LIFE BIBLE MINISTRY

Matthew 15 (Part 1) :1-20

Confronting Meaningless Religion

Pastor Paul LeBoutillier · April 18, 2026

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

Matthew, chapter 15, verse 1. If you're there, follow along while I read. Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat. Jesus replied, And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?

For God said, Honor your father and mother, and anyone who curses his father or mother must be put to death. But you say that if a man says to his father or mother, Whatever help you might otherwise have received from me is a gift devoted to God. He is not to honor his father with it. Thus you nullify the word of God for the sake of your tradition, you hypocrites. Isaiah was right when he prophesied about you.

These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. They worship me in vain. Their teachings are but rules taught by men. Jesus called the crowd to him and said, Listen and understand. What goes into a man's mouth does not make him unclean, but what comes out of his mouth, that is what makes him unclean.

Then the disciples came to him and asked, Do you know that the Pharisees were offended when they heard this? He replied, Every plant that my heavenly father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots. Leave them. They are blind guides. If a blind man leads a blind man, both will fall into a pit.

Peter said, Explain the parable to us. Are you still so dull? Jesus asked them. Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart.

And these make a man unclean. For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man unclean. But eating with unwashed hands does not make him unclean. Stop there, please.

Let's pray. Father, open our hearts to the ministry of your word and speak to us, Lord, right where we are. And Lord, fill us with grace, fill us with insight, fill us with understanding and application to take this word into our lives and really apply it. And we ask that you would do this and be with us in Jesus' name. Amen.

There are three headings that we're going to put up on the screen here. For those of you taking notes, these would be good things to write down on a piece of paper because these will help you to remember what this passage is largely dealing with. On the screen, the first thing that we're going to deal with is the power of tradition. Secondly, empty religion. And then finally, matters of the heart.

Let's start with the first heading on your notes. And that is that of the power of tradition. This passage begins by saying that some of the religious leaders came from Jerusalem to Galilee to listen to Jesus, to observe things and so forth. You've got to know that these guys were probably sent to find fault. But the point is, eventually they began to observe the disciples eating their food without going through the ritual washing that the Jews would do.

And so they said to Jesus, you know, why do your disciples break the traditions of the elders? And they're washing with unwashed hands. Did your parents ever accuse you of washing with unwashed hands? I used to hate it when we'd get to the table. My mom, who was a nurse, you know, would make my brother and I show her our hands.

And of course, it was never a good thing when I was a kid. But she'd say, young man, get up right now and go wash your hands. So we'd have to go wash our hands and scrub them to her satisfaction. And we couldn't come back and eat until we did. Probably wasn't the worst thing that happened to us in our lives, I dare say.

But what my mother was concerned about was our lack of hygiene at that age. And I think it was a legitimate concern. However, the religious leaders are not accusing the disciples of Jesus of poor hygiene. This has nothing to do with hygiene. What they are accusing them of is not fulfilling a ritual cleansing that the religious leaders had decided years before was necessary for you not to defile your food with your hands and then eat it, ingest it, and then cause that defiling to go into your entire body.

I know, strange. But let me just give you a little history of this. In the Old Testament law, okay, God's law, there were things after which someone touched, they were required to wash before they could go and worship the Lord. One was a dead body. If you touched a dead body, you had to go through a ritual cleansing before you would be cleared to go in and worship the Lord or be clean.

Another was bodily fluids and other kinds of nasties and things like that. And after a certain ritual washing took place, you were then free to go in and worship the Lord. And I don't know if you've ever read through all that stuff in the Old Testament and wondered what in the world that was all about. But we're going to be covering this again here in our Old Testament study. Starting in September when we get back into it, we're going to be getting into the book of Leviticus.

If you've never done a study through the book of Leviticus, I would encourage you, come join us on Wednesday night. We're going to deal with all kinds of washings and nasty things like mold and mildew and touching dead bodies and stuff like that, and all the requirements that God laid upon the people related to those things prior to being able to come in and worship the Lord. And you're going to hear a lot about clean and unclean and so forth. But you read through those passages and you go, what was that all about? I mean, what in the world was God trying to communicate to the people about all those washings?

Talking about everything being clean and things being unclean. God was communicating to his people during that time the difference between holy and unholy, righteous and unrighteous, good and bad, light and dark. And he did it by communicating primarily to them, I am a holy God and you can't just approach me without being cleansed. And there are things in this life that dirty you. And if you're going to come before me, you must be cleansed.

Of course, the whole thing was to set the stage for the coming of Jesus Christ, who on the cross died for our sins that we might be cleansed, right? And ultimately approach God. You see, the Jews in those early days were in a time of schooling to help us all understand that we serve a holy God. We approach a holy God. And I just can't waltz into the presence of God.

Neither can you. We can't just walk in and say, hey God, it's me, let's talk. You know, I'd be toast. You know, our God is, the Bible says, a consuming fire. It is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

We forget that. We forget he's holy and pure and righteous. Well, the Jews didn't forget it because God told them through all of these ceremonial washings and things like that, he reminded them that you must be purified in order to approach God. But again, the spiritual lesson came after the physical. And that spiritual cleansing comes through Jesus Christ, our Savior, and so forth.

Now, that's all good and fine. Here's the problem. Over the years, the rabbis started adding to what God said in the Old Testament where he said, you know, if you touch a dead body, if you touch this, if you

touch that, you got to be cleansed before you can go in and worship the Lord. Well, they decided that wasn't good enough. We're going to add some things on top of it.

So they said, okay, here's the deal. Before you eat, you have to go through this ritual cleansing. And they came up with all these rules about how much water to use. Yeah, you had to measure out the water. And you didn't just wash your hands.

You had to wash down to your elbows. And you had to do it just the right way. You had to let the water drip off your fingers in just the right way. And if you didn't do it just the right way, you had to start all over again. Didn't that sound like a fun way to live?

Well, it had nothing to do with God's Word. You know? God was teaching them the difference between holy and unholy and so forth. And they added to it all these rules. Well, guess what?

Rules, after you keep them for a while, they turn into traditions. And traditions turn into laws. Whenever I go through something like this, I, of course, immediately have the soundtrack of Fiddler on the Roof going through my head. Don't you? Some of you guys?

Remember? Remember the father? He's all freaked out because he's got these daughters who are constantly... violating tradition, you know, and he sings, ♪ Tradition, tradition ♪ You guys ever watch Fiddler on the Roof? If you hadn't, just go get it.

Takes about 14 hours to get through the whole thing, but I don't know how long it is. It's long, it's one of those really long movies. It seems like 14 hours. I don't actually know how long it is, but anyway, you know, he's this Jewish man who's just steeped in tradition, and all the traditions that he's ever held dear are being just blown away before his eyes, and it's just freaking him out big time. Anyway, great movie.

The point of this whole thing is that traditions can so easily creep into our lives after a period of time, and it usually takes a period of time, to the point where about a generation or so after we create traditions, people no longer even realize why they do things anymore. It's just tradition. And if you want to know if you're dealing with someone who is just following tradition, ask them why they do it. And you know what you'll get? They think about it for a minute, and then they go, well, we've always done it that way.

And you say, well, why? They go, because we've always done it that way. Right? That's tradition. Tradition.

Yeah, that's pretty much all there is to it. Now, I'm not saying that traditions are bad or wrong necessarily, because our family, like yours, has developed traditions over the years. We have holiday

traditions, Christmas traditions, Easter traditions, and things like that, and they're fun. They're fun, and it's neat to see our kids grow up, get married, and then kind of begin to do traditions with their own families. That's kind of neat, too.

But when a tradition revolves around something we do related to God, it takes on an added sort of a weight of authority, and essentially, these traditions will become equal in weight to the very word of God, like you have with Roman Catholicism. I mean, I'm not throwing stones here. You talk to somebody who's into Roman Catholicism, and they will tell you. I mean, it's a tenet of the church that the traditions of the church have equal value to Scripture. I mean, it's just, I'm not telling tales out of school.

This is just the way it is. Tradition has equal value or authority as Scripture in Roman Catholicism, and it's just because it's been around so long, and this is the way we do it, you know? And so, that brings us to our next point on our outline. After tradition, we deal with the issue of empty religion, because ultimately, after we begin to walk in traditions that are not founded in the word of God, careful to qualify that, we find ourselves engaged in empty religious practices, and Jesus comes right back after the religious leaders say to him, why do your disciples not wash their hands? Why are they breaking the traditions of the elders?

Look at verse three in your Bible. Jesus comes right back, and he says, and why do you break the command of God? For the sake of your tradition, and before they can even say anything, he gives them an example. Verse four. He says, for God said, honor your father and mother.

Verse five, but you say that if a man says to his father and mother, whatever help you might have received from us is a gift devoted to God, he is not to honor his father with. Okay, what's going on here? Here's the deal. In the Old Testament law, God had told his people, honor your father and mother. Well, that can be expressed in a lot of ways, not the least of which is when they become aged, we take care of them.

And many of you are taking care of aged parents, or you've taken care of aged parents, or you're going to take care of aged parents. It's a way that we honor our parents. It's a very honoring thing to do. It's honoring today, it was honoring then. But you see, some of the people didn't want to spend their money on their parents.

And so they looked in the law for a loophole, and they created traditions. And so this is what they did. They said, all right, here's the deal. If you've got money set aside, and you don't want to spend it on your

parents when they're old age, then all you have to do is set it aside for the Lord. And what they were required to do was to speak this little formula, literally to their parents.

And I could give it to you verbatim, but it doesn't really matter. The essence of it was this, whatever support you might have otherwise thought you would get from me is devoted to God. So, sorry, and that was it. And as far as the religious leaders were concerned, your money was now no longer obligated for use to take care of your parents. It was now devoted to the Lord.

Doesn't that sound religious? It even might sound a little bit cool to say, my money and all I have and all my possessions are devoted to God. And you kind of have that air about you. All that I have belongs to God. But what's really going on is I am motivated by greed, you see, and selfishness.

I don't want to give my money to my parents. Worked hard for it. So I'm going to make it sound all very right and good in my selfishness and greed. And then Jesus goes on to say, and so therefore this little loophole you found with your traditions, you actually do harm. You violate the essence of the word of God for the sake of your traditions.

And that's what traditions can do. And what that becomes, people, is emptiness. Empty religious practice. And unfortunately, there's a lot of it going on. And that's why Jesus said, look with me again in your Bible in verse seven.

He says, you hypocrites. He tells them that what they're involved in through their tradition is really just hypocrisy. He said, in fact, you know, Isaiah was just, he hit the nail right on the head when he wrote about you. He said, these people honor me with their lips, but their hearts couldn't be farther away. He says, you know, the fact is, you have a pretense of worshiping God, but your worship is vain.

And that word vain, by the way, means empty, okay? That's what the word vain means. When it says, don't use the name of the Lord in vain, it means don't use it for an empty, meaningless purpose. Your worship now has become empty. It is empty religion that has no meaning, no substance.

And your teachings are nothing but rules taught by men, right? It has nothing to do with the authority of God's word and so forth. Now, what Jesus is confronting the religious leaders with in this passage was obvious here. They were being confronted with their hypocrisy. They were being confronted with their empty religion.

It's easy for you and I to look at and read a passage like this and think, you know those religious leaders, man, what a piece of work they were. I mean, just weird religious crazies, you know, that were

just filled full of selfishness and self-purpose. And yeah, oh man, I would never be like that. Problem is, we can be like that, very much like that, as a matter of fact. We can allow, and this is the sobering reality, we can allow our own worship of the Lord to take on the same kind of religiosity.

And it's a fairly easy thing to do. And here's how we do it. We do it the same way the Jews did it. We forget that worship, serving God, serving God, living for God, is all in here, and it's not out here. And you don't think we can forget those sorts of things?

Oh, you better believe we can, and we do. And it's a deterioration of our personal, you know, us evangelical Christians, we love to talk about a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. We'll go around and ask people, do you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ? And then they'll talk about their little religious this and that, and we say, yeah, but do you have a personal relationship with him? Because you gotta have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

And if you don't have a personal relationship, and we're all about a personal relationship, but you know what, we evangelicals very subtly can just move beyond that personal relationship where there's no longer any real intimacy, no longer any real communion going on between us and God, and it becomes this situation where he's like a policeman. And we're trying to figure out if we can like, get in under. the radar, and people come to me from time to time. Believers will come to me, you know, like some, and after a service or whatever and say, Pastor Paul, I have a question. Do you think God would be mad if I, and then they talk about something they want to do or are planning on doing or are thinking about planning on doing or something like that.

It's kind of like the way we respond to the police. It's like, okay, the speed limit is 65. Can I go 68 and get away with it? How about 69? You think he'll pull me over for 69?

I don't know. I think they'll probably let me go at least five over. 70, I can go 70, no problem. You see what we do? And we begin to apply that same mentality to God, and instead of having a living, breathing, warm relationship with God where we're, his heart becomes our heart, and his desires become our desires.

We start having this external relationship with God that kind of consumes this whole idea of, can I get away with it or can I do this? What can I do? How close to the edge can I live? And is God gonna be angry with me if I do this? And it becomes this thing outside of us, and pretty soon, it affects our worship.

And our worship becomes just as external. And we might be singing the lyrics okay. We might even be raising our hands in pure evangelical fashion, but something in our heart is now disconnected. And we're

really, truly not worshiping the Lord. We're singing a song in the same fashion you would sing around the campfire while you're roasting marshmallows, and there's really about as much emotion as that.

And it's something that we as Christians have to be really careful of, and that brings me to the last point of our outline, and that is matters of the heart. This is the point where Jesus helps move us beyond externalities, what we're doing out here, trying to kind of deal with God as policemen, and start dealing with God as the lover of my heart, the lover of my soul, and the one who knows my every thought, my every motive, and whose heart I want to be in me, and so forth. It starts this way. Look in your Bible here in our passage at verse 10. It starts here.

Jesus called the crowd to him, and he said, listen and understand what goes into a man's mouth is not what makes him unclean or defiles him. It's what comes out of the mouth that makes him unclean. Why does Jesus say that? Why does he say it's what comes out of his mouth that makes him unclean? Well, he actually explains it in verse 18.

Look in verse 18. He says the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart. That's why. What comes out of the mouth, you want to know what's in somebody's heart? Just stick around with them for a while and wait and just see what comes out of their mouth, because that is a reflection of what's in the heart.

Now, we can all put on the religious talk for a while. You put a couple people in a room all by themselves and lock the door, and they can talk a good fight for a while, but eventually, they're gonna get upset, they're gonna get irritated, they're gonna get frustrated, or whatever the case may be, and out of their mouth is gonna spill what's really going on in their heart. And the words that we say are just a reflection, you know, of what's going on inside of our heart. Well, what goes on inside of the human heart? Verse 19, Jesus kind of outlines the whole nasty sort of list.

He says, for out of the heart come evil thoughts. Things like murder. It's pretty evil. Adultery, sexual immorality of all kinds. Theft, false testimony, slander.

He says, you know what? These are what make you unclean. These are what defile you. It's not eating with unwashed hands. What is Jesus saying?

It's not what goes into your mouth, it's what comes out of your mouth. That's what shows the true you, and so forth. So the question that you and I have to ask about this whole issue is what can I do about it? You see, because everybody, whoever is genuinely open and serious about God is eventually gonna have

to look at their heart and see what it's made of. And by the way, that's not going to be an exciting sort of a investigation.

When we look at our hearts, we see things that we don't really wanna see, but we need to see. And the question that we're all gonna have to answer at some point is what are you gonna do about it? Now, if you're a religious person, which I don't recommend, by the way, but if you're a religious person, you're gonna get busy doing something about it. Well, I just have to clean that up. And you can hear religious people talk all the time because they'll mess up.

They'll do something that they know they shouldn't do, and they'll say things like, sorry about that, I'm just really working on that right now in my life. Did you hear what came out of their mouth? They're working on it. See, that's what religion does. Religion makes you work on it.

Religion tells you you gotta work on it. You just really need to work on that, young man. Religion is all about working on it. It's about works. It's about what you can do to clean yourself up.

People who don't even go to church have a religious mindset. That's why when you invite them, what do they say? Nine times out of 10, what do they say? They say, well, I'm just really kind of working on my life, and when I get some things kind of dialed in, then I'll come to church. That's religion.

And you need to look at them and say, we don't do religion at our church. You see, the gospel is for sinners, right? The church is for sinners. It's a hospital. That's like saying to your doctor, when I get well, I'll check myself into the hospital.

That's stupid. That's backwards, you see. We're here because we need to be here. Our hearts have been sickened, and things need to change in our lives, and yet we're still overwhelmed with this religious sort of a mentality. I've gotta do this.

I've gotta pull myself up by the bootstraps. I gotta clean up my life. I gotta clean up my act. I gotta take the bull by the horns, all the other ways that we say it. And we apply that same thing to our relationship with God, which isn't a relationship at all.

Well, if it is a relationship, it's a judicial one. It's a legal relationship with God. What kind of relationship do you have with God? Is he like the policeman? In that case, you have a legal relationship with God.

If you're always kind of just looking over your shoulder and wondering if God's lights, whoo, whoo, whoo, are in your rearview mirror, and he's gonna catch you doing something or whatever, then you have

a legal relationship with him. That's called religion, guys, and religion is bankrupt. Religion never helped anybody. You know why? Religion can't change the heart.

All it can do is change the candy-coated wrapper, the stuff on the outside. And you know what? Jesus told us in this passage, frankly, that just doesn't matter. You know, Paul wrote to the church, the Colossian church, and he talked about this because they were involved, like a lot of churches were, that a tendency toward focusing on the externals, not focusing on the heart, and being involved in some kind of legal requirements, you know, and so forth. So let me put this on the screen.

Let me show you what Paul said to the church at Colossae. He said, since you died with Christ to the basic principles of this world, why, as though you somehow still belong to it, do you submit to its rules, such as do not handle, do not taste, do not touch? He goes, listen, these are all destined to perish with use because they are based, ooh, look at this, on human commands and teachings. Such regulations, oh yeah, oh yeah, they have an appearance of wisdom with their self-imposed worship, their false humility, and their harsh treatment of the body. But look at this, this is so important.

They lack any value in restraining sensual indulgence. In other words, it looks hot, but it doesn't change the heart. Religion appeals to us because on the outside, it looks like these people have it together because they keep their rules and they stand up tall and they're constantly pointing at themselves, look what I can do. Three times a day I do it, as a matter of fact. Do you do it even once a week?

And they're always thinking and talking about themselves and what they've accomplished and so forth. And you know what? Paul says, you know what, it's empty, it's bankrupt. Because while they maybe are successful at calling attention to themselves, They can't change their heart. The heart remains unchanged.

It's the same corrupted, rotten, stinky heart with a candy wrapper. Have you ever bit into an apple that looked gorgeous on the outside but was rotten on the inside? Boy, is that a surprise. I mean, you're getting ready to enjoy a juicy, crisp apple and it's got worms on the inside. Yikes.

Do you know that that's what religion looks like? It's just this beautiful outside wrapper. And people will be impressed with you. I guarantee it. You'll even have people, you might even get a little following of folks coming behind you and telling you how cool you are and how much you have it together.

But you don't have it together because you're involved in religion and religion doesn't change the heart. It can't change the heart. As Paul said to the Colossians, it has absolutely no value in any kind of restraint of what is the cause of all these things, the sensual indulgence of the heart. So there you go. Rules don't work.

So what's God's solution? Well, you know, like I said, there's a point in time, hopefully there's a point in time that every single one of us has an appointment with reality. And what I mean by that is we see what's really going on in our hearts, the real true condition of our hearts. And as I said before, that's usually a very troubling revelation that comes to our lives. David in the Old Testament had a very troubling revelation of what was in his heart.

You know, here was a man who was said to be a man after God's own heart and so forth, and yet he found out that his human heart could not only covet another man's wife, he could take her, violate her, and then make arrangements for her husband to be killed and make it look like it happened in battle, but everybody, well, he knew. This was a setup. And then he could live like that for months until finally the Lord sends one of his prophets to David and confronts him with his sin. Now, the good thing about David is on that day when he had an appointment with reality, he saw his heart as it really truly was, and he cried out to God with all he was worth, but I want you to see, and this is so vitally important, what he said to God related to his heart. It's in his famous prayer of repentance, which is encompassed in Psalm 51, but in it he said to God, "'Create in me a pure heart, O God.'" And many of you know that the word, the Hebrew word that is translated create in this passage is the same word that is used in Genesis chapters one and two when God is creating the universe, and it means to create out of nothing.

Just as God spoke things into being in the universe, David is not saying, cleanse my heart. He's saying, I need a new heart. I need a brand new heart created by you. You see, this is a man who is basically at the end of himself. He realizes, I can't do it, I can't cut it.

This is gonna need a heart transplant from God. And by the way, people, this happens when we come to Jesus Christ, confess our sins, and invite him to be the Lord of our lives. This happens, the Bible has a term for getting a new heart. It's called being born again, okay? That's the New Testament term.

When you come to Jesus Christ by faith, you confess your sins, and you say, you are the Savior, and I accept what you did on the cross for me. The Bible says you are born again. You're given a new heart at that time, a brand new. He creates in you a new heart. There's all kinds of different ways we talk about it.

We talk about it as putting on the new man. We talk about it being born again. We talk about being regenerated. We have all kinds of different terms, but it all comes down to meaning the same thing. You got yourself a new heart, wonderful, great.

That's how you start. But there's a problem. We keep living in this dirty, rotten, stinking world, don't we? And we keep having to walk through this dirty, rotten, stinking world. And there's the constant threat of now polluting that which God made new.

You've been given a new heart by God when you came to Christ, but now you have this issue of living life. And there's a constant threat of going back and living in that same cesspool of degradation and sin that you lived in before you got your new heart. And now there's an issue. And in fact, the Bible issues a warning to us in Proverbs 4, verse 23. On the screen it says, above all else, guard your heart because it's the wellspring of life.

All things come from it in your life. What you put in your heart affects you. Well, you've been given a new heart, but you see now you have the added responsibility of protecting that heart. How are you and I gonna do that? I wanna close this morning with yet another exhortation from Paul's letter to the Colossians because this is an age-old issue, guys.

Can I just tell you this right now? This issue of protecting the new heart that you've been given has been going on ever since new hearts have been being given out. The threat of corruption and pollution in these new hearts that we've been given is as old as the new hearts. And the issue that you and I have living in this world is really the same issue that people have always had living in the world. And that is, how can I live with now this new heart that God's given me without finding myself back in the same cesspool of sin that I once used to swim in?

Colossians chapter three, verses one through 10. Here's what it says. Paul writes and he says to them, since then you have been raised with Christ. Here's what I want you to do, guys. Set your hearts on things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds, your thoughts on things above, not on earthly things. You died. Your life is now hidden with Christ in God. And when Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. So put to death therefore whatever belongs to your earthly nature.

All that sexual immorality and impurity and lust and evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. He says, because of these you know the wrath of God is coming. And you used to walk in these ways in the life you once lived. But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these, like anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. Do not lie to each other since you've taken off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self.

That's a way of talking about the new heart, which is being renewed in the knowledge, in the image of its creator. Oh, this is where the rubber meets the road, guys. This is the tough part. Oh, this is the tough part. God, how in the world do I live in this world and not get tainted by it?

And I'm even living in a world that's different than the one my parents grew up in. You know, I was telling the kids just last week at Refuge, I've been sharing at Refuge, and when I was a kid, we had to do some labor to pick up like a dirty magazine. I mean, a filthy pornographic magazine. And I'm ashamed to say that we did on occasion. Today, it's a mouse click away, just like that.

Now, we have that freedom today. Do you think we're better off for it? No. We can just tumble a little bit faster today than we could 40 years ago. That's all.

The need, and this is the point I'm making, the need to be vigilant and careful, to guard our hearts is so much greater than it was even 40 years ago or 100 years ago. It's not because hearts have gotten any worse, it's because that which we indulge in from the world has become easy, easy. It's like a pornographic magazine sitting on every coffee table of every house in America, just sitting there open. And all you gotta do is walk by and look. We had to, when I was a kid, we had to go find them.

You don't have to do that anymore. It's just right there. And that's just one example of the things in this life. that used to exist behind closed doors, and now those doors are wide open. So here's the issue.

You and I have been given a new heart. Thank you, Jesus. By the way, if you haven't been given a new heart yet, and you've been laboring and grieving over the condition of your heart, then stop your religious thought, right here, right now, and do what David did. Cry out and say, God created me a clean heart, a new heart, created me a brand new heart. That's what I need.

Don't cleanse what I got, give me a brand new one. And he will. He'll meet you right there. But now that you have that heart, we need to protect it. We need to walk circumspectly.

We need to walk vigilantly against the constant onslaught of the world and its ways into our lives. Because listen, the enemy of your souls is behind everything that the world is throwing at you right now, and he has a purpose, he has a plan, and it is to destroy your life. But we just have to say, you know what, we're not gonna let him. We're gonna pray. And I believe prayer is one of the most powerful tools that we've been given, and one of the most underused tools that we've been given, and frankly, it shows how little faith we have.

But we need to begin to pray. We need to begin to cry out to God, Lord, save me from the corruption of this world. You've given me this new heart, now help me to protect it. Give me the courage not to watch that movie, not to pick up that book, not to listen to that particular music, or whatever the case might be. And Lord, if I've opened things in my life, if I've opened my heart up to things that are not your will, Lord, bring that conviction.

Show me by your spirit those areas of my life where I have allowed things into my heart that are not good, that are actually polluting this thing so that this relationship between you and I is becoming strained and stressed and distant. Show me those things and give me the strength to repent of them and turn my back and say, you know what, I'm not going there. I'm not doing that. My relationship with Jesus is more important than that thing. ♪♪♪ ♪♪♪ ♪♪♪ ♪♪♪ ♪♪♪ ♪♪♪ ♪♪♪