

- and most fulfilling life possible. He tells us what to do because He knows how we work best.

**Biblical Principle:** His commandments are not burdensome because when we are born again, we are given new hearts—hearts which by instinct wish to please God. As part of the New Covenant, the law of God has been written on the heart of every believe. HUA

**?Question:** How do you see truth – burden or desire?

## DO | What are you going to do about it?

### *Matt 16:15-16*

*But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*

- **We must as Christians hold fast to biblical authority.**
- **The foundation of the church is the revelation of God given through His apostles, and the Lord of the church is the cornerstone of that foundation.** Because it is His Word that the apostles taught and that the faithful church has always taught, Jesus Christ Himself is the true foundation, the living Word to whom the written Word bears witness (John 5:39). And “No man,” Paul says-not even an apostle-“can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 3:11). **The Lord builds the church on the truth of Himself, and because His people are inseparable from Him they are inseparable from His truth.** And because the apostles were endowed with His truth in a unique way, by their preaching of that truth they were the foundation of His church in a unique way.

**Biblical Principle:** We are the church build on the foundations of the apostle and Jesus Christ is the cornerstone. HUA

**?Question:** Do you know truth well enough to recognize non-truth??

**Application Challenge:** What do you believe – look up Grace’s doctrines of faith and research the Nicene creed – Apostles creed.

## -----Stories from the Field-----

*There is a Gathering Storm in the Church. The demands for an updated theology and morality- for Christianity to be redefined for a secular age – is reshaping seminaries, congregations, schools and denominations.*

**Protestant liberalism and secularization have merged, creating a new and dangerous context for the biblically committed Christian.**

Secularization has desensitized many people in the pews leading them to hold, unwittingly, worldviews. There is now a Moralistic Therapeutic Deism: believing some God exists and created a world who wants people to be simply congenial and kind, and that life is about happiness and self-fulfillment.

**The pressure on the church to adopt secularization is passive and active in its efforts.** *Passive:* because we are constantly bombarded by cultural messages through media. The result, the church simply stops talking and teaching about truths revealed and defined in the bible. “Inclusivity” is taking priority over theological fidelity. **The only resistance is the church preaching the Word of God!** *Active:* because the secular movement believes the church should no longer enjoy religious freedom. It will not tolerate any individual, institution, church or denomination until it fully surrenders to its world view. Liberalism and secularism have no compatibility with the bible. **The greatest threat to the church is not to its existence, but to its conviction and faithfulness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.**

Passive and Active liberalism/secularization threaten Christian fidelity. Secularization of the culture demands unconditional surrender. **Within the walls of the church, we see continued efforts to undermine the authority of the Bible and usurp the rule of Christ.** Liberals are summoning the people to abandon their posts, and to redefine the Christian faith into something more acceptable in the view of the dominant culture.



**Men of Valor**

### **Gathering Storm #2**

**Biblical Manhood:** To love and follow Jesus by being Men of the Word and Men of Prayer while Accepting Accountability, Taking Responsibility, Leading Intentionally, Persevering through Adversity in their domain to make God Known

Christians must live as people of the Book—when you surrender the authority of scripture you threaten the very existence of the church.

**The church must:** 1- **stand for the faith** extended from Christ to the apostles and extends to us through scripture, 2- **understand what we believe and hold each other accountable.** 3- **stand on the totality of the Christian Worldview** — the only comprehensive, truthful and universal view of the world. 4 – **recommit to the Great Commission – to make Christ Known!**

**The Gospel is the ONLY saving message and it is our responsibility to preach the Gospel to the nations.** We cannot hide behind church walls and be passive – we must engage and be active, that is our calling!! We can hold fast because we stand upon the rock!!

### Talk about it:

**Question for contemplation and discussion:** What did God enlighten to you in the text?

## KNOW | What does God want us to know

### *Romans 12:2*

*And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.*

- **Do not be seduced by secularization which is attempting to marry incompatible world views.** Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves toward the goal of true maturity
- Stop being squeezed in! **Quit imitating the system of thought that surrounds you, its line of reasoning, its method of operation, its style and techniques!** How? By a radical transformation within. By a renewed thought pattern that demonstrates authentic godlikeness.

- Living differently begins with thinking differently. A life that is characterized by serving others begins in a mind that is convinced of such a life. That explains why that great section of Scripture describing Christ's willingness to take upon Himself the form of a servant begins with the words: "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus" (*Philippians 2:5*).

**Biblical Principle:** Jesus's life of serving was the outworking of His mind—"unsqueezed" by the world system in all its selfishness—and remains, forever, our example to follow. For us to be true servants of God, our minds must be renewed! HUA

**?Question:** What are you doing to transform your mind? (Chart)

## BE | How does God want us to become more like Him?

### *1 John 5:3*

*"For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome."*

- **Where you find a church, you find a community of believers striving for holy obedience to God. Conversely, a church that doesn't tell people how-to live-in obedience to Christ isn't a church at all.** The mark of love for God is joyful obedience, not begrudging obedience.
- This text clearly distinguishes loving Christ from obeying his commandments. If you love me—that's one thing—then you will keep my commandments—that's another thing. The one leads to the other. If you have the one, you will do the other. It's not wrong to say that loving Jesus, or loving God, includes doing what he commands. But that's not all it is. Loving God is not just external obedience; it means having a heart for God that doesn't find his commandments burdensome. And if the commandments are not burdensome, what are they? They are desirable. They are gifts from Him to show us the best