

STANDING STRONG IN THESE LAST DAYS

Pastor Rick Reager – August 10, 2025

*“³ For a time is coming when people will no longer listen to sound and wholesome teaching. They will follow their own desires and will look for teachers who will tell them whatever their itching ears want to hear.”
2 Timothy 4:3*

“¹⁰ And many will turn away from me and betray and hate each other. ¹¹ And many false prophets will appear and will deceive many people. ¹² Sin will be rampant everywhere, and the love of many will grow cold. ¹³ But the one who endures to the end will be saved.” Matthew 24:10-13

I. HOW CAN I STAND STRONG IN THESE EVIL TIMES?

1. TO STAND STRONG, I MUST _____

The Enemy:

i. _____

“⁸ Stay alert! Watch out for your great enemy, the devil. He prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour.” 1 Peter 5:8

“⁷ So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.” James 4:7

ii. _____

“⁵ Do not love this world nor the things it offers you, for when you love the world, you do not have the love of the Father in you. ¹⁶ For the world offers only a craving for physical pleasure, a craving for everything we see, and pride in our achievements and possessions. These are not from the Father, but are from this world. ¹⁷ And this world is fading away, along with everything that people crave. But anyone who does what pleases God will live forever.” 1 John 2:15-17

iii. _____

“¹⁷ The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions.” Galatians 5:17

2. I MUST EMBRACE _____

“¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷ God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

KEY: Embracing the Truth Requires _____

“²² But don't just listen to God's word. You must do what it says. Otherwise, you are only fooling yourselves. ²³ For if you listen to the word and don't obey, it is like glancing at your face in a mirror. ²⁴ You see yourself, walk away, and forget what you look like. ²⁵ But if you look carefully into the perfect law that sets you free, and if you do what it says and don't forget what you heard, then God will bless you for doing it.” James 1:22-25

II. WHY MUST I RESIST “THE ENEMY”?

1. “THE ENEMY” ENDORSES A WAY THAT SEEMS _____, BUT ACTUALLY

“¹² There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.” Proverbs 14:12

2. “THE ENEMY” PROMOTES THINKING THAT _____ MY SOUL

“¹¹ Dear friends, I warn you as “temporary residents and foreigners” to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. ¹² Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.” 1 Peter 2:11-12

3. “THE ENEMY” _____

“⁴⁴ For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the father of lies.” John 8:44

III. WHY DO MANY FALL DOWN SPIRITUALLY?

1. THEY _____ GOD’S WORD

2. THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN _____ &

_____ & ATTEMPT TO ABUSE GOD’S GRACE

“⁸ God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God. ⁹ Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.” Ephesians 2:8-9

“²¹ Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. ²² On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ ²³ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. Get away from me, you who break God’s laws.’” Matthew 7:21-23

“³ And we can be sure that we know him if we obey his commandments. ⁴ If someone claims, “I know God,” but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth. ⁵ But those who obey God’s word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him. ⁶ Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did.” 1 John 2:3-6

3. THEY ONLY RECOGNIZE SINS _____

“¹⁷ Remember, it is sin to know what you ought to do and then not do it.” James 4:17

4. THEY DO NOT SEE THE BIBLE AS GOD’S _____

“¹⁶ All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. ¹⁷ God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

“⁸ The grass withers and the flowers fade, but the word of our God stands forever.” Isaiah 40:8

SO THEY:

i. _____ The Parts of the Bible They Want To Follow

ii. Ignore Parts Of The Bible They Feel Are _____

iii. Interpret the Bible Through The _____

“² Don’t copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God’s will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.” Romans 12:2

“¹⁷ Therefore, come out from among unbelievers, and separate yourselves from them, says the LORD. Don’t touch their filthy things, and I will welcome you.” 2 Corinthians 6:17

5. THEY DO NOT _____

“²⁶ But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.” John 14:26

“¹³ For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.” Philippians 2:13

IV. WHAT ARE SOME COMMON AREAS WHERE MANY FALL DOWN?

1. PRACTICING _____

“¹⁵ Don’t you realize that your bodies are actually parts of Christ? Should a man take his body, which is part of Christ, and join it to a prostitute? Never! ¹⁶ And don’t you realize that if a man joins himself to a prostitute, he becomes one body with her? For the Scriptures say, “The two are united into one.” ¹⁷ But the person who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him. ¹⁸ Run from sexual sin! No other sin so clearly affects the body as this one does. For sexual immorality is a sin against your own body. ¹⁹ Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.” 1 Corinthians 6:15-20

2. PRACTICING, ADVOCATING, OR ACCEPTING _____ & _____

IDENTITY

“²¹ Yes, they knew God, but they wouldn’t worship him as God or even give him thanks. And they began to think up foolish ideas of what God was like. As a result, their minds became dark and confused. ²² Claiming to be wise, they instead became utter fools. ²³ And instead of worshiping the glorious, ever-living God, they worshiped idols made to look like mere people and birds and animals and reptiles. ²⁴ So God abandoned them to do whatever shameful things their hearts desired. As a result, they did vile and degrading things with each other’s bodies. ²⁵ They traded the truth about God for a lie. So they worshiped and served the things God created instead of the Creator himself, who is worthy of eternal praise! Amen. ²⁶ That is why God abandoned them to their shameful desires. Even the women turned against the natural way to have sex and instead indulged in sex with each other. ²⁷ And the men, instead of having normal sexual relations with women, burned with lust for each other. Men did shameful things with other men, and as a result of this sin, they suffered within themselves the penalty they deserved.” Romans 1:21-27

“⁹ Don’t you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

“⁹ What sorrow awaits those who argue with their Creator. Does a clay pot argue with its maker? Does the clay dispute with the one who shapes it, saying, ‘Stop, you’re doing it wrong!’ Does the pot exclaim, ‘How clumsy can you be?’ ¹⁰ How terrible it would be if a newborn baby said to its father, ‘Why was I born?’ or if it said to its mother, ‘Why did you make me this way?’” Isaiah 45:9-10

3. PRACTICING, ADVOCATING, OR ACCEPTING _____

“⁸ But cowards, unbelievers, the corrupt, murderers, the immoral, those who practice witchcraft, idol worshipers, and all liars—their fate is in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death.” Revelation 21:8

“¹³ You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother’s womb. ¹⁴ Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous—how well I know it. ¹⁵ You watched me as I was being formed in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. ¹⁶ You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.” Psalm 139:13-16

“¹⁶ There are six things the LORD hates—no, seven things he detests: ¹⁷ haughty eyes, a lying tongue, hands that kill the innocent.” Proverbs 6:16-17

4. REFUSING TO MAINTAIN _____

“³¹ You have heard the law that says, ‘A man can divorce his wife by merely giving her a written notice of divorce.’ ³² But I say that a man who divorces his wife, unless she has been unfaithful, causes her to commit adultery. And anyone who marries a divorced woman also commits adultery.” Matthew 5:31-32

“¹⁰ But for those who are married, I have a command that comes not from me, but from the Lord.^[b] A wife must not leave her husband. ¹¹ But if she does leave him, let her remain single or else be reconciled to him. And the husband must not leave his wife.” 1 Corinthians 7:10-11

5. WORSHIPPING _____

“³ You must not have any other god but me.” Exodus 20:3

“²⁶ If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.” Luke 14:26

KEY: Sometimes We Create Other gods _____ In Our Minds

6. PRACTICING _____ & _____ OTHERS

“² They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone... ¹⁰ If people are causing divisions among you, give a first and second warning. After that, have nothing more to do with them. ¹¹ For people like that have turned away from the truth, and their own sins condemn them.” Titus 3:2 & 10-11

“²⁹ Their lives became full of every kind of wickedness, sin, greed, hate, envy, murder, quarreling, deception, malicious behavior, and gossip.” Romans 1:29

“²⁹ Don’t use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them.... ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. ³² Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:29-32

“⁶ And among all the parts of the body, the tongue is a flame of fire. It is a whole world of wickedness, corrupting your entire body. It can set your whole life on fire, for it is set on fire by hell itself.” James 3:6

7. REFUSING TO _____ OR _____

“¹⁴ If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins.” Matthew 6:14-15

“²¹ You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ ²² But I say, if you are even angry with someone (without cause), you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell. ²³ “So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you

suddenly remember that someone has something against you, ²⁴ leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.” Matthew 5:21-24

¹⁴ If we love our brothers and sisters who are believers, it proves that we have passed from death to life. But a person who has no love is still dead. ¹⁵ Anyone who hates another brother or sister is really a murderer at heart. And you know that murderers don’t have eternal life within them.” 1 John 3:14-15

8. CAUSING _____

⁶ But if you cause one of these little ones who trusts in me to fall into sin, it would be better for you to have a large millstone tied around your neck and be drowned in the depths of the sea.” Matthew 18:6

⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4

⁶ In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely. ⁷ And you yourself must be an example to them by doing good works of every kind. Let everything you do reflect the integrity and seriousness of your teaching. ⁸ Teach the truth so that your teaching can’t be criticized. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed and have nothing bad to say about us.” Titus 2:6-8

KEY: This Can Be _____, _____ Teaching The Truth, Or Living

¹² Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior, and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.” 1 Peter 2:12

⁶ Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it.” Proverbs 22:6

9. ABUSING _____

⁹ Don’t you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.” Ephesians 5:18

¹² You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. And even though “I am allowed to do anything,” I must not become a slave to anything.” 1 Corinthians 6:12

10. PRACTICING _____ OR _____

⁹ Don’t you realize that those who do wrong will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Don’t fool yourselves. Those who indulge in sexual sin, or who worship idols, or commit adultery, or are male prostitutes, or practice homosexuality, ¹⁰ or are thieves, or greedy people, or drunkards, or are abusive, or cheat people—none of these will inherit the Kingdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 6:9-10

³ Let there be no sexual immorality, impurity, or greed among you. Such sins have no place among God’s people. ⁴ Obscene stories, foolish talk, and coarse jokes—these are not for you. Instead, let there be thankfulness to God. ⁵ You can be sure that no immoral, impure, or greedy person will inherit the Kingdom of Christ and of God. For a greedy person is an idolater, worshiping the things of this world. ⁶ Don’t be fooled by those who try to excuse these sins, for the anger of God will fall on all who disobey him.” Ephesians 5:3-6

11. SPEAKING OR DEALING

“²² The Lord detests lying lips, but he delights in those who tell the truth.” Proverbs 12:22

“¹ The Lord detests the use of dishonest scales, but he delights in accurate weights.” Proverbs 11:1

12. FAILING TO HELP

“¹⁴ What good is it, dear brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but don’t show it by your actions? Can that kind of faith save anyone? ¹⁵ Suppose you see a brother or sister who has no food or clothing, ¹⁶ and you say, “Good-bye and have a good day; stay warm and eat well”—but then you don’t give that person any food or clothing. What good does that do? ¹⁷ So you see, faith by itself isn’t enough. Unless it produces good deeds, it is dead and useless. ¹⁸ Now someone may argue, “Some people have faith; others have good deeds.” But I say, “How can you show me your faith if you don’t have good deeds? I will show you my faith by my good deeds.” ¹⁹ You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror. ²⁰ How foolish! Can’t you see that faith without good deeds is useless?” James 2:14-19

“¹⁶ We know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So we also ought to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. ¹⁷ If someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion—how can God’s love be in that person? ¹⁸ Dear children, let’s not merely say that we love each other; let us show the truth by our actions. ¹⁹ Our actions will show that we belong to the truth, so we will be confident when we stand before God.” 1 John 3:16-19

“²⁷ Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.” James 1:27

13. FAILING TO WORK

“¹⁸ Jesus came and told his disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20

“³⁶ ‘Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?’ ³⁷ Jesus replied, ‘You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ A second is equally important: Love your neighbor as yourself. ⁴⁰ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.’” Matthew 22:36-40