

Philip Anthony Mitchell

*His Teaching and Ministry Weighed by
Holy Scripture and the Westminster Standards*

Pastor of 2819 Church, Atlanta · Founder of the ACCESS prayer gatherings



VERDICT

NOT A SAFE TEACHER

A grave error on the person of Christ, with serious errors besides

“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, for many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

1 JOHN 4:1 (ESV)

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VERDICT

NOT A SAFE TEACHER

Don't sit under his teaching or recommend it to other believers.

The Short Answer

Philip Anthony Mitchell preaches many true things with real force. He calls sinners to repent. He says plainly that no one can earn acceptance with God. He warns against the prosperity gospel and against sexual sin, and he presses the return of Christ on the conscience of a young generation. Believers should be glad whenever Christ is truly preached.

What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

PHILIPPIANS 1:18 (ESV)

Even so, this report finds that he is not a safe teacher to sit under. His own published sermons teach that the Son of God emptied Himself “of some of his divine nature.” He speaks often of God charging him and telling him things directly. He taught his church to make an arena “a portal from earth to heaven” and to “put a demand” on God. He told a congregation that fasting can “move God” and that “your bodies are going to be healed.” On perseverance he hangs final salvation on the believer staying in God’s will, which leaves weak believers without the anchor Scripture gives them. His Lord’s Day services and stadium events are built as produced experiences that lift the preacher, and signs of idolizing him are plain to see.

So the counsel of this report is simple. Don’t make him your teacher, and don’t hand his sermons to new or struggling believers. If a brother or sister already listens to him, don’t mock the man or slander him. Show them his own words, show them where those words depart from Scripture, and point them to sounder shepherds, beginning with the elders of their own church.

How This Report Was Made

The standard used here is Holy Scripture, which alone binds the conscience. The Westminster Confession of Faith and its catechisms are used as the church's faithful summary of what Scripture teaches. Every passage of the Bible is quoted from the English Standard Version.

The evidence comes first from Mitchell's own words. That means sermon transcripts published from the 2819 Church podcast feed, the church's statement of beliefs, his personal website, and his long-form interviews. Reporting from the Associated Press, Christianity Today, Premier Christianity, Charisma, and others was used for the facts of his life and ministry. Critics were read for leads but never treated as proof. A charge that could not be traced to his own words or to a reliable report was left out.

The sermon transcripts are generated by machine from the church's audio, so small slips in spelling appear in them. Where a quotation carries great weight, this report names the sermon and the approximate minute so any believer can listen for himself. That's the Berean way.

Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

ACTS 17:11 (ESV)

Part 1. Who He Is

Philip Anthony Mitchell was born and raised in Queens, New York, to parents who came from the Caribbean. He grew up in a Christian home, but by his own account he was dealing drugs by age twelve and carrying a gun in his early twenties. He has spoken often of time at Rikers Island, of paying for abortions, and of a dark season around 2003 that brought him near to taking his own life. That crisis turned him back to Christ. He says he sensed a call to preach while reading Proverbs 3:5-6, and that he ran from that call for four years before he surrendered.^[1, 6, 7, 9]

He is an honors graduate of North Carolina Central University. He also holds a degree in Pastoral and Church Leadership from Valor Christian College in Columbus, Ohio, the school Pentecostal preacher Rod Parsley founded at World Harvest Church. In one sermon he held up the Bible his college gave him, inscribed "Valedictorian of Valor Christian College, May 15, 2010," and said he finished with a perfect 4.0. He has been married to his wife Lena since August 2004, and they have two sons and two daughters.^[1, 2, 27, 33]

For about ten years he pastored a small Atlanta congregation called Victory Church. Looking back on those years, he has said he wanted to be rich and famous. The congregation was scattered during

COVID. In December 2018 he traveled to Israel and, by his own account, had an encounter with God there that changed the direction of his ministry. In January 2023 he relaunched the work as 2819 Church, named for Matthew 28:19, with 183 people.^[3, 7, 16, 18]

The growth since then has been very large. The church reports about 6,000 people in person each week and about 75,000 more watching online, and its YouTube channel is near two million subscribers. He preached through the Gospel according to Matthew for about three years and has since moved through Acts and into Ephesians. He appears on TBN, co-hosts a touring podcast called Street Preachers with Florida pastor Tim Timberlake, and released his first book, *Contend*, on October 13, 2026.^[2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 13]

Part 2. The ACCESS Gatherings

ACCESS is billed as “That Powerful Hour of Prayer.” Mitchell says it began more than twelve years ago as a family prayer hour in his parents’ home in Rex, Georgia, while his father was dying of cancer. After his father’s death the family kept the hour going, and it grew into church gatherings. In October 2025 it filled State Farm Arena in Atlanta and an overflow hall, with about 40,000 people reported.^[4, 12, 20]

On October 10, 2026, ACCESS came to AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas. The church said all 80,000 free tickets were claimed within eight hours. The evening moved through three parts called The Cross, The Warning, and The Cry, and it closed with the prayer “Maranatha! Come, Lord Jesus!” Mitchell says the event cost about three million dollars and that no admission or offering was taken.^[7, 12, 13]

Two days later he posted on Facebook, “Just learned that a teenage girl was HEALED of deafness and removed her hearing aids last night at ACCESS in TX,” and added, “This to the glory of Christ.” No name, no family statement, and no medical record has been offered, and no independent report confirms it.^[14]

A great crowd gathered to pray and to hear of the cross and the coming of Christ is no small thing, and no Christian should sneer at it. But the way Mitchell taught his church to understand ACCESS raises real problems, which Part 6 takes up.

Part 3. What He Gets Right

Fairness comes first. A man should be judged by the whole of what he teaches, and Mitchell teaches a good deal that is true.

Salvation by grace

He denies salvation by works in plain words. His church's statement says salvation is a gift of grace and is not earned by works. On *The Breakfast Club* he said, "You can never be enough to be accepted by God." In a sermon on Matthew 15, about thirty-eight minutes in, he said of Christ, "He never broke the law," spoke of Him "exchanging his righteousness for your unrighteousness," and told his people, "you're not righteous because you have good behavior." He went on, "we are only righteous if we stand in Christ." That's the heart of imputed righteousness, and he preaches it with conviction.^[1, 7, 25]

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 (ESV)

Sin, election, and judgment

He affirms election. In October 2026 he told his church, "God in eternity past chose you saved you before the foundation of the world." He preaches hell as real. He calls sin by its name, and his sermon on Matthew 18 that passed two million views told hearers, "Stop treating sin like a pet. Kill it before it kills you." Readers of John Owen will hear the echo. In his sermon devoted to the ten virgins he taught that the foolish virgins "represent every man and woman who thinks they are Christians, but they are really not." That's a needed word in a land full of false assurance.^[24, 34, 23]

Money

He rejects the prosperity gospel by name. Preaching on mountain-moving faith from Matthew 21 he said, "this ain't prosperity gospel" and "this ain't name it or claim it," and he added, "we have no guarantees, yours is to just pray with faith." He has taught that tithing "is not structured to be bound in the New Testament" and that "we give out of the generosity of our heart." Preaching on Acts 2 he warned that the early church's generosity "is not permission for gospel grifting."^[21, 26, 29]

The Holy Spirit

On the Spirit he is more careful than many charismatics. He teaches that Spirit baptism is “that salvific moment when the Holy Spirit unites a person with the Lord Jesus Christ,” which ties it to conversion. He noted that some traditions place it later, but he did not press that view. He also teaches that the tongues of Pentecost were real human languages.^[22, 28]

Humility and counsel

He tells his people, “He’s just a man. Come feel God’s presence,” and he has urged them not to “idolize a preacher.” He has told visitors from other cities to go home and “find a Bible teaching church where the word of God is being communicated.” In April 2025 a sermon of his told Black parents to “stop blaming white cops for the killing of Black kids,” and it caused deep grief. He publicly apologized and said his framing “was and is harmful.” Not every preacher with his following is willing to do that.^[8, 9, 23]

These strengths are real, and they help explain why so many young people have been stirred by his preaching. They also explain why his errors are dangerous. Error rarely comes to the table alone. It usually comes on the same plate as truth, and the truth makes it easier to swallow.

Part 4. The Person of Christ

The most serious finding concerns the doctrine of Christ. In “Stay Awake,” a sermon on Matthew 24:36-51 published August 11, 2025, Mitchell took up the question of how Jesus could say He did not know the day of His return. About seventeen minutes in, the published transcript records these words.^[17]

MITCHELL'S OWN WORDS

Christ, when he was on the earth, was fully God and fully human at the same time. ... if he’s God, he is all-knowing. ... I think the canosis of Philippians 2 solves this question. ... he emptied himself, the canosis in Greek, of some of his divine nature, so that he can fully step into human. ... The evidence that he emptied himself is that he needed to pray just like you.

“Stay Awake,” Matthew 24:36-51, about 16 to 18 minutes. “Canosis” is the transcript’s spelling of the Greek word kenosis.

A few minutes later, about twenty-two minutes in, he adds, “I do believe now that he’s seated at the right hand of the father he probably knows the day and the hour.” That line confirms what he meant. He believes the Son gave up His divine knowledge for a time and has it again now.

This view is called kenotic Christology. It teaches that the eternal Son laid aside some of His divine attributes in order to become man. The text Mitchell leaned on doesn’t say that.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men.

PHILIPPIANS 2:5-7 (ESV)

Paul says the Son “emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant.” He emptied Himself by taking something. He added a true human nature to the divine nature He always had. He veiled the outward blaze of His glory and stooped to the lowest place, all the way to the cross. He didn’t subtract any part of His Godhead, and He couldn’t have. Deity has no parts to give away, and God doesn’t change. If the Son gave up some of His divine nature, then the One who walked in Galilee was something less than God.

For in him the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily,

COLOSSIANS 2:9 (ESV)

The Westminster Confession states the church’s settled faith with great care.

The Son of God, the second person in the Trinity, being very and eternal God, of one substance and equal with the Father, did, when the fullness of time was come, take upon him man’s nature, with all the essential properties, and common infirmities thereof, yet without sin; being conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, of her substance. So that two whole, perfect, and distinct natures, the Godhead and the manhood, were inseparably joined together in one person, without conversion, composition, or confusion. Which person is very God, and very man, yet one Christ, the only Mediator between God and man.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH 8.2

So how could the Son say He did not know the day? The Reformed answer, with Calvin and the older church, is that Christ spoke according to His human nature. His human mind was a true human mind. It grew and learned, just as Luke tells us.

And Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature and in favor with God and man.

LUKE 2:52 (ESV)

But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only.

MATTHEW 24:36 (ESV)

As God, the Son knew all things, even while He lay in the manger. As man, He learned and grew. Both are true of one Person, and neither nature was traded away for the other. That’s how Jesus

could pray, hunger, and grow weary while He upheld the universe by the word of His power. Mitchell is right that Christ's prayer life shows His true humanity. He is wrong that the Son emptied Himself "of some of his divine nature," and that error sits at the foundation of the faith.

Charity requires us to notice that Mitchell said in the same breath that Christ was fully God, and his church's written statement confesses the same. The fairest reading is that he is confused, and not that he means to deny the deity of Christ. But a confused account of who Jesus is, preached to a vast audience and left standing, is a grave matter all the same. A man who titled his book *Contend* ought to be the first to contend here. This research found no public correction of this teaching.

Because the transcript is generated by machine, any believer who wants to confirm the wording can listen to "Stay Awake" on the 2819 Church podcast at about the seventeen minute mark. The wording is clear and consistent, and the later line about Christ knowing the day "now" only makes sense if he meant what the first line says.

Part 5. Claims of Direct Words from God

Mitchell often speaks of God charging him and telling him things directly. The clearest example is his account of Israel in December 2018. In a sermon titled "A Clarion Call" he describes a man in Israel who laid hands on him and prayed over him.^[18]

MITCHELL'S OWN WORDS

He says, receive a double anointed [anointing] and lays his hands on me. And prays over me. ... God charge you. Go back to your nation. ... I've been charged by God almighty in the holy land of Israel.

"A Clarion Call," about 28 to 29 minutes

Later in the same sermon he says, "And I can hear God telling me, man, there's a work for you to do over here, my son." The pattern runs through other sources too. The Associated Press reported in December 2025 that Mitchell "said God told him to preach without bringing prepared notes onstage." In a sermon on faith he described "using my mouth in prayer and prophecy to agree with everything God already told me." Speaking of the worship planned for ACCESS, he said, "I feel that in my spirit."^[4, 18, 20, 21]

To his credit, he also warns against careless talk. In that same Israel sermon he said, "God said, two dangerous words," and added, "Anytime I hear somebody say, God said, I've got a question, an eyebrow raised." The trouble is that he doesn't hold his own claims to that warning.

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.

HEBREWS 1:1-2 (ESV)

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

2 TIMOTHY 3:16-17 (ESV)

The Westminster Confession says Holy Scripture is most necessary, “those former ways of God’s revealing his will unto his people being now ceased.” It also says that to the whole counsel of God set down in Scripture “nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.”^[38]

Reformed Christians don’t deny that God guides His people today. He guides by His Word, by His providence, and by wise counsel, and the Spirit opens our eyes to the Scriptures. A man may come home from Israel with a heavy burden for his nation, and God may use that burden greatly. What Scripture does not give us is fresh speech from God that carries His authority. When a preacher says “God told me,” his hearers rightly take him to mean that God has spoken. If God did not speak, then the claim puts words in God’s mouth. If God did speak, then His word binds the hearer just as the Bible does. Either way the claim is far heavier than charismatic preachers usually treat it.

The practical danger is authority. In a 2025 sermon Mitchell told his church, “If you don’t like the vessel, pray for the vessel, especially if God sent the vessel.” A ministry whose founding story rests on a personal charge from God is very hard to correct, because a brother who questions the preacher seems to be questioning the God who sent him. Scripture gives every believer a better rule.^[26]

Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:20-21 (ESV)

Part 6. Prayer, Portals, and a Demand on God

In “Expectations for ACCESS,” published in October 2025, Mitchell prepared his church for the Atlanta gathering. He rightly said that ACCESS “is a gathering of prayer” and that he named it for the access believers have in prayer. Then, about thirty-seven minutes in, he described the event this way.^[20]

MITCHELL'S OWN WORDS

We're going to make the arena a portal from earth to heaven. ... we will put a demand on him to come down.

“Expectations for ACCESS,” about 36 to 39 minutes

He also told them to expect “spiritual healing” and “even physical healing,” and he prayed for “signs and wonders and miracles and healing and deliverance.”

Talk of portals and of placing a demand on heaven comes from the charismatic revival culture of open heavens and spiritual atmospheres. It has no place in Christian prayer. Believers already have access to the Father, and they have it in every place, because Christ opened the way by His own blood.

Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh,

HEBREWS 10:19-20 (ESV)

A stadium is no nearer to heaven than a farmhouse kitchen. Jesus said as much to the woman at the well.

Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ... But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him.”

JOHN 4:21, 23 (ESV)

Neither prayer, nor any other part of religious worship, is now, under the gospel, either tied unto, or made more acceptable by any place in which it is performed, or towards which it is directed: but God is to be worshiped everywhere, in spirit and truth;

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH 21.6

No man puts a demand on God. We come as children who ask, and our Father gives according to His will.

And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him.

MATTHEW 6:7-8 (ESV)

And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that if we ask anything according to his will he hears us.

1 JOHN 5:14 (ESV)

The irony is painful. The gathering is named ACCESS, and access to God is exactly what Christ purchased for every believer in every room at every hour. Telling thousands of young Christians that a packed arena can become a portal draws them away from the closet and the Lord's Day assembly, which are the places God has promised to meet them. Mitchell did say he wants people to pray in God's will, and he isn't teaching occult ritual. But the words he chose teach a wrong idea of prayer, and the crowd hears the words.

Part 7. Fasting and Promises God Did Not Make

In January 2025 Mitchell called 2819 Church to a week of fasting in a sermon titled "So We Fasted," from Ezra 8:21-23. He said, "For the majority of us, 85%, 90%, I'm calling you to what's called a total fast," and for himself, "water only." He did offer a partial fast as another path.^[19]

Fasting is biblical, and the Westminster Confession counts "solemn fastings" among the proper parts of worship upon special occasions. A pastor may rightly call his flock to humble themselves before God. The trouble lies in what Mitchell said fasting does.

MITCHELL'S OWN WORDS

I will weaken you so that who I really am, a spirit inside of a body can grow strong in intimacy with Christ. ... When you fast, you hear God more clearly. ... When you fast, you can move God to intervene in circumstances. ... You're going to be radically transformed. Your bodies are going to be healed.

"So We Fasted," Ezra 8:21-23, about 15 and 48 minutes

Several problems stand out. The picture of a man as "a spirit inside of a body" isn't how Scripture speaks. God made man a unity of body and soul, and the body is His good creation. The phrase echoes a saying that Word of Faith teachers made popular, that man is a spirit who has a soul and

lives in a body.

Fasting also doesn't "move God" as though our hunger pulls a lever in heaven. God answers prayer freely, out of His own fatherly goodness. Worst of all, Mitchell promised a congregation that their bodies would be healed. God made no such promise. When that promise fails, the weak are left to wonder whether their faith or their fast was too small.

Scripture warns that hard treatment of the body can look like wisdom and still leave sin untouched. Sin is put to death by the Spirit, through faith in Christ.

These have indeed an appearance of wisdom in promoting self-made religion and asceticism and severity to the body, but they are of no value in stopping the indulgence of the flesh.

COLOSSIANS 2:23 (ESV)

For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live.

ROMANS 8:13 (ESV)

Mitchell did say that God "can do anything he desires to do in the context of his will." That's true, and it should have governed the whole sermon. A pastor should also use great care before calling most of his church to a seven-day water fast, since any large congregation holds many people with medical reasons that make such a fast unwise.

Part 8. Signs, Tongues, and Healing Reports

Mitchell is a continuationist, meaning he believes the miraculous gifts continue in the church today. Preaching on Acts 2:42-47 he said, "the Holy Spirit still does signs and wonders through people," and "We still lay hands and see healing." In his sermon on Acts 2:1-13 he said the tongues of 1 Corinthians 14 are different from Pentecost, that "Paul tells that this is a gift for prayer," and that it "requires a gift of interpretation." In a sermon reported by Charisma he said, "Suddenly, He can heal a physical body." He has also published healing reports, like the deaf girl at ACCESS, with no evidence beyond the report itself.^[14, 15, 28, 29]

He isn't a classic Pentecostal. He doesn't teach tongues as the required sign of Spirit baptism, and he ties Spirit baptism to conversion. He has also spoken tenderly of a church member who died, saying, "although she was not physically healed in this life, she is completely healed right now." That's the right comfort for grieving saints, and it shows he doesn't teach that God always heals.^[22, 30]

Reformed churches confess that God still heals, and that He answers the prayers of His people for the sick. James 5 calls the elders to pray over the sick, and believers should do so with faith. What

the Confession denies is that the revealing gifts and sign gifts that marked the apostolic age go on as an ordinary part of church life. Healing claims announced from a pulpit or on social media, with no names and no proof, also put the honor of Christ at risk. When such reports prove false, unbelievers mock, and believers who were not healed grow confused about God.

A man isn't a false teacher simply because he is a continuationist. Many godly brothers hold that view. But for a Reformed believer this is a real line, and in Mitchell's case it feeds the larger problem described in Part 5.

Part 9. Assurance and Perseverance

Mitchell affirms election, yet he speaks of the believer's final salvation as hanging on the believer. In "Blessed in Christ," preached in October 2026 from Ephesians 1, he said, "the one who adopted you will bring you all the way into the kingdom so long as you stay in his will." A clip that circulated in early 2025 carries his line, "Too many of you think once saved always saved." In "Woe to You" he warned that "people who used to be on fire are no longer on fire."^[24, 35, 26]

His burden is partly right. Many Americans presume they are saved because they once prayed a prayer, and Scripture warns them. The foolish virgins thought they were ready. The Reformed faith has never taught that a man may live in open rebellion and rest on a past decision.

But the Reformed faith also doesn't hang final salvation on the believer's staying power.

They, whom God hath accepted in his Beloved, effectually called, and sanctified by his Spirit, can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end, and be eternally saved.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH 17.1

I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

JOHN 10:28-29 (ESV)

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

PHILIPPIANS 1:6 (ESV)

The sinner who truly believes will persevere, and he perseveres because God keeps him. Warnings are one of the means God uses to keep him, so a faithful preacher holds the warning and the promise together. Mitchell gives the warning loudly and the promise faintly. A doubting saint who hears "so

long as you stay in his will” will look inward at his own record and find no rest there. The Reformed answer turns his eyes to Christ, who loses none of those the Father gave Him.

This research found no evidence that Mitchell teaches sinless perfection or that a single sin undoes salvation. His view is best described as unsettled and leaning toward conditional security. Believers who struggle with assurance should be especially careful here.

Part 10. Handling the Text

Mitchell calls himself an expository preacher, and he does preach through whole books of the Bible. That’s a good practice. But at times his application goes beyond what the text says. In “Be a Witness,” preached in April 2026, he said Jesus told the parable of the ten virgins to show that at His return “he would find half of his people ready for his return and another half of his people who was not ready for his return.”^[22]

This is a good place to think about what in Scripture is meant literally and what is meant as a figure. A parable is a true lesson told through a story. Its details serve the main point, and they aren’t always meant to be read as hard facts. Five wise and five foolish sets the two kinds side by side. It isn’t a count of how many professing Christians will be ready on the last day. Notice also that both groups slept.

As the bridegroom was delayed, they all became drowsy and slept.

MATTHEW 25:5 (ESV)

The wise were not wiser because they stayed awake. They were wiser because they had oil. In his earlier sermon devoted to this parable, “A Cry for Readiness,” Mitchell taught it better. He noted that “all of the women fell asleep” and said the foolish “represent every man and woman who thinks they are Christians, but they are really not.” That’s sound. The later line about “half of his people” shows a habit of loose application that careful hearers need to watch for, and that risk grows for any preacher who goes into the pulpit without notes.^[23]

Part 11. Money, Tickets, and Answering Critics

In 2026 Mitchell and Tim Timberlake, senior pastor of Celebration Church in Jacksonville, Florida, took their Street Preachers podcast on an eight-city tour. General admission ran about \$60 to \$70. A \$200 VIP ticket added a meet-and-greet with the hosts, a free book, and merchandise discounts. Every stop sold out.^[6, 10, 11]

When Christians objected, Mitchell answered from the pulpit. He said the tour was paid for from his own pocket and not by his church, that venues and security cost money, and that “We’re not doing this for a bag.” He also called his critics a “brood of vipers,” the words John the Baptist used for the Pharisees, and he pointed to a child he said was healed at one of the events. On *The Breakfast Club* he said he takes no offering at Sunday services and that he is “not a grifter.”^[6, 7, 10, 11]

This research found no evidence that Mitchell preaches a prosperity gospel, and ACCESS itself was free. Scripture also allows those who preach to be paid for their labor.

In the same way, the Lord commanded that those who proclaim the gospel should get their living by the gospel.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:14 (ESV)

Yet selling time with a preacher is a different thing from covering the cost of a room. Paul set himself apart from those who traffic in the Word.

For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God’s word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

2 CORINTHIANS 2:17 (ESV)

Premier Christianity noted that Mitchell’s long rebuttal never addressed the VIP ticket, which drew the strongest objection. Branding fellow believers who raise a concern as a “brood of vipers” also isn’t the gentle answer a shepherd owes. When a celebrated preacher answers criticism by naming his critics Pharisees, he teaches a great many young believers that any question about their preacher is an attack from the devil.^[6]

shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising oversight, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

1 PETER 5:2-3 (ESV)

By comparison, his giving appeals to his own church have been measured. In early 2025 he asked for a special offering toward a five million dollar building over thirty-six months. He used the language of sowing, but he named no amount and promised no harvest, and he said, “if this makes you feel uncomfortable, then don’t do it.” That’s to his credit.^[30]

Part 12. Training, Associations, and Influences

A man’s teachers don’t settle his doctrine, but they do shape the way he thinks. Mitchell’s formal Bible training came from Valor Christian College, founded by Rod Parsley at World Harvest Church in Columbus, Ohio. He graduated as valedictorian in 2010, and in a sermon on honor he said that to throw the Bible his school gave him on the floor would “dishonor Pastor Parsley.” Parsley’s ministry is a classic Pentecostal seed-faith ministry. A current appeal on his website promises “seven powerful blessings of atonement for you when you bring an offering,” including “FINANCIAL overflow” and “A DOUBLE portion from the Lord.” Critics have also tied Parsley to dominionist politics.^[27, 33, 36]

Mitchell has not taken up Parsley’s money teaching, and he openly rejects it. Even so, the “double anointing” prayer in Israel, the talk of portals and demands, the fasting promises, and the pulpit healing reports all fit the world in which he was trained. This research found no public statement in which Mitchell distances himself from that school or its founder.

His other ties are mixed. In one sermon he said, “Thank God for Jakes,” speaking of T.D. Jakes, a preacher long tied to Oneness Pentecostalism and prosperity teaching, and he gave no word of caution. He co-hosts with Tim Timberlake, appears on TBN, and is promoted by Charisma magazine. On the other side, he has been welcomed on Josh Howerton’s program, author Jackie Hill Perry and her husband Preston Perry attend 2819, and the church’s worship team has partnered with Reach Records.^[3, 8, 32, 37]

No evidence was found that Mitchell belongs to the New Apostolic Reformation or claims the office of apostle. He is best described as a conservative charismatic evangelical, trained in Pentecostal circles, who has moved toward a sharper doctrine of sin and grace while keeping many charismatic habits of speech and practice.

Part 13. The Church and Its Government

2819 Church is nondenominational. Its written statement confesses the Trinity, the full deity and full humanity of Christ, the inspiration and inerrancy of Scripture, and salvation by grace through faith. It practices believer's baptism and a memorial Lord's Supper with bread and grape juice. Those last two points differ from Presbyterian conviction, though many faithful Baptists share them.^[1]

Its government is much less clear. Mitchell refers to "the elders," and the church names him and his wife Lena as its leaders, but it publishes no list of elders, no account of how leaders are chosen or held accountable, and no plan of church discipline. In a 2025 sermon he told visitors there is no membership requirement at 2819. A church of thousands, with tens of thousands more "Digital Disciples" watching online, can't be shepherded the way Hebrews 13:17 describes unless the shepherds know the sheep and the sheep belong to a flock. A livestream can't do that work.^[1, 23, 29]

Part 14. Worship and the Danger of Idolizing a Preacher

The Lord's Day gathering at 2819 Church is built like a concert. Reporters have described a countdown clock, loud music and percussion, strobe lights, and a smoke machine. Volunteers pray over each seat, greeters dance, and the worship team moves from a fast song into a slow one while the room lifts its hands. People line up before dawn to get in, and some travel hundreds of miles each Sunday. ACCESS carried the same pattern into the arenas, with a produced program and tens of thousands gathered around one preacher.^[4, 5, 31]

What God requires in worship

Reformed churches hold what is called the regulative principle of worship. God alone decides how He is to be worshiped, and the church may add nothing He has not commanded.

But the acceptable way of worshiping the true God is instituted by himself, and so limited by his own revealed will, that he may not be worshiped according to the imaginations and devices of men, or the suggestions of Satan, under any visible representation, or any other way not prescribed in the Holy Scripture.

WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH 21.1

Smoke, strobes, and countdown clocks are devices of men. They exist to shape the mood of a room, and they work on the feelings whether the preacher intends it or not. When a gathering is built that way, it becomes very hard for anyone in the room to tell the work of the Spirit from the work of the

lighting. God has given His church plain means for worship in the reading and preaching of the Word, prayer, the singing of praise, and the sacraments. Those means need no help from a production team.

Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire.

HEBREWS 12:28-29 (ESV)

Feelings aren't the enemy. David danced before the Lord, and the Psalms are full of tears and shouts. But holy affection rises out of truth understood. When a room is engineered to stir the feelings first, people learn to measure God's presence by what they feel, and they go looking for the next service or the next stadium that can make them feel it again.

Signs of a culture built around one man

Concern about idolizing Mitchell has been raised in public and more than once. Reporters note the enthusiastic reaction whenever he takes the stage, and one observer reported that some members have begun dressing like him. VIP tickets that included a meet-and-greet with him sold for \$200, and every stop on the Street Preachers tour sold out. In 2025 a woman interrupted a service to call the church to repent of idolizing its pastor, and security removed her. In August 2026 a visiting minister said he was removed after raising the same concern. The matter has come up often enough that Mitchell addressed it on *The Breakfast Club*, saying "there is a difference between idolization and admiration."^[6, 7, 9, 11]

Mitchell says the right things about it. He has told his church, "He's just a man. Come feel God's presence. It's much better," and he has urged them to thank God for growth "and not idolize a preacher." He should be taken at his word that he wants no worship for himself.^[9]

But his platform pulls against his warnings. He sells paid time with himself on tour. He builds stadium events around his own voice. He tells his church, "If you don't like the vessel, pray for the vessel, especially if God sent the vessel." His whole ministry rests on a story of a personal charge from God in Israel. Every one of those things lifts the man, and none of them is required by his calling. A preacher who means his warnings will take down the platforms that feed the problem. John the Baptist showed the right spirit.^[6, 18, 26]

He must increase, but I must decrease.

JOHN 3:30 (ESV)

What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:5-7 (ESV)

Why this makes him a particular danger

Movements like Bethel Church in Redding, California, are easy for conservative believers to spot. Mitchell is much harder to spot. He sounds like a sound evangelical. He preaches sin and repentance and grace, and he draws young believers who would never go near Bethel. So his errors reach ears that are otherwise on guard.

His growth has been sudden and enormous. He relaunched with 183 people in January 2023. He now draws about 6,000 a week in person and tens of thousands online, and in the space of a year he filled State Farm Arena and then AT&T Stadium. If he keeps teaching the errors documented in this report at that scale, inside a culture of spectacle that lifts the preacher, he will do as much harm as Bethel has done. He will do it through a door that conservative churches have left open.^[5, 7, 12]

Part 15. Summary of Findings

The weight given to each finding follows the Westminster Standards. A grave finding touches the foundation of the faith. A serious finding departs from clear Reformed teaching in a way that harms hearers. A caution marks a weakness believers should watch for.

Area	Finding	Weight
Gospel of grace	Denies works salvation and preaches Christ's righteousness counted to the believer.	Sound
Person of Christ	Taught that the Son emptied Himself "of some of his divine nature." No correction found.	Grave
Revelation	Regular claims of direct words and charges from God, outside Scripture.	Serious
Prayer	Called ACCESS "a portal from earth to heaven" and spoke of putting "a demand" on God.	Serious
Fasting	Said fasting can "move God" and promised that bodies would be healed.	Serious
Spiritual gifts	Continuationist, with unverified healing reports made public.	Caution
Perseverance	Final salvation tied to staying in God's will. Leans conditional.	Caution
Interpretation	Expository in form, loose in some applications.	Caution
Money	No prosperity gospel found. VIP tickets and harsh answers to critics.	Caution

Area	Finding	Weight
Associations	Trained under Rod Parsley, commends T.D. Jakes. No NAR tie found.	Caution
Church order	No published eldership, accountability, or membership.	Caution
Worship	Lord's Day and ACCESS built as produced experiences with smoke, strobes, and countdown clocks, against the regulative principle.	Serious
Personality culture	Visible signs of idolizing the preacher, fed by paid meet-and-greets and stadium events despite his warnings.	Serious
Character	Willing to apologize publicly. Warns against idolizing him.	Credit

Part 16. Counsel for the Saints

Should Christians listen to Philip Anthony Mitchell? The answer of this report is no, not as a teacher to sit under. A believer may hear a clip and find something true in it, and truth is still truth when it comes from a man with errors. But a teacher is someone we trust to feed us week after week. Mitchell's errors reach the person of Christ, the sufficiency of Scripture, and the nature of prayer itself, and those are not side issues.

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

JAMES 3:1 (ESV)

Where should saints be most careful with him? Test anything he says about who Jesus is against the Creed and the Confession, beginning with the "Stay Awake" sermon. When he says God told him something, ask where God said it in His Word. Language about portals, atmospheres, and demands should send you back to Hebrews 10, where Christ alone is our way to the Father. Promises of healing or breakthrough tied to fasting or to a gathering need a promise from God behind them, and he doesn't supply one. And when he warns about false assurance, take the warning to heart, but rest your soul on the promise that Christ keeps His own.

How should saints speak of him? With truth and with charity. Quote his own words when naming his errors. Don't call him a wolf or a deceiver without proof of his motives, and don't repeat charges the record doesn't support, such as membership in the New Apostolic Reformation or a money-for-blessing gospel. And pray for him. He has shown that he can humble himself and correct a public mistake. Christians should pray that he does the same about the person of Christ and the authority of Scripture.

For regular feeding, point believers first to the faithful preaching of their own church, where elders know their names and watch over their souls. For further help, point them to men whose doctrine

has stood the test of time, such as R.C. Sproul, Sinclair Ferguson, John MacArthur, Voddie Baucham, and Paul Washer, and behind them to J.C. Ryle, Charles Spurgeon, and the Puritans.

Mitchell named his new book after the letter of Jude. The saints would do well to take that verse seriously.

Beloved, although I was very eager to write to you about our common salvation, I found it necessary to write appealing to you to contend for the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints.

JUDE 3 (ESV)

Contending for the faith begins with the faith about Christ Himself. That's where Mitchell most needs correction, and it's where the church must stand most firmly.

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