word to cut into us and expose our false beliefs, giving us the chance to repent.

BACK TO TIM. Now let's go back and continue our exposition of 2 Timothy 3, and now we're on verse 10:

2 Timothy 3:10-17 (ESV)

¹⁰ You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness,

¹¹ my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra—which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me.

¹² Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,

¹³ while evil people and impostors will go on from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it

¹⁵ and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction,

and for training in righteousness,

¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Verse 10: Timothy has been a good disciple, following his teacher Paul. Not just Paul's teaching, but his holy lifestyle and his dedication to spreading the Gospel.

Verses 11-12: why has Paul been persecuted? Why was Timothy—who imitated Paul—also persecuted? What does “living a Godly life” mean, as Paul says that all who desire to live this life will be persecuted?

Paul answers these questions in the following verses, pay attention!

Verse 13: the persecutors are evil unbelievers who oppose the spreading of the Gospel AND imposters supposedly WITHIN the faith. People who pretend to be Christians who really aren't.

NOT JUST WOLVES. We're not just talking about the typical “wolf in sheep's clothing” either. **Verse 13** says these people are deceived—in other words, they truly believe they're Christians when, in fact, they aren't.

Who would people like this be? Christians who mix the morals and teachings of the world with God's Word and then claim that God approves.

A LITTLE LEAVEN.... Remember something very important spoken by Jesus and Paul: to beware the leaven of certain people like the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herod. Leaven is yeast and is symbolic of doctrine/teaching. Jesus spoke openly that these groups had created their own traditions and commandments and taught them as coming from God.

NO MIXING/BROWNIES. That's exactly what Christians who mix the doctrines and morals of the world with that of the Bible are doing today. They espouse things like abortion and LGBTQ and claim that God approves.

Back to 2 Timothy chapter 3, we left off at verse 13 which states these people are not only deceived themselves, but deceive others by spreading their false Gospel. It isn't just pastors and teachers who do this, but lay Christians.

CORINTH MAN BEING SEXUALLY IMPURE. Paul addressed a man in the congregation of Corinth who was living a sexually immoral life, and several in the church were saying it was OK:

1 Corinthians 5:5-7 (ESV)

⁵ you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be

saved in the day of the Lord.

⁶ Your boasting is not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole lump?

⁷ Cleanse out the old leaven that you may be a new lump, as you really are unleavened. For Christ, our Passover lamb, has been sacrificed.

LEAVEN. The “leaven” of their permissive and wicked society said this man’s lifestyle was acceptable, and Paul rebukes them and calls upon them to repent of the same, and turn back to what the Scripture states about sexuality, which he explains in detail 2 chapters later in the same letter.

You and I need to cleanse the old leaven out of our loaves of bread.

The way we do that is to allow God’s written and spoken word to stab us like the sword it is and EXPOSE the old leaven, separating out what we have mixed together.

Back to 2 Timothy 3, continuing with verse 14: Paul tells Timothy to CONTINUE is what he has learned and firmly believed...what has he learned? In what has he believed?

Verse 15 reveals: in the “sacred writings” he’s learned from childhood which have “made him wise for Salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.” What “sacred writings is Paul talking about?

Verse 16 and if the Bible in front of you right now is yours, underline verse 16. As a matter of fact I would like you to memorize it so you can quote it word for word:

2 Timothy 3:16 (ESV)

¹⁶ All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

THE BIBLE. The sacred writings that Timothy has been trained in, read, studied, spoken out loud, and made him wise toward Salvation in faith of Christ is the Bible. Let’s examine verse 16 closely:

HOLY SPIRIT IS BREATH. I’ve already told you the Holy Spirit is the breath of God and Jesus is the Word of Father God Himself. Both were required for creation to be birthed. You and I might have great words to say that will change lives, but we need breath to speak them. The Holy Spirit is that breath of life that make the word of God quick and powerful, living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword.

SPEAK OUT LOUD. When you and I speak God's written word out loud, the Spirit of God adds His life giving breath to them giving them great power to anyone listening. ***It enables the Word of God to stab into us and others like the sword it is.***

Look at the rest of verse 16: it's good for:

- Teaching the truth.
- Proving itself out as true.
- Correction of any false beliefs we have.
- Training us in proper Godly morality.

DEMONSTRATION. Now comes the promise I made to you: it's time to stab your Pastor! I'm going to pretend to believe several common worldly doctrines taught to us by our parents, school, college, the news media, the entertainment industry, your friends, politics, social media, political parties, and schools of thought like liberal and conservative.

I will name several of these doctrines then one of you will stab me with the sword, reading what the Bible says about the same things.

#1: *"I've heard that the universe was created by a Big Bang!"*

Genesis 1:1-2 (ESV)

¹ In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.

² The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

#2: *"My teachers and professors have told me that we evolved from chimps."*

Genesis 1:26-27 (ESV)

²⁶ Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. And let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth."

²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:7 (ESV)

⁷ then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

#3: *"Gender fluidity is the new thing! You can be any gender you want, or even non-binary!"*

Genesis 1:27 (ESV) ²⁷ So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Matthew 19:3-5 (ESV)

³ And Pharisees came up to him and tested him by asking, “Is it lawful to divorce one’s wife for any cause?”

⁴ He answered, “Have you not read that he who created them from the beginning made them male and female,

⁵ and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh’?

#4: *“What’s wrong with same-sex marriage & relationships? I think God approves of them as much as He does heterosexual ones.”*

Leviticus 20:13 (ESV)

¹³ If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination;”

1 Corinthians 7:2 (NKJV)

² Nevertheless, because of sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband.

#5: *“I see nothing wrong with Christians consulting mediums, astrology, and I even know a couple people who say they’re white witches. I think God can work through anyone.”*

Deuteronomy 18:9-14 (NKJV)

⁹ "When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations.

¹⁰ There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, *or one* who practices witchcraft, *or* a soothsayer, *or* one who interprets omens, *or* a sorcerer,

¹¹ *or* one who conjures spells, *or* a medium, *or* a spiritist, *or* one who calls up the dead.

¹² For all who do these things *are* an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations the LORD your God drives them out from before you.

¹³ You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.

¹⁴ For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; but as for you, the LORD your God has not appointed such for you.

#6: *“I consider abortion to be a right and don’t believe that an actual life is being ended when one is done.”*

Psalms 139:13-18 (ESV)

¹³ For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother’s womb.

¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well.

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in

the depths of the earth.

¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them.

¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ If I would count them, they are more than the sand. I awake, and I am still with you.

#7: *"I think I can sleep with whoever I want to, and don't need to be married. No one owns anyone else and I think God has bigger fish to fry than whose sleeping with who."*

Hebrews 13:4 (ESV)

⁴ Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous.

1 Corinthians 6:13 (ESV)

"The body is not meant for sexual immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body."

#8: *"The earth will end in a climate change apocalypse as humanity drains all of its resources away! Humanity is like a leech upon mother earth and needs to be stopped!"*

Romans 8:18-23 (ESV)

¹⁸ For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

¹⁹ For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.

²⁰ For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope

²¹ that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

²² For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now.

²³ And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Revelation 21:1 (ESV)

¹ Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more.

#9: *"I think there are many ways to God and Heaven. It doesn't matter if you're a Christian, Muslim, Hindu, or whatever...I think God has revealed Himself in all religions and faiths."*

John 14:6 (ESV)

⁶ Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

John 10:1-9 (ESV)

- ¹ “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber.
- ² But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep.
- ³ To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.
- ⁴ When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice.
- ⁵ A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.”
- ⁶ This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.
- ⁷ So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep.
- ⁸ All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them.
- ⁹ I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture.

DID YOU GET CUT? I could go on with many more examples but I ask you now: did any of the above cut into YOU? If yes congratulations! You are experiencing step 1 in the process of Sanctification which is that what we believe and hold to be true conflicts with the Word of God.

HEBREWS 4:12 ENACTED. When the Word of God is spoken out loud then Hebrews 4:12 is enacted:

Hebrews 4:12 (ESV)

- ¹² For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

STEP 1: SEPARATION is the first step: when the Word of God is read aloud, the truth is separated from what we believe and therefore we feel “cut.” The cutting process is the division of what we’ve mixed together: doctrines of the world with that of God. The Word of God aids in the removing of our personal deception by rightfully separating the two.

Step 2 is REPENTANCE. That’s when we make the willful decision to reject any falsehood that we’ve believed and believe in what God has said.

Step 3 is LIFESTYLE CHANGE. Now that we’ve repented in our hearts and believe the truth, our lifestyle must follow...or its not a true repentance.

For example:

- A person living a life of fornication or adultery leaves that lifestyle behind and either gets married or lives as a celibate.
- A person identifying as non-binary or gender fluid now realizes they're the sex God created them to be, either male or female.
- A person who formerly had their hope drained away by a potential climate change apocalypse now realizes God is going to save the planet just as He Saved humanity, and is no longer angry or depressed over the fate of the planet but is now filled with hope and joy.
- A person who formerly consulted their astrological sign, psychics, and mediums now understand these things all come from fallen angels and realize they have all the spiritual wisdom, knowledge, and revelation through the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit Who helps us understand them.