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An Airing of Grievances

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Life and Books and Everything - Clearly Reformed

Originally released on May 12th, 2020, Kevin DeYoung, Collin Hansen, and Justin Taylor discuss the following: an airing of grievances in honor of Frank Costanza, how to accept criticism, the unique challenges of social media, best books on preaching and ministry, books we re-read, and what makes for bad preaching.

Transcript

This is Life and Books and Everything hosted by Kevin DeYoung, Justin Taylor, and Collin Hansen. Welcome back to Life and Books and Everything. I am Kevin DeYoung with Justin Taylor and Collin Hansen.

We are so glad that you have joined us as we record this here on Monday, May 11th. I want to start with a question and I hope it doesn't move in an unedifying direction or make light of anyone's passing, but at 92 years old, Jerry Stiller, comedian, passed away this morning, most famous, probably for our generation, not commending the show to you, you know, use your discretion, but Frank Costanza, George Costanza's father on Seinfeld, and perhaps most famously, his character invented Festivus for the rest of this. So in honor of Festivus, I thought we could begin with the airing of Grievances.

I got a lot of problems with you people. I got a lot of problems. So, Riddity, no! So, I thought nothing too serious, but I thought, give me a little insight into the idiosyncratic world that is Justin Taylor or Collin Hansen.

What are some, there's some little mini rants, some pet peeves that you have, and once I knew I was going to ask this question, this is a sanctification issue. I just, I couldn't stop. I started just listing.

I just had a long, long list. Even if you give us a chance to warm up. Okay, well, I won't mention all of them, but here's a few that are on my list.

One, grow as a transitive verb. Can I get an amen, Justin? I know that you can do this now, but I grew up learning that unless you are, you grow corn, grow as an intransitive

verb. You cause something to grow.

So all the people growing churches growing their budget, it just bothers me. Here's the extent to which it bothered me. When I was at Urbana 1996, they had a song that somebody, you know, it was a nice song and I had a, it was just a home grown song for the conference.

And it was, of course, was grow something new. And in my life, oh Lord, grow something new. And I just couldn't sing it.

I kept under my breath. Saying cause something to grow in me instead of grow. So I just didn't, I don't like grow as a transitive verb.

I don't like when people think they can pick and choose willy nilly their sports teams. I remember 10 years ago, and he's dancing a guy working on our house doing something. I'm making small talk.

And he mentions he's a Michigan fan. Well, well, you're in, you know, like, he gives some hard time about beating us in football, Michigan State. And I said, wait till basketball.

And here's what he said. I'm not making this up. He said, well, in basketball, I kind of root for the Spartans.

Well, and I've, I've had people here who, you know, they'll give me a hard time about Duke and I'll say, well, you know, I was Duke football. Well, you know, in football, I'm a little bit of a Clemson fan. No, you can't, you can't do that.

You know, basketball, I've just always been a Warriors fan until recently. I'm not so much. So that, that's a, you can't do that.

That breaks rules. You know what bothers me? My kids, when they went to the public school and there's good and bad things about the public school, but the big banner sort of their slogan was raising global citizens. And there was definitely, I mean, there, there's a worldview behind that.

Lisa wasn't growing global. I know that would have been horrible, but you're not a citizen. There are no global citizens.

Okay. Until Mars has colonized, there are no, you're just, you live here. You are not a citizen of the world.

There is no citizenship of the world. You have a citizenship to a particular country. People, place.

Yeah, the world series bother you. Yes, that bothers. Well, I mean, it is America.

We have Canada in there. Would it make Korea and Japan feel better if they got to participate? Yeah, or Cuba? Okay, here's my another classic Seinfeld moment. I know I have many more, but here's my last one, which is semi legit, I think.

I have a long time pet peeve with Christian colleges. They're alumni magazines. For once, I want to see them highlight a mother, not a mother who is also doing the New York Ballet or a mother who also is discovering the cure for cancer.

I want a mom. Now, I don't expect that from a secular university, but I'd like to see a Christian college, not just to affirm moms, but to affirm their liberal arts education that what we give you is not just valuable if you end up being a quote unquote important person. It's valuable because it makes you a better mom.

It makes you a better Christian. It makes you a better thinker. So I have a pet peeve when you know, 55% or more of their graduates are women and for a Christian conservative school, probably most of them are spending their next two decades in large part being moms and you would never guess it from their alumni content that any of their impressive graduates are mothers.

There you go. I thought you were going to say something about world changers. Oh, I will get on that too.

World changing global citizens. I want to hear what Justin has to say and I want to just save up for the feats of strength. All right.

Eric, I'm grievances. Justin. All right, Kevin, you're the advantage here because you get to think about these for several days.

Okay, I'm going to give you that ahead of time. I'm sorry. No, your list was very impactful.

So I appreciate it. No, don't impactful is another word. I was going to put that in my list.

He stole mine. This is just going to be a list of editing grievances, actually. The M dash and the N dash.

Okay, go Justin. Yeah, have you figured those out yet? I know what they are. I just on my computer.

I refuse to use them. I love how this friendship works. Justin complains to Kevin about the dashes.

Kevin refuses to change decade after decade. Meanwhile, I go into every blog post, Kevin writes, and I make them right. I fix them.

Tell me how to do it on my blog post. Make Justin happy. I fix all of them on the blog

post.

Yeah, the airing of grievances is a fun editorial activity because there are so many of them. I don't really have any grievances. I just give thanks in all circumstances and I'm not wired like Kevin, I guess.

No, the Iowa Hawkeyes would be one. All of us agree. No, what's so what? Justin Nebraska is just, I mean, anything more than that, just state prejudice? Mainly state prejudice and all the lowans, but they waste children, Justin.

I know that it. They do. They can't later.

They I was a student in 2000 when they denied Northwestern going to the Rose Bowl. I will never forget Iowa for that. So I'm with you, Justin.

I agree. I guess a few kind of spiritual ones. I I've thought about writing a blog post defending people who use the word just in their prayers, like every sentence.

I think there's something humble about it, but it's still great in the ears when somebody prays and inserts the word just before every class, Lord, and they remind God of his title name, Lord. Every sentence, just Lord, Lord, we just want to come before you today and also inviting God into our presence is another prayer pet peeve, but that's very unsanctified to always be judging people's prayers when you hear them pray. Yeah, the Lord, but that that is one for me.

On Twitter, people asking to retweet or retweeting themselves or quote retweeting themselves. I saw somebody today liked a post that they had retweeted, I think of themselves. So it's like inception on Twitter of retweeting oneself, retweeting stuff.

I guess an interpersonal one. These aren't as funny or creative or cool as Kevin's, but when somebody wants to talk to you, they ask for time to get together and then they they talk for 95% of the time and you're thinking of helpful insightful, wise responses and kind of come to the end of it and you realize that they didn't want to hear anything. They just wanted to speak.

So is now referring to our lunches at Jimmy Jones together and we can I was not going to mention that, but Sorry, or I would add and maybe this is more unique to the pastoral vocation. You meet and someone want to have lunch and you do it for an hour and 15 minutes and you think, okay, I guess there wasn't it was just a get together and And you say any way I can pray for you, which is the Christian way of saying, I'm almost done. Are you? And then they say, well, the reason I wanted to get together, you think, Oh, we have been doing a lot of preamble.

Now that guy who has lunch with you last week who's gonna feel really bad. Yeah, well, I haven't had lunch with you for a long time. Nobody.

No, buddy. No, buddy. Virtual lunch.

No, that's that's the airing of my grievances. No, we're not spiritual. Let me let me add just one.

That is complaining on twitter about people who are not on twitter or who do not listen to you on twitter. So I've been kicking this around lately that I think There really has been some kind of revolution affected by social media where all of a sudden our reaction to the news is now the news And that's really disturbing to me at a variety of different levels. I think it's Starting even to our humanity because it now means we have to project ourselves at all times But a lot of times on twitter, I think You do realize Nobody's listening so being mad at somebody else Because they're not being mad about that thing That that person did who doesn't care what either one of you thinks or says about anything That's a pet peeve of mine.

Let me add a porellary of somebody Doing a nice thing Happy birthday grandma who's 107 Today and like grandma grandma's not seeing this or you know Happy birthday to my two-month-old Why are you saying that they're not being encouraged by this? They're not like getting warm fuzzies and they don't care about leading their mom on mother's day She's not following in everyone who says to the best mom. I always want to You are really hurting you don't have the best mom Who said that? That's a michael scott best best boss moment right there. Yeah All right anything else Colin sorry.

I know that question ahead of time. No, that's good I mean, I am always up for some frank castanza Yelling at stein Brenner for trading jbunner. I mean it is just classic Well, maybe we can make this a recurring theme on the show People who don't put on their turn signal People slow at the left turn lane There are many Colin, I remember I thought you were going to say this with twitter because you said this to me one time and it actually stuck with me You said Don't complain about travel on twitter because you look When you're oh boy the airport in janeva is so busy today that There's there's no way to complain about your connection in bali from jakarta It doesn't make you come across looking You know, not exactly like the most edifying person There was kind of a weird season of twitter life where people were complaining about the tsa It's just why why I mean the tsa is not following you.

No one cares that you had your Commute was delayed by seven minutes because they searched your knapsack I did you just say knapsack? He did say knapsack Wow, okay, you don't have a knapsack I thought that roughly went out of english usage in knapsack for your extra pair of knickers Well, I wear a bandana and that is a helpful now So we actually do need bandanas. I keep looking for my my stock that I can't find Okay, so I wasn't this question just came to me. So I don't know if I have a good answer, but I should What what would someone say? If they had to take truth serum is their pet peeve about you Oh gosh Don't tell your pet peeve about me, but okay here I know I had a

friend Uh, I'll say who it is.

Let Offair who one time said to me kevin you're you're compliant, but complaining I thought there's some truth to that like yeah, I'll just do it and I'm making clear that I don't really like it Just soft quiet grumbling I'm sure many people have left My presence and said that guy is impossible to feed And I'm sure they've gotten a ball you most food No Many or all All perhaps or especially if I speak somewhere And you know my admin assistant is just doing a wonderful job trying to help me says He needs this type of cheese only he needs this brand of tostitos. He needs berry berry cheerios. He needs Uh, yeah, that sort of thing he only eats blue m&ms.

Yeah, right? These are actual actual things because of your diet. These are actual. I'm sure there are much more consequential Things, uh, you guys come up with anything off the top of your head Things about you? No, that's not off the top of your head.

What's in your car? I like four things What's the airing of grievances about Colin? Hanson. Oh gosh. Well, that's that's an easy one Nobody is better than I am about talking at length about things.

No one else cares about And not caring it. I mean it's perfect for podcasting right? Um or the opposite. No, that's that's my specialty Is I just get really enthusiastic about things that no one else cares about and I don't really care Or have the courtesy to stop talking about them to people who don't care So to all of you who know way more about northwestern football And the civil war and everything else Um I'm sorry And I don't know how to change and i'm getting close to 40 And I figure at that point that's just not worth bothering I'm a man I'm afraid Exactly.

See there we go Um Yeah, no, that's that's definitely I mean I can think of lots of other ones, but that's got to be number one Um There's no one calling that knows more about the civil war and northwestern That is true That is true that combo is safe in your hand, you know, you know, somebody somebody has to All right, Justin anything calling is the cliff clavin of this podcast is true Uh, I think I just have a suspicion that there are a large number of verbal ticks that I have that That i'm just unaware of probably one is there is a sense in which And I kind of catch myself like I have I said there's a sense in which like seven times in this conversation And everybody else may be snickering and i'm blissfully unaware of it at the end of the day There you go at the end of the day at the end of the day and that type deal Oh, oh I should have said uh Ending all sentences with of That would be or prepositions in general that would be a midwestern tick Going on last week's podcast and it's a at usually where you at where you at I mean is this and is it semi Serious question. You've probably read the cs luis Essay, I reference it all the time in my sermons the problem with x And he talks about you get with a group of people and you talk about the problem with x The problem with justin is and everyone the problem with kevin and everyone kind of yeah And then he turns and he says you need to realize

there's some group of people that you're the x and everyone Obviously sees what your problem is uh the proverbial salad dressing on the side of your cheat the ketchup on on your Mouth that you can't see that everyone else can see and uh, it doesn't mean that we won't have them But it's been a helpful Check in my own heart before i'm So critical of others which is can be a besetting sin to realize there's somebody out there saying and you know what kevin d young's Problem is and you know probably more than half the time they're right One thing I appreciate about friendship with both of you is that you both regularly invite criticism Oftentimes it's about something that you've written but you say, you know, push back and and tell me what i'm missing here Tell me what i'm doing wrong and and I think the three of us know each other well enough too that if there's Ways in which we are sinning or being unwise in our speech whether that's tone or content We kind of have an open door to tell each other like that I don't think you got that quite right or you might want to rethink that and Obviously even if you invite that it's still hard to receive it Especially if you disagree with it and feel like you're being Stubborn by not agreeing instantly with the feedback, but I I think it's a good thing find friends who invite criticism Kind of have an open door for them I can I can think of other podcasts that seem more or less dedicated to Mocking and pointing out the problems with us three and other Like so I think this is an actual Specific thing, but I hope that's something that comes across in this podcast that We I don't think we claimed to have everything figured out or claimed to always take ourselves So seriously, I think we do take our beliefs very seriously and I think we do take god seriously and I think sometimes those things can be conflated that you That somehow they all have to kind of fit together, but I think Just it's possible to to be very earnest in your belief about god and earnest in your belief about You know his work in the world and earnest in your belief about what he's doing and who he reveals himself to be in his word but that doesn't have to translate into kind of seeing yourself as an extension of god's authority in exactly that kind of way So I hope that's something that comes across and also I mean, I think I was just reflecting on this. I don't know what you guys have experienced with this But this is a podcast about books about reading and also to a certain extent about writing and publishing them And one thing I've just found out recently is that I'm much more open to criticism about my writing now than I was 15 years ago I would I think I'm probably a much better writer than I was 15 years ago, but now I don't take it as personally and I see it as a way I want to grow And I think if I've gotten to 40 years old and I'm as good as I'm going to get about books Writing then something's wrong with me kevin.

I don't know what that's like with your preaching Um, but that's that's just something I noticed in myself like I got You know, I got a long My editor wrote me a long thing on friday about things that I needed to change and I Previously I would have just spent the entire weekend trying to prove him wrong or to fix it Instead I was like, okay I'll get to that. I'm glad that he spent the time telling me where I was wrong And it is amazing how how difficult it can be to really get me we all talk about wanting constructive Feedback,

but either we don't really want it or we don't really get it And again, not just batting you guys on the back after Justin encouraged us But I can't think of a time when I've sent you something that I've written Where you guys responded? And it wasn't helpful. I mean in 90% of the time I changed the things you suggest to change because I wasn't clear or you brought up a good point and I hadn't thought of And I do want to get circle back to preaching because I think that's another conversation to talk about because it's very difficult for Preachers to get good feedback.

I want to give you a chance to Add into this conversation Justin before I I circle us back to talk a little bit about Some of the the social media twitter stuff we were just alluding to do you want to say anything else about this self-improvement and writing I do think that very few of us are so gifted at thinking and writing that we don't need help and I I would resonate with what Collins and I feel like the older I get in so many ways. I feel like there's so much more that I don't know and My self doubt at some level even rises I'm just eager for feedback and to see how it communicates with other people because when you write something It's not like it just enters some vault that gets Graded at some cosmic level the whole point of it is to communicate with people And so you want to run by something to see what people actually think does this make sense Um, is it clear? Was it compelling? Did it make you want to keep reading? So it's a way of field testing what you're doing and I think we Reject that step kind of at our own peril. There's just there's no benefit to it and the key is to find the sort of people that you trust because You could send those pieces ahead of time Kevin to Really strong critics of yours and that that might be helpful at a certain level But it's not going to be the sort of help that you would Expect or somebody who just you know, send it to your mom and she thinks this is brilliant.

Kevin. Thank you so much You always say it exactly right and so finding that the right sort of critic and Dialogue partners is probably one of the most important things. Yeah And maybe that's a good segue because it ties into these both of these conversations we're having Uh, we were talking I think it was last week just about how Marshall McLuhan's famous dictum that the medium is the message That we can naively think that we have a message and no matter how it goes out on what sort of medium It's always the same and fail to realize that you know the medium If it isn't the message, it certainly shapes the message and I was just relating What I had heard someone recently Observe that print was undeniably tied to Protestantism.

We know that but it also was a shaping and shaped by Protestant uh religion of the word Radio tied to the rise of totalitarianism perhaps television tied to the rise of kind of demagogic presidency or just you know president as Communicator in chief above all else and then social media with a rise of populism But all of us are on social media blogging twitter. Maybe you guys are on the other platforms as well How do you think? That particular medium affects the message and what are Possibilities that can be for good and what are some of the pitfalls? And I have a few theories that maybe we'll get

into but I might start with you Colin because you're very observant with these things and even more dialed in than the rest of us How has this changed? I mean Justin's been blogging for a long time and I've been blogging for over 10 years But a lot of this social media stuff has changed. How have you seen it changed? And how in particular is there a danger that as that's changed it might be changing us or how we communicate? I've actually been thinking about this a lot lately because during this lockdown I'm becoming increasingly sensitive to social media.

It's been more discouraging to me I just sort of I have this sense of regret like oh no, this is really going to tear me down It's going to bring me down when I look at twitter and I look at facebook I think um, I don't be very interested to know what you guys think about this because I I do think that something changed That now our reaction is the news And there is the expectation of this performative outrage And what i've been trying to figure out is that it doesn't appear to be any it's not like one group Does this it's not like only the right does this or only the left does this or only christians do this or only Communists do this it seems to be endemic to the system itself There seems to be an inherently reactive nature to this And so what i've noticed a lot is that with social media there's an expectation that Somebody must be blamed And this wrong must be fixed And that's just the default now and again it doesn't matter which side you're on and so everybody somehow senses that I'm I'm I'm defending myself and people and things that I love against to some kind of conspiracy That's trying to take us down And I don't know why we think our performative outrage is accomplishing that But it almost seems I you know, I've got an interview That's out now with you've all lavin And it seems like We now believe that when you say something you have accomplished something I think that's new guys I mean, I know you can go back my wife and I were talking about this and she was pointing out that There we we now do cause marketing celebrity marketing But then I went back to the activism of the Vietnam era. So i'm not sure all of that is really new But this combination of performative outrage, there's always somebody who must be blamed There's always somebody who must fix this There's always some conspiracy that i'm trying to out and my reaction is itself the news and whenever something bad happens I am obligated to perform according to the expectations of my tribe I'm i'm really worried about this i'm worried about this for our kids I'm worried about this for myself That i'm wondering if this is going to be a long-term takeaway for me with the lockdown because I do think i'll just close with this I think more people have more time on social media now Because of the lockdown and I think I think people are agitated. You know, they're looking for connection and I thought you know, so many crises Draw out the best in people and they bring out solidarity I feel like this has been the opposite I think it's getting worse And um and i've been surprised by some of the controversies that have proceeded as if there's no Huge, you know global pandemic even going on right now So I don't know what you guys think and I try not to exaggerate this but I think this is different like growing up If something happened in the news would anybody care what you thought About it.

What would you do? You send a letter to the editor. Maybe you call in to a show Right wouldn't matter. That's really insightful.

What do you think Jason you follow this stuff a lot? Yeah, I totally agree with what Kallen is just saying I think that is insightful and I think it's right and it's worrisome and it also feels like it's one of those things where it's difficult to put the genie back in the bottle like What do we do other than just to say I'm going to go cold turkey and I don't know what people are saying and I'm not going to participate in it. Um I mean, I think that you guys model social media better than I do and not looking at your mentions as much and I think heaven the way that you do it probably is Exemplary better than than what I'm doing even though I'm I'm trying It just a little bit of a different angle Um from Kallen and this might seem a little bit more benign but the very nature of Twitter as an example that you have to compress your thought into um You know now it's 280 characters I remember one time John Piper did a controversial Some I can't even remember what the controversy was at the moment, but it was like three tweets kind of a little string of three tweets in Rachel Held Evans um The late Rachel Held Evans tragically passed away re quote retweeted one of his tweets And you know did her thing where she made him look bad and kind of called upon others to to pounce and I remember Piper saying by email it was a classic mistake in his part That he always wants every tweet to stand alone and he kind of made a mistake there and It was an argument. So he was it was kind of a three step argument But somebody can take one step of your argument out of context without Anybody knowing that there was a second part or something that qualified it But she means that it's almost inherently Contrary to careful reasoning and to nuance If you want to make an argument arguments take steps They require clarity on terms they require Proper procedures in terms of logical connections from one premise to reach a conclusion And it's just very difficult to do that.

So Unless you're merely tweeting to do fun stuff about whether Michael Jordan is the greatest of all time which he is Or if you're linking to things where you can make a bigger argument Uh to try to argue on Twitter Is really really difficult and just seems counterproductive. So nuance is lost But then it's required that you Present things in the most provocative way that get the most attention because we're all creatures of feedback So If you do a tweet and literally nobody likes it and nobody responds to it There's always so many times that you're going to do that and uh Do you realize I'm just wasting my uh Finger strength and tweeting this out Uh, what's the point now if I make it a little bit more provocative if I make it a little less nuanced all sudden Hey, look at this reaction. It's a little bit of Pavlovian dog Interaction there that you get that feedback and you realize this is being rewarded if I say it this way and it's not rewarded If I am more careful if I'm more nuanced and there's just these expectations.

I mean an 800 word Column say by David Brooks Allows him to set forth an argument to cite some facts if you were to do an 800 word String of tweets people just say what is wrong with this guy. This is crazy. What you're just going on and on and on Everything

about the medium is just saying be short be concise.

I only have two seconds If you don't tell me in two seconds, i'm moving on So there's a lot of things that are unhealthy about that whole dynamic Yeah, I think that's really good and one of the things i've been thinking about lately and let's just take people of You know think of christians basic Lee of some goodwill Uh in online spaces blogging twitter facebook posts I think some of the inherent difficulty Is because online media like that Straddles different kinds of communication for example If you're writing a book A book is not immediate Justin knows that better than anyone. It is a long process through a lot of layers Now you may be responding to somebody else's book or ideas out there, but it's far from immediate And it's not personal now you can make a book personal you can attack people you can be responding But it's much more difficult to do Take that as one a book on the other end take a conversation sitting down around a table with someone unlike a book. It's both immediate and personal So there are certain things in a book That are expected generally a kind of dispassioned Analysis, I mean you may be passionate about it, but the way you respond you're not called upon to maybe come alongside and assuage the the feelings of those who you're whereas if you're having a conversation and a person of Across from you seems really upset Well, yeah, that's what you do as a christian or just as a human being you say Whoa, what what's going on? Are you okay? Did I say something that that's how you relate when you are personal and immediate And it seems like one of the struggles Is twitter blogging online? We go back and forth which one of these are we trying to do and Depending on who you are and what you're talking about you may have a different Aim for it.

So I I often you know and I'm more on the I treat online discussion as I'm putting out information. I'm giving you content if you want to respond, but the nature of people often talk about the conversation And some people use that as a euphemism meaning. I'm going to say stuff I kind of use it that way other people are really thinking I'm in a conversation.

You're going to say something. I'm going to say something back So if you're around the table, it's expected You say something I say something if you have a book Yeah, you may but there's no or a journal article that's you know has a nine month delay But a blog a tweet It's sort of unsure should you be going back and forth? Should there be a conversation? And then you have a lot of people saying well you're you're not you're not listening to me And I sympathize with that and I'm frustrated by it the same time because I think it straddles that What sort of medium are we doing here? Uh, are we talking about ideas and we're it's more like a book in which case I'm I'm not trying to figure out. We're not doing a group counseling session.

We're we're debating publicly ideas Or is it really more of a personal conversation? And and I think what we often get In online instead of the best which is you can be quick. You can be clarifying You can have many experts way in sometimes you get that but you

often get the worst virtue signaling tribal harsh Victimhood and I think all of these Inherent difficulties with the medium are then Exacerbated when it comes to conversations that are already fraught with difficulty whether it's racial Or it's gender where there's already tension because then it's I'm quite apart from just disagreeing Or maybe you don't know the person you're not even sure that you're really talking about the thing in the same way Um wait a second you didn't listen to how how I'm feeling in this I don't dismiss that because if you're at my kitchen table, I very much Am wanting to know how you're feeling about it and I don't want to be rude But if we're not having that sort of conversation and we're debating ideas Then it can become sort of emotionally manipulative or hijacking so I That's someone's probably written about that. I've just been ruminating on that for the past few days Uh Am I onto anything? Is it any that makes you yeah? Well, here's here's one thing that can come out in this podcast.

So again, we've known each other for a long time We know each other in person and we know each other You know through text and phone calls and all that kind of different stuff and so kevin I think about Just watching your your career watch you grow up as a friend and all that kind of stuff and it's interesting to me that We've talked about this a lot, but when when you tend to write something on your blog that is constructive That is mainly here's something that I think you should know about and i'm going to work it through Especially a theological talk theological topic like your primer You know as well as I do that it almost never gets any attention gets no attention no attention. Okay, so Now we also know let's look at your life. You've got a lot of kids You you're you're you're leading your home Do you're you're caring for your wife? You are leading a church you're preaching twice a week um, you know, you're doing all kinds of constructive stuff Catechical kind of work But one thing i've noticed is that you tend to see your blog as the medium to respond to somebody Yeah, and a lot of your responses whether they be a book review or something like that Have tended to be the things that get the most attention Okay, for sure and I think what happens is it actually means then that a lot of people Think of you as the person they see on the blog And I think that's one of the biggest differences that I noticed being a good friend of yours versus seeing the public Kevin Deung is that people tend to Not see you the way I do because they're only seeing you in that blog medium Which is where it's tend to be tends to be a reactive medium and where you tend to be using it that way Not as a constructive one.

Yeah. Yeah, exactly So I don't know if we've talked about this I think before but that's what I think of Well, and I think it's very hard. We've said this too.

I think it's much harder for pastors to be Bloggers than it used to be because I think I don't want to say it has to be a full time, but really it is for the people who are Ready to get on there with a hot take ready to be invested you need to have a lot of time To set aside and even if a fraction of what I write on my blog are Responsive to some current controversy. It's really a fraction, but it's it's like you said The three-fourths of the fraction nobody really pays attention to it's just sort of Going on teaching didactic sort of

stuff and then the responsive stuff gets Attention and and I don't know how well I do this, but I try to do it In a way that's mindful of the different dynamics that I was just talking about that as much as I want to think of it as Dydactic exchange of ideas that not everyone on there is is reading it that way and so I want To do the caveat and try to try to do the best I can to be heard by those who are Asking different questions and are wanting me to speak to some that's what I did You know most recently in one of my blog posts, but that can be difficult to do and it just one last thing I'll adjust and go you know, I've I've learned The hard way I mean I maybe told this story before but when I first started blogging. This is like my second or third blog post I did a very snarky Post about a christian author I thought it was kind of clever, but this is before I even knew anyone was paying attention to anything I was saying And it was about a week later.

I was at speaking at a christian college at an event And the person who was affiliated with this other person's ministry So friends of his came up to me at this event made a beeline and I thought What and he I mean he read me the ride act and just said That that was so snarky you did this to this person that I care about you And I was really back on my heels because I was new to this medium. This was 2009 I just thought we're just kind of doing fun things and You know, I don't know if he was 100 right in his rebuke of me, but he was he was at least more than 50 right and And in the lord's providence now I can look back and say though I'm sure I had to learn the lesson many times after that It was helped for me early on I realized I have to be mindful What if the person i'm writing about? Walks in the room tomorrow. What if I see him or her now that shouldn't mean that i'm a coward and I don't put it But it is I think Shaped how I try to write about things would I be embarrassed Uh that this person is going to read this Uh on the other side of their computer and that I would sit down with them tomorrow and I think that simple act in the lord's kindness by this person who was uh Rebuking me and and we actually had some subsequent conversations that were pretty good Uh really helped me to just kind of get my bearings about what I didn't didn't want to do Justin, how do you think of this you have a long history and using social media and using it really well We've been grateful for it.

Yeah, I certainly made uh my mistakes too and and try to learn from them and try not to keep going back to them but I remember somebody making that observation once about we have to remember that there's real people and and one snarky critics said Come on. You haven't forgotten that that is a real person out there, but but functionally we can we can Start to treat this person as like a disembodied Icon or mascot for some theological tribe and not realize uh, they have families and they have ministries and they make mistakes and they are real people I think one of the funny things about a lot of this is that if you have a question about somebody Uh, or you want to press back on an article Most of us are relatively accessible like if it's a professor, you can find their email online, but we tend to We've already used the word performative We tend to want to ask those questions out loud so that other people can listen in and see that we're issuing a a

review or a question and so Going back to your analogy Kevin. It's it's not just kind of the the book or the personal conversation around the lunch table Uh, but it's almost like an auditorium.

So there's You know going for a public event where there's a debate and you get to ask questions and you want everybody to hear your question Um, and then To stick with the twitter thing It it's a little bit like watching a debate between William Lank Ragan and atheist I'm wailing Craig does a lot of debates. What if they could only go like one sentence at a time like okay, Dr Craig Opening sentence and he gives a sentence response from the atheist like it's really the worst possible way to have a conversation But somehow we've become a culture to thinking yeah, this is normal way to go kind of back and forth and Another grievance that I thought of uh Good. Good.

I thought of another one. I thought of another one too Justin I'm gonna have a long list when we uh, hang up from the podcast but And another grievances to see like some theological topic breakout and two or three people go back and forth pretty vigorously Uh, and then people commenting a couple of days later Uh, a big fight or twitter blew up the other day on this topic. It's like I was kind of watching that conversation I think we're like three people that were engaged in conversation, but twitter Theological twitter blew up on thursday.

Yeah, and with that is the The Jesus Juke that often happens even on We could be evangelizing and we're wasting our time Yeah Well, I um, this is this is a grievance that I hadn't thought of before as well. Uh, I think One of my you guys are not guilty of this not that I'm aware of thankfully But one of the ways I've been wounded most as in ministry has been in the cases that you talked about there, Justin where an issue comes up publicly That Could be somebody could ask me about They can call me they can knock on my door They can visit me. They can send me an email.

They can stop me at church And they don't But they decide to go public about it And they're wrong with their facts about it or they just assume the worst possible interpretation of it I can think of a number of times where that's happened and consistently that's been one of my just one of the most painful things And happens in ministry. I'm not sure why it has to be that way, but it does Suggest to me as we said earlier the performative outrage dynamic of social media That we all need to be aware of of practicing our righteousness before men including practicing our righteousness by pointing out the supposed unrighteousness of someone else and um I I mean, I've had thankfully I've had some really good Conversations even reconciliation forgiveness extended to friends where that's happened um, but um And I'm sure I've I've done the same to others Um, but that's just it's one of those. I think we could all grow In that if just you have a problem you have a question ask somebody So how do you guys think through that because we've all seen the the foe I think foe outrage of Nobody came to me with their with their You know book review nobody before sending it to me matthew

18 Uh, and yet it's it's not It's not black or white.

I mean if you guys were going to say something critical about a book or a post I would expect and I would be heard if you didn't say something Or if someone in my church Because there's a relationship there Uh, but I don't expect I don't expect people to have to seek me out before I mean you make a public comment Your your statements are public And people should be able to respond to them publicly That's not a matthew 18 which has to do with confronting somebody in their sin So how do you guys think through when you would go to someone and when you feel like somebody should have gone to you? Yeah, I I didn't think None of the situations I was thinking about kevin would be kind of those public kinds of things they tend to be a controversy erupts and Individuals are involved and there's some confusion about who is responsible for what or who did what? And if somebody wanted to come they they know me and they could easily ask me for that clarity But instead of asking for the clarity they assume the worst of me Or of the institution that I serve and go public with that in ways that actually make the situation worse Which they would find out if they had just asked me or anybody else connected to it So I hadn't I hadn't really thought of it connected that way, but I do agree there is a problem Where that kind of thing can be manipulated to say don't ever criticize me publicly Even when I've said something publicly and they can easily be turned around and manipulated I write something you write back about something and then I say well, why didn't you talk to me first? Well, you didn't talk to me first, right? I don't think you had to so I agree I think it's a little different from what I was talking about. Yeah Don't make a good point Well, I agree with your point and just conversely too just because somebody writes something about you doesn't mean you have to respond just because people have access to us Even if they find our email, right again, it depends on Yeah, how much email you get and we all know Justin and crazy busy Look up the video between Justin and I was crazy. Yeah, how many how many emails in your inbox right now, Justin? 37,910.

Oh, that's all right. I'm read. I'm like I've no one read and I have like three emails But there's a cost to that in my So Justin, how do you think? So, crazybusy@gmail.com if you want to email But just because someone can get access to us Doesn't mean They they need to get a response from us But yet there are certain people that have a relationship as someone from my church does one of my elders do So that's when people say you don't listen to x whatever the x group is I want to say no I don't automatically listen to people that I don't know And have no right to put a burden upon my time Except that they found out how to get ahold of me Well and listen is often Code for submit to or agree with You know, so it's entirely possible that I have listened to x and don't find x's arguments compelling I disagree with x So sometimes, you know kind of that shut up and listen means shut up and agree with me No, which is not a great way to have a conversation I find it interesting the three of us are associated with gospel coalition in different ways but to see the number of kind of conspiracy theories or Accusations of

motives or connecting of dots of of course.

This is the way it really works or this is what was motivating This or that and to be somewhat on the inside and to kind of know what's going on behind the scenes and to see how often that really does miss the mark So I think a public document invites public scrutiny why make it public if if you're not inviting Pushback feedback Affirmation denial whatever Um, but I think what Collins alluding to is people connecting the dots Well, we all know that this must be the case and this there must be this connection with that person And therefore this is what's really going on And so often it's just not true and could have been cleared up if somebody hate So the the more that it's a public thing respond to public arguments the more that you're kind of Surmising that I think this trend matches up with this trend and therefore that must mean that there's this connection Which is the real motivation despite what they say here's what here's what they've publicly seen as their motivation Let me tell you what's really going on to that degree. I think Uh, you need to do your homework and reach out privately before you start kind of connecting those sort of dots Yeah, I mean we could talk about TGC fodder and I mean All of us would I mean people could point to us over a decade plus of tgc articles even from our own writing probably and say What about that? And i'm perfectly fine to say yeah, I I didn't agree with that or oh, maybe we missed the mark there Uh, and that is totally fine and reasonable and fair What I can say for so we make mistakes sometimes we get things wrong sometimes we need course corrections. What's absolutely? Never been the case.

I've never been in any smoke filled rooms Uh, there's never once a decision that was made You know that that i'm aware of with us that was well This is going to really hurt our our funding or this is Motivated by money. There's all sorts of ways that all of us involved in any institution get ego and pride and hurt I mean all of that happens in the in the human spirit, but the the cabal sort of talk is just It's an easy way to try to explain what are usually the product of small complicated diffuse situations people personalities Okay end of that books we've been saving our books too little time and this is a podcast about books. So here we go first, uh When it's been a ton of time on this and I should have given you a heads up on this one but what are some books that you have intentionally reread Books that you not just a resource you go back to karson's john commentary the esv study bible But books that over the years or even looking in a not too distant future.

I think I'm going to reread that I make a point because it is I learned from it To read it again. I'll give you A few that i've done this certainly calvin's institutes is one that I've read cover to cover a few times and i'm sure in the future will say I got to read through that again Uh, burr cost systematic theology because it's such a crisp clear distillation really of bobbing but just have Reformed theology that i've gone through that said I want to read through that uh loit john's preaching and preachers is one that every so many years i'll say Even though you don't agree with everything in it Just to spark the the for

me the the romance of preaching and to learn from it and kind of be enthused again for the gift that is preaching Uh, i'll take that off the shelf and read it again Maybe you know, I read chronicles and arnie a couple times or lord of the rings but as far as nonfiction books Uh Creeds confessions of course it's sort of a different category, but those three books Come to mind i'll try to think of some others. What about you guys? What do you reread on purpose? Justin I don't do very much rereading Um, probably did more of that kind of early seminary days I struggle more than you guys do to get the true books uh in general so I think the one that comes most readily to mind that i've probably reread the most number of times and maybe not Some cover to cover and some just dipping in would be augustons confessions um I've just never once regretted opening the confessions Uh Given the distance that it is.

I mean of of all the things that we read outside of scripture It's one of the oldest that we have kind of in our christian corpus And the way in which it is so incredibly relevant today Obviously, there's there's cultural even a little bit of theological distance But the way in which he's speaking into the human heart uh, the way he's really conducting the the longest sustained prayer in I think ancient uh church history literature Uh, I just find an utterly remarkable book and and it's not that long relatively you know compared to something like kevin's institutes uh Comparatively short, but the richness that it repays from rereading We have lots of different translations too. So that makes it a different experience each time you go back to it Uh, but I have gary will's uh relatively literal translation from the latin Uh, which he actually also did kind of commentaries along with it explaining his translation choices It's not as poetic as some of the other ones like like chadwicks, but Um, I've I've never once regretted Reopening augustons confessions. That's really good.

Colin. What do you reread? Shelby foot? Yeah, I don't I don't do much of it. Um, so you guys keep representing Shelby foot probably because it's on the video that we're watching here It's on my top shelf up there You're the president of the shelving foot.

I did I am It's officially on my wikipedia page the founder of the shelby foot society. So i'll get to that in a second Vice president secretary. Yeah, that's true.

That's also true. Um, I will I will I will say that all of the books that I have a hunch that kevin's going to ask us about ministry books So All of these would qualify all of the ones that i'm going to share would also call would qualify as rereads for me, but um the books that I tend to enjoy the most and really just really get into but miss the most at the same time are long historical texts either novels or Or nonfiction so it would be shelby foot because it's so long and there's so many names and there's so many details That a lot of those names and details get lost And you miss the significance of them So you as you add to your body of knowledge of that event you can go back And all of a sudden these things that you had missed these clues that you had missed Are all of a sudden there for you this whole time? So you can reread that every Five or ten years and if you're

growing in your proficiency in that subject matter It really rewards the rereading and he the other one I was We keep mentioning him what was shelby foot the um the epic trilogy the civil war. Yeah, uh, so he um Became famous in the 90s and and sold more than a million copies of these long three volumes about the civil war, but the um You know there's a lot of complaining about christian writing and kind of in In keeping with this conversation.

We're having today. I don't want to just heap a bunch of criticism there But one of the reasons I enjoy reading him is because he approaches his history From the perspective of a novelist And one of the things that a novelist does is that he takes us inside The characters and we see through their eyes what's happening and there's a sense of drama and contingency Whereas history is plagued in my view by the omniscient narrator who always knows how everything is going to turn out And I think it sucks it dry of the drama and of the sort of human Morality play that some that's this kind of working itself out in there. So so again Shelby foot does that because he's a novelist who then turned to history The other is is very similar It's I had mentioned watching this recently and kevin rightly called me out on text about it But if you look at vassili groseman stalin grad and life and fate It's it's it's um again as I talked about it before it's taking war in peace But it's applying it to the great patriotic war, which is what the russians call world war two And um, it's just like those russian novels where the the cast of characters is overwhelming And so you just you know them by the end But like you've invested 400 pages and you don't even quite know who everybody is by that point So those are ones that I look forward to rereading someday.

I only read them last summer So I look forward to rereading them because now i'll be able to go back and say oh now I see what's happening Here, um, and that'll be really fun because as i've said before on this podcast, I love reading these long novels, but It literally can take me 100 200 300 pages before I even really understand For I enter into that world so so I don't do a lot of rereading but that's what I would save it for I just read the wikipedia pages for books and that seems to help Yeah, I don't need to read it. I see if there's a movie brother kara maza was a quick breeze Yeah, luckily for you kevin as I shared last week there is now a mini series of life and fate so you can sit down and Enjoy it. It's you know, I am movies But we'll try okay, okay, uh This isn't a podcast for pastors and lots of people who aren't pastors, but I imagine That that's probably a core audience of our myriad upon myriad of listeners far and wide Is married mean 10 And I thought I just meant a bunch okay.

All right a bunch and a bunch and a bunch bunch and a bunch Uh, what are some of your favorite? Pastoral ministry books are both both of you elders at your local church Justin are you or you were? Or an elder so Uh Pastors in the same way that most people use the word pastor but very much invested in ministry Concerned about the health of the church and pastoral ministry What are some of your favorites that you've read or that you recommend to others? Justin you got a list for us. Yeah, um in terms of preaching

john studs between two worlds Which is how that's the name of my blog Somebody should name a blog after edge count Right Yeah, I looked over on my shelf. I was like that'll work That's kakashi written all over it And what are the two worlds? Um, Iowa and Nebraska, okay, because it's not heaven and earth kind of it's not between those two worlds Which is just called suit city between Nebraska, right on the mozzarella Uh, no, it's it's on the preaching task of connecting the the biblical world and the contemporary world and kind of spanning those two and communicating from one to the other Uh, when I was at bethlehem doing the apprenticeship program.

I think piper assigned loyd jones preaching and preachers Uh, studs between two worlds and supremacy of god and preaching by piper himself And I think those three have really shaped a lot of my conception of Uh preaching your question was on pastoral ministry. Yeah, I had a little bit broader um I think A lot of the little books in the nine mark series have been particularly helpful when I was an elder just for us thinking through practical issues about church membership or about elders And And another nine marks book which is currently being revised and it's going to come out in a second edition Um, i'm not a hundred percent sure if it'll have the same name, but the deliberate church by mark devor and Paul Alexander I think it has not gotten the quite the same attention to some of the other books in the nine mark series, but I thought it was really really Practical and helpful. It's not necessarily your inspiring Uh, I mean, it's inspiring at a certain level But just the nuts and bolts of practical pastoral ministry Um, deliberate is not the most catchy Adjective to describe a church, but it it really is indicative of their intentionality and deliberate nature of of thinking through An entire church service kind of from the ground up and uh, it really impacted me and appreciated it a great deal um Another one that I just keep hearing about as a crossway book, uh, zach s winds the imperfect pastor um, just encouraging pastors Uh to echo the john the baptist that I am not the christ That's primarily titled sensing jesus or no sensing jesus was the original bigger edition of it Oh, okay life and ministry at the human being.

I don't think anybody read it, but those of few of us who did it was amazing Yeah, so then he revised it and shortened it as the imperfect pastor and one of the key overarching principles is just what john the baptist said I am not the christ Uh, there is one who knows everything and is all powerful and can be omnipresent and i'm not him as a pastor as an elder Um, I need to point you to him. I can't be him. I can't be everywhere.

I don't know everything I can't fix everything, but that's why we have a savior. So I I can't functionally take on the the christ rule I'm imperfect person. I'm the sinner who needs guidance and, um, need to look to the great shepherd So those are few that I think have influenced me and the way I think about pastoral ministry Good.

I got a good long list but kalen, what do you have pass from that tree slash preaching books? I'll try to be quick. How blessed are we? By an absolute amazing abundance of resources and I'm just going to keep talking up crossways as much as I can until they

become our sponsors So joustin that's your responsibility here to figure out. No, I mean when when I started thinking about this No, I thought I could I could give a lot of a lot of answers to this and I can think of other works from jonathan edwards that I strongly recommend to people I can think of even some Social psychology that's been really helpful to me that's gotten me through some difficult times ministry wise From one of my favorite authors jonathan height, but I thought I'd be a little bit more straightforward here Because I can in good confidence recommend these books to anybody Uh, and in fact I would I just yeah, I can't think of anybody I wouldn't recommend them to so First one from my old pastor liberating ministry from the success syndrome by canton barber hues My years spent as an as a member and then as an intern at college church in weaton Uh, which is interestingly where we were assigned the deliberate church for the internship class Um, this book was just um, it really explains it's it's For those of us who weren't really around all the way through the 70s and the 80s into the 90s It might not land quite the same way, but I hope it does because kent and barber's story is remarkable And it really helped set you on the right path of ministry Um, I also did have zak s one sensing jesus And if you can find one of those contraband copies now one of those uh, ad apparent copies of sensing jesus Or of course use the smaller version there, but um, you know, there's i'm convinced and we should talk about this another time kevin And I have batted this around but i sense that There's something rotten at the core of how we understand calling to ministry And this book will help set um set young ministers I think especially straight on that path The next one again.

We're three for three here with crossway Memoirs of an ordinary pastor the life and reflections of tom karson by d.a karson And of course, I've had the privilege of working for dr karson and studying, uh, under him And of all the books of his many many many books the one that's most consistently referenced I think by young people in ministry is this one About his dad. That's the one that comes up, you know, like it's not going to win Didn't win all those book awards like the gagging of god, but I bet more people are reading this one I haven't I sign it for my best promenistry class and i'll get to some of the other books I sign But and i've told us to don a bunch of times because Invariably and they had to write a reflection paper Invariably they they write things like This is the best book i've read in seminary Or i'm making my wife read this book with me or This is so much what I want to be or I am reading this book with tears. I mean it It's it's one of undoubtedly their their favorites and their whole seminary experience Yeah, so last one that i'll mention senator church by tim keller um you know the books been out for about 10 years and I think with tim's volume of publishing That it's easy even though he sold lots of copies of these books and they have been well reviewed That people take it for granted And i'm telling you you don't have to agree with every single thing you read about in this book But the amount of learning experience study That is evident in this book is remarkable and as somebody who looks up to tim so much and I just I I sit there thinking There's no way to microwave the kind of Just analysis and understanding and perceptiveness that comes through in this And I think that's a lot of tim's gifting

especially and You know, I just of all different things I could reference um It's just You know, I go past the basics like if you haven't read center church.

I hope that you'll read it It's not only one of my favorite books, but it's also one of the favorite books of my two-year-old daughter Who loves to call it center church, which I think that works too That works too. You take deliberate church and center church. Yes, and they're very there be Quite different in some of the things they're advocating for and their sensibilities but they're both the sort of books by seasoned pastors who thought and have continue to think a lot About how to do ministry and there's something very instructive in that and I've read both of those books And love both of those brothers and there are things in both of those books that I disagree with But there's a lot that I learn and I learn because they have really thought about how to do church from building on their principles and really doing something to model what they think is the most effective and Scriptural way to do church.

I don't like that phrase do church. You know what I mean? Here's some of my books. I teach pastoral ministry class at rts charlotte And so I always have to go I have 12 or 15 books.

I want to assign and I have to sign three of them But spurgent lectures to my students Just great Richard Baxter reformed pastor You you have to understand the context and you can read that and think if I don't visit 17 families a day I'm not a real pastor, but his care for the sheep is really instructed instructive read that with timothy wittmers book on Shepherding elder shepherd Yeah, yeah, what's the title of it? Shepherd leaders. Yes. Yeah, really that's really practical on how to think about how you would shepherd your church Piper's book.

I mean one of my favorite Piper books probably my top three is brothers were not professionals and a lot of it isn't a true It's it's so much has to do with when we read the books. Where are we? It's the book that met us I mean I read it my first year in pastoral ministry another one a crossway one I talked to justin about this that I don't think gets enough attention Is uh, Jesus driven ministry by jith franando There's a lot of wisdom in there and from a non western perspective, but someone is very familiar with the west Uh was helpful another one in my class. It's outside of our circles.

I don't know if you guys have ever read david hanson uh, he's sort of a Eugene peterson inspired You know had a couple small churches in montana then he was in since then i've lost track So I I don't know where the brother is or what his trajectory has been But when he wrote these books And I think I was introduced them because he was a gordon conwell graduate at one point But when he wrote these books in the probably the 90s early 2000s Uh, there's one the art of pastoring He has a book on prayer. They were very good. I thought they they took the kind of Inspirational slow down sort of Eugene peterson ethos, but had some better Theological guardrails Charlie wingard has a really

good book practical for pastors Jason Hallopolis has one for new pastors Uh, David Wells.

I think is really helpful to just get a kind of a sociological theological cultural grid for what's happening in the world Gregor they're great the book of pastoral rule preaching you mentioned all the ones I would have mentioned loi jones piper Stott david helm that that one that in the nine mark series on expositional preaching Uh, if you don't know How to start what do I do? What does it look like in a very short practical book? David helm is good and the book by gerry miller and uh, who's the co-author with ice media saving eudicus Um gerry's a great Irish brother doing really good work in australia now they really are malar malar gemmalar I think That's how it's spelled. That's how it's yeah, but I don't think it's how it's pronounced Yeah, this is riveting podcast. This is riveting podcast anyway Yes other than um really advocating I think for 23 minute sermons on the dot or whatever the really Yeah, so I didn't find Anglican Well in gerry's Presbyterian, so I don't know Yeah, but so there's lots of really helpful Things out there.

Here's what as we bring this at the 75 minute mark and I wanted to get more of this but we'll do it quickly So I preach every week almost every week you guys have probably done some preaching. I know you have But rather than hear me talk about preaching. I would love as a preacher to hear from You guys not regularly preachers what What and what might be surprising for us pastors? What are you? Looking for in good preaching what preaching strikes you as good and and what are Some things that make bad preaching when you're listening to it And uh if you want to pull in contemporary examples for the good we don't need to call out people on the bad But feel free to do so, but I'm just curious as your friend You know, it's really really hard for pastors to get honest feedback.

We talked about that earlier in the podcast, you know three days ago Uh to get honest feedback on preaching either. It's just lots of handshakes at the door. Oh, thank you passwords exactly.

I need to hear You know or just critical people but to really know what's working. What's not you guys sit in the pews chairs How do you assess preaching and what would you want pastors to hear? Keep doing more of this do less of that Justin Uh, that's a great question Uh One thing that I notice And far too many sermons is that it's all indicative and it never gets around to the imperative so Giving a lot of really good information and we know that Uh, the imperatives are built upon indicative but Now i've sat through entire sermons to thank you. You've never called us to do anything.

It may be about repentance and you've never Exorted the congregation to repent to submit to To do x y or z. So that would be one thing is just Don't make it so indicative oriented that you never get around to actually calling people to do something that the word's calling them to do Uh, a second one would be Can I listen to the sermon without ever having to refer to my bible? Um, I think it can be filled with lots of Theology and lots

of good spiritual encouragement, but When i'm hearing a sermon, I want To have to have my bible open to be following along to to see if these things are so To be checking them to see it for myself and I think the best Preaching Alumens the text and draws you into the text rather than just it's different than a theological lecture Theological lecture can be great But that it doesn't you know you don't have to have your nose in the text in order to benefit from it And then the final thing just off the top of my head that comes to mind is To have the sort of structure In mind that when somebody's done the car ride home and you say to the kids what what was the sermon about or what did you get out of it? If it was just a lot of good information, but it there wasn't a clear structure and um, you know, you don't repeat the points or Um, I just think we we all need help as listeners. What's the main point? Where are we going? What did we just cover? um And and maybe drop out kind of long quotes from other people if you know, you're a pastor and your preparation You read this just killer quote from Well some great author see us luis. We always see it's luis source version And and I I'm tempted to do that too.

You come across something. It's great And you think this worked perfectly here, but unless it's two or three lines, you know, if it gets to be two paragraphs It's just you're asking a lot of of the audience to to track with that and to comprehend it. I think That's really good.

Yeah, very true because you you're doing your study and you're really moved by this and Uh, it's just it's the sort of thing that maybe works on the printed page But it's very hard to to get people to track with you I I can be an offender of that great quel-calvin quotes. You're gonna want to hear this in its entirety unabridged Colin, what do you what do you think? How do you assess preaching good and bad? I've been so blessed over the years with a lot of really wonderful Preachers and so um, yeah, I'm just consider myself I just got them very kind to me and my wife when it comes to that And with with yeah very few exceptions and so I think I would agree with Justin about there I really am looking for somebody who opens up the bible and helps me to love god's word and ultimately of course god himself Uh there that's it's pretty pretty simple there and yet you can still kind of lose sight of that I think it's always tempting for pastors Uh to want to use the bible as a as an excuse to launch into whatever they feel like they want to talk about Whatever's on their mind. I think it's a lot easier to prepare That way, you know, you you do that you add in a few anecdotes about kids and kind of call it good um, but I think um One thing that I learned in seminary studying preaching that it has really stuck with me over the years Is that preaching is a unique thing? It's it's different from teaching in so many different ways kind of like in part because the exhortation that joustin was talking about but also because There's some kind of dynamic interaction between the the word of the lord and the word of the communicator of the preacher himself And I think um what tends to really help people to change and to grow in sanctification over time Is when they they see and behold the example in the character of the preacher the relationship with the preacher And as they see that over time and as the cumulative

effect of the messages begins to build It helps to raise the plausibility of this life of godliness And it all kind of works in a mysterious way that you might not be able to remember individual messages, but you remember the effect And you're kind of changed there.

So I guess I would just want pastors to remember that so much of Of their life and their pastoring helps to set up their preaching Um, and so it just depends on which pastor needs to be exhorted to maybe spend a little less time in the study And who needs to spend a little bit more time in the study, but it's just going to be that dynamic interaction Uh that really helps there and so yeah, I mean one thing i've noticed Uh during this I've noticed during this lockdown That my pastor's preaching doesn't come across the same way And I was wondering why Uh And I realize because he's not surrounded by hundreds of people who've known him for decades And love him And react to him when he says things So you can see him up there struggling. He'll say something And there's no reaction and he doesn't know what to do Because that's not he has an ad experience in in 20 plus years of ministry of doing it like that And I think it's because we don't just know him as this person who teaches the bible We know him as somebody we've been in his home. He's been in our home We've been through so many difficult things together.

We've worked together all this kind of stuff and it all fits together Under this banner of what we call preaching And even in that case preaching that's not quote unquote the best according to textbook Can still be exactly what the holy spirit intends for you through the medium of the preacher Yeah, I've certainly experienced that I'm very thankful for the live stream capabilities, but during this stay-at-home time. I've said many times I wouldn't have gone into ministry to do a weekly tv program And uh people will say it seems very natural you're looking around the congregation like people are there and i'm glad for that But it's certainly a different experience And this is uh, you know, I I really thought long and hard about Multi-site at one point and there's maybe different opinions from our listeners out there across the fruited plane but what really decided me against it was I didn't at least multi-site with a video Is uh the preaching event And there's there's a preaching moment that the you even if you're not in a congregation where people are Audibly saying amen go get him preacher. You can tell people are really coughing.

It's anc or it's really quiet There's a hush here They're with me. They're sad. They're quite I mean, you don't throw in jokes to get a response But but that's part of communicating them with you and there's a certain sense of rapport.

So you don't have Any of that When you are preaching just to a live stream and whoever is is watching And I'll just wrap it up by saying any any preachers out there anyone who aspires to that What I agree with Colin just in your thoughts here If if this is one of my hobby horses or I hope it's better than a hobby horse We need to pay attention to the meaning and the mood of the text So not only that we're exegeting the passage

correctly But that we're attending to the mood and I think that helps with the imperative versus indicative Is this passage supposed to feel? Glorious is it supposed to feel like I'm getting a kick in the pants It's supposed to feel scary and they don't all feel the same and if we don't pay attention to the mood We just will import to it our own mood for that week or more likely just our own personality Are we the sort of person who you know? We liked the coach who berated us and made us go run 10 laps and we responded well to that Or we liked the one who always gave an arm around us because we're always feeling down on ourself And the bible has all of that but we need to pay attention to the meaning and the mood and people ought to leave feeling like They've learned something even a very familiar passage even a very well taught congregation I'm not looking for you know scholarly depth necessarily But a connection something because hopefully you're seeing something that you didn't see before And this is where both of you talked about attention to the text I want The best preaching to be tied to the closest attention to the text And so if the best stuff I have for this week is already just stuff I was thinking about And it's not from a new insight that I learned in the text or a connection I saw with this and the rest of god's word Then I think that's the the preaching begins to fall flat over time Uh brothers Thank you. We have tested the patience of our listeners once again to the tune of two or three sermons or one Robust Puritan sermon, but appreciate you brothers and lord willing we'll be back In a week's time and we'll talk more about life and books and cactus bread and everything

[Music] [Silence]