

Torrey Conference 1979 Ultimate Lifestyle Session 5

By Tim Timmons

Timmons:

I appreciate the one who supported my habits. I will partake throughout this hour. Okay. A couple of things I like to clear up before we begin. Seems like I clear up the whole first half of discussing and then I got confused with the day before. I mentioned yesterday a concept in one of the classes. If nobody was listening, so I may be clearing up something or causing more confusion. But I mentioned something yesterday that I think it's an important concept I just mentioned in passing. I haven't thought really what I mentioned before, and that is the idea of propaganda versus persuasion. Propaganda versus persuasion. I just made a statement and answered somebody's question and I moved through it. And a couple of people asked me something about it.

Propaganda is moving people to action without proper reflection. Anytime you move somebody to action without proper reflection and move them towards some kind of decision without proper reflection, it's propaganda. And people use propaganda techniques all the time. And Christians are closed out of moving people to make premature decision without full reflection.

I used to do that very well until I realized what I was doing. And it's unethical. And yet most people don't understand why. I know a lot of people. I'm sure some of you have been victims of propaganda in Christian circle, for instance, as you were growing up, maybe you became a believer of a young person and somebody said that there's a great need in Central Africa, and

they say floods and they overwhelm your body right there. And all of a sudden the next thing you know, you're standing down front someplace and you're going to Central Africa. Now, there is a mood there. I was there last year. I know the news is there, okay. And I'm excited for you. If you're going to Central Africa, I think that's wonderful. However, many people hang on to that and feel guilty the rest of their lives if they don't end up in Central Africa and they didn't really make a logical, rational decision, they were moved to make a decision without proper reflection. A lot of people there was one group that there were people went to Northern Africa where it's against the law to talk about price for having literature. And they went to Libya and some of those others, and they got thrown in jail and they got thrown in jail for a long time. And that's not fun here. It is not fun here and it is not fun there.

And as they came out, you know what? The statement was very interesting. They just threw them out that. We were moved by the need and what was there. And we went and went forward on blades and they all got together and they kept hyping us up and hyping us up and there we are. That's propaganda. The closing is moving somebody to action with proper reflection, with proper reflection, appealing to their ethos, the ethical appeal, path off the nation and logical appeal. That's the only way you see anybody persuading anybody in the Bible, you don't see any work to do. Go get them and sign about it wrong. Here we go. Because especially in an audience like this, for me to try to move you to make some kind of whatever, I mean, to even buy my book might be a little bit propaganda there, because I don't know where you are about it, whether you even need my book or not. Now, of course, I believe at all. I can read my book.

Let's move on to something else. Because this is a relationship. My concern that you as Christians tell the story to people that this one is not a religion, it's a relationship with Jesus Christ and Lord. We say that, well. It is a relationship with Jesus Christ. Then we move him into religious activities and doing certain things, certain ways. We put boxes around them. And, you know, the Christians don't do that. We can't rely upon the Bible, and the Lord is related to the Lord and his spirit being born, witness through the Holy Spirit that he's a child of God. And what ought to happen there. We start putting a box around and said, you got to do this. The first thing you got to do is you got to have seven minutes along with God every day. You need to be at Church on Sunday morning, Sunday evening, Wednesday evening, and Monday the service on Friday morning. I'll tell you what, if you don't do it, that one, you're going to be in the back seat and I'll be able to see up there and what. And then the next thing you got to do is there's certain things you can't do a lot, and there's a lot of things you can't do. All kinds your relationship with God left to itself without cultivating it and working on it, ends up being just another religious system if you don't cultivate a relationship with them.

Pharisees had a problem. The Pharisees were very religious. The Pharisees were so religious that they had all kinds of intricate systems of what was right and what was wrong, even the point of being very unethical at times. For instance, they would swear by the Holy temple to make a deal, close the deal and say, all right, I swear to you, by the Holy temple. And people who didn't know think, wow, he's working by the Holy temple. Must be weird. There was an inside store, but that wasn't any good. You had to swear by the gold in the Holy temple. By the Holy temple may or may not work out, but if you swear by the gold in the Holy temple, now you got it. And you have to understand this kind of books out on how to understand and deal with Pharisees, because

they're going to get what you see. And they figured anything thing they did was Holy, so that got out. Methods were called hypocrites by Jesus. And we many times use the idea of hypocrite the way origin used it. And it really isn't the origin of the word. The way origin used it was like an actor on stage pretending to be something he is not.

We tear that one out completely where we go after you hypocrite if it's going to be something you're not, you act like there's something on the outside, but you're not that on the inside. So that's one form of fair season. But there's another aspect of hypocrite and that is their whole situation. And they're looking for any way to define and deny the box down so that you're one of us. Also it's another form of hypocrite. The word hypocrite is the idea of drawing attention to yourself, drawing attention to outward types of things. That's what the Pharisees told us. Another thing the Pharisees did there's not so much related to hypocrite, but they drew the condemnation of the world on righteous acts before God. They drew the condemnation of the world unrighteous acts before God. For instance, as we move to Matthew chapter six, you find that Matthew six, you start to be aware of practicing your righteousness before men to be noticed by them. Otherwise you have no reward with your Father here in heaven. And then it illustrates what he means by righteousness's.

Now this seems to be a contradiction all of a sudden because we said on the second day that you have to be letting your lifetime before men so that they may see your righteousness. There's a difference between good work and life kicks necessary as he's going to talk about here. And he goes on, when therefore you give arms, know what the right hand is doing will tell you the truth. Illustration is the Pharisees would give and very often take as well. They would sound the

Tempest. The literal meaning I think of this historical setting is that they have receptacles there in the temple area called trumpet. They were trumpet like instead of throwing a dollar bill in, the Pharisee would get hundred pennies. It would make all kinds of noise. And so he would sound like trumpets when he gave. I mean, he really made wing and they weren't upon. And people say better, Jesus is giving a lot today. Did you hear what he did there? You could also pick it up on a secondary approach or secondary application maybe say that you wouldn't want to sound the trumpet by saying, look, we're out about where to give over here, look at this. And that'd be another application saying that we're not to be given that way. We're to be given only before God. Not even letting your left hand know what your right hand is doing.

Now that's a very interesting term. There not letting your left hand know what the right hand is doing. I didn't know the news one another that well, the idea is you even keep it out. It wouldn't even see. And that doesn't mean you put in with your feet or something like that. The idea is you keep the precious and you're not raving a flag. And it says, if you don't do that, then what you do is you get your whole reward when somebody goes, wow, look where we go. I had a family bill \$50,000 for Church and Dallas check and send it in. And he talked to me a long time beforehand and said, how should I do this? And I said, well, if you want the real bigger award up there, what you do is you write the check and you send it in. I said, if you want a bigger award, this is one of the largest churches in the sun called this guy's name. Come up here. He came up and he pulled out the stuff. He said, this gave \$50,000, and I went and he got his whole reward in full right there.

I called him up that afternoon. I said again. He said, what? I said, you got the whole award this afternoon, the whole deal. Did you hear every clap? Did you hear it on paper? You can relive it usually. [inaudible 00:13:14] get away, get by yourself. The Pharisees would put their hands up and go through all kinds of comparisons before people maybe even have some people play in the restaurant. Sometimes it's not too hot to play in a restaurant, depending on the situation and where you are. I've been with people who get in there and they feel like they got to pay for the whole restaurant. And if I was in the middle of me, that's okay. We'll just bless your food too. Embarrass me to death. It's unbelievable. And the teaching here is, don't draw the contempt of the world on a righteous act before God. When you give you're only giving to God. When you pray, you're praying to God. You're not praying to anybody else. I don't want your hands to be raised. Just raise your hand in your heart. When I ask a question, you end up playing a teaching in your prayer for somebody that's there or you are so aware of who's there.

You're saying, what I'm doing is I'm teaching everybody else in the audience or whatever it may be. What an abominable fan. [inaudible 00:15:20] They regress their appearance in order to be seen fasting. By now, when you fast and arch your head and watch your face on your head and look like normal. Some people, when they fasting, they come out and they just kind of bag it out. They got that long face. And the people say, hey, what's wrong with you? Oh I am fasting [inaudible 00:15:40] Because here's another instance of something that only could be for God. There are other things that we could talk about, but this type of thing that these are illustrating, why are we praising God? I've been involved in groups where we have praise rallies and we try to get the whole city out for a praise rally. I don't understand that. According to this, I understand how we can open up all kinds of public prayer meetings and call this something that God is

really excited about. It's a righteous option for God. And it's one of the key ingredients of cultivating relationship with God. Lives in acting religious. You see, I think that Jesus, when he talks about Elijah's body, behold how it's center.

I believe that's the way he says about religion, behold how extent it religion has a smell to it. It's an aroma. Even when I was in the full time Ministry and whatever that was, professional Ministry when I was there, I never, ever said to somebody, when they said, you're an answer, I never said yes. You know what I'm saying? Kind of. And the reason why I say kind, I didn't want them to think that I smelled like anybody else. I was trying to please God all by himself, trying to figure out new ways of moving into all kinds of experience. God does it all. Man does it all. There's a sense to it. There's a sense to it because we bring people into a box. And then you ought to commit yourself to this. The sister says, you got to figure out to be here.

Let me tell you about a couple that I just said are fantastic, the names of the Hamptons. And I tried to get them to be here this week to give a testimony to you because it would be much more exciting to hear in New streets. The Hamptons have gone through seven marriages between them. Okay, they're in the 7th marriage. And now he is 70 years old. And she was about 64, 65 to kill me if I missed that. But I made somewhere in there. And these people, when they came to Christ, it was the most incredible thing to watch. They did not turn weird on anybody, which I thought was very exciting. And the Holy Spirit just said, most people are weird. And they don't sound funny like that. But they began to see, now what does God want us to do with he says? And so they went after waitresses and labor beings and all kinds of people in restaurants because they like to eat that. And they would go to these fine restaurants every Tuesday night. They do

five times down in Newport Beach. And they would witness to these people in different ways. They remember their names and then invite them over to their house and their night off just to come over for dinner at a party that one year period there that I knew what they were going to fight down over half of the waitresses and the best wars. And everybody else had trusted the Lord through their Ministry there five times. It's an incredible thing. Also, they will blow your mind.

They also won the bump contest that year in Southern California. And what they're all about is that they're out basically. They move from restaurant to restaurant, bar to bar, where they can meet the waitresses and people like that. And they invite them over to their house later on that night. Or they had them stay there over the weekend or whatever, and they share with them. There are three whole rock bands in the United States today who will led the Christ to these people. And they go and they just accept it. Beautiful people and their love for Jesus is just phenomenal.

Students have the word like you can't believe. They don't have them believe in five years and they've just eaten up the world. That's exciting. But I'll tell you what, many people in Kristen leadership today had a coronary over that. They would have also had a coronary overseas. He didn't win the bump contest, but he was out in the bar very important that we open our Horizons a little bit. Not my style either. I can't seem to handle that. That's not my deal. As a matter of fact, this isn't what I do either. [inaudible 00:20:44]

Chapter two and three, as you know from your survey, classes are talking about the seven churches of Asia. The most exciting of these churches is the Church of Ephesus. It's the first one. Many believe that the Church of Ephesus is what was responsible for starting the other six churches that are mentioned here in a huge platform. And I mentioned that before, but he do so many times in the frame of a vigaret. And vigaret were the little altar like things with steps on the side, and the first step on each side would be equal and the next one be equal. All the way up near that. There are a couple of it. Wonderful. We're moving into new truth here. And I think the seven churches are basically according to vigaret and the most exciting, one of the most important points upon them, usually on the top level. But here the kids of offices and the kids of Latissia are very much the same. The first one, the last one, you move up the second and the 6th one on the third and the fifth one, and then you got the fourth one on the top.

And you have to figure that one. I don't have time to tell you about that. Anyway. If you didn't understand it, forget it. You'll just be worse off when you figured out both on the same level. And I think they're both saying the same kind of message. Let's look at Ephesus. I know you did death, and if you cannot endure evil men you put to the test those who call themselves Apostles and they are not. And you found them to be false. [inaudible 00:23:11] Remember, therefore, from where you're falling, [inaudible 00:23:13] I know your activities are outstanding. Of course, you could be talking to you as an individual be saying, I know your dudes are good. Hey, that's fantastic. You're doing good things.

I know you're toiled with exhausting labor. I mean, you even stayed up all night a couple of times. This last semester just to get the paper in it should have been there a little bit. You did stay

up all night a drafting toil. And then he goes on and says, I know you're perseverance. I know you're hanging in there, okay? No problem with that. You don't need anybody beach over the head and hanging in there with a Jackson toil and with your beads.

I mean, you got a rule book to keep the beads in line, right? And then you got the toil, and then you put the door. Then he goes on say, I know that you cannot endure evil man. And you put to depress those who call themselves Apostles and they are not. And you find them resolved. You understand boxing well enough that you can discern good from bad, evil man, false teachers. But there's a problem. But I have this against you that you have lost your first life. Notice he does not say you lost your first life. He says, you lost it. It was by a choice, but you neglected it with the idea. An active choice or active. The part of the world where you have neglected or displayed is that first understanding that God loves you and that reciprocal relationship that you have back to God. It's when you first understood what God has done for you and you're overwhelmed by that, okay? And your heart was just overflowing back to God and saying, God, I love you for that. I love you because of who you are and what you've done for me.

It's a dynamic place. So when you first realize what I just described, you're so excited. You went out and you turned off most of your friends and half the enemies the first day. I mean, you're obnoxious about it, what you were. And you didn't know smart, what you're doing all you knew if something happened, you're sorry about it. And you wanted to tell people. Now you have to. Yeah. When you first understood this, you want to read his love writer all the way through. So you start at the beginning, which is unbelievable right there. And you start in Genesis. And you found people begot people back then, you didn't know what that meant, but they begot people.

And then the next few books, you find they all died so begoton didn't have either. And you got all kinds of books back there. I mean, you went to Habitat and Molotsi and Job and some of the others, but you knew you wanted to read it. Now you got to read the Bible, right? Got you. Not just for the class. I mean, you really ought to read it in the mail morning. [inaudible 00:27:03]

I never will forget. My wife's cousin was living with for a while. The first night at Bennett, she said, I want to say something right now. I'm not going to pray with you tonight. I said, well, we're in the meeting either. What do you mean? He thought that we just got around, prayed all the time in our house. And so I said, well, that'd be fine. We're not going to play. You'll be very comfortable, and I'll play later. We don't need to have you here. That's fine.

And so a little bit later, about a week later, she said, I want to play now. I made a pray. So we had to get some people together. And she wanted to play. So we got some people together. We were praying for a guy in bed. [inaudible 00:28:14]

It's a freshness about the whole dynamic. It's that first love. And here he says that I like everything you're doing except you lost the dynamic that makes everything else worthwhile. You've lost the dynamic of a reciprocal love relationship that's made everything else worthwhile. You move into John. And there in John 13:14, Jesus says, I got a new commandment for you. He's talking to the disciples. He said, I want you to love one another. Can you imagine that? These guys didn't want to love one another. They want to love him. They were following him. They didn't sign on with anybody else. They signed on with him. Now he's turning the table. It's

just a tad on him. He says, Now I want you to love one another. Here was Simon the Zealot. Who was part of a bandit group. That used to make life miserable for the Romans.

One of the Romans would have a big parade. They would use slingshots and all kinds of things to make them feel bad. As they're driving through this bandit group. They were very interesting. They just ran around, did all kinds of mischief. They hated traders. There was Matthew, the tax collector, the trader. And you just hear him say, I love him. You Jesus? Maybe, but not him. Where are the people looking at Peter? Hey, Lord, love him. Have you seen how he uses a sword? He never can hit the middle of the head. He always knocking ears off, that's all. With friends like him, we won't need any enemies. We got them right here. Look at Thomas. Thomas was doubting everything. He was the guy that every time they get ready to go and move. He said, Wait a minute.

I don't know about that, you guys. We need to think that through just a little bit more. Lord, if we have to love him, the Kingdom will be late. You see the dynamic there? Then Jesus recognized the problem. He didn't leave them hanging. In the next chapter, he says in chapter 14, if you love me, you will keep my commitment. He's showing that there's a dynamic before we can love anybody else. That has to take place. There are three kinds of love in the Bible. The first is, God loves me. We can bask in that. But the problem is we immediately scoot to try to love everybody else. And we forgot the middle one. God loves me, I love God, then I can love other people. That's the dynamic Jesus is trying to get across there with the disciples. I've given you that commandment. Now if you love me, you'll be able to pull that off. And he explains it later. And John explains it later in one John, chapter four. And following the first love, it's the dynamic that

makes everything else click. It's the dynamic that keeps Christianity from being a religion, another religious system of do's and don'ts.

As a matter of fact, Christianity without a relationship is not Christianity any longer. We dare not. And we cannot call Christianity anything else but a relationship with God. And we cannot live any other kind of lifestyle than a relationship with God. Otherwise, it begins to smell and the aroma gets out throughout all the world. And people say all we are is another religion. Good one, but just another one. How do you fall in love with God? Well, same way you fall in love with anybody. Some of you seem to be doing quite well with that. I've been watching. First of all, you ought to talk to the one or listen to the one you love. You ought to want to listen to the one you love. If you're not willing to listen to the one you love, they're not going to be around much longer. You want to listen to them. You listen to them. You take in what they have to say. Same thing with the Lord Jesus. You got to want to listen to him. You get in here. Yes, get into his word, but then you get his word back into you as we talked about yesterday morning, you're listening to him understanding what the genuine is so you can tell the difference when you're faced with the deceptive stuff and the counterfeit, the only defense you have against the counterfeit is to know the genuine very well.

But don't use the hit and miss method. I've used that for years. For years I used it. Will you open it up like this? I mean, your theology gets really screwed up here at this point when you do it like that. I'm sure you've heard the story of the guy that went like this and said, and Judas went out and hanged himself. And that's nothing to think about very long. So he tried it again. Go thou and do likewise. He thought, I'm going to try one more time. What thou doest do quickly, he's in

trouble. It's a crazy story. But you know the sad part about it? It's true. It's true. The Christians are hanging at the end of some spiritual rope someplace because they can't get into this book and get the book into them. I got a better word for it. Won't get into this book and allow the word to get into them. And the worst place in all of the have a dynamic relationship with God is here. I will say that again, the worst place in all of the world to be to have a dynamic relationship with God is right here.

You're in trouble because you're throwing all kinds of Bible all the time and you take it for granted. You don't have time to live it out. You don't have time to figure out how to love God. You're too busy with everything else and you walk around like this. It's the toughest place to understand how a relationship with God should be. I'm not saying leave. I just said, you've got a tough deal. I know very well because I was here. I was in this kind of setting four years. I know it. Oh, my gosh, do I know it? It's tough to listen to the one you love. Secondly, you don't want to talk to the one you love. You don't want to talk to the one you love. Same thing is true in a relationship with God. You want to talk to him.

Let me give you a couple of principles that might be helpful. One is talk to him privately. Talk to him privately. Get along with him and talk to him. Matthew 6:6, just talk to him privately. You don't have to do it just in the morning. You don't have to do it just at night. Talk to him whenever you need to. Whenever you think about it, talk to him. Build a relationship. You don't set up a time. If you're trying to date somebody and you think you're falling in love, you don't say, Look, I'll see you at 06:00 Friday night from six to 615. All right, we'll meet again then next

Wednesday from six to 615. And let's just build our relationship around that time, shall we? You don't do that.

Secondly, you got to be persistent. In one, Thessalonians five, it says, Pray without ceasing.

When I first read that, I thought, no more basketball, no more baseball, no more food. This could be bad. It's pray all the time, pray without ceasing. And that's not what it is. Pray persistently like little boy Johnny, five years old. He went to his dad and he heard they were going to have a baby. And he said, hey, dad, I'd like to have a baby brother. What can I do to help? His dad thought that was a pretty sharp question. And so he met the occasion. He said, I'll tell you what, Johnny, if you pray every night for the next two months before you go to bed, that God will give you a baby brother, I guarantee you have a baby brother.

At the end of two months, his dad knew some things he didn't know. Obviously, Johnny went to bed early that night, 530 began to pray, God, give me a baby brother. He checked around the neighborhood, found that this has never happened in the history of the neighborhood. Nobody ever prayed for two months and had a baby brother. What a dumb thing so at the end of one month, they quit praying. The end of two months, his mother went to the hospital and they brought her back home and called Johnny to the bedroom. And there was this little bundle right next to her. They opened up the blankets and there were two baby brothers, twins. Johnny's dad looked at Johnny and said, Johnny, aren't you glad you prayed? Johnny looked up at his dad and he said, yes, but aren't you glad I quit when I did? Well, Johnny blew it. He was going so persistently for one month, and then he blew it. But you see why he blew it? He checked around the neighborhood and he found that doesn't happen. It's the same thing we do with our praying.

We're hot on the trail of something. We're praying for something. And then we run into some believer who has been embalmed and we run into them. And then they say, how are you doing? Fine. I've been praying for this. Oh, you see, God doesn't do that kind of thing. Yeah, well, I'll quit right away. I'll retract all those prayers I just made. I'll stop immediately. Certainly. Of course. How foolish of me. Thank God, could pull off a miracle. We check around the neighborhood and then we quit. Persistency.

Thirdly, make it specific. Make your prayer specific. We talk so generally to God that I'm convinced he doesn't know what we want because we don't know what we want. We say, God, help Mary. Help Mary. What? Just help Mary. She looks like she needs some help, that's all. Lord, I just pray for John. Yes. Just shoot some smoke up for John there. I just want to kind of.

You see what I'm saying? You don't date a girl and say, Look, I'll pick you up sometime in February, maybe in the morning, maybe in the afternoon. We might go formally. Might go informally, be ready. All right. You don't do that. That may be some of your trouble. You talk specifically. It's like the young Coed who said, Lord, I'm not asking for myself, but please send my mother a son in law. That's specific prayer you see moving right in there.

Let's turn over to Revelation, chapter three. Revelation, chapter three. The Church of Laodicea. Here he says with the angel of Church in verse 14. Angel of Church in Laodicea. Right. The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God, says this, I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I would that you were cold or hot one way or the other. So because you are lukewarm, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth because you

say, I'm rich and have become wealthy and in need of nothing. And you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. In other words, you're not poor in spirit. That's a good application of that I advise you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may become rich and white garments, that you may clothe yourself and that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed.

And I say to anoint your eyes that you may see those whom I love. I reprove and discipline. Be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come into him and will dine with him, and he with me. I will establish a relationship. I will renew the relationship. We will cultivate the relationship. He's talking about the same kind of concept in Ephesus. He's saying that without that dynamic of a relationship, everything else starts falling apart. It's meaningless. Your deeds, your toil, your perseverance. They don't mean a whole lot unless you've got a relationship. The dynamic is gone. In a religion here, he's saying, Religion makes me sick, makes me sick, makes me spit you out of my mouth, makes me vomit. It's not a very pretty picture here at all, but I don't want you to think it's a pretty picture because it isn't pretty. It smells. Religion smells horrible. It's got a stench to it. Everybody in the world begins to pick up the aroma because we're not willing to think and because we're not willing to evaluate and say, God, I want to be your man, your woman.

I want to do that, which is going to be most consistent with your game plan, most consistent with righteousness. I want that kind of satisfaction where I've been hungry and thirsting. Then we start picking up the same kind of boxes and the same kind of smell and the same kind of aroma of religion. Christianity is not a religion. It's a relationship, a relationship, and it must be cultivated

over and over and over again, continually cultivating the relationship. Otherwise it begins to fall apart and move into a religious system. Without a relationship with Jesus Christ, the dynamic is gone of Christianity. Without a relationship with Jesus Christ, Jesus says, you make me sick. In John, chapter 21, the last chapter of John, Jesus surprises the disciples. They're out fishing. He calls out and says, you're catching any fish? They said, no, we'll try on the other side. And they did and caught a few, and they kind of figured two and two makes four sound like Jesus. So Peter, not willing to ride ashore, tried his walk on water trick one more time. As he jumped out of the boat, he found that the water did not hold him up, much like that shaving cream that they have on television right now.

It won't hold anything up. Same with water. And he went right down and had to swim. Looks like he got there about the same time the other guys did, and they all came in. Jesus had a fire there. They may have already made it, but he was at the fire. And they were broiling fish. And you can imagine what was going on, because, you see, Peter was told by Jesus he was going to deny Jesus. And Peter said, you got the wrong guy. I mean, I'm not going to deny you at all. And they turn around and did so had to be filled with guilt. I mean, overwhelmed with guilt. Clear up to here, maybe even higher. You know how it is when you got to confront somebody, or, you know, somebody's going to confront you and you're guilty right up to here. Stomach moves to throat. And choking begins. Have you noticed that? That's the way Peter felt. And it's very interesting, the dynamic around that fire. It says that they were sitting there. Nobody said very much. You know why? Peter usually said very much. And he wasn't talking. Stomach was in throat. He was ready to choke. You see, no doubt he was still sitting next to Jesus. But he wasn't going to say a whole lot because he was afraid of what Jesus was going to do when he

confronted him. And so you can almost feel the build up of the guilt right there. And then Jesus leans over to Peter. Stomach moves to throw. Choking begins. And Jesus says, Peter, you need to make out a sin list. And we'll take the parchment and we'll just write out every place where you've blown it. And then we'll burn it in the fire. And that will be your recommitment to me. He do that. No, that's what we do. We're good at sin lists.

Peter, at my next revival service, you need to come forward, get your act together. You do that. That's what we do. Peter, I want you to take the stick and just throw it in the fire. Just take this faggot and throw it in the fire. And that'll be your commitment, all right? Huh? No, that's what we do. Hey, Peter, you blew it. Now, what's incredible to me about this story? Forget the change of verbs of File-O and agapa-o. Forget that for a second and understand what's happening. Jesus is confronting a person that he already told was going to sin and he sinned. Now, at least we haven't had the privilege of being told beforehand. And then we go do it. I mean, that's the peak of blowing it, all right? It sneaks up on us. We didn't know what was going to happen. We just did it. Now, Peter knew he did it. Blew it. Guilt up to here. And Jesus doesn't mention one thing about his sin. Isn't that incredible? Blows my mind. I'm sure it blew Peter's mind. And Jesus moved over to Peter. Peter had stomach moving the throat. Choking begin. And Jesus says this. Peter. Yeah? Do you love me? Yeah, I can answer that question. I like that. I wasn't expecting that. I thought you were going to talk about something. Certainly I do. Oh, I bet he was excited, well, then tend my lambs, feed my sheep. Shepherd them. He came right back to Peter again and said, Peter, do you love me? Peter said, well, yes, Lord, you know that I love you more than these. Then feed my sheep. The third time Jesus comes back almost as if to match the denial and say, Peter, do you love me? Yes, Jesus, I love you. Then act like it. Act like it. You see the point?

Jesus wasn't concerned about his guilt trip. Jesus wasn't concerned about a confession sin list. He wasn't concerned about a recommitment. He wasn't concerned about revival. He wasn't concerned about rededication. He wasn't concerned about altars. He wasn't concerned about fires. He didn't have any concern about getting all of this out of a system. Jesus went to one thing. Do you love me?

The first love what's it saying to us? I think that Jesus isn't too religious and we are full of it. Jesus is going to the heart of the whole thing and saying, hey, the key to the whole deal, Peter, is, do you love me? Do you have a relationship with me? If you're willing to cultivate the relationship with me if you're willing to cultivate your first love nothing else makes any difference in comparison. You see in comparison, nothing else makes any difference. Christianity is not a religion. It's a dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ. And I think the kind of thing he's asking us this morning is, do you love me? Do you love me? Then act like it. Act like it and cultivate that relationship. Otherwise, you have a religion that loses all the dynamic of Christianity and makes Jesus sick.

Father, we thank you for your word. We thank you that you care more about us than we care about ourselves. We thank you that you are more concerned about our relationship with you than you are about the petty things that we pick up and try to motivate people to do. And we missed the whole point of the dynamic of a relationship with you. Forgive us, Father Father, for being so religious that we smell funny. We pray these things in Jesus name.

Amen. Amen.