

2/16/20 - Judges 17 - "Subjectivism: A False Religion" (Part 1)

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- [0 : 00] Lord God, we are grateful to have this Word in our hands this morning, and Father, we pray that we don't add or take anything away from this Word.
- And Lord God, that we can see the beauty of the transcendency of Your Scriptures, the supremacy of Your Scriptures, and the authority of Your Scriptures to guide our lives and also to confirm and deny things that might be happening within our minds and within our hearts.
- And Father, it corrects us. Father, we come to You with open hands. We ask that the Holy Spirit would help us this morning to read Your Word and to apply it with that accuracy.
- And Father, we pray this in Jesus' precious and holy name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Read with me.
- Judges 17. There was a man of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah, and he said to his mother, The eleven hundred pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and you spoke it in my ear.
- [1 : 17] Behold, the silver is with me. I took it. And his mother said, Blessed be my son by the Lord. And he restored the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother.
- And his mother said, I dedicate the silver to the Lord from my hand for my son to make a carved image and metal image. Now, therefore, I will restore it to you.
- Verse 4. So when he restored the money to his mother, his mother took two hundred pieces of silver and gave it to the silversmith who made it into a carved image and a metal image.
- And it was in the house of Micah. Verse 7. And the man Micah had a shrine, and he made an ephod and a household of gods and ordained one of his sons who became his priest.
- In those days there was no king of Israel. Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. Verse 7 continues. Now, there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, who was a Levite.
- [2 : 21] And he sojourned there. And the man departed from the town of Bethlehem in Judah to sojourn where he could find a place. And as he journeyed, he came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah.
- And Micah said to him, Where do you come from? And he said to him, I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah, and I am going to sojourn where I may find a place.
- And Micah said to him, Stay with me and be to me a father and a priest, and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year and a suit of clothes in your living.
- And the Levite went in. And the Levite was content to dwell with the man, and the young man became to him like one of his sons. And Micah ordained the Levite, and the young man became his priest and was in the house of Micah.
- Then Micah said, I know that the Lord will prosper me because I have a Levite as a priest. Church, this is the word of the Lord.

[3 : 30] There's many diet plans out there. It's sad that my wife isn't here. She's the diet guru, and she'd probably get a kick out of me talking about diets.

But there's so many diets out there. There are so many strange diets out there, like the tapeworm diet.

Have you ever heard of the tapeworm diet? You ingest a tapeworm, and supposedly it eats all the food for you and doesn't digest. And once you're done with the tapeworm, you get rid of the tapeworm through natural human processes.

There's the cotton ball diet. You ever hear of the cotton ball diet? Anybody on the cotton ball diet here? Ellen? Yeah? Okay. You know, there's zero calories in the cotton ball diet.

You can just keep on eating and you feel full. They actually made something called slimming soap. Or it washes the fat away. Slimming soap.

[4 : 34] Have you heard of it? Yeah? Man. I had fun looking this stuff up. There's the cigarette diet, which is odd because I thought cigarettes actually make you gain weight. But I guess at one time, they thought that having a cigarette would actually help curve some appetite.

Grab a cigarette if you're hungry. Or the sleeping diet. You can't be hungry if you're sleeping. That's great. That's a good diet. Or the vinegar diet.

The vinegar diet is a good one because the side effects include vomiting and diarrhea. So basically, you're not getting anything either way. Or the vision diets.

Oddly enough, if you get these special glasses that have a shade of blue, apparently blue curves your appetite. Makes you feel less hungry. So, I don't know.

Maybe take a look. Amazon might have some deals going on. But there's so many strange diets out there. Living in the USA, we have quite an issue with eating real food, don't we?

[5 : 40] I was speaking to one of our international students from Honduras. And he was talking to me one time we were at Chipotle, eating kind of healthy. We were talking about, you know, the differences between his country and our country and some complexities.

And he was saying that one interesting thing is he gained so much weight. He stayed on the same diet that he was on in the Honduras.

When he came here, he ended up eating the same things, but he gained weight. We have a problem of not eating real food. And like many of us, I love the junk food diet.

It's a good diet. It really is. I'm a sucker for my kids' veggie straws. Those family-sized bags have no problem in my life. You can sit there and eat and eat and eat.

And nothing satisfies me better than a Boston cream Dunkin' Donuts. Right? I love those things. But there is often an objective in our desire to eat junk food.

[6 : 47] We are hungry, obviously. But we also want something cheap. We want something quick. And something that is tasty.

Something that satisfies our desires. You see, the nation of Israel had a similar problem, but it was in eating spiritual junk food.

They were hungry. They were. They wanted something quick. They wanted something cheap. They wanted something tasty. They wanted something that maybe looked like food.

Spiritual food. Their pursuits were good. Just like eating something. Like your body is telling you you're hungry, so you eat. Their desire was to worship God, but through syncretism.

Which is kind of morphing that of the Canaanite religion with true Orthodox religion. They themselves were worshiping God the wrong ways in this nation.

[7 : 53] Ways that were cheap. Ways that were cheap, quick, and easy. They were very tasty, but they were spiritual junk food. So today we're going to see this occur in real time in this nation as we enter into the first part of the epilogue of the book of Judges.

The end part of the book of Judges. And it's actually going to be a two-part message. For next week I'm going to be in 18, but we're still going to be talking about and continuing and expounding on today's message.

And we will see that this nation had the wrong diet plan. It was a diet plan of subjectivism. And so I want to define terms here in this is subjectivism.

And this is the theory. This is going to be important. If you pay attention to anything, I want you to be on track with the whole sermon today. This is the theory that perception is reality.

And that there is no underlying true reality that exists independent of perception. So if you think it and you feel it, it has to be true.

[9 : 04] So in short, subjectivism is the notion that an action is moral because someone or a group says it is moral. Or that's the notion that an idea is true because someone or a group says it's true.

It's not rooted in anything but perception. It makes you feel good. It's just like eating that diet plan. And this is what their diet plan entailed.

It was a plan that was actually rooted in subjectivism rather than what was written. Okay? No one looked to the Torah at this time for guidance.

Their religious endeavors were formulated upon feeling. And the one they worshiped was not the God of the Bible. But the false gods. The carved.

The graven images and feelings. So when we're looking at them back then and us today, I hope you'll see that this has been a historic problem.

[10 : 11] I hope that is loud and clear in this first part of the message. And that the Word of God is the only solution to prevent the spread of subjectivism. Let's look at the first section of text today.

In verse 1 in Judges 17. Where we have divination over orthodoxy. It says, There was a man of the hill country of Ephraim whose name was Micah.

And he said to his mother, The eleven hundred pieces of silver that were taken from you, about which you uttered a curse, and also spoken into my ears, Behold, the silver is with me. I took it.

And his mother said, Blessed be my son by the Lord. And he restored the eleven hundred pieces of silver to his mother. And his mother said, I dedicate the silver to the Lord from my hand for my son.

But she continues to make a carved image and a metal image. Now, therefore, I will restore it to you. It's interesting meeting a man named Micah, because I have a son named Micah.

[11 : 19] So, you know, hopefully this isn't writing on the wall in our lives of us missing eleven hundred shekels or pieces of silver. I'll keep my eye on him.

And interestingly enough, as we read, we have a Levite. So, it's kind of like, I don't know what may have compelled us with our kids' names, but it wasn't the book of Judges. But we actually named Micah because of Micah's meaning.

The name Micah means, Who is like Yahweh? Who is like God? And it's quite ironic in this passage, because he stole quite a fortune from his mother, didn't he?

Eleven hundred pieces of silver. And to put that in perspective, thinking down to the Levites that he hired, he hired him ten pieces of silver a year.

So, obviously, eleven hundred pieces of silver versus ten pieces of silver, you're living pretty lavishly with eleven hundred pieces. Kind of putting that in proportion. So, I could honestly, I could take this scripture and just pluck it right out of here, and we can have a message on repentance and forgiveness and returning the money to your, you know, this is why the Bible says to return to, you know, what you steal and repent from that and then forgive one another.

[12 : 39] But we're actually going to see that there's something wrong in this exchange. As we spread the scripture out within its context, we will see that there's something wrong, there's a disconnect in this passage.

Verse one through three explains something vital, that these two people, that Micah and his mother, were spiritually aware, but their hearts were not upon the instruction of the Lord.

So, the problem with Micah's confession is his motive seemed to be fueled by the curse that his mother spoke to him. Let's have a word of prayer for our firefighters.

Father God, we are grateful to to be here located right on this corner where we get quite a bunch of traffic, and within this traffic comes people and personnel that are hired to protect and serve the people within this Youngstown community.

And Father, whatever this call might be, you know what this call is regarding. And Father, we pray for your spirits and your comforts and to be upon those firefighters as they're leaving their families and they don't know what they're going to be arriving to.

[14 : 02] And Father, we pray that you guide them and protect them and keep them from harm. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So, looking at, back into Judges, looking at Micah and his mother, these, we have a problem with his confession.

His motives seem to be more concerned about the instruction from the curse from his mother. Like, here, give it back. I know you uttered a curse and you spoke it into my ear.

Here, have the money back. I give it back to you. And the problem with the mother's forgiveness is her words seem noble, kind of like turning a curse into a blessing. Who doesn't want to do that for their kids?

Right? But, out of the same breath, she becomes an investor of false worship in this passage, proving ignorance to the Torah because she should know what's written in Exodus 20, verse 3 in the Ten Commandments.

You shall have no gods before me. And what does she do? She does just that. So, immediately, we should draw quite a suspicion to the motives.

[15 : 07] There's kind of some hints within this passage. This isn't a message to be communicating of forgiveness and repentance. This is a message of a disconnect of two hearts that think that they're worshiping the Lord, but their hearts are far from Him.

And so, the verse continues in verse 4. Look with me. And it's kind of like funding this enemy's, the enemy's mission in verse 4. So, when he restored the money to his mother, his mother took 200 pieces of silver and gave it to the silversmith who made it into a carved image and a metal image.

And it was in the house of Micah and the man Micah had a shrine and he made an ephod and household gods and ordained one of his sons who became his priest. In those days, there was no king in Israel.

Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. So, Micah's mother turns into quite an investor in this false worship. Here's a little seed money.

Micah, you know, here's 18% of what you stole from me. I mean, Micah's out, he's church planting, folks. He's got some seed money, he's got investors, he's even got a shrine now.

[16 : 18] He's got priests. Man, this is looking real good. But was Micah's heart set upon the Lord in faith or was his heart set on what was seen?

False worship of man-made idols. These false gods were not necessarily objects of worship. They, you know, they were worshipped. But they also provided a sense of divination, of guidance, supernatural, spiritual guidance, of trying to figure out how to live life and how to serve them.

And this was something that was also forbidden for the nation of Israel. In Deuteronomy 18, 10, we see this, where it says, there shall be found among you anyone who burns his son or his daughter as an offering, anyone who practices divination or tells fortunes or interprets omens or a sorcerer or a charmer or a medium or a necromancer or one who inquires of the dead.

For whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord. For these nations which you are about to dispossess, listen to the fortune tellers and to diviners.

But as for you, the Lord your God has not allowed you to do this. I remember growing up, being young and in my childhood and having playful games of kind of like testing how I need to respond to situations.

[17 : 58] Like I know girls, you know, pick up the daisies and he loves me, he loves me not, he loves me, you know, hoping that he loves you. And, you know, when that turns out not in your favor, you pick up another daisy because you're not satisfied with that guidance in the first place.

I can relate this to my kids play the eeny, meeny, miny, moe game. And Micah somehow, my son Micah, not this Micah, knows how to kind of manipulate. He knows the game of eeny, meeny, miny, moe.

He knows how to get the outcome he desires. I often did this with basketball shooting. You know, if I make this three-pointer, I'm going to do X, Y, Z.

And then you miss that three-pointer and you're like, okay, best out of three. Okay, best out of three. I'm going to try this again. It's like, it's like we do this often with God sometimes in life.

It can have different shapes and different sizes. We treat God like a spiritual vending machine where if we put in our quarter and we get an outcome that we don't desire, we just, we're just like, is there any other quarters here that I can, I can try this and try again and you don't get it again.

[19 : 10] You just keep trying and trying again. Just keep adding quarters. Church, I know we're prone to do this, but I want us to rest in what God has revealed in His Word by the help of the Holy Spirit according to what is written in His Word.

That we can rest in His grace and His sovereignty in the aspects of our life, lest we find ourselves sinning against God in various same ways of divination that Micah and his mother struggled with.

How quickly we can even become straight to Orthodox Christianity in different ways, seeking out new and fresh divine revelations apart from what has been written and promised within Scripture.

And there we go at times, we're like shaking the eight ball sometimes in life, trying to figure stuff out on our own wits, our own knowledge. Or rolling the dice with God.

And this isn't even just me, I mean, this is something that even charismatic folks have agreed with. Even one of the modern day heretics, Todd White, agreed with in a recent video in January that the church does this.

[20 : 23] They're seeking this new, fresh message and they don't know the original message that was given to them. It was really interesting hearing someone like Todd White say that. But the point of this first section of passage, when we're looking at divination, this worship of false idols, church, our concern must not be in attempting to conform God's will to our will or His ways to our ways.

Instead, we have to conform our will to His will and our ways to His ways. He's giving us the mold, we have to fit His mold.

We are not the potter. Okay? So Micah and his mother suffered from a subjective reality. Think of subjectivism. Doing what is right in their own eyes is subjectivism.

This is the perception that reality is truth. Who can question you because you feel this or all these other people are doing it? So let's see this narrative continue as we meet a sojourner, a Levite priest.

In verse 7, it says, Now there was a young man of Bethlehem in Judah, of the family of Judah, and was a Levite, and he sojourned there. And the man departed from the town of Bethlehem in Judah to sojourn where he could find a place and he journeyed.

[21 : 46] And as he journeyed, sorry, he came to the hill country of Ephraim to the house of Micah. So, we see a sojourner. This guy was not on a church plant at Dever.

The NAM, the IMB, didn't send him from a sending church. He was supposed to be, being a Levite priest, he should have been located in Shiloh.

But he was sojourning. So, we see something odd in this text as well. This isn't a message about missionary work. This section begs a question, what would lead this priest to sojourn?

Obviously, the reframe, the subjectivism is even found in his life. He was doing what was right in his own eyes. He left his orthodox life as a Levite and he's sojourning.

He's going to find something better in this passage. And within the context, it will actually support that even within next week. So, Micah sees an opportunity. He says to, he says to the Levite, where do you come from?

[22 : 52] And he said to Micah, I am a Levite of Bethlehem in Judah and I am going to sojourn where I may find a place.

And Micah said to him, stay with me and be a father and a priest and I will give you ten pieces of silver a year and a suit of clothes in your living. And the Levite went in.

Man, Micah hit the jackpot. Man, his mother gave him all this seed money. He's got his shrine. He's got all these other priests. No way. What comes knocking up on his door?

It's a Levite priest. If my neighbors and those other shrines don't take me seriously then, they're going to know that this is for real. Now, I have a Levite.

This was a very important time in his life. He hit the jackpot. What better way to make his plans come true, his successes look like it's coming from the Lord, than to have a Levite hired.

[23 : 49] Truly, this was of the Lord, right? It's surprising, though, knowing Bethlehem since Bethlehem was not a city listed in the ascribed cities of the Levites.

Bethlehem wasn't even someplace that he should be coming from. He's been wandering for quite some time and that list is in Numbers 35 and Joshua 21. And so, he kind of puts on this fruit facade.

He's got his shrines. He's got his priests. He's got his Levite. His breadwinner. And in verse 11, we see, and the Levite was content to dwell with the man.

And the young man became to him like one of his sons. And Micah ordained the Levite and the young man became his priest and was in the house of Micah. Then Micah said, now I know that the Lord will prosper me because I have a Levite as a priest.

I have hit the jackpot. Micah's whole heart is revealed in verse 13. He is seeking prosperity from the Lord but failing to seek the Lord.

[24 : 56] Micah's actions were not based on the teachings of God's word. His heart was inclined to do what he wanted and not as God had commanded him. In verse 13, this should indicate that Micah was trying to actually worship Yahweh.

Yahweh is actually used in this original text. The Lord here is translated Yahweh. He was trying to worship the true God with his idols, with the things that he had.

His attempts, though, were feeble and did not represent the one and true God and King. Get that. He was trying to worship the God of this universe with false gods but his worship did not represent the worship of our true God and King.

So might we as a church have a tendency of not representing the one true God and King at times? Our problem today is not necessarily carved images. Maybe it is.

I don't know. You tell me. But rather subjective idols like who God is to us or how we create him to be to fit inside of our little box on our shelf.

[26 : 15] People say, I like to think of God as the great father in the sky. I don't like to think of God as a judge. Why would we think God as a judge?

Because the word tells us that he is the judge. Okay? Subjectivism. But our desires have nothing to do with God's true character.

What we think of God has nothing to do with his true character. It makes me cringe actually when I hear this said. God is who he says he is because he is what he is.

It doesn't need our interpretation. It doesn't need our carnal definitions. And that is why false images of God are forbidden.

in scripture. This is Exodus 22. We see this often in our day and age. God has revealed himself and he demands that our understanding of him conform to what he has revealed about himself in his word.

[27 : 21] Regardless of our feelings, regardless of how many people are doing it, regardless of maybe what's happening in life, it is in subjection to his word. Luther, Martin Luther says anything that one imagines of God.

Apart from Christ is only useless thinking and vain idolatry. Church, self-made and subjective religion is committing spiritual anarchy.

This is not biblical. Worship of God is unique and it is distinguished. distinguished. It is not syncretism of a little bit of this and a little bit of that.

The worship of the true God is unique and distinguished as revealed according to his word. So this points us to a book where we find who God is and knowing God's instructions for our lives.

We do not live according to our own terms, our own feelings, or how many other people are doing it, but we live according to God's terms as he has revealed to us in his word.

[28 : 34] So the second point this morning in sojourning from orthodoxy, we cannot profess faith in Christ and ignore all of God's standards. Lest our profession be proven false by what we allow God guide our lives, what we feel.

Or we serve a unique and distinguished God who cannot be compared to anything. He's uniquely the Father, uniquely the Son, uniquely the Holy Spirit, all of which are co-equals with one another.

One is not greater than another. They're all equal and have equal authority. And they're unique and distinguished. And so our lives should likewise be unique and distinguished as our lives declare his glory.

glory. And as we go into the last section of this passage, which we're actually going back to verse 6 in this last section of subjectivism over orthodoxy, it says in verse 6, in those days there were, there was no king in Israel.

Everyone did what was right in his own eyes. all right, so I'm going to get a song stuck in your head this morning.

[29 : 56] You can thank me later. If you know that song back in 1992, I love 90s music, of four non-blondes, of What's Up. You remember that song?

It goes, hey, hey, hey, hey, I say, hey, what's going on? that song pops in my head, and actually popped in my head when I read this passage, when I'm looking at all this, they think they're worshiping Yahweh.

This often pops in my head when I go on Facebook, and I'm like, whoa, okay, I'm just going to back away from this for a little while, or Twitter, or even reading the newspaper.

It just pops in our heads of what in the world is going on? Not only in the world, but even in the church. This single verse alone puts the whole narrative into perspective.

This isn't a message, this isn't a verse about repentance and forgiveness, it's not a message about evangelizing and sojourning to another location, but this whole passage and the remainder of the book is driven by subjectivism, that in those days there was no king in Israel, and everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

[31 : 24] Everyone. That means Micah, his mother, and the sojourning Levite priest, everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

Subjectivism. And it's interesting because for any Bible scholars or people who care, this is the chiasmic tip of chapter 7, this verse alone draws all the emphasis on all the other subparts.

This is a complex issue because the Israelites did not do what was wrong in their eyes. They were the judge of what was right and wrong, but they were convinced that what they were doing was right.

Think about that for a moment. That they did not do what was wrong in their eyes, but what they did, they thought was right. They thought Yahweh, the creator of the heavens and the earth, desired to be worshipped in this way.

Like that diet plan of junk food. It's filling, yeah, it makes us feel good, it makes us feel like we're maybe adding a couple things to get, you know, overcome some of these sins and yeah, I told a lie, so let's carve another image just in case.

[32 : 48] It tastes good, it looks easy, it's almost like the nation of Israel are like going around telling all the others. Forget about those ten commandments, forget about what was said, forget about what was written, look at what we're doing, this is the new way, this is the new way of doing things, forget the exodus, forget those words of Joshua, forget what's written, doesn't this make you feel good, isn't this fresh and new?

I believe that problems of the world today are just a repackaging of yesterday's problems. Like in Ecclesiastes, it says there's nothing new under the sun, there's nothing new.

And this is the same type of subjectivism which exists in the world and the church today. It's a feeling, it's that notion that if it looks right and it feels right, letting your heart dictate this truth, isn't this just a repackaging of doing what is right in your own eyes?

how wonderful this book of Judges speaks into our lives today. This is truly a transcendent book. This is no ordinary book. Do not neglect the instruction of this book.

This is why this book relates so well to today, because it is just a repackaging of old vices. So looking at the secular society, this vividly applies to the secular world today.

[34 : 29] I mean, I could go exhaustive into it. I mean, between redefining terms, creating new appeals to what male and female actually mean, subjective topics, well, that's not what it means to me.

So based on my subjectivism, you are wrong and I'm right. Or sexual attraction, or what marriage means, that it is a holy union that declares the gospel between Christ and his church.

Definitions of what's right and what's wrong, definition of what love means and what hate means, the world is doing this within our midst. Want to know how to change society?

You have to go after vocabulary and indoctrinate the youth with new words and new meanings. It's actually scary how this is done and it's done within the educational system.

Dr. Al Moeller puts it this way, when massive change is taking place in a society, the vocabulary changes with it. Sometimes new words emerge.

[35 : 47] Oftentimes old words are redefined. They're redeployed, sometimes contorted beyond their meaning, sometimes broadened beyond anything previous generations could have ever imagined.

Look at what the society has defined as gender today. It used to mean, it used to be a binary system. Now there's 58 genders that you can identify with.

58. But remember, like that diet plan of junk food, it's filling, it tastes good, it's easy. Let's tell the others about this new revelation, this new way.

Forget the binary system, forget what the Bible has to say about this. Out with the old and in with the new. The secular society clearly deals with this, but I do want to take a moment to just let us remember that no matter how many genders, there could be a thousand genders.

It doesn't matter. We are called not to attack or mock or provoke, but to clearly point this confused society towards truth. And the only way you do that is to keep that conversation open and not attack and mock.

[37 : 05] We are called to love and to reach these 58 genders and whatever it might be next year or 10 years from now, just as Christ loved us as sinners. It's important to note.

But we see that subjectivism in society clearly. It's not anything new to you, but there is truly nothing new under the sun within the church. Churches tend to depart from the word of God since the day of the judges and long before that and all throughout the centuries.

And the same is true today. We must still refute the same disease leaking into secular society and the church in our modern day of hyper-subjectivism.

In a broad scope, it's ultimately just a repackaging of historic issues. Refuting is easy, church. What does the word of God say about it? The word of God is the measuring stick.

And this is identified as called testing according to the scriptures. This is what Paul wrote to Timothy. This is what Peter wrote in his letters to beware, to test.

[38 : 17] test. This is our message today, church, to not distort the original message of the gospel. And this develops, this subjectivism develops in religious practices without God's truth applied.

This alone deserves special consideration today as perversions of ideology only yield more perversions. It's like a toxic spread. spread. And the Holy Spirit will never contradict the whole counsel of God.

It will never contradict. And sin breeds sin. We see this in our church today within the NAR movement, within witchcraft, within astrology, within mysticism, and other special revelatory religious systems today.

They exist. If you don't know they exist, take a look and we can provide some resources to you. Think that this was just a golden calf problem back then? It wasn't.

The same sinful worship exists within driving distance of here. Some organizations boast in the materialistic fruit. Well, look at all these people who believe us.

[39 : 27] Oh, okay. But when does quantity ever represent quality in God's kingdom? Think about it. There's nothing new under the sun.

For centuries, man has created idolatrous visions of God. This is nothing new. Moses had to refute the golden calf worshipers. Jesus had to refute the Pharisees who emphasized their traditions over the word of God.

Early church fathers had to constantly refute Gnosticism, Asceticism, and mysticism. And even during the Reformation, the early church reformers, our forefathers had to refute Rome's man-made relics and their indulgences.

There is nothing new under the sun. And so what we see, if you compare to some things in today's day and age versus what is revealed to us and guided to us within Scripture, we know that the word of faith movement is false.

The prosperity gospel is false. The other golden calves that Jesus had to be born again is false. We know that according to his word. Kenosis, that he wasn't fully human and fully God.

[40 : 47] Or dominionism, that the seven mountain mandate of the church's overcoming this world is not listed in proper context within Scripture. And other dogmatics of teaching people gifts of the Spirit and that this overemphasis on various gifts over one another.

The sorcery of dead raising teams, grave sucking, this is all within the church today and it needs to be held accountable to the written word, not subjectivism.

Like 2 Timothy 3.13, he says, Paul says, but evil men and imposters will advance to worse, deceiving and being deceived.

You can't get more lost than grave sucking. Who lays on a grave trying to soak up an anointing that was left within a dead person? These are churches within driving distance church and we must define a hard line.

Like the diet plan of junk food, all of this is filling. It tastes good, it makes us feel good, it makes us feel spiritual. Let's go tell the others of the new revelation just like the world does.

[42 : 02] Out with the old and in with the new. Forget the written word, forget the Mosaic covenant, forget all of this. This feels so right because we're all doing it too. Subjectivism.

So the third point today, boy I'm going long. Third point is regardless of the issues of the world or the church, the answer is pretty simple for us, church, Youngstown Metro.

Subjectivism is subject to the objective truth and authority of God's word. Subjectivism is subject to the authority and the truth of God's word.

Feelings or discernment will never contradict the whole counsel of God. In other words, subjective truth must submit to biblical truth. Even if everyone else is doing it and it feels good or you experienced it personally, you can't deny what you experienced, right?

Wrong. We can. Based on his word. So as we conclude the message today, I want you to take a lesson from Steve.

[43 : 14] Steve is a man-made person I made up today. And this was a military man. He loved to wear his uniform.

He had so much pride in wearing that uniform because that uniform represented dignity. It represented ethics. And that uniform had long-standing traditions of being honored and showing what you stood for.

men. But Steve had a lapse of judgments of that honor and those ethics and was caught red-handed stealing from a local shop.

And guess what? While wearing that uniform. And once he returned to his post, Steve's sergeant carried out strict discipline and told Steve, you are a disgrace to the uniform.

And Steve received great reprimand. He was called for hypocrisy. And this hypocrisy not only affected him, but it affected the whole post.

[44 : 23] You see where I'm going here. Something similar occurs at times with God's people. We are guilty of disgracing our uniform. We are clothed in garments of righteousness.

Christ's own righteousness, which clothe us, which have set us free from sin, from the power of sin over death. And this happens simply by completely ignoring God's standards.

We can only assume this is spiritual anarchy when you do this, when you disgrace the uniform that Christ has given you. And you can only imagine that harsh discipline will follow either in this life or the next for that.

Let's not be Steve, church. We all have a part in this, of making sure that we are honoring the uniform that was given to us. And so, be encouraged by 2 Timothy 3, where it says in the ESV, all scripture is breathed out by God, profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Or even, interestingly enough, Eugene Peterson in the Message Translation expounds quite a bit on this passage. It says, stick with what you learned and believed, sure of the integrity of your teachers.

[45 : 53] Why? You took in the sacred scriptures with your mother's milk. There's nothing like the written word of God for showing you the way to salvation through faith in Jesus Christ.

Every part of scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another, showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, and correcting our mistakes, training us to live God's way.

Through the word, we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us. Remember, church, that the book of Judges is a book about leadership and what it reveals is that leadership problem and a people problem who stray from what has been written.

This is disguised by what we feel versus the Holy Spirit. There's an imbalance within that. If only Israel would have remembered the words of Joshua, which I'm not going to read the whole thing, but remember in Joshua 1, 7, it says, Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law.

There's your solution, Israel. Micah and his mother and the Levites. Do not turn from it to the right or to the left.

[47 : 18] You may have success wherever you go. This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate. It should not be just becoming out of our mouths.

It should be something within our minds that is just welling up like a wellspring. Be careful to do according to all that is written in it. Church, the sufficiency and completeness of his word is how our lives must be balanced.

This was the baton that was not passed down to this nation of Israel, which led them into this religion of subjectivism. We must take heed in the warnings of the spiritual condition of the nation of Israel, but also be encouraged by the words that were to guide this nation that were neglected.

If only they would have just rested and were confident in what was written to Joshua. And you know what the greatest thing at stake is?

Not just the preservation of Scripture, but it's the preservation and the sufficiency of the message of Jesus Christ, which is revealed through special revelation known as the Holy Scriptures.

[48 : 33] We find within Scriptures a man who is man and also God, something to be grasped. And he was the complete sacrifice on the cross for sin.

He became literally sin for us. And today he's standing mediating between God the Father and us. He was the propitiation, the satisfaction for our sins.

Why do we guard this word and hold to this word? Because that is where we find Christ. The only solution to the 58 or 100, whatever genders there are.

The moral compass within Scripture. Let's not seek out the things of Jesus Christ. The things of Jesus Christ, get this, and neglect Jesus Christ.

Don't be looking at all the perks and the benefits and the woos and the wows and everyone gathering and doing this and doing that and feeling this and feeling that and neglecting Jesus Christ. Don't seek out the things of Jesus Christ and neglect Him in the process.

[49 : 41] Our subjective experiences cannot save us. Our subjective groups cannot save us. Only the objective truth of Jesus Christ, written in His Word, the truth of the gospel, saves the object of Christ.

And we build our lives around that truth according to the Scriptures. If we do this, heresy will never have a chance within our midst.

So what are you seeking in life? Right now, maybe you're a visitor, maybe this is the first couple times, what are you seeking in your life right now? Are you seeking some cool experience?

Well, let me tell you, there's no experience like a sinner coming to life in Christ. There's a working of the Holy Spirit, and a miraculous working it is. Is your diet junk food of subjectivism?

Or is it healthy, nourishing food which is governed by the authority and the objective truth of God's Word? Let's not be junk food junkies. Let us be rooted in His Word and continue with us next week as we go into the second part of this message, which will be in chapter 18.

[50 : 55] Please join me in a word of prayer as we meditate on this Word and close in a quick, brief song. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.