

The Final Countdown – Rise of Apostasy

Part 1

“Well hey, one day Kenny was getting a checkup and he tells his doctor that he thinks his wife, Lori, is losing her hearing.

And so the doctor says to Kenny, ‘You should do a simple test. Stand about 15 feet behind your wife and say, ‘Honey?’ And then move about 3 feet closer and then do say it again, ‘Honey.’”

And then keep moving 3 feet closer until she finally responds. Remember how close you were when she finally gives you an answer. This will help me know how bad her hearing loss is.

So about a month later Kenny goes back to the doctor again and the doctor asks, ‘Well, did you do that experiment with your wife’s hearing?’

And Kenny said, ‘Yes.’

And the doctor asked, “How close did you get before she answered?”

And Kenny said, ‘Well, by the time I got about 3 feet away, she just turned around and said ‘For the FIFTH TIME...WHAT???’”

And all the ladies said, “Amen preacher! Preach it!” That’s right! But seriously folks, how many of you can not only identify with Lori’s pain there, but how many of you would say Kenny’s horrible assumption about Lori’s hearing was about to make things much worse not better? But that’s right folks, believe it or not, did you know the Bible says one day the whole planet’s going to make a wrong assumption that’s going to make things a whole lot worse and that’s going to happen at the rapture of the Church! And the reason why it’s going to be so horrible is because for those who refuse to

accept Jesus Christ as their Personal Lord and Savior, they will be catapulted into the 7-year Tribulation and it's not a joke! It's an outpouring of God's wrath on a wicked and rebellious planet. In fact Jesus said in **Matthew 24** it's going to be a "time of greater horror than anything the world has ever seen or will ever see again. And that "unless that time of calamity is shortened, the entire human race will be destroyed." But praise God, God's not only a God of wrath, He's a God of love as well. And **because He loves you and I**, He's given us many warning signs to show us when the Tribulation was near and Jesus Christ's 2nd Coming was rapidly approaching. Therefore, in order to keep you and I from experiencing the ultimate bad day of being left behind, worse than a trip with Al and Kenny, we're going to continue in our series **The Final Countdown**.

And so far we've already seen how the **#10** sign on **The Final Countdown** was **The Jewish People**. The **#9** sign was **Modern Technology**. The **#8** sign was **Worldwide Upheaval**. The **#7** sign was **The Rise of Falsehood**. And the **last 5 times** we saw how the **#6** sign was **The Rise of Wickedness**. And what we saw there was that God lovingly foretold you and I that when we see an **Increase of Absolute Unadulterated Wickedness** in all levels of society, which is happening today right now all over the world, thanks in part to a Wicked Worldview called **Humanism**, a

Wicked Teaching & Attack from **Atheistic Evolution**, a Wicked Worship called **self-love self-esteem**, a Wicked Lifestyle called **Hedonism**, and last time with a Wicked Connection with **Occultism**, which we saw is happening right now today all over the world with this increase of drug usage, demon worship, and actual demonic witchcraft. And as we saw, guess what? This is an indicator from God **you are living in the last days!** **AND** it also explains why we've gone from a Great Mighty Christian Nation into what we have to deal with today! But that's not all. The **#5** sign on **The Final Countdown** that God has given to us to lovingly wake us up is none other than **The Rise of Apostasy**. That's right folks, not only is the world going down the tubes in the Last days, so is the Church! But don't take my word for it. Let's listen to God's.

1 Timothy 4:1-6 “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer. If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.”

Now folks, according to our text there, another major characteristic of the Last days is that many people in the Church will what? They will

apostacize! They will “abandon” and “turn away” and “leave” the faith for demonic teaching! And that’s when the show begins. They will be **pretending** to be religious and give the **appearance** of being Christians, **yet** will show their true colors by **turning away from the truth** to follow hypocritical teachings, right? And granted, throughout history we’ve always had some people following some sort of perverted truths of Christianity. That’s pretty commonplace. But what’s **not common** is how **in the last century alone**, there has been a **mass exodus** of people “claiming to be Christians” who are turning away from even the basic truths of Christianity. I mean, they’re following all kinds of wacked out stuff! And it’s getting worse. And to show you just how bad its gotten, let’s take a look at the change of beliefs of people claiming to be Christians, even here in America, **in just the past couple of decades.**

1. 80% of Christians believe “the Bible teaches that God helps those who help themselves.”
2. 53% says the Holy Spirit does not exist.
3. 12% do not know what will happen to them after they die.
4. 25% agreed that it doesn’t matter what faith you follow because all faith groups teach the same lessons.
5. 30% says that Jesus Christ died but never had a physical resurrection.
6. 29% contend that “when he lived on earth, Jesus Christ was human and committed sins, like other people.”
7. 29% assert that “there are some crimes, sins, or other things which people might do which cannot be forgiven by God.”
8. 65% say that satan “Is not a living being but is a symbol of evil.”
9. 22% agreed that all people will experience the same outcomes after death, regardless of their religious beliefs.

10.31% says that a good person can earn his/her way into heaven.

Now folks, I don't know about you, but it sure looks to me that **in the last couple of decades alone**, there's been a massive **Rise of Apostasy** hasn't there? Just like the Bible said would happen when you are in the last days! But the question is, "How could there be such a mass exodus of people deliberately turning from even the basic truths of Christianity in such a short amount of time, especially in America with our Godly Heritage?"

Well, once again, thanks for asking. The **1st reason** people **in the Church** have turned from even the basic truths of Christianity is due to **A Flood of Phony Christians**. That's right, I'm talking about the **Fake Believers** in the Church. Little do people know, that as we saw last time, not only are satanists and witches coming into the Church wreaking all kinds of havoc and trouble, but so are a whole flood of phony baloney believers! And just like all the satanists and witches, sometimes, they too, are hard to spot. They too know the Christianese language. They too know how to talk the talk. They too might even have become members in the Church, but the proof is in the pudding they're fake! In fact, Jesus warned us about them.

John 6:63-64,70-71 "The words I have spoken to you are spirit and they are life. Yet there are some of you who do not believe.' For Jesus had known from the beginning which of them did not believe and who would betray Him. Then Jesus replied, 'Have I not chosen you, the Twelve? Yet one of you is a devil!' (He meant Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, who, though one of the Twelve, was later to betray him.)"

Now according to our text, Jesus not doesn't even hesitate to tell the people who were following Him that His teachings were not only from God, but that **He Himself was God**. And they way He demonstrates that is by knowing only what God could know, whether or not a person truly believed in Him. And because of this, we observe the shocking truth that “**Not everyone who claims to be a disciple of Christ really is one.**” And as we saw, the Bible clearly says that some people **in the Church**, in the last days, are going to be counterfeit disciples just like Judas Iscariot. Oh, they might go to a Church service, but going to a Church service doesn't make you a Christian any more than sitting in a henhouse makes you a chicken. You must be born again!

But you might be thinking, “Oh come on Pastor Billy. You don't mean to tell me that Church's across America are full of phony boloney believers who are no better off than Judas Iscariot. That's crazy!” Well crazy or not folks, don't take my word for it. Let's listen to one. His name is Larry. “I'd really call myself an agnostic. I live my life the way I believe it should be lived. I very much live along Christian value lines but no I'm not convinced and quite frankly, you know, I don't worry about it. I don't care.

I go to a church, I support the church and everything else. I'm very much in favor of it. I believe in strong morals, strong family values and want to bring them up in my children. I also believe my views are my views and other people believe what they want to believe and I don't want to get in an argument or try to convince them otherwise.

Logically, intellectually I have a hard time grasping that Christianity is necessarily right. I mean why...take Judaism for example, why isn't that just another mythology...why isn't that, you know, I mean Romans had mythology. Greeks had mythology so you know why isn't Christianity just another mythology.

I mean you look at Jesus Christ and you'd say had to be a phenomenal human being, a phenomenal leader. He was able to call Himself the Son of God, had a bunch of disciples and get a lot of people to believe that He was the Son of God and to reaffirm a belief in God and that then evolved historically into a great religion.

My view of the afterlife is, there is none. Life ends when you die. You didn't exist beforehand and you will not exist afterward."

Folks, I'm telling you, we have got to wake up and deal with the facts. The Church of Jesus Christ **right now** has been flooded with phony baloney believers just like Larry, just like the Bible said would happen in the Last Days. They're all over the place! In fact, I used to have a 50-50 rule, where I figured about half the American Church probably still doesn't know Christ. But I remember reading in D. James Kennedy's biography where he put the number as high as 80%. And the reason why he said 80% was because of the 20-80 rule that we see in Churches all across America. Where 20% of the people do 100% of the work while 80% of the people do nothing! And he said the reason is simple! The reason why the 80% doing nothing is because they're not true Christians because how can you be a true born again Christian and have **no desire** to serve Christ! The logical response is, "Hey

can I do something for you, etc.” And as shocking as that might sound, believe it or not, some of those 80% might be your Pastor! Check this out!

Wes, a Methodist, lost his confidence in the Bible while attending a liberal Christian college and seminary. “I went to college thinking Adam and Eve were real people,” he explained. Now, he no longer believes that God exists. His church members do not know that he is an atheist, but he explains that they are somewhat liberal themselves. His ministerial colleagues are even more liberal: They don’t believe Jesus rose from the dead literally. They don’t believe Jesus was born of a virgin. They don’t believe all those things that would cause a big stir in their churches.”

Rick, a campus minister for the United Church of Christ, was an agnostic in college and seems to have lost all belief by the time he graduated from seminary. He chose ordination in the UCC because it required “no forced doctrine.” Even as he graduated from seminary, he knew, “I’m not going to make it in a conventional church. He knew he couldn’t go into a church and teach his own theological views. He does not believe “all this creedal stuff” about the incarnation of Christ or the need for salvation, but he remained in the ministry because, “These are my people, this is the context in which I work, these are the people that I know.” In the pulpit, his mode is to talk as if he does believe, because “as long as ... you are talking about God and Jesus and the Bible, that’s what they want to hear. You’re just phrasing it in a way that makes sense to [them] ... but language is ambiguous and can be heard in different ways.”

Darryl is a Presbyterian who sees himself as a “progressive-minded” pastor who wants to see his kind of non-doctrinal Christianity “given validity in some way.” He acknowledges that he is more a pantheist than a theist, and thinks that many of the more educated members of his church hold to the same liberal beliefs as his own. And those beliefs (or unbeliefs) are stated clearly: “I reject the virgin birth. I reject substitutionary atonement. I reject the divinity of Jesus. I reject heaven and hell in the traditional sense, and I am not alone.” Amazingly, Darryl is candid about the fact that he remains in the ministry largely for financial reasons. It is how he provides for his family. If he openly espoused his beliefs, “I may be burning bridges in terms of my ability to earn a living this way.”

Adam ministers in the Church of Christ. After years in the ministry, he began to lose all theological confidence. He has moved fully into an atheist mode, yet he continues to lead his church in worship. How? “Here’s how I’m handling my job on Sunday mornings: I see it as play acting. I see myself as taking on the role of a believer in a worship service, and performing.” This “atheistic agnostic” stays in the ministry because he likes the people and, “I need the job still.” If he had an alternative source of income, he would take it. He feels hypocritical, but no longer believes that hypocrisy is wrong.

John is identified as a Southern Baptist minister who has primarily served as a worship leader. He was attracted to Christianity as a religion of love, but his pursuit of Christianity “brought me to the point of not believing in God.” As he explains, “I didn’t plan to become an atheist. I didn’t even want to become an atheist. It’s just I had no choice. If I’m being honest with myself.” He is clearly not being honest with his church members. He rejects all belief in God and all Christian truth claims out of hand. He is a determined atheist. Once again, this unbelieving minister admits that he stays in the ministry because of finances. Amazingly, this minister even names his price: “If someone said, ‘Here’s \$200,000,’ I’d be turning my notice in this week, because then I can pay off everything.”

I like what Gilbert Tennent said way back in 1739 about phony Preachers, “If they will not remove themselves from the ministry, they must be removed. If they lack the integrity to resign their pulpits, the Churches must muster the integrity to eject them.” **Why?** Because they’re phony! They’re **apostates** and they’ll ruin the Church!

And fortunately when it comes to these phony baloney believers in these Last Days, God doesn’t leave us hanging high and dry, wondering who’s who, and who’s real and who’s fake. He actually tells us how to spot

them. The **1st** way to spot a **Phony Baloney Believer** just like Judas Iscariot, is when they **Worship God with Their Head but Not Their Heart**

James 2:14-17,19 “What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed, but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that – and shudder.”

People, the Bible simply declares that not all faith is a saving faith. And according to our text, if your faith is not accompanied by appropriate action, it's not only fake, **it's dead**. And here's the point. The devil knows this. He knows it so stinking well. So here's what he does. He tricks people into thinking that faith is having a **head knowledge** of God instead of a heart knowledge of God. Or in other words, just giving a mental ascent that God exists. Whip De Doo Dah! What'd we just read? Even the demons believe in God, but are they saved? Absolutely not! So if you believe that there's a God, then whip-de-do! This only puts you on the same level as the demons! And this is what the Bible calls a **dead faith**.

And people it's my contention that this **dead faith syndrome** has become an epidemic in the American Church, just like the Bible said would happen in the Last Days! Many people today in Churches think it's no big deal to **not** “get involved” and **not** “get serious” about going to Church

services. I mean, after all, you don't want to be labeled as one of those Jesus freaks do you? And people, this apathetic behavior has become so commonplace in the American Church that we even make jokes about it all the time, like this one.

“There were three country churches in a small Texas town that were being overrun by some pesky squirrels.

So the 1st Church called a meeting to decide what to do about the squirrels. And after much prayer and consideration they determined that the squirrels were predestined to be there and they shouldn't interfere with God's divine will.

And when the 2nd Church got together, they decided they weren't in a position to harm any of God's creations. So, they humanely trapped the squirrels and set them free a few miles outside of town. However, three days later, the squirrels were back.

But it was only the 3rd Church that was able to come up with the best and most effective solution. You see, they decided to baptize the squirrels and registered them as members of the church. Why?

Because now they only see them on Christmas and Easter.”

Now granted that joke is pretty funny, right? Because it's so true, right? But folks, it's really not that funny when you realize that those who are acting like **squirrely Christians** may not even be Christians at all!

People I'm telling you, we better wake up! A true Christian **is not** one who lives for God just twice a year! Are you kidding me! They live for the Lord every single day of their lives and God uses them to transform this world.

John Wesley said, “**Give me ten people who hate nothing but sin, who**

fear nothing but God, and who love nothing but Jesus, and I can change the world.” And people, I don’t know if you’ve noticed, but the American Church seems to be having a hard time changing this world nowadays. In fact, it seems this world **is having an easy time** at changing the American Church. And you know why? Well I’m thinking maybe it’s because the American Church is full of people who **Worship God with Their Heads but Not Their Hearts** and that means the American Church is full of Phony Baloney Believers.

Oh but that’s not all. The **2nd** way to spot a **Phony Baloney Believer** just like Judas Iscariot, is when they **Worship God with Their Lips but Not Their Lives**.

Titus 1:15-16 “Everything is pure to those whose hearts are pure. But nothing is pure to those who are corrupt and unbelieving, because their minds and consciences are defiled. Such people claim they know God, but they deny him by the way they live. They are despicable and disobedient, worthless for doing anything good.”

People, the Bible declares that not everyone who claims to know God really knows God. In fact, if all they do is give God lip service instead of **life service** then their so-called faith is actually worthless. and people the devil knows this. He knows it so stinking well. So here’s what he does. He tricks people into thinking that all you have to do **is not** live like a Christian, but just **say you’re a Christian**, and somehow you’ve become one. But people

we're only fooling ourselves if we think we can **sin up a storm** 6 days a week and go to a Church service on the 7th and somehow everything's just fine. Anybody can claim to know God all they want. But if they deny this claim by the way they live then their being a **hypocrite**. And this is not only detrimental to your soul, but to the souls of others. One person said this:

“The number one cause of atheism is Christians. Those who proclaim God with their mouths but deny Him in their lifestyles, are what the unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable.”

And people it's my contention that this **lip service syndrome** has become an epidemic in the American Church, especially in these Last Days! Many people in Churches today think that all you have to do is claim to know God **but never live for God** and somehow you're in like flint. But people, a true Christian **is not** one who lives for God just one hour a week. Are you kidding me! They live for the Him every single day of their lives and God uses them to light this world on fire! When asked why so many people came to hear him preach, John Wesley said, **“It's simple. If you light yourself on fire for Jesus Christ, people will come for miles just to watch you burn!”** And people maybe this is why the American Church can't seem to get the fires of revival burning across our nation anymore. Maybe it's because people are **Worshipping God with Their Lips but Not Their Lives**. Maybe the American Church is flooded with Phony Baloney

Believers, just like the Bible said would happen, when you are living in the Last Days.

Oh but that's not all. The **3rd** way to spot a **Phony Baloney Believer** just like Judas Iscariot, is when they **Worship God with Their Thoughts but Not the Truth.**

1 John 2:18-19 “Dear children, this is the last hour; and as you have heard that the antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come. This is how we know it is the last hour. They went out from us, but they did not really belong to us. For if they had belonged to us, they would have remained with us; but their going showed that none of them belonged to us.”

People, the Bible declares that not everyone who goes to a Church service really belongs to the Church. If they walk away from the truth and start following a lie, then it only shows they were **never saved** in the first place. And this not only explains our opening text of the **great falling away and people abandoning the faith**, but once again, the devil knows this. He knows it so stinking well. So here's what he does. He tricks people into thinking there are many roads to heaven and that Jesus is not **the only way to God**. No! He's just one of the many ways to God. But people hello, this is not only calling Jesus a liar, but it's assuming that God's going to bend His truth to your man-made thoughts! And oh, it may sound nice and wonderful, and politically correct, but sooner or later, the truth will be known, like this story reveals.

“A counterfeit Christian is like a counterfeit ten dollar bill. For instance, let’s suppose you have a counterfeit bill but don’t know it. You think it’s genuine.

So sure enough, you use it to pay for some gas. But as soon as it makes its way to the bank, the bank teller spots the phony and says, ‘I’m sorry, but this bill is a counterfeit.’

Now that ten dollar bill may have done a lot of good while it was in circulation, but when it arrived at the bank it was exposed for what it really was and it was immediately put out of circulation.

And so it is with the counterfeit Christian. They may do a lot of good things in their life, but when they face Christ at the final judgment, they’ll immediately be rejected.”

People, the Bible says if a person “professes” to be a Christian yet walks away from the truth that Jesus really is the only way to heaven, then the Bible says their a counterfeit. And again, I got to thinking about this. Well gee maybe this is the reason why the American Church has lost its zeal for the lost. Maybe it’s because the majority of the American Church is still lost themselves? Why? Because their **Worshipping God with Their Thoughts and Not the Truth** and now the Church is flooded with a bunch of Phony Baloney Believers, just like the Bible said would happen, when you are living in the Last Days.

Oh but that’s not all. The **4th** way to spot a **Phony Baloney Believer** just like Judas Iscariot, is when they **Worship God with Their Religion but Not a Relationship.**

Matthew 7:21-23 “Not everyone who says to me, Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles? Then I will tell them plainly, I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!”

People, the Bible declares that not everyone who says, “Lord, Lord” really belongs to the Lord. If their faith is based on **pious religious deeds** instead of a personal relationship, then they don’t belong to Christ. And people the devil knows this. He knows it so stinking well. So here’s what he does. He tricks people into thinking that if they want to get to heaven, then just be a good religious person who does good religious deeds once in awhile. But people, Jesus didn’t die on the cross so people could **get religious** for Him. NO! He died on the cross so we could have a relationship with Him. And again, it’s my contention that this **religious attitude** has become an epidemic in the American Church, especially in these Last Days! And because of that, many people who claim to be **alive in Christ** are actually dead to Christ because of their religion, like this story reveals.

“There was this new minister in a small Oklahoma town who spent the first four days desperately calling on the Church membership and begged them to come to his first services. But try as he might, nobody would come.

So he decided to place a notice in the local newspapers, stating that the Church was dead, and it was his duty to give it a decent Christian burial the following Sunday.

Well, this of course go the curiosity of the whole town and everyone turned out. And when they got there, they saw a coffin smothered in flowers in front of the pulpit.

And after the minister read the obituary and delivered a eulogy, he invited his congregation to step forward and pay their respects to the dearly departed.

And without a moments hesitation a long line was formed because each person couldn't wait to see what in the world was in the coffin. But, as soon as each person peeped into the coffin, a strange thing happened. Each person quickly turned away with a guilty look. Why?

Because the minister had placed a large mirror inside the coffin which meant that every single person simply saw themselves."

People, I place a mirror before us and the American Church today and say this, "If you have to have your arm twisted to give up your time, treasure, talents and tongue for God, then maybe it's because you don't have a relationship with God, maybe it's because you've got a religion with God." And if you can't ever seem to get motivated to come hear the Word of God, then maybe one day you'll hear from God, "Away from me you evildoer, **I never knew you!**" Why? Because you're **Worshipping God with Your Religion and Not a Relationship**. It might be a sign you are a Phony Baloney Believer, just like the Bible said would happen in the Last Days.

People, what more does God have to do? He loves us. This is happening before our very eyes! He doesn't want us going into the 7-year Tribulation! And this is why He's given us the sign of the **Rise of Apostasy**

today to show us that the Tribulation is near and the 2nd Coming of Jesus Christ is rapidly approaching. And that's why Jesus Himself said:

Luke 21:28 "When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."

People of God, like it or not, we are headed for **The Final Countdown**. And so the point is this. If you're here today as a Christian it's time to get busy! Stop bickering and start working together, and let's get busy saving souls! But if you're here today and you're not a Christian, or maybe you **think** you're a Christian, but God exposed you today and you're feeling a little uncomfortable, then I urge you, don't leave here before coming one. Why? Because God knows who's real and who's not like this guys shares.

A TRUE CHRISTIAN

COMMISSION: I think that if you are a true Christian, you don't consider Christianity just a part of your life-it is your life. If you follow the teachings of the Bible, specifically Mark 16:15 which says, "Go out into the world and preach the Good News to all creation."

AN OBLIGATION: Then you have an obligation to share that faith with others. If you saw a building on fire and you knew there were people in it and you knew you were capable of running in there and saving someone who wouldn't be able to help themselves. If you knew you could help them would you just stand there and do nothing and unfortunately by not clearly seeing the issue. I think that's what a lot of Christians do-is that they just stand there.

AN OMISSION: I think by and large, most of it is that most Christians are not really well educated as to their own religion's position on various issues.

AN IGNORANCE: They consider worshipping Jesus to be a part of their lives but not their primary purpose and I believe that true Christianity considers it to be the primary purpose.

A PURPOSE: If you are a true Christian, you believe that those that are not Christians, those who have not followed the teachings of the Bible that have not accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior, those people aren't going to Heaven they are going to Hell. Hell's not a fun place.

A HEAVEN AND A HELL: I have heard Christians definitely that have the view that everyone is entitled to their own belief and that's not necessarily a bad position to have but if you believe that what they believe is going to earn them a place in eternal suffering, then there's a problem with that in that you're allowing them to be tortured for eternity while at the same time believing that you shouldn't save them from that. It's very awkward.

A REAL BELIEF: If you really believe that people who are not Christians are going to hell then that is a very serious consequence and if you don't take that seriously I think you might be compromising your own belief system.

A COMPROMISE: Those who do take their faith seriously. They need to encourage or teach those who might not know how important that is.

A FEAR: Sometimes I think Christians are afraid of being labeled as a "bible-thumper" Or to have negative connotations associated with that.

A LABEL: But that is not necessarily negative if you're a Christian I'd think it would be something you'd be proud of. There's nothing to be ashamed of if you're a Christian about the Bible or being a "bible-thumper". It's something to be proud of. It's something you take seriously and it's something you should encourage others to take seriously as well.

A REACTION: And it might require you to challenge yourself. You know to stand up in front of crowds to talk to people who you don't know.

A CHALLENGE: Missionaries who work in places where the predominant religion is not Christianity and that's a completely different scenario than in most parts of the United States but they take it in stride and they accept it

and they move on.

A BOLDNESS: You shouldn't take rejection personally but consider it you gave them a fighting chance.

A FIGHTING CHANCE: Give them a fighting chance of Heaven even if you have to risk offending someone or a risk of friendship. It's a simple way of weighing priorities

A WEIGHING OF PRIORITIES: If I were a Christian of course I would take the Bible seriously. I respect people who take their beliefs seriously and I would take the Bibles teaching seriously. Among those teachings is the idea that there's a Heaven and there is a Hell and those that accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior go to Heaven, and those that don't, go to Hell and the implications of that are very far reaching.

ATHIEST:

“And you're an atheist?”

“Yes I sure am.”⁹

To find the way to God, to understand the *truth* of God's Word, and to received the gift of eternal *life*, begin by repentance and faith through a prayer like this:

“Dear God, I understand that I have broken Your Law and sinned against You. Please forgive my sins. Thank You that Jesus suffered on the cross in my place. I now place my trust in Him as My Savior and Lord. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.”
