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Cameron Buettel:

Well, hi, guys. I really can't believe that I am here right now. I am sitting here with Paul Washer and I have been so blessed by his preaching for a couple of years now and downloaded so many of his sermons and to meet him in person is such a privilege.

And I have been talking about Paul about what we have been doing in Denmark and I have been humbled to hear the great interest he has shown. And so I just wanted to ask him a few questions today and just to tell us about what he sees as important, what advice he could give us in Denmark and what things he would like to bring if he was to come to Denmark.

First of all, Paul, is there any truth to the story that you might be willing to come to our little country?

Paul Washer:

Yes, I have... as a matter of fact I am very excited about coming to Denmark. I have to be in Holland next summer and I have to be in England once. So either from the England trip or from the Holland trip I would like to come over and be in Denmark.

One of the things I find most productive is not necessarily having a big campaign or a big group of meetings, but rather meeting with 15, 20 young men who are preachers who are preaching the gospel on the street and just sit down with them for several days and kind of help them maybe through some of the issues that they are dealing with as young preachers, to teach them the foundational points theologically of what the gospel is because it is ultimately through the clarity of the gospel that a nation is changed and that the church is refined.

Cameron Buettel:

What would you say people there is a real heading, moving away from doctrine in the mainstream of evangelicalism today? And in Denmark very much so. Many churches have no doctrinal statement at all. What would you say about the importance of the foundation of good doctrine?

Paul Washer:

Well, first of all, the moving away from sound doctrine. Let's think about just that phrase, our moving away from theology. Theology is a contraction of two words. It means literally the study of God or a discourse on God. So you are wanting to have a Christianity without a discourse on God. Doctrine simple means teaching. You want to have Christianity without biblical teaching. Now that is absolutely insane.

Now why is there a move away from doctrine and Scripture and expository preaching?

Well, first of all we know from the garden, from the very beginning, that any time there is a move away from the Word of God it is a work of the devil. No matter how you dress it up, how refined you make it, it is a work of the devil. Even well meaning people who want to move away from Scripture in order to take some of the scandal out of Christianity in hopes of reaching more people, it is still a work of the devil.

Another thing that we need to realize is that one of the chief characteristics of fallen man, natural man, man who has not been converted, although he may be religious, is that he seeks to restrain the truth. Now, the book of Romans tells us that he does that, chapter one verses 18, in ungodliness, unrighteousness.

So any time there is a move away from the clear teaching of Scripture and expository preaching for anything else, it is a work also of the natural man seeking to restrain truth.

Now, when I see movements that are based on anything other than expository preaching, new ways, new methodologies to supposedly reach modern man, it is not based on Scripture. I know one of two things are happening. Either these are false prophets who are without the Spirit of God or, two, they are very, very immature believers who have no business leading a church or any other sort of movement.

Cameron Buettel:

So with that you spoke about expository preaching.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

What do you mean specifically by expository preaching and why is it important as compared to topical preaching?

Paul Washer:

Expository preaching... now topical preaching can be biblical. It can be. For example, if we were to do a....

Cameron Buettel:

I have heard you do it.

Paul Washer:

Right.

If we were... hopefully it is biblical. If we were to have a topic, for example, substitutionary atonement and penal satisfaction, we could stay in one text, for example, Romans three. But we would also probably want to bring in Old Testament texts speaking about substitution, Isaiah 53. And so it is possible to have a biblical sermon that is topical.

But if you are going to feed God's people in the context of a community every week, if you do not preach through books of the Bible and do not teach Christ centered exposition there is so much that is going to be lost.

You see, for example, if I take the book of Romans...

Cameron Buettel:

Yes.

Paul Washer:

And I start in chapter one and I end at the end of the book, I can be quite assured I have hit probably every major theme. Whereas if I just do topical preaching most of that will be based on the topics that I choose.

Cameron Buettel:

Yes.

Paul Washer:

Now if I am a modern day sensitive preacher I might put a box out in the congregation and let the congregation choose. But either way, the topics that we choose are going to

be biased. They are going to be slanted towards our own desires and our own needs. Where if we are preaching book by book through the Scriptures then we know that we are going to get everything God wants us to have.

Cameron Buettel:

Another thing I hear often from even leaders in Denmark is that you don't need to preach about sin because people know that they are sinners. Would you agree with that?

Paul Washer:

Absolutely not. Absolutely not because what they have just done—and mark my words. There is no way around this. It is not something I am going to sit around and argue with someone about.

Cameron Buettel:

[?]

Paul Washer:

Yeah, it is... listen. This is absolutely insane. What is at least we... we may not say the principle, but what is at least one of the major or principle ministries of the Holy Spirit? That when he comes he will convict the world of sin.

Now what is the sword of the Spirit? It is the Word of God.

You see, also, let's just look at the apostolic example that is left to us. They dealt with sin.

I always use this example. Romans... the book of Romans is the closest thing we have to a systematic theology. Now it is not a systematic theology, but is as close as we have. And isn't it amazing that the apostle Paul spends the first three chapters dealing with the sin of man, at least starting in chapter one verse 18 on through chapter three to verse 23 at least. And what is he dealing with? All through there he is seeking to show men their sinfulness, to literally bring men to the recognition of their condemnation, that they are not righteous, they are not good, they do not seek God. And what Paul has to do is to leave all men in the dust with their hand over their mouth recognizing they are sinners without one excuse. Then he goes on to salvation by faith through the redeeming work of Christ.

And so we can see throughout Scripture the need to bring men to a full recognition or a saving recognition of their sin so that when Christ is preached then it is something that they would desire that they would see the need for.

The fact is I have heard so often from post modernists and post modern preaching that the men of our day are not as hearty as the men of the Reformation or people during the time of John and Charles Wesley or Whitefield, that we are weak and fragile and we need our self esteem built up and our self love built up. That is just exactly the opposite.

We are a people more in love with ourselves than any other generation that has walked this planet.

I will give you an example. In the 60s it was the—and everyone recognized this, sociologists, anthropologists, everyone—that in the 60s there seemed to be this desire to change the world. Now it failed. And notice that we went from the 60s to health clubs. We went from the 60s to the me generation. The hippies turned into some of the greatest consumers and buyers on the face of the earth. We went to the me generation.

I can't change the world, so I will be all about me. I will change me. I will get the best world for me that I can get. And we live in that strain. We are a people who love ourselves.

And then we have these teachers that come along supposedly in the name of Christianity and Jesus Christ and say, "You know, you must have self love before you can love your neighbor because Jesus said love your neighbor as yourself."

That is not at all what Jesus was teaching. He didn't say that you needed to love yourself more. What he is saying is, "Look, you already want to love yourself. That is not a problem. Now love your neighbor." That is what he is teaching us.

And so men are not fragile. They are rebellious and the men who will not deal with sin in the pulpit, they are deceivers and they are just like in Jeremiah where they are saying, "Peace, peace," where there is no peace and they are healing the wounds of my people superficially. And they need to stop it.

Cameron Buettel:

Many commonly living in Europe. I am an Australian living in Europe, but a thing I really noticed from [?] and even more so in America is people are very private. People generally don't talk to strangers. And so among those of us who are keen to evangelize [?] a real issue of fear, just talking to people.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

And getting past that and we really... I... I think we need to wake up because it is not North Korea. It is not the Sudan. It is not China. This is the price that we pay.

As a missionary coming from Peru and some of the hardest parts of the world, what would you say to these guys about actually opening their mouth, speaking up and being burdened and active within the culture we live in?

Paul Washer:

Well, again, one of the main things that is going to be put against someone who wants to be open about their faith is this, that it is not cultural any longer to do that. It is... it is against the grain. It is going to do more damage than good.

But here is what you have got to understand.

I have a book in my office on Charles Spurgeon. It is basically different quotes and things from newspaper clippings and a very rare book. And if you look there you see that Spurgeon was constantly attacked in his culture for the openness of his faith and the openness of his preaching. If you go back to the time of Whitefield and just look at the political cartoons written against Whitefield, I mean, he was considered an absolute fanatic, a crazy man. Why? Because he preached in the open air. John and Charles Wesley in England, Hal Harris and Daniel Rowland. It has never been with the culture to do open air evangelism.

I am not saying that the guys who are talking today are wrong when they say, "Man, it is against culture to be doing this stuff." What I would tell them is it has been against culture since the moment the apostle Paul stood up in that great coliseum and spoke the Word of God. It has always been against culture. And that is what you have got understand about Christianity. Christianity makes a warfare on culture. It doesn't seek a truce with culture and then in that truce pass over to the other side. It doesn't do that. It says, "No, this is who I am and all of you adjust to me."

And that is the scandal of Christianity because if we were to say, like I said in the lecture this weekend, if we take the definite article "the" out Jesus is the Savior, Christianity is the way and we exchange it for "a Savior," an indefinite article, and "a way" then the scandal of Christianity is gone and we can make friends with the world. Everyone will love us.

And that is what a lot of these men are doing today. The problem is in the pulpit. The guys in the Emergent Church and in other forms of post modernism, what they are doing that to me is dastardly, it is deceptive. If you want to go out and start another religion and you want to say that Jesus is a way and you want it to be based on post modern thinking, then go ahead, knock yourself out. Start another religion, but call it another religion. Do not try to identify it as orthodox Christianity. And that is where the deception is.

Cameron Buettel:

Yes.

Paul Washer:

And so I am not against someone going out and starting their own religion. It is a free world, free conscience. I believe in all of that. But don't call it what it is not. It is not Christianity.

Cameron Buettel:

Yeah. So as you are talking there about open air [?] and not everyone is going to be an open air preacher.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

We are all called to be witnesses, aren't we?

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

And so just to take that step apart and actually talk to the people we encounter we might never see again.

Paul Washer:

Well, and here is something that is really, really good. I tell college students this who want to share their faith. I say, "You know, prior to coming to know Christ, when you were just a regular guy on campus, if you saw someone sitting down on a bench you could sit down beside him. You didn't sweat bullets. You weren't... your hands weren't trembling. You could sit down. You could say hi, couldn't you?"

They go, "Yeah."

And you'd just talk to him. You know, "Did you see the soccer game yesterday or, you know, what do you think about this or how your studies are going?"

I said, "You could have a conversation like that, couldn't you?"

They said, “Yeah.”

I said, “But the moment you became a Christian and you were told that you needed to witness, everything changed, didn’t it?”

And they go, “Yeah.”

I said, “Now you are walking across campus. You see a guy sitting on a park bench you start sweating. Your heart starts beating. Your palms get all sweaty and cold because you think I have got to witness. I have got to witness.”

Here is a really good word to hold on to for witnessing. Normal. Just be a normal human being.

Like I see someone sitting on a park bench I do like I always used to do. I am tired. I sit down on the park bench. “Hey, how is it going?” You know, just talk to him. Talk about things.

Now, in the sharing of my faith—now I am not talking about street preaching, now. I am just talking about sharing my faith—I used to sit there and think, ok, I need a line. I need something so that I can break in, you know, and start sharing the gospel, looking for an open door. And almost it is kind of deceptive because you are looking for a way to sneak in there and tell him about the gospel.

Well, I heard John MacArthur say something one time and I thought, man, that is wonderful. And that is this. I am sitting down having a conversation with someone. They ask me what I do or something. I tell them. That may open up to the gospel. It may not. But what I will do is simply go: Look, wasn’t that a great conversation? Before I go, I would just like to tell you something. I am a follower of Jesus Christ. And have you ever understood the gospel, I mean what Christianity is really all about?”

And a lot of times, you know, they will just clam up and when they clam up maybe I will give them a tract. I am not going to, you know, sit there and fight with them. But a lot of times when I just look at someone directly and say, “I am a Christian. Have you ever understood the gospel?” And they say, “No,” I will say, “Well, would you give me just a few minutes to share with you exactly what the gospel is all about?”

And a lot of people go, “Yeah.”

One time, actually, I was coming back from Romania and I landed in Amsterdam from Romania, from Bucharest and I got on the plane again and I sat down beside what seemed to be kind of a refined, educated gentleman. And it turned out he was one of the aids for George Bush, Senior when he was president of the United States.

And I said, I started talking to him and I said, “You know, have you ever understood what Christianity really is? I am not talking about the TV preachers. I am not talking about all this, you know, sectarian belief. I am talking about just general historical Christianity. Have you ever understood it?”

Do you know what he said to me? He said, “Well, you know, I am Dutch Reformed, but I never go to church. It means nothing to me.” He goes, “We have got six hours until we land in Washington, D.C. Why don’t you just sit down and share with me what Christianity is all about?”

So for the next six hours, you know, I gave the man a history lesson, more a story of the redemptive history of the world in Jesus Christ. But being honest, just being normal really goes a long way in just sharing your faith.

Cameron Buettel:

You mentioned history just then and, of course, Europe is steeped in history with the Reformation. And especially coming from the post modern crowd I am hearing a lot of negative revisionism of the Reformation.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

For our friend in Demark I think it could be perhaps inspiring just to touch on maybe some of the heroes of what went down in the country where they live four or 500 years ago [?] the Reformers.

Paul Washer:

First of all...

Cameron Buettel:

The price they paid and so forth.

Paul Washer:

When you look at any movement in history, we don’t want to think to ourselves, golden age. That is the wrong thing to do.

For example, if you say, “Man, I would like to have a church just like the, you know, the first century of the New Testament, you know.”

So I go, “Ok, you would like to have the church like the one in Corinth then, right?”

Cameron Buettel:

Yes.

Paul Washer::

I mean, there has always been problems, ok? So we don't go back to a golden age.

And then the second thing I would say is this. A lot of people who theologically are in disagreement with the Reformation, what they will do is they will attack the people of the Reformation or they will find something that was done during the Reformation that is not biblical and then use that to dismiss the whole movement. But notice this. They will not deal with the theological truths of the Reformation.

It is like this. When... in the United States my wife is not from here and she said the first thing she noticed when she came to the United States is that everyone is so thin skinned. If you tell them something that maybe you rebuke them or tell them that there is something wrong in their life, they just get mad.

Well, I have had so many people come up to me after I have preached and said, “I don't like what you said. I don't like your attitude. You were proud. You were arrogant.”

And I stop them and go, ok. Could I have been proud? Yes. I have been proud before. Could I have been arrogant and fleshly? Yes. I will go back tonight in my hotel room. I will search my heart. I will ask other people who were here to rebuke me if that is true what you are saying, but that is not really the question.

Cameron Buettel:

Now, just stop right there. That is a real lesson.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

There for any preacher to respond that way.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

That... wow. Ok. That is really stark contrast to a lot of what I have heard in the past.

Paul Washer:

You need to be open to the fact... you see, when someone persecuted Jesus, Jesus really didn't have to worry about it because he was always right.

Cameron Buettel:

Yes.

Paul Washer:

When someone persecutes us or writes something terrible on the internet...

Cameron Buettel:

Yes.

Paul Washer:

We don't need to dismiss it. We need to say, "Hold it, I am not Jesus." We need to be open to rebuke.

But when people rebuke me I want to humble myself before that. But then I look at them and go, "Ok. You told me you didn't like me. You didn't like my attitude and you didn't like the way I said something. But now let's go on to the greater issue. What I said, was it true?"

And, see, what a lot of people will do is they don't like the truth of the Reformation, but they... But if you look at that, a lot of those people also are not serious about Scripture at all. When the preach, when the teach, Scripture doesn't have a central place in their ecclesiology, their ministry or anything. They are more culturally, they are centered on culture and upon man. They are humanists.

So when someone comes to me with honest questions about the Reformation and they are a person who is diligent in their study of Scripture, then I am going to deal with that. but most of the people who come to me aren't diligent in their study of Scripture. They don't even like Scripture. As a matter of fact, they spend most of their time in the Bible trying to figure out a way to say what it doesn't mean.

So that is the first thing and it goes back, again, to Romans 1:18 where they suppress or restrain the truth in unrighteousness.

Cameron Buettel:

Could you perhaps paint a contrast between a biblical view of regeneration and what we see largely in the modern era of what I might... I would probably call decisional regeneration?

Paul Washer:

Right.

Well, first of all there is a great battle raging today as most know, between the more Calvinistic brethren and the more Arminian brethren and it is a valid battle and I am Calvinistic. I prefer to call myself a five point Spurgeonist...

Cameron Buettel:

But yet you have been influenced by Arminians, too.

Paul Washer:

Oh, and that is my point. For me the battle... I am not going to battle on this Arminian Calvin thing. My battle is on regeneration and that is why I could have fellowship with John and Charles Wesley who were Arminian. I could have fellowship with Leonard Ravenhill and all these people. Why? Because the issue for me is the doctrine of regeneration and both ought to agree on this doctrine. And what I mean by that is this. In almost the last century we have lost the doctrine of biblical regeneration and that is what always happens. And whenever there is a great awakening, in that great awakening the doctrine of regeneration is discovered.

Prior to the preaching of Wesley and Whitefield and the awakening there, most people believed themselves Christian not because they had been baptized as an infant in the Christian Church. They had been confirmed in the Church of England or whatever, believed themselves soundly Christian. They have a Christian burial. They are Christian.

All right. Then you have Whitefield and Wesley and these men jumping up and saying, "No, you must be born again."

Now everyone is looking at them like they are crazy. "Well, I am born again."

"Well, how do you know?"

"Well, I was baptized. I am Christian. I was baptized as an infant."

Today it is not so much infant baptism as it is decisionism.

"I am saved."

“You must be born again.”

“But I am saved.”

“Well, what do you mean?”

“Well, I prayed and asked Jesus to come in to my heart in an evangelistic campaign. I am saved.”

Now, most of these people who prayed like that... Now some of them honestly got saved not because of the method, but in spite of it.

Cameron Buettel:

Yes.

Paul Washer:

But most of the people everyone recognizes falls away, falls away completely. Never goes to church, never bears fruit, never grows in godliness, nothing. Why? Because they made a decision one time and even to their grave, even though there is no fruit, no godliness, no hunger for God or Christ, they will go to their grave believing they are Christian because one time in their life they prayed a little prayer, asked Jesus to come in and some religious authority told them they were saved and they hold on to that all their life.

And when someone like me or you comes and preaches to them, “You must be born again,” they think we are crazy.”

“Well, I have done did that.”

“You have done did what?”

“I have done made my decision. I have prayed my prayer.”

“Yes, but there is absolutely no fruit in your life. You are as carnal and worldly as the last man.”

Now here is the problem. The Bible teaches that men are radically depraved, that men are born coming out of the womb telling lies, that they hate God and they hate God’s truth and they are spiritually dead. They will not come. They cannot come to God, but they are not victims. They cannot come to God because they will not come to God. And they will not come to God because they hate God and they hate his truth.

And therefore, all men are suppressing the truth of God in ungodliness and unrighteousness.

Now, when you and I as a preacher go out into the midst of these people it is like Ezekiel standing there in the midst of the valley of dry bones. I mean, you cannot manipulate bones that are very dry to come to life. You can't lower the lights in the auditorium. You can't play beautiful music. You can't promise them their best life now. You can't give them 40 days of purpose. You can't do any of that.

I mean, nothing is going to save these men. But that prophet Ezekiel was told to prophesy and when he prophesies the truth of God and the wind representing the Holy Spirit blows upon these men, they are brought to life. Our ministry as preachers, we are not professionals as John Piper says. We are not movers and shakers and we are most certainly not spiritual life coaches. We are prophets. We go out and we preach a singular message: Christ crucified, risen from the dead. And if we stand there long enough preaching clear enough the Spirit of God is going to blow on somebody's heart and resurrect them from the dead and they are going to become a new creature.

That is gospel preaching and that is the way we must look at it.

And that is why one of the things that I love so much about way of the master and Ray Comfort and Kurt Cameron, Todd Friel and all those guys, is they see this. We are out on the streets, the Spirit of God must move upon the hearts of men, but he will move upon the hearts of men if we are faithful to this gospel message, a gospel message which exalts God, teaches men who God is, teaches men who they are and then presents Christ to a man broken over his sin.

Cameron Buettel:

So we need to have a biblical understanding of success then, don't we?

Paul Washer:

Yes, we do, because success today has been redefined, absolutely redefined.

It is absolutely pathetic.

First of all, success is fidelity to the person of God and his Word. That is success. So if a man never has a great ministry, if he... you know, great minister. I mean, large ministry, well known, none of that matters. The question is: Has he been faithful?

I mean, the Jehovah Witnesses and the Mormons have great ministers. If you want to talk about the size of their ministry it is great or the effect that they have had on the world, it is great. But it is not faithful to Scripture.

If church growth guys, and I say this and I know it sounds harsh, but their idea of success is get as many people as possible into a community. But getting a people into a community of faith is not going to get them to heaven. Getting people into Christ.

And the step by step soft sell of the gospel is never presented for us in the Scripture. I mean every time... when Jesus came to people and preached the gospel, repent and believe the gospel, when he had a great following he would turn around and say something purposely to [?] that he didn't have to say.

I have heard people come to me in my preaching and say, "Brother Paul, what you said was true, but you didn't have to say it that way. That was offensive."

And I said, "Ok, let's go to the book of John."

Jesus didn't have to go to a group of Jews and say, "Unless you drink my blood and eat my flesh..."

But the moment he did it almost everybody fell away. Later on when the apostles come to him in the situation and they said, "Well, you know, you have offended everybody. Everybody is leaving."

He says, "Do you want to go, too?"

Cameron Buettel:

Well, the Lord Jesus back then, that was kind of before church growth men.

Paul Washer:

Yeah, I don't know how he got along, do you?

Cameron Buettel:

[?]

Paul Washer:

No wonder he was such a failure.

Cameron Buettel:

Yes.

I think [?] going through the [?]

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

You know, Noah, Jeremiah and Jesus. And, of course he meant that sarcastically.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

To say that our success should be defined by our... our faithfulness to... to the message we preach.

Paul Washer:

That's right.

Cameron Buettel:

And Jesus could clearly see in that case that those people were not interested in the bread of life. They were interested in just the bread that filled their bellies and they wanted more.

Paul Washer:

Listen. At least in America, maybe in Denmark you are a more noble people, I don't know, but I doubt it. In American you walk up to somebody and you say, "God loves you and has a wonderful plan for your life."

Now, imagine. I know that sounds good, but think about it. Here is a man in love with himself that is autonomous. I mean, he wants to govern himself or he has all kinds of plans.

You walk up to him and say, "God loves you."

And he goes, "What? God loves me? I love me. Oh, this is great."

And you say, "God has a wonderful plan."

"I have a wonderful plan for my life. And you mean to tell me that if I receive this God he is going to love me even more than I love me and he has even greater plans for me? Or he is going to make all my plans come true so I can get my best life now?"

“Yeah.”

“Ok. I’ll take a god like that. Do you have two or three? Because I will take them all if you have them.”

You see, instead of coming to a man and saying, “Sir, this is who God is.”

What a novel idea. Sir, this is who God is. Sir...

Cameron Buettel:

The holiness of God.

Paul Washer:

Sir, this is who you are. Sir, this is what God has done, the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sir, this is what God demands.

Cameron Buettel:

So we need to see that great contrast if we fear God isn’t who we are...

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

He might just see what the cross is really about.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

That way... I guess that makes grace amazing instead of amusing.

Paul Washer:

Because look at this. Let’s go back to the argument that men know they are sinners. Whoopee. The devil knows he is a sinner. He does. But the question is not do you know you are a sinner? The question is: Do you hate your sin?

You see and another thing about this being men are fragile. Oh, I love that. Look at the heinous crimes that are committed in our age, things unspeakable, unheard of, the raping of infant children, the rampant immorality, grotesque immorality, the fact that we kill thousands and thousands of babies worldwide in abortion without even thinking about it, blinking. The things that come out of Hollywood.

Cameron Buettel:

[?] last year that was 46 million babies [?]

Paul Washer:

Hello, holocaust.

Cameron Buettel:

And all these [?] going on and on about AIDS which is important. Too many die from [?]

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

What... what... this whole repositioning on abortion is a really scary...

Paul Washer:

That is because pastors care more about being culturally sensitive or sensitive to a wicked culture than sensitive to a holy God.

I am going to tell you something and I do care how many people it makes mad, it makes angry, but I am still going to say it. The problem in the world today is not liberal politicians. It is not the cults. It is the supposed evangelical Bible believing pastors. That is the problem in the world today. And I don't know if it is out of ignorance of Scripture, self preservation or they are just unconverted, but one of the greatest, most horrible judgments is going to fall upon men of God who cry out, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace."

They have sold their birth right for porridge.

Cameron Buettel:

And from that subject of accountability we will finish, I would like to finish just talking about the whole thing of church planting.

Paul Washer:

Ok.

Cameron Buettel:

[?] but leading into that church government. We see different models of church government. One thing we have seen a bit of in Denmark is actually churches with basically the one man model and they have a board, but basically the pastor is calling the shots.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

Again, it is an accountability issue. What would you have to say about that and what form of church government do you think is the most biblical?

Paul Washer:

Well, any time we start using the word “model.” You know, this is a model that we have come up with.

Cameron Buettel:

Ok.

Paul Washer:

And this is a... you know, this is a... you know, here is the great battle. If you believe that the Scripture is inspired, you have only won half the battle. The second question is: But do you believe the Scriptures are sufficient?

Cameron Buettel:

Ok.

Paul Washer:

And what I mean by that: Do you believe the Scriptures are sufficient for every question that needs to be answered in ministry or life itself?

Now most men would say yes. Most men are practicing just the opposite.

When you have got to go and get some new cultural methodology in order to reach your generation, you are saying the Scriptures are not sufficient.

Cameron Buettel:

Ok.

Paul Washer:

Now the Scriptures have given us how church is supposed to be done. It has elders that hold the congregation accountable and the congregation holds those elders accountable.

Cameron Buettel:

Right.

Paul Washer:

Those elders are involved with pastoring the people through the ministry of the Word of God and through caring for them and shepherding and through leading the church. There are deacons who, although they may be involved in the ministry of the Word, they are primarily involved in the meeting of the material needs of that congregation in order to free up the elders to lead and to minister spiritually.

Now, within the body of elders, 1 Timothy chapter three tells us what the qualifications are. You cannot set aside those qualifications without causing damage in the church.

Now that doesn't mean that you are looking for perfection. But those qualifications need to be characteristic in the life of that person.

Now, within that group of elders—and the Bible doesn't address this idea of... There is not in the Scriptures this one great leader, you know. There is a group of elders. Now when a church starts there may be a need. There is just one man, maybe, starting the church. But he needs to be working on training and bringing men in who can work with him and he can work with them. And they can hold each other accountable.

Now all these elders together must all be apt or able to teach. But that does not mean that all of them are gifted with some you know, great teaching pulpit ministry. They must all be able to hold doctrine and teach doctrine soundly. But you may have some men in that group who excel in teaching, who may be doing more of the teaching ministry. Ok?

Now I believe in a spiritual authority among elders. A lot of times people have elders and there is elders and then there is the elder.

Cameron Buettel:

Yeah.

Paul Washer:

All right. So it is like an... you know, a leader among equals which really doesn't work that well.

What I see is that there is spiritual authority and there is a difference. If I give political authority that means I say you are this, you are this, you are this, that is the way it is going to be. That is political authority.

Spiritual authority is let's say that all of us elders sit down and there is a question on doctrine that comes up. The church is being attacked by some heretic. All of the sudden there is one or two men among those elders who really are Bible teacher, scholars. And they just come to the front naturally among the elders. They just come to the front. They take the lead.

But let's say the next time the men meet there is a different sort of problem that requires wisdom in counseling maybe or wisdom with regard to finances. And it seems like these men who took the lead theologically are now kind of regressing or returning back into the body of elders and some other men come to prominence and leadership.

So men have different gifts in leading.

Now so you have elders. Then one of the great missing doctrines in the church today is church discipline.

Cameron Buettel:

You have a conference about this.

Paul Washer:

Oh, yeah, we do. It was really something.

Loving, compassionate church discipline.

Over the last several years in this church I believe they were telling me the other day—and I can say this because I am a member here, I am not a leader or something like that. But I marvel at this church because in the last several years I think more than 30 marriages have been saved from divorce through church discipline.

Cameron Buettel:

Oh.

Paul Washer:

And people think church discipline is: Oh, you sinned. You are out.

That is just a lie of the devil. And it is a lie of many preachers who don't practice church discipline in the name of this, that they love God's people more than God does.

If we love God's people we will love God and keep his commandments. And Matthew 18 is in the book unless you want to rip it out. 1 Corinthians five is in the book. Galatians six is in the book.

And so what is church discipline? Church discipline is if I see a brother in sin I go to him.

You say, "Oh, that is harsh."

Well, let me ask you what is harsher? Me going to him or you not going to him and allowing him to die in his sin? Let me ask you what is harsher? Me going to him without talking to anybody else? Or you not going to him but talking to everybody else about his sin.

All right? So it is lovingly and compassionately going to him. Let's say that he agrees. Yes, I am in sin. He humbles himself. I pray for him. I have won my brother.

Let's say, though, that he disagrees. That means I need to bring in two more brothers, wiser, possibly elders to judge.

Why judge? They are not on my side because I am going to rebuke him, but maybe I am wrong. Maybe he is not in sin. So two wiser brothers come and they judge.

"Hey, look, he is not in sin, Paul. You are being a legalist."

Or, "Yes, he really is in sin."

And they admonish him to repent. If he does we have saved our brother, case closed. If he does not, then it goes to the church. And the church... You see?

And you would be surprised the way it works.

Cameron Buettel:

Todd Friel actually interviewed one of the elders here teaching pastor Jeff Noblit and he

spoke about church discipline and in one thing he said which has stuck in my memory and that was that Todd asked him: What sin qualifies for church discipline?

And pastor Jeff replied, “We don’t discipline people for sin. We discipline people for unrepentant sin.”

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

It is not the sin issue. It is whether people repent of it. But I thought that was so interesting. It wasn’t the issue of what sins are big, what sins are small.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

It is the issue of repentance itself.

Paul Washer:

And a lot of enemies, and that is what they have made themselves. They attack us. They will say, “Yeah, well, someone is struggling with alcohol or this or that. You guys just kick him out because he can’t let go of it.”

Have you been reading our church notes or something? We have never done anything like that. I mean, I have seen these elders work with men for months and months and months to restore them, to help them. And any man who repents and shows any genuine sincerity in wanting to be free from his sin, he is not disciplined. It is the guy who looks you right in the eye and says, “I don’t care what you say, pastor. I don’t care what this Bible says. I am going to do exactly what I want.”

Cameron Buettel:

So you said you are not an elder here yourself. So you actually... you submit to the eldership here.

Paul Washer:

Yes.

Cameron Buettel:

So they can come and tell you where to go.

Paul Washer:

They can tell me where to do, but here is what you need to understand about true elders. This is not a...

Cameron Buettel:

I probably said that a bad way. I meant...

Paul Washer:

No, but I am glad...

Cameron Buettel:

[?]

Paul Washer:

No, I am glad you said it that way. An elder has authority only to the degree that he makes decisions and speaks according to this book. So when this book... it is kind of like common law. You know, the president or the king when it is common law, the president and king, they have to submit to the law.

So the law is ultimately the ruler, you see.

Now, it is the same way in Scripture, but even more so. It is this book.

Now, let's say that there is something that is not in this book that they come to me with like, "Brother Paul..."

That is a principle that if we neglect our family that is a sin, but where do you draw the line?

But they have never done this, but if they came to me and said, "Paul, you are traveling too much. You are tired. You are wore out. As elders we are going to make the recommendation that you do this, that you draw back, you take some time to study, take a break, get reacquainted with your family, things like that. All right?"

Knowing who they are, because they meet the qualifications of 1 Timothy chapter three, knowing that they have these characteristics, I am going to take that seriously. I am going to take it seriously.

You see, here is the problem. And all you young ministers need to understand this. It is fame, finances and femininity. Those are three things we call it the trinity of death, ok?

Cameron Buettel:

It could be the Bermuda Triangle.

Paul Washer:

It could be, except usually you don't disappear, you go down in... not in flames, but you go down in shame.

Cameron Buettel:

Yeah.

Paul Washer:

And but it... fame will get you. When you start believing everybody's hype about you, you are in trouble. And...

Cameron Buettel:

One of the place where you are at right now.

Paul Washer:

Right. But one of the things that is really neat is when I travel with guys, like we were sitting there the other night and I preached that one general session and when I walked off the pulpit I had a standing ovation. All right?

Now I went right to one of the brothers who travels with me and we went back in the room and we just started laughing. And he said, "You know, isn't it amazing?"

He said, "A lot of people who hold you up so high would be so disappointed if they actually knew you. Not because you are a hypocrite or you are a liar or a deceiver, but because you are just a man and you have problems."

I mean, it is unbelievable. Sometimes I will be with people and they will get mad at me because they say I am too lighthearted or I laugh too much or I don't always talk about... you know, sometimes I talk about other things like, you know, well, it is a beautiful day, you know, that type of thing or he really eats? Yes, he does eat.

But one of the things that is wonderful is God has given us brothers like John over here and others who just look at you and go, you know, you are just like everybody else.

And then he gives us wives who really straighten us out. But I remember one time I was preaching in Romania and something of a revival broke out and after it was over and I finally was making my way back to the states, I was traveling with a dear, wonderful Bible teacher. If you never get him over to Denmark or Holland, brother Mike from Kentucky, Mike Morrow. And we were sitting there in Zurich, I think, in the airport and he is sitting down beside me and he goes, he said, “Boy,” he said, “God really used you. Now just remember, you are dirt apart form the grace of God.”

Cameron Buettel:

That wasn't very nice to your self esteem.

Paul Washer:

You know, one time I was preaching and I mean, I was really preaching and as soon as I said amen and was coming down from the pulpit an old man—if he knew I was calling him an old man he would be mad—but an elderly man kind of came up the steps... I mean, right there at the platform and he said, “Paul, you preached the truth tonight, you really did. And you preached it in the flesh and you need to get down on your knees right now and ask God to forgive you.”

He was right. That is why you always need people around you who love you enough to tell you the truth.

So fame will get you. The other is finances. That is a deadly one. It is very, very deadly. So you have to set up a thing where if you are preaching, you have got any kind of ministry and God begins to prosper you or whatever, you have got to set up a thing where the finances and your preaching ministry and are all handled by someone else and someone else determines how much support you get and everything else.

Now our mission is a little bit different because the money comes in and goes to heart cry and things like that. But... and when I do get something from a church the leaders at heart cry know exactly what it is, they know everything.

Cameron Buettel:

That is why you only draw a base model Ferrari, isn't it?

Paul Washer:

Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. Actually I bought that car five years ago for 3500 dollars. It was a great deal. But one of the things that I think that a minister should have the right never to set his salary higher, but he does have the right to set it lower if he feels like people... because a lot of times when God begins to use you people really hate you, but some people really love you. And they will be almost too kind. So you have to be careful.

And the other is, of course, women, femininity.

Brother, even if you are sitting there. Like I would be sitting here right now saying, "I don't have any desire for anything like that. I don't. I love my wife. That's it." I mean, I don't think about that.

But that doesn't set you off the hook. Being that way sets you up as a primary target. You have got to realize, I do not trust me. I do not trust my heart. I do not trust other people. I am going to have myself guarded. That is one of the things I really appreciated about the ministry of Billy Graham. He was never alone. He was never alone. And I will hear young ministers go, "Well, this doesn't bother me. I don't have a problem with it."

Don't even come to me with that. Because, you know, I am an American. I will probably hit you with a board or something. I mean, it is wrong. It is a lie. You are lying to yourself. You are lying to everyone else. You are setting an example. It is going to cause... give other people freedom to do the same immoral thing and they are going to fall, too.

Cameron Buettel:

Just on that elder thing and I wasn't... I didn't mean to go there, but you kept emphasizing the man thing, men, men, men.

Paul Washer:

Yeah.

Cameron Buettel:

And I can just imagine right now people are going to see this and, of course, there is a very strong feminist influence in the Scandinavian cultures.

Paul Washer:

Right.

Cameron Buettel:

Like Denmark.

Maybe you should elaborate on why you are emphasizing men as preachers, men as elders, why your emphasis was there.

Paul Washer:

Because that is just what the Bible teaches. Apart from you try to do some cultural gymnastics with the Scriptures. That is what Scripture teaches.

Now, women have all sorts of ministries, can do all sorts of things, all sorts of expounding of the Scriptures, many things. But when it comes to being an elder and exercising authority, especially in the realm of theology and doctrine, the eldership is a place for men.

Now, we could go into a long drawn out thing here, but here is what I want you to see. Anyone who is a Christian any length of time has got to recognize this. If godless culture goes a certain way, it is probably going to be the very opposite of what the Bible says.

Now, just think about this. I used to have a psych professor that I had to take at the University of Texas and a friend of mine who was discipling me had him the first hour and I had him the next hour and my friend Mike came out one day and he is just laughing. He is all happy.

And I said, "What's going on?"

He said, "Man, I just love this psych class. I mean the guy was just so anti Christian it was unbelievable. He called himself the antichrist and everything."

And I said, "But why?"

He said, "I am learning so much from this psych class that I can apply to my daily life as a Christian."

And I said, "But how?"

He goes, "I write down absolutely everything that man says. I do the opposite and I have the Bible."

And it is kind of the same way. Look what culture has done. Men have been emasculated, almost castrated. I mean it is just horrible. Men can no longer be men. Ok? They are no longer told to lead. They are no longer taught about headship. All that to a godless culture, the same culture that hates Jesus Christ teaches certain things. And those certain things have led to the demise of family, of institution, of absolutely everything.

Now, we can go here. I mean, we probably don't have time, but when you go into 1 Timothy it is very clearly that the reasons why Paul gives for a woman not exercising authority in the Church, they are not cultural.

Cameron Buettel:

[?]

Paul Washer:

Right. They are based on creation, based on what happened there. And that is what we need to hold to.

Also you go to Ephesians. It is very interesting because when Paul talks about the congregation in chapter five what he is doing is setting forth for us how we handle our different relationships in society. And the first one he talks about the community of faith.

He says, "Submit to one another." Ok? That is a community of faith.

He talks about husbands and wives. Wives, submit to the husbands.

When he comes down to children, children, submit to your parents.

When he comes down to employer, employee relationship, employees—which back then was in the sense of slaves—submit to your masters. Ok? And honor them.

So he is going down the society. Every one of those have been tore out and look where our society is at?

You know? And with regard to... see, feminists and this just goes on probably make me very popular. Feminists hate women more than any group on the face of the earth. They hate women. And they idolize men. And how can I say that? Because all you feminists out there are doing your best to make women into men. You want women to be men. You don't want them to be women. You hate the role of a woman. Yet God honors the role of a woman. He does.

And so, you know, of course that is a several lecture teaching...

Cameron Buettel:

I was glad you touched on that.

Paul Washer:

Yeah.

Cameron Buettel:

[?]

Just, finally, with our situation in Denmark we have our fledgling evangelism network. You have been stressing to me how the importance of planting a church, a biblical church. Could you... could you elaborate for the video why that is important and what

the important things are for us to do, what we should prioritize and what price we should be willing to pay and what it is worth paying that price.

Paul Washer:

Well, let me speak to all of you street preachers and the guys who are out there witnessing. If your ministries do not contribute to the edification of a biblical local church then your ministries are incomplete. If you do not see to it that those who are converted are brought together into a biblical fellowship, your ministries are incomplete. You cannot live the Christian life apart from the Church. God has given us a Church.

Another thing my pastor always likes to say, Jeff Noblit, is that Christ gave his life for the Church. And yet to many even young guys fired up with evangelism and things, they do not see the importance of the church.

Several years ago when Bill Clinton was running for political office he had a slogan, "It is the economy, stupid."

You know, and that became, very, very popular. It is the economy, stupid. Although it would be rather rude, sometimes Jeff, our pastor here, he said he would like to make some t-shirts that said, "It is the church, stupid." And what he means by that is look all these ministries, para church ministries and all this stuff, but it is the church, it is the local community that is the way God has taught us to do this.

I had a para church organization and I don't... I am not against para church organizations.

Cameron Buettel:

[?]

Paul Washer:

Well, no, that is why we came here.

Cameron Buettel:

Ok.

Paul Washer:

To bring our ministry under a church and no longer be that.

Cameron Buettel:

Oh, ok.

Paul Washer:

And that is where.... you know, because here is one of the things that happened, a para church organization called me and they said, “Mr. Washer, we are having some really trouble with our staff and all kinds of things like that and we need some advice.”

So I listened to the story and then all of the sudden it dawned on me. I can’t give you any advice. And they said, “What do you mean?”

I said, “Well, if you were a church and you had elders exercising biblical authority and all these different things I could tell you what to do. You are not a church. You can’t practice church discipline. You can’t even begin [?] You are not connected with a church. You don’t have elders.”

They said, “But our leadership...”

But the Bible has a leadership. They are called elders. And they have a congregation to hold them accountable. You have none of that. So whatever I tell you is just going to be my opinion on how to fix your situation.

And that is why... and I would like to see other... like heart cry started with me in Peru. But I praise God that the Lord taught me the importance of being in a church and doing what we do through a church. And that is why if I am out there preaching too much, the elders of this church come and set me straight.

People talk about, “Well, are you a part of a economic accountability organization that keeps tabs on your economics, you know, your finances and how you guys spend money at heart cry?”

I say, “Yes, we are. It is called the elders of our church and the congregation and things like that.”

But, of course, we do other things. But... so what I want them to see is, guys, you need to stop just preaching. No don’t stop preaching. But you need to start planting biblical churches because that is the only way the evangelism you are doing is going to be sustained to the next generation and let me say this. It is raising up healthy churches, but raising up healthy families also, biblical families.

If there is ever a case where people are doing what seems right in their own eyes, it is with regard to the church and the family. And the churches today and the families today are being directed by the lies and the deceptions of secular psychology, humanism, anthropology, sociology, all these –ologies that completely contradict the Scriptures. That is what churches and families are being based upon instead of the inerrant, sufficient Word of God.

Cameron Buettel:

So, you desire to come to Denmark and visit us?

Paul Washer:

It may be my last visit before my martyrdom. But yeah.

Cameron Buettel:

There haven't been too many burnings at the stake [?]

Paul Washer:

Yeah, there is only one thing worse than a burning at the stake. That is being ignored.

Cameron Buettel:

Yeah, yeah. But if you come, you have told me your main goal would be not to draw a large crowd, but to gather guys, gather people for a week.

Paul Washer:

Yeah.

Cameron Buettel:

And what do you want to pour into them. If anyone is going to come, if we are going to promote something and have people come, what are they going to expect when they come to spend a week with you?

Paul Washer:

I will bring some other men with me who are much wiser and know more about God than I do and we just want to pour our lives into what it means to be Christian, not just the proclamation of the Christian message, but what it means to be Christian and what it means to truly serve the Lord, who the Lord really is, what is the true gospel, how is it to be preached and also when it is a small setting like that, there can be question and answer things like that go on until four in the morning.

Cameron Buettel:

Yeah.

Paul Washer:

You know.

Cameron Buettel:

[?]

Paul Washer:

Yeah.

Cameron Buettel:

Paul, thank you so much for your time.

Paul Washer:

All right.

Cameron Buettel:

[?]

Paul Washer:

Well, God bless you.

Cameron Buettel:

God bless you. Thank you. All right.