



Schemes of the Devil – October 30, 2019
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Verses Covered This Week

Ephesians 6:10 – 11

Genesis 3:1 – 5

1 John 5:13

Romans 8:15 – 16

2 Peter 1:2 – 4

Romans 5:8

1 John 4:10 – 11

Ephesians 1:7

2 Corinthians 5:21

Psalms 103:12

Isaiah 38:17

Micah 7:19

Matthew 13:20 – 21

1 John 5

1 John 1:9

OK. Slide over to Ephesians 6:10 – 11. This Greek word appears there. If you transliterate this, you don't translate it, it's the Greek word *method*. And my Bibles that I use are all gone. They're headed to my new office at Southwestern right now. As a matter of fact, I have to meet them at 9:00 in the morning to move one office of mine up to the office I have there. So all my good Bibles are gone. I'm stuck with this hard back thing that I have in my hand. I hate study Bibles because there are so many notes, it takes forever to find the book. In my day, they had this deal they taught us in Bible study. In my day, you opened the first quarter you went to 1 Kings. You open the middle; you went to Psalms. Open the third quarter, you went to Matthew. Open the end, you went to Revelation. Now you open to the middle, you're in Genesis 4. So here we go.

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹Put on the whole armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

This is the Greek word for scheme: *methodeia*. We get the word method from it. He has schemes that he will use in your life. He has several methods that he will employ to take you down. Now remember, you don't really matter to him. We need to grasp that. You're irrelevant. He just hates

God, God likes you, so he wants to do everything he can to deal with this. Now, the interesting thing is the schemes that he uses, that we'll look at in the Scripture, have never changed. What he did 2,000 years ago, let me back up. What he did in Genesis, he's still doing. He has not changed a single scheme and the reason he hasn't changed is because they work. So slide over to Genesis 3.

¹Now the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the Lord God made. And he said to the woman, "Indeed, has God said, 'You shall not eat from any tree of the garden'?" ²The woman said to the serpent, "From the fruit of the trees of the garden we may eat; ³but from the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God has said, 'You shall not eat from it or touch it, or you will die.'" ⁴The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die! ⁵For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

Here is the first strategy that he uses. His first strategy is to make you believe that God is cheating you. That's his premise with Adam and Eve. Now the argument is that he made them doubt the word. But here's how he made them doubt the word. God said, "You eat from that tree you'll die." Satan said, "No, you eat from that tree, you'll be like He is. In other words, the rule that He has for you about that tree is cheating you. You'll never reach your fullest best unless you eat from the tree that He told you not to eat from." Now this is the first strategy he uses. It's the strategy in Luke 15 with the prodigal son. He's got this great life with his dad, he thinks, "Man, this is boring being with my dad, keeping all these rules, being responsible." He heads out, wastes everything, wrecks his life. It's the way he works. I couldn't remember, the other thing they packed were all my notes. They sucked my office dry like a Hoover vacuum cleaner. They sucked both my offices dry as a matter of fact. Have we done a session on the two natures? OK. Good. Good to know. Now this is the first way he will get you. For example, they asked Carrie Underwood one time, they said, "Do you believe that same sex marriage is wrong?" And Carrie Underwood, who is ostensibly a solid Christian, made the statement, she said, "I don't want anybody telling me whom I can and cannot marry." In other words, if you live out the Scripture, you're going to be cheated because nobody should tell you whom you should or shouldn't marry. Well the Bible's very clear. You can't have same sex. You can't marry an unbeliever. You ladies need to marry someone who's your spiritual leader. If he's not your spiritual leader before you marry, you don't marry him. So you've got all these things where the Bible really does give you great guidelines. And if you follow those, you're not being cheated, you're being blessed. But his argument is going to be that God is ripping you off. The reason a Christian man or woman will have an affair, and we'll look at this, I think we may look at this next time we meet. We'll discuss the two natures because it's very confusing and most Christians don't get it. When you become a Christian, and I'll explain this again next time we meet, Satan can only attack you externally. Now when you're non-Christian, he owns you internally. But when you become a Christian, he can only attack you externally. And so what he will do to a man or a woman who has an affair, he can't pull them into an affair really through lust. He pulls them into the affair by them believing that the spouse they're with is not good enough for them and they're being cheated. And if they go to this spouse that God's not OK with, they'll be blessed. So the first thing he does is he's going to make you believe that God's ripping you off.

Second thing, 1 John 5:13. Listen to what he says. Now we're going to look at this and underneath we'll look at Romans 8:15 – 16. Listen to what he says:

¹³I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.

Now go over to Romans 8:15 – 16.

¹⁵For you have not received a spirit of slavery to fall back again to fear, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry out, “Abba! Father!” ¹⁶The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we’re children of God.

Now the second thing he’s going to do is he’s going to make you doubt your salvation. I think when you doubt your salvation, it’s the ultimate authentication of your salvation. He’s never going to make a lost person doubt their salvation because that would push them toward Jesus. But he’s going to make you doubt your salvation. I said that, I was teaching the men one night, I made that statement and one of the guys said, “Man, I must be the greatest Christian in the world.” So he will make you doubt it and it is extremely powerful. If he does, 2 Peter 1:2 – 4, look there with me. Listen to what he says.

³His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness,

What’s the tense of granted? What’s the verb tense? Past. How many things? All things that pertain to life and godliness. So in other words, as a believer I have everything I need to be godly and to live a good life. I have everything.

through the knowledge of Him who called us to His own glory and excellence. ⁴By which He has granted to us His precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

He says, God’s promises are what enable me to live out this great blessing of holiness and life. Now here’s the problem. Promises are pulled into your life by your trust. If I’m not sure I’m a believer, I will never be able to trust His promises. And so what God has given me never appears in my life. This is an insidious issue. 1 John 5 is very clear. It is what you believe. Now part of the problem is, for many of you because of preachers, there has been a tendency over the years to say, “Do you remember the day you were saved? Do you remember the date you were saved? Do you remember the hour you were saved?” And if you don’t remember that, then there’s something wrong with you. You’re not a believer. You’ve not a Christian. You should be able to remember the date. I do not have any idea what the date or day or night when I was saved was. I do remember hearing Billy Graham. I do remember going back to my room. I remember when I was in Louisiana and we went to Alabama a couple weeks later. That is the only thing I remember. Kind of a general time frame. I don’t think you have to remember the day. I don’t even think it has to be some supernatural experience. I don’t think you need to see flashing lights. I think you simply come to a place where the Holy Spirit says to you, “You’re a sinner. Jesus isn’t and you need His blood.” And you say, “OK. I’m in.” That’s it. The other problem we’ve had, I think, and I’m as guilty of this as the other guys. We talk about praying the prayer. There’s nothing in the Bible about praying the prayer. There’s everything in the Bible about believing what the Holy Spirit has said to you. So the Holy Spirit tells me I’m bad and Jesus isn’t. I need what He did because I am

bad because He's not. It's my only hope. I believe that. My belief saves me. The Bible says, whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. If you have believed in Jesus Christ as the redeemer for your life, you're good. It's not what you do. It's not how much you've done. And the other way you'll struggle here is if you compare your Christian walk with someone who's got an older Christian walk. You've been saved two years and somebody's been saved 32 years, her walk should be better than yours. Don't compare yourself and don't worry about a date. Did you believe and have you believed? Then you're good. Don't let anybody, one of the things I do with kids is I want them to lock down. There are a lot of people that will tell you, and don't you ever do this, when you do come to somebody and say, "You know I'm doubting my salvation. I don't know if I'm saved." You'll have somebody sooner or later look at you and say, "Well let's do this. Let's nail it down today. Let's you and I kneel and let's pray and let's ask Jesus in our heart." If you do that, you're going to do that every six months for the rest of your life. You have got to come to a place where you say, "God I believe Your Spirit spoke to me. I believe His blood is my only hope. I believe I believe that. And I don't think there's anything else I need to do and I'm trusting Your word for where I am." Until you trust His word instead of what Satan whispers to you, you're not going to win. And it will be a chronic, constant, debate. It's why, I want to be careful here, I know as parents we want our kids to be saved. I want us to remember God wants that more than you do. The older your kid comes to Christ, the better. W. A. Criswell was pastor at First Baptist Dallas for years. A tremendous man of God. His books changed my life. He's the one that got me into Greek. Never met him except one time briefly. I never talked to him. Tremendous man. Built First Baptist Dallas. But he was saved when he was age 6. And Criswell made this statement. He said, all his life he doubted his own salvation. He brought thousands to Christ. His entire life he doubted his salvation because, he said, "I was saved so young." When you're saved at age 6, how many drugs have you sold? Except for the kids who was in my office when he was 7 a couple months ago. I said, "Have you sinned?" And he went, "A lot." You have to cure your own doubt. You've got to come to a place where you trust what God says about who you are.

Number three. Go to Romans 5:8. This is a new insidious twist on this one. We're going to look at a couple and then we're going to look at one other one. John 3:16; what does it say? For God loved what? The world. Is that you? Yes. Now listen to Romans 5:8 and then we're going to go to 1 John 4:10.

⁸God shows His love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

So he says, God loves us. Proved it through the cross. And then look at 1 John 4:10.

¹⁰In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

One of the things that the enemy will hit you with, particularly there's a theological term called theodicy. It comes from two Greek words: *theós* and *díkē*. It means God's justice. Now this is an issue at some point we'll all face. Saturday we have Jon Perrot's funeral. 52. Taught the kindergarten. Loves his wife. 10-year-old son, Micah. 7-year-old daughter, Zoe. His kids are going to struggle with this because they're not going to understand why God would take their daddy. She's going to probably. When you see men that are not godly live to be 85 and your husband who did everything right, poured himself into his children, true to you, faithful to you,

loved you, honored you, honored every promise he made you on the wedding vow, and he's gone. He's gone in a way that you don't even have a chance to say, goodbye. This becomes a struggle. What I hate about Satan is when you hurt the most is when he jumps on you the worst. And he's going to make you believe that if God really loved you, and it is a question, it is a difficulty. I remember a young couple coming in. They married as virgins, they did it right, prayed for children, couldn't have them. Came in one day and looked at me and said, "We don't understand. We've got a teenage girl down the street. She's seventeen and had two abortions. We want a child and God won't give us one. Why?" That's a hard one. I don't have an answer for that. And when you go through those things, the enemy's going to jump on you and say, "You know, He really doesn't love you." And the problem is, I want to be careful how I say this. I'm not a Calvinist. I don't care if you are so don't misunderstand me. But there is a, John Piper who is kind of a big guru Calvinist today, Piper's come out with a theory that a lot of the young reformed preachers have locked into. That God can't really love you directly. That He really can only love you indirectly because He can't love anything beyond Himself. He can only love Himself. And so the best thing for you is loving Him as He loves Himself. Then that love will come to you. I had a young Calvinist that we were sitting at lunch one day and he was regaling me with his brilliance on that subject. And I said, "Let me ask you a question. Where in the Bible does it say that God loves Himself?" "Well God can't....." I said, "No, no, no. I don't care about your philosophy or your extrapolation of what you think you believe. Where in the Bible does it say, 'He loves Himself?'" And the answer to that is, nowhere. These are a bunch, just a handful, of verses over and over and over and over and over say, He loves us. It says we are the apple of His eye. There is this deep statement in the Scripture. As a matter of fact, Jerry Bridges, who wrote a book, Trusting God, had the best statement I think I ever read in conjunction with this. He said, if you read the Bible fast, you don't stop and meditate, you just start in Genesis 1 and you fly through to the book of Revelation as quickly as you can. As many chapters as you can a day. He said, "When you finish, you'll come away with the idea that you live on a planet created by a Being who loves us and we've rejected that love." That is probably the best summation of Genesis to Revelation I've ever heard. The Scripture is clear. He loves us. And there will be times in your life when this is all you have. You're going to have to trust what he says because there are going to be days. And so I pray hard for Micah and Zoe. I pray for these little kids that lose a dad. I don't think I'm betraying confidence here. Zoe asked her mom, "I'm going to miss dad coming in and telling us when we get out of the car that he loves us, mom loves us, and Jesus loves us." They're going to struggle with this. And this is why it's imperative that we as adults be clear on this so when our children in our church struggle, we're there to reaffirm God loves you. It's a tough thing and we're going to wrestle through that.

Ephesians 1:7. And then I'll give you a couple of others, as a matter of fact, we'll also go to 2 Corinthians 5:21. Ephesians 1:7;

⁷In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

We have forgiveness. 2 Corinthians 5:21. Slide over there and I'll explain back to Ephesians.

²¹For our sake, He made Him to be sin who knew no sin so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God.

He will make you believe, and this is what we struggle with, that you're not forgiven. I love this Greek word. It's this Greek word: *aphiēmi*. It's translated here, to forgive, it's translated in John 4 when the woman at the well is so pumped about what Jesus said to her, that she walked off and the Bible says, she forgot her water pot. It's the same Greek word. So what it says is, He forgives me in the sense that He forgets everything I've done that is against Him. It's totally removed. I want to read you three verses real quickly. Psalm 103:12. Go there. As a matter of fact, you need to jot these down and keep them. These are three good phylactery verses. Anybody know what a phylactery is? The Jews had a box, a lot of times they'd take a leather amulet and just wrap it around their wrist and they'd type verses on that amulet, life verses. These are three of the best.

¹²As far as the east is from the west, so far does He remove our transgressions from us.

Then go to Isaiah 38:17. Listen to what he says.

¹⁷Behold, for my welfare that I had great bitterness; but in love You have delivered my life from the pit of destruction, for You have cast all my sins behind Your back.

East to west. Behind back. And then look at the third one. Look in Micah 7:19. Keep going to the right.

¹⁹He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

So, he gives you three metaphors. He says, He's going to put them east to west, behind His back, and in the depths of the sea. Can He go east to west? Yes. Can He reach behind His back? Yes. Can He go to the depths of the sea? Yes. Can you go east to west? No. Can you reach behind His back? No. Can you go to the depths of the sea? No. He's not hiding from Himself. He's hiding them from you so that you understand, because the deepest thing we struggle with is our own personal forgiveness. He's already forgotten them. And the three metaphors are designed to tell you, "Quit looking for them. You can't find where He's put them." So stop believing you're still guilty. He's put them where you can't go. Now the enemy's going to remind you, and you remind him, "I'm going to believe that God put them where I can't go so they're no longer my problem. Matthew 13:20. A parable that Jesus used.

²⁰As for what was sown on rocky ground, this is the one who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; ²¹yet he has no root in himself, he endures for a while, but when tribulation or persecution arises on account of the word, immediately he falls away.

Satan will try to get you to live by what you feel. Now, ladies, don't shoot the messenger. Men don't struggle with this much. Because we get in boxes. You are spaghetti. Everything in your life is wrapped around everything and so you are far more emotional than men. That's why you don't understand. Your husband doesn't feel about things the way you do because he's not ever going to. Now what the enemy will do is get you to where you live by what you feel instead of what God says. That become an extremely difficult thing. And the problem with feelings is, they are instantaneously changeable. When I was dating Peggy, we were home in Minden, Louisiana. She and her mother had gone to bed and I'm staying up with her father, Mr. Proctor. We're

watching a John Wayne movie, World War II. So he starts telling me about flying in the war, different missions he went on, we watch the rest of the movie, and he goes to bed. I'm saying to myself, "We're bonding." And if you're dating this girl, you want the guy to like you. So I get up the next morning. Ms. Proctor's cooking breakfast. I walk in and I go, "Ms. Proctor it was really something about all the missions your husband flew in the war." She never turned around. She just kept flipping and she said, "He never flew in the war." My emotions changed immediately from, "I think I'm bonding" to "If I killed him, how would that make the wedding be with me and Peggy?" So the problem with what you feel and that's why Satan wants to get you there, because if you live by what you feel, you're going to be up and down and up and down and up and down. These kind of people change churches every six months. Because no church ever is enough for what they feel. It is a difficult thing, when I was called to preach, I shared with you it was very dramatic, very impacting on me emotionally. I had never really heard God speak out loud. And so it was incredibly impacting to me. And I remember we went to Destin, Florida a couple of weeks after that, me and my parents. And I would go out at night and pray on the beach for 3 or 4 hours. And I mean I could just sense His presence. So about, I don't know, four or five months after that all of a sudden I get up one day and I feel nothing. I mean nothing. I'm reading the Bible, I don't feel anything. I'm praying, I don't feel anything. I have nothing. So I begin to sweat it and think, "What's happened?" And I'm going down to my pastor, I mean literally like a couple times a month on Sunday nights, telling him, "I don't feel anything". And I got so tired of this from my pastor who was, I'm sure, sick of me. But he said over and over and over, he said, "Chris, you've got to walk by faith." And the last time he said it, I'm walking back to my pew. It took me a long time, probably a year, before I ever sensed His presence again. Because what He wanted me to do is seek Him and what He said, not based on what I feel, but on who He is. So one of the things the enemy's going to try to do is make you feel. And if he does, and for y'all, you feel deeper than anybody else. Now I'm not going to go there because we've been there already, but 1 John 5, he will make you pray your agenda, not the Father's.

Now, last thing. What is the sin in the Bible that God punishes the deepest in the Scripture? Unbelief. The Jews wander for 40 years and die off because they don't believe. Saul's kingdom is taken away from him because he doesn't believe. It's given to David who does believe. Solomon doesn't believe; loses the kingdom. Every one of these he's attacking some part of your faith. You either don't trust that God's not cheating you. You don't trust that what He says in His word is true. You don't believe that He loves you. You don't believe that He's forgiven you after He says He has. You don't believe in what He says. You live by what you feel out of what He says. Every one of these is a reflection of a lack of faith somewhere in you. And so the only way to combat every one of them is to believe exactly what He says. That's your option. There is no other fix. I can't fix the doubt in your salvation without you trusting Him. I can't fix whether or not you think you're forgiven without believing that you are. Your forgiveness is based on the blood. If the blood works, then you're forgiven. I can't help you to think that He loves you unless you believe that He does. Because there are going to be days you have to choose the word. I remember when my son had surgery. He had four surgeries as a kid. He has epispadias and when he was really young, I think it was the second surgery. We were down there quite a while and I took the nights and Peg took the days. The pain was real intense. He'd have these bladder spasms for about an hour. And he would just scream in pain and there was nothing they could do. They couldn't give him any real medicine that would work. They said it's just going to have to work its way out of his system. And I'm praying really hard and I mean I'm just weeping. And so finally one night, I mean I'm sitting at the window and he's just finished one of these sessions and he's

exhausted. It's three in the morning. I'm just worn out. And I remember telling God, I said, "Look, I've got to go preach Sunday morning." I was going down on Monday and coming back on Friday. We were in Midland at the time. I said, "Lord, I've got to go preach Sunday and right now I don't think you love me because there's no benefit here. I'm praying hard for this to go away from him. He's not growing in You because of what he's going through. It's not helping me. I don't get it." And I really kind of questioned whether or not He loved me and I'll never forget. I looked out the window on Fannin street. I glanced out the window of Texas Children's and there's this cross blinking across the street. And He told me, He said, "You know, there's nothing I did to my son any worse than what's happening to yours." So there are times, I think with every one of these, you've just got to trust the Father. And it is at times difficult. So when you really get down to it, every attack that he's going to put in your life, every scheme he has, is based on some way on undermining your faith in what God says. And here's the problem we face. When God writes something down, it's done. He thinks He's that He's God and you're not and that therefore if He says something, you ought to buy it. He's not going to whisper to you seven times a day. Now the problem you have is, the enemy, the demons that are assigned to you, are going to whisper to you all day. And if they can get an inroad in their whispering, they get louder and louder. And the only conquering of their whispering is come to the place where you say, "God I don't feel anything, but I believe what You say." It's the only answer. What you believe is the only issue that will conquer every scheme that he has. He cannot handle you if you trust what God says in the word.

I fear, I don't know if I shared this. I can't remember. A young man I know, came out of my ministry, he planted a church, built it on expositional preaching, and the elders have come to him and said, "Look, we don't want to do expositional preaching anymore. We want to do topical. So we're removing you from preaching the main campus. We're going to let you preach at the other campus because we don't think we need to be doing expositional preaching." We're in a day when if faith is the only thing that conquers what he's doing, then you better be real sure of what that book says. And if you get a pastor who's topical and not expositional, he's never going to hit everything in that book. The problem with not going book by book, verse by verse, when you preach is if that's true, you'll only preach what you understand or what you like. When you go verse by verse, book by book, it forces you into passages that you wouldn't normally preach. There are a ton of verses I hated preaching on. But I don't have any choice because I can't skip it. Somebody in the church will go, "I thought we were on 6:11 last Sunday." But it forces me into every aspect of what He says. There is nothing in His word that your faith can't stand on that will stop the enemy from hurting your life.

Questions

- Q.** So back to the kids, you have a seven-year-old and a four-year-old, and just last week me and my mom were talking about how we really need to try and keep our schedule of coming to church because she said the older the girls get, mostly the seven-year-old, the harder it's going to be for her to come to Jesus.
- A.** I'd rather it be later. A Jewish kid wasn't confirmed until he was 12. Because I think later the more meaningful it is, the more the memory's intact, you have done some sin you know about. Most of the time when I have a little guy or girl in, they're age 7, and I say, "Have

you sinned?" They're going to say, "Yes." Sometimes not because they really think they have, but because they know all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Mom and dad have told them. Everybody sins and even if the parents are not putting pressure. If you know your mom and dad are Christians and your ten-year-old brother's a Christian and you're seven, you want to be part of the family. So there's a pressure there to get in. So for me, I just think the older the better. That's why I tell parents, "You put them off until they're just wearing you out." I think that's key.

- A. God wants them saved way more than you do. If He knows what day He's taking them, and you're doing it right, they're going to be OK. The problem with a lot of parents, I'm not saying anything in here, just hear me. I had a lady come in one time. Her son was six. She said, "He's ready." So I went through my questions and I got to, "What did Jesus do that lets Him forgive you?" No idea. No clue. So I looked at her and I said, "He's not ready." She said, "Well he's just scared." I said, "I understand they come in here scared. But if he doesn't know that, if he can't make the correlation between the sin and the blood, I don't want him to know the kenosis theory of the incarnation. I get that. But he's got to know that. So she left not real happy. Two weeks later, brought him down in front of the church and said, "He's asked Jesus into his heart. He's OK. Don't worry about it." Well, that's far more dangerous. You just told your kid he's saved when he's not. And that's way more dangerous than putting them off until the Holy Spirit's getting hold of him. Because when the Holy Spirit starts dealing with him, you can't put him off. And if the Holy Spirit's not dealing with him and he dies, he's going to heaven. David made the statement about his own son.

[I can't bring him back, but I can go to where he is.](#)

So I think that's key. I think that you've got to trust that the Holy Spirit is going to draw your child, not you and me. And it is a scary thing, I'm telling you. But I really do believe, my only job when the kids come in my office is test their knowledge. There's an intuitive understanding in a parent when they're ready. Let me just tell you. When my son, I don't remember how old he was, 10 or 11, I can't remember. My wife knows all that stuff. I can't remember anything. But it's one of these nights where he's, "I got to use the bathroom. I need a drink." And it's about the 10th time. And he's coming in, we hear him coming in, and I look at Peggy, we're at the dining room table and I said, "I'm going to kill him." I'm mad. So he comes waltzing in and I'm ready for the daddy, "OK, we're going to the back, son." And he said, "I want to ask Jesus in my heart." But it was crazy because the minute he said it, Peg and I both looked at each other and knew it was legit. So he asked Christ in and it was legit because my son always has a better idea and a better answer. Never had said he was sorry and two weeks later he did something and said, "I'm sorry." And Peg and I, after we got out of the hospital, were shocked. So I think you will have an intuitive knowledge. He will not let, let me just tell you this, if you're serious about Jesus, you will not fail with your child. It's not possible. Because He wants them saved more than you do. He will not let you fail.

- A. It may not be the first time you respond. Oh, OK. I see where you're going. Yeah, I think absolutely. Yeah, I think there are times, and the problem is we get convicted by sin, the enemy will then come in and say, "If you were a believer you wouldn't do this." I mean

we have to remember, all of us are capable of anything in the world. When we dealt with what we dealt with Monday night, that individual simply stayed carnal so long that he got to a depth that is not normal. But had he responded to any kind of conviction back here, but we're all capable of anything.

Oh, absolutely. And you're right. If you notice, I have never used the word rededicate in a sermon. Because I heard the same thing. And you can't do that. If He's speaking to me, I don't need rededication. You're right. I just need to go, "OK." As a matter of fact, I forgot to mention one thing. 1 John 1:9. It's exactly what you're talking about. We confess our sins, He's faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleans up all unrighteousness. The Greek word confess, a combination of two words, *homoú*, we get homogenize from that, *légō*. This is same. This is speak. So you have the idea confession is simply exactly what she's getting at. When the Holy Spirit speaks to me I just agree with Him. And the minute I agree, it's not that I lose my relationship, according to 1 John 1:9, that we're forgiven when we confess. But I do lose fellowship. And so my confession immediately restores that fellowship based on the response to Him speaking to me. You're right. OK, I've got to be honest about me and every other guy that did revivals in the 70's. We milked that on y'all. We knew somebody was guilty about something. I mean when you get up and say, "If you ever hated your mother." "I have! I'm sorry!" I mean we could get people down. That was not a problem. And we used that. We used their guilt over legitimate things to make them come down and rededicate their life when that was not the issue. You're exactly right.

- A. It changed from age of accountability, that's the old Baptist thing, I think more of a stage of accountability. Because every kid's at a different level. You may reach that stage at age 21. You may reach it at age, I mean you can be saved at 6. But I don't know where that stage is for each kid. But every kid's different. For me, the stages was 17. But I think there is a stage of accountability. I think you have to come to a place where you understand you're bad, He's not, and you have to have what He has. I grew up in a Southern Baptist home. Heard the gospel for 17 years and it never hit me until I was 17.

Yeah, I think when you lose a child and he's not come to Christ, he's going to heaven when he's a child. And I think your point's well taken. It may well be if the kid hasn't reached that stage at age 17 and he dies at 16. My first funeral, I was in my last semester of seminary, Doris Coker's son, 17 years old, flipped the car, drunk, she was a believer in my church, his dad was the town thug, and he was not a Christian and had rejected Christ. So I've got to do the first funeral for a kid that's not a believer with his mother balling and his father, who really was the town thug, he'd been shot 5 different times. Was an alcoholic, drunk in the town. And as he's standing at the casket screaming out in this little, tiny church, "I taught you better." I mean, I wanted to badly to say, "Yeah, you taught him. That's why he's in the ground." So yeah I do believe in stage unless a kid comes to a place, as this kid did, "I don't want Jesus." That is not a fun funeral.

Q. As a Christian, how should we view Halloween?

- A. Oh, man! This is like Christmas questions. You know, let's pray. I'm not really big on freaking out over those things. I read all the Harry Potter books. There's not much

difference between Harry Potter and C. S. Lewis and Tolkien, except that Potter's obviously not a believer. But it is interesting in the Potter books, you discover the hurt of the lost. Potter needs two things in his life. What are they? What does he crave? Friends and value. What are we born with? We're born with people and a God who makes us value and a wife perfectly built for us. So we're built for relationships and His value which we've lost. So the Potter books are brilliant. J. K. Rowling absolutely pictured that. So I probably don't freak out over Halloween. I don't freak out over Christmas. We told our kids Santa Clause would come, but he wasn't Jesus. It was Jesus in the manger, not Santa Clause. And then my wife had a great tradition at Christmas. We had the manger scene and we'd hide baby Jesus. And then on Christmas day, He would appear. When your kids are little, they're going, "He's here." But I really don't freak out. Maybe you don't want to wear something ghoulish. But I really don't freak out over those things. And if it really bothers you, don't do it.