

## **Get Real (and renounce the kingdom of lies)**

Ephesians 6:10-12 & Acts 19:23-20:1

#33 in our series from Paul's letter to the Ephesians

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### **Prayer**

Lord Jesus, we ask that you would help us to preach. We pray that your Word would be heard...that you would be heard. Because Lord Jesus, you are the Living Word. And Father, I pray that we would be strong and of good courage. And Lord, the most repeated commandment in scripture is: "Fear not." Lord God I pray that we would "fear not" and that we would stand in the ground that you claim, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### **Message**

Ephesians 6:10

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.*

Weeks ago we began preaching on this text and discovered that the armor of God really isn't a "what" but a "Who." It's not "what you know but "Who" knows you. We also talked about Quantum Physics.

Since the 1920s physicists like Max Plank, Werner Heisenberg, Erwin Schrodinger, and Albert Einstein have been saying, "It's not what but who;" for it appears that matter doesn't really matter...but you do. For the data is clear: subatomic particles (which are the building block of matter are not actually there, only potentially there, until someone consciously observes them...that is...thinks about them.

All of that leads to some utterly fascinating questions that physicists are unprepared to answer: 1)"What's an observer?" Not "'What am I?'" but "'Who am I?'" 2)"Who is observing me? For I seem to exist, and 3)"How can you and I exist in the same reality?"

According to the laws of Quantum Mechanics, if you and I exist in the same reality, someone must be observing us both...a more powerful observer. Well, scripture claims that observer is God, and His thoughts are His Logos, His Word, His Reason, and His Word became flesh we wrapped Him in swaddling cloths and laid Him in a manger and his name is Jesus.

And so, to get real and have real relationships with real people, you must live naked before God, the observer, and His Logos—His Word. And...if you refuse to be observed; for you want to be the Lord of your own life, and creator of your own reality...if you refuse to be observed...well, perhaps for a time, and in a way, you can.

Yet, to hide yourself from God, the Observer, is to un-create and desecrate yourself. It is to trap yourself in non-reality: illusions, lies, insanity, darkness and death—a universe with no "whos" only "whats." We talked about that last time, and we all know it on some level.

If you want to create your own reality, you cannot allow other observers or persons in your reality; for their reality will compete with your reality. So you must create a reality without persons and thus without Love, which means without God, which means you would not be observed and thus...not truly exist. You must be false...not alive...but dead—not substance but

shadow—one of the *raphaim*, in Hebrew, translated “shade” or “ghost”—a *phantasma* in Greek, translated “phantom” or “ghost.”

If you think you create yourself, you create a ghost...trapped in a universe of darkness and death. And the Bible refers to that place as “Hell.” In one of my favorite quotes, from His book, *The Great Divorce*, and through the words of an Angel, C.S. Lewis describes Hell:

Hell is a state of mind...And every state of mind, left to itself, every shutting up of the creature within the dungeon of its own mind-is, in the end, Hell. But Heaven is not a state of mind. Heaven is reality itself. All that is fully real is Heavenly; for all that can be shaken will be shaken and only the unshakable remains.

The choice of every lost soul can be expressed in the words: “Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.”...a damned soul is nearly nothing: it is shrunk, shut up in itself. Good beats upon the damned incessantly as sound waves beat on the ears of the dead, but they cannot receive it. Their fists are clenched, their teeth are clenched, their eyes fast shut. First they will not, in the end they cannot, open their hands for gifts, or their mouths for food, or their eyes to see.”

“Then no one can ever reach them?” Someone asks. “Only the Greatest of all can make Himself small enough to enter Hell...” replies the angel. “And will He ever do so again?” asked the man. The angel replies: “It was not once long ago that He did it. Time does not work that way when once we have left the earth. All moments that have been or shall be, were, or are present in the moment of His descending. There is no spirit in prison to whom He did not preach.

In Ephesians 4:9 Paul told us that Jesus “descended into the lower parts of the earth and ascended leading a host of captives free.”

In Isaiah 26:9 Isaiah prophesied: “The earth will give birth to the *raphaim*.”

In Revelation 20:14 At the end of time as we know it: “Death and Hell are thrown in the lake of fire and death shall be no more.” Hell comes to an end in a lake of eternal and consuming fire; our God is eternal and consuming fire. God is the end of Hell. “Hell” is usually *Hades* in the Greek and *Sheol* in the Hebrew. And that word does not mean what most American Christians think it means. *Hades* is not eternal and not only in the afterlife *Hades* begins here and now, in our hearts and minds.

In Ephesians 4:25 Paul wrote, “Put away the false.” (the false self) And then in verse 27: “Give no place to the devil.” You see? The devil is looking for a place—a place where he can hide from the gaze of God—the judgment of God. I suspect that the devil (whatever he is or is not) has no power except that which we give him.

The devil cannot massacre 6 million Jews. He needs a young, insecure, and frightened man named “Adolph” to create for him a place. The devil cannot crucify Christ. He needs Judas, and Pilate, and all of us sinners to create for him a place and give to him the arms to crack the whip and pound the nails.

So if the devil has control of your life, it's because he has a place in your life...that is...you have sin in your life, yours or someone else's. But don't panic...it's an extremely common condition. Ask Jesus to expose the sin, and then confess the sin, and believe God's Grace—Jesus came to “destroy the works of the devil.”

Put off the old man—the false self, and put on Jesus. Last time I said, “It's not “what” you know...but “Who.” But now I want you to see that we each have created a kingdom of “whats”—a shadow world—a haunted house—a dead universe.

*To resist the devil is to invite Jesus, the ultimate “Who” into every corner of your kingdom of “whats.”*

*To resist the devil is to surrender every corner of your haunted house to Love and Life—God and His Word.*

So Paul writes, “Give no place to the devil.” And now, “Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might...” “That you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.” So what are the “schemes of the devil?” We don't fully know, but we do know that for the children of Adam and Eve, they all begin with a lie: God cannot be trusted...so we must take the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; we must:

*Take law, take rules, form agreements, and covenants, and systems of law.*

*Take the description of the good to make ourselves good, and God is the good.*

*Take from God to make ourselves in the image of God.*

*We must create ourselves and our world.*

So Satan says, “Why walk with God in His garden? Take knowledge of God and make your own garden, your own reality—your own world.”

So Paul writes,  
Ephesians 6:10-13

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil (diabolos-The word means “Accuser.”)*

You know, if there's no “knowledge of law,” you really can't accuse people of breaking the law. Jesus fulfills and fully fills the law, but Jesus is not a legalist. Satan is a legalist. He is the Accuser.

*Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil (the accuser). For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood,*

You wrestle...right? We all wrestle.

*..we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm.*

What does Paul mean, by “rulers and authorities,” “principalities and powers?” Most scholars argue: Paul means, any system of government, which governs the minds and hearts of a group of people.

So Paul certainly meant Rome and Roman law.

But he also meant old Jerusalem and the priests who tried to rule with God’s law.

And he meant economies like the economy of the empire.

He meant governments, religions, economies, societies, sociologies, perhaps even psychologies and archetypes of the mind that govern societies.

In Colossians, Paul teaches that they were all created by God through Jesus, and now must be redeemed by Jesus; for they’ve been corrupted and exist in rebellion, “a spiritual evil in the heavenly places.” So Rome isn’t just a set of laws, it’s more than the sum of its parts. It’s the beast from the sea that John sees in the Revelation. And John sees a beast from the land—a false prophet—a corrupted religion—faithless Israel. And John sees an economy—a great harlot, who rides the beast that serves the dragon that is the devil. And God’s people are in bed with the harlot...so even the church can forsake her calling and become an antichrist (an imitation Christ)...become a principality and power of this world...become a set of rules or laws, spoken or unspoken, which people use, to build a society and make themselves good by controlling themselves and others, with threats of punishment and promises of reward, with man-made covenants and oaths, binding people in guilt, shame, and fear...principalities and powers, systems with which we seek control but through which we are, in fact, being controlled.

In some world, there may be a Kingdom...where the Ruler is an absolute blessing to each and everyone that He rules, where everyone is free and surrenders in the ecstasy of Love. But in this fallen world, the “principalities and powers” control people with greed and fear and imprison them in shame, all under the dominion of the accuser, who is the devil and Satan.

And here’s the worst part; we think it’s normal. In fact, Jesus and His Kingdom of love is so different from the ways of this world that even after 1500 years of education in God’s way, when Jesus, The Way, came to His own home, and his own people...they joined with the Romans and nailed Him to a tree. And so, what are the schemes of the devil today? Now I know this is weird, but this little video (that may be offensive to some) really made me think, “What are the devil’s schemes?”

A Clip from *DET Satan Club* is shown.

The entire clip can be found at this link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZsYEGmhEbc>

Here is a shortened and edited version:

“Hello Christian Internet; welcome to our black metal weblog: *DET Satan Club*.”

Heavy Metal type singing begins: “Deep in the bowels of Norway...where every church has third-degree burns. DET Satan Club presents...Pictures...Pictures...Pictures for Christians.”

“You Christians love to see pictures of your precious Jesus...suffering on the cross. You love it. But we are Satanists. We desecrate what you love by creating images of Jesus in comfortable positions...like:”

[An image of Jesus in a bubble bath is shown]

“You Christians hate to see images of your Jesus so comfortable. It makes you rigid with fear. You Christians love imagining that the world will end when four housemen arrive to signal the apocalypse...so do we...but the horsemen are cool dudes, frosted tips and visors...high-fiving people with self-esteem problems”

[Images of four men dressed in cackies and purple polo shirts with the heads of horses topped with visors are shown high-fiving a depressed youth]

“While Satan watches thinking... ‘This pleases me...’”

Now, listen closely. It's good to high-five people with self-esteem problems. And I know that Jesus would enjoy a bubble bath, but if Satan were to really see our demise...wouldn't he try to convince us that Jesus is comfortable in this fallen world and with this fallen world. And wouldn't he try to make us comfortable by guarding us from famine, war, and death—the horsemen of the apocalypse released by God? For it's suffering that makes us think, “Maybe this world needs a savior.” Wouldn't he create images of a Jesus validated by the “principalities and powers of this world,” like an American Jesus: A Republican Jesus or a Democratic Jesus— maybe a Catholic, Presbyterian or Lutheran Jesus but *OUR* Jesus?

And above all, Satan would not let us contemplate Jesus Christ and Him crucified; for according to Paul, it was there on the cross that God, in Christ Jesus, exposed and disarmed the principalities and powers. It was there that the First became last and forgave every debt and destroyed the dominion of Satan's lies.

Well, I don't know what those college kids were thinking, but they made an absolutely brilliant video. So what do the “principalities and powers,” “the rulers and authorities” look like? And what does it look like when we wrestle against them?

Last time, we looked at Acts chapter 19 because Acts 19 is the record of what happened when Paul visited Ephesus, and must therefore, be the example in the Ephesians' minds as they read Paul's letter.

You'll remember that when Paul came to Ephesus, he baptized twelve people in the Holy Spirit and then taught for two years and three months in the synagogue and then in the hall of Tyrannus. During that time, God did extraordinary miracles at the hands of Paul so that people were healed and evil spirits were cast out. Then seven Jewish magicians try to cast out a demon saying, "We command you by the Jesus whom Paul preaches." The demon replies, "Jesus I know and Paul I know about but who are you?" It's not "what" you know but "Who." The demoniac then overpowers the seven Jewish magicians, and they all run out of the house naked, stripped of their fig leaves, their religious deeds, and their magic.

Satan tempts all of us with magic. Magic is using knowledge of God or gods to gain control of God. Faith is surrendering control to God in Love.

Well, seeing what happened to the seven Jewish magician priests, the people of Ephesus burn about eight million dollars worth of magic books, which undoubtedly affected the economy of Ephesus—"the principalities and powers."

In Acts 19:23 we read that a silversmith named Demetrius grew furious and started a riot; for Demetrius made silver shrines to the goddess Artemis. Ephesus was home to the temple of Artemis, which was considered one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.

Artemis of the Ephesians was something of a cross between the Roman Diana and the ancient Asian fertility goddess, as evidenced by the numerous and bountiful bosoms on her chest.

[Image of Artemis is shown]

Acts 19:25-34 & 20:1

*So Demetrius says to his fellow craftsmen, "Men, you know that from the business we have our wealth. And you see and hear that not only is Ephesus but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods.*

See? The devil wants you to believe:

That with the strength of your hands you can make gods;

That with your religious good deeds you can make yourself

God.

*Demetrius continues. And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship." When they heard this they were enraged and were crying out, "Great Artemis of the Ephesians!"*

Now remember, this wasn't just their religion, but their society, their economy. They probably had some sort of guild and were bound together

with covenants and oaths. This is how they made their living, how they made their life.

*So the city was filled with the confusion, and they rushed together into the theater...Paul wished to go in among the crowd..*

The Greek word for crowd is *demos*. It's where we get our word democracy. I It was a *demos* that chanted "crucify him, crucify him" ...and condemned Him to death on the tree.

*...Paul wished to go in among the crowd, the disciples would not let him...Now some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion,*

The word for assembly is *ekklesia*, which is also translated church... So just because a group of people chant together and call themselves a church, it doesn't mean they serve Jesus.

*...the assembly was in confusion, and most of them did not know why they had come together.*

Now, many of you have been wondering, "Why is Peter wearing that God-awful tie?" Well, how do you know it's a "God-awful tie?" Along about 1972 my dad wore this tie, and I remember thinking, "What a cool tie!"

You see; there's no logical reason that one tie is better than another tie...it's just fashion.

And that's the way it is with the "principalities and powers."

The logic is fashion: "It's only common sense." "Look out for number one." "The strong survive." "You've got to make something of yourself." "It's what everyone does." "It's the way of the world." "Get real." But what is really real?



*...for about two hours they all cried out with one voice, "Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!"*

Finally, the town clerk quieted the crowd by reminding them that they could all get arrested for rioting.

*After the uproar ceased, Paul sent for the disciples, and after encouraging them, he said farewell and departed for Macedonia.*

And that's kind of anticlimactic...I mean Paul seems to have access to all this power, (healing people and driving out demons) but he doesn't use that power. He doesn't mobilize his crowd,

or call down fire from heaven upon Demetrius. He just lets them turn him into their scapegoat. (Apart from the miracles, he just preaches the Word in weakness and lets them turn him into their scapegoat.) It seems like he lost...and yet...2000 years later, I don't know of anyone that worships "Artemis of the Ephesians."

But 2000 years later you're sitting here, reading Paul's letter that he wrote in a Roman prison, and worshiping Jesus. And just think of it; Jesus had all that power but apart from the miracles, he just preached the Word in weakness and then he let the Jews literally turn him into their scapegoat—their sacrificial lamb.

The beast from the land and the beast from the sea, in bed with the great harlot and under the dominion of the dragon, used the crowd, Judas, Pilate, and some humans to nail Jesus to a tree, but...

There He cried, "Father forgive."

There, God, in Christ Jesus exposed and disarmed the "principalities and powers."

There the ruler of this world was cast out.

There, Christ romances all people to Himself.

So Paul writes, "Be strong in the Lord and the strength of his might that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil...you wrestle not against flesh and blood but principalities and powers...a spiritual host of evil in the heavenly places."

And now, I'd like to tell you a story that will raise questions...and still raises plenty of questions in me. It's a true story, but if you're new I honestly don't expect you to believe me; you don't know me. And if you're old...for some here at the Sanctuary...I've been your pastor for over twenty years...I'm cashing in credibility chips. I want to tell you a story that blows my mind, and we may need to discuss it again next week. Part of it you may know; for it started three and a half years ago, not long after our church began meeting in this old building.

A pastor friend made a short video of this room and then sent me the video saying, "Peter look there is a black thing that flies out of the corner and across the window." I didn't know quite what to think. A week or two later, a new person approached me, she said, "I saw a black thing fly out of the corner and across the window and my husband did too." I showed her the video and she said, "That's it." She turned out to be a reporter for Fox 31 news and later asked me, "Can I do a story on that thing?" I said, "I guess, just don't make us look stupid."

Meanwhile, Susan and I decided to take communion wine and pray through the building. My wife has a gift of discerning spirits and will often get words from the Lord. Over time, and through some crazy experiences, I've learned to trust that gift.

Well, she heard a voice saying, "Sh-shh-shh." We prayed and then bound a demon named "secrets." Susan heard other voices and said, "Peter, it has something to do with the Masons." I thought oh well...yeah...everybody blames the Masons. Well, God did some truly wonderful and amazing things...I preached three sermons on it in the fall of 2010, all of which you can watch online, along with the weird video, if you're into that kind of thing.



Well, when the reporter interviewed me, she said, "Peter, did you know this land used to belong to the Masons, and it seems that before the church was built, some were buried here?" Over the next year and a half, we did lots of praying, and God did lots of cleansing. Through a series of truly bizarre events and one crazy prayer time, we bound spirits named "Archetype," and "Loathing," and "Hiding," and then "Antichrist," (which means imitation christ,) and then the spirit over it, whose name was "Lucifer."

Masons advance through the ranks or degrees of their order by taking secret oaths. In James 5:20 scripture says, "Above all...don't swear *any* oath." And so...I don't even say the pledge of allegiance anymore. And don't get me wrong, the United States of America is my favorite government in this world but it's still a government *of* this world.

Well, Masons swear oaths and the oaths are secret. (Yet, I have read that by the 33rd and highest degree a Mason must swear an oath to Lucifer, whom the Mason has been told is the same person as Jesus.)

Now I doubt that many Masons worship Lucifer and in fact, I don't know for a fact that any do. And I'm sure that most Masons take vows in ignorance, just as most people take vows in ignorance all the time. And I know the Masons do many good deeds, just as all the principalities of this world do many good deeds. And I'm not saying that all Masons participate in the nefarious activities of just a few. Nevertheless, in January of 2012, we were lead to the creepy dark room down in the earth under the bell tower, with a list of Masonic oaths to renounce on behalf of those that had vowed them in this place in the past.

And now, the story gets weird...and *wonderful*. Two friends from our prophetic prayer team, Pam and Norm joined us. We took communion and claimed the blood of the covenant. We claimed the eternal covenant in Christ's blood, which supersedes and breaks all other covenants, and it's not a thing...but a life...Jesus' life.

I announced that I prayed on behalf of the family of God, and then we prayed through a long list of oaths, removing each one in the name of Jesus. In the process we bound more demons. One was named "Ignorance," and it was chained to "Lucifer." One was named "Confounder," and it was sent to confound me. We made them all get in a box, a large metal box.

Then, all at once, Susan said, "I see children." (Now, understand I don't see this, but Susan does.) They're all around the room and they're really afraid. They're standing in a circle staring at an animal that's been sacrificed. They're trapped in fear. They would kill the animal and tell the children that the same could happen to them..." I realized that the children weren't demons and that they must be ghosts and this was like...a corner of Hell.

Scripture clearly forbids consulting the dead, I suppose that's because the dead are lost and cannot give you directions and because demons can masquerade as the dead. But once we bound all the demons, these children just showed up. I prayed that Jesus would come and take the box of demons away in order to comfort the terrified children. Susan and Pam both saw Jesus come, but Jesus put the box in the middle of the circle, so the children could see: That tremendous, horrifying box shrank to almost nothing next to Jesus; then He picked it up and put it in His pocket.

I asked Susan, "Is that animal still there?" and she said, "Yes, I see the pieces." The kids were staring at the pieces. Norm thought it was a lamb, Susan said it was a goat. I reminded them that the Passover lamb could be taken either from the sheep or the goats. I then said, "Jesus would you show the children what you do?" And those children watched as Jesus put this little goat back together and it came to life.

Yet, they still struggled. Susan said, "It's because their fathers are behind them with their hands on their shoulders." So, in Jesus' name, I told the fathers to release their children. The children started coming to Jesus, laughing, and petting the goat. The fathers didn't come...I said something like, "Children, I think Jesus wants you to turn and say to your fathers, 'I forgive you in Jesus' name. You need to come to Jesus.'" But Susan said the fathers just stood there covered in hoods and robes. I said, "In the name of Jesus take off your hoods." Then Susan said, "They're naked, old and worn out." And then I preached. I told them about Jesus and His grace. The Jesus I knew; for He knew me. I said, "You must become like children to enter His Kingdom. Then I said, "I think Jesus would say this to you and He wants me to say it: "My Father is Your Father."

Pam said, "Tell the children to go get their fathers." I did and one by one the children came and then took their fathers by the hand and began leading the to Jesus, and as they got to Jesus, they would change and grow young. It was at this point that my wife got very animated and said, Peter the one with the knife is attacking Jesus." (What am I to do?) So I said, "Jesus, would you take care of him?" Susan said, the man burst into flames and turned to dust. If he was a man, I believe Jesus will one day make him new. If he was only a shadow...then there's nothing to make new.

There was one other man who wouldn't come to Jesus. I asked, "Jesus who is he?" and Jesus answered, "The Steward." Susan said, "He's so filled with shame, he won't even look up." I figure he must be the deacon or pastor that let these men use that room one hundred years ago. In fact, it was after this that we found one-hundred-year-old bulletins under the stage and discovered that all the officers of the church were called "stewards."

Well, I preached to that steward about the power of the cross...that, on the cross, Jesus had taken his sin and shame away. He is the Lamb of God that "takes away the sin of the world." He is our scapegoat, and God the Father raised Him from the dead. I said, "Jesus told us: 'I will build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.' Now look, you are standing before Jesus, in *Hell*, and He is revealing His power and glory."

Then Susan said, "He has keys. They are keys to the church." I said, "Hand them to me." Then suddenly, I realized what I was doing and said, "No, hand them to Jesus. The church belongs to Him." The man finally did. He surrendered his stewardship. He handed the keys to Jesus.

Then Susan and Pam and maybe Norm said that it was like a party broke out. Jesus, the kids, the dads, the steward were all laughing and smiling, and the goat was bleating. I was exhausted; for it took several hours, and not really knowing what to do or say at this point, I said, "Jesus, is it time for them to go home?" Suddenly, according to the others, for I don't see any of this...suddenly....a door opened on the side of that dark room under the bell tower.

Through the door shown a brilliant light (heavenly light.) Susan said, "They're all walking through the door," and then she started laughing out loud. I said, "What did you see?" She said, "It was so cute, they all went through the door, and the last one through was the goat, He came running after them...bleating...through the door." Jesus is the Door. Jesus is the Lamb. Jesus is the Goat. Jesus is The Way. Jesus is the Light that shines in the darkness. He is the Truth in the place of lies. He is the reality in the depths of unreality. He is the Eternal Seed that cannot be stopped.

You know, for years people said that that old building was haunted, and now, I believe it is haunted...with the Spirit of Jesus—The Holy Ghost. You see, God's really not into stone buildings. He is into you. Your life is to be His building—His temple—His body. So to do battle with evil is to surrender every room to his glorious presence.

So don't hide; don't harbor guilt and shame in your house, and don't keep any secrets. Renounce every ungodly oath you've ever made. I often wonder if all oaths are ungodly. Don't believe curses. Don't believe demons. Don't believe the lie.

You can't make yourself in the image of God...with your knowledge of God...BUT....  
*God* makes you in His own image, by Grace...through Faith—His Word.

In fact, all has been arranged that you would see His Grace and be filled with Faith and invite Love and Life Himself, invite Him, to make His home in *every* room of your house—His Sanctuary.

### **Communion**

On that darkest of nights, as He was being betrayed by all of us, the Lamb of God took bread and broke it saying, "This is my body given to you, take and eat; do this in remembrance of me." And in the same way, having given thanks, He took the cup saying, "This is the covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins...the covenant. It's called the new covenant; it's also called the eternal covenant. This covenant supersedes and breaks all other covenants. So as you come to this table, you are renouncing all other covenants and claiming this covenant: That from the foundation of the world, our Father chose you, in Christ Jesus, to bless you with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places and make you His child, make you the bride of His son.

When you talk about the principalities and powers, there are a couple structures in our world that are different than the principalities and powers. They don't just run on promises of threats and rewards, curses and shame. There are societies of love, which is a different kind of thing. Something that a good father has for His children and good children have for their father. Something that a good husband has for his bride and a good bride has for her husband. And Jesus said, "I am your husband." And God says, "I am your Father and I have paid." So He calls you to come home, to come to the table and receive His life, His grace, His mercy and His presence...He himself... in this old haunted house, drink of it all of you in remembrance of me.

### **Prayer**

So Lord Jesus, today we offer ourselves to you. (Just do that right now, whatever words you have in your heart, silently just offer yourself to the Lord.) If you have vowed yourself to other lords, other organizations other than your Father and His Kingdom just offer those vows; renounce them. If you are committed to Him, He'll tell you what to do. He's your one obligation. Confess your sins.

Lord God we offer you these houses, this house, this place. We ask you, Spirit of the Living God, fill us up, and keep filling us up. We are your sanctuary in Jesus' name.

### **Benediction**

Fear not; for Jesus is in the house. You will wrestle because I think He's showing you His victory and He's making you His body. So we all wrestle against principalities and powers the world rulers of this present darkness, a spiritual host of wickedness in the heavenly places. I meant what I said when I said you don't need to believe my story, but believe the Bible: Jesus is in the house. You *do* wrestle... but Jesus wins.

The things that we did in the basement of this building...well that's a weird story...but you see...those are the things we do every Sunday when we come here. It's the thing you do every day when you remember His grace and mercy and you speak to Him and call on Him. You become a vessel for the destruction of the work of the devil at the hands of Jesus...the body of Jesus. So don't fear, and one day things will really go dark. We'll lose control. The principalities and powers will no longer work for us. We will breathe our last breath and our physical heart will beat its last beat, we will descend into what appears to be darkness and then...suddenly, we'll see Him.

Don't keep your head down in shame like you don't know Him. Don't run in fear as if you're not forgiven and His blood hasn't canceled every debt, every agreement you ever made with evil. Don't run; don't hide. Look up, look into His eyes; lift your head and say, "Jesus I am ready to come home." Because you see...He's ready to come home to you. You are His sanctuary, and He loves you, and He wants you to know it. In the name of Jesus, believe the gospel.

You see, it really is GOOD news! This one thing we know: He's good and He's showing you. Amen.

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio or video version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*