

Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

Deliverance: The Neglected Doctrine

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 80-221

As you know, we've been studying the gospel of Luke, and the gospel of Luke is compelling and riveting material, and we have loved every moment of it. And, I very reluctantly have missed, through a vacation time and in my absence in Italy, I missed the gospel of Luke. And by all rights, I should go back to it this morning, but I am compelled in another direction. In recent months, as we have been studying the gospel of Luke, I have mentioned a couple of times that I've been prompted to write a book on deliverance. You remember me saying that a couple of times?

And, while I was away this time I did a lot of reading and a lot of thinking. One of the benefits of being gone from here is that I'm not so literally crushed by all of the demands that are all around me. I get some time to think about things that I want to think about, and read in areas where I maybe wouldn't had normally had the time. And the subject of deliverance has been much on my mind. And so, while I was away I did a lot of thinking, a lot of meditating, and a lot of reading on that theme. And so, I'm really compelled in my heart to address it this morning, and even beyond this morning, as a little bit of an interlude in our study of Luke. It is the gospel of Luke and the ministry of Jesus, which is a ministry of deliverance, as we learned in the section in Luke that we're looking at in chapter 4, that really prompted me to start thinking about the subject of deliverance. So, I've entitled this little study: "Deliverance: The Neglected Doctrine." "Deliverance: The Neglected Doctrine." And this morning, I'm really just going to introduce this subject to you. This is not so much a sermon in itself; it certainly is not the sum of everything that I want to say, but more of an introduction.

One of the great words in the Bible is the word "deliverance." It is, however, not commonly used in the Christian vocabulary. I don't recall in my life ever having heard a sermon on deliverance. I don't recollect in any part of the world where I have talked with Christians, who speak my language, that they have used the word "deliverance," unless it has been used in some context related to demons, or exorcism. The word "deliverance" is not a part of Christian vocabulary, but really should be. The fact that it isn't is a serious failure on our part because the word opens to us a category of truth that pointedly clarifies God's redemptive purpose.

As I read Psalm 91 earlier in the service, do you remember? That, three times, God is referred to as the Deliverer who will deliver His people? In fact, deliverance may be the best, it may be the most comprehensive, and it may be the most clarifying word to explain God's gracious powerful work in our lives, in spite of its infrequent use. I have searched some theology books looking even in the subject index at the back of the book to find any discussion of deliverance and have found it very rare. It's a

great word, biblically, and it's a great word in the English language. We all understand the English word "deliverance." In fact, that word has in it a certain tone of adventure, doesn't it? There's a certain drama in the word "deliverance." Even in English, we think of deliverance and if you are asked to give a synonym, the immediate word that probably would come to your mind would be "rescue." When we think of deliverance, we think of somebody being rescued out of a situation of grave danger, and that is what the word does in fact mean. It connotes somebody in an impossible dilemma from which they don't have, personally, the power to extract themselves, somehow being rescued by some greater power. And when we go to the Bible, that's exactly what we find with the word "deliverance." It's a rich word. It's a word, as I said, filled with drama and filled with adventure.

Now, in the Old Testament there are three Hebrew words that are translated "deliver." The first is *natsal*, and it essentially means to rescue or to deliver. It is used of physical rescue or physical deliverance. For example, in Exodus chapter 3, God says, verse 8, "I have come down to deliver Israel." That is, to rescue them, to bring them out of that land, being Egypt, into a good and spacious land, being the land of Canaan. So, God came to rescue, to deliver in a dramatic and adventurous way, the children of Israel out of Egyptian bondage and take them into the land of promise. So the word *natsal* is used of that kind of literal, physical deliverance and rescue.

Natsal is also used numerous times to speak of spiritual deliverance. It is so used on a number of occasions in the Psalms: Psalm 39:8, Psalm 51:14, Psalm 69:14, Psalm 79:9, and other Psalms, are verses which refer the word *natsal* to some kind of spiritual rescue, rescuing the sinner from judgment, from sin, et cetera.

Secondly, there is the word *palat*. That word is also a Hebrew word that is a synonym to *natsal*. It means to save or deliver. It is used in the Old Testament in those passages which are poetic. In fact, it is limited to usages in Old Testament poetry. So, you find it very, very often in the Psalms, a few other times in other places where poetry is included in the Old Testament. It, again, means deliver, or deliverance, and could even be translated "escape."

There is a third word, *yasha*, and it is the most common word. It means to deliver, or to save, or rescue. Same thing, exactly. It is translated by deliver, or save in most instances.

Any of those words carries the same idea: the idea of a rescue, the idea of a dramatic deliverance of someone who is in a dangerous situation over which they have not sufficient control. And usually when these words are used in the Old Testament, all three of them, God is the Deliverer, and man is the delivered. God is the rescuer, and man is the rescued. So one of the great concepts in the Old Testament is this concept of deliverance. God the Deliverer, man the delivered, and God is the one who provides the plan of deliverance.

When you come to the New Testament, nothing changes. You go from the Hebrew language to the Greek language in which the New Testament was written, and you find a familiar word in the New Testament, *sozo*. Any Bible student, any New Testament student knows that word, and it is most of the time translated save, saved, or salvation. And, it means to be rescued, or to be delivered. In fact, when the Bible in the New Testament talks about salvation, or being saved, most often it uses the word *sozo*. It can mean physical rescue. It can mean an actual rescue of a person from a dangerous earthly situation. Most often, it has to do with deliverance from spiritual danger, and is the word commonly translated save, or salvation. There's another New Testament word, *rhodomai*, used about 18 times in the New Testament. Means the same thing. Means to deliver or to rescue. Paul uses that word in Colossians 1:13 when he says, "God has delivered us from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of His dear or beloved Son."

So you have these two New Testament words, and you have Old Testament words, all of which deal with this concept of being delivered, being rescued, being taken out of a dangerous predicament and put into a better situation. Deliverance then, by all accounts, is a crucial Biblical idea. And unfortunately, it has kind of been smothered under familiar terminology, most often being saved and salvation. And while those terms are great terms and they have meaning to us, they are not common terms in our English vernacular. The word "deliver" is a much more common term in the concept of deliverance, much more readily understood in English than is the term salvation. In fact, we rarely use the word "saved," it seems, unless we're talking about something that's put away for safe keeping, something like an account somewhere, or something you're holding back for future usage. We don't use the word "saved" for the most part to speak of being rescued from danger; for that, we tend to use the word rescue or deliverance.

So, we're talking then about God as a rescuer. God as a deliverer. God bringing a plan of deliverance, and that's why Psalm 68 verse 20 says, "God is to us a God of deliverances," plural. There are many facets to God as our Deliverer. Psalm 40 in verse 17, "Thou art my help and my Deliverer, O my God." The same is quoted in Psalm 70 verse 5. In the familiar words of Psalm 144 verses 1 and 2: "Blessed be the Lord my rock, my loving kindness, my fortress, my stronghold, and my Deliverer."

Now whenever in the Bible, you're reading in your own Bible, and you come across the word "saved," "save," "salvation," or "Savior" you can substitute some form of the word deliver because that's exactly what is meant. Now this will help us emphasize what salvation really is, it is deliverance. When someone becomes a Christian they are delivered from certain very dangerous and deadly matters, things that pose a fatal danger to the eternal soul. True salvation then, the work of God, is deliverance. It is the dramatic rescue of the sinner from the elements of life that threaten to destroy and damn him. Ours then, in the work of evangelism, is a work of rescue. We, on behalf of God, have been sent out to tell sinners God has a rescue plan. God who is by nature a deliverer, the only deliverer, has a deliverance plan by which He will deliver the sinner from all those things that damn

him.

In fact, there may be no better way to understand the power of God's Spirit in the believing sinner's life than to understand that the Spirit is working a work of deliverance. When we talk about conversion, when we talk about regeneration, when we talk about new birth, being born again, new life, transformation, when we talk about these matters of grace, we are really talking about being delivered from certain things.

In fact, deliverance, as we will see in this series, defines what it means to be a Christian. A Christian is a person who has been, listen, permanently delivered from certain deadly, damning realities. This is what defines a Christian. A Christian is not someone who says they believe in Jesus. A Christian is not someone who prays a certain formula prayer. A Christian is not a person who goes to church or belongs to some quote-unquote Christian institution. A Christian is not someone who feels good about God or good about Jesus. A Christian is a person who has been, what? Delivered. This is absolutely critical to understand because there's so much confusion about who is a Christian. The answer is: Christians are people who have been delivered.

Now, we're not talking here about justification, which is a forensic thing, which is a declaration on God's part, which is obviously an essential. It is an accounting of God by which He credits righteousness to our account and puts our sin to the account of Christ who pays the penalty for it. That is forensic; that is a judicial act of God. We're not talking about that because that's not manifest. That's not visible. We can't know a Christian by a forensic declaration of God. The only way we can know a Christian is by a transformed life. And so, for us to assess who is a believer, we have to look and see if that person has been delivered.

This is critical. Because, as Jesus said in Matthew 7: many are going to say to Him in the day of judgment. Lord, Lord, You know we did this and that in Your name, we prophesied in Your name, we cast out demons in Your name. And He's going to say, "Depart from Me, you workers of iniquity, I never knew you." So, there are people who are very deceived about their spiritual condition. They think they belong to the Lord, but they don't. They may believe in Jesus, they may believe certain things about Him, they may function in some fashion in His name, but the fact of the matter is: they have never been delivered.

That's why 2 Corinthians 13:5 says, "Examine yourselves whether you be in the faith." Make sure you're a true Christian. Well, what do you look for? You can't look for a forensic declaration by God. You can't look for something that God does in His own counsels. You have to look at your life to assess whether or not you're a Christian, and you can't look back at some point in time when you prayed a prayer, or walked an aisle, or put your hand up, or responded to an invitation, or felt some kind of impulse, or felt some emotion. You have to look and ask the question: have I been, what? Delivered. Because God is a deliverer who developed a plan of deliverance by which He delivers

sinner from all that dooms them. That is why Romans 11:26, great statement, says, "The Deliverer will come, and He will remove ungodliness." Now, that's deliverance. The Deliverer will come from Zion and He will remove ungodliness. And later in that same verse it says, "And this is My covenant with them when I take away their sins." There's going to be a deliverance here, and it's going to be a deliverance that turns somebody from ungodliness to godliness, and from sin to righteousness. This is a real deliverance.

Now let me put this in a current context. I think you know me well enough to know that my passion is to teach the Bible. But at the same time I have a passion to teach the Bible, I have a passion for the church. The big picture of the church is: the church is in serious trouble. I'm not talking about our local church. I'm talking about quote-unquote the evangelical church. It is a grave, grave blight that strikes the church in our day, and it is a tremendous grief to me. I'm certain that I'm grieved in my own heart because I understand enough about the Bible to know what the Lord wants the church to be, and it's not that.

Always I'm asked, and let me see if I can work my way into this context, always I'm asked questions when I travel around. You people ask me a lot of questions, and when I go other places, people ask me questions all the time. Questions about the Bible and about issues in regard to Scripture. And, I am always asked this question: what do you think is the main problem facing the church? I was asked that question on a number of occasions by Italian folks, and also by the people that were a part of our group, asking me: what do you think is the main issue facing the church? I'm always asked that question, and I always answer basically the same way. The main issue facing the church is the lack of discernment. That is the main issue facing the church. The church doesn't distinguish between truth and falsehood. It has a defective immune system. It has a case of spiritual AIDS. It does not have the ability to fight error because it doesn't know the truth. It doesn't have enough truth antibodies to fight off error. The church is ignorant. It is blissfully ignorant. And consequently, it is victimized easily by error. This is a serious, serious problem.

Weak theology, shallow, superficial knowledge of Scripture, all kinds of uncalled, unqualified people standing in pulpits who were not sent by God like the false prophets Jeremiah talks about, and don't have the Word of God and don't understand it, are inventing all kinds of things that the church is buying into. A superficial knowledge of Scripture, a weak theology, all kinds of error flooding into the church cripples discernment. And what makes it worse is that there is a movement to say that the tolerance of all of this is the purest expression of Christian love, right? And, if you call these people into question, and you call what they're saying into question and say it's not true, it's error, you are unloving, you are divisive and you are striking a blow against the unity of the church. And so, you have error flooding the church. The church is, by its theological and biblical ignorance, unable to fight against that error. And, tolerance is being elevated as a supreme virtue which aids and abets the problem.

This is in contradiction to the command of 1 Thessalonians 5:21, "Examine everything carefully and hold on to what is good and put away what is evil." The church has gotten itself into a position where it cannot distinguish between God's Word and Satan's lies. That's sad. That's sad.

Now let me go a little deeper into this issue. Of all the issues of discernment, and there are many, there's a lot of confusion in the church, there's a lot of error in the church about a lot of things. There are all kinds of views of the work of the Holy Spirit, the person of the Holy Spirit. All kinds of views about various passages in the Scripture: paradigms for sanctification, forms of baptism, spiritual gifts, views about salvation, about the purposes and work of God, about the sovereignty of God, about the human volition. All kinds of views about all kinds of things. And the church not only lacks discernment, but lacks the will to be discerning.

But of all of the issues that are important, there is one that is at the top of the list. If we're going to be discerning about anything, there is one thing we have to be discerning about and it's this: who is a Christian? That's the most critical one of all. That is the most critical issue of all. At the top of my list in this matter of being discerning is: we need to know who the true Christians are. Because if we don't, then we've invited the enemy into camp. Now, I've been all over the world, as you know, and have had lots of discussions with lots of Christian leader, and I've read lots of things about the church, and the history of the church, and the theology of the church. I've been all over everywhere and I can just tell you this. Right now, in this day, and it's been this way for a long time through this 20th century. The biggest problem in the church is its inability and unwillingness to distinguish true Christians from false. It's literally killing the church.

You go all over the world, and you see people who claim to be Christians. I've been in the Eastern Europe and I've seen the orthodox church which is by its own definition a Christian church. They believe they're the only true Christians in Eastern Europe. And then you go into western Europe, and earlier this year in France, and then in the last couple of weeks in Italy, and there is this massive monolithic system called Roman Catholicism which believes itself to be the only true Christian Church on the planet. It's one thing for them to believe it, it's something else for Billy Graham to say the Pope is a fine, outstanding Christian, something else for him to hold an evangelistic meeting and invite all the Catholics to cooperate. It's something else for Bill Bright to say that the Pope is a fine, outstanding Christian. It's something else for people in the ECT, the people who are in Christian leadership in America, to embrace the Roman Catholics and say we all love the same Christ, we all serve the same God in the same way. And these are all our Christian brothers and sisters. It's one thing for these institutions to exist; it's something else for those people who are Christians to embrace them as if they're all true Christians. This obliterates the line of clarity and invites the enemy into the camp and it just devastates the church.

You can turn on your television and watch TBN. Everybody that comes on is embraced as a Christian, even though it's just filled with false teachers and people who obviously haven't been delivered. It's the idea that anybody who believes in Jesus is a Christian. And if you want to push the point beyond that, you're somehow a problem, and you're divisive and schismatic. Liberal Anglicanism in England back in the '60s was in its heyday, and there were some evangelicals in the Anglican church, and they thought, well, we need to move in to the Anglican church and get a hold of this thing, and partner up with these brothers. They're our brothers. We can't let things divide us. We're all one church. And it was David Martyn Lloyd-Jones who stood up and said, "This is wrong. You've got to separate." And he was vilified, and he was marginalized, and he was pushed out, but he was right as time has proven. Because whatever evangelicalism was there has succumbed to the power of liberalism, and the pollution of the church. You can look at the American denominations: the Presbyterian historic denominations of the Presbyterians, and the Methodists, and the Episcopalians, and even largely the Lutherans and others, and you can see the tremendous slide.

And it goes back. They invited people into their schools, in their seminaries to teach. They said they were Christians but they were wrong, and they came in and they stole the institutions and sent them right down the drain. This is deadly stuff. And now you even have evangelical churches that are designing their churches to make unbelievers comfortable. This is frightening stuff. And I guess I feel at this point, I've got nothing to lose anyway. I have to be accountable to the Lord. It's just time to stand up and say this has got to be brought to the test of Scripture. You can have a thing called Amsterdam 2000; you can have 5,000 so-called evangelists and celebrate all this unity, but who's finding out whether these people are Christians? They come from Catholicism, and orthodox groups, and fringe groups, and all kinds of strange groups, and even some cults. I talked to a man even this week who said he thinks there's going to be many Mormons in heaven. This is continuing to escalate, and I guess it's time to just stand up and say there has to be a line drawn.

The issue of who is truly a Christian is at the very center of the church's life and ministry. This has to be protected. There isn't any fellowship between light and darkness; is there, 2 Corinthians 6? There isn't any concord between Christ and Satan. Two can't walk together unless they be, what? Agreed. You have to come out from among them and be ye separate and touch not the unclean thing. And here is the church absorbing all of this. And now it's so confusing that the church itself doesn't even know who's a Christian, and frankly I don't think they particularly care as long as you say you believe in Jesus.

A friend, Iain Murray who is a gifted theologian and a great biographer, wrote the massive two-volume biography of Martyn Lloyd-Jones, has also written on Jonathan Edwards and many others. He is a very esteemed Englishman and has been here many times. We've spent many hours together, has written a new book called "Evangelicalism Divided" in which, and I read it, just devoured it over the last few weeks while I was in Italy in the plane, in the back of the bus, in the room, everywhere, because it just consumed me. Murray is tracking the 20th century decline of evangelicalism and it's a

book of history that is very, very revealing. And Murray says, and I think he's absolutely right, he says, the inability of the evangelical church to distinguish between a Christian and a non-Christian is quote: "The greatest failure of professing Christianity in the English-speaking world in the twentieth century." End quote.

He understands the implications. If you redefine non-Christians as Christians, you obliterate the distinctiveness of the church and you therefore create an environment in which you have to tolerate error because these people represent error. He further writes, this is very important and insightful, "The health of the church," and he's speaking as a historian here, having tracked it very carefully, "the health of the church has always been in proportion to the extent to which the difference between Christian and non-Christian has been kept sharp and clear." Absolutely right. The starting point for the church is to be absolutely clear about who is saved and who is not. If we're not clear about that, then we don't know who's on our side and we don't know who we really need to reach.

From the time that God began to form a people for Himself, Satan endeavored to intrude. From the time that the demons cohabitated with the daughters of men in Genesis 6, Satan has been trying to pollute and mix, all the way down to sowing tares among the wheat. And it's really true. Murray says, "The most insidious opposition to the gospel has come from within worldly churches." I'll say this as simply as I can. The gospel is more often attacked on TBN than it is on NBC. This has been the legacy of liberalism which has been embraced by quote-unquote "evangelicals." This has been the legacy of charismaticism where theology, and I'm not speaking about all the people, but for the most part where the Movement tolerates anybody's view. This has been the legacy of the seeker-friendly pragmatic movement. This has been the legacy of evangelical ecumenism which wants to re-embrace orthodoxy, and Catholicism, and everybody else.

And the confusion goes from the grass roots right on up to the top. I've talked to the evangelical brain trust, if you will, and they aren't even willing to commit to who's a Christian. Even my conversation with JI Packer, so capable and gifted a theologian and writer, when I asked him: what is the line by which you determine a true Christian? All he could say was, "That's a good question." For most of the last part of the twentieth century, the last 50 years, there has been a sustained effort to invent and promote a popular definition of Christianity, which is neither biblical nor legitimate, and to fill the church with non-Christians. And we have to recover the identification of a true Christian, and that means we have to get back to the doctrine of deliverance. That's the connection. Because if you understand the doctrine of deliverance, then you have a criteria by which to understand who's a Christian. And we can't obviously know the heart.

We can't be sure about everyone. That's not within our capability. We can't always distinguish between the wheat and the tares. But it is true that even Jesus said, "By their fruit you can," what? "You can know them." So there is marked demonstration in the life of a person as to whether or not they have in fact been delivered. And such deliverance, listen, is the common experience for all

believers in Christ. There is a dramatic change in their personal life. We're not talking again about forensic things; we're talking about actual transformation. There is a dramatic change in their personal life, their personal nature, and this is the work of the Holy Spirit. They are new creations and they have been delivered from some very specific dangers into some very specific new patterns of behavior.

And by the way, this isn't anything new. Go back to Thomas Scott who wrote this in the 1820's, 200 years ago: "This I will say that whatever darkness there may be in a man's understanding, unless he feels and behaves as a sinner, justly condemned for breaking a righteous law; that is, unless you see in him penitence and brokenness, and unless he expects salvation of mere grace; that is, he seems himself as a sinner and grace his only hope," and, he says, "as reconciled to God, loving God's service, longing after holiness, that holiness which the Law requires and so living holy in sincerity and truth, he cannot be saved, according to the Bible." What was Thomas Scott saying? He was saying if his life isn't changed, he's not saved. If he's saved, he's been delivered and he will love God, he will love God's service, he will long after holiness, he will live in a holy way in sincerity and truth or he's not saved. He was dealing with the same issues 200 years ago. Why? Because Satan always wants to get the church confused about who's saved, then he can infiltrate and take over, as he's done in so many institutions and denominations. Iain Murray again writes, "When churches have recovered from apostasy, historically, such as at the time of the Reformation and the eighteenth century evangelical revival," that's from Wesley through to Jonathan Edwards, "when churches have recovered, it has always been," I love this, "by a return to such discriminating preaching and practice."

What he means is: when there's ever a recovery from a time of apostasy, it has come when preaching has become discriminating. What does it mean to discriminate? If you say you discriminate, what does it mean? If you say, you hear people say, be a discriminating buyer, what does that mean? It means that you can choose the best out of the lot, right? You know how to discriminate. It means to discern. The only hope for the church is discriminating, discerning preaching. I don't think there's any organizational answer. I don't think we need more meetings, more seminars. We need preachers who will stand up and preach discriminating messages. And Murray says, "Given the great decline in the English-speaking churches of the twentieth century, the chief need again was the reassertion of the meaning of being a Christian." Wow. The chief hope for the church is discriminating preaching primarily directed at the issue of who is a Christian.

I don't care how widely known you are as an evangelical leader. To say that Roman Catholics and the Pope are wonderful Christians is not discriminating. It questions somebody's faculties of discernment. And sometimes I wonder if those who can't discern the true church can't discern it because they're not part of it. I know people who aren't a part of it can't discern it because the natural man understands not the things of God. I don't expect non-Christians to be discerning about the church, but I do expect Christians to be discerning about the church. And yet, you have people who have risen to prominence in evangelicalism who have defined evangelicalism on a large scale who lack

that discernment. And what we need is exactly what Murray say: we have to have some discriminating preaching. It's time to draw the line again, and that means to be unpopular, I hate to say.

And people ask me: why do people do this? Why do they compromise? Why aren't they discriminating? Why don't they say what needs to be said? Why don't they say this is not a Christian institution, these people are not Christians? Why don't they make a clear-cut line? Why don't do they do that? And the only answer I can come up with, and I think it's a general one, and Murray in his book agrees with me on this: the fear of being alienated. It's the fear of man. It's the desire for popularity. It's the desire for the widest possible acceptance. It's the desire for a reputation. It's the desire not to be marginalized and pushed off into a corner. It's a desire to be tolerable and tolerant because it affords you some level of popularity. Because it lets you move up the social strata in the world of Christianity. And so, they seek the approval of man. And it's amazing how they can seek the approval of man at the expense of the approval of the Lord of the church. In fact, if you try to be the discriminating preacher, if you try to bring the truth into the situation, you're a problem.

But this is not new either. John Wesley in Volume 8 of

"Wesley's Works" said this, "In our days, to be a true Christian is really to become a scandal." There was Wesley in the midst of apostate, the apostate church in England in the 18th century, a true Christian preaching a true gospel, and being so scandalized that it ultimately led to persecution of the true Christians. May have to be that way, but isn't it interesting that the church that persecuted the true believers? You know, when the people came and founded America, they were coming here for religious freedom, did you know that? Because they were being persecuted, not by the secular world, they were being persecuted by whom? The church, the apostate church.

So how are we going to draw this line about who's a true Christian? Well, the simplest way I know how to do it and the biblical way to do it is to realize that the true church is the living society of the delivered. I don't think that's necessarily a great name for a church, The First Church of the Delivered, but that's the idea. The true church is the living society of the delivered. Now how do you know if someone is delivered? Well, I'm going to tell you that, next time. But I'm going to give you the outline this time, 'cause I want you to have this.

First of all, I'll start with five categories of deliverance. True Christians have been delivered from lies to the truth, from error to the truth. I think that's pretty obvious. Secondly, they have been delivered from sin to virtue, or from ungodliness to godliness. Thirdly, they have been delivered from fear to joy; they have been delivered from fear to joy, from wrath to blessing. Fourthly, they have been delivered from the love of the world to the love of the church. And fifthly, they have been delivered from Satan to God. All of these things are manifestly noticeable in the life of a true Christian. See, it's not the issue of when and where you made some decision. It's not that you belong, or that you believe in Jesus somehow. The church is the living society of the delivered.

You know, this gets us back to the gospel. And this is really a battleground. You know, it's been many years I wrote "The Gospel According to Jesus." And I wrote what I thought would be just a nice book to state that Jesus is Lord. If you confess Jesus as Lord and believe in your heart God raised Him from the dead, you're saved, Romans 10, right? That's safe enough. Confess Jesus as Lord. I wrote that book and it started a fire storm and it hasn't stopped nearly 15 years later because there are so many people in the church who think you can be saved without confessing Jesus as Lord. And that's rising again.

So, I have been sort of banned in certain places because of that very divisive view that to be saved you have to confess Jesus as Lord. That's just one of a myriad of things. When you try to be discriminating, or discerning, or biblical or clear, theologically precise, you really do expose the vulnerability of those in error. But you must do it for the sake of the truth and the sake of the souls of men, and the sake of the purity of the church.

It's been a long siege, you know, for the truth but we continue to proclaim it and shall continue. And I think I determined after this last trip that we need to crank it up a bit because the confusion not only is characteristic here, but it's getting exported everywhere. So we will help you next week by talking about what the delivered people are like so that you can be able to tell who's a true Christian.

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