



**The Gospel According to Luke**  
**Wk. 82 “Pressing into the Kingdom Life by**  
**Pressing into His Word”**  
**By Pastor Jody May**

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**Luke 16:14-18 ESV**

**The Law and the Kingdom of God**

<sup>14</sup> The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. <sup>15</sup> And he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an abomination in the sight of God.

<sup>16</sup> “The Law and the Prophets were until John; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is preached, and everyone forces his way into it. <sup>17</sup> But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void.

**Divorce and Remarriage**

<sup>18</sup> “Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.

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The Pharisees were to be the guides into the Kingdom of God. Their form of Judaism was to help people live out their Mosaic Covenantal Responsibilities, in order to bring about and prepare for the time of the Messiah. What they did though, was to build up walls around God to keep people from getting to Him, so they could retain the seats of honor in the public place.

In doing this, and we will see this morning, this posturing actually caused the Pharisees to break the law because they fell in love with how they thought they could manipulate it. Jesus shows that the beginning of their condemnation/damnation all started with JB. He is the last OT prophet; he is the one prophesied about in the OT to be the voice crying out in the wilderness to



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prepare the people for the Kingdom of God because the Messiah was entering into the world.

They denied this message, they denied his offer of a baptism of repentance, and in doing so denied God’s will for their lives **thus rejecting Jesus**. Jesus then explains that ever since JB decreased so He/Jesus should increase, that the Kingdom of God has been preached. Then there is a curious phrase that Jesus utters, “**and everyone forces his way into it.**”

The interpretation of this phrase varies on who you read. The summary of these thoughts is **that those who believe in God, or at least want Him for what He has, are violently forceful in trying to get in.** 1 - The Pharisees are forceful in what they preach and how they keep people out. 2 - The temple elites/Sadducees were forceful in who they would let in the temple grounds and what they allowed, they even had guards! 3 - The Essenes, the religious hermits, kept people from their way by location and an eccentric way of life. 4 - The common people followed Jesus, left homes, jobs, and family to discover how they could get into the Kingdom.

Here’s where I come to the conclusion that even though we are saved by Grace through the gift of Faith it requires of people **FORCE/EXERTION/VIOLENCE to enter into the Kingdom of God** for the **way is narrow** and the **world is against you finding it**. This is what we have seen in Luke and it is what you will find in Acts. It is the story of the church in Paul’s letters, it is the encouragement of Peter and John and their letters in the NT to suffer through, and in Revelation Jesus commends those that strive to find it, and judgment is passed on those that give up. Let me try and paint this picture...

**(Illustration of Playdough)** In vs. 17 Jesus pointed to the thing that we can forcefully push into **like Playdough** because God Himself ensures it won’t ever change - **the law, the Torah, the OT**. God in His Wisdom, Love and Grace, left for us, crafted for us, and had people endure torture for us so we would have: **His Word, the**

“Workout your Salvation” –  
Phil. 2:12,  
“Deny yourself” – Luke 9:23  
Unless we repent we will perish  
Luke 13:3



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**Bible.** God leaves us the tool by which we are to be pressed into, to have it mold us, so that **we may find the Kingdom**. Make no mistake it will require violence on our own souls for we will not like how it forces us, to be molded into Christ’s image, **but it will save you!** For it is by the authority of Scripture alone do we come into the Salvation. In the text today I want to share with us 3 reasons why we should **PRESS INTO THE TEXT:**

1. Press into the Word to be made aware of **Sin**.

<sup>14</sup>The Pharisees, who were lovers of money, heard all these things, and they ridiculed him. <sup>15</sup>And he said to them, “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is exalted among men is an **abomination** in the sight of God.

The Pharisees had just listened to the parable of the wise steward and Luke reminds us where their hearts are, **they are lovers of money**. Jesus in His closing statement last week said, “You can’t serve God and money.” The response that Jesus is getting now from the Pharisees is not acknowledgment of sin **but sneering, the word ridicule in the text means they looked down their noses at Him**, as if He was less because He didn’t like money like they did.

Jesus says to the Pharisees you are the living examples of people that justify yourselves before men, based on what you like, but this is an **abomination** to God. Translation; in the text that God sees it as “**Idolatry**”. How they view themselves is not just a misunderstanding but **breaks the first 3 commandments**, thus their sin negates everything they could ever do because they live not for God but for themselves.

The issue is they stopped using the law to be made aware of their sin but instead twisted God’s Word to make their sin acceptable to glorify themselves more. They looked to their bibles, the OT, not to see how they should live, confess, and repent, but they looked to the Bible to justify how they wanted to live. The issue is they had actually **stopped pressing into the Word for transformation** but



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**settled for conformation to a worldly standard.** They became ok with looking like Gentiles where the pursuit of financial gain and prestige was the goal of lie.

This is where we can learn from our ancestors, that the more we struggle to justify our behaviors to the world, the more we try to change what the Bible says to support our desires, the further into spiritual blindness we descend.

John Calvin coming out of the Protestant Reformation, as God’s Word was raised to be the authority over a Christian’s life and not the church/pope, penned in his institutes 3 different ways that the Bible, especially the OT, is good for the modern man. Years later I think the late RC Sproul summed it up the best:<sup>1</sup>

1. The law of God is a mirror of God’s holiness and our unrighteousness. It serves to reveal to us our need of a savior.
2. The law of God is a restraint against sin.
3. The law of God reveals what is pleasing and what is offensive to God.

What has happened in our culture wars of today is that some people in some churches/denominations have turned the Bible into an acceptance letter of all people of the world. It can’t be that because the Bible shows that God allowed **His son to be sacrificed** in order that people could come to Him after they had renounced this world. Our unrepentant sin is not a badge to wave around to scream God has accepted me and my sin on the contrary:

### **Romans 6:14-15 ESV**

<sup>14</sup> For sin will have **no dominion over you**, since you are not under law but under grace. <sup>15</sup> What then? Are we to sin because we are not under law but under grace? By no means!

The Gospel makes changes to the Christian life, so it is not an escape from the law but **an escape from the wages of the sin** when we disobey it. To model Christ in

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/sproul/threefold\\_law.html](https://www.monergism.com/thethreshold/articles/onsite/sproul/threefold_law.html)



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this life is to model his life as an **active participant in Biblical living** and in this pursuit, we will press into the Kingdom of God.

Everyone seeks to press into the Kingdom of God but without using God’s Word as an indicator of your sin you won’t get very far...

2. Press into the Word for it will **Never Change**.

**<sup>17</sup> But it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of the Law to become void.**

Jesus is making a bold statement here, that it would be easier for all of the Universe (heavens) to pass away than for one swipe, one pen stroke, one mark of God’s law to change. That means that God’s Word is an everlasting Ordinance that does not change because it contains the authority of God. **(Example of my Dad’s Authority does not change due to time, situations, nor people.)**

In theological circles we call this the **Verbal Plenary Inspiration** of Scripture. Basically, the idea is that the entire Bible (Plenary) is Holy Scripture (Inspiration).

“The idea behind the word inspiration is that God supernaturally guided the biblical authors to write the exact things He wanted expressed. The result is Holy Scripture. Therefore, the phrase “*verbal plenary inspiration*” means that all parts of the Bible, as well as every word of the Bible, says exactly what God wanted said. He guided the entire process so that the end result would be His words.”<sup>2</sup>

What happens when we stray away from this concept is that people tend to make up conditions for why we don’t need to interpret in the traditional sense anymore. That is called *Liberal Theology* and it’s on the march again. Some modern theologians, and that number is growing, believe we have evolved, and

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<sup>2</sup> [https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart\\_don/faq/bible-authoritative-word/question3-verbal-plenary-inspiration-of-scripture.cfm](https://www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart_don/faq/bible-authoritative-word/question3-verbal-plenary-inspiration-of-scripture.cfm)



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we can see now that **the Bible is more interested in ‘how’ you love one another well, ‘rather than’ if you choose to love a person of the same sex.** This my family comes from teachers of the Bible that #1 are more interested in their justification to the populace (abomination) and #2 they are condemning people to a false gospel. Look, the book of Romans is pretty clear about homosexuality and Paul even says at the end of that letter (Rom. 15:4) that all the Bible is good for instruction and the church should be clear about it as well! Preaching all the Bible is loving to people that struggle with homosexuality and a whole host of sins for it offers them freedom to love a God that can drown out the passions of the flesh.

This is part of the Gospel as well, Jesus not only followed all the law, but believed it was still necessary in His day, to live it out the way God intended to earn Salvation, to deny His flesh so that the Father may be glorified, living perfectly biblical manhood. That is shown in His resurrection that He lived the scripture out with the correct interpretation, that it never changes, and it is for all people at all times.

So, in review so far, **the we press into the Kingdom by pressing into God’s Word.** God’s Word can be trusted and utilized for it **teaches the proper awareness of sin, and it never changes so we can trust it,** and here is a really important and last reason why we need to thank God for it this morning:

### 3. Press into the Word to discern **False Teachings.**

**<sup>18</sup>“Everyone who divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery, and he who marries a woman divorced from her husband commits adultery.**

Ok last part here, Jesus gives a personal example of how the Pharisees were using God’s law to justify themselves and were using it to live life that was actually degrading to others.

Pharisees were known to have justified divorce that was initiated by a man, not just on the basis of adultery, as Jesus taught in Mat 19 and Mark 10, but rather on the modern-day interpretation of the law.



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And so, by the way, here was Rabbi Hillel's list. Here are the causes for divorce: burning dinner, lousy food, too much salt, spinning in the street so someone saw her knees, taking her hair down, saying something unkind about her mother-in-law, infertility, not giving you a son, or finding someone prettier makes her in your eyes unclean, and then there's a whole lot of blanks. You can fill in your own. Very convenient interpretation, a very happy one for the Pharisees, and they didn't bother to interpret the rest of it accurately so they were proliferating divorces. When they saw somebody they liked better or somebody that was nicer or they were tired of having lousy food or whatever for any excuse.<sup>3</sup>

Jesus is pointing out that the Pharisees hypocrisy condemned people to adultery it didn't free them to pursue other relations. The **point of this** is that when we use all of God's Word to learn about sin(s) and God's Holiness, when we don't change it to suit our purposes, AND when we don't add an iota or change its' meaning then not only are we pressing and entering into the Kingdom of God but while **we can't make the way wider**, we are **making the opening much clearer**.

Jesus is the way the truth and the life and no one comes to the Father, but by Him (John 14:6). If He says press in, even when it's hard we press in!

One last thought on letting culture interpret the Bible and Sin instead of the church...

Intersectionality and Critical Theory (Resolution 9) – Culture is now allowed to translate the Bible. The problem is that when **people in power** say we need to **use tools outside of scripture** that derive in a secular man-based culture to pinpoint unrepentant sin, then culture will begin to decide how to interpret the Bible and we the church will stop. When that happens, we are inviting the world to tell us how to live our lives, what lifestyles to accept, and how to change the Gospel, that is agenda of Liberal Theology.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gty.org/library/sermons-library/42-211/why-false-teachers-mock-the-truth-part-3>



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**2 Timothy 4:3 ESV**

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions,

**PRAYER**

**COMMUNION**

**BENEDICTION**

Go in the name of the Father, that has ensured everything we need to live has been provided in His Word.

Go in the name of the Son, that was the Word personified living out every iota of the law, becoming the perfect substitution for us, that we may be saved.

Go in the name and power of the Holy Spirit, that helps us to keep pressing into God’s Word, so that we may enter into the Kingdom and share it with our neighbors.