

## 2/23/20 - Judges 18 - "Subjectivism: A False Religion" (Part 2)

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[ 0 : 00 ] Father God, we are at your mercy to understand your holy scriptures. And Father, at this time, we submit ourselves to the authority of your scriptures.

We pray that the words come to life just as the life that was intended to be communicated to us. Father, if anybody in here is distant from you, I pray today that they draw near to you based on the truth of your word.

And Father, for those saints gathered here today who are justified by the blood of Jesus Christ, I pray that we are rejuvenated by your word, that we are equipped with your word, and that we are corrected and taught today by your word.

I pray this in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Let's look at the first section of passage of self-interest over orthodoxy.

We see in this passage, it begins with verse 1. In those days there was no king in Israel. And in those days, the tribe of the people of Dan was seeking for itself an inheritance to dwell in.

[ 1 : 09 ] For until then, no inheritance among the tribes of Israel had fallen to them. Verse 2. So the people of Dan sent five able men from the whole number of their tribe, from Zorah and from Eshtel, to spy out the land and explore it.

And they said to them, go and explore the land. And they came to the hill country of Ephraim, to the house of Micah, and lodged there. When they were in the house of Micah, they realized the voice of the young Levites.

And they turned aside and said to him, who brought you here? What are you doing in this place? What is your business here? And he said to them, this is how Micah dealt with me.

He has hired me, and I have become his priest. And they said to him, inquire of God, please, that we may know whether the journey on which we are setting out will succeed.

And the priest said to them, go in peace. The journey on which you go is under the eye of the Lord. Let's take a pause there for a moment. So setting up this narrative, we just saw last week the house of Micah, when he built the shrine to the false gods.

[ 2 : 28 ] He had graven images, carved images, metal images, all for the worship of a false god. And because he met a sojourning Levite in the narrative last week, he found, man, this is a great opportunity.

Let's increase my impact here. I got a Levite priest. People are going to think legit of this shrine. They will not question this shrine. Man, look, look at the Lord.

He's blessing me by bringing this Levite priest. And he hired him. So now the narrative continues. But now with the people of Dan, it's like the camera kind of focuses over here now at something where this narrative is going to come in with this narrative.

And so the people of Dan were obviously a forgotten people. They were sojourning as well. They were looking for an inheritance in verse 1.

And so these people, the people of Dan, set out five men to seek out a place, a land, and explore it in verse 2. And so they got to the hill country of Ephraim.

[ 3 : 34 ] And this is where the two narratives meet. They come, these five men come to the house of Micah, where the shrine is. And who do they find in this place?

They find this Levite priest. And they recognize this Levite priest. They recognize an accent. It's kind of like back in the old stories of, what was it, Jephthah?

With the words and the shibboleth. Remember that? It was almost like they could recognize the accent because there's geographic significance in accents and everything. We would know a New

Yorker if a New Yorker was here, for instance.

So they knew that this Levite priest did not have a tongue, a sounded tongue just like that land. And so they were like, what are you doing here?

So these five men inquired of this guy. And he's like, man, this guy hired me. Isn't this pretty cool? All right. And then these men were actually seeking out blessing.

[ 4 : 36 ] This whole nation didn't have a king. And so these people are looking for some sort of direction. They're blindly walking around. Looking for people. You know those things that are known as generic truths?

You often see them in fortune cookies. You know? Or horoscopes. You know, the Sunday paper.

You can find them. You can often find them online, you know, in our technological era today.

But generic truths. What a generic truth this Levite priest gave to these five men. They inquired, you know, of God. You know, please let us know if this journey is going to succeed.

And he says, go in peace. The journey on which you go under is under the eye of the Lord. Oh. Oh.

Oh. So is this good or is this bad? You know, it's an interesting generic truth that they received.

And it actually encouraged them. Because in verse 7, they continue their journey here. And we're going to see they reply back down in chapter 8 or verse 8.

[ 5 : 43 ] Back, they relay what was told to them by the Levite priest. So they scout out some territory in this narrative. These men get their blessing. They get their generic truth.

And in verse 7, it picks up again. Then the five men departed and came to Laash. And saw the people who were there. How they lived in security after the manner of the Sidonians.

Quiet and unsuspecting. Lacking nothing that is in the earth. And possessing wealth. And how they were far from the Sidonians. And had no dealings with anyone.

So these five men, they find this remote village. Who had everything. They were wealthy. They were quiet.

They were unsuspecting. They were living the dream out in these woods. This was a Canaanite settlement.

[ 6 : 40 ] Who lived in an abundant land with access to waters and springs near the east. And so these five men find this land. And they run back.

They run back home. And this is a perfect place for our inheritance. What better retirement plan? Look. They got all inclusive drink. They got all inclusive water.

Everything is provided for us. We can retire here. So in verse 8. When they came back to their brothers at Zorah and Eshtel.

Their brothers said to them. What do you report? They said. Arise. And let us go up against them.

For we have seen the land. For we have seen the land. And behold.

It is very good. And will you do nothing? Do not be slow to go. To enter in and possess the land. As soon as you go.

[ 7 : 33 ] You will come to an unsuspecting people. The land is spacious. For God has given it into your hands. A place where there is no lack of anything that is in the earth.

If we could stop at this point. And kind of just look around. At the spiritual condition of this narrative. How these people were living emotionally.

How these people were living spiritually. They were truly impressed with these Canaanite people.

How they were living. They had easy living.

So this reveals a lot about their motives. Doesn't it? They were seeking out an easy lifestyle. They just wanted to. Just cast their tents.

And just be living in peace. They were not concerned about. Deuteronomy 7. Or the way. Which was the established covenant with God.

[ 8 : 35 ] For them to drive out the Canaanites. And to not leave anyone standing. They weren't concerned about that. They were concerned that it was a nice place.

It had everything they needed. And man. They can be an unsuspecting people too. They wanted a good life. And in verse 8.

The report of the five men. Of this forgotten tribe. This sojourning tribe. They rested upon this generic priestly instruction. They come back. For God has given it into your hands.

You see this Levite with his generic truth. Really made an impact with these five men. He goes back and communicates it to them. Be encouraged. It's under the eye of the Lord. I don't know how it's going to pan out.

But it's under the eye of the Lord. I mean. The spiritual condition. The emotional condition of this nation. I think if they looked into a pond. And saw a bubble from a fish pop up.  
[ 9 : 30 ] They would take it as a sign. That the Lord is doing something for them. How sad though. Right? A nation whose devotion. Withered towards God.

And so we see the point in this first section of passage. Their blind hearts of self-interest dictated their worship to God.

They lived based on horoscope faith. By a generic truth. Not a divine commission that God gave them back in Deuteronomy 7.

And so as the section 2 comes. We see a joyful heart over orthodoxy. In verse 11 as it continues. We see moving day in verse 11 through 12. That they get 600 men of the tribe of Dan. Armed with weapons of war. And so they set out on their conquest.

[ 10 : 27 ] But they make a pit stop in verse 13. It says. And they passed on from there to the hill country of Ephraim. And came to the house of Micah. Just like the other five men did.

Then the five men. Who had gone out to scout the country of Laish. Said to their brothers. Do you know that in these houses. There are an ephod.

Household gods. A carved image. And a metal image. Now therefore consider what you will do. And they turned aside there. And came to the house of the young Levite.

At the home of Micah. And asked him. About his welfare. And so they kind of go window shopping. In verse 16. Now the 600 men of the Danites.

Armed with their weapons of war. Stood at the entrance of the gates. And the five men. Who had gone out. To. Gone to scout out the land. Went and entered.

[ 11 : 21 ] And took the carved image. The ephod. The household gods. And the metal image. While the priests stood by. The entrance of the gate. With the 600 men.

Armed with weapons of war. And so while they're at it. In their window shopping. I'll take that. I'll take that. This is a pretty nice mansion. Thanks. Have a nice day.

We'll. We'll take it from here. Oh yeah. By the way. I'm going to give this Levite. A promotion. Look in verse 18. And when they went into Micah's house.

And took the carved image. The ephod. The household gods. And the metal image. The priest said to them. What are you doing? And they said to him. Keep quiet. Put your hand over your mouth. And come with us. And be to us a father. And a priest. Is it better for you. To be a priest. To the house of one man. Or to be a priest. To a tribe.

[ 12 : 13 ] In clan of his. In Israel. In verse 20. And the priest's heart. Was glad. He took the ephod. And the household gods.

And the carved image. And went along. With the people. So they turned. And departed. Putting the little ones. And the livestock. And the goods. In front of them.

Let's take a pause there. And catch our minds up. To what's going on. You got these. Armed men. That are ready for war.

Think about it. 600 men. Going to take on this inheritance. But on the road. You know. These five men are like. Oh by the way. I mean. This mansion that we're passing.

This. This shrine. Look at it. Look how beautiful it is. Inside. I was in there. And they got this. And that. And this. So let's make a quick pit stop. It's kind of like. Our equivalent to.

[ 13 : 08 ] Visiting the largest ball. Of rubber bands. On the way down to Florida. You know. They make a pit stop. And they're like. Hey. Let's just go. Go do this. Let's make a quick pit stop. Let's go window shopping.

I mean. We got 600 men. Nobody's going to stop us. We can do what we want. We can do what we want. And they. They saw the Levite. And they said. Keep quiet. Put your hand over your mouth.

And come with us. Be a father and a priest. And they give him this promotion. And fix his eyes. Off of the. The opportunity that Micah gave him. That was an extreme. Extreme identity issue.

Back of giving him purpose. Giving him identity. Of being a priest to Micah. And now he's looking at something bigger and better. Ooh. You know. You're right. Why would I want to just stay here.

And be the priest. And the father of one man. I could. I could lead an entire nation. Ooh. And look. In verse 20. The priest's heart was glad. Within this verse.

[ 14 : 04 ] It reveals two things clearly. First is the reckless desires. Of the people of Dan. To rob. To benefit their man-made quest.

Of acquiring an inheritance. We see robbery. We see thievery in this passage. And soon. We're going to see. These 600 men. Being put to action.

And death. You know. Could this be. The same reason. That the Levites sojourned as well. That they were seeking after a new place.

A new identity. Something. Something that was desirable to them. Could this be. What. What. The. The sojourning. The. The. The culture of sojourning. Between the Levite priest.

And the people of Dan. I don't think we're too far off. When we see that. As being. Something significant. In this passage. And the second thing. That we see clearly.

[15:00] Is that the priest's heart. Was glad. At the opportunity. To have a greater influence. Micah's job. Was simply. Kind of like a stepping stone. It was a resume builder. For instance. As we know it today.

The priest was not concerned. Of the Lord's direction. But followed his heart. It's a dangerous endeavor. So the point of the second section. The priest's blind heart.

Determined. His worship to God. The priest's blind heart. Determined. His worship. To God. And as we reach. To the last section. Of this passage. We see section three.

Of self-will. Over orthodoxy. As the chapter. Continues. And concludes. In verse 22. It says.

When they had gone. A distance. From the home of Micah. They got everything. That they need. The men who were in the. Houses near Micah's house. Were called out. And they overtook.

[16:00] The people of Dan. So word gets around. And around Micah's house. People know. What just happened. And Micah didn't. And they shouted. They chased after. The people of Dan. In verse 23.

Who turned around. And said to Micah. What is the matter. With you. That you come. With such a company. And he said. You take my guns.

That I made. And the priest. And go away. And what. What have I have left. How then. Do you ask me. What is the matter. With you.

Verse 25. The people of Dan. Reply. Do not let your voice. Be heard. Among us. Lest angry fellows. Fall upon you. And you lose. Your life. With the lives.

Of your. Of your household. Then the people of Dan. Went their way. And when Micah. Saw that they. Were too strong for him. He turned. And went back. To his home. This whole exchange.

[16:54] Is surprising. I mean. Nothing that Micah. Owned. Belonged to him. He's upset. That what. What he made. And what. What he.

What was given to him. From his mother. In the narrative. Last week. He was upset. Because it was taken away. I often laughed at my own children. Sometimes fighting over.

This. This pointless toy. Or. Or maybe even the straw. Like really kids. You're fighting over. The McDonald's straw. And then a temper. Micah recanted his aggression.

Due to the threat. Of the 600 military men. I mean. Looking at Micah's standpoint. He's probably just. He. He was a thief. To begin with. He's probably just going to return home. And be like. Well. Yeah. Whatever. I'll let those ones go.

I'll just ask my mom. For some more. You know. We'll just ask her. For another. Another couple card images. And Ferrari. While I'm at it. I honestly don't know. If this. This narrative. Is humorous. Or.

[17:49] Or. Sad. Because you look at. Who the nation of Israel. Was supposed to be. And who the nation of Israel. Has become. It's like. Me seeing today.

Like. Two grown men. Fighting over their. Fantasy football team. Like really. Come on people. People. Like. I'm talking like. Real fighting.

Like. Like arguing. And. And. And. And. And. Just. Just. A debate that I. That. Exceeds my knowledge. And level of. Of expertise. Peace. And so.

We see the conquest. As the narrative. Continues. And concludes. Conquest of Laash. So the people of Dan. Continue. But the people of Dan. Took what Micah. Had made.

And the priests. Who belonged to him. And they came to Laash. To a quiet people. And unsuspecting. And struck them. With the edge of the sword. And burned the city. With fire. And there was no deliverer.

[18:44] Because it was. Far from Sidon. And they. They had no dealings. With anyone. It was in the valley. That belongs. To Beth Rohab. Then they rebuilt the city.

And lived in it. And they named the city. Dan. That is the name. Of Dan. Their ancestor. Who was born to Israel. But the name of the city. Was Laash at the first.

And verse 30. It concludes. Worshipping their way. And the people of Dan. Set up the carved image. For themselves. And Jonathan. The son of. Jershom.

Son of Moses. And his sons. Were priests. To the tribe. Of the Danites. Until the day. Of the captivity. Of the land. So they set up. Micah's carved image.

That he made. As long as the house. Of God. Was at Shiloh. Micah's. Not only Micah. Micah's. Levite priest.

[ 19 : 39 ] Was given a promotion. These carved images. Were given a promotion. As well. These carved images. Were worshipped. By this whole. Entire nation. Not only did they cause.

One house. To stumble. But they also. Led an entire nation. To serve this false god. The false worship. Of one. Led to the false worship. Of an entire nation.

Church. Sin. Breeds sin. Sin. We see Jonathan. His. That name. His name comes out of nowhere. We kind of like. Don't really know. What. Where that comes from. In this passage.

Jonathan literally means. Yahweh has given. And this is another instance. Of irony. Isn't it? That like. Nothing that's given. In this passage. Nothing that's happening. Is given by Yahweh.

At all. This is just man. Acting upon their heart. Their feelings. What feels right. Subjectivism. And we meet. Jonathan though.

[ 20 : 35 ] And get this. He's the son of Moses. Who would have knew? Many commentators. Identify this. This man. Jonathan.

In this passage. Being that Levite priest. Who was hired. In the house of Micah. It doesn't explicitly say that. But. But think about. About meeting. The son of Moses. The son of the dude. Who split the Red Sea. By the power of God. Mind you. This guy. Who led. An entire. Nation. That was the amount.

Of. Probably seven or eight. Super Bowl. Full. Packed house. Super Bowl. Filled. Amount of people. Led them. Out of Egypt. Out of slavery.

The son of Moses. Is also. Within one generation. Is lost. With blind hearts. All the Israelites. Fought over man-made idols. And with blind hearts.

[ 21 : 32 ] The Danites. Succeeded in their. Selfish conquest. To the easy. Life. How shocking. To see. That even within. A generation. After Moses. His self-interests.

Determined his worship. To God. Blind hearts. Church. Blind hearts. I want to point out. One point. Today. Well. Two points. But the first one is. The warning signs. Of a blind heart. One of the things. That I love. Most. In the summertime. Is taking vacations. Taking beach vacations. Specifically. Mind you. I don't know. If there's some weird people.

Out there. That think. That go into the Colorado. Rocky mountains. Is vacation. It's not vacation. Vacation. Is digging your toes. In the sand. Laying out. Burning up. Going back.

[ 22 : 27 ] Putting aloe on. And itchy skin. And. Peeling skin. I love. Going to the ocean. And how many other people.

Can. Can identify. With those moments. Where you go to the ocean. You run. You get everything. Everything ready to go. And. You get. You have your. Your blankets. You got your.

Your towels. You got your. Your umbrellas. Everything's ready. You're walking up to the. Up to the beach. And you're just. You're imagining. Just the kids playing. And everything. And you see that sign.

Posted. Rip current warning. I don't know. If it's even up on the screen. Or if you got anything. But. Just a rip current warning.

Sign. And it says. That you should be. You. You could be. You could be. Swept out to the ocean. When in doubt.

[ 23 : 23 ] Don't go out. Rip current. Warning sign. Now. For the. Determined. Person. The unsupervised. Vacationer.

You're like. Man. We're all packed up. I'm not going back to the hotel. It's across the street. Around the corner. This is. Silly. We don't need to do this. Don't worry about what that sign says.

I'm going out. So. Determined. Having your will determined. Having all that anticipation of. Of wanting to go out. And experience the beach.

And just kick back and relax. You kick back and. Take. Take a couple steps in. And by. By a notice. You're swept under water.

And taken out. A mile. Away from the shore. If. The warning sign was out. In this nation.  
[ 24 : 22 ] It is best. To trust the sign. Lest. They head for disaster. And be pulled out. To their own sinful devices. From Moses.

To Joshua. To the judges. The whole biblical narrative. Warning. After warning. After warning. Deliverance. After deliverance.

I mean. We. We read it. Back in the. Back in the. The chapter. Chapter two. Of the introduction. Remember when.

When the angel of the Lord said. Now the angel of the Lord. Went up. From Gilgal. To Bochum. And he said. I brought you. Up from the. From Egypt. And brought you. Into the land.

That I swore to give. To your fathers. I said. I will never break. My covenant. With you. And you shall make. No covenants. With the inhabitants. Of this land. You shall. Break down their altars.

[ 25 : 17 ] You shall. But you have not. Obeyed my voice. What is this? You. Have done. The warning signs. Were laid out.

For this nation. The nation of Israel. Did not serve. The God. Of the Bible. The God. Who led. Moses. The God.

Who led. Joshua. But they. Served. And they. Worship. The God. Of their. Hearts. And what. Blind hearts. They were. Or we could.

Also say. That. They worship. What made. Their hearts. Glad. Made them. Feel good. They sought. Out an. Inheritance. Apart. From God's. Provision. They worship.

Their false. Gods. And were. Convinced. That they. Were. Worshiping. The Lord. Word.

Remember. The problem. With doing. What is right.

[ 26 : 14 ] In your own eyes. Like living. In a life. Of subjectivity. That. If it feels good. If it looks right. If it. If it. If. If. In my perception. It is right.

Then. That will dictate truth. Especially all these other people. Who are doing it. With me. Life. Living a life. Of subjectivity. With a. Spiritual diet. Of toxic. Junk food.

That was never. Prescribed. And now. With blind hearts. In complete. Ignorance. To the written law. And furthermore. They thought. They were serving. Yahweh. A brother in the Lord.

Dustin Benj. Just put a quote out. Not. On Twitter. It's. It's amazing. How some things. Just stand out. When you're in the middle. Of a series. That you can. Read. Dustin Benj. Just shared.

On Twitter. Last. Two days ago. He says. When your final. Authority. Is your. Heart. You will ordinarily. Twist. Scripture.

[ 27 : 09 ] To say. Whatever. Pleases. Your. Heart. A.W. Tozer. Says something. Similar. To. The idolater. Simply. Imagines.

Things. About. God. And acts. As if. They were. True. Feels. Good. Looks. Right. It's a. Spiritual. Diet. Of. Junk. Food. And today.

The struggles. Of this nation. Are not too far. From our own. Struggles. Church. Church. We have. Such great potential. Of becoming. Similar. Idolaters. Satan. Often.

Brings. Into our lives. Things. That will make. Our hearts. Glad. That will be. Appealing. To our eyes. And it begs. A question. At that moment. Are we.

Worshipping. The God. As revealed. In the Bible. Or the God. Of our passions. Or personal. Experiences. And we see this.

[ 28 : 03 ] All over today. We don't. Not just churches. I'm not going to bash churches. But even just books out there. Even music. Some worship music out there. It's just like. All about feeling.

And. And. And nothing that's rooted in the word. Extra revelation out there. That exists. In books. Experiencing like. Third heavenly realms.

Like this all is. Is. Is mysticism. Gnosticism. It's led by. Blind hearts. It's feeling. Without knowledge. And we know. One thing about our hearts.

As defined by scripture. Our hearts. Lie. Very often. It may feel good. It may look enticing. It may even taste. Good.

Just like. Worshipping. The man-made gods. Of Israel. But the. But the church. Must worship. And serve. The indistinguishable.

[ 28 : 57 ] God. Revealed in scripture. And experience him. Therefore. Based on who he is. As revealed in scripture. In. In only ways. That can be verified.

In scripture. Remember. In Matthew 7. When we're talking about. Subjectivity. One passage. That's. That jumped out at me. Not too long ago. Within the past. 24 to 48 hours.

Was Matthew 7. Verse 21. Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, Will enter the kingdom of heaven. But the one who does the will of my father, Who is in heaven.

On that day, Many will come to me, Lord, Lord, Did we not prophesy, In your name, And cast out demons in your name, And do mighty works in your name.

And then I will declare to them, I never knew you, Depart from me, You workers of lawlessness, I said it before.

[ 29 : 53 ] And I'm going to say it again, Subjectivism, Is subject, To the authority, Of the objective truth, Revealed in God's word, Okay.

And now this is not saying, This is not negating, The working of the Holy Spirit, In our lives, But the Holy Spirit's leading, Will never contradict his word.

Which the Holy Spirit inspired, Okay, We must take great care, In allowing the word, To govern our feelings.

And our experiences, And I don't want to negate, Personal experiences, That you have, Within the church, Or in the past, But if it doesn't align with the word, You have to get yourself in check.

You have to, The truth is, I depend, Personally, On the Holy Spirit, 24-7, I do, Especially a house of four, All of a sudden.

[ 30 : 49 ] I depend on the Holy Spirit, 24-7, In my prayer life, In my preaching, Right now, At this moment, In my parenting, The Christian life.

Is a spirit-filled life, But it is also a word-filled life, A word-led life, This equally means, Submitting your experience, To the testing.

Against scripture, Satan is in the feel-good business, Church, He's been in the feel-good business, All this time, Since the nation of Israel, He has been making people feel good.

And get God's people to crave sin, Since Genesis, And distorts the truth, Remember Genesis 3, 1-6, He said to the woman, Did God actually say?

Hmm, Interesting, You shall not eat of any tree in the garden, And the woman said to the servant, We may not eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, And God said, But God said.

[ 31 : 45 ] You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree, That is in the midst of the garden, Neither shall you touch it, Lest you die, But the serpent said to the woman, You will not surely die.

Forget what he said, Listen to me, For God knows that, When you eat of it, Your eyes will be opened, And you will be like God, Knowing good and evil.

Yeah, God's holding out on you, Don't listen to God, So when the woman saw, Look at this, When the woman saw, That the tree was good.

For food, Hmm, And that it was a delight to the eyes, And that the tree was to be desired, To make one wise, She took of its fruit and ate.

And she also gave some to her husband, Who was with her, And he ate, And so we arrive at the nation of Israel today, And we arrive at our, Even our sometimes distorted spiritual conditions.

[ 32 : 42 ] Living a Christian life today, Distorted from God's truth, Remember, There is nothing new, In the nation of Israel, There is nothing new, Under the sun, And there is nothing new today.

Christians, Christians, Around the world, Hear that same wise and crafty serpent, In our lives, He kind of tangles around our hearts.

And pulls at our heart strings, And say, Did God really say that? And man, What a place he can get you in, To do his bidding, Right?

When life gets tough, When you experience trials, There is a lot of people in the hospital right now, Mind you, Side note, Okay, Back on track now.

When life gets really hard, When things come weighing in, When you feel like you are in between, One tidal wave, And another tidal wave, And it is just not getting any better.

[ 33 : 41 ] And you look to your feelings for security, You get to a point where the enemy is going to ask you, Did God really say? That? When you are tempted.

When you are sitting there, Men on a computer late at night, With no accountability whatsoever, Scrolling on your phone, And you are two clicks away from pornography, You hear those still small voices.

Did God really say? Maybe you can let sin, Sin abound, So that grace may abound, Right? Maybe in your marriage.

When you are at work, And it is late at night, And you are working at 24, And there is that one, That one, Just beautiful woman, That works with you.

And you are just like. I can go flirt a little bit. And nobody will know. Did God really say? This is where the rubber meets the road.

[ 34 : 42 ] When things do get challenging. Because the Christian life is challenging. If you signed up to be a Christian. You wanted an easy life. I am sorry. The Christian life is about suffering. It is about dying to yourself.

But it is also about having the most joy. The most fulfillment in life. Because you have Jesus Christ. You have forgiveness of your sins. But in our suffering.

Where the rubber meets the road. We often sometimes look back on those mountaintop experiences. You know. When we first come to know Jesus Christ. Or when you are on your honeymoon. You get those. You know. Those lovey-dovey feelings.

And those tingly feelings in your stomach. Of just. I love them. And those mountaintop experiences. And it is like. You want to keep going back. To that mountaintop experience.

But God doesn't want to lead you through the mountaintop experience. Because he cares more about you going through a valley. How much our feelings can dictate how we respond and worship God.

[ 35 : 41 ] So it takes the testing. The accurate testing against God's words. Not cherry picking this verse. Because this verse fits what my heart desires to be feeling right now.

Not twisting scripture to fit your heart's agenda. But paying close attention to the in-context instruction of the word. And I know that a lot of people can come to concession.

Yeah. We need to test everything according to his word. And guess what? There's a lot of teaching that uses his word. So this is where it becomes interesting. If you need help about doing this.

I have a text message away of testing a situation that you're experiencing or going through. We have other pastors who are available to you as well to ask those questions.

And you want to know one of the tools that is a false teacher's worst nightmare for you to get a hold of. Is a good commentary on scripture.

[ 36 : 39 ] Because these men have been studying this thing. And false teachers do not want you to have a commentary. These tools are out. We need to be used to be doing this together.

To be testing together what the Lord might be experiencing in your life. And look at it according to scripture. And as we come to a close in point two.

I want to see sin's progressive potential to a blind heart. And this is kind of surveying chapters 17 and 18.

The second point. Sin's progressive potential to a blind heart. It shouldn't be anything new. Do you know about the Australian wildfires? Yeah.

Okay. Well Australia was like literally on fire. News flash. It started like last fall. And what's interesting about these wildfires that happened in California.

[ 37 : 33 ] Which happened in Australia that brought all this devastation. Is that we often see the aftermath of this wildfire. And we fail to see the beginning.

Where it started out with just a single flame. A single spark. Which led to what this was 25.5 million acres.

Left ruin. Which started as just a flame. 33 people dead. And at least three volunteer firefighters. And more are missing. Around 3,000 homes were destroyed.

Or damaged. You see Micah came from a respected family in this narrative. Their desire was to worship Yahweh. But sin abounded as they lost the conviction of the Lord's instructions for their life. The sin spread like a wildfire. It went from Micah. It went to his mother. It went to the Levite. Then it transferred from the Levite to the Danites.

[ 38 : 36 ] To an entire nation. All starting with a single origin. A single flame. Starting at Micah. It all started with one single man. Which led an entire nation to worshipping Satan.

Most who thought that they were actually worshipping the Lord. And the same spread of sin can happen very quickly. And over a length of time. Which may begin to.

With something minor. It may be with one man. Or maybe with one compromise in your life. Then within a blink of an eye. Satan grips your hearts and instares you.

Jonathan was one of those people who became apathetic. This didn't care obviously. Within one generation. Being in his father's legacy. His father's family tree.

It is a blind heart church. That became desensitized to God's will. And God's presence. According to what was word. Instead he bought into a lie.

[ 39 : 32 ] Of serving his selfish desires. And seeking out other paths. Paths of life. Forget the Red Sea. The Christian life is not easy.

We should know that. So I want to ask everyone here today. Well myself included. I don't want you to think that I'm out of this as well. I ask everyone.

Even myself included today. To surrender control to the sovereign king. Surrender your hearts to the sovereign king. Even your experiences to the sovereign king.

He has not forgotten you. And wherever he has you right now. You could be in between two tidal waves. I know a lot of us are going through that right now. Wherever he has you right now.

Be content knowing that he is working for our good. This is a scriptural truth. Revealed in his word. Even if it doesn't feel like it church.

[ 40 : 32 ] Just as one small flame turned into a wildfire. The same is true for one minor compromise. It has the potential to change the course. And reap utter destruction.

This may lead you to find yourself using a holy label. Rather than upholding a holy living. So be encouraged. While an entire nation fell into worship on account of one man known as Micah. It also took one man to fix everything. One man fixed all of this church. This man was created for a purpose.

Micah was a man-made person. He fell short. The Levite was a man-made person. He fell short. All mankind has been created in the image of God.

But our passion of self-consumed indulgences fixed our eyes upon vain worship.

[ 41 : 39 ] The worship of idols. From the judges to the kings to the prophets. All of this foreshadowed forward to this one man who fixed everything. And the apostles in the early church looked back upon the cross of this one man.

This man is Jesus Christ. And he fixed everything. He fixed everything within this nation in Israel. He fixed the biblical narrative. He bridged the gap. Everything comes by faith through him.

He brought this fallen man, that fallen man back into relationship with God. By placing our sins upon him. Our sins were with him and were buried with him. And one day in the final judgment over believers in all of our lives that we will see someday.

We will not end in separation like this hell on earth that Israel is experiencing. But it will result in unity with Jesus Christ for eternity as we are risen with him.

Church, this truth. This truth is incorruptible. This truth is preserved. It is the message of the gospel. Which the essence and the substance is Christ alone.

[ 42 : 50 ] Our subjectivity submits to him. Our emotions submit to him. Our experiences submit to him. And let your emotions and experience respond only because of the gospel.

Let it be fueled because of the gospel. And if our feelings are concerned, this draws upon many feelings. The gospel does actually draw on many feelings.

But gospel feelings. The feelings of grieving over your sin. Of being a wretched sinner that we are. That we created this mess. The feelings that...

The feelings after you accept Christ. Of feeling that freedom from your sin. Knowing that the debt has been paid and you have been ransomed.

These are gospel feelings. But they are derived by what is written. The preserved gospel message, you see. Everything points to the written words.

[ 43 : 51 ] Church, we are one compromise of being completely lost. But one confession away from being completely found. Don't let false worship of God. Of doing what is right.

What you feel is right. In your own eyes. Of subjectivity. Of eating junk food. And adding a little bit to this word. Living it with a blind heart. You could try to pull that on your judgment day.

As each one of us will have someday. And say, but God, it felt good. Everyone else was doing it.

But, you know, your judgment is your judgment at that time. God, don't rest upon your feelings.

Rest upon what is revealed in his word. This should not only be a driving force of that which we teach. From this pulpit. From this table. But also what we sing.

What we pray. And this is the truth. Let's worship the true God. That you know is right. And is verified. Because it is rooted in the foundation of the living. And the breathing.

[ 44 : 52 ] Holy Spirit inspired word of God. Let's pray. As we come to a close. Let's pray. Let's pray.