

Torrey 1998 What Motivates you? [Wednesday]

By Ron Mehl

Jim and Mary Kay:

1 Samuel 17, says. It's not by sword or by spirit, but by the power of the Lord, for the battle is ours. Battle belongs to the Lord. [singing 00:00:54] . I wanted to do a hymn for you this morning. I work at a church that is largely made up of people who did not grow up going to church. And I want them to learn some of these great hymns, but they just don't dig the music. And so we have to mess with it a little bit. I hope this won't offend anybody, but this is come Christians join to sing. [singing 00:02:45] Alright, you guys did great.

Thank you, Father, for your goodness to us daily, your grace and your mercy, which come to us with great abundance and great frequency. We give you thanks this week for the privilege of going deeper in your word, of studying the truths from your scriptures, the way in which they relate to our lives. We pray that your spirit would be at work in our lives and that we would give your spirit great freedom to work and move both in us individually and corporately as we learn together. Illumine our hearts, increase the understandings of our minds. We pray so that we might live out your will for our lives each day with increasing regularity and with increasing frequency, greater conformity to the image of your son. We pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Ron Hafer:

Thank you. Scripture says Wherewithal, a young man or woman cleanse their way by taking heed, according to your word. With my whole heart have I sought thee. Oh, let me not wonder

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from thy commandments that word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against thee.

During my years at Biola? Whenever we have a chance to be interviewed by anybody regarding Tory conference, it's a joy to be able to say that the direction has always been the same. The idea is the clear teaching and application of the word of God. So thank God for a place where we can come and the time can be set aside, where our hearts can be refreshed. And the spirit of God can speak, and he can actually changes and make us the kind of men and women that he would have us to be to be. We uh, in a moment, I'll have a chance to introduce Ron Mehl from Beaverton, Oregon, but whoo, I knew. But before that, I want you to get a chance to meet briefly this morning, although the next hour he'll be opening the word of God. But Dr. Gordon Kirk is here. And I thought it would be nice not only to get a chance for you to to meet him, but to hear a little bit about the direction of his elective. Each of the three speakers will be doing that so that you'll know what they'll be doing, doing during the two o'clock time when you elect. And before he comes, let me say a couple of corrective things regarding the program. One with Jim and Mary Kay Altay. Sure, they will be doing a worship and music seminar this afternoon. It will be at 2:00. It will not be in Mayer's Auditorium. It will be in room 122 in Crowell. And all you'll have to do is go in the music building and they'll point you the way. So the same time, the same people, a different venue, and we'll be there. They will kill the frog. I don't like the idea. Alistair Begg said of the pick and frog talk. I'm as good as the frog, any day. And but nonetheless, then they Altay's or ivory and brass will be with us all day and again this evening for a mini concert before Alistair Begg opens the word. Now, Gordon Kirk, please come and let us welcome you back and say a word about your elective.

Kirk:

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Thanks, Ron, and it's a unique time to be back here, 31 years ago, I came to Biola as a student and sat in the bleachers and a part of the Torrey conference in those several years as I graduated from Biola. And then I had the privilege of being your 10 years as a faculty member and part of the biblical studies department. So I stand before you with a great sense of humility and a unique sense of honor. Just quickly, the themes for my focus on growing deep in the love of Jesus would be the mornings. We're going to look at the attributes of God. We're going to focus on some of what God has said to be true about himself so that we can gain more confidence and more understanding. And I hope a real sense of new stability and what God says to be true about himself. The afternoon we want to apply that. And I've chosen, as I've prayed through this, to focus on how we talk to each other, how we communicate with each other. And we're going to focus very clearly on some ways in which we can show love in relationships. It's my personal conviction that the number one issue we struggle with, whether it's a guy or gal relationship or husband or wife or family issues are on the job or, you know, with your roommates, whatever it may be is, you know, how do we communicate with each other? And so we'll take some time to look, especially in the Book of Proverbs and see what it says regarding ways in which we can show love, grow deep and love in relationship to how we speak to each other.

Ron Hafer:

All right

Kirk:

All right.

Ron Hafer:

That's good. I like it.

Kirk:

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Thanks.

Ron Hafer:

Thank you.

[Applause]

Ron Hafer:

Thank you. Isn't this a warm place only at Biola are you applauded for an announcement? This is a terrific. Gordon. Gordon is a good example of those who have faithfully persevered. And you some of you would be sitting there and thinking, I think one day I would like to be teaching the word of God in front of other people. And lo and behold, here he is. And it's so delightful to have you back during his actually during his teaching days, student days, even before he began to teach for that ten year block, he was very popular. Prof. Gordon will be having outlines and those outlines will be available for those that would like them. All you have to do is come to the chaplain's office. We call it chaplain and Student Ministries Office, and there will be a sign up sheet. You don't have to say anything more than just your name, because once we know at the end of the conference how many outlines individuals would like, we'll turn that in the [inaudible 00:10:51] center. We'll [inaudible 00:10:53] them. And sometime next week, probably Tuesday or Wednesday, those will be available.

Let me take the opportunity now to introduce Dr. Ron Mehl. Then we'll worship a moment or two more. But before he comes and opens the word of God. With the exception of 600 plus freshmen and visitors, many of the students have already met Ron Mehl. We do kind of an evaluation process, probably not as thorough as we're like we'd like, and we're still looking for a good instrument to do that. But I do know this after Spiritual Renewal Week last year, the

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overwhelming response was, thank you for bringing Ron Mehl from Beaverton, Oregon, and have this guy back. So we by popular demand, this guy is back.

He has been pastoring for 24 years, the same church in Beaverton, Oregon, married to the same woman for longer than that, two sons and a daughter. He has written a number of books. The thing I think that grabbed my heart the quickest when I read the bio sketch was that he's all, although he's written a number of award winning books. There's there are two books that were written only for his two sons, and they were life experiences, things that he's learned that he gave only for their eyes only to read concerning the Christian life and how to grow. And as a dad that really impressed me and impressed in my heart, we thank God that the Lord continues to strengthen him. He is a survivor of cancer. He teaches the word of God literally all over the United States, but sticks with the stuff in Beaverton, Oregon. And we're glad that they released him on occasion to come and open the word of God here. We'll worship a few more moments. Your hearts will be warmed and pumped and primed and ready to go. And then without further ado, Ron Mehl will open the word thank you to Jim and Mary Kay. Let's worship again. And as we do so, let's prepare our hearts for the clear teaching and application of his holy word.

Jim and Mary Kay:

Pslam 1:39, says, oh, God, you have searched me and you know me, you know, when I sit and when I rise, you perceive my thoughts from afar, you know, am I going out in my lying down. You are familiar with all my ways before a word is on my tongue. You know it completely, oh, Lord. This is not all that good a news for me that God knows everything about me. And so I thought as we come together to worship this morning, take a few silent moments and and get prayed up again. Just confess your sins to the Lord silently. [singing 00:13:50] we know that

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God knows everything, and we also know that he can do anything, if there was anything that he couldn't do, that he would not be all powerful, omnipotent. And I think of Jeremiah 27. Listen, this is what the Lord God Almighty, the God of Israel says. Tell this to your masters. With my great power in my outstretched arm, I made the people of the earth and its animals and everything that is on it. And I give it to anyone who I please. I want you to think of the areas in your life where you feel like you're pretty much out of control. And I want you to remember again that there is nothing that God cannot do. He is creator. He made everything omnipotent, completely powerful. [singing 00:17:03] If God knows everything and if he can do anything, then we call that sovereignty, there's nothing outside his control. This is the attribute by which he completely controls the universe. He knows everything that's going on. He can do anything he wants. And so he is in complete and utter control. And it's it's important for me when I come to God to acknowledge his power, to acknowledge his control, and that I try as I might I'm not going to be able to mess up his eternal plan for the world. And I take comfort in that. And yet I also fling myself on on his sovereignty and try to try and be a part of his plan. And so I say, thank you, Lord, and I pray. In fact, let's pray together who's higher than the highest Lord? Who's mightier than the almighty one? Who is older than the eternal one? Who knows more than the old wise God? Who has more authority than the all-powerful? Who understands more than they otherwise God would appreciate this morning, and we give ourselves to your sovereignty and your complete control? [singing 00:20:30] Lord, we do thank you that you have given us your Holy Spirit so that we can know you and that we can hear and understand your words. Speak to us now, Lord, we're listening and we want to act in Jesus name. Amen.

Ron Mehl:

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Well, good morning, everybody. How are you? You and I have to tell you, whenever you come to a place you don't know people very well, you get really, really nervous. And I have to say, though, before I even begin this morning, that I think all of you love Ron Hafer, don't you? Pretty much. I mean, but I had I mean, there's some hesitation out there I picked up, but I had a dream the other night and I just I you know, I'm not given to dreams or anything, but it was kind of like a first. But I thought I had to tell you I was sleeping away and I had this incredible dream. And the dream was that I went to heaven. I mean, it's not like that was a great surprise. But I arrived in heaven. And when I walked in, it was, you know, heaven was pretty excited. And I was, too. And I remember the moment I walked in, this angel took me, walked over and brought me into this room, this amazing, incredible room. It was just like a banquet room with lavish food. I mean, there was food everywhere, just piled everywhere in this angel very graciously took me over and sat me down right next to a man. And as I started to eat, this guy just began to just to talk. I mean, just talk, talk, talk, talk, talk. I mean, I couldn't I couldn't even concentrate. It was like just on and on and on and on and on and on and on. And every time I go to grab some, he'd punch me and he'd say this and that. And it was just probably the most obnoxious I mean, what a goofball is, what he was. And I'm sitting there thinking, this is, you know, if this is heaven, this is going to be a long haul. And by this is not a biblical illustration, by the way. And as I go on, you'll see. But so I'm sitting there. I'm thinking this just this is unbelievable how the relationship with this guy. And at that moment, as I'm sitting there, a little disturbed, little troubled, you know, all this food, I can't even eat, the guy when I couldn't even couldn't even think, let alone eat. And at that moment, Ron Hafer walked in, which all of heaven shocked at that. [audience laughs]

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And when he came in when he came in immediately, immediately, this angel ushered him all the way down to the end of the table and sat him down right next to Miss America. And I thought, this is not right. This is not right. I'm nicer. I'm prettier. I mean, I've done more. I'm think I'm far nicer and greater than he. And I'm sitting next to this absolute jerk. And he, who is the lesser person that he is, is way down there at the end sitting with Miss America. How in the world can this be? And so I couldn't take any more in this angel came by and so I grabbed the robe and I, I, I said, you know, these are new. And I was going to ask, but they said, well, you want to know why you're here and. Yes. And I said, well, you're dead. And I said, I figured that out and you're in heaven.

And and this food, all this food has been prepared for you because of all the wonderful things you've done for God. I mean, your faithfulness, your commitment, your love, and you prepared all this food and and being the nice person that I am, I couldn't bring myself I couldn't bring myself to say, what about this guy here next to me? I mean, this is ridiculous. I, I can't even get a word in edgewise. He just talk, talk, talk, talk, talk. And so being the nice person, I just kind of went like this to Angel, as if to point to what's with this guy.

And the angel said, well, you've done wonderful things. You've done amazing things. We love you up here very, very much. But there are a few things you didn't do when God asked you to do them. And this is just the beginning of some of the punishment. This is not a biblical illustration. This is the beginning of some of the punishment that you're going to go through while you're up here. And I'm thinking this this isn't right, because now I'm feeling worse, because now I'm next to this guy. I can't concentrate or think, but I'm thinking about dear Brother Hafer down at the

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end of the table. And so immediately when he said that, I jerked my head and I looked straight down at the end of the table and there was round the corner said, Oh, you want to know what that is, Miss America. You want to know why, why he's sitting next to her. I said, I really do. And the angel said How we choose to punish Miss America is our business [Audience laughs]. And I, I, I just I just love it, you know, I suppose that is a little bit unfair, but coming here, I always feel like I'm sitting in the best seat and enjoying the best time. I'm supposed to tell you just a moment about my elect. What the thing I love about this conference, as all of you do, is that the commitment of the faculty and staff here is not just that we'd set aside and be religious about the Bible, gather round it and let's just study the word about, you know, for three or four days. Well, that is a commitment and a desire of everyone here. The truth is, we don't just want to study the Bible. We want the Bible to study us. We want the word of God to study you and me to look into my life and your life.

And and that's why just this afternoon, I'm going to talk about a person who, when I get to heaven, is my favorite person in the whole wide world. There's no one quite like him. When I get to heaven, I want to I want to talk to Peter first. And the reason I do is because he's given me so much hope and it made me feel so good that if God could use him, then, you know, there's a good chance for me. And while I plan to talk about those things that that Peter went through, I'm most amazed that while Peter did everything to cause the Lord more heartburn than anybody on the planet, the Lord loved him, was committed to him, and in the end, he was the one who represented the disciples. He was the one who stood on the day of Pentecost. He's the one that represented the Lord in so many things. And while there's hope for all of us, I think the wonderful thing is the people that the Lord uses.

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This morning, I'd like you to take your Bible if you have one, and turn to the Book of Exodus, would you? To Exodus and Chapter 19, to the Book of Exodus and Chapter 19. Thank you for bringing your Bible. I'm going to ask you to look at a couple of verses with me this morning, because I, I want to talk about a subject that probably you're now going to look to the person and say, oh, boy, this ought to be an exciting session that I'd like to talk to you this morning about about the Ten Commandments. I say, well, now that's that's got to be real edifying. In fact, when I first approached this, I thought, who wants to hear about the Ten Commandments?

Who in there, especially in these days where people believe that they're invaluable, they're of no value. They're certainly, in my mind, timeless. But there are many people that suggest that it's far from that. And here in Exodus, Chapter 19, I'd like you to see something about what I think what I'm going to do, when I'm done, I'd be, you, I'd certainly be y love for you to to think it through. But in my mind, I'm convinced that the Ten Commandments is one of the greatest pieces of literature and the love of God, that there is anywhere that can be found. Some people say, no, they're legalistic, they're demanding, they're hard. It's God saying you better do this. If you don't do this, the relationship's over. And as I approach this, I in my mind, I realized I realized that everything God has ever done or ever said always had your best interest in mind, in mind. Everything that he did. Jesus came. I didn't come to receive. I came to give. I didn't come to administer until I came to minister.

So I thought, well, how in the world then can the Ten Commandments be this incredible hard like chains of legalism that this is the way it's going to be and you better get it together. And if you don't get it together, then it's going to be over. And I thought that just isn't the way God

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thinks, even though I certainly think they are commands. And so with that in mind, I want you to look here to Exodus Chapter 19 and just see what I discovered. And I hope you will agree with me about this morning's morning session, about these Ten Commandments in light of the fact that the Lord says in Exodus chapter 19, by the way, and I remember this Moses, I remember, went up to the mountain, up, down, up, down, up, down, up, down. And finally the Lord said, by the way, go down. I want you to I want to get down, give them these Ten Commandments. But don't go down. Don't go down and give them. This is a little bit of a paraphrase. Don't go down and give them the Ten Commandments. Don't go down and say, do this. You better do this until you do this. And the Lord said God said Moses in verse four of chapter 19. It said, You have seen what I did under the Egyptians and how I bear them on eagle's wings and brought you under myself. Now, therefore, if you obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all, people for all the Earth is mine and you shall be under me. A kingdom of priests, holy nation. These are the words with thou shalt speak under the children of Israel. So when I read that, I thought, now that's real interesting. I had never really looked at that before. And I thought, now it's interesting that God would say Moses. Now before you go down and give them the Ten Commandments, don't go down and say, give them, you know, don't harshly demanding commandingly, say, here's ten things, you better do it.

He said I would you go down and tell him this verse. Would you go down and tell them, Moses, before you even get close to saying that you go down and you tell them that I bore them on Eagle's wings and I thought and I wasn't sure what that meant. So I looked up and one of my anointed sources and Ranger Rick magazine and and I found out how an eagle, how an eagle, how a mom, an eagle works with her little ones and here's what she does. It's quite amazing that

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the nest of an eagle can be twenty feet deep, eight feet wide. I mean, it's quite a fortress, but somewhere along the line, after they're born, she decides that now's the time for them to learn to fly. And she takes them out of the nest and she flies up as high as she can go. When she gets up as high as she can go, then she drops him. And as these drop, he's falling now. He's falling so fast, he sees the ground coming up. He's there's no way in the world he's going to make it. There's no way in the world to survive. Trying to fly, can't fly. He doesn't know what to do. He's never flown, never been in the air like this in his life. And now the ground is coming up fast. His little heart is about ready to burst out of his chest. And the very last second, this mama eagle watches him all the way down. The last second she swoops down and she picks him up and now he's saved. And, boy, I'm so thankful. And then she does what? She flies back up as high as she can go and she drops him again and he learns to fly. So what was the Lord saying and what was God saying? Here's what I'm convinced he was saying. What God was saying was, Moses, don't give them these Ten Commandments until first you tell them that I bore them on Eagles wings. You read Exodus Chapter 1 to 19 and you're reading about the history of Israel and what did God do? What he's saying is, do you remember when you didn't have any water and I provided water for you where there wasn't any? Do you remember when you didn't have any food? And I came and I provided manna for you every single day. That's what he's saying, Moses. You tell them, you remind them when they came to the Red Sea, they were dead. There was no hope. There was no chance. There was no way. And I opened up and I made a way for them. You go down and tell them that I bore them on Eagle's wings, that I was there to help them and to see them through. With that in mind, I thought, well, you know something? It's interesting that the context of the Ten Commandments is God's great love. So is God saying, OK, Moses, tell them how good I was, how much I loved him, how much I cared for them, what a treasure they were to me.

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And I was always there to help them tell them everything's changing. Now the deal's off. It's a new deal now. The New Deal is you better do these ten things. If you don't, the relationship's over. And I thought that's that's not possible. That couldn't be.

And so what what I want to do this morning, just for a few minutes, is I would like to walk through now. Not all of them don't get nervous, just a couple of the Ten Commandments, because I believe with all of my heart more now than ever in all of my life, that the reason the Lord gave them was this. He said, I've been so concerned about your past. I've been so concerned about where you've been, about what you've been through, about the things that you faced. And listen what God is saying, Moses, you go down and tell them these ten things will keep them from destroying their life and destroying the lives of everybody around them. These ten things are my great, great concern with passion about their future. And these ten things will keep them from anything less than God's best and blessing in their heart, in life.

And so just for a few minutes, could we just look at a couple? I think when you turn to Exodus Chapter 20, as you move along, you will see very, very quickly. And I think maybe just. Well, I'm only going to pick out a couple here. Let me just. Have you noticed that the Lord said thou shalt have no other gods before me? Well, of course, you know what some people say. Here's what some people say. Well, here's what God's saying. I want to be number one. I'm going to be number one. You better put me first. You don't put me first. And that's it. I, I think God wants to be first, don't you? I think he wants to be number one. I don't have any doubt that he does, but I will never be convinced of what he's saying is good. I'm to tell him I want to be number one. I'm a little bit insecure up here and there's been a lot of giving, not a reciprocal sense of love coming

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my direction just going I'm telling this the way it's going to be that better person love me more than the world. I thought that just can't be. And as I look through, especially in regards to the context of the Ten Commandments, that the Lord bore them. If God is concerned about the future, what did he mean when he said, you, you you shouldn't another God?

Let me illustrate it for you. I remember the article in Playboy magazine, which I read in Christianity today. I did. And just in case you're wondering, and it said it's an article about Ernest Hemingway because, you know, of course, there are people say you don't have to put God first. You don't have to put him first. You can you can you can you can casually somehow commit your life when you want to when it's convenient to put him first. There are people who say, I don't put the Lord first and look at my life, look at the condition, look where I am. I have more than you have. I'm enjoying life. I have everything you want to imagine. And that's why this article about Hemingway was very interesting. Listen to it would you? Ernest Hemingway had done everything, traveled everywhere, fought in revolutions, toppled women and was living proof that you can cheat so-called sin and get away with it. He lived life to the very hilt, had everything you could imagine or want. Ten years to the very day, Mr. Hemingway took a gun to his head and blew his brains out. You know why? Because he just couldn't stand this life that they said now was a life of such joy and bliss and blessing.

You you you just take a little bit of history of Elvis Presley, of Janis Joplin, of Jimi Hendrix, of John Belushi. Anybody you want to name. These are people. These are people that, by the world standards, had everything in the world. But these people were burned out. And the reason they were burned out is because God knows that the gods of this world will do what the gods of this

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world will convince you. Follow us, live our way, do what we say, and in the end, you'll have joy and blessing in your life. It's not true. In fact, a year ago I told you my favorite commercial. Just it's so fitting.

Let me just tell you, the guy standing by side of the road, fresh wouldn't have heard it. But there's there's the Bugle Boy Jeans commercial. You've seen it. There's this guy. Stand by the side of the road. He's tall, he's handsome, he's tan. His shirt's open. He's sweating. He's kind of in the desert and he's standing by the side of the road. He's wearing bugle boy jeans. And while he's standing there, he knows because these jeans are on it, no question he's going to get a ride. This very it's a national commercial. You've all seen it probably at one time or not. And this beautiful woman, beautiful girl comes flying down the road, a red Ferrari, I think. And she gets right when she gets right to him. He's standing there now looking just as cool as can be and which she gets right to him. He knows she's going to stop. She goes right by. She goes right by, she gets down to the end of the row, when she gets down to the end of the road about a quarter mile, it dawns on her. She stops, she puts it in reverse, dirt flying. She backs up, she gets right to him. She hits the window, the window goes down, he comes over. He you know, he he's he's ready to go to heaven. You know, he he's leaning in the car and she looks at him and she says, are those bugle boy jeans? And he says, well, yes, they are. And with that, she hit the button, the window went up. She stomped on and left him standing there. I think I think the world did you and I a great favor, because I think what the world just taught you and I was this you buy her stuff, you wear our stuff, you dance or dance. And when you're done giving us everything that will leave you strip standing by the side of the road with absolutely nothing.

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Did God know that? Absolutely. Was he saying, I want to be number one? Yes. Was he saying I want to be first? Of course he was. But everything he says and does is with your interest in mine, in mine, so that he's greatly concerned now about our future as much as he was about our past. And when you look through this wonderful commitment on God's part to say, would you would you put me first, you go the way of the world. You do what they say, and in the end, that's how you'll feel. How in the world did this happen to me?

You want to stray in the life of Charles Manson. Charles Manson maybe is the finest, nicest person you've ever met in your life. And he started his little family. His little was what it was called, a little family, no drugs, no violence, no weapons, nothing. And then all of a sudden things began to evolve. And not only that, drugs, but then they had get guns and knives to protect themselves from one another and others. And this little family deteriorated into something else. When God said to Moses, Moses, I've been so concerned about Israel's past, but would you go and tell them, please, that these things I know how this world works. I know what the gods of this world are like. I know what they'll do. They'll convince you, follow us and do what we say. But in the end, they'll leave you with nothing, wondering what happened. Of course, the Ten Commandments goes on and on. And to prove that all ten of them have to do with his love, frankly, wasn't that difficult for me. I think as well.

When the Lord said, thou shall not make into to the any graven images. Was it Andre Agassi that told all of us that image is everything? Image is nothing. Image is nothing. If you look like this, I mean, you know, now you go to the store, you but you buy rags on purpose, you know, you know, now you buy clothes with holes already in and it costs three times as much. I mean, just

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buy the regular stuff, make your own holes. I mean, it just you save a lot of money. But the world says, no, this is what you should wear.

Listen in Beaverton, Oregon, which is the home of Nike, if Nike is probably a quarter of a mile down the street from the church that I pastor and in Portland, if you don't wear Nike shoes, they'll laugh you out of the building. Sorry for any of you here that they don't have Nike's on. But if a sixth grader comes to school without Nike, they'll laugh him out of the building. Absolutely. No, it's obvious you're not with it. You don't have it.

You know, God knew that the gods of this world wouldn't just want to control my life and convince me, give us what you have and we'll leave you wondering what happened to you. But this world would want to shape us into its image and somehow convinced us that when we're done, we'd be looking exactly the way in our heart, deep in our heart, we really want to be. What God is saying is and there's no one that can bring you to the reality of what you should be and ought to be like me myself. Would you tell them, Moses, that I'm committed to and concerned about the image of their life in every regard? It isn't just in the worship of things, the fetishes of things that you and I carve with our hands. It is as well having to do with how those things affect our life, the image of our life, not just physically coming to pray and kneel at something, but how that affects you and how it affects me.

I think maybe my favorite of all, certainly one of my favorites is, is honoring the Sabbath. I always thought, I don't you know, I mean, let me let me just, you know, help me with this, because I am convinced that one of the reasons the Lord said, I want you to do this, I I want you

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to make sure that you honor the Sabbath. Now, whatever your persuasion is about that day, I frankly, that's not the issue for me.

The real issue is the Lord saying you're not going to be able to do everything without me. I'm very busy up here in heaven. You're going to be really busy down there. We'll talk every single day, I hope. But could we at least make sure that at least once a week that we can just concentrate and spend time with one another? But I think it's more than that, too. I don't think it's him just saying I want to make sure you just spend really one day with a serious concentration.

I think he's talking about the fact that we need rest. And without that sense of resting, my life resting in God, I mean, now so many of you are here planning for your future and people begin to strive and manipulate the scheme because they know where they want to be. So now they commit themselves to doing the work that, you know something. One of the things that you ought to do is make sure you realize that the fastest way for you to become everything that God's purpose for you to be is to rest your life in God.

In fact, when I first went to Pastor, I'm pretty old now. When I first went to pastor, you know, I went down to eat a hamburger at the bowling alley down from the church. And and I noticed that a whole bunch of bowling pins sitting up on a shelf on the way. I said, what what are all those bowling pins up there? And the guy said, oh, they're resting. And I said, they're they're resting. He said, yeah, they're up. They're resting. I said, resting. You've got to be kidding. Said no. He said every once in a while we take them all off, we put them up on the shelf, we'll let him rest because, you know, after they get hit and hit and hit and beat up and beat up, they don't have the

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same life and spark. So we set him up there and get some rest. Then we put on. Yeah, I know. It's hard to believe. Hard for me to believe, too. And then they would bring him back down. They put him back out and they were just as life as much life as you could even begin to imagine. Of course, my wife has bought into this idea. That's everything God has created in this planet has come under the law of the fact that it must rest and the fact that God is the sustainer of everything that he's made and that you and I will never function well unless we come to that place where we realize that my life, my future rests best in the fact that God cares for me.

My wife has bought into this fact. She heard this bizarre idea that if you bought a pair of shoes and wore them, it's better to buy two pair of shoes and alternate them. If you do, then they'll last twice as long. So now she's got a lot of shoes now. I mean, she just, you know, it's she just said that's what they told me. You wear the same pair every every every single day. They just wear out right away.

I suppose that most of you have heard the verse. They the wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. And the thing I love about that is that that the word renew is the word for exchange, which simply means and if you read Isaiah Chapter 40, it says they that wait upon the Lord. And this is in this interesting this is always the case. The Lord said, would you make sure that you wait on me? But then he reminds us of who he is. If you go back to verse 12 of Isaiah chapter 40, for you see the Lord saying that this is who I am, I created things, I made things. I keep things, I watch over things. This is who you're waiting on. And the word to renew means to exchange.

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I've ever been to Nordstrom's before. Have you been to Nordstrom's? They have Nordstrom's down here. Yeah. You know what's bizarre about Nordstrom's? You can wear the same shirt for three years, take it back and say, you know, I just don't like this. And they'll say, oh, no problem. You can wear a pair of shoes for a year and a half wear them out and just, these just don't fit quite right and they just take them. I mean, there's no questions asked. And that's what the Lord said in the Times when you're most weary and most tired, if you'll come to me then then I'll exchange your weakness, your inabilities with the strengths that I have no questions asked. None. Absolutely none. Sure. I'll exchange. I'll give you what it is that you need when you march through and you see the Lord's love for you and me. I find myself over and over again moved by the fact that when you put the Lord first, then it affects everything about your life. It affects your opinions, it affects your attitude, it removes every sense of worry. And by that I simply mean that there's no sense to worry when you know that God is concerned about your life and about your future.

I was surprised a few months ago I was driving a friend's car and when I got in the car, I started talking to me. I mean, I've never been in a car that talk to me. It just said, your lights are on, your lights are on. And it was kind of the lights are on, lights are on and fuel level is low. Fuel level is low. And I you know, it should say you're an idiot, you know, because anybody anybody who didn't know the lights are on, the gas is low. But this car just began to talk. And then they have this little they have this little little red little thing up there on the dash. And that little red thing comes on. And when it comes on, it means there's something horribly wrong. You ought to pull over. And I was driving down the street and as I drove down the street, I noticed a guy there, just a big puff of smoke came out of the back of his car. And when I pulled up next to mine, just

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there's smoke everywhere. And you can tell he slowed down a little bit. But then when I pull up right next to him, there's this red light going on and off. And he started to pull over. But then the smoke stopped and he just kind of pulled back on the road and he carried on. And when I came up next to him, here's the light flashing red on and on and on. And he he never made a decision to even, you know, drive off to the side and even check what was wrong. And as I watched that and for me, at least, I discovered that that you really in the end, all of us discover what worry is.

Worry is for me, at least there's a warning light that I'm not putting God first. Any sense of worry in my life is a suggestion that I don't trust God, that I don't trust him as my father, that I don't trust him as my provider, that when I worry I'd immediately stop and think, Lord, but you said you said, Lord, I could rest in you and you said, Lord, you would provide anything and everything for me. And I don't have to worry, Lord, because I know who you are, because you're a God who loves me. Cares very, very much.

I want to just mention to others real quickly, and with this I'll be done, I, I it's a rather long story, but to honor your parents is something. When I came to this, I wrote about it and and I had never met my dad in my life. I've never met him before. And my wife decided to go and find him just a couple of years ago. Now I'm fifty four years old. Fifty three years old, and having never met him, he left when I was a little tiny baby and because of my family and the history and nobody in the church knew about it. And I passed through the same church not twenty five years last Sunday and but nobody knew. I had never told anybody, but I knew they were going to end up reading about it. And so I, I, I told them I stood there and on that Sunday morning and I, I, I preached about that forgiveness is a choice. And I walk through this whole ordeal about meeting

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my dad, walking into the room and in the same height as me about 6 ft 3" and looked exactly the same. It was just the strangest feeling. And while we stood there, I, I found myself, of course, extremely emotional as I got to meet him and we sat down and it's a long story. But I still remember sitting there and my dad looking at me, who is a tremendous professional athlete, a very gifted man, but an alcoholic, a drunk, an absolute drunk. In fact, when he knew I was coming, he asked my wife, Joyce, would you just hold him off for a couple of months? And he wanted to go into rehab and and make sure that he was somewhat, you know, looking decent when I arrived. And I still remember him looking at me across the table. And and when he looked at me, he said, I know you could never forgive me. And I said, well, then you don't know me. And as we began to talk, we began to talk just about the fact that, you know, the reason the forgiveness is something that's a trait of yours and mine as people of God is because we know how much the Lord has done for us.

And when it comes to honoring parents, listen to us. I have never, ever met. I'm old, you know, just look at me. I'm old. I've never yet never yet. I've never met a young person who does not honor their parents that has ever experienced ongoing blessing. Never. And I pastored a long, long I have never in my life ever, ever been exposed to a young person who doesn't. And I'm not I didn't say honor your parents because they've got it all together. Mind sure didn't. It says honoring them. And in doing that, what happens. But it's really the only thing with promise in these commands that the Lord said, I'm going to do something for you, bless you not only with blessing, but with a long life. And that is why I think when it comes to knowing him, to think about God's heart. Now again, Moses, go down and tell them, you know, I've been so concerned.

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Remind them how concerned I've been about their past. And now you start seeing God saying it's almost as if he's crying out now and saying these things will keep you away.

A lawyer in our church, he said they're close to thirty nine million laws on the books in this nation, all of them to enforce the Ten Commandments. Every one of them would fit under one of the Ten Commandments that works that Lord, you know, at least I have done twelve or thirteen. I mean, you know, ten seems a little ridiculous to me, but ten covers at all. And that is why I think you're the one that maybe has affected me as much as any is thou shalt not kill. I know there's the issues of abortion, of death, of killing and all of that. But I will tell you that one of the things that affected me was that I know the Lord had a lot of things in mind, not the least of which is even the fact that words kill and the things that we say kill.

I remember when I was a kid, I'd always go down to to play football down in the corner. And I was always just one kid named Dennis. And he'd always say, Here comes big ears, Mel. Here comes big ears, Mel. And I had a problem with that anyway, because I thought, you know, it was like Dumbo. I'd put a rubber band around my head when I went to bed and I just, you know, try to hold them back. And I'd walk down the street and he'd say, here come the big ears Mel, big ears Mel. And I remember going home that night. I was pretty sad. I don't know, I was fifth grade or something. And my mom said, what's wrong? And I said, oh, nothing. And she's no, there's something wrong. So I said, Dennis, he just called me Big Ears Mel again, all the time. He just sees me And he started big ears, Mel, big ears, mouth. And my mom looked at me and she said, Son, you remember this. Sticks and stones may break your bones, but words will never hurt you. And my mom was wrong. My mom was wrong. The things that you say, the things that

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we say have an incredible impact on people's lives. It's not only that there's a physical concern of killing, which goes in fact, that is where forgiveness starts in the Ten Commandments is thou shalt not kill, because when forgiveness comes, there's no reason to be hateful and angry. But I found myself realizing that the things that we say for those of you when you get. I'll tell you this, the things that you say to one of the things that bring real health and joy and blessing, the Lord had so much in mind in these things while he did.

I I think that is is moving in illustration I've ever heard is a woman named Lorna. Lorna was not very attractive. Coke bottle glasses, and she had acne and braces. I mean, she was pretty ugly. But the thing about Lorna was that Lorna was 14 years old and had developed a lot faster than all the other girls. I mean, from here down, I mean, she was pretty impressive and she was on her way to school. And as she was on her way to school, of course, there's always the hot shot jock on campus that thinks he's mister everybody. And he's standing on the corner with one of his friends. And as he stands around the corner, she comes walking by and she overhears him as he kind of talks softly, but she heard him as she was walking by. He he said to his friend, he said, boy, you know, put a bag over her head and she'd be an absolute knockout. Now she's sitting in an office with a pastor. You can think about who that is. And she said, my husband could never love me. He could never love me. When she walks in and sits down you if she walked in this room right now, every head would turn. Most impressive and beautiful woman you could even imagine sits down and says, I don't think I could ever be a blessing to my husband. I could ever love me. I just don't think that I can bring any joy to his life. But now, of course, you're looking at a woman who now has contact lenses and now you're looking at a woman who doesn't have acne anymore and she doesn't have braces. She's taken the braces off and her teeth are perfect

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and she's beautiful. Listen. And she'll sit and say, you know, if I just had a bag to put over my head, I bet I could really be attractive to someone.

God, when God says something, listen, God knows what this world does, will do, wants to do and plans to do. And when any person chooses to put someone first other than God, God says, I'll tell you what will happen. Your life will become miserable. You'll discover there's no way in the world you'd ever believe you have a future. There's no way in the world you could ever have a sense of confidence that your life could be of any value. And I suppose I read all of these even in coveting things, you know, why shouldn't you covet what is the Lord say thou shall not covet? Well, he didn't want you to be happy. I don't want you to enjoy anything. Don't want to experience any blessing. I don't want you having those things. That's why he doesn't want you coveting. Why doesn't the Lord want us to covet? Thou shalt not covet. Why is that? You know why? Because God said, listen, haven't I promised you that I'm going to provide for you everything you would ever want? There's nothing you'll ever want or need, but that I can and will provide for you. The gods of this world won't provide. They'll take. They are in really the business of convincing you there's something there. But in the end, it's nothing that really fulfills you and me.

And that is why in conclusion, this morning, I want to tell you a story, because I think it's how do you talk about the Ten Commandments and, you know, how does that affect me? And I think the best way to tell you is this by telling you a simple story, it's a dear old man is very, very, very wealthy. And he loved his wife very much. And she was stricken with cancer. And it really didn't look like there was much hope. And sure enough, she died. He was brokenhearted. This man was

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not only wealthy, but on the most expensive art collection in the world. I mean, he owned Monet and Picasso and Rembrandts. I mean, everything. And while he was extremely wealthy now, he was very discouraged and depressed because his wife, who he loved, was now gone. And he had one son, which was a little bit of encouragement because his boy loved him. But his son didn't really like art that much. But his son took a real liking to his father's art collection. And they began to look at pieces of art and they traveled all over the world and they would purchase some and look at others. And he enjoyed it so much being with his dad. And then this boy, his son was drafted into the service. He went into the service. And this dear old man now is very troubled about that. But of course, he let him go. And it wasn't but about four months in and the dear old man received word that his son had been killed in the war. Now, of course, he just you know, there's no way in the world he thought he would ever make it another day and every minute or another hour. And while he sat down in his chair and sitting there in front of the fireplace, and it was on Christmas Day that there was there was a knock on the door.

You won't believe this story. There's a knock on the door. And he went to the door and they're standing at the door. Was this very tall and a nice looking soldier with his uniform on. And he was holding this big package in his hand. And he said, Sir, he said, sir, I just I wanted you to know that I was your son's best friend. In fact, sir, your boy is the reason I'm alive today. He saved my life and I want to thank you. And he said, I know you ought to know that all your boy ever talked about was you. About traveling everywhere and looking at pieces of art and purchasing them. He not only did he love looking at, but he loved being with you. And that's all he ever talked about was you. And he said, sir, I'm I'm not much of an artist. But he said I I drew this picture and I just I want you to have it. I know it's not very good, but the old man opened it

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up. And sure enough, here's the picture of his son. And when he opens up, he looks. And here now is this pretty good resemblance. It's not the best in the world in the old man says, son, I'm going to put it right up over my fireplace, over above the mantel. And that's what he did. He went in and boy went with him and they move this big Rembrandt out from over the fireplace. And you put this picture of his son. And after the young man left, dear old man sat down in his chair, sat in front of the fireplace, and it wasn't in a matter of weeks. And the old man died himself.

Well, when he died, the moment he died, it was automatic and immediate, that auctioneer's I mean, people were anxiously awaiting. Now, when is there going to be an auction? Because it's the most priceless art collection. You won't believe it is the most priceless art collection in the world. When is it going to be? Finally, they set a date, New York City, and everybody arrived. They sat down kind of like you are, and people sat down with their numbers and they were ready for the auction to begin. And to their surprise, the very first item that was brought up for bid was the picture of this man's son that the soldier had painted.

Well, I mean, people weren't happy. I mean, they were really upset. They said, what is this? I mean, this is ridiculous. We didn't come here for this foolishness. We didn't come here to bid on something. Number one is not even good. But number two, it isn't really why we came. And they began to really speak rather harshly to the auctioneer. And the auctioneer said, no, this must be the first item up for bid. And with that, he said, do I hear any bids? Fifty, one hundred, two hundred, five hundred, thousand, nothing. Not a word, nothing. But just get with it and get on with it. And finally, after a few minutes, one guy who is saying this is ridiculous, a waste of our

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time. We didn't come here for this. A little old man stood up in the back of the room and he held up his hand. He said, Sir. He said, Sir, I knew this man and I knew his boy very well. And he said, you know, I don't have very much money. And he said, I I wondered what could I? Could I bid ten dollars for the picture? The people are saying half give it to him for ten dollars. Let's get it over with. Let's get on to the good stuff. And auctioneer said, well, I guess you can. He said, do I hear fifty, one hundred, two hundred, five hundred, nothing. No bid because, just give it to him. It's ten dollars. Just do it, get it over with. And after a few minutes the auctioneer said ten dollars going once. Ten dollars going twice. Ten dollars sold for ten dollars. And with that he took his gavel and he pounded on the table and he said the auction's over. Well let me just tell you, people weren't happy. I mean, they were really upset and people began to scream. And one guy stood up in the crowd and he looks at the auctioneer. He said, listen, we didn't come for this nonsense. We demand an explanation. And with that, the auctioneer held up the piece of paper and he read, according to the will of the father, whoever takes the son gets it all.

And and when I heard the story, when I heard the story, it best illustrated for me the Ten Commandments, because God said, Moses, please, Moses, come here. Don't go down and give him these ten thing. Don't say this is the way it's going to be. You go down, you first tell him I was always there. I came down to help them. I swooped on. I watched them from Egypt all the way through every day, every day, concerned, burdened for them, providing for them all along the way. Moses, I haven't changed. I love them as much as I ever, ever have. And I'm really concerned about the future. And so, you know what happened in the Old Testament. He said, I saw you on Eagle's wings and you know what he did.

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So he sent Jesus down. And now Jesus came down to do what Jesus came down in the times when I know there's nothing there's no hope for me. No chance for me. When will can I ever do ever becoming the Lord came down, swoop down, said, Son, there's hope for you. There is really a future. I do have plans for your life. Jesus came to do what? To make it possible for me to live a life. To put God first. To say, Lord, you're everything. To me. The image of the world is not in my heart, Lord. I know where that leads. I know where that will take me. I know where the end is. I'll end up standing by the road saying what in the world happened?

And that's the reason, one of the reasons for this Torrey conference, because I'm going to tell you, you kids know each other pretty well. But I tell you, a fifteen, twenty years from now, you're going to look back and you're going to see the ones that put God first and you're going to see the ones that said, Lord, it is your word and your promise. That's everything to me. And the ones that did are the ones in which God will do what constantly swoop down and provide and bless for you and me those things that we need like no one possible.

Let me just tell you this, in conclusion, I, I you know, I'm one of those people that the Lord really feels sorry for. You know, I think he really likes me. But I think deep down inside, I just I think he really thinks, you know, if I don't help this guy, this guy didn't have a chance in the world. You know, I'm not the brightest person. I'm not the most gifted person, the most talented. I'm certainly prettier than Ron, [audience laughs] but I'm not I'm not the most talented person in the world. But you know what I love about God? What I love about God is that when you commit your life to him, you know something? He always makes you look better than you deserve. He always makes a way with there isn't any way. He always does the things that only he

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can do. And that's why he said this. When you take Jesus, you get everything. You not only get a sense of direction, he changes your heart, your life, the things you say, the way you speak, everything about your life. Because the Lord said every day I'm going to come down, I'm going to swoop down and I'm going to make myself available to you to bring righteousness and glory to your life. I want you to just close your Bibles, and I'm going to ask you just to bow your heads with me. And I'd like us just to pray a moment.

Good Lord, I thank you this morning. That Lord, early on, I pray that that Lord will catch your heart for us, the fact, Lord, that you loved us so much that that not only did you come down and help the children of Israel in so many instances and circumstances, and now you sent Jesus down and Lord, you came down to show us the way to live and a path to take and learn, even as we think through the things that you've said. I pray that, Lord, this morning in a very profound way that, Lord, you'll help us to understand what it means to really follow you, not just to follow you, Lord, but to know that day by day as we do, you're going to do things for us that could never happen. Lord, we know in those times of resting, resting in you, you're going to be doing the work we could never do, Lord. And we seized from our labors. We release you to do the things that only you can do. Right. I give you thanks this morning, especially, Lord, that you would have not only made clear to us your love because we know you care for us. But Lord, even now, more and more we see it even as we look at these simple commands that are so profound, necessary and essential. Because, Lord, we live in a world that suggest that it is not important to put you first. We live in a world that suggest that God doesn't need to be that important. We live in a world that says that we can manipulate and scheme our way through the traffic and end up where we want to be. The Lord. You said in the end, along the way, there would be always those

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Lord who we look at their lives and realize that deep down inside how miserable they must have been. Lord, thank you for bringing joy to our lives and thank you for the promise that Lord, you walk with us now day by day into the future, Lord, that is blessed by your hand. We give you thanks and we give you praise in the name of Jesus. We pray. Amen.

[singing 01:07:02]

Speaker 1:

because when you have the son, you have everything, you are dismissed. See you in half an hour. God bless.