

# Ask The Pastor

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Date: 02 July 2017

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[ 0 : 00 ] To be continued...

Oh, beautiful for spacious skies, forever grains of grain, for purple mountains' majesties above the fruited plain.

America, America, God shed His grace on thee, and crown thy good with brotherhood from sea to shining sea.

Oh, beautiful for heroes proved in liberating strife, who more than self their country love, and mercy more than life.

America, America, may God thy gold refine, till all success be nobleness and everything be fine.

[ 1 : 54 ] Oh, beautiful for His degrees that seas beyond the years, Thine alabaster cities gleam, unlimbed by human tears.

America, America, God mend thine every flaw. Confirm thy soul in self-control, thy liberty in love.

See, we used to sing off the sheet up here, but now they've given us the words in back. So what you mess up on, I mess up on too. I'm like, oh, oh, oh, oh, look at the page, look at the page.

The Lord be with you. Take a moment, if you will, and greet your neighbor with the peace of the Spirit. The kids are invited to come up and join me now if they'd like to.

Any other kids want to come up? How are you guys doing today?

[ 3 : 34 ] Do you ever have a question and you need an answer? Yeah, me too. You know, sometimes when I have a question and I need an answer, I go to Google, and I say, Google, what's my name?

You think it knows? Nope. It doesn't know my name. You know, Google can't answer everything, can it?

No. It answers a lot of things, but it doesn't answer everything. I kind of like Google. Sometimes Google's wrong, too. But sometimes when I have an answer or question, I go and I ask somebody else, like your parents, right?

Or a teacher or somebody. If I have a question about God, you know what I do? I go to this book. Anybody know what this book is? It's the Bible. That's right. And in this Bible are all kinds of stories about God.

Have you ever looked in a Bible? Yeah. Do you have a Bible? Because they have Bibles that are for kids, too. So you should have a Bible, too, right? Because in this book, you can find out all kinds of things about God that help us out.

[ 4 : 43 ] You could ask Google, but Google isn't always right. But God's always right, and he'll help you to find the right answers, okay? What are you guys thankful for this morning? You want to share something? If you do, raise your hand. My mom and dad.

My parents. Anybody else? Okay. Let's pray. Lord, we thank you for this day. We thank you for our parents, our moms and dads, our blessed people in our lives, the family we love.

And we thank you for you, Lord. And we thank you for Google. And we thank you for answers that you can give to us. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You guys can go to church school. All the kids are welcome to go out to church school now if they'd like to.

I like Google. I like Google, but, you know, this morning I'm not thankful for Google. I'm thankful, actually, for this country we live in. I mean, we should be this weekend. And it's a great nation, not just because we live here, but because it's a wonderful place that gives us opportunities and freedoms.

In our recent years, we have a lot of people that criticize our country, and I understand it, all the difficulties and confusion and complaints and concerns that people have. But believe it or not, most of the people in the world that don't live in our country would really prefer to live in our country.

[ 6 : 03 ] This is still a great place to live that God has blessed us with the opportunity to have as a home nation. And so, as I'm thankful for our country and all the people that make it a wonderful country, let's return our thanksgiving this morning to God for all the blessings he gives us with our morning tithes and our offerings.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 8 : 39 ] Thank you. Dear God in heaven, you have blessed us with so many wonderful things.

A place to live, people to love, and people that love us. An opportunity to do and be what we want to be and what you've called us to be. We thank you for all these things, Lord. And we give you these gifts as a small thanksgiving to you.

Bless them and use them for your work in this world. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Please be seated. Please be seated.

This morning I have two or three concerns I want to share with you. Just make sure I got them all. All right. First of all, Ellie Drake is having some significant health concerns. So if you know Ellie, keep her in your prayers.

Even if you don't, you can keep her in your prayers. I know that she would appreciate that. Also, Ollie Burbage has had some surgery this week, and she's in the hospital, but I think she's coming home today.

[ 9 : 35 ] So we want to keep her in our prayers. Lori Gondek is also having health issues. The doctors are working on it. I talked to her last night. But she's still going through tests and still has a lot of concerns.

And finally, a joy, Dick Anderson, who we've been praying for for quite a while, they tell me he's coming home this week. So we're looking forward to him returning to his family and his life and just getting back to things.

He's getting miserable in the hospital, which is a really good sign. So we look forward to that. All right. We have many joys, many concerns, many blessings, and many things that we want to take to God in prayer.

So let's take our hearts and our souls and lift them up to the Lord. You're welcome to join us in prayer in your seats. Or if you'd like to come to the rail, you're welcome to do that as well. Let's pray together. Dear God, you are a great God.

And we thank you. We thank you that we can come here to worship you. We thank you that wherever we are, we might speak to you. That no matter who we are, you still love us and make a place for us in your universe.

[ 10 : 44 ] We ask God that you would pour your spirit now into this place. Touching everyone gathered here that we might experience the power of God just pouring down on us like rain.

Bless us with your understanding as we turn to the scriptures to learn what we can learn from you. Bless the words we use in our songs, in our thoughts, in our prayers.

Bless us with your prayers that we might honor you. And bless our lives, Lord, because we have concerns. We have needs. Some of them we mention out live.

Like those who are struggling with surgeries or health issues. We ask, Lord, that you'd be with them. That you'd watch over these people we love and help them to heal.

Some of them we haven't spoken, Lord, but you know them. They're written deep in our hearts. And so we ask that you would now listen, Lord, as each of us shares those thoughts, those concerns, those needs we have with you.

[ 11 : 55 ] Listen as your children pray to you, God. Lord, we pray for all those in need, those struggling with their work, with their finances, those who are having difficulties in life or relationships.

We pray for our community. We pray for our children and our parents and our grandparents and our grandchildren. We pray, Lord, that the world might come to know you and that our nation might come to know your peace.

We pray for our world, Lord, that peace might break out instead of war. And we ask, Lord, that your peace might enter into this place to touch us.

That as we come before you to hear your word, you would bless us, you would move us, you'd lift away our burdens and fill us with the wonderful power of God.

Lord, take away all our worries, all our thoughts of everything but you and fill us at this moment with your spirit that we might know and hear that you are God.

[ 13 : 20 ] For it's in Jesus' name we offer our prayers. Amen. And now shall we listen to the scripture, the word of God for the people of God. Amen.

Amen. Good morning.

Good morning. This morning's scripture is from Deuteronomy, chapter 32, verses 1 through 7. Listen, you heavens, and I will speak.

Hear, you earth, the words of my mouth. Let my teaching fall like rain and my words descend like dew, like showers on new grass, like abundant rain on tender plants.

I will proclaim the name of the Lord. O praise the greatness of our God. He is the rock. His works are perfect and all his ways are just.

[ 14 : 42 ] A faithful God who does no wrong, upright and just is he. They are corrupt and not his children. To their shame they are a warped and crooked generation.

Is this the way you repay the Lord? You foolish and unwise people. Is he not your father, your creator, who made you and formed you? Remember the days of old.

Consider the generations long past. Ask your father and he will tell you. Your elders. And they will explain to you. This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God.

Thank you, Elizabeth. I think there's only a couple of us wearing these jackets, so I'm taking mine off. And you're welcome to do the same if you happen to be wearing one.

This morning our sermon is a little different because it is just a response to your questions. I actually had one last night that said, how can we heal the divide in our country, which fits exactly with what the scripture is saying to us.

[ 15 : 45 ] Because this song of Moses was about a time when Moses was concerned about the people going astray. Following after voices that had nothing to do with God.

And he said, remember who God is. He's your rock. He's your strength. He's the one that has the true wisdom. He made you and formed you. So look to answers from God.

So today we're going to come to look to those answers. I answered that question by saying simply, and I won't go through another one, but that we need to turn back to God. Somewhere along the line we become the me generation.

Most of our sentences seem to start with I and end with me. I this. I what about me? We won't change our world or our country or our nation or our hearts until we start remembering that as Christians, all of our statements should begin with God and end with the same thing.

And when we do that, it will change our perspective and we'll remember that we're all here to serve God. We're not here to compete and argue and fight with each other because we all have the same God.

[ 16 : 57 ] Adrian went to the trouble of not just folding them all up so I wouldn't peek at them. He taped them together. Last night I answered about a dozen questions or so.

We'll see how far we get today. If you'd like to hear the questions that I don't answer in this sermon but I answer in the other ones, all three will be in an audio form online.

So you can check them all out if you want to and see what I did with them. When I prayed to you and asked you a question, I heard your voice.

Was it you? It's a really good question. How do we know if the voice we hear is the voice of God as compared to some other voice, which could simply be a manifestation of our psychosis or neurosis as we make up a voice in our head?

Or it could be a demon voice or it could be something trying to lead us astray. How do we know that the voice in our head is the voice of God? There are times when I've said that God has told me that I should do something like this or that.

[ 18 : 11 ] I will tell you I don't hear an audible voice of God. Some people do. I don't. But I know when God is speaking to me, I can feel it. I can understand it.

The Holy Spirit witnesses to my heart this is the voice of God. But even then I don't trust it. Even then I don't trust it. So I go back to the Bible to see if the voice that's speaking to me was saying the same thing here.

Because whatever witness God would want us to have today is generally something that agrees with the witness in the Bible. One time I came back from a trip and I proclaimed to the whole church it was harvest time.

I haven't talked about planting corn in the front lawn and all kinds of crazy things. Those ideas weren't from God. But as I looked up the idea of harvest time, I saw that God proclaimed that it was harvest time.

Jesus proclaimed that. Those weren't my words. Jesus, when I say you need to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and that God gave me that message, he gave it to me here too. Do you see?

[ 19 : 14 ] So we can check against that. And then the third thing we need to do is we need to trust our sisters and brothers in God. We need to talk to him. And say, I have an idea that God is trying to speak to me about this.

Does that seem right to you? Help them. Let them guide you and help you to understand. Because there are voices that want to lead us astray. And some of them are evil.

And some of them are just neurotic, psychotic episodes we're going through. If you put the right pill in your mouth, you're going to hear all kinds of voices. And that isn't necessarily from God.

Some people think it is. Why is it so hard for people to not see God's hand in all things, even the bad stuff? That's an interesting question.

Because people don't want to see God. That's really the easy answer. People don't want to see God. People don't want to see God because if they see God, then they have to forget that they're God.

[ 20 : 17 ] They have to let go of the idea that the world, the universe, our families, our nation, our ideas, the whole culture exists for us.

Because that's what we're told. It's not new. It happened during the time of Moses as well. That's not this. This is a list of the sermons I've already preached. Because if I get one of those questions, I'm going to say refer to.

And you can get those online too, by the way. I asked Adrian last night, and he said we go back about two years in sermons. You can look up all kinds of sermons if you have that desire or interest, or you just want to share it with a friend.

The idea about God is simply that most people want to be the center of the universe. Most people are like little babies. They cry, they yell, they say, what about me?

And if we come to terms with the idea that there is a God and there's something more important than us, then we have to let go of our selfishness. And most of us don't want to do that.

[ 21 : 20 ] We've been taught to live into our selfishness. You deserve a break today. So go get a hamburger. You have a right to it.

And many other things you've been told you have a right to. But truly, the only thing we have a right to do is to serve God. God, people don't want to see the hand of God. They don't want to see God at all.

Because in doing that, they have to acknowledge who they're not. We're not God. That, by the way, in fact, somebody said to me I should make a sermon series out of it. Because that is the biggest thing we're facing, I think, as a culture right now.

Is that we have turned ourselves into God. And even we Christians don't understand how much this has affected and infected our lives. That we worry more about ourselves.

Oh, that was an easy one. Are you ever shocked by the evil in humans?

[ 22 : 21 ] We're all shocked by evil, aren't we? I hope we are. I shouldn't say that. Some people aren't. Of course I'm shocked by the evil in humans. I'm not shocked that there's evil in humans. Because there's evil in me. Martin Luther said there's a struggle between the old man in Adam and the new man in Christ.

That there's a battle going on for our soul. And it even says so in Paul. The very thing that I would do, I don't do. The very thing that I would do, I don't do that. It's not me, but it's sin in me, it says in the book of Romans.

Because we struggle. We struggle with this battle. Because while we give our lives to Christ, we struggle to do it completely.

So we always have a battle. But take the next step and understand that some people refuse to even have God. So they don't even have the ability to resist evil. They're taking on the forces of evil in the universe.

They're taking on an archangel named Lucifer himself. They're taking on evil demons and forces that they cannot overcome. Because they don't have the power of God.

[ 23 : 32 ] The Bible says, greater is the one that is in us than the one that is in the world. And the one in the world is the devil. If you read in the Bible, you'll find out that when the devil went to war, Lucifer went to war with his angels.

And he had angels on his side in this war. He went to war with Michael, the leader of God's army. He lost. And you know where Michael threw Lucifer down to?

Here. He's not in a hole in the ground. He's running around on the earth. So all the evil demons and devils that used to be angels with all their power are roaming around and cause us trouble.

And if we don't have the power of God on our side, we have no ability to resist that evil. Which is why you shouldn't look down at people who do the wrong things in our culture as if somehow they're morally deficient.

They're godly deficient. You should look at them with pity. And I don't mean to take a bad attitude of them in any way at all. I'm simply saying that they don't have the power we have.

[ 24 : 37 ] But unfortunately, Christians also sometimes forget about God. And they do things that aren't right as well. Am I shocked by it?

No. Am I surprised by it? No. Am I disappointed with it? Of course. Especially when it turns out to be me. Right? Oh, you didn't know that.

I'm not perfect either. Explain how dinosaurs fit in the Bible. And how they fit in the time frame of millions of years ago. Well, dinosaurs don't fit in the Bible.

They're not in there. Simple as that. You got your green alligators and long neckies. Some Humpty Back llamas and some chimpanzees. Cats and rats and elephants.

But Lord, I'm old. Forlorn. I just don't see no dinosaurs. Oh, unicorns, right? Dinosaurs are not in the Bible because, quite honestly, the people who wrote the Bible, inspired by God, could only write what they could get their brains around.

[ 25 : 42 ] So they can't get their brains around something they don't even know. That's the truth. So it's the same for us. When God inspires us with something, we write from our context and our world.

And sometimes that doesn't come out in the way God really would like it to be. So this isn't even just about dinosaurs. That's a simple thing. That's very easy.

God said that a day in the life of God is like a thousand years to people. And he didn't mean a thousand years. It could be a million years. And so if God wanted to take six million years or six billion years to create a universe, that doesn't disagree with the Bible.

It doesn't really matter to God. God is not really worried about a time frame. That's us with our goofy little heads trying to get ourselves around the divine wonder of God.

You can believe that God created the world in six 24-hour days. Nobody's going to prove you wrong, really, ultimately. We don't have any tapes from back then. All right?

[ 26 : 45 ] But the truth is that we do have some records and we do have some ideas that the world might be a lot older than that. And in God's divine revelation to people, he started that several thousand years ago.

But in his creation of the world, that could have been millions of years ago. That doesn't disagree with the record of the Bible. Because all the Bible says is that God created it in an orderly, reasonable way.

First, he created the cosmos. Then he created earth without form or void. And then he created waters. And then he created land that came out of the waters.

And then he created plants. And then animals and sea creatures. And finally, humanity. Sounds a lot like what we learn in our science class, doesn't it?

The truth is God's truth and science's truth are aiming for the same thing. Science is trying to find truth. And we're trying to find truth.

[ 27 : 50 ] We come from different places, but we're going for the same purpose. That's the truth. So dinosaurs aren't in the Bible because nobody thought about dinosaurs.

They never even knew that they existed. If they did, they called them things like the Leviathan, which is a great sea creature that they couldn't define. They do have animals and creatures in the Bible that we can't explain today.

We try to find them, but maybe they existed back then when they wrote the books. Maybe they didn't. We don't know that. The bigger problem is that in the course of life, as we try to understand God, we understand God from the context we understand.

So unfortunately, in the Bible, it's not just the fact that dinosaurs aren't there. The difficulty is that sometimes we have the Bible written from the perspective of a culture that is, in some ways, foreign to what we think.

So we may have a culture where women were dominated by men, or we may have a culture where certain people were kept in enslavement by other people, or we may have a culture where people thought things we don't think in our world today.

[ 28 : 58 ] And they wrote some of that into the book, too, because they didn't understand what we understand. I've only been on this earth for 60 years, and I've got to tell you, the world I grew up in doesn't look anything like the one I live in.

Anybody say amen to that? People that are my age, man, I'm telling you, doesn't look like it. And if I acted, and sometimes I do, the way I acted 50 years ago or 40 years ago today, I'd be in real trouble.

We have to learn and grow and develop and let the Spirit lead us to understand the wisdom that was written through the Holy Spirit through those people's hearts and not worry about the little things that don't fit our little world.

Mark Twain, that great theologian, once said, reading the Bible is like eating fish. There's a lot of good fish, but once in a while you run across the bone.

Don't try to choke it down. Just set it aside and move on to the good stuff. I think it's the same with the Bible. Well, that's a tricky answer, isn't it? Yeah. You don't know whether you've got a good answer or not.

[ 30 : 10 ] The problem with these things is these are like things I could spend an entire, hour talking about in a Bible study. Right now I don't have that kind of time. This one's big. Why did Jesus get baptized?

Why did Jesus get baptized? Did he have sins to wash away? No, he was born perfect. So he didn't have any sins to wash away. I don't know that baptism does that anyways. It's a representation of the sins being washed away by our faith in God.

He got baptized because it was the right thing to do. He got baptized because it was the right image to show. He also went to the temple at the right time. He also prayed in the right time.

He also showed respect for religious leaders who didn't deserve respect because it was the right thing to do. You see, sometimes we should just do what's right. Not because the people that are in leadership are the right people.

Not because we necessarily think that what we're doing is something that is necessary. But because it's the right thing to do. It looks right to people and that helps people to feel more comfortable.

[ 31 : 14 ] More comfortable listening to what we have to say. If we spend all our time saying, I don't need that, then they don't listen to what we have to say. So Jesus did several things and he says it in the Bible.

I'm doing this for their sake. So that they can hear me. They can see me. They can listen to me. So sometimes Jesus did that.

Did he need to be baptized? No. But at that point in time, there was a whole movement that was suggesting that baptism was an important part of the faith. And if Jesus completely ignored it or said, I don't need that even though all of you do.

People wouldn't listen to him anymore. So I think Jesus did some things because they were the right thing to do. And sometimes we do that too. Is it possible that a person could get forgiveness if he was sorry but never asked for forgiveness before death?

Hmm. Hmm. I'll go a step further. What if we weren't even sorry because we may not have even realized or didn't have time?

[ 32 : 32 ] What if I committed a sin two minutes before I died? Or maybe I died committing a sin. Right? Let's go a step further.

Not even sorry because I haven't even had time. I die in the midst of doing something wrong. Now, I know you've all got crazy ideas in your head. So get them out. Okay?

I'm not planning on this idea. All right? All right? The kings in the Middle Ages used to keep a priest next to them because they didn't want to be baptized.

Because they want to be able to go out and slaughter and kill and do things that kings had to do without having to worry about God's judgment. But if somebody somehow mortally wounded them, they wanted to have a priest there to be able to baptize them right away so that they wouldn't have to worry about God's wrath in the end.

Isn't that kind of interesting? Yeah? This isn't some mechanical thing. This isn't some kind of a put in your prayer, get out forgiveness.

[ 33 : 33 ] What's your attitude? What's the condition of your heart? Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ? If you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, you will be saved.

Believing is living. My life is focused on God. Do I do things wrong? Of course I do. I'm no different than you. I hope I'm doing less wrong. And I hope that the things that I see that are wrong, I'm doing less of.

Do you follow? We all should be doing this. This is not an excuse to sin. Somebody put this to Paul and he said, so should I sin so that there will be more forgiveness around? He says, for goodness sakes, no.

Don't go sinning and don't use grace as an excuse for sin. But if you happen to have your heart with God, if you happen to be following God, you're living your life for God.

But you have a momentary lapse. Or maybe even less than a momentary lapse. I believe God will send you right to eternity.

[ 34 : 34 ] Because God's merciful towards his own. Think about children. Because God thinks of us like his children. All right? Think about children.

Do we disown them because they do something we don't like? No. In fact, the only way they can be dismissed from us, not in relationship with us, not part of our family, is if they refuse to do that.

So it's not what they do or what we do. It's what they do. God isn't going to turn anyone away if they turn towards him. So I don't believe that a particular sin is going to matter.

Living in a condition without God, living in a condition of sin is a different story. Refusing to have anything to do with God, that's a whole different issue. Did I hear you correctly?

Of course not. That's a great question. Let me explain a couple things. First of all, I preach somewhat extemporaneously.

[ 35 : 45 ] I have notes. All right? I'm not just preaching off the top of my head. But I have notes. I don't have a manuscript. Some preachers preach from a written manuscript.



And the reason for that is because they will never, ever use the wrong word. They've taken the time to pore over those words and get them exactly correct so that they can be sure that what they're saying is what people should hear.

It's what I might do if I was writing something. All right? So when I preach, sometimes the words that come out of my mouth are completely wrong.

If you haven't been here long enough, you should get used to that. And if you have been here long enough, you'll go, he didn't mean that. He meant the opposite of that. I mean, because you know I say things that it comes out just like you, comes out of my mouth backwards, but I didn't realize I did it.

And some of you will give me these looks. That's how I know. And the whole congregation goes, what I say, what I say.

[ 36 : 53 ] So sometimes when you're preaching extemporaneously, it's nice because it makes a sense that we feel more connected, that we're in a conversation with each other. But it runs the risk that you might somehow pull out the wrong word, the wrong thought, or something like that.

And it's especially true on Saturday night. Okay? For those of you who are not aware, when I preach my sermon on Saturday night, afterwards, Pastor Sherry does me a wonderful favor, and she tells me everything I said wrong.

And truly, that's a blessing. It really is. Because I go, I didn't say that. She'll say, yes, you did. And I go, well, I won't say that tomorrow. So Saturday night is kind of raw.

But even Sunday morning, words will come out of my mouth. And I'll say I'm wrong. When people talk to you in any conversation, not just the pastor, but in any conversation, if sometimes they say things wrong, look at the condition of their heart.

Don't be so quick to judge a misspoken word or word that comes out of a culture or a background that's not like yours. Don't be so quick to judge people by their exact words.

[ 38 : 06 ] Judge their heart. If the condition of their heart is love and grace and mercy and always has been generally good towards you, why would you think that they said intentionally something evil?

It's appropriate to say, now you just said. Okay? That's all right. But that's not appropriate to say, you just.

Do you see the difference? I got in trouble with this when I said the S word. Some of you know what I'm talking about. I can't say it because I get in trouble. And it's not a swear word, but it's an inappropriate word in the culture today for little children.

But it's not for people our age. Our people go, what? All right? What are the intentions of a person's heart? Finally, on the same note, because this is really important, you will hear what you're looking to hear.

I have a lot of people say to me that, you know, I must have microphones in their house or something because when I'm preaching, I seem to be talking about them. I actually had somebody leave the church over that. They really believed, honestly, that I had a sermon waiting for them, that when they walked in the door, I'd switch my notes and get them.

[ 39 : 20 ] All right? I don't do that for any of you. I'm sorry. I know that you might think so, but bring your ego down a couple notches, you know. There's hundreds of people I have to preach to.

If I got something with you, I'll talk to you. All right? Not the whole world, just to make you feel bad. But if God is speaking to you, he will convict you.

He will talk to you about what you need to hear. And sometimes through me, even when I don't realize I'm saying it. All right? So I've had people come out and say my sermon was something about something I never knew it was about.

But that's what God wanted you to hear. Or it may be what you're hearing because of your life situation. And sometimes I can seem insensitive or I can seem rude or I can seem like I'm somehow penetrating into your world in an inappropriate way because I'm speaking to hundreds of people and I'm not always specifically acknowledging people's individual situations.

So I apologize if I ever do that because I have done that. In fact, I found myself sometimes looking through the crowd like this as I'm preaching. Oh, my gosh, they heard this wrong. I know they did.

[ 40 : 34 ] Okay? Because I don't mean to offend. But when you're talking to a whole lot of people, sometimes the words you use might strike somebody different than they strike everybody.

So, you know, that's a really good question. I didn't expect that one at all. It was sort of like off the charts. Good question. This one's two pages.

We know that we are commanded to forgive. I have made the choice to forgive someone who has wronged my family and have even prayed that God may be my heart right, may make my heart right, something like that, and help me to forgive.

But I just can't seem to let go of the bitterness that I have against the person. I know that I've been forgiven much and know that I am supposed what I'm supposed to do, but just can't seem to get it right.

What can I do? Forgiveness, there's two components. First of all, and Pastor Lisa helped me with this. I thought this was fascinating and interesting.

[ 41 : 39 ] God forgives. We have to choose whether we accept it. But God forgives. That way, he's not carrying it around. He's already chosen to forgive all of us. And we can forgive whether people receive it or not.

Receiving will allow us to be back in relationship. If they don't receive it, we won't be able to get back into relationship. But we can still forgive and just forget about that circumstance.

The other piece about it that we have to understand is that not forgiving is a demon. It's a demon. It's called grudges.

We carry them around. We hold on to them. We nurse them and we feed them. And the person who we're upset with is feeling great.

Do you follow the problem with this? The demon is eating our life up. Destroying us from the inside.

[ 42 : 43 ] And the person we're carrying this bitterness towards is like, I got you. Da, da, da, da, da. Really? Sometimes you got to let go of things.

You have to cast that demon out of your life. If you're carrying around bitterness or grudges or anger or frustration, all it's going to do is hurt you.

You're not hurting the person you're upset with. Believe it or not, they may even enjoy watching you feel that way. Let it go.

Let it go. Don't let that demon hold you. Because if you do, it will ruin your life. It's not healthy. So, Satan uses those things to get at us.

And to make us bitter and angry. And filled with rage and hurt. I've been hurt by people. I've had my family hurt by people, which is even harder.

[ 43 : 44 ] I've had people say and do things to me. And I've also done things to other people. And I've done things that are hurtful or wrong.

I try to make up for those the best I can. I trick them to God. And I hope God takes them away from me. And I take the stuff that's broken in me that I feel towards other people.

And I give that to God, too. Because if you don't do that, you're the one who loses. Really. You're the one who loses. It's so much easier to embrace the other people with love.

By the way, if they don't like that, it'll freak them out. Really. Paul says it's like putting hot, burning coals on their head. Treat them with love.

They won't know what to do with it. And all of a sudden, it goes from you carrying the grudge to them going, what? And either they'll change or...

[ 44 : 42 ] That's a whole sermon, isn't it? Spend some time on that. Spend some therapy on that. I would ask God, what does my future hold?

It would be a good question to ask him. I would just suggest you that. Ask God. But be prepared for the answer. Because the answer is probably not the one that's focused on you.

Oh, we're back to the beginning, aren't we? Yeah. The answer may not be one that causes you to be going, yeah, that fit right with my plan.

That's what I wanted to do. That's what I was planning all along. More than likely, it's going to be something completely off deck. You know, sometimes people ask me why I became a pastor.

It's very simple. I got drafted. Now, you young people don't know what drafted is. We do because we grew up in an era we could be in war if they pulled our number. God pulled my number.

[ 45 : 48 ] God pulled my number. I don't want you to get any impression that I don't enjoy my work or haven't liked being a pastor. I didn't sign up for this. This was not my plan.

I didn't want to go down this road. I had a whole life plan for myself. And God messed it up. And I ended up here.

Which is really pretty good. Because my life probably turned out a lot better than I thought it would. But I can't even promise you that either. All I can promise you is that if you do what God wants, it will satisfy that emptiness in your soul.

It will cause you to feel full and whole and like your life is what it needs to be. And if you don't, you'll always feel empty and incomplete. Does that mean you have to do a job, a particular occupation or something like that?

Of course not. It just means that somewhere you need to find a way to do what God is calling you to do. I think I have time for one more.

[ 46 : 55 ] When we ask the Lord to forgive us of our sins, the Bible says he will remember them no more.

However, when the judgment day comes, it says the Lord will know everything we have done and will be judged on everything. Please explain. I don't know.

I don't know. You know, some of these are over my pay grade. But here's the thing. When I'm in love with somebody and I'm feeling really, really good, you know what I'm talking about?

I'm in that relationship where we're in a loving, caring, really like each other relationship. I don't remember anything wrong. In the first Corinthians, it says love keeps no record of the wrongs.

As soon as I fall out of that love, when they say or do something that makes me feel hurt or a separation in our relationship, everything they ever did wrong comes back.

[ 48 : 08 ] Am I right? Well, yes, but I remember back when. I didn't remember it before. It was gone. But it's still there. And the record is still there.

But it also says that there's another book called the book of life. And if your name is written in the book of life because you believe in Christ and you've accepted the Lord in your life as your Lord, I believe Jesus is going to say just as soon as they start reading, hold it. the name's in the book.

I don't want you to know any more of my stuff. How do we find the answers to our questions? We pray to God as we pray that God will guide us and teach us with his Holy Spirit.

But in the end, if we read what other people did in their faith walk with God, we can find a lot of answers to our questions, even ones that aren't necessarily in there like dinosaurs.

They come from God and his word. Please stand if you're evil. Many words are reserved for our one in this world.

[ 50 : 36 ]    The ancient world defy.

With these birds and hold them deep Ancient birds of a Jew Changing me and changing you We have come with open hearts All at the ancient words in love Ancient words of a Jew Changing me and changing you We have come with open hearts For that is ancient, ancient fire God has not designed a world to frustrate us

One in time I still know you and your name We know we live to name our God And life is something that can tell us We know it will make us so much joy In ordinary lives Time for us to avoid and touch the wine We were made to die To your word we're digging deep To know the Father's light

[ 55 : 13 ] To the world we're reaching out Show them who you are So living water flowing through  
God bless the Lord of you Fill our hearts and guide our souls With one desire I still know  
you and your name To live your Lord We live to name our God And life is something that  
can tell us We know it will make us so much joy Joy, ordinary lives Stand for us to pour the  
dust of the light We were made to die

Joy unspeakable, faith unsinkable Love unstoppable, anything is possible Joy  
unspeakable, faith unsinkable Love unstoppable, anything is possible Joy unspeakable,  
faith unsinkable Love unstoppable, anything is possible Just to know you and to make you  
know We lift your name on high Shine like the sun Make darkness on high We know we  
were made for so much more Than ordinary lives

It's time for us to pour the dust of the light We were made to die Hey!

Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!

Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa! Whoa!

[ 57 : 51 ] Whoa! Please be seated. I like to do that in an Irish accent. I just can't pull it off. I'm  
actually Scottish, not Irish.

What are you going to do? We have a different way of talking. You know, we don't have all  
the answers. And sometimes even when we do, we mess up.

That's the way it is. And sometimes I mess up. And that's the way it is. If you're looking for  
a perfect person to be your pastor, keep searching and you'll never find one.

The truth is, is none of us are perfect except through the grace of God. That's not an  
excuse for doing wrong. We should all be striving to do the best we can. And just as Jesus  
did what was right, I should do as best as possible what's right before you.

I understand that. But each of us need to turn it over to God in the end so that God will  
make a place for us in all eternity. So that's why we come to ask for God's forgiveness.

[ 58 : 51 ] And I invite you to do that if you're willing today. Dear God in heaven, I have sinned. I  
have sinned. You know what I do wrong. And oftentimes I know what I do wrong.

Forgive me, Lord. Turn my heart towards you and towards others. Give me a forgiving  
heart.

Fill me with love. For you. And for others. Take away the brokenness. Take away the sin.

Prepare me for the day of judgment. And prepare me for this day. For it's in Jesus' name  
we pray. Amen.

God, says that everything you ever did wrong right now is gone. It's gone. The only way it  
comes back is if you choose to bring it back.

[ 60 : 02 ] Right now, you're perfect. Perfect. It's not my idea. It's God's idea. That's pretty cool, isn't  
it? You're perfect. Hold on to that.

And hold on to God. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God.  
Amen. Glory to God. Amen.

Amen. I'm in my cell I've lost words And one thing is It's over here Last thing I need Is to  
be heard But to hear But you can still Word of God speak Pulled out like grave Watching  
my eyes to see Your majesty Be still and go You're in this place

Please let me say And rise For your holiness Blood of God's name I'm in my cell And lift to  
you And the music And the noise All that I need Is to be with you In the quiet Hear your  
voice Word of God speak Would you pour down like grave Watching my eyes To see Your  
majesty

To be still and go You're in this place Please let me say And rest In your holiness Word of God speak Lord of God speak Lord of God speak Lord of God speak Watching my eyes Watching my eyes To see Your majesty Be still and go Be still and go You're in this place Please let me stay And rest In your holiness Word of God speak Word of God speak Word of God speak Word of God speak Word of God speak Word of God speak Word of God speak Word of God speak

[ 63 : 41 ] Word of God speak In the midst of the disciples' confusion As they were looking for a victory from Jesus That would send the Romans someplace else And make them go away And allow the problems to be settled And Jesus kept talking about dying In the midst of their frustration And their confusion Some ran away And some betrayed him But God still gave him this gift This meal To say he still loves us No matter who and what we are So this table is open To all those who seek after Christ Anyone who wishes to be In communion with God He wishes to be in communion with you today And you're welcome to come to the table And join us this morning The Lord be with you Lift up your hearts Let us give thanks to the Lord our God He is right

It's a good and it's a joyful thing we do Always and everywhere To give thanks to God He's a creator of everything He's a giver of all that we have And all that we are And so with all the people on earth And all the angels in heaven We praise his name And join their unending hymns Saying Holy Holy Holy Lord God of power and might Heaven and earth are full of your glory Hosanna in the highest Blessed is he who comes In the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest Holy are you Blessed is your son Jesus Christ Who gave us this meal On the night In which he was betrayed He took the bread He gave thanks to God And he broke the bread He gave it to his disciples And he said Take and eat This is my body Which is broken for you For the forgiveness of sin Eat of this Remembering me When the supper was over

He took the cup And he gave thanks to God And he gave it to his disciples And he said Drink from this all of you This is my blood Of the new covenant It's poured out for you And for many For the forgiveness of sin Drink of this Remembering me And so In remembrance of these mighty acts In Jesus Christ We offer ourselves In praise And thanksgiving As a holy and living sacrifice In union with Christ Offering for us As we proclaim The mystery of faith Christ has died Christ has risen Christ will come again Pour out your Holy Spirit On these gifts of bread and cup Make them be for us The body and blood of Christ That we might be filled With the presence of God So that we might be To the world The body of Christ Living in love And grace With one another Pour out your Spirit On all of us God that hear Lord Bless us And fill us And help us To experience The wonder The knowledge The wisdom of God Fill us Lord Fill our nation

Fill our community Bring your blessing And your peace Be with us today And always As we offer our prayers In the name of the Father And the Son And the Holy Spirit Amen And now as Jesus Taught his disciples To pray Let us join together In saying Our Father Who art in heaven Hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come Thy will be done On earth as it is in heaven Give us this day Our daily bread And forgive us Our trespasses As we forgive those Who trespass against us And lead us not Into temptation But deliver us From evil For thine is the kingdom And the power And the glory Forever and ever Amen For those who are Assisting at the table Come forward at this time Please Amen Amen Legends Amen Amen Amen

Amen Amenana Thank you.

[ 68 : 18 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 70 : 48 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 73 : 18 ] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[ 76 : 47 ] Thank you.