

Escaping Lies, Embracing Truth

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- [0 : 00] A God who is strong and kind and doesn't demand that you make sacrifices of your children. Or all of the other things that so many pagan religions demand of their people. So that they can appease their God and make him happy with them. Right? God is happy with us in Jesus, right? Amen. Amen.
- Well, we're going to be in a number of different passages today. I'm not going to finish in Ecclesiastes 9, although we will spend some time in Ecclesiastes. The title of my message is Escaping Lies, Embracing Truth.
- I want to do something very, very unique with you today. This has come as a result of some studies that I've done over the last couple of weeks. And thinking through how I can take this particular example that I interacted with.
- And model for all of us ways to use the scripture to answer the deepest and greatest needs of the human heart today.
- [1 : 14] In other words, let me ask you this. If you're in a conversation with someone and you're talking to them about the issues of life. And you're listening to them tell you about how much they struggle and how hard things are.
- And they're an unbeliever. How do you go about talking to them in a way where the Bible comes alive? And you help them realize that this book that's so old speaks directly and poignantly and powerfully right into the deepest issues of the human heart.
- Because you understand our mission field out there. Most of them don't believe what I just said. They don't believe Bible has any relevance at all for what they're going through.
- It's ancient. It's old. It's outdated. It's outmoded. And it doesn't have anything to speak in modern existence. We beg to differ. Don't we?
- For those who live by the truth. No one ever comes to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. This is where the Bible is where we find the truth that liberates our hearts.
- [2 : 28] It's our Savior. Amen? Now last Sunday as I was speaking to you, I included this particular quote in my introduction from the book Untamed.
- And here's the quote. Let's put it up here for them. I love myself now. Self-love means that I have a relationship with myself built on trust and loyalty.
- I trust myself to have my own back. So my allegiance is to the voice within. I'll abandon everyone else's expectations of me before I'll abandon myself.
- I'll disappoint everyone else before I'll disappoint myself. I'll forsake all others. For the sake of myself.
- Me and myself. We are till death do us part. If the Lord Jesus Christ had taken that attitude, he never would have come to earth.
- [3 : 23] He never would have gone to the cross and we would be without hope in this world. For millions and millions of people, that seems good advice.

And that's our mission field. Millions of people in our day and age consider the ideologies of the book Untamed that I just quoted from to be truth and wisdom for living a full and meaningful life.

Now that's sad to us. People have devised their own belief systems for understanding, for evaluating, for teaching about what matters most in life.

There are as many opinions about that as there are people perhaps in the world. And Untamed, the book Untamed, has struck a major chord. Now, maybe we would be shocked at some of the things that I'll tell you in just a few minutes about this.

This particular book and its ideologies. But we really shouldn't be surprised. Because this is the mantra of our age. And this is what we can expect from the human heart apart from God, which is the exact point that Solomon's making through the book of Ecclesiastes, beloved.

[4 : 46] So I'm going to ask you to just kind of endure the pain for a few more minutes with me here while I rehearse some things. I am setting you up. Now I'm just admitting that.

All right. The whammy comes later. But I want you to interact with this because what I'm about to share with you now is the world you live in. This isn't really going to be news to you if you work in the secular workplace.

If you deal with unbelievers day in and day out as you go about your life. But all of that particular belief system is kind of packaged in this book, Untamed, that has become wildly popular.

So this is not an endorsement for this book. It's just an example. Let me give you some examples of how popular. People magazine calls the author of this book, Glennon Doyle, the patron saint of female empowerment.

It is a book written by a woman for women to empower those women. Actress Kristen Bell, I'm sorry, who is the voice of Anna in Frozen, says Glennon's book, Untamed, is, quote unquote, an anthem for women today.

[6 : 08] Now, I just want you to keep that in mind, an anthem for women today. I'm going to read you a bunch of quotes from the book in a minute. Actress Tracy Ellis Ross called Untamed a wake-up call.

And then world-famous singer-songwriter Adele enthusiastically claims that Untamed, quote, will shake your brain and make your soul scream, end quote.

Glennon is friends with Oprah, been on her show, and Oprah endorses her books. She's actually written several books. This one, Untamed, is her most recent.

So how popular is she? Glennon boasts about 700,000 followers on Instagram. She has nearly a million, if not more than a million, people following her on Facebook.

She's written those several books. Two of them have gone on to become New York Times bestsellers. Untamed was on the bestsellers list for about 12 weeks, I think, about three months.

[7 : 18] Here's how one reviewer, a Glennon fan, describes Untamed. Glennon Doyle's book, Untamed, is a relatable collection of essays that detail how women become tamed when they deny their authentic selves and what they truly want in order to accommodate and serve those around them.

Heaven forbid. Heaven forbid, ladies, that you would deny your authentic self, which I have no idea what that means. I don't think she does either. To serve and accommodate people around you.

She encourages everyone to be who they are rather than who the world expects them to be. I had that on a slide. Yes, thank you. Here's an astonishing reality.

Glennon professes to be a Christian. A Christian mommy blogger is how she got started. She is considered a courageous example of a woman who is being true to herself.

She is praised for her candor and, I quote, her honesty. About her struggles with, and I quote, bulimia, alcohol, drugs, anxiety, depression, and mental health.

[8 : 40] End quote. I suppose all of that makes her an expert. I'm not making fun of her, folks. I'm saying this is how the world thinks.

These are the world's heroes. Being true to her authentic self, Glennon divorced her husband in late 2016 and married female Olympian soccer star Abby Wambach in 2017.

Her followers view this as an act of courage and integrity. Now, here's a sampling of Glennon's wisdom, quote unquote, for women who want a full life.

So, ladies, pay attention. Quote. I'm going to put them up here one at a time for you. If you guys will just follow along with me. I had been deceived.

The only thing that was ever wrong with me was my belief that there was something wrong with me. Second one. We weren't born distrusting and fearing ourselves.

[9 : 53] That was part of our taming. We were taught to believe that who we are in our natural state is bad and dangerous. And that is exactly what the Bible does.

Right. I'm going to resist taking each one of these. I'll just try to get through. All right. The next one. They convinced us. I'm not sure who they were.

I did not read the book. That is a caveat. I'll admit right to the point. I've taken these quotes from a number of different sources. There were tons and tons of quotes. I felt like I read the book after I read all of these.

And I just tried to shrink them down. So I don't know who they are. They convinced us to be afraid of ourselves. So we do not honor our own bodies. We do not honor curiosity, hunger, judgment, experience, ambition.

Instead, what we do is we lock our true selves away. Women who are best at this disappearing act earn the highest praise. She is so selfless.

[10 : 51] We can either control ourselves or love ourselves, but we can't do both. What we need right now is more women who have detoxed themselves so completely from the world's expectations that they are full of nothing but themselves.

What we need are women who are full of themselves. Now, I told my wife when I read that I can only think of one more terrifying reality than that. Men full of themselves.

Because we're destructive critters. We're warmongers. We get too full of ourselves. We just take the world apart. Just a few more.

Following our deep desire always returns us to integrity. If your desire feels wrong to you, go deeper. You can trust yourself. You just have to get low enough.

Do you understand that? That's wisdom. So what she's advocating is that you need to drive yourself deeper into your depravity. And if your conscience goes off in the process, ignore it.

[12 : 01] And go deeper still. If women trusted and claimed their desires, the world as we know it would crumble. Perhaps that is precisely what needs to happen so we can rebuild truer, more beautiful lives, relationships, families, and nations in their place.

Maybe Eve was never meant to be our warning. Maybe she was meant to be our model. Own your wanting. Eat the apple. Let it burn. Are you scared yet?

I wept when I read this. I wept. And I prayed. Millions and millions of women are embracing this truth.

Quote unquote. Quote. This is the wisdom of man. And in this case, a woman. Finally, this. What the world needs is more women who have quit fear of themselves and started trusting themselves.

What the world needs is masses of women who are entirely out of control. This is taking the gay community by storm.

[13 : 07] This is taking the transgender movement to the next level. People all over this planet are grabbing on to this book. And this is becoming the mantra.

Of that movement. So selflessness is the worst of sins. Trust yourself. Love yourself. Be full of yourself.

Follow yourself. And above all things, be true to yourself. Now, Jeff, why take that kind of time to advocate or at least to expound on to reveal untruth and ungodliness, which is what that is?

I do all of that in my sermon. It's because of what millions of people in our mission field are saying about the message of untamed. This is how your mission field thinks.

This is what your mission field values. Does everybody in our mission field latch on to this? Not everybody. But they have their own devices and their own standards that relate to this.

[14 : 20] They may say it in a little bit different way, but I'm going to show you where it all comes from in just a few minutes. I'm going to show you why I'm saying that this is common. This is the world that we live in.

Here's a quote that represents what so many people in our mission field then believe. Here's a quote. Let me throw it up here for you. Untamed continues Glennon Doyle's trend of writing raw, honest books to inspire and encourage women and beyond.

The beyond means the transgender and gay community and different men. It focuses on finding joy within yourself, being at peace with who you are, and listening to your inner voice that is the source of unbridled wisdom.

Glennon writes a great deal about her own personal adversities, pains, and the injustices of life that she suffered.

She's experienced much of this in her own life, and she is really candid about how it's affected her. Let me give you this quote from Ed Welch, pastor and theologian and author.

[15 : 38] When trials and testings come, we have two choices. To trust unswervingly in the God who is loving and powerful, or trust in ourselves, our interpretations, or our rights.

Now, which one do you think represents unswervingly? Folks, please hear me carefully on this. Glennon Doyle is right.

We are not supposed to allow the approval of people to define our lives. What has happened is she has turned away from that and turned inward to herself.

And in turning inward to herself, she becomes then her own God, making her own life and thinking in terms of her own limited reason.

Man's reason can only take him so far or her so far. And that's what's happened. That's what this is all about.

[16 : 49] For months now, for months now, folks. And hear me again carefully as I share this with you. We have been reading from a book that deals with the same adversities that this woman's faced.

The same kinds of pains. The same or similar injustices. Written by an author who also himself personally experienced all of that stuff over the course of his entire lifetime.

However, his wisdom and his counsel about it all, it all, as we've studied, is worlds apart from what Glennon advises.

My friend Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes, a book we've been studying for months now, going verse by verse through. He wrote that book to counter the false notion that you carve your own meaning out of life.

That you can live life to the full by being true to your own desires. You hear me? He wrote his book, Ecclesiastes, to declare with absolute certainty, the only people who can know true meaning and true fullness in life are those who live in a high and holy reverence for God.

[18 : 12] People who get the most enjoyment out of life are thankful people who live their lives as gifts from God. In Solomon's entire refrain, over and over and over again, chapter by chapter by chapter, is that life is a gift from God.

Enjoy it to its full. Fear the Lord and live. And I wanted to help define that further for us. I want to stand before you today without apology and with great, I hope, humility in my heart.

I have prayed for this woman. I have prayed through the week for the people reading this book and taking it to heart. That God would enlighten their eyes like we prayed in Psalm 19 and reveal to them the truth.

That this book will take them into oblivion. So what I'd like to do now is I don't want to overwhelm you. Don't I hope it won't be like that.

I want to help now fill your minds and your hearts with the clean truth of God's wisdom. So I'm going to take you to a number of different scripture passages.

[19 : 28] And as I do this, I'm going to try my best to help you connect this truth with the philosophy, the ideology of what we were just exposed to as I shared some of the quotes from Untamed with you.

Okay. So this is something of an apologetic as well as an evangelistic approach to dealing with what our mission field is latching on to and believing.

I also want to help you understand where it is that all of this is coming from. Who's it? It is a conspiracy. I'm going to preach conspiracy today.

But I think you might be surprised about where it comes from and who's involved. All right. So let's begin then filling our hearts with the truth of the Lord by going to Ecclesiastes and just being reminded my the folks who are here at our church week after week.

They will be reminded by these things for our visitors. Perhaps this will be a fresh kind of presentation for you. We're going to start in Ecclesiastes chapter three. And I'm going to be talking to you and referencing for you the next few minutes here.

[20 : 45] The concept, the truth or the idea of the fear of the Lord, the fear of the Lord and what that means. So chapter three in Ecclesiastes in verse.

I know that everything God does will remain forever. There is nothing to add to it and there is nothing to take from it.

For God has so worked that men should. I don't know what your translation says. Mine says fear him. Literally, it means reverence.

Or to stand in awe of him. So this is the concept or the idea throughout scripture of worship. This has everything to do with the worship of our heart in a in a full bodied, full being, full persona way.

This is all of me giving all of what I am in worship to God. That's that's the fear of the Lord. Now, I could say much more about the fear of the Lord, but I think that helps helps us grab on to what I'm talking about.

[21 : 53] So this is a high and holy respect. Reverence for almighty God. And I want you to notice in this. He says in verse 14, everything God does will remain forever.

Now, that's stability, isn't it? That's stability. Your feet or sink your teeth into that truth and that reality. There's nothing. It's so stable. It's so firm.

It's so pure. It's so good. It is so, if you'll allow, relevant to our lives that there is nothing that can be added to it and nothing that can be taken from it.

God is so in the fabric of life that men should come to revere him. If you look back up into verse 11, God has made everything appropriate in its time.

He is also eternity in their hearts. You see that? This is why every single person is on this quest or this search for purpose and meaning in life, because God has put the reality of an eternity in them.

[23 : 07] They intuitively and instinctively, by God's design, know that there is an afterlife. There is an answerableness to their lives.

God put that in every human being. And this is why you see so many people around us chasing after the answers for what is this thing that has been put into me or that is driving me and I need the answer for.

It's the answer of eternity. And when we go to scripture, we find that the author of eternity is God and that he makes the offer of eternity available to us through Jesus Christ.

It's a beautiful picture. Let me keep going because I just can't spend that much time on each one of these. Each one of these will preach. So. They go to Ecclesiastes five.

Verse seven. For in many dreams and in many words, there is vanity or emptiness is what my Bible says. Rather, fear God.

[24 : 14] Fear God. The idea here is and this is just in the way of reminder because we've covered all of this. Dreams and many words that has the idea of illusions or fantasies.

These are the kinds of things that we want to dream up, that we want to create for ourselves. These are the ways that we we convince ourselves that what we're thinking, what we're believing, what we're doing substance.

This is the path. And he says, no, that is all collectively in the sight of God. What is your Bible say other than empty? Vanity.

Vanity. Meaningless. Empty. Vapor. Breath. Breath on a cold day. And then it's gone. That's God's opinion of all of that.

Rather, he says, there it is again. Reverence God. Live your life in a high and holy reverence for almighty God.

[25 : 20] In chapter seven. Eighteen. Over and over again, Solomon will deal with this reality. Verse eighteen. It is good that you grasp one thing and also not let go of the other.

For the one who fears God comes forth with both of them. Again, we covered this when we were talking about it. What he's saying is enjoy your life and pursue godliness.

It's okay. It's good for you to reach out and grab the one while still holding on to the other. Hold on to enjoying your life while you reach out pursuing God.

They are not mutually exclusive. If you've ever met a sour, dour Christian who loves Jesus, you understand what I'm talking about here. We're meant to be the most blessed and fulfilled people on the planet.

We have more to rejoice about than anybody else on the planet as a believer, as a Christian. And so Solomon says it's good. Enjoy your life. Hold on to that.

[26 : 29] Reach out and grab that pursuit of God. Pursue him. Know him. Hold on to him. And the only people on the planet that can know that and do that are those who, here it is, fear God.

Fear God. Those people have both. Those people have both. Another one is chapter 8, verse 12.

Although a sinner does evil a hundred times and may lengthen his life, still I know that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear him openly.

The idea here is, look, this is the reality that we would love to be able to share with Glennon Doyle. Wouldn't you love to witness to Glennon Doyle? I would. To share the hope of Jesus Christ with her.

To say to her, what your heart is screaming for can only be found in a person. Not a concept. And certainly not within you. Right?

[27 : 33] Here we have the reality of Solomon saying, you know what? The reality of living in this, people sin against us. People hurt us.

We suffer injustices. And yet, Solomon says, these people who do this, they still live lengthy lives. Oh, figure. Here. Why doesn't God zap them?

Whoa. Before I came to Christ at about age 20, I'm really glad God didn't zap me. Because that's what I was living. I lived in sin against people.

I did injustice toward people because I was all about me. And God had mercy on me. And enlightened my eyes. And helped me to see the truth of Jesus. People sin against us.

People hurt us. People still live long lives. We can't figure that out. But. But. Look what it says. Still, I know that it will be well for those who fear God, who fear him openly.

[28 : 35] What does that mean? What God says and what God thinks is most important. Still, I know that God's on his throne and what he says is true. One day we're all going to give an account.

And because we're not God, we don't get to stand. We're those people in need of grace. Glennon Doyle is in need of grace.

Amen. We are in need of grace. Right. We don't make fun of her. We don't look down our nose at the people who believe this. We have been those people.

And it is by grace of God that we have been lifted out of ourselves, saved from ourselves. I don't need saving from Glennon Doyle's in the world. I don't. She's not my enemy.

She's my mission field. I need salvation from me. You need to be saved from you. Left to yourself. There's no telling what you'd go after.

[29 : 34] That's the truth. And then finally, in chapter 12, the very end of the book. The conclusion when all has been heard is fear God and keep his commandments because this applies to every single person.

And I think that we could just leave it at that. Fear God. A high and holy reverence for God. Live in relationship to God. Obey. It applies to every single person on the planet.

Now, Solomon also wrote many, many Proverbs. And so I want to take you to Proverbs and continue in this theme. And again, this I'm not going to say much about any of this.

I just want to move through it and kind of let it just fill your minds. Proverbs 14 is where we'll begin. Proverbs 14.27.

The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life that one may avoid the snares of death. How do you avoid those things in life?

[30 : 47] Hear me, friends, that are death producing. You understand reading the book Untamed is a death producing reality. If you read the book Untamed and heed that counsel in that book, that will be a death producing event for you.

And I don't just mean that it will make you physically die. I mean it will rob you of life. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life.

Isn't that beautiful? Look up in verse 26. In the fear of the Lord, there is strong confidence. You need confidence in life that what you're living is true.

The fear of the Lord is that path. Having a high and holy reverence for the Lord is that path. How about chapter 15, verse 33.

The fear of the Lord is the instruction for wisdom and before honor comes humility. The fear of the Lord is wisdom. The fear of the Lord leads you in a wise life.

[31 : 58] In other words, you face the situations, the circumstances, the injustices, the pains, the adversities. The time when you're just standing there going lands in what in the world is going on right now.

Where is God in this? The fear of the Lord is instruction in those times. And do you know what cultivates in you? Humility.

Because only people who are humble can submit to that kind of thing. When you don't have all the answers and you're trusting God, that's humility.

And obeying Him anyway? Latching on to Him anyway? Even though your heart's full of hurt and pain and uncertainty and you run to Jesus?

There is no humility in the book untamed. None. There is no humility in ideologies that tell you you are your own God.

[33 : 01] It just isn't. It's tragic. How about chapter 16, verse 6? By loving kindness and truth, iniquity is atoned for.

And by the fear of the Lord, one keeps away from evil. How do you keep away from the evil? How do you discern the evil that would rob you of life and the enjoyment of life?

How do you deal with your sins and the sins of others when they hurt you and sin against you? What does it say right here? The fear of the Lord. The high and holy reverence.

Now we're back to that quote. Listen. When trials and testings come, we have two choices. We're going to trust unswervingly in the God who is loving and powerful or trust in ourselves, our interpretations, and our rights.

One is a path toward kindness and gentleness and peace for your life. The other puts you at the center so that you're constantly trying to control and manipulate everything around you to get it just where you want.

[34 : 06] And how's that working out for you? Doesn't that make you miserable? Can I clue you in on something? Not to talk down to you, to say to you, this is me too.

It makes everybody else around you miserable too. It's just no way to live. When you try to live your life controlling and manipulating everything so that it's like what you want, other people suffer too.

Right? How about chapter 23, verse 17? So do you think Solomon was kind of a wise guy? Maybe a little bit.

23, 17. Do not let your heart envy you sinners, but live in the fear of the Lord. My Bible says always. Day to day.

Or all in the day. Throughout. Now again, can I ask you something, friends? What would this kind of counsel do to help release Glennon Doyle?

[35 : 10] And all of the people on our mission field. If they were to take this to heart. Don't let your heart envy sinners. When people sin against you. When people hurt you.

When people step on you. When the world crushes you. Takes advantage of you. Cheats you. Whatever. Don't let your heart envy them.

When you see that their life goes right on. And they're laughing and seeming to have a party over it. While you've just lost all this. And been through all this. And they're just doing their thing. That's what Solomon said. Solomon said, yeah, I saw that.

And you know what? I went, what? Really? That's a paraphrase. He said, yeah, you can spend your life doing that. And it'll make you miserable. Or you can look to God.

And realize he's still on his throne. He knows what he's doing. Look to him. You say, Jeff, that just. Will that make everything right? You know what? I bet. I'm willing to bet.

[36 : 06] Your circumstances most likely won't change. But your heart attitude will. Your perspective on it will. And that will make all the difference. Do you see where I'm coming from here, folks?

The scripture is targeting you. Not all those people. Do you see that? The scripture wants to work in you. What does that tell you?

You're the issue. You see what I'm saying? Glennon Doyle's not my enemy. I'm my enemy. I need Jesus.

If Jesus leaves me to myself. I don't need Glennon Doyle's to destroy me. I'll do it really good myself. Really well. Now you think about that.

It's sobering. Where were we? 2317? 2814? How blessed is the man who fears always.

[37 : 14] But he who hardens his heart will fall into calamity. How blessed is the man who fears always. Blessed here has the sense of happy.

A blessed person is a person who's enjoying life. So this is a person who is stable in life. I'm stable. I'm fixed.

I'm grounded. I know what I'm about. I know who to trust. I know who to look to. Happy. Blessed is the man or the woman who has this high and holy reverence for God as the defining factor of their lives.

Friends, I just put it out to you. Is that you? Do you live in a daily basis fearing the Lord? Cultivating, nurturing in your life this wonderful trust and submission and humility and obedience.

All of that is part of your daily worship to God. Or do you do what you want to do all week and come in here and now it's time to worship? It won't work. You'll be very short lived here.

[38 : 19] Because you're going to hear this every Sunday. Finally, let me give you one more from Proverbs. Proverbs 9. I'm going to take you back toward the beginning of Proverbs.

9 verse 10. I save this one for last. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.

So if you want to have a discerning heart toward the issues of life, you will not be able to figure out everything that happens to you.

Why? How? All that. You won't. You just won't. Everything that comes at you, beloved, you won't be able to figure all of that out. You just won't. But here we have reverencing the Lord is the beginning of a wisdom that will take you through those experiences because it is the knowledge of the Holy One.

You start with God. You measure everything that's coming at you and happening with you by the standard of knowing God. You start with the Lord and you measure that experience against the Lord.

[39 : 31] The Lord is the defining factor. He's the standard. You don't flip that thing around. You flip it around and start with your experience. God gets a raw deal in that one. So start with the Lord.

He'll give you the perspective that you need to move through those circumstances. I'll tell you, I say it again. I've said this a couple of times in the time we've been in Ecclesiastes. Man, when life really slams you, you haven't been slammed yet or you haven't been slammed in a while.

Just hold on. And if you keep drawing breath for life, when life really slams you. Though those are the times when people find out really quickly what kind of foundation they have.

And it can disappear quickly. Right, Alonzo? This woman worked as a nurse for many, many, many years. She saw a lot of pain and suffering. You find out real quickly when people are suffering like what she saw, what they're trusting in.

What we're talking about right now counts. This matters. This offers the depth that people are crying for. Now I want to show you just real quickly here.

[40 : 42] I promise to show you the genesis, the source, the origins for these kinds of ideologies.

This kind of teaching that you would see in Untamed. This, can I say it this way? Message. There's a message here. Alright? While there are all these sub-messages going on in these books like this, there is one overarching message that drives through.

In every single case, it's exactly the same. And it just astounds me. And if you know what to look for, you'll see it every time. It's not you biasing the material.

It's you discerning and drawing out of the material itself that same kernel or core message. It's fascinating. So I'll take you to Corinthians chapter 4.

And here's where it's revealed. 2 Corinthians chapter 4. In verse 4.

[41 : 49] I'll start up in verse 3 actually. Paul says, And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing.

In whose case, that is, those who are perishing, the God of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of Almighty God.

So what's he saying? And even if our gospel is veiled, Paul was coming under a lot of criticism for his preaching and his teaching ministry. And the criticism was basically this.

It's ineffective. This place ought to be exploding, and it's not. You're teaching Paul, and you're preaching Paul. You're one string banjo.

Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. Just ain't getting it. And so he came under lots of criticism for that. Rejection. Denial. And if our gospel is veiled, they don't get it.

[42 : 56] Unbelievers, they don't see it. It is veiled to those who are perishing. Perishing and unbeliever synonymous. And what about those who are perishing?

Why can't they see the truth? Why won't they embrace Jesus as a Savior of the Lord, in whose case the God of this world has blinded their minds, so that they will not, cannot, do not, see the light of that gospel of the glory of Jesus, who is the image of Almighty God.

That's why. That's why. And in every single case where you see this message of self going out, you can trace its source back to Satan.

Satan. Let me show you again in 2 Corinthians chapter 10 something that the men studied together recently. This is why we can say that the people of our mission field who believe these things are not our enemies.

They're enemies of God. They're not our enemies. Verse 3. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh.

[44 : 17] This is not a war with bullets and guns and knives and tanks and aircraft. For the sins of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

Paul, what do you mean by fortresses? What kind of fortresses? We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God.

And we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ. In other words, if we were left to ourselves, we would think like that too. Now in Christ, we take every one of these thoughts captive to Jesus.

We take these thoughts, these things that come at us and make them prisoners for Christ. If they stand up to the scrutiny of Christ, we hang on to them. If they don't, we jettison them.

Plain and simple as that. In his commentary on 2 Corinthians, in this section, Dr. MacArthur says this, Satan controls the ideologies, opinions, hopes, aims, goals, and viewpoints current in the world.

[45 : 22] He goes on to say this, Satan panders to the depravity of unbelievers and drives them deeper into darkness. That would be themselves. Did you hear that in those quotes?

The deeper we go into ourselves, the darker it gets. And yet we have a world out there embracing this ideology in this book and saying it's raw, it's courageous, it's full of integrity, and it is the path toward liberation.

Now, they're blinded. Will you pray for them? Will you pray for the people in our city who are reading this kind of stuff?

Will you pray for them? Will you ask God to put you in their path so that you can share the hope of Jesus with them? I've given you all kinds of scriptures.

Look, I got pages of notes. I'm ready. You want to do some more? Let's do some more. See? Let me just show you a couple of more before I close.

[46 : 22] In Romans. Romans. The book of Romans. Chapter 8. And we'll start in verse 5.

There's a contrast being made here. Those who are according to the flesh, we were just reading about that, that our warfare is not in the flesh, but is a divinely powerful spiritual battle.

Now, here we are. Those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh. But those who are according to the spirit, that is the Holy Spirit, the things of the spirit.

For the mind set on the flesh, that is the world system of belief, is death. But the mind set on the spirit is life and peace. There's your life, Glennon.

There's your peace, Glennon. It is a mind set on the spirit of the living God. Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God. It does not subject.

[47 : 30] See? There's no humility. It does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so. And those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

And if you can't please God, you're headed to a devil's hell. And this should break our hearts. There is only one way to please God. That is through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The pleasing of God has been accomplished for us in Him. It isn't a plan. It isn't an ideology. It's a person. It's a person.

Listen, we here at Grace preach, teach, and follow a person. And His name is Jesus. That's what we do.

Because we have a church full of people here who've been liberated from this. Who've been given this life and this peace in Him. In Him.

[48 : 31] The worst part about all of this is if people heed the message of this book and books like this book, not only will they not experience a fulfilling and meaningful life, they will be led into a wasted, vain, futile, empty life of loneliness of the soul.

And worse than that, eternal separation from God. I have much more I want to share with you, but I don't know how long I've been going.

How long? Suzanne? Oh, I got plenty time. I do want to end on a positive note, but I've got to show you and give you some cred here with what I'm doing in the way of Satan being the author of all of this.

If I haven't made the case, this is going to slam dunk it for you. We're going to turn to John chapter 8 and look in verse 34 to pick up the context of the conversation that's going on here between a bunch of very religious Jews and Jewish leadership.

So these are spiritually tuned in religious people in the Jewish faith. And they are all about what they say is following God and being people who are true to Abraham, the patriarch of the Jewish faith.

[49 : 59] And so they encounter Jesus. And here's what he says in verse 34. Jesus answered these people. Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is the slave of sin.

Now, these people don't want to hear that. They don't want to hear that they're slaves, right? The slave does not remain in the house forever. The son does remain forever.

So now he's distinguishing between the people of eternity in heaven and the people who are not. So if the son makes you free, you will be free indeed.

Now, who's the son? Jesus, right. OK, verse 37. I know that you are Abraham's descendants. See, physically bloodline.

Yet you seek to kill me because my word has no place in you. Oh, I speak the things which I have seen with my father.

[50 : 59] Therefore, you also do the things which you heard from your father. Yikes. They answered and said to him, Abraham is our father.

However, Jesus said to them, if you are Abraham's children, then do the deeds of Abraham. Abraham was a true God worshiper. So he's calling them to worship the true and only God and put their faith in the Messiah who would come, which is what Abraham did.

And the Lord said that it was reckoned to him as righteousness. Right. So that's how we know that. Verse 40. But as it is, you are seeking to kill me.

A man who has told you the truth, which I heard from God. This Abraham did not do. You are doing the deeds of your father.

They said to him. Now they've become really indignant at this point. We were not born of fornication. We have one father, God. Jesus said to them, if God were your father, you would.

[52 : 10] And have come from God, for I have not even come from my. But he, God sent me. Why do you not understand what I'm saying? Here it is, folks.

Why do they not see this? Why do they not understand? Why didn't you understand before you got saved? It is because you cannot hear my word.

You do you see that? You cannot hear my word. You are of your father. The devil. And you want to do the desires of your father.

He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth because there's no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature.

He is a liar and he is the father of lies. But because I speak the truth, you do not believe me. Let me throw this slide up here for you to see.

[53 : 09] Remember I told you just a minute ago to look for that central message that is driven into all false notions, false worship. Here it is.

The heart of all lies is this. You can form and transform yourself into the best version of yourself because you know best. You deserve the best for yourself.

You believe in yourself. You follow yourself. You reward yourself because at the end of the day, it's all about you. And then this.

The truth is, you cannot transform yourself or save yourself from what is most wrong with you. Then Jeff, where do we turn?

Well, I'm in the same book that I just quoted from where Jesus confronted these men and said, the devil is your father and he's your father for one reason.

[54 : 12] You don't love me and you won't listen to me and you won't worship. So the devil is your father. Where's the hope?

Listen carefully. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

For God did not send the son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through him. That's the hope.

That's why we preach Jesus and him crucified. That's why we call people to a relationship with Jesus through faith. You say, Jeff, how do I have a relationship with Jesus?

How do I come to Jesus and know him the way you've been describing and talking about? It's very straightforward. There is no one plan.

[55 : 12] There is no secret prayer or handshake that gets you in. After hearing this message of hope through Jesus Christ, what do you want to do with Jesus?

You say, Jeff, I want to know him. All right, then bow to him. Bow to him and express your heart to him and confess to him. I'm a sinner. I have wronged you and sinned against you and lived life for my own way.

I've been my own God and I want to change, repent. I want to leave that behind and reach out to you and believe you to be my only hope for forgiveness for my sins.

Jesus, will you forgive me? Please forgive me. If you pray a prayer similar to that and express a heart like that, the promise of Scripture is that in that confession, he will forgive you now and forevermore.

When you die, he'll take you to heaven. And in between that time, he'll help you to live a life that pleases him. That's what it takes. Much more that I could have shared with you.

[56 : 28] I'll encourage you to read 2 Corinthians 3 and all of 4 that we didn't get to. When I speak to you from the Bible about escaping lies and embracing truth, I'm directing you, beloved, to a person.

I'm pointing you away from faith in yourself to a positive response to what God has done to save you from yourself.

Please hear me as I close. It is not a matter of embracing what we can do, but of embracing God in what he has already done for us in Christ.

Big difference. The Bible says, embrace the Lord Jesus Christ in faith as your Lord and Savior and know peace.

peace with God even if you won't have it with men. Let's pray. Father, we have turned our hearts to you as we have looked into your word, as we have sought to humble ourselves and submit ourselves to you in our worship that it might be acceptable to you.

[57 : 49] and so it is that we would not go amiss here, Father. I ask my brothers and sisters to join with me in praying for Glennon Doyle.

We pray for this woman. She is miserable. She is lost, aimless, afraid. We pray, Father, that you will put into her path loving, gracious, tender-hearted, gentle, long-suffering Christians who will speak the truth in love to her and model for her the grace and tenderness of Jesus.

We pray here for the people in our community, people who in one way or another are living for themselves, whether they've read this book or not, under the leadership, under the ownership of Satan, headed for a devil's hell.

God, please, help us in our church family to gather together and move together as one in ways that we can reach these people with the truth of the gospel and give our lives dearly on their behalf, selflessly looking to be useful to you on their behalf.

You told us, Lord, if we're going to follow you, then we need to deny ourselves, take up our crosses and follow you. So help us to walk like you, to speak like you, to think like you.

[59 : 21] More than anything, help us to love like you. Thank you for loving us and thank you for these truths that we can take to our hearts that help define who we are in Jesus and give us a life of peace.

It's in his name we pray. Amen. Amen. To God be the glory. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.