

Roman 16:17:20

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[0 : 00] We've been in the book of Romans around two years, I think, and it's been an awesome time. We've learned a lot of really great truth together. I'm kind of coming to a close on this.

So Paul has talked about how awesome our great salvation is in Christ. He's told us that we are saved by grace through faith in Christ alone and nothing else.

And now he's kind of wrapping up the letter to the church at Rome. And he throws out some things here at the end that are really, you want to ask, why did he kind of like end this way?

Look at verse 17 of Romans 16. We're going to read our text for this morning. It says, I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught.

Avoid them. For such persons do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites. And by smooth talk and flattery, they deceive the hearts of the naive.

[1 : 12] For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you. But I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent to what is evil. The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Just pray with me. Father, I'm overwhelmed and thankful to be here this morning with your people, the church.

Those who have been bought with the blood of Christ. And I pray that you would help me communicate well this morning in a way that would only bring you glory.

This isn't about me. It's not about anyone here. We were made for you, Lord. And I pray that I know that I can sometimes rely too much in myself or not rely enough in you.

And I pray that you would just fill me and control me and allow me to speak the words of life that we just sang about. That men have died for throughout the centuries to preserve translators and people that love you.

[2 : 29] So God, just find us faithful this morning. In Christ's name, amen. Amen. So, throughout Scripture, throughout the Old and New Testaments, but particularly what we're going to look at a lot this morning in the New Testament, there are sober warnings against those who would teach a gospel contrary to the one that they had received.

False teachers, false prophets. False. What we need to understand is that there are no new truths from God. There's no new revelations from God.

No new morals, whatever. Like what God has taught throughout the centuries, there's nothing new at all. God is not changing things. He's not up in heaven at the moment saying, I wish I got something else into this book.

He's not doing that. That's a puny, pathetic God. But throughout the Scripture, there are all kinds of warnings to look out for, be on the watch for false teachers, those who would attack the truth of the gospel.

And so we're told as believers to examine everything carefully under the Word of God and to almost develop like a sixth sense for when something is not right and something is untrue.

[3 : 45] So we're going to have just maybe five places to turn other than our main text, but hold your place in Romans 16 so you can flip back. Return to Mark 13.

We'll just look at some words from Christ. Mark 13, verse 21. And some believers have been fooled into thinking, well, I have the Holy Spirit, so I'm good.

Like whenever something is not true, the Holy Spirit is just going to tell me it's not true. That's not true. Jesus said in John, when he's talking about the Holy Spirit, he said, He will remind you of everything that I have taught you.

He will remind you of the things that I have put into your heart. And so you have to ask the question, well, if you don't know what Christ said, how can the Holy Spirit remind you? And it is possible for even genuine believers to believe lies and to believe false teachings.

And we're going to see that right here. Mark 13, verse 21. And then this is Jesus talking. He says, And then if anyone says to you, Behold, here is the Christ.

[4 : 59] Or behold, He is there. Do not believe Him. For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show signs and wonders in order to lead astray.

If possible, the elect. See that? So even God's people can be deceived by false teaching. But take heed. Behold, I have told you these things.

I have told you everything in advance. Like I have told you. So look out for this stuff. And in Hebrews 13, it says this, Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings. Like it's just this constant theme. There's actually two books in the New Testament that are completely dedicated to apostasy and false teaching.

That's the book of Jude and the book of 2 Peter. Totally dedicated to like exposing false prophets and warning us that they will be coming. So a second place to turn today.

[6 : 05] Flip over to 1 Thessalonians chapter 5. And we're going to kind of look at what we're called to do as believers in light of this storm of false teaching and false doctrines that are out there.

We're going to talk about some later in the message. So, in light of that, believers are called, I should say commanded, to use discernment in everything that they read and everything that they hear.

And this is what, verse 21, chapter 5. Very simple, it says, But examine everything carefully. Hold fast to which is good.

Abstain from every form of evil. And these words there, examine, it means to like to make a distinction, to analyze, to test, to prove, like you would like precious metals, and to deem worthy, to scrutinize.

That's what this means. So, how many of us actually do that when we read and when we listen to things outside of the Word of God itself?

[7 : 17] We need to learn to discern truth from half-truth and truth from error. One of the best vehicles of false teachers is not to just teach you an all-out lie, but to teach you a lie sprinkled in the midst of some truth under the guise of familiar language and jargon.

And the writer of the Hebrews also gives very sober warnings about this. He said, he pleased with them not to depart from the truth that they had received.

And in chapter 2, he says, Therefore, we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, lest we drift away from it. And in chapter 5, he actually classifies those who are spiritually mature and those who are not spiritually mature.

The distinction he makes is the mature will be able to discern from good and evil. Pretty interesting.

That's like what he says. So, this is what he says, But solid food is for the mature, for those who have had their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil.

See that? Like this, their senses have learned like something doesn't smell right here, something is not right about what this guy is saying. This is not true what I'm reading or hearing on TBN or whatever.

[8 : 47] So, what matters is that we're called to be discerning in all that we read and hear as believers and to guard the gospel. If I had to have a title this morning, that would be it.

Like guarding the gospel. Paul told Timothy, Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you.

Hold it dear and protect it. Philippians 1, 9 says this, It is my prayer that your love may abound more and more with all knowledge and all discernment so that you may approve what is excellent.

And so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ. So he prayed like that they would have discernment to approve what is good, what is evil, what is true, what is false. So, but messages like this can come across harsh, I guess, and unloving.

And I really want to just take just a second to explain to you my motive and my desire. Recently, some of you know, like I was diagnosed with some skin cancer and I had to go through some things, but everything looks good now.

And I've had other health issues in my past. So, I have just an illustration for you. Some of the college students might have actually heard this before.

[10:17] But, let's say, you know, one day you were, noticed something wasn't right, like you felt something weird going on in your body. And so you go to the hospital or to the clinic or whatever and to see one of your best friends is actually the doctor there.

And you go with your family and you go with your children and you just expect to just kind of run some quick tests and be out by lunch. Now, you've already gone to the doctor's office and done that. That's the only thing you look forward to is getting out and eating.

So, so you're there and the tests are on and you're sitting in the waiting room. Meanwhile, your friend is in the back and he gets the results from your test.

And he sees that you actually have the worst type of cancer that's out there. And unless he does something soon and you start going through treatment, you're going to be dead really fast.

So in that moment, he has a choice. He can say, well, man, if I tell him this, this is going to ruin his day. It's going to ruin his week.

[11:24] It's going to ruin the rest of his life, probably. I'm going to make his wife cry. I'm going to make his children cry. If I go out there and I tell him the truth about his condition, well, I don't want to make him upset.

So I'm just not going to do it. Is that the loving thing to do? No. Like, love would compel him to go out there despite of what this friend may think about him.

and it would compel him to tell him the truth. You have cancer. Because he, even though it's hard for him to tell him the truth, he loves him and is fighting to save his life.

Right? That's what truth is. And that's what love does. It's the nature of love to warrant against those for harm, for those that it might hurt, you know.

Two, so I just want you to know that I have no hidden motive this morning. Turn to Ephesians chapter 4 real fast. And this kind of sums up my attitude.

[12:26] word. It's the nature of love just to protect those whom it loves.

Okay, Ephesians chapter 4 go to verse 14. And this is Paul talking. And here we go. We just kind of read over this stuff and don't think much about it.

But, it says, he's praying for them in this prayer. And he says, so that you may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by the wind of doctrine, by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness and deceitful schemes.

See that? So he says, that's children who are tossed around by every wind of doctrine that's out there. But then it says, rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body joined and held together by every joint with which is it equipped.

With each part that's working properly makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. So, my desire is like to warn you and say that there are many winds of doctrine out there.

[13:51] I love to study church movements and church history. I bore a lot of people with that day after day when I talk about it. But, I'm not interested to know that the mainline Protestant denominations in the U.S., I could say in Europe too, who once started very conservative, very, you know, Christ-centered, gospel-loving, you know, people who held the Scripture in high regard and said it was the Word of God.

Most all of the mainline denominations have departed from that. Most of them. Here in the U.S., the, like, I'm not speaking for every type of person who's in this denomination.

I'll start with the Baptists because we're Baptists. Southern Baptists have, overall, thankfully, as kooky as we can be about some other things, we've held on to the authority of Scripture and we've held on to the inerrancy of Scripture and Christ being the only way to God and salvation by grace.

We've held on to those things. But there are many different things that have split off of Southern Baptists. Different liberal theological groups and, but some of the mainline denominations, some of the mainline Lutheran denominations, mainline Methodists, have all abandoned those things.

But definitely, there are conservative Methodists and Lutherans out there who don't, you know, tolerate that at all and say, no, that's not what we believe. So, we have to take heed here.

[15:41] I don't want you guys to believe every false teaching this out there. And as it says, the goal here is love, not rebuke. It's like, to show you like, if you're a parent, you have a child, they're doing something going to harm them, you're going to like yank that out of their hands, right?

That's what the loving thing to do is. So, out of our text in Romans, I believe I have just five questions we're going to look at. So, flip back to Romans, chapter 16.

Some of you know I have respiratory issues and I'm not breathing well this morning, so, just bear with me. Okay, so the first question we're going to ask from our text is, what is the mark of false teachers?

what's the mark of false teachers? We see this in verse 17. I appeal to you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and create obstacles contrary to the doctrine that you have been taught.

Avoid them. So, Paul's not talking about minor quarrels here, about the carpet, or about little Bible stories that, you know, whatever.

[17 : 05] He's talking about serious deals that can cause divisions in a church. And, he says to watch out for them. And he says their distinction is they're going to teach you like a gospel contrary to the one that you've heard.

word. And so, like, watch out. And, like I said, we have a few places to turn this morning, but scripture interprets scripture. You need to support what you're arguing with the other scripture. So, flip to 2 Timothy, chapter 4. 2 Timothy, chapter 4. See, the gospel has been passed down throughout the centuries.

It hasn't changed. It's been a relay of truth for all time. And, this is Paul talking to Timothy who is himself a pastor. So, verse 1 of chapter 4.

He says, I charge you, I charge you, Timothy, in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is the judge of the living and the dead and by his appearing in his kingdom.

[18 : 13] Preach the word. Not a word or a good word. Preach the word. God's word. He said, be ready in season and out of season.

Reprove, rebuke, exhort with complete patience and teaching that for the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

So, people who find the truth of God hard to handle, those go somewhere else. They'll go and listen to a teacher who will tell them what they want to hear.

Tell me how man-centered things are. So, instead of submitting to God's truth, they find teachers that will help them, you know, appease what they want and the spirit of the age, I guess you could say in a lot of ways, what culture would say.

So, the mark of false teachers is they teach a gospel contrary to the one that's been passed down throughout the centuries and the one that this testifies to.

[19 : 33] The second point, flip back over to Romans. The second question is, what is the motive of false teachers?

Okay, and we see this in verse 18. It says, for such persons do not serve our Lord Christ but their own appetites. So, false teachers serve their own appetizer.

What this means in Greek is literally your belly which means like the things that your flesh may crave. John Piper said here, behind the plausible speech and smooth talk of a gentleman, gentlemanly, he said, demeanor is idolatry and the idol is the belly, the appetite for food or sex or human approval.

Behind the serious false teaching, we almost have to find out these aren't just intellectual mistakes. These are worldly passions that come from an enslaving mind.

So, like we, false teachers have a different motive other than to glorify Christ. They want man to approve them, they want popularity, they want money, power, etc.

[20 : 54] And I'm going to read something from 1 Timothy to you that kind of explains this. Paul talking again, he says, if anyone teaches a doctrine, a different doctrine, does not agree with sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the teaching that is in accordance with godliness, he is puffed up and conceited and understands nothing.

He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and quarrels about words. And it says that they, he goes on to say that he does this because he hopes it will give him great gain.

He hopes that teaching these things contrary to the gospel will be a means of gain. So, they have some hidden motive, it's not to glorify Christ.

And you always can tell, because men who do want to glorify Christ will always tell you, if I'm out of line, tell me, like let what I've said be tested here, because false teachers don't like scrutiny.

They'll say, just stay away from me, and don't scrutinize me at all with that stuff. So, you know, I, there's so many, this question could go on and on, this next one, but what is the method of false teachers, is the next question.

[22 : 19] What is the method of false teachers? In verse 18, it says, by smooth talk and flattery, they deceive hearts.

See this? Smooth talk and flattery. The word flattery is eulogia. Does that sound familiar? Like a memorial service?

A eulogy, to give a blessing or to give praise to someone. So, in a bad sense, like they're giving you a blessing, they're telling you what you want to hear.

And then in smooth talk, it says, this word means like simple, pleasant, plausible words. They're not trying to trick you on the surface.

It doesn't come across that way. False teachers don't get a big crowd by being rough and harsh and rambling. They get it by being nice guys and by appealing to the sympathies of culture.

[23 : 23] So, throughout history, false teachers have been kind of like that. One guy from 336 A.D., Arius, he was a part of the Arian heresy in the Council of Nicaea.

He denied the divinity of Christ. And listen to what this one historian kind of explains what he's like. He says, he was a bright, energetic, attractive fellow, the kind of citizen whom any rotary club would welcome, singing sea shanties in the dockside pubs, and teaching Bible stories on Wednesday night.

This was an immensely popular man. His story reminds us the heresy does not blunge in us into unbelief.

We are seduced. He was a gentleman. His morals were above reproach, and he distinguished himself by his unfailing courtesy. These are what false teachers look like.

They're so good. They're attractive even. So, we're told to avoid them. Listen to what Jesus said in Matthew 7.

[24 : 45] He said, false teachers, false prophets will come to you in sheep's clothing, right? But he said, but inwardly they're ravenous wolves. So, they appear attractive and good on the outside, but inwardly they are not.

So, they're very tricky. I listen to some of these guys. So crafty with how they play with words and play with ideas and flip questions on people.

So, then the next question, fourth question, who is the prey of false teachers? Okay, so who do false teachers like to prey on?

And according to our text, in verse 18, it says the naive. And this means the harmless, someone who's fearing no evil from anybody, and they distrust no one.

They don't suspect anyone's up to mischief. And I want to submit that I wouldn't say this about our church in general, and I'm thankful for that, but overall, the church in America statistically has an intense doctrinal shallowness.

[26 : 01] They're a mile wide, an inch deep on what they believe. And they seem to be concerned about learning the bare minimum of the Bible. They content themselves with, I'm not against devotional books, I'm just against bad devotional books.

Reading one verse in a paragraph is not going to get you through your day. That's not the nourishment for your soul. What if you just ate, you know, like one biscuit in the morning that was supposed to get you through the day?

Like that's not really good. So because of the doctrinal shallowness that exists, the naive or just easy parade for false teachers.

Like I had a good friend who just bought into some recent new books that are out there. And he's an awesome dude.

He really does love the Lord, but he doesn't have a very solid foundation biblically yet for what is true and what is false. false teachers have to do is just like say a little bit of Christian jargon, refer to a single verse maybe in scripture.

[27 : 11] I love how Joel Osteen loved to say this is the word of God and then he doesn't refer to it the whole rest of the time. So see, it's just tricky. Use one word, just use Christian jargon, crack a few jokes, and then be passionate and then people were just like, they just can't, they don't know what to do.

Like they're just sucked right in. Like in, whether it's biblical or not, if someone is hip and cool and has Christian jargon, a few jokes and they're passionate, that's all it takes.

I mean, that's really it and it's sad. And so, we're probably going to get a little more personal here. We've been speaking very general for the most part. But, I want to submit to you that I have, in the past, believed some things that were not biblical.

Thankfully, they didn't, they weren't things about salvation or anything like that. But, how many of you love the Christian bookstore? When you go to the Christian bookstore and the Christian music's playing and you see all these nice people walking around, you're just kind of, like, man, this place is awesome.

I remember thinking that when I first became a Christian. And, so, we need, though, to understand that whenever we go into the Christian bookstore, there's a lot of junk in the Christian bookstore that doesn't belong there at all.

[28 : 40] Like, they'll have Brian McLaren here, Mac Claren, and then John MacArthur right beside each other. And, those two guys, no way.

Like, one believes the true gospel and one doesn't. And, you'll know which one he really does. So, but, due to the church's lack of biblical theology and doctrine, the word doctrine is not a bad word. It's in the New Testament 16 times. So, deal with that. But, I know some people are like, don't give me doctrine, don't give me theology, let's just talk about how much Jesus loves us.

And, they don't understand. These are things that scripture talks about that we learn well and that we still instill into our hearts. so, so, good Christian books will always lead you back to the scripture. That's something Martin Luther said a long time ago. I love like a book like John Piper. You look and he has like 12 pages in the back that are just scripture references and just clear Bible teaching.

[29 : 52] And, so, I have a quote here by a guy named Nathan Benowitz. He says, outside the local church, there is probably no place in the community with more spiritual influence than the local Christian bookstore.

For many believers, books provide the primary supplement to what is heard on Sundays. But, just because something is on the shelf doesn't mean that it's doctrinally accurate or spiritually, beneficial.

After all, biblical discernment is not just for sermons. It also must be applied to chapters and articles. And, even the bestsellers are not above the scrutiny of scripture.

Like, how dare some of these guys say that their book is above the book that God himself wrote.

And, so, I want to communicate this as kindly and as humble as I am.

This is like the doctor walking into the office to tell you that you might have eaten some stuff that might kill you, okay? And, something needs to be done.

[31 : 04] I have read this book, and as someone who has gone through a lot of suffering in his life, this book brought me no comfort at all. It made me sad. God, and, just as a little thing here, this isn't the time to go through like a large book review on these things.

I'm going to say a few things about them, and if you want to talk to me later, you can, and I also have some things if you want to, to go and read about each one of these books. But, there's so many out there, but I picked two.

So, how many have read the book, The Shack? You don't need to raise your hand, but just ask yourself the question. I've read the book, it's a fiction book, but he seeks to kind of explain God's relationship to human suffering, and it's an emotional book, it's even sad, and like emotionally, it'll just pull you right in, and see, there it is, there's like the biblical shallowness of our culture, like it just pulls us in emotionally, and we just go throw out like whatever this says, and we're just pulled right in, and it's a fiction book, and I want to make just a statement here, the majority, a lot, excuse me, I'll say a lot, a lot of people out there, they don't get their theology from the Bible, they get it from Christian fiction, right?

And the problem is, you can't just say, well, it was just a fiction book, and he didn't mean for it to be like a systematic theology, or anything like that, but the problem is, people don't read it that way, they get like what they believe about God from those books, and anybody, regardless of who you are, you're held accountable for how you try to portray God, whether it's to a child in a fiction book, or whether it's to grown adults, like God will hold you accountable, God cares about how he's seen, and how he's viewed, there was a Puritan named William Ames a long time ago, and he was a loving, kind pastor, the people loved him, he spoke the word of God, and ministered to the laws, and after one of his sermons, the guy said, pastor, you are so precise in what you say, the Puritans

are known for their precision on what they say, they'll tell you 20 things they don't mean, before they tell you 20 things they do mean, and, but his response was, sir,

I serve a precise God, that's like what he said, so, but in this book, real quickly, there was this guy named Mack, and his daughter was brutally murdered in this shack, and he receives an invitation, that ends up being from God himself, to go back to the shack, and for, and in the process, he meets the Trinity there, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but they're not, they're portrayed by, you know, African-American woman, and an Asian woman, and Jesus actually plays himself as the Middle Eastern man in the book, so, it's a book that really does muddle the sovereignty of God, it butchers the Trinity, and it's a bad understanding of salvation, and I've done my research on William Young, I don't, I don't hate this guy, I feel like terribly sorry for him, alright, so here's just a few things out of this book that I saw, and one is, in regards to the Trinity, okay, people are like,

[34 : 44] I read this and now I understand the Trinity, but no, it says, page 96, it says, when we three, this is one of them talking, when we three spoke ourselves into human existence, as God, the Son, we became fully human, the Father, the Spirit, and Jesus were together at the cross, and together they were crucified, what?

No, the Son became manifest in flesh, the Father didn't, the Holy Spirit did not, who was crucified on the cross, was the Father?

Nope, it does this all throughout the book, it gets the roles of each member of the Trinity all mixed up, and that is not glorifying to God at all, and then when it comes to the understanding of sin, and punishment of sin, and judgment, Jung carries like an extreme universal point of view, and he slips it right in, time and again, so this is Jesus talking, and he says, this is what he says, I'm the best way any human can relate to Papa or Sarayu, well, Father and Holy Spirit, to see me is to see them, the love you sense from me is no different from how they love you, so now Jesus is the best way to relate to the Father, in English language, the best way means that there are other ways, okay, and in regard to sin, he said this, this is, this is Papa talking, he says,

I don't need to punish people for sin, sin is its own punishment, devouring you from the inside, it is not my purpose to punish it, it is my joy to cure it, oops, see, sounds nice, right, but then, this is page 120, he says, man, I cannot send any of my children to an eternal hell just because they sin against me, your understanding of God is wrong, I am not the one who will condemn most people to an eternity of torment, and throughout the book, he uses children, the word children, as everybody in the world, he is not referring to the believers, scripture is clear, if you don't have Christ, it says the wrath of God remains on you, and the true children of God are those who have Christ, and that is it, it is not a general thing at all, and so,

God is not going to punish sin, it is not, what does it say here, he says that most people will not, it is not my purpose to condemn anybody, well, broad is the path that leads to destruction, and many will find it, right, like there's this idea there, so there's so much in this book, but as someone who's been through suffering, he really does, like, just destroy God's sovereignty over suffering, and like, if you take away the sovereignty of God, you have zero comfort, zero, what's God going to do, he can't protect you from anything at all, and he carries an open theistic point of view, which you can look up later, but it's, God is reactive to situations, he's not ordained situations, so, man, don't get your theology from this stuff, and pray for this guy, okay, and, and, another one, this is just the second one, this would just be a Bible exegesis, if we didn't just explain, and touch home on some things, but a very well-known, popular book, a guy that I actually used to read a little bit of, and enjoyed some of the stuff, but he's taking just a dive off the deep end, and he needs prayer as well, but the book is called

[38 : 49] Love Wins, a book about heaven, hell, and the fate of every person who lived by Rob Bell, and Rob Bell traditionally has some good stuff, some good teaching, but just he ever slowly just started kind of slipping off what straying from the doctrine he had received, straying from the gospel that he had believed.

He's a mega church leader, but basically he's saying that hell is something that we create for ourselves when we reject God's love, and hell is like a present reality.

He's saying that the suffering and stuff that we go through in this life is hell, but it's not compared to what is to come, but he says that at the end of the day, hell won't be forever because God is going to have his way, and love wins, and one day, all people will be reconciled to God regardless, either in this life or the next, they're going to be reconciled to God again.

There will be no eternal torment of the lost at all, and I rarely, I've heard Rob Bell interview, I've read a lot of his stuff, I've rarely seen someone so crafty with words, he's so good, like he twists and turns things, he uses really good Christian jargon, so if you have read the book or want to just be aware of this, readers need to pay attention to the idea of hell he describes, and he does actually bring up, you know, Jesus is the only way, but not in the way we would explain that at all, not the biblical, orthodox, historical way that's been taught forever, whatever, so pay attention to those things, remember, bad theology usually sneaks under the guise of familiar language, he used 200 pages to kind of sneak in little things, and so, in general, this isn't a new thing at all, this teaching could be summed up with a minor difference or two, in his case, under what is called universalism, which means that one day, again, all people will be saved, there will be no one in hell, it carries a few different ideas, but everyone is savingly loved by

God, and is reconciled to God already, because of what Jesus has done, it says because of the wideness of God's mercy, people of other religions even, will somehow find their way into heaven one day, and initially, it says that despite some people's rejection of his love, these people are still loved by God, and will one day be with him in heaven, so it's this idea that one day, we're all going to be there regardless of what goes on in this life, if that's true, why are we sending missionaries out to die brutal deaths with the gospel, if love's going to win, let's just sit here and chill out, not go do anything for the sake of Christ worldwide, this is not true, scripture, Matthew 25, out of Jesus' own mouth, this is about the judgment, the last judgment, he says, many will go astray into eternal punishment, eternal punishment, says, but the righteous into eternal life, turn,

[42 : 21] I'll show you one, turn to 2 Thessalonians chapter 1, I don't know like what is clearer than this, and go to verse 5, 2 Thessalonians chapter 1, verse 5, and this is scary stuff, it says, this is the evidence of the righteous judgment of God, that you may be considered worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering, since indeed God considers it just to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to grant relief to you who are afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus Christ, here it is, the second coming of Christ, okay, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels and flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord

Jesus, they will suffer a punishment of eternal destruction, does that sound temporary? Like that says, eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his might, when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at by all who have believed, because of the testimony, their testimony you have believed.

So, wow, like what's clearer than that? The Lord hates sin, but guess what? Like he just as equally is merciful and gracious.

Like you don't know what the love of God is until you've experienced how much you've been forgiven. And we want God to be a God who hates sin, and we'll destroy it one day, and we're thankful that he has provided a way for us to be reconciled to God.

In Revelation, it says that those who are cast into the fire will be tormented day after day, forever and ever. That's exactly what it says. There's no temporary thing there at all.

[44 : 34] So, to just be aware that that stuff's out there, pray for these men. This isn't something to laugh about at all.

And like I said, this wasn't meant to be a full book review. I come and talk to me later. I have some things you can look at on each one of those. But those are just two that are really mainline out there.

We forget that up here in Dahlonega, North Georgia, Christ's family. We are blessed to hear really good Bible teaching every week. So, this goes back to Romans again, the last point here, and we're closing it up.

Romans 16, go to verse 19, and this is the last question. What is Paul's encouragement to the church in Rome? In verse 19, he says, Paul rejoices that the church in Rome, in his time, was well known for battling false teachings.

things. They did such a great job at it, and he was thankful for that. He's like, remain that way, be able to stay wise in what is good, innocent to what is evil.

[46 : 09] So, he says, stay that way, but then he gives him an encouragement and says, one day, God will soon crush Satan under your feet. We will triumph with Christ in the end, and we will see him brought low.

This is very unlike the church at Galatia, and this is where we're going to close. But, I do invite you to turn to this if you like.

It's really a great text, and it'll be good to kind of sum up everything we've said today. Galatians 1, verse 6. The church at Galatia had done the exact opposite of the church in Rome.

They were allowing, you know, false teachings to come in, particularly the Judaizers teaching that obeying the law was a part of being saved.

So, verse 6. He says, I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ, and are turning to a different gospel.

[47 : 14] Not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. Alright, so he's like, he's blown away that they're believing this stuff, and it happened so fast.

Then listen to this, he says, but even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.

Wow, like he even threw himself in there. If we come back later on and say, hey, something different going on. But then he says an angel from heaven, like who wouldn't believe an angel from heaven?

If Gabriel came and said, hey, there's another way, right? Y'all know that like several major world religions out there were started that way. Islam, Mormonism, claiming to see angelic beings that preach the gospel contrary to the one received.

It says, let him be accursed. And that word, in Greek, it means to be cut off completely. He's saying here that it is better for that person who is distorting the gospel to be cut off from God altogether than for him to go on deceiving and teaching other people things that are going to lead them to destruction.

[48 : 32] That's what it means. Verse 9 says, As we have said before, so I say again, If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you have received, let him be accursed.

For I am not seeking the approval of man. And for am I seeking the approval of man or of God, or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

Okay, like the gospel, there's no way to dress it up and make it sound good to people initially. They have to understand that they have cancer. They have to know that they're dead in their sin.

They're separated from God. But we have a loving, gracious, love does win, by the way, but not the kind referred to. The unconquerable love of Christ can save us from our sin.

And about this text, this is something John Calvin said about this text, and like it's so Christ-centered, so glory of God-focused. He said, it is better that the whole world should perish and be consumed than for the gospel to be perverted.

[49 : 44] We must cling with strong affection to the gospel and not allow anyone to corrupt it. Like, it's better for us to perish than for the gospel to be distorted.

That's how much he exalted the gospel. That's how much he cared about it. So, I just pray that we would be careful in what we read and what we hear.

We would take it to heart and we would guard the gospel, guard the glorious gospel that we've been entrusted with. Grace alone, faith alone, and Christ alone.

So, let's pray together.