

We've been going through Luke's Gospel, and so we're in Luke 8 this morning. So if you don't have a Bible, there's two tables in the back, and there's a little ESV back there that you can grab. ESV translation is a good translation that we use. You can grab that and take it home with you if you don't own a Bible. But we'll be in Luke 8 this morning, and if you turn there that's where we'll be. We'll also have the words up on the screen.

This morning it's encouraging as we hear a testimony of someone who became a believer. And honestly, I love hearing testimonies. I love hearing stories of how Christ has changed a person's life. One of the things, though, I want to kind of show you is I have a testimony that I became a believer at 11. And so I don't have your typical biker testimony where it was full of drugs and infidelity and jail time and murder and all those things. I just don't have that testimony, and I'm thankful for that, because I'm praying for my testimony to be similar to my son's because I don't want him to experience that stuff either.

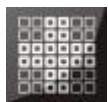
And so what I think we do, though, often is when we do hear those testimonies and if you have one that's like mine you might kind of wonder, "Well, did Jesus really save me?" because it just doesn't seem that radical or that extreme. We kind of tend to draw toward the very extreme testimonies of, you know, the guy who was in a cult and now he's not and he's worshipping Jesus and his family's loving Jesus. We really love hearing those, because they're amazing because you do see this drastic difference between an unbeliever and a believer. And so those are really good. I'm not saying those are bad testimonies either. But I'm not saying that the one who becomes a believer at a young age and endures, that's not a bad one either. That's a pretty good one, right? That's a pretty good one.

And so I think what we do, though, is we look for the wow story more than we do what I think is going to be the most important thing. And this is what we're going to talk about today. Here's what I'm saying here.

I've been a Christian most of my life. I became a believer at 11, again, and so that's most of my life. I'm 32 now, so I don't even know what it's like to not be a Christian. I've been a Christian that long. I don't even know what that's like. I don't even know what it's like not to have the Holy Spirit in my heart convicting me of sin, challenging me to grow, pushing me. I don't even know what that's like. I can't even remember, okay?

And so what I've seen, though – so I went to a Christian high school. I went to a Christian college, and I've been in ministry since I was 18. So I have been around – and I'll use this lightly – "Christians" all of my life.

And what I've seen, here's this sobering truth. This is the frustrating part about this. I have seen people that I went to high school with that claim Jesus with their mouth, even had some evidences of possible salvation. I've been to a Bible college where these young men, young women were passionately pursuing ministry, missions, or whatever it is that God would have for their lives. They were willing. And what I've seen – and this is true, all right? I've made a mental list. I've made specific lists even for



just specific people of, "I want them to endure. I want them to see that God is going to produce major fruit in their life, and they're going to do amazing things."

And I got to tell you what's happened. I have seen more fall by the wayside than I have seen endure, and it's scary. That is scary. I grew up in a Christian school. I go to a Bible college. I go to a seminary. And even in those places, it seems that there are more who fall by the wayside than those who endure. I'm not making this up. I mean, I can go back and I can show you.

I mean, from the very moment of my salvation, I got saved with another kid in my class, and we responded to the Gospel that morning. The preacher got up and shared the Gospel very clear. I responded. I knew at that moment, it's like the Holy Spirit just lifted me out of my seat and pushed me to the front, right? I did the altar call, by the way. And I get up, and I pray. I pray this prayer with this guy in my class, and he prayed the same thing. He did the same thing. And I look him up now, and his Facebook profile he's smoking a ginormous blunt, right?

I'm 32, and he's the same age, and a total different trajectory. Like, as it my work? Was I the one who did everything right and I'm the one who made this thing clean, or was it the Spirit's work in our lives? Because he did not endure. He's fallen on the wayside.

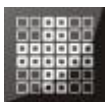
So what is this? What do we do with that when that happens? I think what Jesus does is he answers these questions for us by showing us here a parable in Luke 8. So what we find in 1 through 3, it's really interesting. You see God just doing miraculous things. You have Herod's – well, I'll just read it. Let's just look at 8:1-3.

¹Soon afterward he went on through cities and villages, proclaiming and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with him, ²and also some women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities: Mary, called Magdalene, from whom seven demons had gone out, ³and Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's household manager, and Susanna, and many others, who provided for them out of their means.

So you see Jesus. He's going into cities. He's going into villages, and he's proclaiming the good news of the kingdom of God. He's proclaiming salvation that eventually he would be the way, the truth, and the life and no one can come to the father except through him.

And so what you're seeing here, you're seeing a woman who's healed of seven demons. I mean, look, Herod's house manager, this would have been a very evil woman. And now she is not only a believer, but she's following and walking with Jesus. And Jesus is showing even how he's generous to women in that culture, and that is not something that most men would do. A great rabbi would never do that. And he didn't have women as the 12 disciples, but he had them going with him.

So this shows the generosity and the life change that Jesus offers. And so what you have then is he begins to now speak in a certain way to these crowds as he's walking with these 12 disciples and these multiple women whose lives have been changed. And now he's going, and he's proclaiming more and more of the Gospel, all right? And so this what we have in Verse 4. It says:



⁴And when a great crowd was gathering and people from town after town came to him, he said in a parable: ⁵"A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. ⁶And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. ⁷And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. ⁸And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold." As he said these things, he called out, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

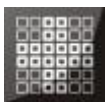
And what you'll see here, Jesus often speaks in parables. And parables, it literally means something that is thrown alongside of something else. That's what a parable means. So Jesus is driving home a point here, and what he's showing here, he's illustrating this to drive home a major point that he's trying to infiltrate the hearts and lives of people.

So he does it in a parable to drive home this point. It's something that goes along something else. And so I'm going to give you a quick lesson on how we are to interpret Scripture, because parables are some of the most hijacked places in Scripture, all right? It's where people go on and on, and we take one thing that Jesus was trying to say and we make it something else. You want to know where a lot of the prosperity Gospel garbage – I mean, yeah – Gospel language has come out, it's from parables. It's from taking parables out of context.

And so let me just show you this, because it's very important that we don't allegorize the Bible unless it allegorizes itself, meaning we're not making stories up that aren't there in the text. Like, here's an example of that. How many times have we heard the story of David and Goliath, and the application point is God wants you to fight all the Goliaths in your life? I mean, sometimes you've got the Goliath of tough financial burden, or you've got the Goliath of sickness, and you have to – and they go crazy with the allegory. They say, "Okay, there's five smooth stones that Jesus pulls out, and one of the stones meant pride in the American way. And the other one meant joy, and the other one meant freedom." And you're like, "What? Where are you getting this stuff?" "And this is how we conquer. We just need five smooth stones to conquer the giants in our life." I mean, have we heard that sermon before? We've heard it. That's called allegorizing the text.

Okay, this is not what the story says. All right? It's not. The purpose of the story is showing that God provides a substitute, something very unlikely to defeat this big giant. That's what we know. God provides for his people, period. Let's not go crazy with what the five stones mean. We don't know. We don't know. We don't even know why he got five. He only needed one, right? We don't even know. All right?

The other thing is – I've seen this also. You've got Jesus who is calming the waters. He's out on the sea, and he calms the sea. And what do we do with that text? Jesus calms the storms in our life. Have you heard that, right? You have the storm of doubt that comes, and Jesus calms it, right? Is that what that passage is about? No, it's about God comes in the form of a man, has the authority to proclaim and control nature. That's what it's about. Let's not go crazy and say, "Some of you have the wave of destruction and the wave of fear come in your life." That's not what it's about. That's allegorizing the text. All right, we're laughing, so we got it. We're getting it, right? We're getting it.



Okay, so you don't read any other book like that, correct? You don't read any other book. So when you read *Lord of the Rings* or you watched the movie, here's what you didn't do. You didn't say, "Here's what a tower is. And I think this tower means the tower of fear, and this is the tower of joy." You don't do that. You say, "Frodo needs to get a ring to Mordor," and that's the story, right? We don't go crazy with this thing. We don't go crazy. "And the helmet is" – you know, we don't do that, right?

No, we do that with the Bible only when the Bible does that, when the Bible gives an analogy and explains it. But you don't just read Scripture that way. But man, we do this thing all the time, don't we? We hijack it, and we over-spiritualize the meaning of it when this is not what it's saying. This is why it's important that we know why it was written, who it was written to. Each and every book is written for a different purpose. I don't know if you knew that. It's important that we see this. So don't overemphasize it.

By the way, the Bible's not a book about you. It's a book about God. It's about displaying God's one and only Son to us and showing us a glorious Savior that we can find salvation only in him.

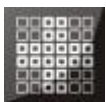
Okay, so what Jesus does is he allegorizes this part, but he – this is what he does – explains what he's allegorizing. He explains what each of these things mean. Here's a hint, so that you don't have to do it, all right? So that you don't have to do it.

And so what he does, he tells 27 parables in Luke. And so it's important that we know what Jesus is saying. So thankfully, in Verse 9, he tells this and his disciples are like, "What are you talking about? Okay, what are you saying?" Look here in Verse 9.

⁹And when his disciples asked him what this parable meant,¹⁰he said, "To you it has been given to know the secrets of the kingdom of God, but for others they are in parables, so that 'seeing they may not see, and hearing they may not understand.' ¹¹ Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God.

So they're asking him what this thing means. And right out of the gate, what you see in Verse 8, he says, "He who has ears, let him hear." You see this repeated throughout the Gospels. You see this repeated throughout John's Gospel. John probably emphasizes it more. What he's talking about is, of course, we all have ears. At least most of us, right, we have ears. And what he's saying is: There are people who will hear in the sense of their heart. Their hearts are open and receptive to the Gospel, okay? That's what he's consistently talking about, how we are open.

So there's going to be people in the crowd that are hearing Jesus or that are listening to him, but they don't have ears. They're not actually hearing the message that Christ is saying, okay? So it's very important to understand that. And so he's talking here about salvation. And so what he does is he backs up and says to his disciples, "These are like parables to everybody else, but you guys, this is mysteries of salvation. This is how salvation is going to work. This is how we understand and know salvation."



So what Jesus does is a few things here. He's setting the apostles up, because he's letting them know, "Hey, when you guys go out and you guys continue in my ministry, there are going to be people that, no matter what you do and no matter what you say, their hearts are hardened. And they will not respond, because they do not have ears." And he's going to say, "There's others that will. They will respond, because they have ears, because the Spirit of God is working in their hearts."

And so when I preach on Sunday, for instance, I come with great anticipation, knowing that God is going to work in people's hearts because the seed is the Word of God. If I get up and proclaim the Word of God, there will be people that God opens their eyes, opens their heart, opens their mind, and they are receptive to the Gospel. So I come with great anticipation knowing that I can't mess this thing up. I just get up and read this stuff. Like, I can totally just get up and read the passage, and there will be people whose eyes and their hearts will be open. So I'm very confident up here, all right? Not in myself but just in what he's going to do. I'm very thankful for that.

Now, I come anticipating, and I come not expecting too much, because he's saying that, "There's going to be people that, no matter what you say or how winsome you say it or what kind of crazy spin you can put on in, they will not hear, because their hearts are not open." So I come expecting and not expecting. That's why pastors are bipolar, right?

Okay, in addition, what you see here is there are going to be some – and this is true. If you preach the Gospel, if you're a church that preaches the Word of God, here's what you'll have. You will have – I'll just read 2 Corinthians 2:15-17.

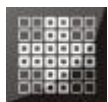
¹⁵For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things? ¹⁷For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

So what he's saying is this. Those who proclaim the Gospel, those who proclaim the Word of God, as for the hearers it will be life and it will be something that brings joy. But for those who are deaf, it will be the stench of death to them. It will be the aroma of death to them.

So someone who really proclaims the Gospel has both of those things, both of those responses. And so what Jesus is showing his disciples is, "You are going to have this happen. If you really preach the Gospel, unless you're a peddler of God's Word, you're going to have people that will respond and they will love what you say. And there will be others who absolutely hate and despise it." I've seen it. I've seen it.

And so Jesus' main point here in this text is to take heed how we hear. Let's look at Verse 12.

¹²The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved.



So he's explaining what he says in Verse 5. This is the path. This is the seed that's thrown on the path. The birds come up and take it. He's saying that bird is like Satan. Satan's coming and taking away truth. And so I've been accused of this before. I have a person that goes here, and they came up to me and said, "You know, you don't really talk about Satan a lot. I grew up in a denomination that it was every single week that was 'Let's bind Satan from this place.' And they would pray to God and say, 'God, thank you for being here,' pray to Satan, 'You're not invited here anymore.'" And it's kind of like, you know, "You suck," this kind of attitude toward Satan that we have.

Ad I don't. Honestly, I don't, because Scripture talks a lot about Jesus. And it does talk about Satan, and so when it does, I will. All right, how's that? That's fair? Okay, so what Satan is and what we do with Satan sometimes is we kind of look at this dualistic thing, and we give Satan attributes that only belong to God, meaning this.

Satan is not omnipresent. He cannot be everywhere at once. Only God has that attribute. Okay, only God has that attribute. Satan probably doesn't even know Ben Tugwell, because he can only be in one place at one time. He does not have the attribute of omnipresence, okay? That's good, right? Is that good news?

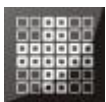
Okay, the other thing is he's not all-knowing. God is all-knowing. That is an attribute that belongs only to God, and we give that to Satan like, "Oh, Satan's in my head, and he's controlling my thoughts. And oh, that music, if I play that song backwards, he's just going to infiltrate my heart." And we give these things to Satan, and then we give him the power to create. We give him that.

We say that he's got this power to create. We say this is his music, and these are his movies, and these are his people. He does not have the power to create. God is the only creator. Satan, what he does is he takes what God has created, and he distorts and perverts what God has created. So what Satan's role is in what Jesus is saying here is not he's coming up and he's catching God blind sighted. God doesn't see it coming and Satan comes up and swoops him away.

No, listen. Satan distorts what God has proclaimed. Satan puts question marks where God puts periods, right? That's what he does. He distorts, and he tells you, "No, no, that's not true. No, no, here's something else for you."

And so what he's describing here and what Jesus is showing is that this is a person who at one point had a response, whether it be intellectual or emotional to the Gospel. They saw its beauty. They saw what Christ offers. And then all of the sudden, they saw that and then they were bought in and sold into a lie. And Satan swept them away into a lie. Did they lose their salvation? They never had their salvation, because the Gospel never took root in their heart.

By the way, when the Gospel takes root in your heart, Satan can lie all he wants, but eventually what the Spirit is going to do is show you the truth of the Gospel. Isn't that great? Oh, that's not great? That's great, right?



So what you have here is this person in the short season they had this response. But you have Satan's who's kind of lying to them, and they kind of walk away. They walk away. Verse 13, this is the other person that he talks about.

¹³*And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of –*

Notice this.

– testing fall away.

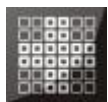
Now, this is a person that – and here's what I've seen. We rely on, so often, emotional response to salvation. And this is why we don't do a big altar call at the end, and Chris is up here playing *Just As I Am*, the 72 verses over and over again. And I'm up front. I'm sweating, and I tell the story about the young man who got in the car, "And he died and then he went to hell and he walked away not knowing Jesus. And if you don't want to be that guy, you better come up now," and we just keep rolling this thing up. This is why we don't do that, because we don't want to overemphasize this emotional response, because what Jesus is saying here, "Hey, the emotional response ain't everything."

I mean, emotions are good, correct? Did God give us emotions so that we can rightly worship him, and we can love him, and that God might stir our affections for the Gospel? But emotions are not everything. He's saying, "Listen, this is a person. This is the altar call kid, right?" This is the stereotype that we know, the kid that comes down and they're super excited and even crying. He says, "But the Gospel never took root in their heart." And so when they leave, they feel good about themselves. They feel happy. They feel excited, because they saw what Jesus offers. They saw what Jesus has, and they were around a community of people that are loving and kind. And they come out and say, "Yes."

But here's what happens: Life. Life happens. Trials come. Suffering arises. They say, "This isn't what I signed up for. This is not good. This isn't fun. Like, where's the next high? Where's the next high?" And so what they do is they attach God to an emotion, and they continue to chase that looking for that. He's like, "That's not genuine salvation."

That's not what it means to know him, so I have to be careful of that, honestly. I have to be careful of that. When I preach a sermon and I feel like, "God's got somebody, right? They want to meet with me, and they want to share. And they say, 'Oh, Pastor Ben, you shared that, and it spoke to my heart.' And they're weeping and they're crying, and I'm like, 'I am so good at what I do, right? Yeah, she responded. She wants to hear what I have to say and she wants to listen. God's got her, and God used me.'"

And then I began to say, "Well, what happened?" "Well, I got saved," and they're crying. And then I start asking them questions. "Tell me about your purity." And they say, "Well, I've got to go. I've got to go." "Tell me about where are you denying sin in your life? Where are you fighting sin in your life?" "I don't want to talk about that. Let's go back to your sermon, you know. Let's go back to that emotion that I had, that high that I had." I got to guard myself against that, right? We've got to guard ourselves.



And we can't just say, just because someone responded in an exciting way that they're responding to truth, because it's so often that they're not. And that's a scary deal. Is that scary?

So 14. By the way, I just want to show you, suffering shows you who you are. It shows you who you are. Verse 14:

¹⁴And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature.

Now, most people – or a lot of people, I'll say this – when they look at the parables, they say, "Well, okay, the first two people are nonbelievers." We can agree that those two people are nonbelievers, right? Can we agree on that? Okay, and then what they'll do is say, "Well, this third person, they did, but they really didn't grow, and they really didn't disciple. And they just need that extra step of obedience. They just need to join another Bible study, because they're just caught up in the world," right, because we see it so much.

And here's the deal. We see the third one, so much of this – and I'll say this – "nominal Christianity," this cultural Christianity, this person who signs up for it, the "Get out of hell free" card, whatever language you want to use. And they continue to kind of float in this world of, "I'm going to heaven. I do whatever I want. I'm going to love the things of the world more than I love God. I'm going to think about my 401K and my retirement plan, and I just don't love the things of God. I'll go to church. I'll give even. I'll do all these things," but there's no heart change in their life.

And what we do is we've actually created a theology around this person. And we have trouble with three, because we have invented this culture of "You can live carnal, and you can do whatever you want. You can live like hell, and you can still get to heaven." And what Jesus is saying is, "No, you cannot," because what he's doing here is he says this person – it even uses the language. Look in Verse 14 again. He says:

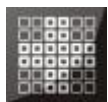
And their fruit does not mature.

What do you think that is? What do you think this fruit is? The fruit is salvation. This is salvation in a person's heart. If salvation doesn't mature, it's not there, because what do we know about a believer? A believer is one who endures. A believer is one who does grow. Okay, here's what Mark says, Mark 4:19. When he talks about this same parable, he says when the seed is choked, it proves to be unfruitful. Does that sound like a believer? No, it's not a believer. It's to a believer.

So it's not this third person. There's three lost people that Jesus is describing. And by the way, the third one and the fourth one, they have a lot in common in some ways. They look similar in some ways. But one doesn't have a heart change, and the other one does.

So what he does in Verse 15 is this:

¹⁵As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word –



Notice this. They hear the Word of God. They have ears, right?

– *hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with –*

What is the word?

– *patience.*

So suffering happens. They bear fruit with patience. Trials come. They bear fruit with patience. Lies from Satan come. They bear fruit with patience. You have the worldly things that come in. This life happens, and a true believer bears fruit with patience. I think Paul, our boy Paul in Philippians 1:6, one of my favorite verses of all time, it says:

He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

John 8:31:

³¹*So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.*

Hebrew 3:14:

¹⁴*For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence –*

What does it say?

– *firm to the –*

What?

– *end.*

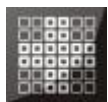
End. And so I think I true Christian is one who endures to the end. Now, you can't lose your salvation, because you didn't do anything to get it. The Spirit of God worked in your heart. Your eyes were open. You responded to the Gospel. You can't lose that. You're sealed until the day that you receive your inheritance. That's Ephesians 1. You've got this thing that God is doing in your life, and he's pressing you to endure. He's pressing you to press on into the mark of the high calling, until you are surrounded by this great cloud of witnesses, and that you will endure. And this is what the definition of a Christian is that you will endure.

And so what Jesus shows us is something really similar. He talks about this fruit idea, this idea of what fruit is. He does this in Verse 16.

¹⁶ *"No one after lighting a lamp covers it with a jar –*

This is the next parable.

– *or puts it under a bed, but puts it on a stand, so that those who enter may see the light.*



Notice what he does here. He just got through talking about what fruit is, and now he introduces this new idea. And what he's showing is that fruit and light are synonymous. Light is illuminating in a dark place. He's saying, "Listen, if you want to see a person who knows Jesus, they know God, and their heart is changed, you will see a difference. There will be a significant difference." Light and fruit are synonymous here in this passage.

Then he goes on in Verse 17.

¹⁷ For nothing is hidden that will not be made manifest, nor is anything secret that will not be known and come to light.

There's another passage in Matthew 12:36 that says that Jesus will give account for every careless word that we say. Praise the Lord, right? Every single careless word that we say? Seriously? So even in our human brain, the things that we smell, the things that we see, the things that we hear, they're all stored in our brain, whether we even know it or not. Have you ever been to a place, and you smell a fragrance that reminds you of something else, and you just go back? It's just like a download of all these memories that you had of being in this one place.

So think about this. Every single idle thought God holds in our account, every single thought that doesn't glorify God. Does that show you how sinful we are? Yeah, it does. And so he's saying, "Listen, you can fake it. You can be like these other seeds. You can continue to walk in worldliness and your own passions and your own desires."

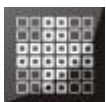
But he's like, "You're not fooling Jesus. Every single thing is going to be made to light. Every single lie that you've told will be brought and made true. He'll bring it to light and show your lies. He'll expose us. The great thing is when he exposes us, he'll say, "Oh, yeah, Christ died for that too. Christ gave himself for that as well." So it's brought to light, but we have a mediator.

Look at Verse 18.

¹⁸ Take care then how you hear, for to the one who has, more will be given, and from the one who has not, even what he thinks that he has will be taken away."

Now, this verse is obviously about giving. No, it's not? Okay, good, because this is what people do with this verse. They take this verse out of context, and they say this is about giving. So if you give, more will be give back. I've even heard people do this. They proof text all the time. Now, what did Jesus just come out of talking about? Was he talking about giving? No, he's talking about fruit. He's talking about taking heed of what God says. He's not talking about giving.

So what is he saying here? He's talking about those who patiently endure with an honest and good heart, those who walk in this, they will have and it will be given back to them more joy, better intimacy, more love, more healing, more life than anyone else. Those who endure patiently, those who walk in the Word of God, and those who believe in his name, and those who believe that he is the only way that Christ died for our sins in our place, that he rose from the grave that those who do that, it will be given



back to them so much more than anything that this world could offer. And it's not worldly things. It's not worldly things. It's Gospel things. I'm going to spend more joy. I'll enjoy Christ more, and I'll have more joy than anyone else that doesn't know him.

And it's amazing here, because this is what a testimony should be. This is what a true testimony is. It's not this wow story. This is a wow story of someone who met Christ, and they endure their whole life. And they may face great persecution. They may face great suffering. They may face great trials. But the thing is they look back and they say, "Through that, I applied the Gospel in my heart, and I find that nowhere else do I find satisfaction and joy other than the person and work of Christ."

And that's the testimony that I want to hear. I want to see some old 90-year-old guy get up and say, "I met Jesus early on. I met Jesus in my 20s, and I faced all of these things. My life hasn't been perfect. I lost all of these things. But you know what I found satisfaction and joy in? Christ. I found that he is the only person that can give me true joy. And I find all my satisfaction in him, and I owe him everything."

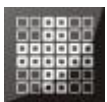
So we're not here this morning just to build your few minutes of life throughout the week, and those things are important to kind of show you to walk and demonstrate the Gospel. We're here to show you a Gospel legacy that one day you might get up and share. And I'm not saying you're going to have a perfect life, but I'm saying this. You'll have joy only in Christ if you believe in him. I'm not saying that your bank account's going to be full, but you'll find that he's better than money, and he's better than sex. He's better than relationships. He's better than everything.

And so maybe you're one this morning who you're like the seed that's thrown on the path. Maybe you are quickly snatched up by everyday life. And I've got to tell you this morning what Jesus is saying and echo the words of Jesus. You don't know him. You don't know him, and you're never going to find satisfaction and joy outside of him. If you just believe Satan's lies, it's just going to continue to snowball. And he'll lie and lie and lie, because he's not your father. He's not. He's not the true father.

You may be like the seed that fell on the rock that has no moisture. And all you do is you live for the high, but it's hard for you to live in the lows. It's hard for you to find joy in Christ in the lows. And I'm not saying you immediately do that when suffering happens. But eventually, what you'll begin to see through your suffering at the very end of your suffering, maybe, you'll begin to see, "You know what? God was faithful there. God showed up. God taught me these things there. God was pressing me there, and he was showing me sinfulness in my heart and my need for him in those moments."

But if you're one of those people that you've gone through trials and you're still ticked off at what God did 20, 30, 40 years ago, and you just haven't dealt with those issues of this is what God has done for me, maybe this is an issue in your heart where you may not know him. You haven't shown that Christ is above all things, that he's the one who offers true satisfaction and joy. And that's hard. That's hard.

Maybe you're like Number 3, and you're just kind of this nominal, cultural "Christian," and you're just kind of floating by, just gonna live just like everybody else, but you're just hoping that you'll just get to heaven. This is saying you don't know him. A true Christian is one who endures and he finds true satisfaction and joy only in Christ.



So this morning, I just want to challenge you with this. No matter where you land here, Jesus is going to bring to light what we try to hide. And so it's important that now we just walk in repentance. Say, "God, this is where I am this morning, but I'm just going to be open and honest with you." Maybe it's even time for you to confess that sin to another brother and sister in Christ in this room and just say, "Listen, I need accountability here. I've got these doubts. I've got these frustrations. I'm swept up in all these lies." Maybe it's the time for you to do that this morning.

So what I'm going to do, I'm just going to pray. And I'm just going to ask you to be honest with the Lord on where you're at this morning. I don't know if you know him or not. Only Jesus knows that. He'll come to light what we don't see with our own eyes. He'll bring that to light.

