

The True Covid Impact

Thank you for attending our services live this morning....I really mean that....you chose to come to church and you chose to come to Remnant. We are beginning a new series this week called "Bearing Good Fruit." We are going to look at what Paul told the Galatians and what we call fruit of the Spirit.

This series is shaped by my experience with God during the Covid Pandemic this year. Covid 19 Stats

As a nation, we are about to face the greatest fatality statistic of Covid and no one is talking about it.

Later this year we will get the true fatality statistics of Covid and we will see the damage that was really done. Not by the virus, not because of the deaths and illnesses....not just because of the economic shutdown.....but damage done that is much more destructive. Damage that may well be eternal. The Spiritual damage that occurred because churches were disobedient during the virus pandemic.

Study Performed by Barna Research Group on the First Half of 2020. Numbers for the last half are expected to be much worse.

Boomers: 26% Stopped Attending 11% Switched Churches 40% Stayed at Same Church

Gen X: 35% Stopped Attending 17% Switched Churches 31% Stayed at Same Church

Millennials: 50% Stopped Attending 8% Switched Churches 30% Stayed at Same Church

God warned us and we did not listen.

Hebrews 10:22–25 (ESV) 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

We did this to ourselves. We stopped meeting...we stopped encouraging one another...and we failed to stir one another up to love and good works.

The government said churches were essential and the churches of America told the government and more importantly God....no we are not.

Since we didn't find the courage to respond to this challenge...many walked away from a faith that they found powerless in the midst of an epidemic. Instead of God demonstrating His power....His church just failed to demonstrate.

Now before you jump on me for being too harsh....I want you to think about the true Spiritual impact of Covid 19. And if you think I am angry, I am. We let Satan win and that ticks me off. We should have been protecting those wavering in the faith and instead we watched online and they didn't.

What are we to do with these kind of stats?

On average over the year 2020 from another study....Only 37% of people stayed at their church and another 50% gave up on church all together. Most churches in the USA lost over half of their congregations. The impact of Covid 19 on the American Church is expected to reach its destructive climax in the latter half of 2021 when churches realize people are not coming back and churches can no longer fund their infrastructure.

The foresight of the Elders at Remnant has been God led. We don't have salaries. We don't have a mortgage. We don't have major loans. We knew that churches in the future would have to run lean. And we have prepared to be strong as the end approaches.

Throughout the year. God has provided for Remnant and the Remnant Cafe. We have stayed faithful, remained open, and God has blessed us as a church. A Remnant Church must be able to survive difficult times. We are preparing for the changes to come and listening to God very closely.

Our church has grown financially, spiritually and numerically during the Covid crisis because I believe that we were obedient to God and held services every Sunday of 2020.

This week President Biden said that soon people would no longer be able to hide their prejudice and racism behind the protection of a church. The government will soon be attempting to censor God's message of truth on topics like abortion, sexual identity, sexual perversions and other similar sins.

We are preparing for changes to come. Not in fear. Not in worry. Just being wise as God leads.

We will soon come off the mainstream Social Media platforms and begin to consolidate and protect the message that God has given us. We have concerns that the Truth of God will be censored. Not because of the political climate although that is contributing but because of Scripture. Jesus said that they persecuted Him and they will persecute us. That in the end times they will not longer tolerate hearing what they do not want to hear.

2 Timothy 1:14 (NLT) 14 Through the power of the Holy Spirit who lives within us, carefully guard the precious truth that has been entrusted to you.

Currently we are a 501c3 Non Profit Organization which brings us and those who contribute to us some tax benefits.

We are preparing for the day when having status under the government could require that we no longer teach God's Word unfiltered.

So we are ready to walk away from our non profit status if God so leads. We are ready to do whatever God leads us to do.

So as I was processing the Barna data this week, I began to ask myself....how can over half a church's congregation just walk away?

Admittedly 13% or so "changed churches" but for many it just meant that they changed the channel on a live stream. When churches re-opened many decided to not attend in person anymore.

It made me wonder what would happen in America if we were truly persecuted for attending church services.

Jesus said, and I am paraphrasing, you will discover your foundation when the winds blow. Many have discovered that their faith is based on the sand of convenience instead of the bedrock of sacrifice and service. They decided that they could get what they needed from the church without having to truly be part of the church. They will discover that they are mistaken. Most already know that their relationship with Jesus has suffered because of their absence.

Once the Barna data came out, I have received many emails from Church Consultants stating that we need to focus on bringing more value to people. We need to market more, promote more and make our message even more appealing and culture centered. Now more than ever we need to entertain and be culturally relevant. Otherwise people will not reengage and pump life into your church.

Advice like that from believers.... should be checked for occult blood....because it is crap. We don't need to pump life into a church...we need to pump the life that is Jesus out of His people, out of the church and into the world and into lost people.

The church was never supposed to be about you. The church is about what you can do through the power of God for other people. IF you attend church just to have your needs met....you don't understand the purpose of Jesus' church. Jesus church is about Jesus. It is about His mission....His message...and His truth.

Jesus didn't build His church just to meet your needs, exceed your expectations, and make you feel good. He built His church as a place where you grow spiritual muscles through sacrifice, service, and commitment. A place where you connect to the vine and He grows Himself in you. He uses frustration, trials, hurts, betrayals, victories, support, encouragement, forgiveness, obedience and every other life experience that happens in this glorious place that we call church in order to help all of us who are connected to the vine...connected to Jesus...grow fruit.

He is the vine...we are the branches...we help one another grow. Particularly when times get hard...and that is where we are headed.

The church of Jesus Christ is to be missional not comfortable. A place of service..not a place of being served.

I hope people don't stay at our church because they are here to be served or to have their every need met or to be entertained. Some say that I lack compassion. The truth is, I don't waste it.

The church is a place where Gods' people are encouraged, supported, challenged and inspired to go on mission to serve, love and reach other people. It is sacrificial. We serve others at the expense of ourselves because that is what Jesus did. We don't consumer shop churches until we find the one that will allow us to stay, cater to our needs and not expect us to do anything.

At Remnant we don't try to attract all the people that you know. We equip with the attraction of Jesus in you....to reach the people that you know. We aren't here to do your work for you...we are here to equip and encourage you to fulfill your mission. You are here to work for Jesus. And the work that He has for you and me is often outside of these walls.

So...the question remains....why did almost half of all who claimed to be believers stop going to church? When their work resumed...they went back to work. When schools reopened...they went back to school....When restaurants reopened they went out to eat....But when churches reopened...many stayed home....Why?

Well, I think the answer begins with the encounter that we have had with Jesus Christ. It really boils down to the power of your relationship with Christ. Many have had too many life changing moments in the church and among their church family to walk away. They see their role as critical to the mission. They have a post...a responsibility...they attend church because they know everyone needs them to be there. They don't attend church as if they are to be entertained or serve..they come to serve others through serving Jesus.

I believe that the best way to get someone to experience Jesus is to go and serve someone else. When God's people reach out to care for others..they almost always have life altering and life changing experiences.

How many truly life changing experiences have you had? Have you thought about that? So much of what we do is routine Do you remember what you did on Wednesday? Doesn't it just blend in with all the other days? How about 3 weekends ago...no...it just blends in But every once in a while... You get an opportunity to do something... That you know you will remember for the rest of your life Those life changing experiences...

When you get a chance to have a life changing experience You have to jump on it... Life is too short... You need to build in opportunities like that in your Spiritual Life Most of us rarely see the miraculous of God Because we never put ourselves in a position To depend upon it. A Key part of life transformation...it to position yourself To finally be completely dependent upon God

Which means you have to be willing to be very uncomfortable You have to place yourself... Where if Jesus does not show up... You fail. So I beg you..Begin looking in your life for opportunities to stretch....to reach out to others....to care for someone other than yourself...In order to grow spiritually, you and I must get away from the comfort of our zone. We have to get offline and take our position....our post...in the Spiritual battle that we are called to fight. We don't just live another day that will blend in with all the rest....Don't just have another routine...that you can control Life is way too short for that....

I don't want this service or this series to just be lumped in with all the others you have attended. I really want this hour to be a life changing experience... I pray for that every week and for every series...but it is really strong in my heart today Because I am teaching in this series something that is my heartbeat...

A High View of God I am praying that we will all see how Big God is...how great God is... Because it is everything.... Your view of God...your image of God...what you think about God.... How Holy He is....How Great He is...How Powerful He is.... Is THE MOST IMPORTANT THING ABOUT YOU

When Jesus is the most important thing about you....you could never walk away from the church. You might decide to leave this one....but you never get to leave your service to Jesus in the church.

My prayer is that the new series we are starting today Will bring life transformation to you That in some way God will open you up to a new experience with Him That this series will not be just another series But it will be a time when you surrendered....and God showed up.

So we Begin the Series Bearing Good Fruit But as we start this series...I really want you to focus on Good Fruit.... I want you to see your life and the fruit that is produce through you Picture the juciest best piece of fruit you have ever eaten Busting with flavor...almost exploding...perfect in season...the best You have seen fruit before...but that one Had something special inside. Something about the way it was grown...watered...fertilized...cared for...made it special

The image of fruit and a fruit tree are all throughout Scripture We know Adam and Eve had issues with their fruit trees Ironically though God uses the idea of fruit to represent our relationship with Him He uses the analogy of trees bearing fruit to represent the way He lives through us. Hundreds of years before God, Jesus, walked on earth...

The Prophet Isaiah told us about Him and about us.

Isaiah 11:1–3 (ESV) 1 There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch from his roots shall bear fruit. 2 And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. 3 And his delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide disputes by what his ears hear,

We have looked at this passage before...the prophecy of the foretelling of the Messiah coming from The family of Jesse The Spirit of the Lord will rest and stay upon Him Isaiah told of Jesus' coming long before His arrival. But this passage also talks about us... Do you see it? A branch from His roots...shall...bear fruit. There will be a branch....rooted in Jesus....a group of people...connected to Him They will bear fruit.

The prophet Jeremiah spoke similarly

Jeremiah 17:7–8 (ESV) 7 “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. 8 He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”

Jesus said it this way....

John 15:4–5 (ESV) 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Jesus says that if we don't abide in Him..we cannot produce fruit. Only those who abide....who spend time with....Jesus Produce fruit.

Jesus goes on to say.... The fruit that we produce defines us.... He told the disciples that false teachers would be defined by their false fruit.

Matthew 7:15–20 (ESV) 15 “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17 So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. 18 A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. 19 Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. 20 Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

In Galatians .Paul contrasts two type of fruit.... One type comes from being rooted in our sinful nature.... Paul calls it the fruit from our flesh....

Galatians 5:19–21 (ESV) 19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these.

The other type of fruit comes from being rooted in Jesus... Paul calls it the fruit of the Spirit...

Galatians 5:22–23 (ESV) 22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

People often look only at the fruits of the Spirit and miss the contrast Paul is trying to make between works of the flesh and works of the Spirit in distinguishing false teachers. Context is Key. Paul is speaking to us about how to recognize false teachers.

He is not saying that if you don't exhibit these 9 things at all times that you are somehow a false prophet. None of us fully express the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. But we should be growing and moving in that direction.

Paul lists 9 things that are evident of the fruit of the Spirit. And we are all in Christ unfinished products. Then he encourages the Galatians....

Galatians 5:24–25 (ESV) 24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. 25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also keep in step with the Spirit.

Crucify the flesh.....Grow in the Spirit.

Let me ask you this... Are there any of these 9 that you do not want in your life? If God promised to pour out these 9 things in your life Would you be disappointed? If you could add to your Spiritual life....wouldn't this be what you want?

Imagine your life one year from now... What if God began working through you.... And you exploded in love....you had so much joy you couldn't stand it Your life is crazy but somehow you abound in peace. You use to get really frustrated with others....but you now have this weird patience. You replaced your selfish thoughts with kindness....goodness...

You use to have a fear of everything...tied up in anxiety....trying to control it all... And yet welling up inside of you.... Is an enormous sense of faith Your trust in God grows and as you do so... You become faithful in all areas of your life. Your once harsh exterior is replaced with gentleness toward others. You have areas in your life that have always been out of control.... And yet somehow....you can now control impulses and urges with a power that is now from you.

Can you imagine what could happen..... In your relationships? Imagine how it would transform your marriage....your parenting...your friendships... Think about how your coworkers would change. Think about your outlook on the future.

Now imagine.... That this transformation is not just in you... But in every person in your church family... Imagine if Remnant exploded in love....expressing joy....at great peace.... Abounding in patience...kindness...goodness... faithfulness...gentleness and self control What if we not only were fruitful...but so full of the Spirit.... So ripe and plump and juicy That everyone could see these things pouring out of us. These things don't come from us..... They only come from God living through us.

We become Ripe....Juicy....GreatFruit Not because of our efforts.... But because of the depth of our intimacy with Jesus. Juicy Fruit is the result of a deep....solid....commitment to stay rooted in Jesus....

So often we strive to create what God wants to give us We try to make ourselves more loving...more joyful.... We try to conjure up a bunch of peace....or patience... We go through contortions to try to find self control. We try to beat gentleness into us. And when these things don't grow in our lives... We begin to feel like we are failing as Christians...

We see others...and are envious of their internal joy... We watch some in our small groups...who abound in faithfulness Others seem to have genuine goodness and kindness But we are fighting...and internal war with ourselves And it seems like we are losing....failing at this Jesus thing

IF that is you....This series is for you... My prayer for you is that you will stop striving And position yourself to receive... You don't create the fruit in your life... You express it. Because it flows through you In this series we are going to learn.... Some things we need to do..... Some things we need to stop doing.... To become Great Fruit

Maybe you really want intimacy with God You see people that seem to have it... And you say...I want to love God like that.... But truthfully I don't right now... You see...honestly...I have all these other desires right now. My heart is pursuing other things... I want to pursue God...but really... My heart is not into that right now.

How do I get there? I would tell you...to pray. You see you don't have the ability on your own to love God. If you want to know how messed up we are..or how fallen we are... We do not have the capacity to love God. I can't muster up a bunch of love for God. I have a sin nature that loves me. I need God to grow in me a love for Him and others

We have to pray each day.... God I need you.... I need you to grow in me a love for you I need for you to grow in me a love for others.

This series is all about growth. We are going to focus on growing fruit in our lives... But fruit doesn't just happen... It is the evidence of something much deeper You can trust that Great Fruit only comes from....deep roots...to the source of growth. No tree produces fruit...until it has first developed roots. And no Christ follower produces the fruit of the Spirit Without deep roots invested in the Spirit.

How do we do that? Developing roots.... Strong roots that connect to Jesus If we really desire to become Christians overflowing with Great Fruit We must make a commitment to connect our roots to the source of the Spirit IF you want the life change that comes with the Fruit of the Spirit

You must remember that it is not just Fruit... It is Fruit OF THE SPIRIT

The only way you grow this fruit in your life Is to grow your relationship with the Holy Spirit... Through a deeper connection to Jesus. I only have one objective for this series.... I have been praying that God will give me the words....the images... That will get you to stop believing.... That anything on this earth will bring you more pleasure... Than knowing God....knowing Jesus....intimately.

That you will become so convinced of that truth... That you pursue Him more than anything. And I know it can be hard to believe.... Because so many in this room are here hurting today.... Your desire is to just get rid of the pain. And I just want you to be open to the idea... That possibly....getting to know God intimately.... May be more important than even getting rid of that pain.

I know that many sit in this room today with so many problems.... and you believe your greatest desire is....I just have to fix this problem... I need God to fix this problem for me....I have come here looking for a solution to my problem. Can I ask you to just be open to the possibility that it is not just about that problem. That knowing God more intimately could be even greater.... than fixing that problem.

Some are here today struggling with temptation... You know God has a different plan for you.... But you are tempted and you love it so much... You want it so much...even though you are in church.... You are already planning it...to dive right back into your sin when I am done....

I am just asking you to consider the possibility...that intimacy with God... Will bring you more pleasure than that sin that you are involved in. I know you can't see it... I know that temptation may be everything to you... But my prayer is that you would realize... that knowing this God is better That there is nothing on this earth....that will bring you more personal satisfaction That nothing on earth will bring you more pleasure... Than knowing Jesus intimately.

You may be thinking.... How could that possibly help my problem? How could a relationship with Jesus help anything? I desperately want you to know today.... That a relationship with Jesus changes everything.

Even if your situation never changes.... Going through it with Jesus changes everything.

I remember the day that I decided to marry Tammy... I didn't know the future...I was struggling with problems... But I knew to my core...that whatever the future held... I wanted to experience that future with her... That relationship changed everything. I would rather have gone through tough times with Tammy Than smooth sailing without her. The relationship was the most important thing...

I want you to just consider the possibility.... That an intimate relationship with Jesus.... Trumps every other circumstance in your life.. That it is better to go through trials with Jesus... Than living a wrinkle free life without Him. There is something about this relationship.... That says...I would rather be with Him... Than anywhere else. Nothing else compares to knowing Jesus...

So we walk with Jesus In our hearts we want to grow deep roots We want to spend time with Him....to understand His word. We can't believe that we are in a relationship with God. It is so exciting...we wonder how we ever lived without it Church, small group, baptism, worship, gifts, serving... we almost can't get enough of it Every day we read our bible and pray... Jesus is without a doubt the most important thing in our life

Things are really...really...good Sure you still have problems....but you have Jesus Your life is still challenging but you are no longer alone You are in a relationship with God You can't believe your good fortune You...dirty...undeserving...sinful...fallen Have been pursued and loved by perfect...holy...God.

It is sort of like the movie Hitch...**SLIDE**

In that movie a beautiful woman named Allegra Cole.... Falls for a man named Albert Brennaman who it appears Has no business being in a relationship with her. She is way out of his league... Rich...beautiful... Seemingly self assured He is ordinary...overweight...clumsy and somewhat neurotic.

You look at them and you wonder....How could he ever be with her? Not only that but Albert wonders how he could ever be with...Her. She is way out of his league...and he knows it. Yet the movie ends with Albert marrying Allegra.... He can't believe his good fortune Allegra married Albert... What else could he possibly need or want He had no business being with her So surely they will live happily ever after...right?

But you know that doesn't just happen The excitement of a new relationship wears off eventually Part of our fallen state is that we take for granted what we have been given Unless we fight against it...our selfishness takes over. We start to see other things....things we don't have... Things we want...things we choose to pursue.

The world bombards us with what we don't have Without realizing it...we drift away from the most important things.... Our relationships....to pursue....things. Because we easily forget what we have been given..... And because we take it for granted....we begin to covet...to desire other things.

That is why we have to work so hard... To protect...nurture...and grow our relationships Great marriages take commitment....and work. We have to prioritize spending time together... We have to cherish the memories of time we have spent together. We remind ourselves each day of why we fell in love in the first place Returning often to the photo album of our times together- reminding ourselves

We have to say no to a lot of other things....because we are committed to the relationship If we want the fruit that comes from a great marriage We will be asked to sacrifice our wants for theirs. It always costs us something...to really love someone else. We have to stay committed to each other

We know that as parents too... We must prioritize spending time with our families and our children No one has great relationships without investing time in others. Can you imagine having a friend... Sure you use to spend a lot of time together.... But you have been busy Sort of took that friendship for granted You trust that they will be there for you...if you need them. But will they?

If you don't rearrange your priorities... and invest in the relationship The great experience that you had with that friend will become a distant memory.

At some point...we have to decide.... IF our relationship is worth fighting for. So where are you with Jesus today? How is that relationship going for you? You see I know just how Albert must have felt....

My relationship with God is like that... I look at God...perfect...Holy....righteous.... glorious in every way Then I look at me....I know what I have done...I know my failures...I know what I deserve.

And yet...Somehow...I am in a relationship with Him. God....Big God...spoke the universe into existence God God the true perfect 10 Not only wanted a relationship with me....but pursued me. Personally arranged my life....personally moved my heart....to fall in love with Him Prepared a way...paid a price for me to be able to be in a relationship with Him The God of the Universe.....loves...me...and He loves you.

It blows my mind when I think about it.... and yet as amazing as that truth is.... I am so fallen...that I can actually take Jesus for granted. I have been matched up with holy perfect beautiful God He calls me His child...He calls us His bride...He calls us friend. And yet I look around in the security of that relationship.... And complain about the things I don't have.. The problems I still have The things I want and He hasn't give me...

It is so easy for us to look around at the things we don't have.... And forget....that I have everything.. I am connected to God...we are the bride of Christ... We have friendship with...GOD Intimacy with God....

But let's get honest.... All of us have at times pursued other things... We committed to Jesus but took that relationship for granted. We get so tempted...something else...looks so good to us. We begin desiring other things more than Jesus.

One thing this year has shown us....is that...when we stop prioritizing our time with God..... the things of this world start competing for our time Like that friend we haven't seen in a while.... The relationship starts to cool.... Not that anything is really wrong.... It is just not right...and we know it.

I know we all have problems.... I don't want to trivialize your situation.... I just want to magnify Jesus above it. God loved you...you...so much... That He would rather watch His Son suffer and die...on a cross.... than to miss out on a relationship with you.

Jesus offers you a life.... Overflowing with love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness and self control If you are following Jesus...and not seeing these things grow in your life Can I just suggest to you....that there is something in your life.... that you believe is more important than Jesus

John 15:4–5 (ESV) 4 Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Jesus made it absolutely clear....if you don't abide in Him You will never....ever produce...fruit... Meditate on this verse this week... A branch cannot bear fruit by itself I am the vine...you are the branches...the ones Isaiah spoke about long ago If you abide in me....you will produce much fruit.... A lost world needs to see real God Fruit...

Fruit that has been grown in that quiet place with Jesus. Because so much time has been spent with Him... In prayer....in His word.... That the Spirit of God...the Holy Spirit.... Has grown so strong in you...that the juice in your fruit Is the Holy Spirit waiting to explode out of your life and on to others.

I want that so desperately in my own life.... And I want it for each of you....and for this amazing church. I want the juiciest fruit possible expressed in each of our lives... But I don't grow fruit...and neither do you The amount of love, joy, peace and all the others that we experience together Is directly related to how much time we spend in the Sanctuary...the quiet place with Jesus.

All we can do...is surrender our priorities to His...and position ourselves to receive. I know it can be very hard... Our problems...our issues...our struggles...they just seem so Big The immediate events in your life...seem so overwhelming That temptation that is leading you away...seems so desirable Can I just suggest to you....to consider the possibility...That those things... Are the very things God is using....to move you to the quiet place?

That it is in the sanctuary....your time alone with Jesus Where your problems become small.. Because God becomes so Big.

I want so desperately to be used by God... To show you... That the only solution to whatever you are facing... Is knowing God....knowing Jesus....intimately. That you will become so convinced of that truth... That you pursue Him more than anything. Because you know nothing else on earth... Could possibly bring you more pleasure.

So this week as we launch the series.... What do you need to do....to position yourself To abide in Jesus?

What priority are you willing to change? What temptation are you willing to walk away from? What immediate problem are you willing to set aside? What selfish desire do you need to release? To make sure that your relationship with Jesus is THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN YOUR LIFE

Many this year have found their faith is on sinking sand. They have walked away from their call as believers to serve others, to sacrifice for others, to share our lives with one another, to continue meeting together and to continue to be equipped to reach others. If you are watching us online and have stopped attending a church service with real people who have real needs and need to know a very real God. I am calling you out.

This year 30% of church attenders used Covid as an excuse to stop attending church.

Is that all it took really.....really...for you to abandon your post?

I started teaching before the Covid Pandemic about God's truth for our church and it has never changed.

Hebrews 10:22–25 (ESV) 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Do you want to know why it is so critical that we obey God's Word. Because The greatest damage of Covid is not the loss of life....it is not the illness....not the pandemic....it is that over half of the people who were pursuing Jesus and serving Him in churches are no longer doing so.

No one is talking about the damage that Covid has done to the church and to religious freedom. The Government said that Churches were essential and the people of God said...No its ok...I'll WATCH online.

The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few.

Followers of Jesus have been placed on guard duty for times such as these....We are the first defenders of the truth...We are the light of hope in the darkness of our culture...People are going to stumble into church looking for help....not your living room. How dare you stay home....when the battle is building....when the times are getting darker....and comfortably watch the rest of us do God's work for you on line. You don't have to attend Remnant....and now maybe you don't want to. But plug in somewhere. The mission is too great....the work is too hard....and we need you fully engaged in the work of the Kingdom.

My prayer is that you who are watching on line will get up next week and go to a church. Go to serve, go to encourage, go to contribute, go to worship, go to learn, go to become equipped, and go to make your life about someone other than yourself.

This series is about positioning yourself to be fully equipped with the fruit of the Spirit....a fruit that grows out of a deep relationship with Christ and is ripened in the midst of serving others. The gifts of the Spirit are gifts given to us by God to be given away to others. We are rivers not reservoirs. Jesus didn't text or skype the leper.....He reached out and touched him....when no one else would.

Let's Pray.