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Mark & Friends

America's Greatest Need: God's Word and the Gospel
Part 1 of a revival message from Evangelist Dave Kistler at Bible Baptist Church in
Champaign • Tuesday, July 21, 2026

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Today's focus: God's Word still changes lives, every person needs repentance and redemption, and America's deepest need is the saving hope found in Jesus Christ.

Welcome to today's edition of *Mark & Friends*. Listen to the broadcast, read the proofread transcript, download a printable copy, and explore today's Program Resources.

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Opening Welcome

We're glad you're here, we're glad you're here,
Fellowship is sweeter, knowing you're near.
It's so good to see you, we hope that it's clear,
Everyone loves you, we're glad you're here.

Program Summary

In the first half of this revival message, Evangelist Dave Kistler holds up the Bible as the enduring answer to America's deepest needs. He recounts the story of the Aitken Bible,

describes efforts to place personalized copies of that historic Bible into the hands of members of Congress, and shares examples of God opening doors for ministry in Washington, D.C., Romania, and beyond. Turning to Luke 13, he emphasizes that tragedy is not proof that one person is more sinful than another. Every person stands in need of repentance, and every person must be redeemed through the precious blood of Jesus Christ.

Key Takeaways

- God's Word remains the sure foundation for individuals, families, churches, and nations.
- When our plans change, God may be arranging something greater than we could have designed.
- Political and cultural problems are ultimately symptoms of a deeper spiritual need.
- Jesus rejected the idea that tragedy proves its victims were worse sinners than others.
- All people are sinners, and no amount of outward goodness can replace repentance and faith in Christ.
- The gospel is still changing lives in America and around the world.

Scripture References

- Psalm 119:105
- Luke 13:1-5
- Ezekiel 38
- Proverbs 27:1
- Romans 3:10, 23
- 1 Peter 1:18-19

Quote of the Day

“What’s needed in my house, and what’s needed in your house, is God’s truth brought to bear on everything that’s going on in our world right now.”

Broadcast Notes

- This is Part 1 of a revival message preached at Bible Baptist Church in Champaign.
- Evangelist Dave Kistler discusses the historic Robert Aitken Bible and a ministry effort to distribute personalized copies to members of Congress.
- The message continues tomorrow with further teaching from Luke 13 and Ezekiel 38.
- The central evangelistic appeal is urgent and personal: today is the day to repent and trust Jesus.

Practical Applications

- Place God's Word at the center of your decisions rather than treating it as an occasional reference.
- When plans change unexpectedly, pause and ask how God may be redirecting your steps.
- Refuse to compare your goodness with someone else's failures; compare your life with God's holiness.
- Pray for leaders on both sides of the aisle to encounter biblical truth and the gospel.
- Share the permanent link to this broadcast with someone who needs the hope of Jesus.

Today's Challenge

Read Luke 13:1-5 slowly. Ask God to remove every trace of spiritual comparison and to give you a fresh awareness of your own need for grace. Then pray for one person who does not yet know Christ, and consider sending them today's broadcast.

Closing Prayer

Lord, thank You for giving us Your Word as a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Forgive us when we trust politics, personal goodness, or human plans more than we trust You. Help us remember that every person needs grace and that salvation is found in Jesus Christ alone. Open doors for Your truth to reach homes, churches, communities, and leaders. Give us courage to repent, believe, and share the gospel while there is still time. In Jesus' name, amen.

Complete Proofread Transcript

We're glad you're here, we're glad you're here,
Fellowship is sweeter, knowing you're near.
It's so good to see you, we hope that it's clear,
Everyone loves you, we're glad you're here.

Oh, magnify the Lord with me. Let us exalt his name together. It's Tuesday, July 21st, 2026.

And welcome to another edition of Mark & Friends. Today we're sharing the first half of a message preached a week ago Sunday morning during the revival services at Bible Baptist Church in Champaign. Evangelist Dave Kistler reminds us that God's Word continues to change lives and that while America faces many challenges, our greatest need has never changed.

We all need Jesus. Here's evangelist Dave Kistler on today, the Tuesday edition of Mark & Friends. This Bible I'm holding in my hand right here.

This is called the first American Bible and it's called the first American Bible because in 1776 we just celebrated this America became a nation with the Declaration of Independence separating from the mother country of Great Britain. By the way, I love the country of England. They are some of my dearest friends are there.

I was just there as I said a few weeks back. But anyway, we declared our independence from the country of Great Britain and that was in 1776. We did not get a fully ratified, fully ratified constitution till 1789.

But right in the middle between 1776, 1789, Congress did something in 1782 that they had never done before. Of course, we were a new nation. Understandable they'd never done it, but they've never done it since either.

And that is in 1782 they commissioned the printing of the Bible. Can I hear an amen? What had happened is in the six years from the time we declared our independence, people began to move west across the country and other things were at play as well. Many of you may not know this pastor.

I did not fully understand this until this project presenting these Bibles. But did you know the king of England, the crown held the copyright to the King James Version of the Bible? That's why in the early days of this country during the colonial period, it was illegal to print the Bibles in the 13 colonies. King George would not allow that.

So there were no Bibles that continue to come into our country after the Declaration of Independence. England was a little upset with us. And so by 1782, six years after we became a nation with no Bibles coming in from England, there was a dearth of Bibles across the country.

So a Pennsylvanian by the name of Robert Aitken, A-I-T-K-E-N, realized we needed Bibles. He was a bookbinder and a book printer. And he went to the first Congress and he said, look, if you will commission it, I will print it.

And so they did and he did. And the end result was the first American Bible, the only Bible ever commissioned by the United States Congress. You ought to hear an amen there again, because the answer to America's ills is found in this book called the Bible.

So anyway, it was printed and recommended with a resolution. By the way, if you come by and I want you to do this at some point this week, I'm going to lay the Bible right here. This is my copy has my name on it, but feel free to pick it up.

Look through it. I don't mind if you do that. But if you look in the very first part of the Bible, the resolution that Congress put along with the Bible when it was commissioned is in there and you can read it.

And they recommended that the schoolchildren of America read that Bible, that families read that Bible. The size of the Bible is unique because they wanted it to be easily handled by children. But also they wanted our military men to be able to hold it in one hand, pack it in their gear, not be a soft, flexible cover like most of the Bibles today that could get bent and distorted.

And so we felt on America's 250th birthday, what better gift could we give to every member of Congress than one of those Bibles? And so we did it and we put the names of every individual member of Congress on the Bible preacher. I'll tell you this, that changes the way you do a presentation of the Bible whenever they have their name on there. We wanted to personalize it, but they all had to be proved to make sure every name was spelled correctly.

All 535 of them very common to get E's and I's reversed. Even when engraving names on Bibles is just a just a common mistake. So we had to go through all of that, had to lay out all the Bibles for the 17 people that were going to D.C., to help us deliver the Bibles to members of Congress and present them.

So that took some organization, but it was all well worth it. It was one of the most amazing things that our ministry has ever done. And I don't mind telling you this.

We saw God work dramatically and powerfully. We'd been preparing for this since before actually I was here last year and we'd set the date the last week of April the 27th through the 30th and about, I don't know, maybe six weeks before we're going to converge on Capitol Hill to present those Bibles. I found out that Speaker Johnson was going to allow all the members of Congress, the House side, typically if the House goes home, so does the Senate, but he was going to allow them to go home for a one week recess, which meant this, no members of Congress were going to be in town the week we had planned to distribute the Bible.

They were originally going to be there according to the congressional calendar, but he decided to let them go home. So when I met with all of our 17 people that are going to be going to deliver the Bibles, I had to tell them that, and it was like deflating a tire of air. All of this prayer, all this preparation, all of the work that we had put in to deliver the Bibles to the individual members of Congress now is going to have to be adjusted.

We're going to have to give the Bibles to the chief of staff for each member or to a staffer in each office, and it would still be very effective, but it just wouldn't be the same, and so I'm trying, preacher, to encourage the troops. I'm trying to encourage the troops and say, look, we've done this long enough, 20 plus years we've been involved in ministry on Capitol Hill, and every time God changes our plans to accomplish his plan, I

said, I've learned this, God knows what he's doing. Have any of y'all figured out God knows what he's doing? He does, and he knows better by far than we do, so I'm trying to encourage them and telling them, look, we're just going to pray that somehow this will change and all the members will end up being in town.

Well, about three weeks later, we're down in Texas, my wife and I are visiting her 95-year-old dad and 88-year-old mom. Her dad, 95, still driving. That is an experience.

I'll just tell you that right there. I can't ride with him anymore. I left finger indentions in the grab handle the last time I rode in the passenger seat with him, but we're down there visiting him, and I was watching the news, and I saw something on the news that our president had invited King Charles of England to come to the United States to speak to a joint session of Congress in honor of America's 250th birthday, and I thought, man, what a great gesture.

We were separated from England for so long. That has been healed a long time ago. What a wonderful gesture to invite the king to come and address Congress, but I kept watching, kept listening, and the date that the president invited him was April 27 to 30, so I got to doing some inquiring and found out that Speaker Johnson and the leader in the Senate had called all the members of Congress back to Washington, D.C. to be there April 27 to 30 because they wanted a full house when King Charles spoke, and so guess what? God brought the king of England to America so we could present Bibles to members of Congress.

That's exactly what he did. You say, Preacher, you understand that's a coincidence. No, there are no coincidences with God.

God does all things well. By the way, you're not here today accidentally. You're not here today coincidentally.

God loved you enough and loves you enough to bring you here to hear the truth of God's Word today, so I hope you'll take it that way because that's exactly the way it is. So we had a wonderful, wonderful time, and I had a harebrained idea, Preacher. I thought, well, what I'm going to do is since the king's going to be here, we're going to have one of those Bibles made with his name on it, and then we're going to have one made with the president's on it, which we did, and we're going to try to get a meeting, and I worked every angle I could possibly work with everybody I know on Capitol Hill to try to find a moment when the president and King Charles were together that we could present that Bible to them, and we got very, very close, but it was a very, very busy time, and it ended up not working, but we've got a second alternative plan B, at least the Lord does, between now and September 12th to present at least the Bible to the president of the United States, and then ultimately we'll get the other one to King Charles in England, and there's a lot more I could share with you that God is up to and that God's been doing.

I'll not do that right now, but I just want to encourage you that we serve an awesome God, and the answer is the word of God. Do you agree with me? The answer is God's Word, and what's needed right now on Capitol Hill on both sides of the aisle, what's needed not just the White House, but what's needed in my house, and what's needed in your house is God's truth brought to bear on everything that's going on in our world right now, and God speaks to those things, and so it was a wonderful, wonderful opportunity, and I don't mind telling you we walked about 8 miles a day delivering those Bibles, 8 miles a day. Now, I do it all the time in these dress shoes, okay, and I just don't think anything about it, but a lot of the men that went with us to Capitol Hill had not done anything like this before, so 3 months prior to us going up there, I encouraged them, I said, guys, as we met together, I said, guys, you need to begin doing some exercising, because we could walk as much as 8, maybe a little more miles a day delivering these Bibles, and most of the guys took me up on it.

They either were already exercising, or they ramped up their exercise regimen, maybe a few of them didn't take me up on it, but by the third day, they were dragging their tongues, I'm just telling you, they were tired walking 8 miles a day, and so now they jokingly say, when you go to Capitol Hill with Brother Dave, it's called Kistler Boot Camp, that's what it is, Kistler Boot Camp, but we had a wonderful time, and I could tell you stories all day, which I'm not going to do about how God opened doors with individual members of Congress, and how God allowed us to share the Gospel, and share the Word of God with individual members, and it's just been an amazing, amazing thing, I want you to understand, the reason I'm telling you all of that, is there's a lot going on in our world right now that can be very disconcerting, in fact, it can be discouraging, if you focus on the wrong things, I want you to know, our God is alive and well on planet Earth, He's alive and well on planet Earth, and in the last 8 to 9 months in our country has been an amazing time for our ministry, we have seen literally hundreds and hundreds of people come to know Christ as Savior, and I praise God for that, we were just in the country of Romania, doing a youth conference there, the young man that organized that is 22 years old, I want you to think about that, 22 year old young man, he is Romanian, he was in England attending college, when I first met him 2 years ago, he got saved in a college and young adult conference 2 years ago, where I was preaching in England, it so changed his life, he said, brother Kistler, would you come over to Romania, I want to try the same thing over there, and so he has since relocated to Romania, I could not do it last year, but the opportunity opened up to do it this year, and so we just returned from there, and on Friday night of the 3 day conference, Friday, Saturday, Sunday, they rented out a huge auditorium in the middle of downtown Ploiești, Romania, it is a town of 300,000 people, the building, you cannot make this stuff up, the building is ironically called the White House, that is the name of the building, it has no connection whatsoever to America, or to the residence of the president in Washington D.C., they just call it the White House, and my friend said, what is the irony of that, and I said, well you know, the Lord is up to something, but anyway, they rented a large room in that building, and it was packed out on Friday night, amazing, packed out with young people, from all over the city, and there was some wonderful music done, worship music, and then I had the privilege of preaching, and we had at least that we know of, 15 people trust Christ as Savior, can I hear an amen right there, and it was just phenomenal what God's up to, all around the United States, and around the world, He's doing something in the hearts and lives of all people, but especially He's doing something in the hearts and lives of young people, and I don't know about you, but I'm excited about that, I'm incredibly hopeful about what is going on, because God has a plan, He's working that plan, and that plan is a plan of redemption, trying to get the truth of His gospel to as many people as possible, because I believe Jesus is coming back soon, don't you, in fact I'm surprised we're still here, now having said that, I want you to look if you would please, in Luke chapter number 13, just turn there, Luke 13, we're just gonna be there for just a couple of minutes, and then I'm gonna have you turn if you would please, hold your finger at Luke 13, and then flip back if you would please to Ezekiel chapter number 38, Ezekiel chapter number 38, I wanna show you something in Luke 13, and then we're gonna flip back to Ezekiel 38, because I wanna show you something that God has been teaching me, and put an exclamation point on the times in which we're living and how absolutely essential it is, if you don't know for absolute certain that Jesus is your Savior, today is your day, please do not put off, please do not delay, please do not say I'll think about it and make a decision later, can I implore you, don't do that, last night at 8.30, a man whose office we were in three weeks ago, Senator Lindsey Graham from South Carolina, had just arrived home from a trip to Ukraine, he had arrived at the airport in Washington DC, got his ride over to his house which is not far, his residence there in Washington DC, not far from the capitol building, his intent last evening according to what I was told was to watch the soccer game and just enjoy some light refreshments, but none of that happened, at 8.30 the EMTs were called in and Lindsey Graham had a heart attack and went out into eternity, I do not know for certain his spiritual condition, but folks can I say this, Franklin Graham this morning on Fox News early, when asked about this incident, the first thing he did and I love him for doing it, every time a microphone is placed under his chin, he

immediately goes here because it is the place to go, he said this ought to be a vivid reminder that life is short and uncertain, the Bible says boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth, I'm not trying to frighten you, I'm not trying to be a downer this morning, I'm just here to tell you I feel great right now at 66, soon will be in another couple of weeks, 67 years old and that's the place you're supposed to be shaking your head going no brother Dave, you don't look anywhere near that, but none of you are doing that, that troubles me a little bit, but the bottom line is this, I feel great right now, but here's the facts, I could be in eternity before tonight, so could you, so now is the time, today is the day, look at Luke 13 if you would please verse number 1, the scripture says and there were present at that season some that told him, the him here is Jesus, there were present at that season some who told him of the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices, now look up at me for just a moment, this incident that is referenced here about Pilate mingling, mixing the blood with some sacrifices was an event that occurred there in the city of Jerusalem in Jewish history, by the way Pilate was a political figure, please understand where I'm going today, I'm going to give you some incidences, I'm going to mention some names, none of those names should be interpreted as me endorsing them necessarily or saying that I agree with every decision they make any more than Jesus agreed with every decision Pilate made, but somebody came to Jesus and brought up, hey what do you think about that incident where Pilate mingled the blood of certain people with the sacrifices, you say what is that, what's that talking about, what had occurred, evidently preacher there were some people in the temple offering a sacrifice, Pilate sent some soldiers in there, they killed those Jewish worshippers and mixed the blood of the worshippers with the blood of the sacrifice, it was a horrific incident and so Jesus is being asked about an incident that has occurred in town, I want you to notice what Jesus does to address that, he does not go to the incident itself, talk about whether he agreed or disagreed with it, what he does is he turns it to try to draw attention to the needs spiritually of the people that have brought this incident to him, look at verse number 2, when Jesus entering said unto them, suppose ye, do you think that, is what suppose means, do you think that these Galileans, these folks that were killed in such a horrific fashion, do you suppose that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans because they suffered such things, now folks look up at me for just a moment, there is a concept that we can have today if we are not careful that the Jews had as well and that is when bad things happen to people it's because they deserved it, that's the basis upon which they are bringing this incident to Jesus, and Jesus says do you think that because this horrible tragedy happened to the Galileans, do you think it means that it's because they were sinners above all the Galileans, in other words they were somehow special sinners and they deserve that more than you, look at the next verse, I tell you nay, no, but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish, do you see what Jesus is doing, everybody is a sinner, well you know brother Dave what about people like Hitler, what about pastor like, the place we visited in Romania, do you know Romania, the country of Romania is only 37 years removed from communism, preacher they had a revolution in 1989, Nikolai Ceausescu and his wife Elena had ruled that country with an iron fist, we took a tour of the largest parliament building brother Mark in the world, which is there in Romania, it was built by Ceausescu, it was built by money off the backs of the common people, it is stunningly beautiful, I was not prepared for how beautiful it was, but I really wasn't prepared for the spring palace, the residence of Ceausescu and his wife Elena, literally it's more modern but the opulence of it rivals some of the beauty of Louis XIV palace at Versailles, it was stunning, and you know what the people realized, we have been mistreated and they rose up, forgive me I'm not saying I approve of this, I'm just telling you what happened, to convince, to convince the Romanian people that Ceausescu and his wife were actually gone, and they could rise up and be free to convince them, the execution of Ceausescu and his wife was carried live on television, they have been free for 37 years, people would say you know what Nikolai and his wife deserve to die the way they died, because they were so, there is such a thing folks please understand, there is such a thing as pure evil in this world, and they qualified, but you know what Jesus would say do you think Nikolai and his wife deserve that, do you think maybe they deserve to go to an eternity in hell more than you, he'd

say I tell you no, no except you repent, you'll also likewise perish, look at the next verse, Jesus doesn't wait for them to bring up another incident, he brings up his own, he rips it from the headlines as it were of the Jerusalem newspaper, look at Luke 13 and verse number 4, or those 18, now this is Jesus bringing up this one, those 18 upon whom the tower in Siloam fell and slew them, would you look up at me for just a moment, do you remember the tower of Siloam preacher it was located in close proximity to a place called the pool of Siloam, around the pool of Siloam is where the lame and the people that couldn't walk would gather, for whatever reason we don't know why it happened, but the tower located near that pool collapsed and fell over, here's all these crippled people who can't get out of the way fast enough, and some of them, 18 of them died, Jesus said let me ask you a question, do you think that because they suffered that fate they deserve that more than you, to the Jewish mindset of that day they would say well of course or the tragedy wouldn't have happened, Jesus said no, no they didn't deserve that more than you, I tell you except you repent, you shall also likewise perish, see Jesus is getting rid of this idea that you know there are some good people over here that they deserve by their good works and their good lifestyle they deserve to go to heaven, and then there's bad people over here and because of their lifestyle they deserve to go to hell, listen the Bible says there is none good, no not one, can I hear an amen, because, you see, preacher my goodness is not compared to you, your goodness is in juxtaposition to me, our goodness or lack thereof is compared to the holiness and righteousness of a sinless God, and compared to that we're all sinners in need of a savior, Dave Kistler preacher's kid, I'm not saying this because I'm better than anybody else cause I am not, but I want to tell you something other than inhaling from the top of a beer can, alcohol has never come across my lips, oh preacher that makes you better, no it doesn't, preacher other than being challenged one time as a middle school student to stick a cigarette in my mouth and light it up and cough just incessantly for probably 30 minutes, other than that I've never smoked a cigarette, no it doesn't, Dave Kistler was born with a sinful nature that I got from my mom and dad, you know what the scripture says for as much as you know is you were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation, vain conversation means your vain, your wicked lifestyle, received by tradition from your fathers, but with the precious blood of Christ, I am redeemed by the precious blood of Christ from a sin nature that was passed on to me by my parents, did you know you had a sin nature passed on to you, now this is hard for my wife to admit, but since we were here last year I was here, we are now grandparents a second time with a beautiful little boy named Matthew Laughlin Wilder Igoe, our son in law is Toby Igoe, Matthew Laughlin Wilder, Wilder after Laura Ingalls Wilder of Little House on the Prairie, Matthew Laughlin Wilder Igoe, did you know he's 7 months old, he wakes up the happiest child I've ever seen, by the way I've got pictures if you want to see them, I'll show them to you, I mean really I will, I've got pictures okay, videos no doubt, do you know what that little guy as happy as he wakes up every morning was born with a sinful nature, and you know what sin and that sinful nature is why Jesus died on an old rugged cross, cause no sin gets into God's heaven, we have to be washed in the blood of the lamb, can I hear an amen? Amen, amen, and amen, thank you for joining us for today's edition of Mark & Friends, today we heard how God continues to work through his word, reminding us that America's greatest need is not political but spiritual, tomorrow we'll conclude this timely message from Sunday's revival service at Bible Baptist Church in Champaign, as evangelist Dave Kistler continues pointing us to the hope found in Jesus, in the meantime we invite you to continue learning by visiting the Mark & Friends tab at GreatNewsRadio.org or WLUJ.org where you'll find today's broadcast and a growing collection of resources to help you continue your walk with Jesus, thanks for listening, thanks for being a part of our radio listening family, this is Mark Burns with the ministry of Great News Media, God bless you and have a great day and night.

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