

# Still No Repentance...

Pastor James Foley – Shared Sunday, February 21, 2021

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## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us today! Whether you are here in person or watching via the livestream, you are most welcome. Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take some notes. We have much to cover in a relatively short amount of time.

**FYI 1** – I want to share a message that is simple (i.e., in an intellectual sense) yet spiritually challenging. I would like to open with a selection of complementary texts from the pages of the New Testament. Please follow along closely as we consider some vital precepts...

**FYI 2** – Let us start in the Book of Revelation (ch. 6)...

## THE REVELATION RECORD PT. 1

**NOTE 1** – The Book of Revelation presents to us—in vivid detail—a future period of cataclysmic judgment that will immediately precede the Second Coming of Jesus Christ (cf. Rev. 6–16). This future age will be characterized by unprecedented and devastating warfare, famine, plague and affliction, death, global disaster, astronomical upheaval, and more...

**FYI** – If you thought 2020 was horrific, it will be pleasant compared to this coming 7-year period of tribulation!

**NOTE 2** – We could talk at length concerning the divinely-ordained disasters that will befall those living in the days preceding the Return of Christ, but I think the following portion of Scripture spells out how terrible this time shall be for humanity...

### Revelation 6:15–17 (NIV)

15 Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and everyone else, both slave and free, hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. 16 They called to the mountains and the rocks, “Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! 17 For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can withstand it?”

## THE REVELATION RECORD PT. 2

**FYI** – Yet we see something incredible and tragic in the midst of tribulation: i.e., people would still not repent...

**KEY** – i.e., the people would not relent of their evil ways no matter the penalty they suffered for them...

### Revelation 9:20–21 (Emphasis Mine)

20 The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues **still did not repent** of the work of their hands; they **did not stop** worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. 21 **Nor did they repent** of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.

### **Revelation 16:8–11, 17–21 (Emphasis Mine)**

8 The fourth angel poured out his bowl on the sun, and the sun was allowed to scorch people with fire. 9 They were seared by the intense heat and they cursed the name of God, who had control over these plagues, **but they refused to repent and glorify him.**

10 The fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and its kingdom was plunged into darkness. People gnawed their tongues in agony 11 and cursed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, **but they refused to repent of what they had done.**

17 The seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and out of the temple came a loud voice from the throne, saying, “It is done!” 18 Then there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder and a severe earthquake. No earthquake like it has ever occurred since mankind has been on earth, so tremendous was the quake. 19 The great city split into three parts, and the cities of the nations collapsed. God remembered Babylon the Great and gave her the cup filled with the wine of the fury of his wrath. 20 Every island fled away and the mountains could not be found. 21 From the sky huge hailstones, each weighing about a hundred pounds, fell on people. **And they cursed God** on account of the plague of hail, because the plague was so terrible.

## **THE REVELATION RECORD PT. 3**

**KEY 1** – A great many who will live in the midst of this future period will not be awakened to a place of repentance—no matter what transpires! Despite every attempt of the Lord to stir humanity to a place of humility and faith before Him (i.e., the purpose of such judgment), there will be those who refuse Him in a spirit of utter defiance...

**KEY 2** – Those given to the acts of the flesh (i.e., sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like cf. Gal. 5:19–21) will persist in their sinfulness despite these final “awakening” attempts of heaven...

**KEY 3** – Once again, this is precisely what John the Revelator wrote concerning this future wicked generation...

### **Revelation 9:20–21**

20 The rest of mankind who were not killed by these plagues still did not repent of the work of their hands; they did not stop worshiping demons, and idols of gold, silver, bronze, stone and wood—idols that cannot see or hear or walk. 21 Nor did they repent of their murders, their magic arts, their sexual immorality or their thefts.

**KEY 4** – How woefully tragic...

## **TRANSITIONS**

As we transition you may be thinking to yourself: “If only God had chosen a softer way to reach out to man—they would have certainly repented and turned to Him in faith!” Be careful not to elevate your wisdom over that of the Lord, as the stream cannot rise higher than its source (C. S. Lewis).

**FYI** – Yet to prove the point that many will persist in sin no matter what God does, take note of the following...

## THE GOSPEL RECORD PT. 1

### Matthew 11:20–24

20 . . . Jesus began to denounce the towns in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. 21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades. For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. 24 But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”

**NOTE 1** – The four Gospels present to us—in vivid detail—the record of the life and ministry of Christ at His First Coming. This moment in history past was the supreme demonstration of God’s love and desire for humanity, characterized by unprecedented pardon, acts of service, and the working of the miraculous!

**NOTE 2** – We could talk at length concerning the goodness of God evidenced in and through Jesus Christ during His First Advent and/or Appearing, but I think the following text is the best possible summation of the gracious mission and purpose of our Lord...

### Luke 4:18–19 [Christ Speaking of Himself]

18 “The Spirit of the Lord is on me,  
because he has anointed me  
to proclaim good news to the poor.  
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners  
and recovery of sight for the blind,  
to set the oppressed free,  
19 to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

**Q. Who would have loved to see, hear and experience the ministry of Jesus nearly 2,000-years ago?**

## THE GOSPEL RECORD PT. 2

**FYI** – Yet we see something incredible and tragic in the midst of this period: i.e., people would still not repent...

**KEY 1** – Many would not relent of their evil ways no matter the gracious working of God on their behalf...

**KEY 2** – This was the point Christ was making in the midst of His earthly ministry...

### Matthew 11:20–24

20 . . . Jesus began to denounce the towns in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent. 21 “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22 But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the day of judgment than for you. 23 And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted to the heavens? No, you will go down to Hades. For if the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day. 24 But I tell you that it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you.”

## THE GOSPEL RECORD PT. 3

**KEY 1** – A great many who lived in the times of Christ were not awakened to a place of repentance—no matter what transpired! Despite every attempt of God to stir humanity to a place of humility and faith before Him (i.e., the purpose of His miraculous works, teaching, service, and vicarious death), there were those who refused Him in a spirit of utter defiance...

**KEY 2** – Those given to the acts of the flesh (i.e., sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery, idolatry and witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like cf. Gal. 5:19–21) chose to persist in their sinfulness despite these “awakening” attempts of heaven...

**KEY 3** – How woefully tragic...

### SUMMATIONS

**FYI** – I have presented to you the response of large swaths of humanity to both the judgment and the goodness of the Lord: i.e., they would not be moved to a place of repentance no matter what transpired. In my estimation, this reality is informative in several key areas of life and living...

### INFORMATIVE PT. 1

Firstly, this is informative re: the fallen condition of man...

In every era of human history (i.e., past, present and future), a portion of humanity will persist in the willful, ongoing and habitual rejection of the Lord. Many are persistent in their spiritual stubbornness, hard-heartedness, rebellion, obstinacy, self-deception and pride. This is the case whether the Lord extends His hand of mercy or His hand of judgment...

**KEY** – There will always be those who refuse to repent. The Bible often calls us stiff-necked (Ex. 32, 33, Acts 7)!

**FYI** – This is a dangerous condition...

**QUOTE** – The captain of the ship looked into the dark night and saw faint lights in the distance. Immediately he told his signalman to send a message “Alter your course 10 degrees south.” Promptly a return message was received: “Alter your course 10 degrees north.”

The captain was angered; his command had been ignored. So he sent a second message: “Alter your course 10 degrees south—I am the captain!” Soon another message was received: Alter your course 10 degrees north—I am seaman third class Jones.”

Immediately the captain sent a third message, knowing the fear it would evoke: “Alter your course 10 degrees south—I am a battleship.” Then the reply came “Alter your course 10 degrees north—I am a lighthouse.”

In the midst of our dark and foggy times, all sorts of voices are shouting orders into the night, telling us what to do, how to adjust our lives. Out of the darkness, one voice signals something quite opposite to the rest—something almost absurd. But the voice happens to be the Light of the World, and we ignore it at our peril.

## INFORMATIVE PT. 2

Secondly, this is informative re: the character of the Lord...

**NOTE 1** – Scripture calls us to behold His goodness and His severity (Rom. 11:22).

**NOTE 2** – God is good in His willingness to extend mercy and grace—and in His faithfulness to send prophetic voices that call us to repent. These days many believe that calling people to repent is an unloving act. I would reply that calling others to repentance is the most loving thing we can do against the backdrop that unconfessed sin will be met with judgment!

**NOTE 3** – Yet God is severe in that He will execute judgment. He will not compromise His righteous standards to appease our sinful inclinations (cf. Ps. 2). Could we really say that God is good if He is willing to overlook human sin? Rather, His judgment is an extension of His love (as odd as that sounds). He loves us enough to make a way for our pardon. He also loves us enough to respect our eternal desires—i.e., He will not force Himself on those who do not want Him...

**QUOTE** – “There are only two kinds of people in the end: those who say to God, ‘Thy will be done,’ and those to whom God says, in the end, ‘Thy will be done.’ All that are in Hell, choose it. Without that self-choice there could be no Hell. No soul that seriously and constantly desires joy will ever miss it. Those who seek find. Those who knock it is opened.”

**NOTE 4** – Those who will not have Him in this life will not have Him in the next. If you reject from the source of love, joy, peace, hope, comfort, etc., do not be surprised when you experience an eternity devoid of those very elements. This, dear friends, is the very nature of hell! In the end, we cannot possess the benefits of Christ independent of faith in Him!

## INFORMATIVE PT. 3a

Thirdly this is informative re: the mission of the Church...

**NOTE 1** – We must understand that there will always be those who refuse to repent. If there were many who would not repent in the days of Moses, the prophets, Christ, the apostles, etc., do not be surprised if/when people reject you in the here-and-now!

**NOTE 2** – At the same time, we do well to remember that there will be those who do hear and repent! For every stubborn and stiff-necked soul we meet, there may well be ten who are open to the call of Christ. For every Pharisee there is a Simon Peter, a Mary Magdalene, a Lydia, etc. Since we will not know how people respond until we give them opportunity to respond, do not be dissuaded in doing the work of the Lord...

**KEY** – Christ did not call us to worry about how people will respond to His message—He called us to GO...

### Matthew 28:18–20

18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

## INFORMATIVE PT. 3b

**Q. What should we do if a person is rather stiff-necked in response to the Gospel, etc.?**

**A1.** Love them—serve them—pray for them—bless them...

**Matthew 5:38–48**

38 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.’ 39 But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. 40 And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well. 41 If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles. 42 Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.

43 “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ 44 But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. 46 If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? 47 And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? 48 Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

**Romans 12:14, 17–21**

14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.

17 Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. 18 If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. 20 On the contrary:

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him;  
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.  
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”

21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Moreover...

**A2.** Follow the leading of the Lord and know when to push in v. pull back...

**Proverbs 26:4–5**

4 Do not answer a fool according to his folly,  
or you yourself will be just like him.  
5 Answer a fool according to his folly,  
or he will be wise in his own eyes.

**Matthew 7:6**

6 “Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and turn and tear you to pieces.

## INFORMATIVE PT. 4

Lastly, this is informative re: our own personal response...

**Q. Are you a stiff-necked individual?**

**NOTE 1** – We have experienced the severity of God in the midst of 2020–2021...

**NOTE 2** – We have experienced the goodness of God in the midst of 2020–2021...

**Q. Yet are we continuing in the same patterns of sin and dysfunction?**

**Q. Are we still given to the same acts of the flesh that only bring judgment?**

### **Galatians 5:19–21**

19 The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; 20 idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions 21 and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

**Q. Are we copying the pattern of those who shall reject Christ in Tribulation (severity)?**

**Q. Are we copying the pattern of those who rejected Christ in His age of grace (goodness)?**

**Q. Has this “season” of judgment and/or blessing moved us to a deeper level of repentance?**

**KEY 1** – This is something that only you can answer (i.e., individually).

**KEY 2** – This is something that we must answer (i.e., collectively, etc.).

PRAYER...

## CONCLUSION PT. 1

**FYI** – Special T.Y. to those who contributed to the offering for Mike and Polly Brown (Bolivia)! Total was \$1,420

## CONCLUSION PT. 2

Thank you for taking the time to join us today. Should those of you who have joined us online wish to give, please do so through the giving portal of our church website ([www.NewLifeBarre.org](http://www.NewLifeBarre.org)). For those who are present, you may place your donation in one of our offering boxes.

### **Numbers 6:24–26**

24 The Lord bless you  
and keep you;

25 the Lord make his face shine on you  
and be gracious to you;

26 the Lord turn his face toward you  
and give you peace.