

The Supernatural Power of Biblical Preaching

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Host: David Wheaton 00:08

The Supernatural Power of Biblical Preaching. Today we will recap Shepherds Conference 2024 right here on The Christian Worldview Radio Program.

The Shepherds' Conference is a three day pastors conference held in early March at Grace Community Church in Los Angeles. This is the church that John MacArthur has pastored for 55 years. What started 40 years or more ago, with about 100 pastors coming, has grown into 5000 church leaders and laymen gathering from all corners of the world. The mission of Shepherds' Conference is this; "To provide the opportunity for men in church leadership, to be challenged in their commitment to biblical ministry, and to find encouragement together as servants of the Chief Shepherd." That's basically what takes place over those three days. Some of the most notable expository pastors; as in, they teach verse by verse from scripture, such as, John MacArthur and Steven Lawson, HB Charles, Voddie Baucham, John Piper, Paul Washer, Alistair Begg, who was not there this year, as you know, by now, Conrad Mbewe, and Albert Mohler was there in the past, and many, many more.

Those preachers preach to the pastors who attend to strengthen and model to these pastors in attendance, how to preach and lead their own churches better. It has been a blessing and time of growth for me to attend the Shepherds' Conference about 15 times or more over the years. That being said, I hadn't attended the conference since 2020, but I was able to attend this year and I'm going to share some of my key takeaways from this year's conference, along with some "man at the conference" interviews. This is the first time I've done this, but I'm going to give you my headline takeaway right here up front. Supernatural transformation takes place in lives when God's Supernatural Word leads the way in preaching.

The conference always takes place on a Wednesday through Friday; three days. There's 12 general sessions, four per day, which run about 1 hour and 15 minutes each. Typically, about 15 to 20 minutes of music to start each session, followed by a sermon by one of the keynote pastors. On Monday and Friday, in addition to those general sessions, there'll be a choice of about 10 different seminars you can attend during one session in the afternoon. On Thursday, the middle day of the conference, there's typically a Q&A. This year it was with John MacArthur and John Piper. The theme of this year's conference was *Truth Triumphs*, so for all 12 general sessions, each pastor was assigned a various aspect of that topic. For instance, Mike Riccardi, who is the outreach pastor at Grace Community Church, talked about how *Truth Triumphs in Culture*. He went to the passage in John 18, and preached on where Pilate said to Jesus, "What is truth?" This is a very powerful message. And all these messages by the way, will be available on the Shepherds' Conference website for free within a week or two.

Phil Johnson, who's the executive director of *Grace To You* preached on *Truth Triumphs and Persecution* from 1Peter 4. HB Charles, who is the pastor of Shiloh Metropolitan Baptist Church, of

Jacksonville, Florida, preached on how *Truth Triumphs in Prayer*. This was one of my favorite messages of the conference, a very powerful message on prayer. Abner Chou, who's the President of The Masters University, preached on *Truth Triumphs and Perseverance* from Daniel chapter 7, about how we look forward to the return of Christ. Nathan Busenitz, the Executive Vice President of The Masters Seminary, and pastor of a small church there, Cornerstone Fellowship, preached on *The Triumph of Divine Pardon* in Mark chapter 2. Again, there's a theme to the conference this year, every year, and each of the main preachers will preach on a specific passage of scripture related to that.

This is definitely not a topical preaching conference. You know, *How to Thrive in Your Marriage*, or *How to Build Your Youth Ministry at Your Church*. Some of the seminar sessions will focus on various aspects of church life or issues going on in society or biographies of great Christians. Pastor Jesse Johnson gave one on christian nationalism this year. Pastor Harry Walls gave one on *How to Shepherd and Serve Your Wife*, and Costi Hinn on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Brad Klassen, on *Discipling, and Developing Men in Your Church*. James Coates, you remember him from the past year was arrested in Canada, on *The Biblical Blueprint for Personal Boldness* that's so apropos for him.

There's lots of Russian and Spanish sessions as well. There are helpful seminar sessions on issues that pastors are facing within their own church and within the culture as well. So, it's an expository conference, not a topical preaching conference. It's also not a church growth conference, which are so ubiquitous today. You'll see an endless number of these advertised in your social media feed, at least I do! *How to Draw More People to Your Church*, *How to do Music Ministry Better*, *Seven Ways to Increase Donations at Your Church*.

That's not Shepherds' Conference. As a matter of fact, let's get to our first "men at the conference" interview with Tom Patton, who was actually the host of the conference. You'll see him come up and introduce the various sessions. He told me what goes into putting on the conference, and what he sees as the commonality of the preachers who preach there. "Tom, just give us a behind-the-scenes look at what goes into the preparation for this conference, and then for what you do in getting all the sessions and all this preachers and so forth, tell us behind the scenes what it's like."

Live Interview with: Tom Patton 06:45

Wow, there's so much that goes into it, it's almost hard to begin. There's a team of many, many people that organize all year long for this. This isn't something that ramps up a month beforehand or two months before. You're thinking of, not only of the amount of books that come in here, the sellers that come here, and the products, but also the preaching; Even I think someone was saying today, I think it was John Piper, about how everything starts with the letter "P" and he was so amazed that we had that alliteration, but that's just the skimming of the surface. We have a whole team of men that are committed to it, and a group of volunteers that are behind it. Even a session like tonight, there's a massive amount of work that goes into preparation, thinking through it. The flow of it, connection of the material to the music, and the music to the material. It's an orchestration. The whole event is orchestrated from beginning to end, having a beginning, middle and end, so as to have that sense of purpose and intention all the way through.

Host: David Wheaton 07:42

What are some of the commonalities or things you notice about these men who are asked to preach here,

Live Interview with: Tom Patton 07:48

They have a love for Christ, every single one of them that's really profound and distinct. You have people that are so different in terms of style. You have HB Charles, which was just fantastic today, and how God uses him. Then there is Abner Chou, which comes from a different point of view. Maybe more academically and scholarly, but still so wrapped up in the sovereignty of God, as He preaches, it is just a part of his life. Then we have Pastor John who has been doing it for 55 years, but the sovereignty of God and the love for the text, that is everything.

Host: David Wheaton 08:22

Again, that was Tom Patton, the host of the conference, and he's exactly right. The men who preach at Shepherds' Conference have what's called a, high view of Scripture. They trust in what God does when his Word is preached, verse by verse. They're not trying to make up human schemes and strategies to be able to get certain points across. Is the conference all about preaching though? No, it's not. You remember, back when I read the mission of the conference earlier in the program, that the latter part of that mission says, "...and to find encouragement together as servants of the Chief Shepherd." This is a prominent thing you will hear the various men who come to the conference say. It's the getting together of like-minded pastors; and by like-minded, those in a ballpark of theological conservatism. They believe in the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, the Five Solas from the Reformation: Grace alone, through Faith alone, in Christ alone, Scripture alone, for God's Glory alone.

I will say on the issue of salvation, these are men that believe in Lordship Salvation, that vs free grace. In other words, Lordship Salvation is when you become a believer, Christ isn't just a Savior, Christ becomes the Lord of your life. Those are some of the distinctives, and there are many more, that's just a nutshell version of it. These pastors, these church leaders, come together and they worship together as men. They take in the preaching, and then they have fellowship, and eat together between the sessions. They talk ministry with each other. You often see men praying together about issues going on in their own churches, their own lives.

It's very interesting to see who attends the Shepherds' Conference, even if they're not scheduled to preach at the conference. This year I saw Costi Hinn, and Tom Buck from First Baptist Church of Lyndale, Texas, a recent guests on the program. Owen Strachan was there this year. Grant Castleberry, also. We are actually going to hear from him in a "men at the conference" interview later today. Mike Gendron was there. Tom Pennington, pastor of Countryside Church in Dallas was there, as well. So, these pastors are seeking nourishment for themselves and refreshment from this conference. By the way, they're served by 1000 volunteers that come from Grace Community Church, who provide meals and snacks and shoe shines, and you name it all week for these pastors.

I asked Tom Buck at the conference, why does a pastor who is busy with all sorts of things, set aside time to come to a conference to take it in? How does this affect you as a pastor?

Live Interview with: Tom Buck 11:11

One way way it affects me is that it feeds me. So as a pastor, not only am I always feeding other people, but I need to be fed. It allows me to sit around the Word and hear live preaching of the Word. Listening to it on the internet, or listening to a podcast or whatsoever, (although podcasts are wonderful, I'm on here, this is one that you have.) There is a difference between being in a live preaching event and listening to it. I think that pastors need to remember that. I don't get the same effect, if you will, spiritually when I'm just listening to it on an audio recording, as I do being there in that moment, where the Spirit is working in that room in a very significant way, in my opinion under the preaching the word.

Host: David Wheaton 12:06

What, from the messages this year, has really most struck you? What are you taking away?

Interview with: Tom Buck 12:12

The theme of the week is Truth Triumphs, and I love the themes of triumphing, in suffering, truth triumphing, and how we in the Biblical worldview that we need to have, like Phil Johnson, presented from 1st Peter, understanding suffering as a whole, and our life and His purpose that God has for us. Hearing the Word of God, speak directly to us of how truth needs to not just be in our head, but how it needs to be impacting our lives and our ministry. So that's been probably one of the most encouraging things to me, the preaching has been fantastic. Okay,

Host: David Wheaton 12:48

That was Tom Buck, the pastor of First Baptist Church in Lyndale, Texas, and you remember that he was recently on the program to talk about the "He Gets Us Campaign" and the ads that took place during the Super Bowl. He summarized this well. He's a busy pastor, but he needs to come and be fed himself. He needs to be filled up, so that he can go back and give it out to his own church as well. I want to mention one more thing before we get to the key takeaways of the conference, because there is one more notable part of the conference beyond the preaching itself, and the fellowship these guys have together, is the music. The music falls into two categories.

During the conference, some of the evening general sessions are led by Bill Brandenstein, who is the music minister at Grace Church, and where he'll have a choir and orchestra and solos, more formal music during the evening sessions. Phil Webb, an incredible vocalist, will sing on occasion. Then during the daytime sessions, Bob Kauflin, who you probably know of as the director of Sovereign Grace Music, has written all sorts of hymns that are sung in your church on Sundays. He leads the daytime sessions, usually playing on piano and speaking and reading Scripture before those preaching sessions begin. One of the most notable things about the conference to me is to hear 5000 pastors loudly singing, because pastors sing and praise God with one another.

As matter of fact, the closing minutes of this year's conference was what I would call as a tingling moment. The Worship Center holds about 3000 men, and the overflow of the other 2000 are at

other buildings watching on video around the church campus. John MacArthur invited those 2000 men to come and stand in the aisles of the worship center for the last, let's say, 10 minutes of the final session on Friday night and everyone was crammed in there, and the choir and the orchestra and a vocalist did the song, "*Is He Worthy*" with all these men singing and you had goose pumps going up and down your arms and the back of your neck. It felt like something that would be a worthy of worshipping Christ in heaven someday when believers do that. We put the video of this on our website, TheChristianWorldview.org, if you'd like to see it. I actually was able to talk to Bill Brandenstein, the Minister of Music at Grace Community Church, about how they tie the music in to the preaching sessions of the conference.

Let's talk about the theology that you're trying to get at with the music. I know you work with Bob Kauflin, of course, but you also do separate music with Grace Church. Tell us about the music at this conference,

Live Interview with: Bill Brandenstein 15:36

Whether it's a Sunday service, or at the Shepherds' Conference, when we are singing music, either with a choir or a soloist or the whole congregation together, I'm always looking to accomplish one of a few different things. We're bringing people in at the beginning of a service like a normal Sunday morning service, and we might start with some praise and adoration to get people's hearts and minds really in gear, thinking biblical thoughts, thinking about the God who we're here to celebrate, worship, and proclaim. The thing that you're seeing a lot with Bob's involvement here is something I also love to do with our Sunday services.

That is to feast on the riches of God's word in the songs, as directed to what we're going to hear in the sermon. Tomorrow night, for example, we're going to sing, "*It Is Well With My Soul*" again, and we're going to sing, "*How Firm a Foundation*" and "*On Christ the Solid Rock I Stand.*" Why? Because, nothing can separate us from the love of God.

The purpose of music, as defined in the New Testament is just definitively set forth for us. In Ephesians and Colossians - when we're to speak to one another in psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, those aren't musical genres, those are textual genres. It doesn't say sonatas, ballads, and symphonies. What does that mean? The content of the song is very utilitarian. It's artistic, but it's even more utilitarian.

God wants us to marry truth to the music, so when we gather here as a body, we want to sing truth to one another and fulfill that verse. So yes, it's such a rich privilege and unspeakable privilege to take God's people through truth and to his throne in praise. Bob and I are really trying to access the biblical truths being preached on when we're doing that.

Host: David Wheaton 17:34

Is this would you say a highlight of the year when you actually have 4000 or 5000 men here? Leading music, hearing them sing here in front? What is that like?

Live Interview with: Bill Brandenstein 17:45

There are many times where I feel completely unworthy and even irresponsible to be where I am, because you're eavesdropping on what is being offered to the Lord. This is one of those times. Yes, it is a highlight because there is nothing like a roomful of pastors who fervently live, struggle, breathe, and proclaim with this truth, and then we're singing this together. Even today, earlier hearing about that brotherhood, shoulder to shoulder, standing shoulder to shoulder. We're doing that in song. Our congregation sings well at Grace, and I'm thankful for that, but they pale in comparison to the thickness of sound that happens with all these men in here. It's very, very special. So yes, it's always a highlight to do this, because there's nothing like it.

Host: David Wheaton 18:39

A lot of the men come for the preaching, but the music and the congregational singing takes you to a completely different place that not many people experience. So thank you for all you do at the conference.

Live Interview with: Bill Brandenstein 18:49

It is a privilege to serve and to God be all the glory. Thank you.

Host: David Wheaton 18:54

All right. That was Bill Brandenstein, the Minister of Music from Grace Community Church, talking about what it's like to lead the music at Shepherds' Conference. Today we are talking about *The Supernatural Power of Biblical Preaching*, as we do a recap of Shepherds' Conference, 2024.

In the first segment, we went over some of the background on the conference and what it's like to be there. In this next segment, we'd like to get into some of the biggest takeaways of this conference.

The first takeaway is really the title of the program today, that supernatural transformation takes place in lives when God's supernatural Word leads the way in preaching. We're going to give an example of that at the end of today's program with Steve Lawson, who gave the second to the last message at the conference, to give an example of what that sounds like. Basically, an expository preacher preaches this way: Early in their sermon, they'll read the text that they're going to explain from Scripture, so they lead with God's word. This is the truth that will be brought to bear on you the listener today. They read the text, number one, and number two, they explain the text as accurately as they can, going through verse by verse, cross referencing and so forth, giving examples from other places in Scripture. Once they've read it, and explained it, then they always will have some kind of application from this text for those listening to follow.

Maybe it's something you examine yourself on. Or often it ends with a call to believe the gospel for unbelievers, or to be further solidified in the Gospel for believers. Every message in the conference, maybe with the exception of John Piper, who didn't preach in exactly that type of way, is framed around expository preaching, where you lead with God's Word. God's word determines the truth that's going to be brought to bear. So why is that the most impactful way to preach? Because when you put God's Word front and center, everything then revolves around what God has said, revolves

around God's inspired words, rather than revolving around some preconceived idea or strategy, or reasoning that the pastor had that he thinks is going to work well with this audience.

In expository preaching, you go where the text goes, where God inspired it to go. This is so opposite of most preaching today. Sermons are on topics, and there will be some Bible verses, but those will be plucked from here and there. It's called Proof texting, you find the text to prove your point. This results, at least in my opinion, in a very fragmented view of Scripture. It often leaves out the hard passages because, after all, you just have the pastor selecting what he wants to preach on every week, not the next passage of scripture. This becomes I think, very man-centered, and stems from a lower view of Scripture, where a pastor doesn't trust that just preaching the word of God will lead to results that God has ordained. Then ultimately down the road, this leads to weaker and shallower congregants. This explains why we are where we are in the church in America today. I had a chance to speak with Mike Gendron at the conference of proclaiming the gospel ministries and a frequent guest on this program. He talked about what it's like to sit under this kind of expository preaching.

Mike why do you come to this conference over and over again?

Live Interview with: Mike Gendron 25:19

This is my 25th year of coming, and I come to get spiritually recharged. The word of God is living and active, and when you hear messages filled with God's truth, it's really an encouragement for me to keep on keeping on. So I more than ever love the fellowship of the saints. The worship is heavenly. In fact, I've often said, This is the closest thing to heaven on earth.

Host: David Wheaton 25:45

I agree with you. We're standing outside The Masters Seminary building right here. As we were having lunch yesterday, you brought up something interesting to me. You're such an evangelist. I love that you're always trying to help people understand the gospel, particularly Roman Catholics as what you came out of, but talk about what you mentioned to me about, you're starting to use questions more in the way you interact with people. Tell us more about that.

Live Interview with: Mike Gendron 26:12

Well, I came to realize, of course, that Jesus is the most effective evangelists the world has ever known, and when He walked the earth, He asked over 300 questions, to engage people, to get them to consider things that are eternal. As I studied the questions that Jesus asked, I realized it's important that we not dump on people all of our theology, especially unbelievers. They don't want to be preached at. So I ask them questions, because an unbeliever doesn't care how much you know, until they know how much you care. By asking questions, we can show that we really care for them. One of my favorite questions is, why did Jesus have to die? Most people say because he loved us. Yes, that was his motivation, but hardly anyone will answer the question correctly.

He had to die to satisfy divine justice. Because the wages of sin is death, someone has to die in order to find justice, to be satisfied. So Jesus went to the cross to die as a substitute for those who were trusting Him. David as a Roman Catholic, I never knew about the substitutionary atonement of

Christ. That's why it's so near and dear to me. 2 Corinthians 5:21, that great exchange, He took my sin, and He gave me His righteousness.

Host: David Wheaton 27:33

I just love Mike Gendron and Proclaiming the Gospel Ministry. He is such a faithful man who loves the expository preaching of the Word and loves evangelism as well. We'll try to get him on the program to talk more about how Christ used questions in his evangelism. That sounds like a very interesting thing to learn. Okay, let's get to takeaway number two at the conference.

Again, take away number one is how supernatural transformation takes place in lives when God's supernatural Word leads the way in preaching. Takeaway number two, is the importance of being engaged in a local church and sitting under this kind of sound preaching week after week. That is what deepens believers and transforms their lives for God's glory. The Shepherds' Conference, or as some people call it, Shep Con, it's a once-a-year event, and it moves you along. I can think of the ways over the years that I've been moved along in my Christian walk by attending the conference, but it's not the be all and end all of anything. You can't go to Shepherds' Conference, and have that be your power drink and now you are revved up for the next year. God designed the local church to be the primary source for believers growth, and his or her sanctification. It's the week by week, coming together, and fellowshiping, singing together, sacrificing together, and remembering the death and resurrection of the Lord together. Sitting under the preaching of the Word together. It's those ordinary means of grace in the context of a local church that God has designed to almost be like a a nest for the believer.

In the Bible models, there is no such thing as a believer not engaged in a local church. So if you're not in a local church, you need to work hard and be diligent to find a local church within driving distance of where you are, so you can have those things that are intended by Scripture that move you along in your faith. I spoke to one of the pastors at Grace Community Church, one of the main preachers of the conference, Mike Riccardi. He talked about not only the source of the message that he gave on truth, which was such a strong message. He talked about the the absurdity of the way our culture has discarded truth, but also what it's been like for him to be at Grace Community Church for 14 years. Here's Mike Riccardi.

Mike, your message yesterday, just on Truth. What was the genesis of that? I know you've been preaching about that the last couple of Sunday nights here.

Live Interview with: Mike Riccardi 30:27

Originally, it was the thought of Nathan Busenitz, who's editing a book called *Right Thinking for a Culture in Chaos*, and he assigned me that title. *What is Truth, Reason, Relativity*, and I forget what the rest of the subtitle is. I've been teaching apologetics at the seminary for eight years or so now, and been in that world of the the attacks upon the truth itself, like the concept of truth. That undoes all of your entire worldview. It undoes knowledge, if you indeed say that the truth is not absolute or not knowable, or anything like that. Because the moment you say anything, after you deny the

existence of truth, you open yourself to the to the retort. Well, is that true? Is what you just said, true?

And if you can't say yes, then you've made every thought you have, entirely obsolete and irrelevant. Trying to gauge that and trying to lead people through the chaos of the failed worldview of secularism, relativism, and subjectivism. Then early in 2023 I wanted to start a series, where we were confronting the lies of the culture, trying to equip my people here in grace life, my adult fellowship group here at Grace Church to be faithful witnesses, salt and light in the workplace, in the neighborhood, wherever it is that God had them. So it's a desire to equip the people of God. Then when they told me that the theme is truth, triumph, I thought, well, this could be good for this setting.

Host: David Wheaton 32:03

It was so apropos for what's going on not only within the church, but the broader culture. You brought that up, how absurd our culture is now with rejection of truth. You talked about the Supreme Court Justice Ketanji Brown won't define what a woman is, and men can get pregnant, all these are great points. You've been here at Grace Church, I think now for 14 years actually. If you had to say one or two things that has really impacted you, let's say, first from Pastor John MacArthur, and maybe just being within this church itself.

Live Interview with: Mike Riccardi 32:35

Those are two very good questions. I mean, the first thing to say is that I've been impacted by the faithful preaching of the Word of God week in and week out, and just the ordinary means of grace, do their work in my soul. Without me really noticing it, right, I eat a meal, and I don't feel like I'm getting nourished, it's just that I don't feel hungry anymore. Right? I don't know what the food is doing in my body at the molecular level. In the same way I come and I enjoy the preaching, I attend to the preaching of the Word, sing, pray, give, watch baptisms, partaking in the Lord's Supper. As all that happens, the grace of God does its work in the soul. Making the Word of God central to all of life number one.

Number two is being on the same pastoral staff, as Pastor John. I get to know him personally, I get to see him as a shepherd and as my shepherd, and the kindness and the graciousness, and the humility of a guy who could walk in any room and command any room. Every room he walks into, the person he's talking to is the most important in the room. That has always stayed with me. I mean, he really is, like, he's not faking it. He's not putting on any kind of show. He's not doing what he thinks he ought to do. That's just what he would do, because the Word of God frankly, has had the effect on his life. He loves Christ, and he's living like Christ. Being the recipient of his pastoral ministry, beyond the feeding, has been the most impactful. I recognize that, that kind of thing is not just something for me to benefit from. It's a stewardship. I could live in or live in front of that. That, that can be lived in front of me, requires something of me, and I hope that I can be faithful to it.

Host: David Wheaton 34:30

That was Mike Riccardi, one of the pastors at Grace Church and one of the general session, preachers at Shepherds' Conference. He's in his mid to late 30s, and he's been there for 14 years.

The two main things he said there was that week by week involvement in Grace Community Church, being in a local church like that to sing, pray, give the baptisms, remembering the Lord's Supper, the preaching of the Word, what he called the ordinary means of grace that God uses to grow us. That's why there's such an importance of being involved in a good local church. And, frankly, The Christian Worldview Radio Program, although we are a parachurch ministry, one of the main thrusts of what we try to do, is not just sharpen your biblical worldview, but we want to encourage you to be part of a good local church as well.

That was our second big takeaway of the conference, the importance of being involved in a sound, local church. If you are in a weak, compromised, or worldly, local church, contact us. We'll try to help you find another church in the area. We know a few networks and associations where you can at least visit some different churches that might be better for your spiritual growth.

There's something else that Mike Riccardi said in that interview, that leads to our third takeaway from Shepherds' conference. It has to do with John MacArthur. He mentioned how impactful it's been for him to be on the pastoral staff under John MacArthur. Here's my third takeaway. John MacArthur has labored diligently to be faithful to the position God put him in, and there's been immense impact from that. You can just tell by how the other notable pastors and preachers at the conference treat him and the way they speak about him is how much they revere him. No, he's not perfect and shouldn't be idolized, but who he is and what He has done, leading his people for 55 years, trying to accurately handle the word of truth is incredibly significant.

That being said, he has declined in health quite a bit since the last time I saw him in 2020. His energy level, even his balance, and he's had some heart interventions. He's 84 years old after all. This is to be expected, and he has enormous responsibility underneath him. He did two preaching sessions at the conference, in addition to the Q&A. He's been very faithful in his roles, the output he's been able to generate over the years has been amazing. I don't know how much longer he's going to be able to go at this pace, but I know that his heart is that he wants to die after giving his final sermon just as his dad died as well. I believe he's a third generation now of pastors in his family, so you can pray for him and his health and his faithfulness in these waning years of his life.

In a car ride at the conference, I spoke to Jay Flowers, who is the Chief Operating Officer of *Grace to You*, which is the radio ministry that airs John MacArthur sermons, and ask Jay about the impact that he encounters as he talks to people who are listeners around the country.

What is the most common things you hear people say?

Live Interview with: Jay Flowers 37:58

Probably the most common response we hear is that people hunger to know God's Word, and God's Word is not always taught faithfully. There are a lot of people who come from backgrounds like mine, were raised in a Christian home and raised in a church that affirms the truth of Scripture, but it's never really been taught clearly. I can picture the first time I heard John teach, and I can picture the moment where suddenly I realized that there's so much more to this book that I ever realized. Ultimately, I realized that I had a very low view of God and a very high view of myself, and

God's word being taught is actually what revealed that to me. That's what God used to open my eyes to that.

So we hear from people all the time, who were in those same kinds of situations, where they've never really heard it taught. Once they get a taste of it, rather than satisfying their appetite, it creates a greater appetite. To be able to take John's material from 55 years of faithful ministry at Grace Church, and to see that spread around the globe, is always relevant. It transcends any one culture. All you have to do is get it into people's hands. And then the Lord is the one who brings the fruit.

Host: David Wheaton 39:10

That was Jay Flowers, the COO of *Grace to You*, which features the preaching and teaching of John MacArthur. Here in the last segment, I want to play a sample of just one of the sermons that took place at the conference by Steve Lawson, the Pastor of Trinity Bible Church in Dallas, Texas, also with *OnePassion Ministries*, I'm going to play the opening of his message, and then the closing of his message. Now just listen how at the beginning of his message, the first thing he gets into directly is putting the word of God as He reads revelation 19 in front of those who are listening.

Sermon Sound Bite: Steven Lawson 42:41

There's really nothing else to say, except take your Bible and turn with me to the book of Revelation. Revelation chapter 19. I want to speak to you on the triumph of the King. I want to begin reading in verse 11.

And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse. And He who sat on it is called Faithful and True. And in righteousness, He judges and makes war. His eyes are a flame of fire and on His head are many diadems and He has a name written on Him which no one knows, except Himself. He is closed with a robe dipped in blood. And His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in white linen, fine linen, white and clean, are following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it, He may strike down the nations. And He will rule them with a rod of iron. He treads the winepress of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty and on His robe and on His thigh. He has a name written KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

In these verses we see the return of Jesus Christ and the cataclysmic judgment He will unleash upon this world with all the fury that belongs to Him. This day of devastation is looming on the horizon. And we have never been so close to this final day. It is fast approaching. Jesus is returning to take back the planet But he is coming back to take back with that which is rightfully His. And He will not be a meek and lowly Jesus who is coming. Instead it will be an angry and avenging Jesus coming to wage war with those who have lived in open rebellion against Him, and none will escape the devastation of His judgment in that day. This planet is spinning through space, and is on a collision course with judgment from this Christ, and it is inescapable, how different it will be in that day, when compared to the first time he came. This time, He will not be riding a lowly donkey but he will be riding a White Stallion. At this time, He will not be wearing a crown of thorns, but He will be wearing many Diadems. At this time, He will not lay down His life for many. Instead, He will take the lives of many.

Host: David Wheaton 46:21

That was the opening of Steve Lawson's sermon at Shepherds' Conference. Sitting near me was Grant Castleberry, pastor of Capital Community Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, a recent guest on this program. Here's what he had to say, after hearing that message,

Live Interview with: Grant Castleberry 46:35

Just the power, the unction and the authority. It's such a blessing for me to be in the presence of real preaching, not just teaching, which obviously Steven Lawson does teaching the Word which is so important, but commanding souls to look to Christ and to fear the coming Christ. I mean, there's a real sense where we need to have a holy trepidation before the Lord. And I think he captured that in the sermon,

Host: David Wheaton 47:07

He really did. You said, this is Jesus Christ. This is not a different Jesus. This is not the "He Gets Us" Jesus. Why isn't this preached more? And why does it need to be preached more?

Live Interview with: Grant Castleberry: 47:17

People are afraid to preach it. But it needs to be preached, because we need the whole counsel of God. Jesus says, My yoke is light, take My yoke upon you. We need that Jesus, who's meek and lowly and coming riding on a donkey. That's the Jesus who invites us to repent and believe in Him, but we also need to understand that Jesus who is coming in judgment at the end, and as Steven Lawson said, the real Jesus, the true Jesus, they're both the true Jesus. Jesus is merciful, Jesus is just, Jesus is wrathful, but the first coming is the offer of mercy. The second coming is the coming in wrath and we have to have that full picture in order to understand the real Jesus.

Host: David Wheaton 48:02

Now that interview with Grant Castleberry, was done after Steve Lawson's message. But I haven't played the conclusion of Lawson's message yet. Yes, Jesus Christ is coming to conquer and to judge, but He's also offering us a lifeline as the Savior.

Sermon Sound Bite: Steven Lawson 48:19

I must ask you, do you know this King? Have you come to see that your only hope of escaping the eternal wrath of God, is to flee to Christ, that came into this world on a mission of salvation, to live a sinless and perfect life? To fulfill all righteousness, and to go to a cross to be lifted up and to bear the sins of His people? And there upon the cross, that Jesus Christ would make the only atonement for sin? That through the shedding of His blood, there is forgiveness of sin? And it is being freely offered to you this very moment? And if you reject it you have no one to blame but yourself.

If you were to die today, where would you be? Where would you end up? Either heaven or hell. The only way to be in heaven and to escape all that we see here, and this is only the warm up for eternal hell. Eternal Hell will go on throughout all the ages to come, the lake of fire and brimstone, the place where the worm never dies, where there is the weeping and the gnashing of teeth, that place of outer darkness. That place of torment, where there is no relief for the soul ever. Come to Christ. He

is the friend of sinners today. He will receive sinners today. Do not wait til the last day and face this Christ who is the angry Christ. Believe in Christ today, repent of your sin. Take that step of faith and entrust your soul to Him, and you will find mercy. You will find forgiveness for all of your sins.

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, For by grace you had been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, lest any man should boast. Today is a day of opportunity for you, it is a day of mercy for you. It is being extended to you, from the King. Humble yourself. Deny yourself take up a cross and become a follower of Jesus Christ.

Enter through the narrow gate, for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who find it. The gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and fewer are those who find it. Jesus says he who hears these words of Mine and acts upon them, is like a very wise man who built his house upon the rock. And when the rains came, and the winds blew and beat against the house, it did not fall because it was built on the rock. He who hears these words of Mine and does not act upon them is like a very foolish man who built his house upon the sand. And when the rains came, and the winds blew and beat against the house great was is fall because it was built upon the sand.

That storm of which Jesus spoke in those verses, is a gathering storm tonight on the horizon. And you have opportunity this day to escape that storm and build upon the rock of Jesus Christ. There is no other place to stand to escape His wrath.

Host: David Wheaton 52:41

Escape the wrath to come by putting your faith in the person and the work of Jesus Christ on your behalf.

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Upcoming TCW Events:

David Wheaton here, host of The Christian Worldview to tell you about our upcoming events.

The heart of God rejecting man yearns to get back to Babel, creating a world where man rules apart from God. Evidence for this is all around us and Revelation says this is where the world will end up. On Friday, April 12th, Christian journalist Alex Newman will join us for a Christian worldview speaker series event at Beacon of Hope Church in St. Paul, Minnesota. To speak on the topic, "Of how the push for global governance utilizes environmentalism, the educational system, economic policy, and

more." You can come for a donation of any amount, but seating is limited, so you need to register in advance at thechristianworldview.org, or by calling on 1-888-646 2233. Doors open at 6pm; Alex Newman speaks at seven, with Q&A to follow. Hope to see you Friday, April 12 at Beacon of Hope church in St. Paul, Minnesota.

Our next event is The Overcomer Course for young adults, held June 21 and 22nd. At beautiful Stone House Farm, in Jordan, Minnesota. Ages 18 to 25 is a highly transitional time. The convictions developed and the decisions made during this crucial stage sets ones course for years to come. In eight sessions, over two days, addressing life's most important issues. Such as God and the gospel, right thinking and living relationships in marriage, vocation, the local church and more. The Overcomer Course is designed to help young adults gain clarity and conviction on God's plan and their purpose in it. There will be plenty of time for interaction and discussion as well. You can find out more and register by calling 1-888-646-2233 or by visiting thechristianworldview.org.