

# Pastor Marcus Rogers Warns Christians: 'Do Not Shop Here'

Major corporations are suffering through massive financial setbacks from boycotts.

The Bud Light brand performed what some are calling the worst marketing campaign in history, while Target is now enduring an even greater falling out from a large section of their customer base.

So, what changed? These corporations are pushing leftist messaging and ideologies, and have been for years now.

Christians finally got some boldness in them and are speaking out and acting against the targeting of children by the radical, gender ideologues.

Pastor Marcus Rogers of Firehouse Church in Chicago is calling Christians across the country into action by exposing just how deep the demonic influence is in American culture today:

"You know, Target has been doing this for a while now, but look at this," says Rogers holding up "Pride" clothing aimed at children and in child sizes, including clothing that is "tuck friendly." "It's absolutely ridiculous, and this is how it starts. Remember when they first started off, doing this 'oh love is love,' right? But now it's just gotten progressively worse.

"I think that, as believers, we [have] a responsibility here because they're getting so bold with it. ...The more we don't say anything and the more we don't do anything, it's going to continue to happen," adds Rogers.

Rogers correctly points out that the activists within the

radical gender ideology movements only target Christians when it comes to mockery, destruction of Bibles and other forms of derision for those of faith.

“Think about it. Why at the LGBTQ [events]...they had a guy hanging on the cross, and then some other guy is using the cross as a stripper pole. Then at many other parades they always have a gay Jesus? Why do they not do this to any other religion?” Rogers asks.

This spiritual warfare taking place encompasses much more than the fight for God’s design when it comes to gender. Satanists on other fronts are attacking the Word of God because there is a spiritual battle taking place and it manifests as attacks against God and the truth of Jesus Christ.

“Why are they only kicking Bibles around [and] ripping Bibles up at Satancon and LGBTQ events? Why is it only Christianity and not any other religion?” Rogers continues, knowing full well that Satan will attack the truth wherever he can get a tactical foothold in a person’s life.

Which brings Rogers to the current tactics the enemy is using in places like Target and Kohl’s.

The targeting of children. To normalize and desensitize children to the hyper-sexualization that is taking place in front of their impressionable eyes, and which their minds are not able to fully comprehend at that point in their lives. It sets up an entire future generation for further perversion of God’s design, and paves the way for more grotesque actions the Lord finds abominable.

“Why do [they] insist, with the drag shows, doing it with kids? Why do we have all these videos with the children? Why are you throwing money at kids, having kids dancing in bars? Why is it so important to them to do this stuff in front of kids? Why does nobody say anything?” asks Rogers.

“Here in Chicago, they got guys dressed with all kinds of filthy costumes. Some of them just all the way, you know, completely butt naked. You got grown men on leashes with thongs and stuff like that and you got little kids in the crowd and nobody seems to want to ask ‘Is that appropriate for children to see?’ How is that not child abuse?” Rogers continues.

“It is so obviously demonic,” claims Rogers. “It’s a demonic spirit, a demonic antichrist agenda behind all of it. ...The spirit is trying to defy that it’s the spirit of rebellion and guess what? Rebellion is as witchcraft.”

Now the war is intensifying as Christians appear to finally be taking up positions and saying “No, we aren’t giving up anymore ground to the devil.”

The battle will only heat up, however, as Satan and his forces will not simply stop trying to corrupt the world when they are dealt a blow here or there. They will find new avenues of attack and employ even sicker tactics against the world God designed.

That is why, says Rogers, Christians must be the “Watchmen on the wall.”

“If the watchmen don’t cry out, hey, that blood is on your hands. If you’re a pastor and you’re not speaking up, that blood is on your hands.

“There’s an agenda being pushed on our children. There’s an attack on our children, and it’s a spiritual war and a lot of Christians are silent,” says Rogers.

As commanded in the book of James 1:22, “Be doers of the Word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.” The time for action has come, and any Christian that does not believe the enemy is going to try and make things even worse, is simply deceiving themselves. {eoa}

James Lasher is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.

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# If the Holy Spirit Isn't Near It, This Bold Pastor Isn't Saying It

✘ Pastor John Amanchukwu knows his limits. He knows he's not as bold and courageous to stand up to people in a public forum as he would like to be.

But when the Holy Spirit gets hold of him, Amanchukwu says "look out." When the Holy Spirit takes the lead for him, Amanchukwu says he will testify and be a witness to the truth of God and His Word, no matter what the subject.

It's what leads him to speak in front of school boards about pornographic books in school libraries, and it's what leads him to be a fearless defender of biblical justice on issues like abortion and the lie of critical race theory.

"Well, it's always the anointing of God, it's not me," Amanchukwu told Charisma News' John Matarazzo in a recent interview. "It's not me. I'm man and I'm fallible, born in sin and sharpened in iniquity. Christ has forgiven me for my sins and covered me with His blood. But at the end the day, I'm human.

"So, I depend upon the third part of the Trinity, and that's the Holy Spirit that dwells within me and gives me the proper words to say in the proper timing. I believe that when you have the Holy Spirit, number one, it will testify of Christ

beyond just speaking in tongues. You will testify and be a witness to the truth. And that's what I did at that moment (at the school board meeting in Asheville, North Carolina, recently).

And Amanchukw, a contributor for TPUSAFAITH, says he lives by Mark 13:11, which reads, "But when they arrest you and hand you over, take no thought before, or premeditate what you should speak. But speak whatever is given you in that time, for it is not you who speaks, but the Holy Spirit."

Many people speak their minds about many subjects, including well-intentioned believers. But their words fall short of effectiveness because the Holy Spirit is nowhere near the conversation.

That's why when he spoke in front of the Asheville School board, and when he speaks in other public forums, he remains still and waits for the Holy Spirit to prompt him about what should come out of his mouth.

"I had some thoughts in mind about what related to the conversation, but I would have never known in a million years that I would be cut off and told to stop reading," Amanchukwu says. "And all of a sudden, the Holy Spirit just took control. You can see it in the video."

Amanchuku is crusading for children across the country, speaking out about abortion and the "woke" ideologies that are being forced upon kids in our public schools.

And, he says, the Bible is pretty clear about what will happen to those who "harm children" in any way.

"Luke 17:2 says that it's better for a man to be thrown in the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for us to do harm or damage to a child," Amanchukwu says. "There are so many people in this country who are harming children. They are perverting children and corrupting the minds of children. If

you consider the abortion industry, they want to eliminate children.

“When you consider the public school system, even some of your private Christian schools, they’ve gone woke. They want to indoctrinate children. There are so many attacks that have been launched and hurled upon children. So, it’s going to take men and women full of the Spirit ... consider the power that indwelled Peter on the day of Pentecost. ... He began to preach in a manner that they had never heard before. We finally see Peter, the ‘rock man,’ transformed into that strong anchor that Christ knew he would be before He told him that Satan would come and sift him as wheat.

“And so, today, we need boldness. In particular, in the church, we need the pastors to stand up. Many of our pastors have become weak and frail. They have lost their voice and lost their backbone and won’t speak up. Many pastors have blood on their hands because they have failed to be true watchmen. Watchmen are called not simply to watch, but to warn. I got fed up of just hearing about what’s going on in this country. So, I went down to Asheville and I not only showed them what was in the book, but I made a strong stand against it.”

And he did so, of course, with the covering of the Holy Spirit. That, he says, is what believers must do against the evil and tyranny happening in America right now. {eoa}

**Shawn A. Akers** *is the online editor at Charisma Media.*

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# Beach from Jesus Movement Sees 'Biggest Water Baptism in History'

Another big sign of spiritual revival in America just took place at a historic location in California. More than 4,000 people were baptized in Pirate's Cove on Pentecost Sunday to celebrate not only the gift of eternal life but to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Jesus Movement.

Oceans Church organized Baptize SoCal—an event advertised as “the biggest water baptism in history.” The huge event coincided with a major anniversary of the Christian awakening that saw hundreds of thousands of young people come to Christ in the 1960s and 70s.

More than 280 churches and 8,000 attendees watched as 4,166 people fled to the shore of Pirates Cove to declare their new life in Christ.

On the same weekend, hundreds gathered on Pensacola Beach in Florida to pray, worship and receive Christ, many of whom were baptized in the ocean.

Attendees report the atmosphere was electric as people praised God and celebrated their “kingdom family.”

“What an amazing and historic day,” said musician and pastor at West Coast Life Church, Ray Gene Wilson. “Thousands baptized at Pirates Cove, God is moving in California!”

“A moment I'll never forget,” one attendee commented on Instagram.

“This is absolutely amazing praying for all in their new walk with Jesus... Welcome to the kingdom family,” another Instagram user commented.

Worship leader Lindy Cofer said, “The church is alive! What a beautiful sight in Southern California yesterday!!! On the 50th anniversary of the Jesus people movement.”

“It was such a blessing to witness so many people getting baptized for one but to be able to see happen the same place that the hippies did it 50 years ago for The Jesus people movement was just surreal,” wrote videographer Eddy Ferguson.

The Jesus People movement and the baptisms in Pirates Cove are featured in the movie “Jesus Revolution.” {eoa}

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# **Is Greed What Drives Transgenders in Sports?**

The Holy Spirit has begun to focus my attention on the repeated condemnation of “greed” in the Scriptures.

Oddly, I believe the Holy Spirit has also helped me see that same word and its consequences in a recent op-ed column at The Blaze by former Fox Sports and ESPN commentator Jason Whitlock.

I’d like to review with you what I’ve found in the Scriptures about this vice of greed and compare it to the virtues in Whitlock’s comments. Please stay with me...

## **1. “Greed” as mentioned in the Scriptures.**

The word "greed" or "greedy" is identified nearly 30 times in the New American Standard Version of the Bible (NASB). It can relate to the covetousness found in the 10th commandment of Moses (Ex. 20:17), which condemns having a strong desire or "lust" for something that belongs to another.

From the greed of Elisha's servant Gehazi (2 Kings 5:15-27) to the warnings of David and Solomon in Psalm 10:3; Proverbs 1:19, 15:27 and 28:25, greed is seen as a sinful, natural trait that must be overcome in God's people. The prophet Jeremiah twice said "everyone is greedy" of unjust gain (Jer. 6:13 and 8:10). Other prophets point out the evils and consequences of greediness (Ezek. 16:27; Hosea 4:8; and Habakkuk 2:5).

In the New Testament, Jesus condemned the Pharisees as "hypocrites," being "full of extortion and greed" (Matt. 23:25-26). Mark quoted Jesus as placing greed in the context of evil thoughts, acts of immorality and the defilement of other wicked deeds:

"For from within, out of the hearts of people, come the evil thoughts, *acts of* sexual immorality, thefts, murders, *acts of* adultery, deeds of greed, wickedness, deceit, indecent behavior, envy, slander, pride *and* foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile the person." (Mark 7:21-23; NASB)

Paul warned the Gentile believers at Corinth of the dangers of repeated instances of greed (or covetousness) and other wicked sins, including a covetous [greedy] person "who is called a brother." The prescribed antidote was to "remove the wicked person from among yourselves" (1 Cor. 5:9-13).

This firm correction was to be done humbly and only by those in spiritual authority in the local congregation, realizing the unrighteous and sexually impure will not inherit the kingdom of God. Then Paul reminded them "Such were some of

you, but you were washed, but you were “sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God...” (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

## **2. Greed can impact our actions and attitudes.**

Whitlock reports that USA Today recently “published a column attacking ESPN broadcaster Samantha Ponder for a tweet that supported University of Kentucky swimmer Riley Gaines.”

The swimmer has gained notice for publicly sharing her thoughts about biological males competing against females in sports. The new phenomena is part of gender-dysphoric individuals demanding freedom to live out their newly-found, alternate sexuality in public: misusing gendered bathrooms and showers in schools/public facilities or biological boys or men unfairly competing in strength-based athletics against girls or women.

Jason Whitlock adapted Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.’s anti-Vietnam War speech to write in his op-ed: “A time comes when silence is betrayal.” He went on to say, “It applies to transgenderism. It applies to America’s assault on common sense.”

I suggest it also applies to public greed and covetousness, as well. Cultural “influencers” work to redefine terminology, so they can control the conversations, illustrations and indoctrinations. This becomes a religious-like lust for what belongs to others and not to you. The prophet Isaiah warned:

“Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” (Isa. 5:20, NASB).

Whitlock, who is a stout individual and used to play football at Ball State University, stated:

“I have sympathy for men and women who believe they were born the wrong gender. But common sense makes it clear that not everything is for everybody. A boy who thinks he’s a girl doesn’t get to compete in girls’ sports. That’s life. No different from how I’ve long thought I would look great in size 32 skinny jeans. They’re not for me. They don’t fit.”

Greed is a sinful lust for what someone else has. It is a wicked vice that impacts our actions and attitudes. God has made us male or female. There are only these two genders and they are to be virtuously lived out to please our Creator and Sustainer.

The apostle Paul urged believers to “walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please *Him* in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God” (Col. 1:10; NASB). Let us learn and live accordingly. {eoa}

*Gary Curtis served in full-time ministry for 50 years, the last 27 years of which he was part of the pastoral staff of The Church on The Way, the Van Nuys, California, Foursquare church. Now retired, Gary continues to write a weekly blog and frequent articles for digital and print platforms.*

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## **Denver Church Among 100,000,000 Intercessors in Isaiah 62 Prayer-Fast Over Israel**

As intercessors from 120 nations and 100 languages ended the global Isaiah 62 Fast for Israel on Pentecost Sunday, a group

of spiritual warriors from across Colorado culminated 21 days of prayer on behalf of Jewish people by convening in a historic synagogue.

Church in the City-Beth Abraham hosted worship, prayer, dance and biblical declarations from believers who traveled to Denver for the prophetic gathering, dubbed the Colorado Stands With Israel Initiative. The event was organized by Colorado Prays () and churches aligned with it.

A Jewish believer in Jesus and pastor of Church in the City-Beth Abraham, Rabbi Michael Walker explained how and why the celebration was prophetic at the culmination event for the Isaiah 62 Global Fast.

A little over 100 years ago, the synagogue was built in the heart of downtown Denver. The Jewish congregation that worshiped there placed a cornerstone, which doubled as a time capsule during the synagogue's construction in 1921.

When the Jewish believers vacated the building in 1969, they removed the time capsule; and the synagogue ceased to exist as a place of worship.

Instead, what had been a house of prayer was converted into a rave nightclub. Then when satanists moved into Denver, the synagogue was used by the Church of Satan.

"God spoke to us that all these people were trying to do something to this synagogue that was built to worship the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob," Walker said.

Noting that Jesus spoke in synagogues, Walker said his congregation of Spirit-filled believers agreed to return the house of worship to its former glory with a new cornerstone from Israel.

"Psalm 118:22, 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone' is what the Lord put on my heart.

“What Jewish person such as myself would have a problem with that? It’s in the Old Testament,” Walker said.

During renovation of the synagogue, the Jerusalem Stone Company relocated to Denver, pledging its support for the building’s restoration. Its altars, bathrooms and replicated Western Wall include stone from Israel, and priests from Jerusalem were present for the synagogue’s dedication.

Concurrent with building officials inspections of the synagogue’s restoration, Denver was conducting a survey of the city. Surveyors determined that the synagogue, specifically the cornerstone, is the center of Denver. It is part of the city’s records.

Word of the synagogue’s restoration reached a publication, The Intermountain Jewish News, which decided to inquire. A female staffer commented, “So you’re one of those Jews for Jesus” during a phone conversation.

Later upon visiting the synagogue to document with pictures the progress on the building, the woman told Walker, “I can feel the presence of God in this place, and we don’t even believe in God.”

Reaching 50,000 Jews in a four-state region, the newspaper featured Walker on the cover. “I got to share my testimony without leaving the synagogue.

“So having this event here at this time—for such a time as this—is very prophetic,” Walker said.

Initiated by Pastor Mike Bickle to spiritually buttress Israel from Iran’s nuclear ambitions, the fast drew 12,000 ministries to fast and pray for one hour each day from May 7 to May 28..

The Isaiah 62 Fast, based on biblical references to watchmen on Jerusalem’s walls, surpassed its ambitious goal of raising 100 million intercessors for Israel.

“Have we grasped that in a moment—during the month of May 2023—the nations stood up together for the first time in history?” asked Justin Frie, a leader from Restoration Church in Pagosa Springs, Colorado.

Sovereignly, God moved on the hearts of thousands of Colorado intercessors who participated at various levels across the state of Colorado during the 21-day fast for Israel.

“There’s prophetic significance to what’s happening in this hour. God has connected—through this fast—so many peoples’ hearts to Israel in a precious and tender way.

“I believe the Lord is stirring up His body in the nations to stand with Israel because pretty soon the nations, politically, will stand against Israel,” Frie said.

According to registration figures, some 120 million people signed up for the Isaiah 62 Fast for Israel. With unregistered intercessors joining in prayer, the numbers may be between 150 to 160 million.

At Restoration Church, where members prayed for 21 days with global intercessors, a Jewish man showed up to join them.

“This guy David goes, ‘I’m Jewish. My wife told me to come to this church’s prayer meetings because she thinks it’s great that we’re praying for Israel. I’m really being moved right now; I don’t know where I’m at. But I think Jesus is talking to me,’” Frie said.

“He texts me a few days later and says, ‘I’ve met the Lord and I want to be baptized,’” Frie said.

The crowd in Denver, emphasizing John 17 unity among believers, prayed for Israel, Gentile believers and an estimated 100,000 Jews who live in the Mile High City.

To view the gathering, watch this video. {epa}

*Steve Rees is a former general assignment reporter who, with one other journalist, first wrote about the national men's movement Promise Keepers from his home in Colorado. Rees and Promise Keepers Founder Bill McCartney attended the Boulder Vineyard. Today Rees writes in his free time.*

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## **MLB Players Speak Out Against Group Dodgers Look to Honor**

For all the talk Major League Baseball has done about welcoming fans of all backgrounds and faiths, the Los Angeles Dodgers superbly alienated millions of fans within their own city and across the country.

In their back and forth of inviting, then disinviting, then re-inviting the anti-Catholic group the "Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence," they have riled Christian and Catholic players within the league who are taking a stand against the bigotry and hatred the group represents.

Two of the Dodgers' own players, pitchers Clayton Kershaw and Blake Treinen, have spoken out against the club inviting the 'Sisters' and presenting them with an award for community service.

Treinen asked his friend, worship leader and evangelist Sean Feucht, to share a letter he wrote on social media condemning the Dodgers' decision and stating publicly it is because of his belief that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior:

*My friend and @MLB pitcher Blake Treinen asked that I post this statement for him in regards to the @Dodgers honoring of the sisters of perpetual indulgence. #HoldTheLine*

– Sean Feucht (@seanfeucht) May 30, 2023

Kershaw criticized the team's decision to host the group due to the disrespect and mockery of faith that is the foundation of the group's existence.

"I don't agree with making fun of other people's religions," Kershaw says. "It has nothing to do with anything other than that. I just don't think that, no matter what religion you are, you should make fun of somebody else's religion. So that's something that I definitely don't agree with.

"This has nothing to do with the LGBTQ community or Pride or anything like that," Kershaw adds. "This is simply a group that was making fun of a religion, that I don't agree with."

In response to the severe backlash, Kershaw and the Dodgers announced a "Christian Faith Day" later in the season.

"I think we were always going to do Christian Faith Day this year, but I think the timing of our announcement was sped up," Kershaw told the Los Angeles Times on Monday. "Picking a date and doing those different things was part of it as well. Yes, it was in response to the highlighting of the Sisters of Perpetual Indulgence [by the Dodgers]."

The most vocal opponent to the Dodgers decision has been devout Catholic and pitcher for the Washington Nationals, Trevor Williams:

– Trevor Williams (@MeLlamoTrevor) May 30, 2023

Williams released a statement condemning the Dodgers and for violating their own Discrimination Policy which explicitly states, "Any conduct or attire at the ballpark that is deemed to be indecent or prejudice against any particular group (or religion) is not tolerated.

“It seems that the Dodgers have made an exception in this case,” wrote Williams. “Doubling down that this group—which grossly disrespects and openly mocks many of the traditions and beliefs that Catholics hold most dear—should be celebrated.”

These are just a few of the players, fans and organizations who claim to be targeted, ostracized and insulted by the Dodgers’ decision to honor the group.

For those of faith who are speaking truth in love, Treinen summed up his position on the matter up perfectly:

“But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord,” (Josh. 24:15). {eoa}

*James Lasher is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.*

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## **Matthew Barnett: 4 Ways Your Identity in Christ Leads to Mental Wellness**

Young adulthood is thought of as a time of exploration and growth, a time when individuals begin to carve out their own paths and make their mark on the world. However, for young adults, this time can also be marked by significant mental health issues and difficulty with overcoming them.

Many are battling these challenges right now. It could include you.

**Factors Contributing to Mental Health Issues**

Mental health issues are common among young adults, with many experiencing symptoms of anxiety, depression and other disorders. According to a report by the National Institute of Mental Health, one in five young adults aged 18-25 experienced a mental illness in the past year. This is a significant increase from previous generations and highlights the need for greater support and alternative approaches to help young adults struggling with mental health challenges.

There are a number of factors that contribute to these mental health challenges. These include academic and financial pressures, social isolation and loneliness, difficulty navigating the transition to adulthood or lack of self-fulfillment. Sound familiar? In addition, many young adults are still developing their sense of identity and purpose, which can lead to feelings of confusion, self-doubt and anxiety.

### **A Heart of Servitude**

Despite these challenges, you have a powerful resource in your identity in Christ. Faith and service to others can provide a sense of purpose and grounding, a reminder of their inherent worth and value and a source of strength in difficult times. You can tap into your identity in Christ by serving those who are disadvantaged just like Christ did.

I firmly believe that one of the best ways to reverse course on mental health challenges is considering the needs of those around us.

Here are four ways to help you find your identity in Christ and overcome mental health challenges:

- **Embrace your worth and value in Christ.** It can be easy to feel overwhelmed by the pressures of life and the messages we receive from the world around us. However, as Christians, we are reminded that we are loved and valued by God, no matter what. By embracing this truth,

you can find the confidence and self-assurance you need to navigate life's challenges. As we read in Hebrews 10:35-36, "Do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised."

- **Rest in His presence.** When we get to know God, we get to learn how much He loves us, which enables us to trust Him more. When we surrender all of our problems to Him, we renew our minds with the Word and trust in His promises. Then we truly do what we are created to do, which is to be obedient to Him and His word, surrender our burdens and worries and enjoy life and His creation.
- **Find community and support.** You don't have to face mental health challenges alone. Find a supportive community of fellow Christians and build relationships that provide encouragement, accountability and a sense of belonging. Join a small group at a local church, participate in a Bible study, or volunteer at Christ-centered non-profit organizations! There are many opportunities to connect with others who share your faith and struggles.
- **Consider long-term solutions.** Consistency is key. Whether you are new to the Christian faith or have been a Christian since childhood, discovering your identity in Christ will be a journey. Consider joining a discipleship program, finding a steady mentor, or embarking on long-term mission trips. Join other young adults from all over the country to build your confidence, gain leadership skills and spark your passion. If you are unsure of what your next move will be as you enter your adult years, see if the Dream Center's available experiences for young adults from all walks of life are a good fit for you.

**Step Out and be a Blessing to Others**

Serving others may not permanently solve depression and anxiety, but it will benefit someone while taking your mind off of your negative thoughts and problems. Nothing leaves you with more satisfaction than giving back, whether that's to a family member, a neighbor or someone halfway around the globe.

Step out, even in your pain, and find a way to bless just one person around you. There are countless ways to help, even in your own backyard. It will impact you just as much as it helps our neighbors, and you may just discover your calling in life.

Serving and surrounding yourself with others is not a "one size fits all" approach. But something that is true for all of us is the fact that you are loved, you are worthy and everyone's journey to discover their identity in Christ will take time. When you are ready to take the first step, He will be waiting with open arms and His strength will sustain you on that journey.

Here's how the LA Dream Center is doing its part to combat the mental health and other cultural issues of today. {eoa}

*Matthew Barnett is the co-founder of the Los Angeles Dream Center and senior pastor of Angelus Temple. The Los Angeles Dream Center is a faith-based non-profit dedicated to transforming the lives of individuals and families in Los Angeles through residential and outreach programs.*

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## **5 Steps to Succeed Over Secret Sin**

When I first came to Christ, a tract titled "I'll Never Tell Anyone I Have a Problem With..." caught my attention. I was not

alone. It helped multitudes get free from sexual sin.

When we face besetting sins that seem to have a stranglehold on our lives, it can seem like we'll never break through to victory. Yet if we align with His will, draw upon His grace daily and continue to persevere in faith, we can succeed!

Does this apply to the seductions of sexual sin? What about masturbation? For those who have walked this path, it can be an agonizing and guilt-producing experience, crippling one's relationship with God.

There is hope! There is also the authoritative promise of the Bible enabling us to face this area with unwavering confidence: "No temptation has taken you except what is common to man. God is faithful, and He will not permit you to be tempted above what you can endure, but with the temptation will also make a way to escape, that you may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13).

### **Society Encourages This**

A well-intentioned leader attempts to bring relief to individuals ensnared in masturbation saying, "Periodic release of sexual tension through masturbation may be OK for the single person... Compulsive masturbation is a sin; periodic release of sexual tension when you don't have a spouse is not." This is mild compared to propaganda in public schools today on this subject along with acceptance of pornography, recreational marijuana and sexual activity.

Here's the Biblical perspective that can bring liberation to multitudes struggling specifically with solo sex. I also encourage everyone to watch the 4-minute video on the topic, "Masturbation" and read chapter 14 in my companion book, "Bullseye."

### **5 Transformative Truths**

## **1. Guard against justifying sinful behavior.**

All of us need to be careful we don't yield to rationalization in difficult areas of the Christian life. Scripture teaches that "The heart is more deceitful than all things and desperately wicked; who then can understand it?" (Jer. 17:9).

Due to our fallen nature, all of us have the proclivity to find ingenious excuses for unrighteous behavior.

How many times have I engaged in conversations with professing Christians who find amazingly clever ways to justify indulging in casual sex; smoking marijuana; consenting to an abortion; sexting; living together ("ours are special circumstances which God understands"): or viewing sexually explicit films and even a gay/homosexual lifestyle.

## **2. Resist dangerous deception to disregard biblical standards.**

In our sex-saturated culture there are a multitude of voices sharing their perspectives. Liberal Christian ministers seeking popularity proclaim, "Masturbation is actually a gift of God" (exact quote).

Today sex-education classes, advice columnists and even the World Health Organization encourage masturbation, plus abortion and homosexuality, to children and teens worldwide. Doesn't it make sense to have sound, biblical counsel amidst all the questionable advice bombarding us from every corner?

A Biblical worldview on sexuality seems foolish to pop-culture proponents, yet to those desiring to please God and live holy it brings peace, joy and freedom! Ephesians 5:3, 12 calls us to jettison any "sexual immorality, or any impurity" and, "For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret."

## **3. Scripture celebrates sexual pleasure between married partners.**

“To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven... a time to embrace and a time to refrain... He has made everything beautiful in its appropriate time” (Eccl. 3:1;5;11).

God “richly gives us all things to enjoy” (1 Tim. 6:17) but instructs us, “Do not stir up or awaken love” before the proper time. (Song 8:4)

#### **4. God’s wisdom directs the unmarried to develop self-control (Gal.5:23) preparing us for a successful marriage.**

“You remember the instructions we gave you in the name of the Lord Jesus. God’s plan is to make you holy, and that entails first of all a clean-cut with sexual immorality. Every one of you should learn to control his body, keeping it pure and treating it with respect” (1 Thess.4:2-4, J.B. Phillips).

What is the primary reason marriages break up? Sexual problems? Adultery? Anger and abuse? Financial issues? Emotional problems? No, the number one reason is simply a lack of self-control which adversely impacts all these areas.

Proverbs 25:28 reminds us, “He who has no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls.”

In marriage one must also forgo sexual activity because of sickness, pregnancy or travel. Self-controlled individuals who cultivate this character quality before marriage reap the dividends in marriage! I say this from the perspective of over 47 years of a wonderful covenant marriage in Christ!

#### **5. Jesus came to forgive sins and free us from sin’s power (Rom. 6:6-7)!**

Scores of Christians suffer from addiction to sexual sin and needless condemnation because they’ve never been taught this unbelievable, biblical reality. Like slaves who were ignorant of the Emancipation Proclamation or believed it simply was too

good to be true, followers of Jesus can remain ensnared by besetting sins until they grasp this life-changing truth.

Christians are not to be mastered by anything—that includes masturbation! Scripture cautions us about individuals who “entice by the lusts of the flesh” promising “freedom” but keeping people in sexual bondage because “by that which a man is overcome, to this he is enslaved” (2 Pet. 2:18-19). Jesus told us if we “remain in My word... You shall know the truth and the truth will set you free (John 8:31-32)!

### **Reject the Lies and Rise to Victory!**

It’s a lie when we hear: “There’s nothing sinful or harmful about pornography or masturbation. It’s just a natural way to relieve sexual tension and pleasure oneself.”

It’s also a lie to believe, “I’m trapped. I can’t stop. I’ll never break free from this unforgivable sin.”

**Here’s the Deal:** If you’re tired of Satan manipulating you to walk in defeat, condemnation and uncleanness, then reject his lies, repent of unbelief and passivity regarding this temptation being too difficult to overcome.

Like Job, make a “covenant with my eyes” (Job 31:1). “Flee the evil desires of youth and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart...” (2 Tim. 2:22). Spend consistent time in the Word of God (“How shall a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to your Word” ()).

Don’t plan to fall, but if you do, immediately arise to repent, receive forgiveness and continue your journey to live in victory. You “can do all things because of Christ who strengthens you” (Phil. 4:13)! {eoa}

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# Lee Grady: God Promises to Send His Latter Rain

Last November I traveled to central Oregon to preach at Eastside Church, a Foursquare congregation led by a pastor named Brian Carmack. While I was there for a weekend of ministry, the Lord gave me Isaiah 44:3 as a promise to share with the church. It says: "For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants."

I shared this prophetic word with the congregation during one of our meetings. I felt the Lord was promising to bring growth and an outpouring of His refreshing presence. But I had no idea He would use the weather to confirm the message.

On my second day in Prineville there was an unexpected snow storm, which brought snowpack to the mountains. This was more significant than I realized at the time, because the entire region of central Oregon was experiencing a severe drought. After the initial snowfall, unexpected rains also came.

I flew home after that Sunday, but more precipitation came to that region of Oregon. In fact, so much rain and snow fell in the area that the reservoir in Prineville eventually reached maximum capacity.

"Crook County was the most drought-stricken county this side of the Mississippi River a few years ago," Pastor Brian informed me. "We have been in the highest classification for drought. It was severe."

Local reservoirs had reached a 23-year low. Some were drained

to the point of only being 10% full. Yet today, the reservoir in Prineville is at maximum capacity, and it is as high as it has ever been in five years. Smith says: "Our snowpack in mid-April hit more than 200% of normal. Many felt that it would take years before seeing them even get close to 100%. This was a total miracle!"

I'm so encouraged to know that the Lord is visiting this part of the country. Oregon is infamous for being a spiritual wasteland. Recent polls show it has one of the highest percentages of people who consider themselves unchurched or "unaffiliated" with any religion. In a 2018 Gallup Poll, nearly half—48% of the Oregonians surveyed—said religion is not important to them.

To make the situation bleaker, Portland—Oregon's largest city—is slowly losing its population because residents are fed up with high crime, open drug use, homelessness, high taxes and woke social policies that discourage any police action against criminals. In 2020, 2021 and 2022, the population of Portland decreased because residents who had been loyal citizens decided to get out of the city before crime and other urban ills got worse.

Yet three hours from Portland, Christians in Prineville are praying and witnessing a miracle. They know that if God can fill up an empty reservoir in a span of a few weeks, He can pour out His Holy Spirit on a dry region and bring a wave of salvation and healing.

I believe what happened to the reservoir in Prineville is a sign of what God intends to do all over this country. Like Portland, the United States is in a desperate situation. Current spiritual trends aren't good. But we have the promise that if we will pray, God will heal our land. He will send the rain—not because we deserve it but simply because He is so merciful.

Joel 2:23 says: "So rejoice, O sons of Zion, and be glad in the Lord your God; for He has given you the early rain for your vindication. And He has poured down for you the rain, the early and latter rain as before."

Please lay hold of this promise for the United States, and for your own city and region. Pray for the latter rain. Pray for a global outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Ask God to fill our churches once again with new converts, and to fill our streets with peace and racial harmony. And ask Him to transform the spiritual deserts of our nation into watered gardens. {eoa}

*J. Lee Grady was editor of Charisma for 11 years and now serves as senior contributing editor. He directs the Mordecai Project (), an international ministry that protects women and girls from gender-based violence. His latest books are "Follow Me" and "Let's Go Deeper"(Charisma House).*

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## **2 Elderly Pro-Life Supporters Violently Beaten While Praying Outside Planned Parenthood**

Police are searching for a violent assailant after two pro-life advocates were violently beaten while reportedly praying outside a Planned Parenthood clinic in Baltimore.

The victims were identified by LifeSiteNews as 80-year-old Dick Schafer and 73-year-old Mark Crosby.

A local pro-life activist, John Roswell, told the pro-life

outlet Schafer is recovering at home while Crosby is still being treated at the hospital because the “plate bone in his upper right cheek is completely fractured” and he “is bleeding from some unidentified area behind his eye and the bone eye orbit is completely shattered and will have to be replaced with metal.”

According to WMAR-TV, surveillance footage shows an unidentified man first approaching Schafer. The man was speaking in an aggressive manner, police said. The assailant seemed to be turning away from the elderly man before rushing toward him and tackling him over a large ceramic flowerpot.

Moments later, Crosby reportedly ran to defend Schafer. He was immediately thrown to the ground, at which point the man attacking him purportedly began punching him in the face.

Before walking away, the suspected attacker kicked Crosby in the face using what police described as “extreme force.” While Crosby is still undergoing treatment in the shock trauma unit of the University of Maryland Medical Center, he is now in stable condition.

Schafer was treated on the scene for minor injuries.

*For the original article, visit our content partners at Faithwire. {eoa}*

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