

Comments

(prepared by Dana Perkins)

Note: Words in brackets [...] are participant comments.

For additional resources see Pastor Rossi.

Scripture Reading: Romans 1:16-17

Our Calling.

God's work

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Understanding and Engaging Woke Culture from a Biblical Perspective

Pastor Rossi Teaching

Immanuel United Reformed Church Adult SS

Class 6 April 23, 2023

00:00:05 **Pastor Rossi**

Today will be our last time together talking about this challenging cultural, societal issue that we're facing called Woke ideology, which is kind of a subset of progressivism that we see in our day, which we've looked in the past, where it comes from.

00:00:35 **Pastor Rossi**

Today will be the last time we meet together to talk about this, but feel free to catch me anytime if you want any other questions or want to explore this further or just would like to know what you can be reading. I have a lot of books on this stuff, so if you're interested, please feel free to reach out. Next week is the last Sunday School class, and I was asked to let you know that Mark Van Der Molan will lead the last session on the topic biblical Responses to Serious Sin and Divisions in Family. It was a talk that he gave at a conference recently in Michigan, so I think he wants to share that with you guys as well.

00:01:17 **Pastor Rossi**

Let's open our Bibles as we've been doing in the past, starting our time together, reading a portion of Scripture that relates to the topic at hand for that particular class period. I want to look at Romans, chapter one, verses 16 to 17.

00:01:50 **Pastor Rossi**

"For I am not ashamed of the Gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith as it is written, the righteous shall live by faith." Paul is not ashamed of the gospel, neither should we, because conversion, salvation, comes from God, comes from his power and might, and not from our own strength. And so when we engage in conversation with, let's just say unbelievers in general, we need to always keep in mind that our calling is simply to be faithful, to be salt and light, to show forth the love of Christ, both in word and deed, knowing that it's the word of the Gospel that changes hearts. It's the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the power of the Spirit who works through the ministry of the Word, through the Gospel that conforms

...

Prayer

Woke separate people into two categories: oppressed and oppressor

The meaning of the word “minority” changed by woke ideology.

and transforms hearts. We need to remember this because oftentimes we come away from a conversation with somebody greatly discouraged and we put everything on ourselves, as if my eloquent words or I didn't say things as right as I should have.

00:03:08 Pastor Rossi

Now, maybe there are things we need to learn from, I get it. But when the Gospel is communicated, God works by his power and Spirit, and it is God who transforms, it is God who saves. We need to remember that, especially as we approach this topic and engage people who hold this woke worldview.

00:03:30 Pastor Rossi

Let's pray together. Father in heaven we thank you for the gospel of Jesus Christ. We thank you that it is the Gospel by the power of your Spirit that has created faith in our hearts and has illuminated our minds to not only hear the Gospel, but to believe it and to be transformed by it. And we thank You, Lord, that you have given us eyes to see and ears to hear. And may the Gospel humble us, humble us always, knowing that it is not of our own doing, but from Your Fatherly hand, from Your electing love. For you have chosen us before the foundation of the world to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, to be called to be the people of God and to walk in Your ways. And this is all of Your doing, Grace, from the very beginning to the very end. So we're thankful, Lord, and help us simply be faithful in our calling as Christians to live in Christ and for his glory, to always be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within us and to do so with gentleness and kindness. Father, help us, we pray to be faithful witnesses, give faithful testimony to Your Holy Word, to those who are lost in sin. We pray this in Jesus name. Amen.

00:04:51 Pastor Rossi

All right, so just a very brief recap. Okay? So what are the two categories that those of the woke persuasion put people in? There are two categories. Do you remember what those two categories are? Oppressed and oppressor. Yes. So you have the oppressed. Okay. And the oppressor. Who are the oppressed?

00:05:27 Pastor Rossi

Who are the oppressed?

00:05:32 Pastor Rossi

Minorities. Yeah, I like that. The so called minorities. Okay,

00:05:42 Pastor Rossi

now, what do we mean by minorities?

00:05:47 Pastor Rossi

You remember what Thomas Sowell called the minorities? Those who we feel sorry for or should feel sorry for. The oppressed are the minorities. Are we talking about ethnic minorities? No. Okay.

The “oppressed minority” consider themselves victims and have an aura of self-righteousness.

The meaning of the word “victim” has been diluted.

00:06:05 Pastor Rossi

Who are we talking about? [Of God.] Okay, well, that's not who the minorities here are. That's not we're talking about here. But thank you, Karen, for contributing there. But we're thinking about someone else. Something else. Okay.

00:06:24 Pastor Rossi

The minorities are who?

00:06:31 Pastor Rossi

What kind of groups of people? Anyone? Bueller. Bueller?

00:06:42 Pastor Rossi

[Racial minorities. Different genders?] Yes. She hasn't even been in the class, and she got it. Thank you. Okay, so, like, gender minorities. We're always asking the question, what do we mean by minorities? Okay, so, like, we're talking LGBT.

00:07:08 Pastor Rossi

That's what we're talking about there. Who else? [Anyone who doesn't fit my demographic of a white, male, Christian heterosexual.] Yeah. So, yeah, those who are not the majority, the white heterosexual and those in positions of authority, like institutions. Okay. Why is it important that we know this?

00:07:43 Pastor Rossi

Why is it important that we know who these minorities are in their worldview?

00:07:56 Participant

They can never be guilty of sin.

00:08:01 Pastor Rossi

Right. They don't have a doctrine of sin, do they? As we talked about before, there's this aura of self righteousness that they are the oppressed. They are the victim. They are the victim. Victims of the oppressors. Which, you think about it, it's really sad because I think that this has tragically infiltrated the church because there are victims in society, are there not?

00:08:39 Pastor Rossi

Do you agree? There are victims. So what has happened when they call themselves victims, when they really aren't? What does it do to the term victim?

00:08:55 Pastor Rossi

It distorts it. How does it distort it?

00:09:01 Participant

True victims don't get the care concerns that they would need or the focus that they would need. Yeah,

00:09:11 Pastor Rossi

It completely dilutes the term, and it minimizes or does away with the true victim. I looked at our hymn book, the Trinity Psalter Hymn Book, and there are several songs that call Christ, what the victim? For some reason in our day, we don't like to use the word victim because we've

The true victim.

Words matter – particularly for the Christian.

The attempt to rewrite history comes from an anti-Christian, anti-God mentality.

Engaging a “woke” person

Address the person’s foundational worldview, rather than the policies or behaviors that comes from that worldview.

The means by which the “oppressed minority” liberates itself.

Engage woke individuals personally – individually, as each person is different.

embraced this whole worldly ideology that, oh, we got to stay away from the word victim because we don't want to call ourselves a victim. Nobody wants to be called a victim. Otherwise we'll be associated with the oppressed. Okay, that's wrong, because there are true victims. You mean to tell me some woman who's sexually abused is not a victim? You mean to tell me that's not the case? You're not going to tell me that Riley Gaines, when she goes to speak at a university to talk about women's right. And the true intent of Title Nine, how women should have the right to particular jobs or play particular sports, that she's beaten and yelled at by a man in a dress, that she's not a victim, but the other guy's a victim.

00:10:23 Pastor Rossi

So words matter. And how we as a church, as Christians, communicate words matter. Okay, who's the oppressor? [Rich white people.] Rich white people. [Authorities.] Yeah, authorities. Institutions. Same thing. Institutions.

00:11:00 Pastor Rossi

So you've heard of institutional racism. Institutions that were built up began at its foundation in racism. The 1619 project. You've heard of that? Institutions in this country at its very foundation. Okay, here's the foundation of America. Then you build up, like the Constitution, Bill of Rights, all the amendments and everything. At the very foundation of all those things is racism. All the institutions were built upon a foundation of racism in this country. But as we talked about, let's do away with the politics. At the very foundation is what? Anti Christian, anti God mentality.

00:11:56 Pastor Rossi

Okay? And so when we now we're talking about, okay, how do Christians engage? We try to attack what they're trying to build rather than attacking what the foundation.

00:12:13 Pastor Rossi

Okay. Without engaging the foundation of a person's worldview. Okay.

00:12:24 Pastor Rossi

Oppressed. Oppressor. All right? And the oppressed need to be liberated from what? Anyone

00:12:41 Pastor Rossi

what's that? [The oppressor.] The oppressor liberated from the oppressor. And what is the means by which they seek liberation? [Revolt, violence]. Revolt, violence, silence people. Okay, so is there room for dialogue? Not really, when you have a mob, because that's how they function. That's how this group functions. In mob? In group, group over person, group over victim. Okay, so what hope do Christians have in engaging this worldview?

00:13:29 Pastor Rossi

Well, the fact is that you will run into people with this worldview and you engage them individually.

One approach: dialogue around what a woke person understands particular scriptures to mean..

Ask good questions and put the burden of proof on the woke person to prove the scripture means something other than what Christians have understood for centuries.

Expose their heart by asking questions that draw out their world and life view, just as Jesus did.

The art of asking questions.

00:13:39 Pastor Rossi

There was a young lady who was telling me about her experience via social media, talking to a so called confessing Christian that the Bible teaches LGBTQ rights. And this person was sharing her experience in that dialogue with the person who held these views, saying that the Bible supports it. But this person stood her ground and went back to scripture and said, when the apostle Paul says this for the sexual morality, nor those who practice homosexuality shall inherit the kingdom of God, what is the Bible actually saying?

00:14:35 Pastor Rossi

What kind of question is this person asking those who embrace this woke worldview? What kind of question is that? What is this person doing?

00:14:47 Pastor Rossi

You mean the one that supported yeah, the one that supported that the Bible, they asked that question about what Paul actually meant. What does Paul mean? Okay, you say that the Bible endorses this type of worldview, this type of behavior. So then how do you interpret this passage of Scripture when Paul says this? What is this person doing by asking that question to this lady who holds this woke worldview? [going back to Scripture.] She's going back to Scripture, but what is she doing? What is she doing? [She's making them think what the scripture must mean,] Right!

00:15:35 Pastor Rossi

She's putting the burden of proof on the person who doesn't believe it or is denying it. It's just putting the ball in their court. Okay, this is what it says. Teach me or tell me how it says differently.

00:15:56 Participant

How do you interpret that as saying something different?

00:16:02 Pastor Rossi

Exactly. How did Jesus teach? He asked questions. Questions he already knew the answer to. But he tried to draw out from the world and life view of the people he was engaging, particularly the religious leaders. He was trying to expose their heart by asking questions.

00:16:27 Pastor Rossi

And that's what we need to learn to do. How do you ask questions rather than jumping the gun and trying to give them a mini sermon on what you believe?

00:16:47 Pastor Rossi

It's called the art of asking questions so that we can challenge people to think through why they believe what they believe and how do they know that what they believe is even true.

00:17:07 Pastor Rossi

For example, here's a big one. When Christians ought to engage the woke worldview,

Comments

Ask the meaning of words-

-particularly words like “equity” or “equality” or “compassion” or “justice”.

Changing the meaning of words is called “word laundering”

The mechanism of word laundering

00:17:17 **Pastor Rossi**

Ask the meaning of words. That's what I talked about earlier. Ask the meaning of words. Don't assume that you know what are talking about.

00:17:37 **Pastor Rossi**

Okay? It's kind of like when I'm preaching. And I'll tell you all, I don't know what you're thinking in your heart. I'm not going to assume anything. I'm not going to assume. I'm going to preach the word. And I'm not going to assume. I'm just going to trust that God will do a particular work in your particular heart for his particular purpose.

00:18:00 **Pastor Rossi**

Don't assume that you know what they mean when they use words like equity or equality. Don't assume that you know what they mean when they use the word mercy or compassion. Don't assume that you know what they mean when they use the word justice. Don't assume, because I guarantee you the meaning of the words that they use are not the same meaning that you would apply to that word.

00:18:28 **Pastor Rossi**

I remember that I gave you that homework assignment. Look up woman in the Cambridge Online dictionary. Anybody do that, by the way? Nobody looked it up. You guys did. Do you guys remember what the definition was? [The second definition was somebody who identifies as a female,] an adult who lives and identifies as female, though they may have been said to have a different sex at birth.

00:19:06 **Pastor Rossi**

So the one book that I've been using throughout the course of this study together, *Awake, Not Woke*, she calls it (and I've heard other authors call it this) "word laundering." You launder words through academia, through institutions of higher learning, and that funnels down to the advocate, the one who's studying in these institutions, and those advocates, those who go and teach in elementary schools or other institutions of learning, they then funnel it to the students. And so that in generations, what happens, the words take on different what meanings, and it becomes a norm. Things don't happen overnight. They may happen stealthily, they may kind of be behind the scenes, but nothing happens overnight. This has been going on since the early 1920s with the Frankfurt School in Germany. All right, word laundering. How do we change words, and specifically Christian language, okay? And this is nothing new. If you have your Bibles, turn with me to Proverbs.

00:20:50 **Pastor Rossi**

Proverbs twelve, verse ten says, whoever is righteous has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel.

00:21:01 **Pastor Rossi**

...

Michael Novak on how words matter
<https://www.heritage.org/poverty-and-inequality/report/social-justice-not-what-you-think-it>

Change in the meaning of the word 'justice'.

Change in the meaning of the word "equity"

Why justice is a one way street for the woke.

The mob mentality in use to supplant or replace the Judeo-Christian worldview with an atheistic worldview.

What they call mercy in their eyes is actually cruel. Proverbs 21 ten.

00:21:13 Pastor Rossi

The soul of the wicked desires evil. His neighbor finds no mercy in his eyes, but all the while, the mercy of the wicked is being manifested under guise of evil.

00:21:32 Pastor Rossi

And that's what's happening today. Defined terms.

00:21:37 Pastor Rossi

There's a guy by the name of Michael Novak. He's a Catholic guy out of Texas, I think, but he wrote a nice essay on this whole topic of words and how words matter and what has happened to these words throughout history and how they've been changed by woke ideology. And he takes the term, for example, social justice. Social justice was first used by Catholics in the early or probably the mid 18 hundreds. But even the word social justice by the Catholics meant something different than it means today. For them, for a Catholic, simply meant to live out the beatitudes, do unto others as you would have them do unto you. That's what social justice first meant in Catholic theology, moral theology. Okay, what does social justice mean today? When people talk about we want justice. No justice, no peace. What are they really saying? Think about everything that we've been talking about. What would justice now mean for them? What does justice look like? Okay, hold on. What's up? We want our way. We want our way. I heard someone else. [Revenge.] Revenge.

00:23:02 Pastor Rossi

[The toppling of the oppressor.] The toppling of the oppressor. [Equity.] Equity. Okay.

00:23:13 Pastor Rossi

[It all boils down to socialism.] Yes. Equality of outcome. Right. Equality of outcome. And we talked about that last week.

00:23:34 Pastor Rossi

Justice for them is justice for me. But you've heard this. Justice for me, but not for thee. Justice for me, but not for thee. In other words, justice is just a one way street because they've been oppressed for so long that their action, their revolt, their mob mentality is justified because they've been oppressed by the oppressor.

00:24:09 Pastor Rossi

Turn with me to Leviticus. Chapter 19 [the Mob Mentality Then they're just expressing themselves.] They're trying to change the culture of this oppression by way of the mob. Like forcing people into submission. Okay, what does a mob do? [Intimidate.] Intimidates for what purpose? To silence. To change people's positions, ultimately to change the entire structure of a Judeo-Christian worldview. They're trying to supplant it with or replace it with a socialistic materialistic, an atheistic worldview.

The church cannot be silent but must give testimony to the truth.

Justice as defined by Leviticus 19:13-16

00:25:14 Pastor Rossi

And so what do you replace it with? An anti god worldview. And an anti God worldview essentially is an evil worldview. An evil worldview that promotes sin, promotes hatred. Except and here's the contradiction that they fallen into, except it when it happens to them.

00:25:42 Pastor Rossi

Except when it happens to them. So, I mean, think about in Ephesus when Paul and his buddies were preaching, and then there was a mob that formed. And then you had that interesting verse there where there were people joining in. They had no idea what was going on. They just joined the mob, and they were all in. For what reason, they knew not. And so they try to form this mob mentality to create a revolt against higher structures that are inherently evil, according to their worldview. [And they're creating fear.] They create fear. Yeah. [Afraid to stand up for.] Yeah. And that's exactly right. And that's where we as Christians, how do we apply this? How do we engage? We can't be silent. The church can't be silent. Churches need to be training you and other Christians to resist this worldview, not with fists or arguing, but with truth and prayer. And they hate truth. Okay, remember the scripture passes where God doesn't call us to save people from their sins. That's not our job. We have no position to do that. But we are called to give testimony to what? The truth.

00:27:18 Participant

I think when you see the mob thing, that it creates legitimacy. For example, the January 6 Committee, had there only been one or two people there, this thing would have died a long time ago because there was a whole pile of people that thought that this whole deal of January 6 was such a terrible thing. It went on and on and on.

00:27:46 Pastor Rossi

Yeah. And it all depends on which side of the ideology you sit on, really.

00:27:59 Pastor Rossi

Okay, so Justice Leviticus 19, verses 13 to 16. "You shall not oppress your neighbor or rob him. The wages of a hired worker shall not remain with you all night until the morning. You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God. I am the Lord. You shall do no injustice in court. You shall not be partial to the poor or deferred to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor. You shall not go around as a slanderer among your people, and you shall not stand up against the life of your neighbor. I am the Lord."

00:28:36 Pastor Rossi

What is the position of the Christian as it relates to justice? What is true justice?

00:28:53 Pastor Rossi

What is justice? So when you're engaging with somebody who holds a different worldview than you and holds this

justice for me, but not for the justice for the oppressor, what are you saying? How would you respond to that person?

00:29:27 Participant

I would say that, sure, yeah, go for it. True justice only comes from God and in his great wisdom and understanding, it only comes from Him. It doesn't come from anyone else. And he gives us his word. It's what's appropriate in his word. (Arguing or discussing?)?

00:30:01 Participant

Well, it's .the starting point for you as a Christian. Who defines what justice is. Right? So, for example, if I'm discussing with somebody this topic of justice and they see a video that comes out of some ugly thing that happens, let's use, like, a police department, some ugly that they do, and I see a video of it, and my first instinct is justice against the police department. Well, wait a second. You're only seeing that much of the picture of what's going on. You haven't seen or heard the whole story. We get snapshots. We get talking points of what's going on. Okay. My question is who defines justice? That would be my question. When you say justice, what do you mean?

Who defines justice?

00:31:09 Pastor Rossi

When you say justice, how do you know the meaning of that word justice? You need an authority. Exactly. By what authority do you define justice?

00:31:29 Pastor Rossi

That goes back to what Herb said, right? It not only goes back to the authority, God. I mean, we want to go there ultimately, but it's embedded in the laws of nature. Right? If somebody doesn't believe in sin, as RC. Sprout once said, if somebody doesn't believe in sin, just take his wallet.

Justice also embedded in the laws of nature designed by God. Three examples given.

00:31:56 Pastor Rossi

Oh, he'll want justice right away. We talked about the squatter laws last week. You squat in somebody's house who holds this social justice thing? They'll be pretty upset. I would dare to say. Just recently in California, there's a group of these famous people I won't go into who they are. But they're mad because these smaller homes are being built in their community.

00:32:29 Pastor Rossi

These are advocates of social justice and here you have poorer people moving into their neighborhood and they want them out. The hypocrisy. Right, but we need to be careful about our hypocrisy too. We need to be careful about our hypocrisy. Why do I say that?

We need to be careful about our hypocrisy.

00:32:56 Pastor Rossi

(participant - too quiet to hear) Yeah.

00:33:01 Pastor Rossi

Comments

Our need to be humble.

What is the common good and who decides?

Ask questions that require something other than a yes or no answer.

Ask questions to draw from their hearts and minds what they believe.

What do you mean by:

- Justice
- Common good
- Mercy
- Community

How do you know what is right, true and good?

Topple the foundation of their worldview and rebuild it with a biblical foundation.

So our approach is one in humility really, right? It's one in care and concern for the person who is blind to these things because we were once blind and just teach them and show them truth.

00:33:27 Pastor Rossi

What do you mean by common good? It's the common good that the rich pay their fair share. Really well. Who decides that? That's a question I would ask them. Who decides? What is the common good? You see, ultimately somebody has to decide, right? What is the common good?

00:33:59 Pastor Rossi

You're asking questions, not questions that require yes or no answer. Do you believe in Jesus? Yes. Okay, it's not a question you want to ask these days. It's more along this question what do you believe about Jesus? Tell me who he is not do you believe in Him? Most people believe in Jesus. Most people believe in the common good. Do you believe in the common good? Yes. Okay, well, what is it? You're wanting to draw from their hearts and mind what they believe. You want to understand their world and life view. And the only way you and I are going to know that is by asking questions, not by arguing with them about you had the foundation here and then you had the tower and the tower kind of signifies all their beliefs. Well those beliefs come are built upon a foundation. We're going to the foundation. We're going to the heart of the matter. And to go to the heart of the matter, you have to ask questions. What do you mean by justice? What do you mean by common good? What do you mean by mercy?

00:35:27 Pastor Rossi

What do you mean by community? How do you know what is right, true and good?

00:35:36 Pastor Rossi

All of these things essentially come from God.

00:35:44 Pastor Rossi

He's the God that man hates though and man denies. And so we come to a discussion like this promoting God's truth with the hope and prayer that they will see the truth and belief that their foundation needs to be toppled and rebuilt with a biblical Christian world and life view. Because that's the only way these other ideas that they have regarding justice, regarding mercy, regarding the common good will change. Those will only change when the foundation has been toppled and rebuilt with a biblical foundation. Does that make sense? So sometimes when we talk to people even about the faith, we're talking about other things other than the main issue at hand. The most significant issue is that what are you building your house on sand or solid ground?

00:36:49 Pastor Rossi

We're talking about morality and don't get me wrong, morality is important. But the foundation upon which morality is built on is the person that needs to be addressed.

Comments

Deal first with the heart issues, and the behavior later.

Matthew 15:19

Promoting true individuality and true community.

Exposing hypocrisy and self-righteousness.

Let them know we also are sinners and how we find forgiveness.

00:37:04 **Pastor Rossi**

Why does a person behave outwardly in certain ways? Because the heart is sick. But we deal with the behavior rather than the heart. Similarly, in this discussion, we need to deal with the heart and not the behavior first. Yes, the behavior comes. Later it comes. You may even address it in your conversation. But they need to know where it comes from. What did Jesus do? How did he talk to the religious leaders? Will you whitewash tombs?

00:37:36 **Pastor Rossi**

It's not what goes into the body that makes one unclean, but one that will come out of the body, out of the heart comes what immorality, idolatry, hatred, evil. So we deal with the foundation. We deal with the heart matter. And these are hearts that are opposed to God and truth. I saw this quick video. It was the Dr. Phil show, and they had these trans women on there, these men dressed like women. And they were having a discussion with a fifth grade teacher. And the fifth grade teacher, I don't know if he was a Christian or not, but he did such a nice job. He was very calm, gentle, but very truthful. And they called him a hater. Oh, you hate us. You don't love us, you hate us. And he said to them simply, he's like, no, that's not hate. That's the truth. The truth. Telling the truth is not hate. What is love? Love delights in the what? The truth? Love delights in the truth.

00:38:54 **Pastor Rossi**

And so we're speaking truth to the very foundation of people's hearts. So in doing so, we want to promote true individuality and true community. They're not mutually exclusive. Yes, I am an individual created in God's image, and I'm redeemed by the blood of Christ. I say that for myself. I believe that with my heart because of God's grace. And I'm truly a true person in Christ, a true individual in Christ. But I also belong to a greater community. And so I would promote you want community. You want to know love of a community because they starve for community. They want to be known. And it's very sad. It should sadden us and make us grieve because they're trying to identify with something, a gender that is only going to make them more oppressed and depressed. But what does that tell you about them? They're starving. They're spiritually hurting.

00:40:05 **Pastor Rossi**

And we can tell them that there is true community, true identity in Jesus, not only as an individual that I am who I am by the grace of God, but I also belong to a greater body of believers who love me, and I love them. And so it's individual and community in the Christian life, but we're also exposing hypocrisy and self-righteousness because we are called to promote true redemption. We too are sinners. I want them to know that I am a sinner.

00:40:41 **Pastor Rossi**

I am a sinner, and I need to be forgiven. And the only way to forgiveness is through Christ. And they can know that

Because of sin, man's wisdom will never be able to build a utopia on earth.

Ask permission to tell them about true goodness, righteousness and holiness and the coming kingdom where all this will be found.

Where does true joy come from?

forgiveness, too. They need to know that they too are sinners in need of a savior. And a true redemption is not through mob, not through political ideologies. The only redemption that we can know is through Christ and crucified and risen, that there is a kingdom coming. They're looking for a utopia on earth, and that will never be achieved because of what sin. As long as you have sin in the world, they will never achieve a utopia. As long as they count on man's wisdom, there will never be a utopia. And so we point them to the kingdom to come, and we are citizens of that kingdom through Christ. You want to live in a world that is perfect, that knows true goodness and righteousness and holiness? Let me tell you about Jesus and his kingdom. You want to learn about it? Can I teach you about it? Can I share with you? I'm asking for permission now. I'm asking for permission.

00:41:55 Pastor Rossi

This is your worldview on what you think justice is. You think the common good is this. You think mercy is this. Can I share with you now what the Bible, what God's Holy Word says regarding these things? Because the only reason why they know about any concept of mercy or justice or common good is because of God, and that we just distort that truth and unrighteousness and try to redefine or dilute these terms. Are you guys following me on this? Like I'm just preaching now.

00:42:32 Pastor Rossi

But I think it's coming in with an attitude of humility. It's coming in with an attitude of humility that apart from Christ, I am utterly lost too. Okay. [Can you ask them where their joy comes from, if they have real joy?] I think that's a great question. That is a great question.

00:43:02 Pastor Rossi

So where does your joy come from? You may want to ask them what joy is first. Maybe you always have to ask what they what you mean by the word. Yeah, I think you're looking for peace all the time, right? Yeah. No, that's a great question. So we're promoting true individuality, true community, true manhood, true womanhood, true redemption, true forgiveness. Can I share this with you?

00:43:37 Pastor Rossi

And you know what they say? No. Well, have a good day. You're not going to hamstring people into the kingdom. You're not going to wrestle them into the kingdom. Listen to what I have to say. No.

00:43:55 Pastor Rossi

Right? [Because that's not our job.] Yeah, it's not our job. And that's where the Holy Spirit works, is it not?

00:44:04 Pastor Rossi

When I share the gospel with folks and I probe where they're at and ask them questions, and I will ask them, can I share with you who Jesus is according to the Bible, and how to have a relationship with Christ and how to know

The need to count the cost.

Will you be a silent bystander or a witness?

Be sure to offer Christ to them, not moralism.

him as Lord and Savior? Can I share that with you? If they say yes, the Spirit's working. If he says no, the Spirit's closing the door.

00:44:37 Pastor Rossi

We lose people when we argue with them. And that's just a kind of a common sense thing, too, right? Parents, how many times when you argue with your kids, it's going nowhere? You've lost the kids. They're not going to listen. Nobody listens to arguing. If I'm watching TV and there's an argument going on, Carrie walks by "Shut that off. I can't even stand it." I'm like you're. Right. It's driving me nuts, too.

00:45:12 Pastor Rossi

Okay, one more thing. I mean, I have a bunch more things, but I'll close with this. We need to count the cost. Okay. Let us remember that following Jesus isn't safe. Reference to the lion in Narnia. Is he safe? No. But is he good? Yes.

00:45:39 Pastor Rossi

And Jesus calls us to count the cost if we want to follow Him. And sometimes for us, it seemingly seems to be more so, now more than ever, that we are called to count the cost as followers of Christ, to be put to shame, to be yelled at, to be confronted publicly for our convictions. Are you willing to count the cost? Are you willing, by the grace of God, to take up your cross and follow Him? There are two options for the Christian, we can be silent or we can be witnesses.

00:46:27 Pastor Rossi

What are you going to be? Are you going to be a silent bystander, or are we going to be bold witnesses for the kingdom?

00:46:40 Pastor Rossi

Again, I don't know where you're at, but by God's grace, I prefer, I want to be, I hope I will be a bold witness to always be ready to give a reason for the hope that is within me. And in order to do that, I need to know the truth, as we talked about last week. Know the truth for myself. I need to believe it for myself. I need to be immersed in it myself so that I may give that answer to someone who is lost.

00:47:11 Pastor Rossi

I'm sure you have, perhaps family members or friends who are lost in this world, in life, you. And there is no joy, no peace. And it's heartbreaking. And God calls you and me to be that witness, to be salt and light in that person's life. And if it's not me, if we're geographically far away, then I pray, bring somebody into that person's life who will share the truth of Jesus Christ.

00:47:39 Pastor Rossi

Remember this. We're not converting them to a moralism we're not sharing the gospel to them, a gospel of moralism so that they be better people in hell. We're calling them to turn to Christ and believe and know his forgiveness. And

Pastor Anema's opportunity to witness in a secular setting from a discussion on what it means to be a victim and the possibility of forgiveness.

Asking good questions helps us start where people are at, providing more fruitful sharing of the Gospel.

Closing Prayer.

from that point on, a conversion, there comes the transformation, where their ideology is being changed, where they realize, yes, I am a man, or yes, I am a woman, in the true sense of the word and God is doing a work in me. Yes.

00:48:20 Participant

I don't know. I just kind of want to say Ken has dealt with a lot of this in a course that he taught his past while he's been teaching it for a while. But it's called victim impact and to prisoners and a lot of justice equity and there's a lot of conversations about like he deals with a crime each time he goes in and what impact that has on his client. But they deal with a lot of justice; this isn't fair but the last class was this past week and one of the young fellows said I don't know about you all, but I need to forgive myself. And that led Ken to take off on forgiveness and say let me tell you my testimony. I believe there's forgiveness in Jesus Christ. This is a secular course, it's not one of the Christian courses.

00:49:29 Pastor Rossi

Yeah, no, but thanks for sharing that because that's an important point by asking those questions you want to start where they're at, right? So Pastor Ken noticed that and he jumped where he was at in his life, to then share the gospel.

00:49:52 Pastor Rossi

Wonderful. I have to get ready to go to Consistory room and for the service. So let's pray. Father in heaven, we thank you. Thank you for your mercy and grace that abounds and we're just so thankful that you called us out of darkness and into the light of your Son and our Savior Jesus. Help us, O Lord, to be humbled by this grace and help us, O Lord, to be bold witnesses for your kingdom, pointing people to the one who saves and redeems and cleanses of all of our sins, the Lord Jesus Christ. Be with us now as we worship you in spirit into truth. May you grant us spiritual eyes and ears to hear and to believe and to walk in a manner worthy of the calling. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.