

# FOUNDATIONS FOR OUR FAITH

FROM THE MESSAGES OF ADRIAN ROGERS



## **Foundations for Our Faith, Volume 1**

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## INTRODUCTION

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# FOUNDATIONS FOR OUR FAITH

Books have a great influence on our world. Some have a positive influence, and others have introduced damaging ideas. *Mein Kampf*, Adolf Hitler's manifesto, was the foundation of Nazi philosophies that led to World War II and the Holocaust. *Das Kapital* by Karl Marx was the foundation of the Russian Revolution and led to the formation of communist governments that are still oppressing people today. *The Origin of the Species* by Charles Darwin became the foundation of the theory of evolution that began to push God out of science and education. While these books exploit the evil desires of Mankind, the Book of Romans is the foundation of our Christian faith. It holds God's divine answer to the evil of humanity.

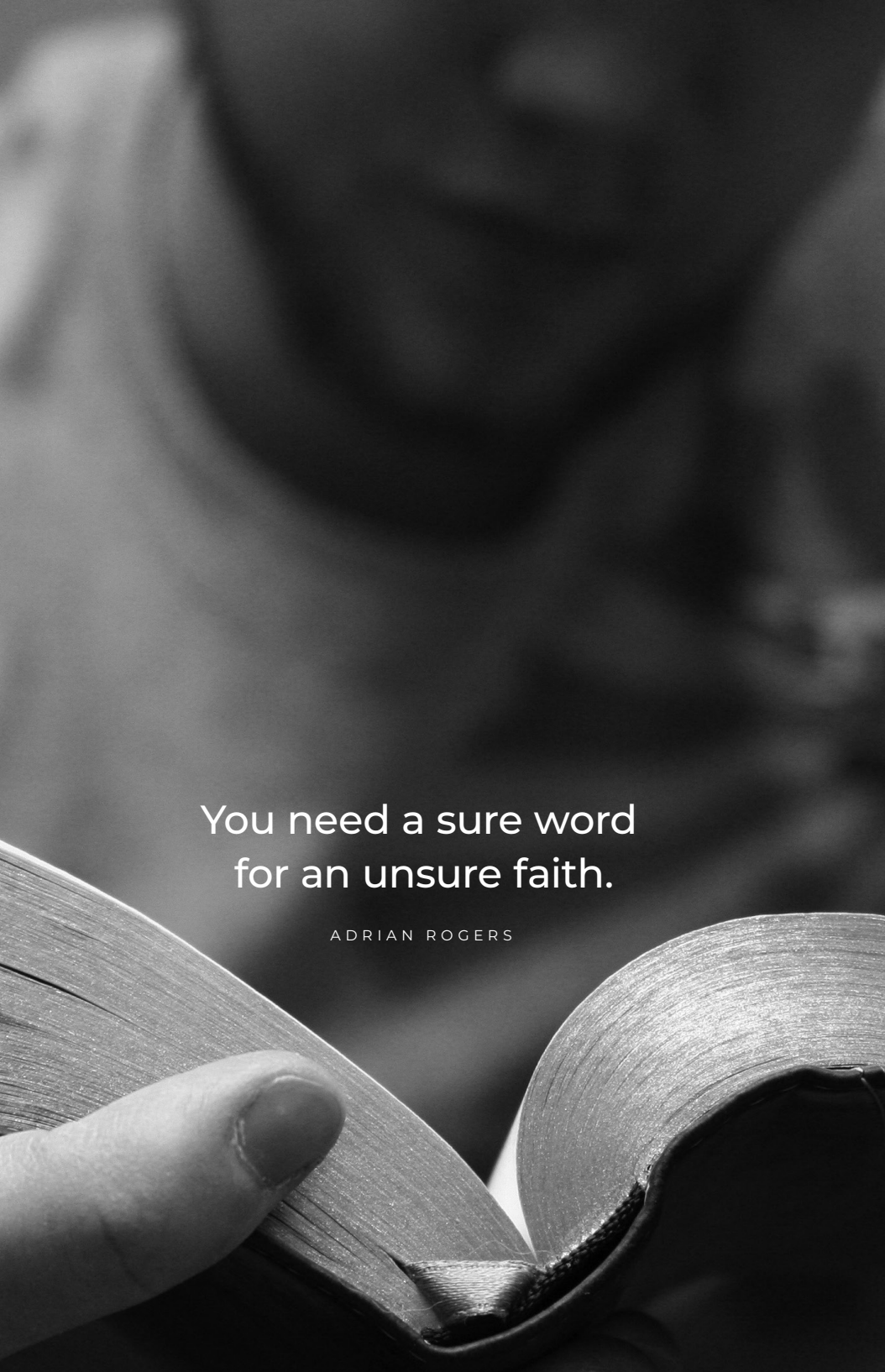
Anyone can see that humanity is on a collision course with disaster and judgment. We see it on the news and in our own communities and families. Wickedness, violence, and destruction can shake our faith and make us wonder whether God sees or cares. But Romans gives us a clear understanding of the Gospel.

The Book of Romans is considered the Magna Carta of our faith, the Constitution of Christianity, and possibly the greatest theological treatise ever written. It exposes the legalism, hypocrisy, immorality, piety, greed, and violence that surrounds us the same way it surrounded the Romans when Paul wrote this letter. This book assures us of our identity, our value, our hope, and our future. The Book of Romans is a foundation for our faith, a solid Word for an unsure age.

We hope that through this study you will develop an unshakable confidence in salvation through grace, and a deeper understanding of the love of the Savior, Jesus Christ.

### WANT MORE?

The audio messages by Pastor Adrian Rogers from which this study is derived are linked using the QR code on page 128 at the end of this study.



You need a sure word  
for an unsure faith.

ADRIAN ROGERS

## WEEK 1

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# THE BOOK THAT CHANGED THE WORLD

### ■ INTRODUCTION

Books have power, but no book has the same power as the Bible. Through it, the power of God has changed the world radically, dramatically, and eternally.

A Roman Catholic monk named Martin Luther tried to get right with God through ritual, penance, good deeds, and by following all the rules of the Catholic Church. But his heart was empty. He took a pilgrimage to Rome and saw the Scala Sancta, believed to be the stairs that Jesus ascended in Pilate's judgment hall. Martin Luther got on his knees on the holy stairs and began to pray on every step, kissing each step as he went up, asking God to bless him, trying to get closer to God. But he said that he was no closer to God when he got to the top than he was at the bottom. As Martin Luther studied the Book of Romans, this verse came alive in his heart and mind:

**For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:17).**

Luther understood justification by faith, the theme of Romans, and was saved. The Protestant Reformation began, and a Great Awakening swept through Europe and ultimately the world.

### ■ PRAY OVER IT

*Dear God, As I study this book that is so foundational to Christianity, give me fresh eyes to see the truth of the Gospel in a new way. Help me to understand the height, the depth, and the breadth of Your love for us. Show me the people around me who need to hear and understand this good news. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

# THE TABLE OF CONTENTS: THE BOOK OF ROMANS

## ■ PONDER IT

Samuel Coleridge, an English poet and theologian, said, “I think that the Epistle to the Romans is the most profound work in existence.”

Before St. Augustine was saved, he was a professor who taught rhetoric and studied philosophy. He followed various philosophers only to become disillusioned by their teaching. One day he heard a child singing “Pick it up and read it. Pick it up and read it.” He recognized it as a message from God and picked up the Bible. The first verse he read was in Romans. His heart was flooded with light, and he turned from his life of sin. He decided to give his life to Jesus Christ and became St. Augustine, one of the great theologians of the Early Church.

John Wesley left England and went to America in 1735 as a missionary to Native Americans. However, he was largely unsuccessful and returned to England discouraged and defeated. He attended a meeting in London where they were using Martin Luther’s commentary to study the Book of Romans, and his heart strangely warmed. He had the assurance of his salvation and went on to become one of the primary preachers in the Great Awakening, a movement that birthed the Methodist Church.

We’re going to start by looking at what is in the Book of Romans—**its table of contents.**

The first three chapters of the book deal with sin; they tell us what’s wrong with the world. Chapters five and six deal with salvation. God doesn’t just show us our sin; He shows us a way out. Chapters seven through eight deal with sanctification. It’s one thing to get saved, but it’s another thing to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Sanctification is a double-jointed word, which simply means “becoming more like Jesus.” Believers go from sin to salvation to sanctification. Chapters nine through eleven deal with sovereignty—showing us that God is sovereign over the Universe and

that God is in charge from eternity past to eternity future. Chapter twelve talks about how we present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable unto God. The end of the book deals with service—it shows us how to serve this sovereign God. It shows, in a very real and practical way, how Christians ought to live with one another.

This is the table of contents that tells us what this wonderful book, this Constitution of Christianity, is all about.

■ **PUT IT IN WRITING**

- If you were stranded on a deserted island and could only have one book of the Bible with you, which one would you pick and why?
- Which topic from the Book of Romans are you most looking forward to learning more about during this Bible study?

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If I were shipwrecked on an island  
and could only choose one book  
of the Bible to take with me, I'd  
take the Book of Romans.

ADRIAN ROGERS



## DAY 2

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# THE AUTHOR: PAUL WAS SAVED

### ■ PONDER IT

We reviewed the table of contents and the preface, so let's talk about **the author of the Book of Romans**. Ultimately, the Holy Spirit is the author, but Paul was the human author.

**Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God (Romans 1:1).**

Paul was a well-educated, Jewish man born in a place called Tarsus. He was fluent in many languages and a world traveler. He was strict in his religious practices and aware of world affairs. In addition to being a Jew, he was also a Roman citizen, which meant he had the rights and privileges of being a free man. He was not subjugated or considered second-class as were other Jewish people under the rule of the Romans. He could travel as he wished. He learned and worked under Gamaliel, one of the best Jewish teachers in that part of the world. On top of that, Paul was part of the strictest religious sect in Judaism, the Pharisees. He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, the highest of the high; he was at the very top of Jewish society.

But something happened to him on the road to Damascus. He met Jesus and was gloriously, wonderfully saved. Before he was saved, his name was Saul. Jesus used his name on the way to Damascus:

**Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4).**

Saul was named after King Saul of Israel. King Saul was a big guy—head and shoulders above everybody else. He was tall, handsome, and arrogant.

If there was anybody who had a reason to boast and strut, it would've been Saul, renamed Paul. But he didn't do that. In Romans 1:1,

the author introduced himself as Paul, which means “little or humble.” Paul lets us know who he is. These verses give an indication of why he changed his name.

**To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given (Ephesians 3:8a).**

**For I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God (1 Corinthians 15:9).**

Paul saw himself in the sight of God as a nobody. He didn't have an inferiority complex; he just knew that he was what he was by the grace of God. So, he began this book using his name as “the little guy.”

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17).**

#### ■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- How did your view of yourself change when you first encountered the saving grace of Jesus?
- What is something you feel like God is calling you to do but you currently feel too small to do it?

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You may be too big for God to use,  
but you'll never be too small.

ADRIAN ROGERS

## DAY 3

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# THE AUTHOR: PAUL WAS A SERVANT

### ■ PONDER IT

Paul was also a servant.

**Paul, a *bonds*ervant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God (Romans 1:1, emphasis added).**

The Greek word “doulos” means “slave,” a particular kind of slave. In Bible times, if a man in debt could not pay, he became the property of the man to whom he owed money. He had to work for that individual because he indebted himself to that individual.

In the Old Testament, God established a law of mercy called the law of jubilee: after seven years, all of the bondslaves were set free. However, at the moment of his freedom, sometimes the bondslave would decide he didn’t want to be set free because he was better off being cared for by his gracious master. The bondslave became a willing slave and had his ear pierced as a sign that he was forever bound to the master. (See Deuteronomy 15:17.) Paul became a bondslave, a willing slave of Jesus Christ.

You probably don’t want to be anybody’s slave, but you already are. You’re either a slave of Christ or a slave of sin. Everybody serves someone. The unsaved person says he wants to be free and be his own person. But this is just an illusion. When you serve yourself alone, you experience the worst degradation and bondage there is: the bondage of sin. Satan, sin, and self are cruel taskmasters and their lust for more is never satisfied. But a person who chooses to become the bondslave of the Lord Jesus out of love experiences true freedom. The most glorious freedom is found in Jesus Christ.

**Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed (John 8:36).**

A bondsman doesn't take on his master's will instead of his own; a bondsman says his master's will is his will. It is not laying down arms, but it is taking up arms for the one he loves and serves. This is what the Bible says:

**Delight yourself also in the LORD, and He shall give you the desires of your heart (Psalm 37:4).**

This promise sounds too good to be true. But it doesn't mean that if you desire a million bucks, you will get it. It doesn't mean that if you desire fame and popularity, you will get them. Instead, when you delight yourself in the Lord, you can have the desires of your heart because His desires align with your desires.

Paul recognized that he was changed. His name was now Paul, not Saul. He was saved and surrendered. He was called to be an apostle. This same chapter says that we're also called:

**Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name, among whom you also are the called of Jesus Christ (Romans 1:5-6).**

God has called you to your own particular sphere of influence. God loves you as much as He loved the Apostle Paul. God has called you and set you apart.

#### ■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- How would you describe the difference between a servant and a bondsman? Are you serving Christ when you feel like it or have you given Him ownership of your life?
- To what sphere of influence has God called you? Who are the people with whom you can share the Gospel?

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If you still want to sin, you need a brand-new *wanter*. You need to be born again.

# THE AUTHOR: PAUL WAS SEPARATED

## ■ PONDER IT

Paul was saved, surrendered, sent, and called by God. **He was separated.**

**Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God (Romans 1:1, emphasis added).**

The key word is not “separated;” the key phrase is “to the Gospel of God.” Paul had already been separated. He was a Pharisee of the Pharisees, who walked the straight and narrow. The name Pharisee implies separation. They were careful to pay the tithe of mint, anise, and cumin just as the Law required. When they were paying tithes, they’d count out ten leaves and give one to God. The Pharisees were careful to separate themselves from sin. But if that’s all the separation you have, it’s going to make you a proud, bitter, haughty Pharisee like Saul who was persecuting the early Christians for not upholding the Law.

Nature abhors a vacuum, and if you get sinful things *out of* your life but don’t get Jesus Christ *into* your life, you’re going to become an old, bitter Pharisee. If you are separated *from* sin but not separated to the Gospel, you will not experience the abundant life Christ offers. We ought to be separated to the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Some people define separation by what you don’t do, what you don’t smoke, what you don’t drink, who you don’t hang out with. But a fence post doesn’t do those things, and it’s not a Christian. If you’ve got no more religion than a fence post, then giving up things will not make you more like Jesus Christ. But it will make you a Pharisee. When you are separated to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, you will be separated *from* those other behaviors.

The word “separated” is the Greek word “aphorizō,” which is related to the English word “horizon.” It’s a compound word and literally means

“to mark off from others by boundaries, to limit or separate.” If you go up to a tall building, you will clearly see the horizon, the line that separates the ground from the sky. If you want to change your horizon, then you must change your location. What determines your horizon is your center. When Jesus Christ is your center, the horizon is your world. His life becomes the boundary of your life. You are separated to Him.

When a young man starts dating a girl he really likes, she becomes the center of his world. When he looks around, he only sees her, not all the other girls. Because his girlfriend is the center of his world, she’s all he sees and cares about. When you find the Lord Jesus Christ, you find a new center. You don’t focus on what you gave up for Jesus; you focus on all you have in Jesus.

Paul was saved, separated, surrendered, and sent. Thank God for the Apostle Paul!

#### ■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- Do you have a little Pharisee in you who tries to live separated from sin by following the rules? How do you view those who do not follow the same rules you do?
- What does it mean to you to be separated to the Gospel? How does this change your perspective? Is Jesus at the center of your life?

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When Jesus Christ is your center,  
the horizon is your world.

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## DAY 5

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# THE HERO

### ■ PONDER IT

We've talked about the table of contents and the author of the book that changed the world. Now let's talk about **the hero of the book**. Every good book has a hero, and the hero of Romans is the Lord Jesus Christ.

**Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead (Romans 1:1-4).**

From the very beginning, Paul moved Jesus front and center. If you don't know and love Jesus Christ, you will not understand Romans. Christianity is all about Christ. Here are four things Paul says about Christ in this passage:

*Jesus is the Promised One.* Paul didn't start a new religion. Jesus existed before the foundation of the world, and Paul told us what he learned in the Old Testament about Jesus. Jesus told those people of His day to search the Scriptures because they testify of Him:

**“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39).**

The Old Testament is not primarily about the Jewish nation; it's about Jesus, the Messiah of the Jews. The authenticity of the Bible is proven by the number of fulfilled prophecies. Jesus authenticates the Bible, and the Bible authenticates Jesus.

*Jesus is the Provided One.* The Messiah is of the house and lineage of David; He is the royal heir to Israel's throne. He is of the seed of David according to the flesh, but He's the Son of God with power by

the resurrection from the dead. Jesus was not a divine man, nor a human god; He was the God-man—perfect humanity and perfect deity.

*Jesus is the Powerful One.* Jesus is not just another religious teacher, some guru, some super-intelligent person. Jesus is different from every other leader because He walked out of that tomb by His own power.

Jesus showed Himself alive by many infallible proofs. He declared Himself the Son of God by the resurrection of the dead. He conquered death, Hell, sin, and the grave.

*Jesus is the Pure One.* Jesus was resurrected by the spirit of holiness. There has never been a man like the Lord Jesus. How holy, how pure, how sinless is the Lord Jesus Christ!

People have met religion, but they've not met Jesus. They've met denominations and programs, but not Jesus. Christianity is not a creed, a code, or a cause; it is Christ. It is to know Jesus as your personal Lord and Savior, not just to know about Him.

#### ■ PUT IT IN WRITING

- Which of these four points is the most meaningful to you today?
- What are the most convincing reasons you have for believing in Jesus Christ and His resurrection from the dead? What would you share with someone who doesn't believe?

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If you're looking for a hero, let me suggest mine to you if you don't have one. His name is Jesus!

ADRIAN ROGERS



## DAY 6

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# THE THEME OF ROMANS

### ■ PRACTICE IT

Finally, we must understand **the theme of Romans is the Gospel.**

**Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God (Romans 1:1).**

*The source of the Gospel is God.* Paul didn't make up the Gospel or receive it from man. It came from God, so don't tamper with it or pervert it. Paul was not trying to be politically correct. He said if anyone, even angels, preach any other gospel to you, they need to be cursed. (See Galatians 1:8.)

*The subject of the Gospel is Jesus.* The Gospel does not just allude to Him. It doesn't just mention Him. Jesus is the Gospel.

**...concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh... (Romans 1:3).**

You can take Confucius out of Confucianism and Buddha out of Buddhism and still have those religions. But you cannot take Christ out of Christianity and still have Christianity. Taking Jesus out of Christianity is like taking the blue out of the sky, notes out of music, and numbers out of mathematics. It just doesn't make sense without Christ.

*The supply of the Gospel is grace.* Grace is how God saves people like us apart from works of any kind. Grace is the sheer, absolute gift of God.

**Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name... (Romans 1:5).**

By faith, you receive the gift of God. By faith, you receive the grace of God. You're not saved by good works, religion, baptism, church membership, or giving money. You're saved by the grace of God.

The author is Paul. The hero is Jesus. The subject is the glorious Gospel of the grace of God. Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection for our sins—that is the Gospel, the good news of Christ. The word “gospel” means good news, and the true Gospel is good news for everyone who embraces it. If you have not yet made a decision for Christ, you can pray a prayer like this one:

*Dear God, I know that You love me and want to save me. Jesus, I believe You're the Son of God. I believe God raised You from the dead and that You paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. By faith, I receive the gift of salvation. I don't look for a sign or ask for a feeling. I stand on your Word. Thank you for saving me. I will follow You the rest of my life. I am Your bonds slave. Make me the person You want me to be. In Jesus' Name, Amen.*

#### ■ PROCLAIM IT

If you are ready to accept God's grace and peace by surrendering your life to the Lord, please share your decision with another Christian you know or with your pastor. We would also like to hear about it, so that we can provide you with free resources to help you grow in your new faith. Please let us know by going to [lwf.org/discover-jesus](http://lwf.org/discover-jesus), scrolling down the page, and clicking on *I BELIEVE*.

Pray for those in your circle of influence who don't know the good news of the Gospel. Ask God to give you an opportunity to share your faith journey with them. Ask God to give you the words and the courage to speak when the time is right.

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A false gospel will lead to a  
synthetic salvation that will  
lead to the very real Hell.

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