



**King Jesus-Part 3**  
**Adopting His Regal Priorities**  
**Pastor Mike Fabarez**

Well last summer I had the opportunity to be preaching out in London and I took my family along and had a chance to visit the Buckingham Palace. We signed up online and got our tickets on the Internet and we showed up where they said, which was kind of hard to find, because it's kind of tucked away around the back of this big edifice there, Buckingham Palace, and as we got up to the front, of course some of you know my daughter's situation, we're in a wheelchair, we're traveling and we roll up to the front door there and they go, "Oh...", because this is a non-ADA-compliant palace, by the way. There are not any ramps on that side. So they say, "You have to go around to the front."

"OK. The front, I'll go around to the front." So, they took us around to the front and I mean the front-front, the front where you see this iconic Buckingham Palace and, of course, there was something going on there as there always is at Victoria's monument that's just out in front of that, I mean, thousands of people. And of course, against the gate where everyone kind of piles up against the gate and they got their hands on the gate, they're taking pictures of the royal guards and all of that. All of that's going on and we get led around to the front gate and a guy comes, takes his keys, opens up, this security guard, opens up the gate and lets my little family of five through the front gate. People are looking at me like, "Who's that?" That I'm the Duke of Orange County, you know. I don't know what to say, but I felt very important at that point. And it's like 100 yards to the front of the building from the gate, and so they put us in this golf cart, basically, and we get in this golf cart and we start going. And we can't help, you know, we all got our phones, were starting to take pictures. "Oh, don't take any pictures!" Like, well, we just took about 30, so we did, because it's interesting to get behind the gate, you're looking at thousands of people who are kind of wanting to break in, and we're they're like we're someone special getting driven in there. We get driven in, if you know how it works, there's a big archway in the front, which takes you into this big quad in the middle. And so back in there, I guess, there was a ramp that we were able to get up on with the wheelchair.

So, we go through that that archway that is so incredible, because if you know anything about history, right above that is the royal balcony, and so much historically has taken place there.

Now, I'm not a big Brit family, popular, you know, fan. I don't care about the royal family much, but I couldn't help but get back, after going under that royal balcony, and trying to look up some of the historic things that had happen there. Because I've got a view of it that most people don't get. I was going under it. And I found all the pictures I would expect to see. Now, I mean, just certain people get up on that balcony with all the rigmarole they have out there for all these kinds of things, coronations and, you know, I saw pictures of Winston Churchill standing there over the top, and you got kings and princes and queens, and it's just a crazy set of the ultimate who's-who of the royalty who stand up on that royal balcony. The one that caught my attention was a video that I found, which just happened before we got there, for the ninetieth celebration, 90th birthday celebration of Queen Elizabeth. And it's a great shot of her standing there on the balcony with her white gloves and her big hat. And as she stands there and they've got this big parade and processional going by in front in honor of her birthday, she's flanked, of course, by her two grandsons, William and Harry. And you know, of course, William's got a family, Kate Middleton, his wife and then the baby, George, I guess it is. They've got one on the way now, I've heard, I've become a Brit royal family watcher now, and Charlotte, that's the little girl.



And so they're all there and flanked by these guys and they've got all their royal regalia on it looks like. And as little 2-year-old George at that time, two and half, three years old, he's messing around doing something, just kind of being a kid and so William gets down on his level and actually kneels down. So you can see the royal balcony and all you get is the front top of his body as he's down there dealing with his son and he's right next to Queen Elizabeth. Well he stays down there for a while and, finally, at one point Queen Elizabeth, with her white gloves, smacks him on the side of his arm. And you can picture it barely, because she barely moves her mouth when she speaks so, you know, royally, she says, "Stand up William."

Prince William, Duke of Cambridge, pops up, he's got his regalia on, he's bedecked with medals and stripes and tassels, he pops up like a seventh grader, you know, just who's told to stand up straight, and pops up because Grandma smacks him with her glove. It was an awesome video. I said, "I like this lady. She's got just a lot of power in the back of her hand." It was awesome. Then I read more about her and I read some articles that said she's very serious about her family performing their royal duties the way they ought. I don't know what to believe about what they say about her but there are some things that she's quoted as saying that are there on record that are just awesome. One was, recently, she said of little Charlotte, Princess Charlotte, William's daughter, she said, maybe you read this, I don't know, maybe you're a Brit watcher, she said, "She's a bossy little girl."

Oh man. Now I thought about being in the royal family. Can you imagine, not only are the world's eyes on you, you're getting pictures taken everywhere, you're trying to raise these kids, they're being kids and all the rest, but to have the reigning monarch chiming in on your less than royal behavior or the less than royal behavior of your children, it's got to be quite a life to live.

And as I reflected on that in light of this series that we started, 10 weeks, I called it King Jesus because it started with the Triumphal Entry a couple of weeks back when we saw Jesus presenting himself as King to Israel. And I kept recurring that theme, it took me back to last summer and I thought, "Yeah, you know what, I am in the royal family." If you're a Christian, you sit here today "in the royal family." And I guess it shouldn't surprise you if the king, the reigning monarch, says to you, "Stand up William" or "Stop being so bossy." I mean, I can see the fact that we ought to expect the king saying to his children, the princes and princesses of the kingdom, you ought to act like royalty. He's got a standard, a high expectation for you and I. As we get into the next day now, after the Triumphal Entry, as we reach verse 45 of Luke Chapter 19, if you haven't turn there please do, take a look at this text.

We have something that's much, much more than a backhanded, gloved hand against the arm that says, "Stand up William." What we have going on right here is a pretty harsh corrective, as Jesus, who's been declared as King, walks into, now let's just be honest here when it comes to who he is, into his royal courtyard with people who claim to be rightly related to the King and he's got some correction, all right.

Here's how he read it, verse 45 Luke 19, reading from the English Standard Version. It says "When he entered the temple, he began to drive out those who sold." "And he entered the temple and began to drive..." We get one verb here, "drive." "Drive them out those who sold." Now this is the shortest, most abbreviated depiction of this scene. Matthew and Mark also depict this scene, and also John gives us the same kind of scene, only it happened three and a half years earlier when Jesus began his ministry. So, this isn't the first time this happened. And we get more verbs and more descriptives there to see what took place, but in essence it's driving them out, moving them out,



those who sold. Now, we've got read between the lines, but there's a lot more going on here than just, "Hey, if you need to exchange that currency for this currency," or "if you traveled as a pilgrim to the Temple Mount and you got to bring a sacrifice, here, pay me and I'll give you your two turtle doves or I'll give you the lamb or the goat." It's a lot more than that. This had turned into the strip mall. Right? This turned into a Target or Wal-Mart. I mean this was a crazy time of people trying to make money off the people who were coming to worship.

And then he starts quoting Scripture why he's doing all this, "Saying to them, 'It is written.'" There's a statement he loved to use, he used it in the temptation back there in Matthew Chapter 4 as he was led into the wilderness and he's quoting the Scripture now and he's quoting, first of all, Isaiah Chapter 56 when he says, "My house shall be a house of prayer." Then he breaks into another reference that is ripped right out of Jeremiah Chapter 7. "You've made it a den of robbers." The distance between what it is now and what I said it ought to be and he's driving them out. Now, that began a connection with him sitting in the temple with people who are now listening to him teach, and in a split decision, I should say, between those who hated it and those who loved it. Look at that dichotomy, here in verse 47, "And he was teaching daily in the temple." Now remember, he's only got a week left. He's going to be crucified on Friday. He's coming into the Temple Mount here, either on Monday or Tuesday, depending on the chronology, that's a whole other message, but when it comes down to it, he's going to teach during these next few days on the Temple Mount. Now remember, our series is ten parts, as we lead to the issues that relate to the crucifixion and the trial and Pilot and all that. But in the next seven weeks, when we continue this study, we'll see all that teaching, at least the part that the Holy Spirit decided to have recorded for us in the Gospel of Luke. We're going to look at all that teaching. But as he's teaching there, here we get the overview, kind of the synopsis of how it all goes. You've got the people who hated it and who were they? The chief priest, the head honchos, the head spiritual honchos, and the scribes, the scholars, the copiers of the Scripture, the professors of the day. And, not just that, here's a general statement, the principal men, the important people. All the principal men of the people, they were seeking to, not just vote no or give a thumbs down, they were seeking to destroy him, we got to shut this guy up.

"But," verse 48, "they could not find anything they could do," at least for a few days. They'd get around to it eventually. But at least in these initial days and this last week of Christ's earthly ministry, it says, "they couldn't find anything they could do." Why? Because, look, he's insulated, "For all the people were hanging on his words," they were drinking it in.

Well this starts, I think, a quick three observations about this particular passage that I hope would be joined together in your mind, because the King has been presented as King and if you call him your King and Christ as Lord, which is an ancient word, I understand, we don't use it in our everyday vocabulary, but he's the boss of you and that is Christ. We see how Christ the King walks into his domain, the temple courts, from the time he was twelve, he's articulating, this is his Father's domain and he and the Father are one and he walks into this situation and he says, "We got to clean this up," and he wants to clean it up. Why? Because he's quoting Scripture what it ought to be. What it ought to be, the King's commands for this Kingly court, is that on this Temple Mount people are all about prayer and seeking God. But what you've turned it into is an opportunity to leverage your bottom line and to make a lot of money. And that greed and that selfishness for commerce and being a tradesman here and a money changer, you've shown that there's a gigantic gap between the King's instructions for your life, and how you ought to function here, and what's actually happening. He quotes a passage for both of those. He quotes the Isaiah passage for this is a summation of what's supposed to happen here, and he quotes the Jeremiah passage, look, right before the Babylonian captivity, this is how bad it had gotten. He's saying now 600 years later it's happening again. This is all about you guys, it's all about your bottom line, it's about your greed, it's about



materialism. It's not about prayer, it's not about seeking God.

And what he wants to do, now follow this, is to close the gap between what God's royal decrees and what God's royal instructions say ought to be, and what is actually happening and he's saying, "We need to take this behavior and we need to make it match what the Bible says." That we call, here's a word for it, "application." Take the biblical principles and apply them. You are to do them, get them done. And how does he do it? Well, he comes in and he tips over some tables, the other references to this particular scene tell us. Here it just uses the word "drive" but still, drive, this is a very physical word for a guy who comes in and physically moves people through the doorway to move them out. It's a very, you might even say, violent reaction to what he's seeing as a big gap between what should be and what is.

Number one on your outline, let's just word it that way. If you're going to really walk in the footsteps of Christ, if you're going to live as he lived, if you're going to walk as he walked, as John said, then you ought to and I ought to "Zealously Apply the King's Commands" because Jesus is showing just how zealous he was for people applying his commands.

Now before you start turning over tables in the bookstore after the church is over, understand this is the King's domain. This is his Temple Mount. This is his domain. And I want to take this, without you trying to "L-shape" amen this sermon and think of all the other people you want to, you know, tip some tables over in their living room. I want you to bring this back to where YOU live, your domain, where you live, your life. Let's start with that today.

But I do want you to start to apply what I think is the commendable attribute of Christ in this passage, that he is no longer going to take it in his domain, having things clearly instructed in the Bible and a gigantic gap between what is and what ought to be, and he says we ought to slam those two together. And I'm going to do it, Jesus says, in a very zealous way, which is a mild way to put it, because he doesn't walk into the Temple Mount and say, "Let's reason together. Hey, let's just talk about this. Is it really the best way? Should you really be charging that much money? I know how much you paid for that, I know what these are worth. Why are you trying to leverage your position here for a lot of material gain? I mean isn't this about...?" He's not going to say that. He's going to do what? Let's look at the other passages. If he does it the same way he did it the first time, three and a half years earlier, here are two things that John says about it. He comes in and not only tips over... Well, let's start with the other two, Matthew and Mark. Matthew and Mark say he tipped over tables. OK? Have you been in a room where a man has flipped a table over? You've seen it on TV. Right? I imagine it wasn't a happy day when you saw that happen. I mean, you know, when you got things on the table and they get knocked over, what kind of mess is that? I mean, that gets everyone's attention. This is a, I mean, a violent act, is it not? Jesus taking the table and flipping it over. John adds this when he did it years earlier, he took their money bags, their money and he poured it on the ground. It wasn't just that he flipped the tables over, he took their money and he spilled it on the ground. Here's the thing you want, here's the prize of what you're working so hard to negotiate your way through, here I'm going to throw it, here's what I think of your money, your tables, on the ground. And then one more, which always makes it into almost every depiction, every painting of this scene in Christ's life, I posted one on my Facebook page, I think I posted another on my Twitter account, of Christ cleansing the temple, which I think is a very passive way to put this. I mean, he is scrubbing out the blemishes here. This is a majorly violent thing. But I know you remember this, he took a cord and he made a whip. Now I want you to think about that.

I mean the most available cord you would have in the first century is the belt that you use, the rope, the cord you'd have around your waist to keep your tunic tucked in. Right? That's probably the one





he reached for, unless there was another one hanging there nearby.

But it says that he took that and he made it into a whip. Now, if you picture the cowboy boots and the 10-gallon hat and the thing that goes "whoosh", the bullwhip, we're not talking about making noise to scare a horse. A whip is for whipping, physically whipping.

This is a cord. If he doubles it over a couple of times, it's not going to make any noise and scare people, it's not like he's got a whistle here. This is used for hitting people. I mean, I picked a couple of those images that I posted just of how he's going after these people. Not to mention the verb to drive out, or to force out. I mean, have you seen a man physically move someone out of a room before? I mean just put all those descriptives together. This is a crazy, crazy response. Why are you doing that? Because the Scripture says this, to summarize in Isaiah, this building and this courtyard, he doesn't enter the temple itself, the walls of the temple, I mean, the context is and we learn this from where this is all happening, historically, it's in the court of the Gentiles, which is the outer ring, if you will, of these concentric squares or rectangles, where he's driving these people out. This whole complex is to be used for prayer. That's a summary statement from Isaiah. But if you go back to when Solomon built this, back in the Old Testament, you recognize that he dedicates it with prayer and in his prayer, you know what he talks about all the time? Prayer.

Now, unless you think of him as some dumb ancient who really thought he could build a building that God would live in, you need to read the Chronicles' and the Kings' version of this, they both are very complimentary, perfectly harmonize, but one gives us a little bit more than the other when it comes to what he's praying. And what he's praying here is that God, he knows, will never live in a building. He starts with this, "Heaven in the highest heaven cannot contain you; how much less this building that I made for you!" There's no way he thinks God's living in the building. He knows that. But he says this, "Here is this, by your instruction, a building, an edifice, a beautifully constructed and extravagantly decorated building, that we can look to that reminds us of your majesty and your greatness and your desire to be present and active among us. And when people pray and they utilize this visual edifice and that becomes this centerpiece of worship, may you hear from heaven, where you really live, and can you hear our prayers and respond to us?" And then he gives a lot of examples. "You know when we get our enemies who start to get stacked up on our borders and we're threatened and we realize we've sinned, we've not been the people we should, and we cry out to you when we realize we need your help and we understand the problems in our lives, would you hear from heaven and give us safety and relief and peace? When we've had a problem with someone else and we've sinned against our neighbor and we come and we bring our sacrifice to this Temple Mount in front of this altar and when we pray to you and you see," and I love that line, "you see the anguish of our hearts and we're contrite and we know we've sinned, could you hear from heaven and forgive us?"

I mean, it goes on and on and on and on. Blight, mildew, warfare, whatever it is, when you see us praying, and we pray in this place and toward this place, God hear our prayers. This building was all about you seeking God. It's about you relating to God. It's about you being honest about what God has written and God said. It's about you being a confessed and contrite Christian, to use our New Testament terms, and to seek the Lord. Now it wasn't about that at all, it was about, "How much money did you make today? Yeah, we did our thing, we bought our animals, we got a good deal over here." It became nothing but a shopping mall.

And Jesus says, "You know, we got to stop this and we have to stop it right now, and I have all dominion on this mound. I just presented myself as the King of kings. I'm coming now to my temple." That's how the Old Testament prophets said, the Lord would come to his temple. The Lord



came to his temple, he didn't like what he found. And he made a whip, probably out of his belt. He tips tables over. And he took this seriously with a kind of almost violent response because he saw it as a den of robbers, which is interesting passage, by the way. In Jeremiah 7, you were with us in our Old Testament survey or you didn't need it, you know the Old Testament history in 586 B.C, the Babylonians come and take the southern kingdom. Well, Jeremiah prophesies before that time and after that time. And when he speaks of what's going on, and primarily Jeremiah's leading up to the destruction of the temple, he writes Lamentations as his lament, his dirge over the fall of the temple, he is concerned about the fact that everyone had compromised, they didn't care about God. It was exactly what Jesus was concerned about, particularly as it relates to the temple, and in Chapter 7 of Jeremiah, God calls Jeremiah to go and give a sermon, it says, in the gates of the Temple Mount. So he's supposed to go there at the temple at the gates, probably at the same exact place Jesus was now standing as he walked through the gate and to preach to these people. He summarizes the problem of materialism, you're in it for yourself, convenience, it's not about me, it's not about God, it's no longer about you seeking me. He says, preach and rail against these guys because they've taken what is sacred, what's important and what's priority, and you've made it secondary and unimportant and you don't seem to care. Matter of fact, you're concerned about advancement, about profit, about materialism above all else. And he summarized it this way, this has become nothing more than "a den of robbers." Jesus quotes that very line in this passage to say we've got to fix this problem. That was the issue, by the way, you want to know why God's people in Judah were taken captive? Ezekiel says it well. Because people hear my words through my prophets and I preach to them and I teach them through the written word of the Mosaic Law, for instance, and the preaching of the living prophets here in the sixth century B.C., and everyone just takes in the information and tosses it. Here's how he puts it in Ezekiel 33. It's like someone who plays an instrument well, it's like someone who sings a romantic love song, and all they do is applaud. "That was great." And they keep coming back to hear the word of the Lord. But he says, because they see it as nothing more than just let's learn more from the prophet, he says the problem is it's good for nothing. And it's like you are just looking at a concert and at the end of it he says you don't put my words into practice. Jesus was concerned about that, Jeremiah was concerned about that, Ezekiel was concerned about that, James was concerned about that when he says, "You hear it, but you're self-deceived if all you do is hear the word but you don't do the word."

So I wonder today, when you look at the commands of Scripture that are right there before you in the pages of the Bible and it says here's how God's royal children should live, and you look at the reality of your life and you see a distance and a gap between those two, I wonder in your domain, your life, how quick you are to try to apply the word, or let's put it this way, zealously slam that door shut. I'm going to try to close this gap by the grace of God in my life to not live with this distance between what ought to be and what is. Are you applying the word?

I could leave it there and say, as a lot of pastors do, I hope you figure out something you can deal with. But let me just give us some examples. And again, it's not because of any counseling appointment I had this week, I'm just throwing out a few examples. The Bible says, for instance, God's people, God's royal people, should not be drunk with wine. Let's just start with that. Right? I literally just pulled this off the pages of the Bible. It has nothing to with what I saw you doing on Friday night. OK?

Don't be drunk with wine. You should not be inebriated. All the way back to the Old Testament. Right? Not for kings to drink wine, not for princes. I mean don't get drunk. I mean, this is not becoming the children of God. This is a consistent biblical principle. And I just wonder if in your life you say, "Well yeah, I can see that but I know, my wife says I really drank too much last week and got a little tipsy here and yeah, I understand, it kind of gets the best of me on certain situations



and at that game, the game went long, I got a little drunk." And I just wonder how committed you are to closing the gap between what the royal commands are for your life and what is, in saying, "It's time for me to tip over a few tables, or to break a couple of bottles, and just say, 'I'm done,' and pour a few things down the drain and go, I'm not going to allow this to stand between me and the royal commands.

Maybe for you, you understand the Scripture says, "Hey, you as a Christian husband are to be an example of Christ and the church." It's all about fidelity and faithfulness to your spouse. This is what the Bible commands. You are to be, to put it in the words of what's required of a leader in the church, a one-woman kind of man, focused on her. This is your interest. And you know, as even as it's put in the Old Testament, you can easily get into what the world's into, neighing after another man's wife, like some donkey in heat. You can be like that, it's disgraceful, it's less than what we should be as the children of God. To not longingly, lustfully look at other women and maybe you recognize, "Yeah I know that's what the Scripture says. I understand what I'm doing on my iPad or my computer is not really that, and I can see that, I'm really going to ask someone to pray for me, and I'm asking God to kind of help me with that." Or you can say, "It's time to smash a couple of computer screens."

It's time for me to take a few things and throw them away. It's time for me to be ruthless about dealing with this and slamming with a zealous kind of zeal to say, I'm no longer going to have this dissonance between what God's royal law says and what I'm living.

The Bible says you should be faithful at being at church. Don't forsake the assembly of yourselves together. I'm just cherry picking here, I'm just shooting here, at various commands of Scripture. It is not to be that way, a matter of fact, we ought to be more committed to assembling together, all the more as you see the day approaching. And that means the church attendance, let's just put it that way, of an average church should be going up, even if they don't gain any new people in their church, because people are recognizing I need to be at church. If I only go three weeks out of four, man, I'm going to be four out of four, because the day is drawing near. But to you it's not been a priority and you know that. Maybe at the New Year, you say, "I'm going to try and get to church more and try to be involved a little bit more."

And you don't look at what the Bible says should be for the royal family of God and what is in your life. You see that gap but it doesn't lead you to zealously say, "Whatever it's going to take to slam..., if there's something sitting between me and that, and it maybe it's a bag of money, maybe that money needs to be thrown on the floor to say, 'I don't care about that like I care about obeying what the God of the universe says regarding my life.'"

Well, you're all here, so you're preaching to the choir, Pastor Mike. Yeah, I know, but I could count up the attendance of everyone that's here on the weekend and then I can look on the roster and say how many people who are really in this church have a ministry post? "Well, that's extra credit." Listen, here's what the Bible says about that. Peter, under the inspiration, the royal inspiration of the Spirit of the Eternal God said this, "Every single person in the body of Christ is a steward of the varied grace of God."

To put it in terms of First Corinthians 12, God has given you some manifestation of his greatness, of his glory, of his Spirit for the common good. And you are a steward and that means I have a stewardship and investment in me and if I don't see a return coming through my life for that investment, if I don't have some kind of ministry in my church, see then, you're a bad steward, and you're in sin.



And I'll bet I could stand there at the door when I shake hands when this is all done and greet people and if I asked every single one of you after you say, "Nice sermon, Pastor Mike," I say, "Tell me your ministry post. Tell me how you serving." And you know what I'd get for a lot of people, I'm quite sure? "Well, you know..., you know..., you know..." We'd have a lot of reasons why we're not doing that. And I just wonder, what's the distance between what is and what the royal law of God says should be for every child of the King. A zealous person who walks in the spirit of Christ himself, who had no sin in his life to rout out, but he could walk into the domain of the royal courts of the temple and say, "We're turning over some tables." Maybe it's time to turn over a couple of tables in your life, that keep you from being and doing what the law of God clearly says, to serve him and to express your love for him the way that you ought as a steward of the very grace of God.

And if you see where I'm getting this kind of ruthless perspective towards sin because you've read the Bible like I have, you know that nothing could be more poignant in this regard than Christ's word regarding sin in our life and something that stands between it even if it's dear and precious to my life. It may not be a bag of money, may not be your little industry that you got going on, it may be something in your dearest, closest held commodity, your own body. Jesus said this, "If your hand causes you to sin," do what? Yawn. Put it in your pocket? No. "Cut it off." "Ah, yeah, you say that a lot." Maybe you've heard the stories of these people and this happened from time to time, I think they may have even made a movie of some of these people. When the climber gets stuck by himself, in what they call a crevasse, and his arm gets stuck and the full weight of his body gets slotted right there at the joint in that rock and he cannot move and he can't call for help. No one's there. You've heard these stories. Right? He reaches into his pocket or into his bag and he's got a knife, and he sits there and yells and he screams and he's almost passing out and he's hanging with his arm stuck. And at some point, he takes that blade and opens it and has to make a gut-wrenching decision, doesn't he? I just wonder how that works when you first start to cut through the skin of your own arm. Now, hopefully he's smart and, of course, these guys who have done this before will put a little tourniquet on here trying to keep the bleeding from being, you know, to where I pass out and then I start cutting. And I grimace from the pain. And then I get to the tendons and I try to dislodge the joint in my elbow by cutting and cutting and cutting and cutting and cutting. When Jesus said if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off, he didn't expect us 2,000 years later to yawn our way through that statement. He's saying there may be something standing between you and righteousness, in what you know you ought to do as a Christian, and I don't care if it's like sitting there with a pocket knife and cutting off your arm. It's not so that you can live, because why would a guy ever do that? He'd only do it because his life is at risk. Well, he's talking about your spiritual health. And he's saying take sin seriously.

Oh, you know what's coupled with that, right? "If your eye causes you to sin." Bible graduates here, Sunday school grads, what's the next word? "Gouge." Depending on your translations, it's a strong verb. "Gouge it out." If the problem that stood between me and what the Scripture says I ought to do is an eyeball, here's the powerful, visceral words of Christ. Gouge it out. I guess if I were to do that I'd have to put my thumb right on the interior of my nose, I'd have to start pushing right there. Oh, this will be tough. And I get my eye to bulge out a little bit and push harder, it wouldn't be comfortable, and then I push so hard I'd be at the point of no return, and I just have to drive my thumb into the socket of my head and my eye would pop out.

But then, of course, that word is to gouge it out, I'd have to take that, if I'm really committed now, as it dangles by the optic nerve on my cheek and grab it. And to get a good handle on it I might be afraid I'm going to squish it, but I'm not committed at this point to keeping it, so I take it and I yank it and I sever the nerves and the blood vessels and my head is pounding with pain. And it doesn't





say set it down, it says throw it, cast it from you, "ballo" in Greek, throw it like a ball, and take that eyeball that I just ripped out of my head with a giant hole in my eye socket and throw it from me.

I don't think Christ expected us to read those words 2,000 years later just because they're familiar and not feel in our gut what he's trying to say about you and I looking at what Scripture clearly teaches and looking at our lives and saying maybe it's time to rip some things out, to cut some things off, to turn over some tables, to dump out some bags of money, to make a whip and drive these things out. I know some of you have been trained in a certain kind of theology that makes you think that the Christian life is not going to be a struggle. It's not going to take hard decisions and effort. I understand that God is at work in us, the will to work for his good pleasure, but that doesn't mean you're passive, you understand that. Work out your salvation. Jesus is one who, when he saw things in his domain that were out of place, he was a zealous, even violent, agent of change.

When I see that in the Scripture and I see people do those kinds of things, I remember reading some of these passages for the first time as a Christian, I wondered what's God going to say about that? You're just reading the narrative when you see Moses, for instance, take that golden calf, grind it up into powder, put it in water, and make the people drink it. I'm thinking, Moses you need a vacation. Right? You're overreacting and I'm waiting to read what God is going to think of that. Or read of a priest named Phinehas, who sits there after that whole Balaam/Balak incident in Numbers, and God protects and defends his people but Satan works through Balaam eventually, we end up learning, to get these Israelites to start engaging in sexual immorality with these foreigners and their shrine and temple prostitutes there. And Moses is now defeated because God has turned against them and they're sitting there dealing with this whole thing. And a young Phinehas watches a guy named Zimri walk by, who looks at all this and says, "You bunch of legalists, we'll do whatever we want." And he grabs this prostitute named Cozbi and..., (sorry, that's her name, look it up), and he takes this foreign prostitute and he brazenly walks by the little meeting Moses is having with the rest the Levitical leaders, and he takes her into his tent and opens the flap and says, "Come on in. Hey guys." And Phinehas, like Jesus making a whip, burns with righteous indignation, and he takes a spear, not the general utensils and tools of the religious class, and he marches into that tent with two naked, intertwined bodies engaging in sex, and pierces them through with a spear.

I'll tell you, I guarantee the first time I read that as a Christian, I don't even know if I had read that as a non-Christian, I'm waiting to see what's God gonna think of that. Right? And God breaks in and comments on this situation. In essence, Mike Fabarez paraphrase, "Finally, someone," and this is almost a quote, "that is as jealous for my name, my cause, my truth, as I am." He's abated the pestilence, the plague, gone. God says, "We're done, revival has started."

It's a dangerous sermon to preach. Right? I'm not asking you to go and spear anybody through this week in Santa Ana. Right? I'm not asking you to turn tables over in other people's domain. I want you to deal with sin severely. Because the Scripture shows us that the King of kings and Lord of lords zealously applies the King's commands.

And he had a lot to say. Verse 47. "Teaching in the temple every day." But as you know, the first thing we learn in verse 47 is it wasn't well received. Not by the "losers" in society but by the happening celebrities, the respected academics, the professorial types, the chief priest, the scribes, the principal men of the people. They were all seeking to destroy him and yet did that stop Christ? Nope, he kept on teaching. Every day of this last week of his life, in the temple, in the most visible, public place he could teach, in the most visible and public place he could teach, he was talking about God's truth.



I'm just saying we can learn from that, can't we? Number two on your outline, let's put it that way. If you are going to do that, you going to have to be fearless, "Fearlessly Promote the King's Truth." The King has a lot to say about what is right and wrong, about what is true and what is not, about how we ought to treat life, how we ought to think of religion, how we ought to think about salvation, how we ought to define the family, what marriage is all about, how the sanctity of life works itself out in the court systems. There are a lot of things that God has to say about how life ought to be lived. And I find this, every person who has an unbiblical, anti-Christian view is absolutely quick to share their opinion, but I find that most of us sit back when those topics hit the table and go, "Well, I don't know. I'm not at church so I don't know if I'm going to say anything about this."

It's part of the point of being salt and light in our society. It really is predicated on and it's foundationed on the fact that you and I aren't going to be quiet. I'm not talking about you jamming anything down anybody's throat, I'm just talking about you being as free to share something that the King has said in his Word, as you would be about something your wife has done or your kids have accomplished or something... I mean, you're not a shame to talk about your wife are you? You are not ashamed to talk about your children. I hope you work for a company that you think, "I'm proud to work here. I have no problem telling people where I work." I mean, I trust that even when you travel around, I mean, you're not afraid to say, "I'm from Aliso Viejo, I'm from Orange County, I'm from Mission Viejo." You have no problem with those things.

But when Christ has spoken clearly on all these issues that we face in our day, starting with the fact that if you ever going to get it right with God, it's only going to happen through Christ, I just wonder, are we free to share that information? Or is it our fear and our shame that makes us say, "I don't want to talk about it."

There's a difference between being nervous and being ashamed. Right? Paul said he admitted to the fact he came with knocking knees and sweaty palms to some places to do his work. But he wasn't ashamed. We've got to be fearless. We need more courage. We need to speak up about all the issues of our day, starting with the most important, how to get right with the living God. Don't be ashamed of Christ. He had so much to say about that in the Bible. He kept telling Timothy not to be ashamed. But at one point, to the Thessalonians, he told the Thessalonians how proud he was of Timothy. And he said of Timothy, you know what, he is a brother and a co-worker with the Gospel of Christ to establish and exhort you. He's talking about the truth.

And then he says this, "Don't move by afflictions." He's reminding you not to be and he's not. "For you yourselves know," let me add this word to the conversation. "You yourself know that we were destined for this." Follow that now. "You are destined for this." What's this? The affliction part, if you're willing to speak up. You want an easy Christian life, don't say anything about Christ. You want an easy Christian life, don't talk about anything in the Bible. You want no one to hate you and think you're weird, shut up about everything that God would ever think or say. But of course, that's not what Christians do. You want to be a Christian? We speak up.

My wife and I were watching these videos of kids and they showed these kids, and we've all experienced it as parents, unless your kid was, I don't know, weird. When you put your kid on the grass for the first time, a little baby. Right? I know what happened with ours and then we watched this video and go, "Yeah, there it is." You set your kid on the grass at the park or whatever, and they just are like, yuck, they dangle, contort their bodies, they don't want to touch it. My wife and I saw that together and we said, "Remember when we took them to the beach for the first time?" Same thing at the beach. Right? Eventually they're going to be eating the sand with double fists, but the



first encounter is like... they don't like it. They don't want to touch it, it's weird, it feels funny on my skin. But you know I can't really introduce you to the joys of being at the park as a kid unless you're willing to let the grass touch your body. And we're never going to have fun at the beach unless you get used to the fact that you're going to get sand between your toes and all over your legs, that's just how it's going to be.

And some people want the experience of Christianity, but they just don't want all that, you know, disdain that we're going to get from the world, and I guess the way I can do that is not talk about it. Well, that's part and parcel of Christianity. We talk about this. Now, I studied it a long time ago, but in Luke Chapter 6, Jesus said, "Blessed are you," when that happens, when you feel that weird feeling, because that's what it's about. When you're a Christian this is going to happen. Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you, "when they revile you, when they spurn your name as evil on account of me." Really? Yeah, "rejoice in that day," leap for joy. When's the last time you leapt for joy? What?

Yeah, for behold, two things, "great is your reward in heaven," there will be vindication. Everything you say boldly about the truth will be vindicated one day, and currently, you ought to have this peace in your heart, for so their fathers, their fathers, the critic's fathers. Right? "So they treated the prophets who were before you." The good guys, the heroes, the guys who God says, there's one, are the guys who were maligned, disdained, excluded, reviled, because they spoke of the truth.

To be a Christian and not experience this is like you saying, "Let's go to the beach and go surfing, go swimming, go bodyboarding, go, you know, whatever, scuba diving, but I just don't want to get wet." Well then you're in the wrong category of activities here. You want to be popular and loved by everyone? Christianity is not for you.

So we need a fearlessness. Let's start in our homes. Can we start there? If I were to say we're going to put on the screen, right now after my sermon is done, we're get to pass out popcorn, you get your little bucket of popcorn and we're going to watch... We're going to pick, I don't know, a couple of people. Let's start with you.

We've recorded everything you said all week long about God's agenda, about the Kingdom, about Christ. We've taken everything, we had hidden cameras in your life, now we're going to play it on the big screens. Dim the lights. Let's watch. I just wonder how much of the popcorn you get through before the video was over. Think about this. Between Sundays, how much have you talked to people about Christ? Just start in your home. How much has the conversation of God's truth, God's agenda, the King's mission, has been on your lips? Well here's what Jesus said, that we ought to be all about this. The Word of God should be in us, the truth should sanctify us. As Paul said to the Colossians, "The Word of Christ should dwell richly in us." As God said to Joshua in Joshua 1:8, "Do not let this book of the law depart from your...", you know the next word? Ears. No. "Your mouth." Make sure it's coming out of your mouth all the time.

Oh yeah, meditate on it in your heart and then you'll be careful to do what it says, application and promotion. Have I given you the second point yet? OK, good. Are you going to do it? Well, two of you, at least.

Let's fearlessly promote the truth a little bit more. Deuteronomy 6 says you ought to be talking about the King's agenda when you wake up with your kids, when you put them to bed, when talking with your wife, and you're going down the road. "Don't let the book of the law depart from your mouth." Meditate on it day and night, you be careful to do it. Then you know what he says in the



next verse, verse 9? If you're going to do that you need to "be strong and courageous. Don't be frightened, do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Where was he going? Canaan. What about that? They didn't like the truth of God. God has sent you into South Orange County. They don't like the truth of God. Be strong and courageous.

Number three. It wasn't that everyone sought to destroy him. Matter of fact, he was insulated, in many ways, by a band of people who were hanging on every word. These people who wanted to kill him, at this point at least, on Monday or Tuesday, could not find anything that they could do, "for all the people were..." Here's a "hapax legomenon" as we call it, the one use of this one word in Greek in the New Testament. The only occurrence and it's a great translation, I think, it's this sense of being enthralled with what's being said. They were all about it, they were drinking it in, they were eating it up. They were "hanging on every word" that he said.

And that group, in a human sense, it insulated him from the people who wanted to take him down. It's like, "Well, I can't get to him. He's got strength in numbers here." There was a linked group of disciples listening and drinking in what he said. There's a strength in that. Now it didn't last till Thursday night and Friday. Right? I mean, he was crucified on Friday. And it certainly doesn't exempt you from suffering, but there's something about that strength that even gets you to get through all of that. That's essential and, of course, it may sound like a different sermon, but let me give you number three here. When it comes to your kingly interest in doing what God has said and promoting his truth, number three, you need to "Find Strength in the King's People." You better have that fellowship, if you want to use that old word from antiquated sermons back in the 70s, you ought to have the fellowship that has you linked arms with a cadre and a cohort of royal children.

And if you wanted to find what kind of people were looking for, it's this kind of people, people who hang on every word of Christ. They hang on the words of Christ. They do as Isaiah 66 says, they tremble at his word. I'm not asking you to just find a few people who go to your church. I'm talking about you having the best friends in your life, the people who you think love the truth enough to where it's going to give you that synergistic strength. It won't exempt you from persecution, but maybe, like Paul, you'll have your Silas next to you when you're in the dungeon of Philippi, and you can sit there and sing songs together, because you recognize you're not in this thing alone.

Paul had his Silas. Paul had his Timothy. Paul had his Barnabas. I just wonder who are your Silas, Timothy, and Barnabas? Jesus went into the garden of Gethsemane and he said, "Peter, James, John, come on, let's go." Who are your Peter, James and John?

You've got to build that connection of friends. The people who you text the most, the people who you e-mail, the people who you call, the people you choose to hang out with, they need to be a cadre, a cohort of people who are committed to the truth of God.

If you want to be someone who zealously applies and fearlessly promotes what the King has to say. We need each other. "A cord of three strands is not easily broken," we quote it often. Jesus was very selective about those who he saw in his inner circle.

You'd think he would say Mary and his half-brothers would be the guys who would be his inner circle. But when they came and thought he was gone off the deep end when he was there and Mark Chapter 3, and they said, "Hey, your brother and your mother are outside. They want to talk to you." When that news finally made it to the front of that little packed room that he was in teaching, here's what he said that was so mind boggling, he said, "Who are my mothers, my brothers?" Mark Chapter 3, "Who is my mother and my brothers?" And with his arm, he was signaling to the people





in the room, he says, "The ones who do the will of my Father."

You need to choose your friends carefully. And the friends that I say are the real friends of your life and, if you're sitting here right now, "Yeah, I've been so busy, I kind of just feel like I'm isolated, no one really knows me, I don't really....," time for you to make that change. This is a priority. This is important. This is part of the royal command for you to have your Peter, James and John, to not neglect the assembling of yourselves together. To make sure that when you do suffer for Christ and you're excluded, that you've got some people who you lock arms with, who help you through that with the right perspective. Hebrews Chapter 12 is all about the right perspective. It was that those enemies could not get to Christ, at least humanly speaking, for a few days, because he was surrounded by these people who shared the same kind of high commitment to the agenda and application of God's truth.

Well my race, that's set before me in Hebrews Chapter 12, has that all throughout the book. That sense of a great crowd of witnesses, which was not just the dead people he talked about in Hebrews 11, but all the living people, the brothers who were to exhort and encourage one another every day. That was the crowd that they were running with.

And I love the way that Pastor Lucas' wife, Heather, put in her blog this week. If you don't read it, it's good. She writes this blog for gals. And I know I'm not a gal but I read it anyway, and she basically takes the Christian life, she's writing that installment on her blog about accountability and she analogize it to running, having running partners. If you're going to run a marathon, you better have some running partners. That certainly keeps you going when you feel like quitting. And, of course, my mind went to this passage and that is a great analogy, and I think you've got to have that team running around you. If you want to run with endurance, that's important, that great crowd of witnesses around you. And of course, as we've talked about, to be ruthless about sin and the sin that so easily ensnares you or entangles you, you ought to lay it aside, you ought to cast it off and you ought to run with endurance, a race that's set before you.

But if you know that passage well, you know it gets around to this. Even if you have a real good team around you running the Christian life, and you're committed to zealously applying and fearlessly promoting the truth of the King, the ultimate power in your life to say, I can keep on moving, is that you've got an author and perfecter of your faith, and the Bible says you ought to keep your eyes set on him. Consider Christ, keep your focus on him. Let me read it. "Look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of your faith." And you want to look at the example he left, "for the joy set before him" the ultimate vindication beyond the cross, "he endured the cross, despising its shame," it's a great Greek word, "kataphreneo" looking down upon and thinking less of it, it's like I'm going to look less at the maltreatment, I'm going to look at the pleasure of the King, his Father. And now he's "seated at the right hand of the throne of God," speaking of regal royalty. It ends with this great line, verse 3, "Consider him who endured such hostility against himself from sinners, so that you may not grow weary or faint hearted."

I want you to get serious, as we all ought to, about applying the King's commands. And I'd like you to make sure you're fearless about promoting it. You can do that best with a team of runners who are going to run with you. A group of people who you call your best friends, not that you're going to become monastic, you're not going to go to, you know, be a hermit in the desert. I'm just saying you are going to be a Christian who surrounds yourself with people who you text and call and talk to, who share that high view of Scripture. But you keep your focus on the fact that when every person in the world fails you and everyone turns against you in this world, I still have my sights set on Christ. He's the ultimate example and he's not just someone who sets an external example, he is the



author and the perfecter of our faith. He sends his Spirit to work within us. And I want to set our focus on him as we wrap up this message by having the ushers come down the aisles and pass out the elements for the Lord's Supper. Because it was his death on a cross that he was willing to endure for our sake that I hope would keep you running in this race this week, zealously applying and fearlessly promoting this agenda that Christ has for us.

If you've never been with us as we celebrated the Lord's Supper, can you know that this is just for Christians. If you're not a Christian, you don't know what this is all about, just let those elements pass by. Keith is going to come, play a little bit of music, I'd rather you pray to God about why you're holding out on becoming a follower of Christ. Maybe today will be your day.

But if you are Christian, I want you take those elements, hang onto them, we'll take them all at the same time. It's kind of a good reminder of our unity in Christ, but as you have those elements, as you hold them tactilely in your hand even, I want you to be praying. Perhaps you can look at the things where there's been distance in your life between God's royal commands and what your life is doing and saying, "God, I just need to start by confessing that."

Confessions never has the word "if" in it. Have you notice that? "If I've offended you." "If I let you down." Forget the "if". You know that if you've not done what God has asked, you have grieved the Spirit, there's no doubt about that. You say to God, "I am sorry that I grieved your Spirit." And you confess it, that's agreement with God. And if you confess your sins, claim this because of the death of Christ, he's faithful and righteous to forgive your sins and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. You can start right now with a brand new, fresh slate, though your sins be as scarlet, they'll be white as snow. Your life will be made clean. And the Christian life, as Jesus illustrated, as we'll look at in the Upper Room, your feet get muddy in this world. I know you've been bathed in the blood of Christ so to speak, you're clean. But maybe there's some confession you need to do because you've got some dirty feet.

Well, I want you to deal with that, and then I also want you to set your focus on Christ. Jesus Christ is the one who makes us qualified for heaven. That's what this is all about.

The things that I've said, don't confuse them. You running in the race of the Christian life in no way makes you qualified to be in heaven. There's a big distinction between us being saved and justification and how then God calls us to strive to make every effort to add to our faith. Keep those distinct in your mind and celebrate this, that with all of our failures and all of our inadequacies, Christ has made me 100% qualified to walk through the gates of the Kingdom. You claim that by faith because Christ said he's promised and he is faithful. You deal with God, I'll come back up, giving you some time to silently talk to God, and we'll take these elements together as we conclude our time.

I think it's just appropriate, that we're celebrating the Lord's Supper on a day that we've had such a hard-hitting message about our own sanctification, because as I said, if you don't keep those things in your mind distinct, at least in terms of what is required, that distinction is critically important, because your neighbors don't understand what you've come to celebrate at church today, I'm quite sure. Your neighbors think that Christianity is like every other religion, which is if you come and clean yourself up enough then you'll earn the favor of God, and that's what they think we're doing here. They'll hear a sermon like this and they'll even think that. "Well, you know, you guys are trying to get rid of pornography and drunkenness and all those other things that you do and maybe then God will like you and you'll get accepted into the Kingdom." That's not how this works. Biblical Christianity is the unique reality that Christ has come to pay it all for us and fully qualify us



for heaven. At the moment of your repentance and faith, at that moment in the timeline of our human experience, you were made completely qualified for the Kingdom. He's qualified you to share in this inheritance in the saints. That is what happened, if you're a Christian. What we're talking about here today is once we're in the royal family, to live according to our calling. Live up to the calling, you're a child of the King. Let's live like it.

It's less than royal for us to be engaging in those things, and I may not have hit..., I just gave you a few examples, there could be several other things God has convicted you, that you're unwilling to speak up in this situation, or you're engaging in things that you know are just not worthy of the child of God.

It's like getting on an airplane and thinking, as you sit in that seat, if you just pull up on those handles, or you pull up on your seatbelt, or if you think light thoughts, you'll make that airplane fly. Nothing you do, sitting in that seat, can propel that plane. You are just there in a seat, there's nothing..., next time you get on a plane, nothing you can do. Right? There's a whole system that propels you through the sky and lift you up off the ground and takes you to your destination. That's the work of Christ in this analogy. And you know what? People understand that. Our parent's and grandparent's church that kept writing books about this and saying how great it is, and it's awesome, it's wonderful. We celebrate the engine of the Cross and the active work of Christ in his life. We get that. That's great. But that's where the sermon ends for a lot of people. In their Christianity, all they can think is, "Now great. Bring the peanuts and the Seven-Up. I've got my Wall Street Journal, let's just read the paper." See, we're not passive passengers in the Christian life. See, it runs a bit of a risk to talk about what we've talked about today, if you don't understand the distinction, we cannot be saved by any good work. You can't renounce something or purpose to do right or forsake a sin and think somehow God is going, "There you go, now you're qualified." But when you're in the plane, because Christ has done the work, you're not a passenger, to stretch this analogy to almost an absurd level now, you're a flight attendant. There's work to do. You've got a uniform on. You've got a name tag and you're there to do what the boss says. And you can be a Christian and not take that job seriously. And all I'm saying is that Christ provides us a great example of a zealous, almost ruthless, I mean it is a ruthless act, to come in there and say we got to fix this.

You're not in charge of the Temple Mount. You're not in charge of a lot of things that you may be tempted to get in there and turn tables up, but you're in charge when it comes to your sanctification, to buffet your body, make it your slave, so that after you preach to others you won't be disqualified, to use the words of Paul. So, let's get to work.

Understanding when it comes to our acceptance before God, it has been paid in full. Jesus said "tetelestai." It is all done. That's the uniqueness of the Gospel. I hope it's the fuel for us to say I'm so excited, with full acceptance before the Father, to walk out through these doors and to take hold of what God has for me next in a Christian life, and to live for him this week. So with thanksgiving, because of the finished work of Christ, let's eat this bread and drink this cup.

God we are amazed when we think about Christ despising the shame, at least I hope we're amazed by that, we ought to be. We can look at the horrific, terrible, excruciating details of the Cross from the perspective of the Garden and say, "I'm going to think less of that because I know this is what the Father has laid out for me. I know this is going to accomplish eternal good for the people I love." God, I pray that we could think that way, when we're thinking about the cost, the price tag of doing out of love for you what you've asked us to do. We thank you that our salvation is not depend on our good works. But God we're grateful, that as saved people, we have the privilege of serving you through the good works we do this week. We want to do that God, as imperfect as we are, as



flawed as we are. God help us to be more zealous to not only apply your word but to promote it. So God do this, go before us and all the struggles we'll face.

Make sure we've got some good friends around us. Let us build those friendships if we don't have them now. Let us connect with those people we need to connect with. Start sharing our spiritual lives with them and make sure we're surrounded with people who have that high view of you, that hang on the words of Christ. I thank you so much for what you've done for us, what Christ you've done for us. God, encourage our hearts now as we think about the wonderful payment that has taken care of all of our ultimate need, that we can celebrate that has forgiven people.

In Jesus name. Amen.