Session 6 Agreeing With Jesus’ Assessment (Jn. 16:1)  
  “Let me drink from the river of Your pleasures as I delight in Your beauty” (Ps. 36:8; 37:4)

*Let’s go ahead and turn in our Bibles to* ***John 16****. We’re not quite in* ***John 16*** *yet, but we’re going to dip into one verse there and then kind of work our way back.* ***John 16****. Okay, let’s pray.*

*Father, we thank You for Your Word. Father, we ask You for the spirit of revelation. Father, I ask You, Lord, that Your Spirit would be stirred on the inside, Lord, that anointing that teaches us all things, Father, we ask that You would activate it by Your Spirit on the inside. Lord, that You would take the things, Father, that belong to You and Your Son and You’d make them known to us. Father, I ask You for new dimensions, Father, of understanding touching our hearts. Lord, that You’d open up our eyes to Your law to see glorious things in Jesus’ name, amen.*

*Well, tonight, I just want to take the next few moments and talk about agreeing with Jesus’ assessment of the world. Agreeing with Jesus’ assessment of the world. Now, in* ***John 16:1****, Jesus makes one of the four statements. There are four statements He makes in* ***John 13-17****, and* ***John 16:1*** *is one of these statements, where He tells us the reason why He’s giving the instruction that He’s giving.* ***John 16:1****, He says, “These things I have spoken to you, that you should not stumble.” Now, I believe there are two ways to look at that statement. The first one is to look at it in a general sense that the entire purpose of the instruction of* ***John 13-17*** *is to equip the saints, to equip our hearts that we would not stumble.*

*So, the entirely of* ***John 13-17****, the purpose is that we would not stumble as believers. The phrases before that are* ***John 15:11****, He says, “These things I have spoken to you that you may have joy and that your joy may remain.” Then in* ***John 15:17****, He says, “These things I command you, that you would love one another,” and here in* ***John 16:1*** *He says, “These things I have spoken that you would not stumble.”*

*So, these statements, again, they can refer to the entirety of the instruction that Jesus is giving in* ***John 13-17****, but I believe there is a second way of looking at these phrases, and we’re going to look at that tonight, we’re going to take that approach tonight, is that right before* ***16:1*** *He made several statements. In fact, in* ***John 15:18-John 15:21****, Jesus gives some instruction about the things that will take place, in particular as it pertains to the issue of persecution. Then He says, “These things I have told you, that you would not stumble.”*

*So, tonight we’re just going to take a brief look at the context of* ***John 16:1****, which is really* ***John 15:18-27****.*

*Now, in* ***2 Thessalonians 2:3****, the apostle Paul talks about a very serious matter that doesn’t get much attention in the church today, one, because it is unsettling, number one, and number two, it awakens different kinds of theological debates with regards to our salvation, but Paul makes it very clear that one of the things that must happen and that will happen before the Lord returns is that there will be a great falling away, that there will be those who will have named the name of Jesus, and I believe those who have had a born-again experience, who, because of the pressures of life, the pressures int eh culture, the pressures in the earth, having lived a lifestyle of continual agreement with darkness in their own souls, find themselves in a position where, by the words of their mouth they decide to break their relationship with the Lord, and they end up in eternal perdition. It’s called the great falling away.*

*The book of* ***Hebrews****, which we’re not talking about the book of* ***Hebrews*** *today, it’s a book that is actually filled with warnings about the potential of this dynamic of coming to a place where our hearts have gotten so hardened. Where it’s not…because the question is that people say, can you gain or can you lose your salvation? It’s not about the losing of salvation as though the Lord takes it away, but you can say, “You know what? I don’t want to do this anymore,” and He gives that warning all throughout the New Testament in various ways, and I realize you’re kind of like, you know, you’re like, “Man that’s intense,” but we’ve got to talk about it, because that’s what I believe Jesus means in* ***John 16 :1****. He says, “I’m telling you these things so that you would not stumble, that you would not fall away.”*

*So, I believe that we’re in the beginnings of these days. I think that we’re at the beginnings of the days of this falling away dynamic that is emerging in our day in this generation in this nation, in the nations of the earth as well, undoubtedly, many questioning the faith.*

*It’s popular these days to go on this journey of, “I’m deconstructing my faith,” and all of these different things. It sounds clever, it sounds intellectual, it sounds proper, it sound smart, it sounds like the thing to do, it sounds reasonable, but so much of it is a subtle drifting away from the faith. I’m not talking about people being Bereans. I’m not talking about searching out the scriptures. I’m not talking about hearing a preacher and going, “Okay, you know what? I’m going to go the Word of God and I’m going to see if what is spoken and what is taught is true.”*

*I’m not talking about that. I’m talking about the questioning of the authority of the Scripture. I’m talking about the questioning of the nature and the character of God. I’m talking about the questioning of God’s assessment of the human race. I’m talking about the questioning of the fact of whether the cross was in fact necessary for the forgiveness of sin, and is Jesus in fact the only way. I’m talking about the real main and plain of Christendom is being questioned by many in the name of, “Well, I’ve got to, you know…” anyway, “deconstruct my faith.” It’s a deception is what it is.*

*Again, this is only the beginnings. It’s only going to increase. Now, in the midst of all of that, the Holy Spirit is moving and He’s going to touch many, and there is coming a great harvest all at the same time, but we’re living in some very interesting days.*

1. the pride and peril of a troubled heart
   1. The purpose of Jesus’ instruction in Jn. 13-17 was to equip His followers to walk in victory under the growing global pressure. He taught His disciples that in dialogue with the Godhead our hearts will be filled with peace and joy to keeping us from falling away under pressure.

11“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you...” (Jn. 15:11)

17These things I command you, that you love one another. (Jn. 15:17)

1“These things I have spoken to you, that you should not…stumble (fall away).” (Jn. 16:1)

33These things I have spoken to you, that ﻿in Me you may have peace…” (Jn. 16:33)

*Now, paragraph A., as I mentioned earlier, the purpose of* ***John 13-17*** *is to equip His followers. Jesus is seeking to equip His followers to walk in victory under the growing global pressures. To walk in victory in the context of the growing global pressures.*

*Now,* ***John 13-17****, I mentioned this before but it bears repeating, happens about two days after Jesus spoke His message to His disciples in* ***Matthew 24*** *on the Mount of Olives.* ***Mark 13*** *is another passage that goes with that.* ***Luke 21****, where Jesus describes the unique dynamics that will take place in the generations of the Lord’s return. He talks about the Lord’s return. He talks about a crisis that is coming, and the backdrop of this crisis is it is social crisis. He talks about a health crisis. He talks about an emotional crisis, a spiritual crisis. He talks about geopolitical crises. He talks about environmental crises that will happen in the generation of the Lord’s return, yet, in the midst of describing this landscape, Jesus says this in* ***Matthew 24:6****, He says, “See to it that you are not troubled. See to it that you are not troubled.*

*Later on, a couple of days later He’s having a Passover meal with His disciples,* ***John 13****,* ***John 14:1*** *He says, “Let not your hearts be troubled,” and I believe He’s picking up the conversation of the exhortation of not having a troubled heart, and then He begins to give line-upon-line instruction of how we can live free from a troubled heart, because a troubled heart is a vulnerable heart. A troubled heart is a vulnerable heart. It’s a heart that is vulnerable to all kinds of things, seeking to stabilize itself under pressure.*

*So, Jesus, in* ***John 14****, even* ***John 15****, I believe all the way to the end,* ***John 17****, He is giving line-upon-line instruction, about how we can relate with God, how we can enter into dialogue with the Godhead, and our hearts be filled with peace and joy and keeping us steady under pressure so that we would not stumble, as He says in* ***John 16:1****.*

* 1. In Jn. 13-17, one of Jesus’ aims is to equip the heart to stay steady under pressure. Jesus exhorted the disciples two days earlier that the church was to not be troubled in light of unfolding global eschatological pressures that point towards the end of the age drawing near.

6“And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.” (Mt. 24:5-6)

*Paragraph B. Again, Jesus aims to equip the heart to stay steady under pressure. You know, I think of* ***Isaiah 40:31****, a familiar passage. Those who wait on the Lord, those who live lives of interacting with the Lord, He says they will have renewed strength, but the verse right before there He says, “Even youths go tired and weary. Even young men will utterly fall.”*

*What Isaiah’s talking about, he’s saying, “Look, there’s coming something in the future that is so intense that even youthful resilience is not robust enough, not strong enough to withstand the pressure except for those who seek to cultivate a life of intimacy, because there is a vibrancy that happens inside of our heart. There’s an inner fortress that’s being built by the presence of God, by the grace of God, of righteousness, peace, and joy, so we can stand underneath the pressure that is coming.*

*Jesus, He exhorted His disciples two days before that the church was not to be troubled, paragraph B., in the light of the unfolding, global end-time pressure.*

* 1. I believe there is a connection between Jesus’ exhortation to not be troubled (Jn. 14:1, 27) and the call to joy (15:11), love (15:17), peace (16:33) and avoiding stumbling in our faith (16:1).

*Paragraph C. I believe that, again, that the exhortation to not be troubled that is found in* ***John 14:1*** *and in* ***John 14:27*** *is connected to the call to not be troubled in* ***Matthew 24:6****. What Jesus calls us to, He calls us to a life of joy, a joy that remains under pressure. He call us to a life of love. He calls us to a life of peace and a life of steadiness in our faith.*

* 1. A troubled heart weighed down with worry and anxiety is a serious matter. It hinders the growth of ***joy*** and ***peace*** in our hearts. Worry preoccupies us with managing our emotions, making it difficult to step out of our feelings and narratives to fully ***love*** others in truth.

*Paragraph D. A troubled heart is weighed down, is a heart that is weighed down with worry and anxiety. Now, worry and anxiety, beloved, worry is a serious matter. You know, when Jesus says, “Do not worry,” how many of you know that’s not a suggestion. When He says, “Do not worry,” He’s giving a commandment, which makes worry a sin. It’s a serious matter.*

*“Well, you know, they just like to worry.” Well, tell them to stop it. “Well, you know, I just like to worry a little bit.” Don’t even do that a little bit. Worry is not good. It actually is a serious matter. I mean, of all the things that Jesus could have said in* ***Matthew 24****, He says there will be wars, rumors of wars, He says there will be pestilence, disease, earthquakes, nation against nation, I mean, He describes this scenario, and of all the things He could have said, He says, “Don’t worry. Do not be troubled.” That makes it a serious matter for us to look into.*

*What does a troubled heart do? Paragraph D. It hinders the growth of joy and peace in our hearts. It hinders the growth, the experience, the cultivating of joy and peace in our hearts. What happens is when we are weighed down with worry and anxiety, we are now preoccupied with managing our emotions in such a way that it makes it difficult for us to actually step outside of ourselves and give ourselves to the person in front of us in love, which is what love is. It creates an inward preoccupation, making it difficult to really begin to relate in real, meaningful ways in love in the way that the Scripture calls us to love, which really is that God-given ability, by God’s grace, to give ourselves to another in sacrifice and love. So, worry is a serious matter.*

*Again, it preoccupies us with the managing of our emotions to step outside of our feelings, and to step out of our narratives, because there are feelings, and we’ll talk more about that in just a few moments, there are various emotions, and there are narratives, perspectives, ideas, and that’s why we’re talking tonight about agreeing with Jesus’ assessment. There are perspectives, there are narratives, there are assessments that we cling on to, rather than giving ourselves, being able to give ourselves in love and truth to others.*

* 1. Worry is simply rooted in pride. It exists because we have bought into an exaggerated sense of confidence in our human ***abilities***, ***assessment*** and ***narratives***, thus not living in truth—reality. Anxiety gets stirred up when our human limitations are exposed and our assessment and narratives or our mindsets (strongholds) in which we find safety get challenged.

4For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds… (2 Cor. 10:4)

*Paragraph E. Simply said, worry is simply rooted in pride. I’ll say this again. Simply stated, worry, or anxiety, is pride, and the reason why it exists is because we have, okay, I do this every now and then when I speak a heavy message. From now on I’m talking to me, so you all don’t have to take it personally, if that makes it a little better for you.*

*But, worry and anxiety comes about because we’ve actually bought our own press. We’ve actually bought that exaggerated sense in us having confidence in our human abilities, assessments, and narratives, and worry gets exposed in our hearts when our human limitations, in terms of our abilities, when we realize where our assessments are being challenged in our narratives, our perspectives of ourselves, the person in front of us, the situation, the nation, the world, when situations come and challenge the frailty of our abilities, the frailty of our assessments, and the frailty of our narratives, that’s when anxiety begins to get stirred up on the inside.*

*Because what is happening in these situations, again, paragraph E., the last sentence there, it exposes the assessments and narratives, or our mindsets, which, the apostle Paul calls mindsets strongholds. There’s a real crazy thing that happens with us as humans, and that is that we actually find safety in our mindsets. It’s actually one of the reasons why we don’t like changing our minds. We actually find safety in our mindsets. It’s why Paul calls them strongholds. These fortresses, these military forts, strongholds, forts, fortresses, they are built for protection. They are built for safety, and what happens in life, there are things that come, and they challenge these strongholds. They challenge these mindsets, and we begin to find out very quickly, that what happens is these mindsets or these strongholds, they were actually made out of straw.*

*They are these little mud houses, and when we begin to see them for what they are, we begin to feel unsafe. We begin to feel unsafe, which is the why the Scripture, all throughout the Old Testament, over and over again, He says, “No, make the Lord your fortress. Make the Lord your refuge. Make the Lord your strong tower.” Find your safety in the knowledge of Him, find your safety, when it talks about the Lord being our fortress, our stronghold, it means make His presence your safety. Make your intimacy with Him your safety. Make His ways, the way that He wants us to do things, find your safety in doing that. In other words, abandon your assessments, your narratives, and your abilities and lean into His. That’s what it means for the Lord to be our stronghold.*

* 1. Worry is our attempt to control the outcome of own life, family, friends, and the world by leaning on our own abilities, assessment and narratives rather than Jesus’ leadership and way.

*Paragraph F., worry is our attempt to control the outcome of our lives. Just remember I’m talking to me. You guys are just listening to some self-talk over here. You know? Because the bottom line is just this, folks. We’re all a bunch of control freaks. No, we are. Well, that person is a control freak. Well, I don’t know. We really are all control freaks. Some of us have perfected it to another level, I get that, but the bottom line is that we’re all control freaks. We like to control the outcome of our lives, the outcome of our families, the outcome of our friends, the outcome of this world by leaning on our, again, our abilities, leaning on our assessment, we know exactly what’s going on, and leaning on our narratives, where we cling more to our idea of where this thing is going to go—it has to go there—rather than leaning into the leadership of Jesus.*

*There’s a book called The Existence and the Attributes of God. It was written back in the 1600s. The author’s name is Stephen Charnock. He wrote about 1000 pages on the subject of the knowledge of God. I call it The Existence and Attributes; I call it The Knowledge of the Holy on steroids. The Knowledge of the Holy is about 100 pages. Stephen Charnock’s book is about a 1000. But he makes this very interesting statement about worry. Here’s how he defines worry. He calls it practical atheism. He says that in our worry we’re actually denying the existence of God and making ourselves, again, our abilities, our narratives, and our assessments, they then become the throne of our souls.*

* 1. Worry is when we walk in the knowledge of self vs. the knowledge of God and His personality, power and purpose. In it we deny the existence of God and we have our self on the throne of our souls. Charnock calls this practical atheism. “Practical atheism is natural to man in his depraved state, and very frequent in the hearts and lives of men.” Stephen Charnock

33But ﻿seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. (Mt. 6:33)

1. agreeing with Jesus’ power, assessment and narrative concerning the world

*Let’s go to page 2. So, why we’re talking about this is because, remember, Jesus said that we are not to be troubled, and being troubled has to do, again, when our abilities, our assessments, and our narratives get exposed for the futility and the weakness that they are. The reason why this is important is because, in this context for tonight, is that part of the wrestle in the human heart is thinking that our abilities, our assessments, and our narratives concerning the world is the way forward and its not. We want to cling to the Lord’s power, the Lord’s assessment, and the Lord’s narrative concerning the world.*

* 1. Over the last several decades there has been an increasing and growing presence of another gospel in the Body of Christ. It centers specifically around the nature of God as a righteous Judge as well as the nature of sinful humanity as rebellious children of wrath.

6I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel. (Gal. 1:6)

4For if he who comes preaches another Jesus … or a different gospel which you have not accepted. (2 Cor. 11:4)

*Paragraph A. In the last several decades there has been an increase and a growing presence of what the scripture calls “another gospel” in the body of Christ, and this other gospel, it centers specifically around the nature of God as a righteous Judge as well as our nature as sinful humanity, the two things that this other gospel attacks. Again, it’s the nature of God as a righteous Judge and our nature as sinful humanity, or as Paul says in* ***Ephesians 2****, where before we knew the Lord that we were by object rebellious children of wrath, is how Paul describes it.*

***Galatians 1****, Paul talks about a different gospel.* ***2 Corinthians 11:4****, he talks about a different gospel and he talks about another Jesus. A different spirit, not the one that we received at the born-again experience.*

* 1. In Jn. 16:1, Jesus states that the reason why He taught His disciples Jn. 15:18-27 was to help them make sense of the true condition of the world and context in which they would witness. Not agreeing with heaven’s perspective concerning the condition of the world will be a source of stumbling for many. Presently, there are growing seeds of this in this generation.

1“These things I have spoken to you, that you ﻿should not be made to stumble.” (Jn. 16:1)

3“…for that Day (2nd Coming) will not come unless the falling away comes first” (2 Th. 2:3)

*Paragraph B. In* ***John 16:1****, Jesus states the reason why He taught the disciples what He mentioned in* ***John 15:18-27****. So,* ***John 15:18-27*** *is the instruction that Jesus is referring to in* ***John 16:1****, and part of the purpose of the instruction of* ***John 15:18-27*** *was to help the disciples make sense of the true condition of the world and the context in which they would be a witness. He wanted them to understand the true nature, the true condition of the unbelieving world so they could make sense of what was going on, because that would be the context in which the gospel witness would go forth.*

*The second sentence there in paragraph B., not agreeing with heaven’s perspective concerning the condition of the world will be a source of stumbling for many. I want to say this again . Not agreeing with heaven’s perspective concerning the condition of the world, the condition that we were in before we met Christ, to not agree with heaven’s perspective on this will be a source of stumbling, a source of offense for many. Presently, there are growing seeds of this in this generation.*

* 1. I have observed a subtle but increased breaking of agreement with the Lord’s primary assessment of the human race as sinful. I have seen this through the increased emphasis of our brokenness instead of our sinfulness as well as brokenness as the reason for sinful behavior. This has resulted in a growing presence of a ‘therapeutic gospel’ instead of the gospel of grace.

*Paragraph C. I personally have observed an increased breaking of agreement with the Lord’s primary assessment of the human race. From my perspective, I’ve observed an increasing breaking of agreement with the Lord's assessment of the human race, and here's what it looks like. I've seen it through the increased emphasis on our brokenness rather than our sinfulness. It’s very subtle. The increased emphasis on our brokenness rather than our sinfulness.*

*Now, before you run me out of town, there is brokenness.* ***Psalm 147:3*** *make it very clear that He that he heals the brokenhearted and He binds up their wounds.* ***Luke 4:18*** *makes it very clear that the Spirit of the Lord is upon Me to heal the brokenhearted, so, there is this thing called brokenheartedness, but beloved, we are not, the human race is not primarily broken.*

*It is primarily sinful and profoundly evil.*

*So, the increased emphasis on brokenness instead of sinfulness, as well as the emphasis on brokenness as the reason for our sinful behavior. I’m going to say this again, an increased emphasis on brokenness, or woundedness or dysfunction, rather than our sinfulness, number one, and number two, the emphasis on our brokenness, dysfunction and woundedness as the reason for our sinfulness.*

*The problem is this, is that if we are primarily broken, you don't need to Savior, you need a therapist. If we’re primarily broken, guess what? Somebody did the breaking. And so, the responsibility ultimately always lies in somebody else's behavior towards us. Again, I'm not denying that are real issues of dysfunction that are tied in to sinful behaviors. In that regards it is very complex, but the cross was too violent. It was too costly. It was too serious of a thing for Jesus to come for merely our woundedness. No, beloved, He paid a price for a serious debt that we had with God that we could not repay, so He made payment for our sins.* ***Mark 10****. For the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many.*

*So, this emphasis or this switching of priorities of brokenness as opposed to sinfulness, and that sinful patterns and sinful behaviors are rooted in brokenness. Yes, brokenness is part of our sinful behavior, but, beloved, let’s just be honest. The Bible says some pretty intense stuff about our sinfulness, and it all but says we kind of do the stuff we do because we want to do it want to do them and we like doing them.*

* 1. It is true that there is brokenness because of living in a sinful world, however it is important to recognize that humanity is fundamentally sinful. The purpose of Christ’s death makes this priority clear. If brokenness is our core than a therapist is our need, not a Lord and Savior.

45“For even ﻿the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and ﻿to give His life a ransom for many.” (Mk. 10:45)

*Paragraph D. Again, it’s true that there’s brokenness because of living in a sinful world. It’s very real. There are things that have been done against different ones that has caused a tremendous amount of pain, and it’s woven, again, into the dynamic of the sinful patterns. But you know what? Do you know what one of the most offensive books in the Bible is? It’s the book of* ***Exodus****. The book of* ***Exodus*** *is a really intense book, because here’s why. Because, the Lord, He delivers slaves. Now, think about this. Slaves for 400 years. I mean, the oppression, the cruelty, just all that comes it. It’s really, really intense. He delivers them out of Egypt and He gives them the Law, only to say this: You’re just like your slave masters.*

*Again, it’s true that there’s brokenness and that there’s oppression. There’s injustice. I wrote a whole book on it, so I get it. But, beloved, we have to begin to grapple again with so much of what the scripture has to say. It’s very important to recognize that humanity is fundamentally sinful. It’s why we need to be born again. It’s why we were,* ***Colossians*** *says, we were taken out of the kingdom of darkness and we were brought into the kingdom of light. We were brought into the kingdom of the Son of His love.*

* 1. Humanity, aside from the work of God’s grace, is unable and unwilling to receive the gospel. The scripture describes humans not merely as emotionally broken but as naturally children of wrath, deeply sinful and evil committed to value system of the world, the flesh and the devil.

11For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men… (Titus 2:11)

19And this is the condemnation, ﻿that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (Jn. 3:19)

*Paragraph E. Humanity, aside from the work of God’s grace is unable and unwilling to receive the gospel. The scripture describes humans not as merely emotionally broken but as, by nature, children of wrath, deeply sinful and evil, committed, deeply committed to the value system of the world, the flesh, and the devil.*

*Let’s look at* ***John****, we all know* ***John 3:16****, For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him would not perish but have everlasting life. Look what it says three verses later in* ***verse 19****. And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world. Look what Jesus says, “And men loved darkness rather than the light, because their deeds were evil.”*

*It's not just that, humans, we did dark things. He goes, “No, they love it. They are committed to it.” Which, by the way, it is understanding God’s assessment of the human race that makes His grace, His mercy, His love that much more staggering. Absolutely staggering.*

* 1. The general human perspective is rooted in the idea of the good of humanity and that we are positioned to fix the things that are wrong. This is not consistent with the gospel, which suggests otherwise. As humans we have no ***ability*** to save ourselves, our ***assessment*** of the human condition is flawed and our ***narrative*** about the eternal destiny of the wicked is off. The gospel declares there is only one Man, Jesus, who is fully God, who can save the world.

12﻿Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

*Paragraph F. The general, human perspective is rooted in the idea of the goodness of humanity, number one, and number two, and that we are positioned to fix the things that are wrong. That is essentially the human perspective of humanity in general, is that humanity is good and that the things that are wrong, we are positioned to fix them. So therein lies the confidence in our ability to get us out of the mess that we’re in.*

*But, beloved, this is not consistent with the gospel. The gospel has a different story to tell. It tells us that has humans we have zero ability to save ourselves. We have no ability to save ourselves at all, number one, and number two, our assessment of the human condition is deeply flawed. I’m going to say this again. We have no ability to save ourselves, and our assessment of the human race, I’m talking about humanity in general, the general assessment of humanity, about humanity, is deeply flawed, but some of that assessment has begun to creep into the body of Christ, so we have a therapeutic gospel.*

*Thirdly, our narrative about the eternal destiny of the wicked is off. So, we have no ability to save ourselves. Our assessment about the human condition is off, and our narrative about the eternal destiny of the wicked is complexly off. The lake of fire is very real. Eternal punishment is very real, and people can use all kinds of clever terms and it’s not even worthy of repeating what these terms are. The bottom line is that, again, that if we are born-again tonight because of the gospel, before we met Christ the road that we were on was not a good road. Hell is real. Eternal punishment is real.*

*Again, it conflicts with all kinds of thoughts and ideas about how we think, again, about the nature and character of God, which is why I said earlier that this other gospel, it attacks two fundamental things. It attacks the nature of God as the righteous Judge and it attacks the nature of humanity as profoundly sinful, suggesting that we’re not sinful, we’re broken and we do messed up stuff, and we just need to get that brokenness dealt with, and that this idea of God being a righteous Judge is completely and entirely antiquated, and we’re having these discussions and these debates within the body of Christ right now.*

*So, Jesus, He’s talking to His disciples, and we’ll look at that in just a few moments, in* ***John 15:18-27****, He says, “Look, let me tell you something about the world that you’re about to be ministers in of the gospel.” He goes, “I’m telling you this because if you don’t grab ahold of this, you will stumble. I’m telling you this so you will not stumble.”*

*The gospel declares there is only one Man, Jesus, who is fully God, who can save the world. The exposure of our wrong narratives, our wrong assessments, and the leaning on our own abilities, it stirs up offense. It stirs up anger, but it also stirs up trouble. It stirs up worry.*

1. the rage of the nations and the reign of sin

18“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. 19… the world hates you. 20“‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you...” (Jn. 15:18-20)

14Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those who had not sinned according to the likeness of the transgression of Adam. (Rom. 5:14)

*Page 3. So what are some of the things that Jesus said in* ***John 15:18-20****? I just want to look at those two verses. But in* ***verse 18****, look what He says. He says, “If the world hates you.” It’s like, Lord, can you kind of soften that term? Just dial it down a little bit. You mean if the world disagrees with you.” He goes, “No.”*

*“Surely You mean if the world doesn’t really appreciate what we have to say?” He goes, “No.”*

*“Really? Oh, what you’re really saying is if the world doesn’t like.” He goes, “No.”*

*He goes, “They’ll hate you.” Like, man. Those are strong words. He goes, “Yeah. I’m telling you this, because if you don’t grab ahold of this, you’re going to trip up.”*

*You’re like, “Okay, well I don’t want to trip up.” He goes, “Okay, good. Then listen! Because if the world hates you, you know that is hated Me.” You’re like, “Woah, woah, wait a minute. What do you mean they hated You? I thought the world wanted Jesus but the church just needs to get it together so the world can get what the world really wants.”*

*The Lord goes, “No. They don’t want Me. You didn’t want me either until I visited you.” You’re like, “Well, that’s true. I forgot about that.” He goes, “I know. That’s part of the problem.”*

*You’re like, “Man.” He goes, “Just remember, they hated Me before they hated you.”* ***Verse 19****, the world hates you.* ***Verse 20****, a servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. What a statement. Again, He’s not just talking about what they will do. Yes, there is a significant escalation of this that will take place at the end of the age, but, beloved, this is the condition of the world today, and such were we before we met Christ.*

*There’s an interesting verse. I want to point out two verses.* ***Romans 5:14****, Paul says this, and then we’ll look at one more. He says, “Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses.” An interesting verse. He says death reigned, or sin reigned from Adam to Moses. One of the things that Paul is saying is that one of the primary messages of the book of* ***Genesis****, because that is Adam, to Moses, which is the book of* ***Exodus****, he says one of the primary messages of the book of* ***Genesis*** *is to convince us that sin had entered into the world.*

*In fact, in* ***Romans 3:20****, here’s what he says, “For by the law is the knowledge of sin.” What he’s saying there is that the law, what he means, the writings of the law,* ***Genesis****,* ***Exodus****,* ***Leviticus****,* ***Numbers****,* ***Deuteronomy****, he says, “Part of the purpose of these books is to awaken us to the condition of the human race that sin had entered into the world. It didn’t say from Adam to Moses, brokenness reigned. He didn’t say from Adam to Moses there was woundedness. Now, undoubtedly there was woundedness. There are passages you can read that’s like, “Wow. Ouch. That must have really hurt,” but that’s not the emphasis that Paul makes. He says, “No, death reigned.” The theme of sin. He said the purpose of the Law,* ***Romans 3:20****, was to make us aware of the fact that there is a problem, and it’s the problem of sin.*

* 1. Throughout history, the nations have been enraged at God and His leadership. This rage will reach apocalyptic heights and the love of darkness in humans will fully manifest. The Father loves the world with great longing, so much so He sent Jesus to become a Man and die for the world and so allow those who respond to the gospel to come into deep relationship and partnership with the Trinity. Yet, He is filled with deep displeasure and anger daily towards the wicked.

11God is a just judge, and God is angry with the wicked every day. (Ps. 7:11)

16For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten ﻿Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (Jn. 3:16)

*Paragraph A. Throughout history the nations have been enraged at God’s leadership. Now, this rage or this anger or this rebellion that’s deep-seated, it will reach apocalyptic heights, and the love of darkness in humans will be fully manifest. What Jesus says in* ***John 3:19****, He says men love darkness, He goes, “The scripture tells us that before the Lord returns it will be fully manifest.”*

*Beloved, it’s happening today. Now, some of you are a little younger to appreciate the perspective, but there are some more experienced individuals in this room. That’s my politically correct way of saying older, where there are things talked about today, I’d never thought they would have talked about these things thirty years ago, and not only are they talked about, they can talk about them for hours without repeating themselves. I’m going, where did this thinking come from? What is happening? They can actually make sense of nonsense. No, it’s the craziest thing, and I look back at the scripture and I’m like, wow. Sin really entered into the world. The love of darkness is real, and it’s only going to be allowed to come into its fullest expression before the Lord returns. It’s a serious matter.*

*The Father loves the world, however. He loves the world with great longing. Great desire. You know, one of my favorite chapters is* ***Psalm 2****. It says, “Why do the nations rage? Why are the nations filled with such anger and rebellion and hatred towards God? The nations?” And I can never get over the fact that the nations are enraged against God,* ***Psalm 2:1****, and in* ***Psalm 2:8*** *the Father says to His Son, “Son, ask Me to give You these people as a gift to You.*

*You go, “What is going on over here? Why would the Father’s inheritance to His Son be a people who are enraged against Him? It’s because the Father loves them. He so loved the world and He so sees value in the world in that they were created in the image of God. Image bearers, vessels created to reflect the very character and the nature of God in relationship to one another, and entering into deep relationship with the Trinity. The Father’s sees the value so He has great love for the world.*

*Then those who are born-again before the Lord returns, they become His prize. They become His inheritance, the best gift the Father could ever give Him. The Father loves the world with great longing, with great desire, to the point that He looked His Son in the eye and the Son agreed. He said, “Father, this is great. This is perfect. Yes, I agree.”*

***Revelation 13*** *it says that even before the foundations of the earth the Lamb was slain. In other words, before the world began, God the Father, with all of His knowledge, beloved, He knew that when He created the world this dynamic of sin would enter in, and yet He was compelled by love to create it, to allow it enter in, knowing that it was going to cost Him everything in sending His Son to die for a lost, dying, and sinful world. Oh, He loves the world with great longing.* ***Revelation 1:5****, to Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.*

***Romans 5****, that God demonstrated His love for us that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Now, this is love, John**says, not that we first loved Him, but that He first loved us and He gave Himself as the propitiation, as the price, as the payment for our sins.*

*So, God deeply loves the world, yet He is filled with deep displeasure.* ***Psalm 7:11****, a little, obscure verse. Not the one you put on your refrigerator; pages are probably stuck together right now.* ***Psalm 7:11****, you know what it says? Here’s what it says. You ready for this. God is angry with the wicked every day. And yet,* ***John 3:16*** *and God’s deep displeasure with the world, they actually can coexist.*

* 1. In Jn. 15:18-21, Jesus connects the disciples with the truth prophesied by King David in Psalm 2, which speaks of the rage of the nations against the gospel and their plotting to remove its influence. Psalm 2 is full of paradoxes showing God’s posture towards a resistant world. He is filled with displeasure yet has a plan to give the nations as an inheritance to His Son.

*Paragraph B. In* ***John 15:18-27*** *Jesus connects the disciples with the truth that is prophesied by King David in* ***Psalm 2****. That’s what is happening. In* ***John 15:18-21****, He is connecting the disciples with the truth of* ***Psalm 2****, that the nations will rage against the gospel and they will be plotting to remove the influence of the gospel and the influence of the church.* ***Psalm 2*** *is filled with a very powerful paradox, where we see God’s posture towards a resistant world, His deep displeasure towards them, and yet His plan to give those nations as an inheritance to His Son.*

* 1. The rage of the nations is seen in various ways:
     1. The rage of the nations against Christ as seen in the cross
     2. The rage of the nations against Christ as seen in the persecuted church
     3. The rage of the nations seen in Babylon drunk with the martyrs (Rev. 17)
     4. The rage of the nations through the antichrist against the end-time church (Rev. 13)

*Paragraph C. The rage of the nations is seen in various ways.* ***Acts 4:28-31****, the church, they are in prayer and they quote* ***Psalm 2*** *in connection to the crucifixion of Jesus, so, the rage of the nations, though in* ***Isaiah 53*** *God was directly involved in the crucifixion of Christ, but here the early church tells us that it was the rage of the nations that was involved in it as well. Secondly, the rage of the nations against Christ is also seen in the persecution of the church throughout history, even today. I think the number is 150,000 a year get martyred for the gospel in the earth.*

*Thirdly, the rage of the nations is seen in Babylon. There will come a global increase of this hatred, this rage. John described it that it was so intense that it says that they were drunk with the blood of the martyrs, meaning it was so rampant in the culture that people begin to lose their sense of reality, because of the bloodthirstiness of the culture.*

* 1. Daniel and John both describe the ***plot*** of the nations’ rage as an all-out war against the saints.

21“… the same horn was making war against the saints, and prevailing against them … Shall ﻿persecute ﻿the saints of the Most High, … Then ﻿the saints shall be given into his hand ﻿for a time and times and half a time. (Dan. 7:21-25)

*Fourthly, the rage of the nations seen through the antichrist against the end-time church. The prophet Daniel and the apostle John said it this way, paragraph D. Daniel and John both describe the plot of the nations, the strategizing of the nations, beloved, as an all-out war against the church. I mean, the full manifestation of this rage at the end of the age will be described as an all-out war against the church and against the gospel.*

* 1. The nations’ rage will manifest at the end when government leaders ratify legislation seeking, through strategic state sponsored violence (Rev. 17:6), to destroy the Church in the earth.

﻿1Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a ﻿vain thing? 2The kings of the earth set themselves, And the ﻿rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and against His ﻿Anointed. (Ps. 2:1-2)

7It was granted to him ﻿to make war with the saints and to overcome them. (Rev. 13:7)

*Paragraph E. The nations’ rage will manifest at the end when government leaders ratify legislation seeking, through strategic state-sponsored violence, to destroy the church.* ***John 16:1****, Jesus says this, “I’m telling you this so that you don’t trip up.”*

1. SO we will not stumble

1“These things I have spoken to you, that you ﻿should not be made to stumble. (Jn. 16:1)

*Let’s go to page 4. I’m also done so then you can go get a burger or something. This makes me, I’m uncomfortable saying these things. No, I really am. I was like, “Agh!” This is unsettling. My stomach hurts. No, for real. I’m like, “Agh! Lord, really?” He’s like, “Yeah.” I’m like, “Man.”*

*I was getting ready for this, I’m looking at this and I’m going, “Lord, I don’t know.” He goes, “No, if you don’t say these things people will stumble.”*

*“Yeah, I know, but…agh.”*

* 1. Jesus wants us to know the true condition of the world so that we can relate with unbelievers properly as a loving witness, as well as properly understanding and interpreting what is happening around us in the culture of our country as well as the nations of the earth.

26“But when the Helper comes, whom I shall send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify of Me. 27And you also will bear witness… (Jn. 15:26-27)

*Okay. Paragraph A. Jesus wants us to know the true condition of the world so that we can relate, number one, properly to unbelievers as a loving witness. He wants us to know the true condition of the world so that we can relate with the world as a loving witness. By the way, don’t go to your…don’t get on the phone and call your unbelieving friends and family and say, “Do you know you’re a bunch of God haters?” Don’t do that. This is for our understanding so we know what it is that we’re dealing with, so we know how to, number one, relate properly in love with an unbelieving world, and number two, so that we can understand and properly interpret the things that are happening around us in the culture. The very fact that we are shocked at the things that are happening in the culture is a reflection that we have not bought into the Lord’s assessment of the world.*

*So, we go, if we can just get the right guy in office, which, I’m all for that, but if we can just…it’s one thing to get the right guy in office so you can bring some restraint. It’s a whole other thing to get the right guy in office thinking it’s going to remove all of this mess. It is not going to remove it.*

* 1. In Jn. 15:18-21, Jesus is emphasizing something significantly underemphasized which is the condition of depravity in the unbelieving world. If we are not careful, a slow but growing perception will take root. It is the perception that suggests that unbelievers want Jesus and if we would only just package our messaging rightly, they will respond.

*Paragraph B. Again, in* ***John 15:18-21****, Jesus is emphasizing something that is significantly underemphasized, which, again, is the condition of the depravity of the unbelieving world. Beloved, if we are not careful, a slow but growing perception will take root. Here it is. It is a perception that suggests that unbelievers want Jesus if we would only package the thing just right.*

* 1. Gandhi famously said, ***“I like your Christ but not your Christianity***.” Ghandi didn't like Christ either or he would have responded to Jesus' leadership, which to our knowledge he did not.

*For years I’ve heard this said, and it’s a famous quote from Gandhi, he said, “I like your Christ but not your Christianity.” This quote was often used to make the point about how messed up the church is.*

* 1. The church needs significant adjustment, and the Lord wants an accurate witness of the truth both in message and in life. However, this belief that Christianity in general is the problem has created an implied belief that people "want" Jesus but the witness is the problem.
  2. It is true, the witness needs adjusting; it is also true that the resistance towards Christ is due to the independent rebellion of the humanity.

10He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and ﻿the world did not know Him. 11 He came to His ﻿own, and His ﻿own did not receive Him. (Jn. 1:10-11)

*Granted, we’re deeply flawed and there’s a lot that the Lord wants to do and is going to do with His church to become that effective witness that we’re called to be, but here’s the stink of it all. Jesus seems to say that the more effective the witness, it is actually going to manifest their hatred, and in the way of thinking, the suggestion is if the witness is effective then we’ll win the whole world, and that’s not true. Yes, there’s coming in a great harvest. There’s coming a great, end-time revival. The prophets make it very clear,* ***Joel*** *in particular. There’s coming an outpouring of the Holy Spirit like never before in the generation in which the Lord returns, in the midst of a significant, eschatological hostility and rage that will manifest in the nations, and yet there’s this perception that suggests that unbelievers want Jesus, and if we’re not careful, we’re going to grab ahold of that perception, meaning, that if we just package it just right, they will come in.*

*The fact is, Gandhi didn’t like Christ or he would have responded to Christ. Maybe he did and we don’t know. Ultimately, we don’t know, but there’s no record in history that says that he followed Jesus whom he claimed to like.*

*Yes, again, the church needs significant adjustments, and the Lord wants an accurate witness of truth, both in message and in life. However, this belief that Christianity is, in general, the problem, has created an implied belief that people want Jesus, and John said this in* ***John 1:10-11****, he says, “He was in the world and the world was made through Him and the world did not know Him. He came to His own and His own did not receive Him.”*

*To identify the world through the lens of brokenness instead of deeply sinful will produce a friendship with the world that is going to further hinder and dilute the gospel witness. By friendship with the world, I don't mean relational. The only way that we can be a witness and sharing the gospel is by being in relationship with those who don’t know the Lord. I’m not talking about being in a relationship with them in and being kind and loving and considerate and all the things that we are to be as Christians. I'm not talking about that. Friendship with the world is referring to agreeing with their value system.*

* 1. To identify the world primarily through the lens of brokenness instead of deeply sinful will produce a friendship with the world that is further hindering and diluting the gospel witness. This friendship is an embracing of the world’s value system concerning the human condition.

4Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. (Jas. 4:4)

19If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. (Jn. 15:19)

*So, again, so to primarily identify the world as broken instead of deeply sinful is to produce a friendship with the world, is to produce a context of deep agreement with the world, thus hindering and diluting the gospel witness. This friendship is embracing the world’s value system concerning the human condition, and* ***James*** *said that friendship with the world or agreement with the world system, he says is enmity with God.*

*I mean look at that. Isn’t that interesting? He goes, “If you are friends with them then you are in opposition to Me, because they are in opposition to Me.”* ***John 15:19****, Jesus said something very intense. He goes, “If you were of the world the world would love it own.” It's like, man that's unsettling. Let’s have the worship team come up.*

* 1. The seeker sensitive messaging and a like it are setting believers up to stumble greatly when faced with the hatred of the culture in the earth. A ***wrong message*** of the condition of the unbelieving world combined with a ***“therapeutic gospel”*** will cause many to endear themselves more to the world wanting to win them over, but it is a slippery slope of apostasy.

4For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it! (2 Cor. 11:4)

*The seeker sensitive messaging and the like are setting up believers to stumble greatly when faced with the hatred of the culture of the earth. A wrong message the condition of the unbelieving world combined with a therapeutic gospel will cause many to give themselves and to endear themselves to the world more, wanting to win them over, but it will be a slippery slope to apostasy.*

*Again, this wrong message, this therapeutic gospel, it will cause many to endear themselves to the world, because, what happens is, you present Jesus, they get mad, and then the conclusion is, “Oh, I must be wrong in what I said. I’ve got to continue to adjust my witness and my message until they are angry no more, because, after all, they want Jesus. My message is just messed up.”*

*That’s why Jesus says we’ve got to be clear about the condition of the world. He goes, “I’ve told you these things,”* ***John 16:1****, “that you may not stumble.”*

*Father, Lord, we ask You that You would rest on our hearts, on our minds. Lord, give us wisdom. Give us insight. Father, return us to the simplicity of Christ, Christ revealed in us, and the simplicity of the authority of Your word.*

*I just want you to stand for a moment. I don’t want to embarrass anyone, I just want to say something and then, if this is true for you, I’d ask you to talk to a friend, talk to one of the leaders in our midst, but if there’s anyone here, you go, “You know what? I signed up for something completely different. I did not sign up for this. I did not sign up for the gospel like this. Ouch. I need to sign up for the gospel. I need to be born-again.”*

*If you find yourself in that situation, talk to your friend, talk to your pastor, core leader, director, whatever, and say, “Hey, I need to know the Lord, because I signed up…I didn’t come to the Lord on the basis of repentance and the receiving of the finished work of the cross and His shed blood because of my sin.” Beloved, that’s the only way into the kingdom is by the repentance, the acknowledgement of our sin, and the receiving, again, of the finished work of the cross, believing in all of our hearts that Christ was raised from the dead, and resting our hearts our lives in this grace to follow Him all of our days as our Lord and Savior.*

*So, Father, if there’s anyone here, I ask You, Lord for just a conviction of the Spirit to touch our heart, for You so loved this one and that one so dearly.*

*There are others of you, you know that you have a calling to be an evangelist, a preacher of the gospel. If that’s you and you’d like to receive prayer, I just want to invite you to come to the front. I’m talking about evangelists. An* ***Ephesians 4*** *evangelist like Philip. Let’s just continue to wait on the Lord for a minute.*

*Some of you are sensing just a, just a spirit of burning that’s on you. You may be feeling it in your heart or just in your spirit. It says,* ***Ezekiel****, that he went forth in the heat of the Spirit. I believe that the Lords wants to…some of those are being touched by the Spirit in that way to get prayed for.*