

Luke 7 is where we'll be. We came off last week from this idea of what it means to have Christ as the treasure of your heart and how that transforms your heart and your life. So in Luke 6, Jesus is coming off this big sermon that he preaches to a large multitude of people.

And what Jesus does is he communicates to this large crowd, and he tells this large crowd that "Many of you here will not hear what I'm about to say." He says, "He who has ears, let him hear." You see that throughout John's Gospel. You see that some in Luke's Gospel. And there's going to be some that will hear, and those are called his disciples. And his disciples, they hear the message, and it impacts their life, and it impacts their heart and their soul.

So what Jesus is doing here, he is showing us that the crowd that shows up, the people that come out of the woodworks just to be amazed at the miracles of Jesus, the words of Jesus, they actually don't hear him. And Jesus is not as concerned with the crowd as he is his own disciples. It's just really clear.

Okay, so let me give you a couple of examples of that. If you think back to the largest miracle that Jesus ever performed, what was it? The feeding of what? Seriously, the feeding of what, and you can't answer it? All right, the feeding of the 5,000, right? And the 4,000 would be next. And by the way, it's literally 20,000 or 30,000 people, because that's just counting the men, the head of the households, the 4,000. So it's like 20,000 or 30,000 people that Jesus feeds with a snack pack, all right? With a snack pack.

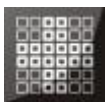
And so you've got all of these people gathered. You've got all these people coming and hearing, and you say, "Wow, what a great miracle. What a great opportunity for Jesus." And then, later, he gives a cunning statement about what it means to follow him, and then they're all gone. I mean, do you see these people at his crucifixion? Do you see 20,000 people rooting for Jesus at his crucifixion? No, it's like a handful. It's like a small, little handful, like his mom, right? His mom. Peter denies him.

So when we look at this, when we look at what are we calling people to when we're saying, "Follow Christ. Give your lives for Christ," what are we calling people to? Because I think that's really, really important.

As we look at so many of us who claim to know Christ, how many of us actually do? How many of us actually believe in what he's actually calling us to? And I think the problem is and the crux of really what lies in this, "Do we follow Jesus or do we not?" it really lies within "Do we trust his authority over our lives?"

Because I look at this. You look at the feeding of the 5,000. You look at these large crowds who are coming. These aren't followers. These aren't followers, because these people would not submit their lives to Christ. That's a big deal. That's the hard part, isn't it? That's the hard part, because praying a prayer is one thing, but submitting our lives to his authority – I'm going to keep using that word, authority – is the hard part.

And so what we're asking people to do when they receive Christ saying, "Do you believe that God is in control of all things?" That's what we're asking people to do. We're asking them to submit to the



Lordship of Jesus. We're saying, "Do you believe that God is in control over all things? And does he have the authority; does he have the right over your heart? Have you submitted and surrendered your life to Jesus?"

So it matters that we have a clear understanding of God's sovereignty and God's control over everything, the good, the bad, the ugly. He's got control over all of it, and it matters. It matters that we understand that, that we see that.

The most mature believers I know, the most mature Christians that I've ever seen in my life, have this unbelievable idea of God's sovereignty and control over all things, because when they go through suffering, they say, "God is in control over that, and God is putting me through that for his good, for his glory, so that I would love him more in the end." I think it's important that we grasp this. I think it's important that we understand God's sovereignty.

Here's another example of that. How God has begun to show me and shape me in my life and understanding God's control over all things and God's sovereignty over all things, it even challenges the way that I view missions.

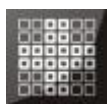
Here's what I mean. Early on, back in the day when I didn't really see God this way – that he has control over all things – I would see it as, "Well, I've got to find an opportunity to be a missionary. I've got to look on web pages. I've got to find resources. I've got to go ask my pastor, 'Where are ways that I can serve as a missionary to the city?'" And they would give me resources, "Well, here are some opportunities and towns. You can go serve. What are your gifts? Where are your opportunities?"

And now, here's the way I see it. I see now God has given me, because I'm a believer in Christ, the Holy Spirit of God. We believe that? You believe that? He gives us the Holy Spirit of God. So everywhere that I go, the Spirit of God is working through me, and the Gospel should come out if I'm a true believer. It should come out.

And so now, because I'm a believer – now when I moved to a specific city or I moved to a specific neighborhood, I believe that the sovereign God of the universe has divinely appointed me in that particular neighborhood. And not only that, before the foundation of the world, he's placed my specific neighbors right next door that do not know him, that have a totally different background. But he's going to use my background, born in Rocky Mount, North Carolina, becoming a believer at 11 years old, from a divorced family, from an alcoholic father.

He's going to use all of these things, how God changed me and my father's life at once, and we got baptized together. He's going to use that story in this person's life who lives next to me. I've got a neighbor from Boston who's a Catholic. He's going to use that story for this guy to hear the Gospel. And I believe that before the foundation of the world God had this thing planned out perfectly.

And this is how the sovereignty of God works in the way that we see missions, that that annoying coworker was put there by God's divine plan for you to be a missionary in that person's life. That



neighbor, yeah, that one – you know who I’m talking about – the one with the dog, that one, God’s put that neighbor in your life so that you can be a missionary to that neighbor.

By the way, I almost got bit by our neighbor’s Rottweiler. The tree went down in the hurricane, and I no longer had a fence. So we’ve got all these dogs using the bathroom in the yard. And I looked up, and I had a rake – this is Monday, and this is my excuse for not doing the yard – and I see this Rottweiler, foaming mouth Rottweiler growling at me. And I actually vertically – I jumped so high over my fence to get away from him. And I knocked on the front door, and Jess was laughing and saying, “What do you want?” I said, “There is a huge dog.” And I tell the cop, and he’s not near as scared as I am. I’m like, “There’s a Rottweiler in our yard,” you know. So anyway, I think he’s gone.

So this is how my understanding of God’s sovereignty and control over things controls the way that I view missions. Do you see how God’s sovereignty matters, understanding his control of all things matters in our life, and even in how we are missionaries to people? What about suffering? What about marriage? How can we apply this to many things?

And I think, if we understand it rightly, it will change our lives. And so Jesus gives us two stories here in Luke 7. Luke gives us two stories about Jesus’ life in Luke 7, and we’re going to learn a little bit about God’s control and God’s authority over people and over the world, all right? Luke 7, starting in Verse 1, it says this:

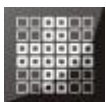
*<sup>1</sup>After he had finished all his sayings in the hearing of the people, he entered Capernaum. <sup>2</sup>Now a centurion had a servant who was sick and at the point of death, who was highly valued by him.*

Now, a centurion was a Roman official. A centurion is not a high rank. It’s kind of a middle ground rank. It’s kind of like a captain. He’d be like a captain who would oversee people, so he understands authority well. He understands that he has people under him, and he also has people over him. So he knows how to be an authoritative figure, and he also knows how to submit to authority. So that’s very important to know when we understand where Luke is going with this story.

What he does is he has a servant who is sick, and he wants this man to be healed. Now, this is very, very uncommon. What normally would happen, a guy that high ranked, if he had any type of servant that was sick, he actually could kill him and hire the new guy. So this guy’s sick. I can put this guy to death. I can bring in the new guy. But this centurion Roman official has compassion over the sick man, and this is really, really rare. So I want to show you that. So Verse 3 it says this:

*<sup>3</sup>When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent to him elders of the Jews, asking him to come and heal his servant. <sup>4</sup>And when they came to Jesus, they pleaded with him earnestly, saying, "He is worthy to have you do this for him, <sup>5</sup>for he loves our nation, and he is the one who built us our synagogue."*

Now, notice here the posture of this centurion guard. He is not gathered around Jesus, like most of the time when Jesus would travel and he’d do miracles. People would gather around him hoping that he would perform a miracle on them, that he would touch them or that he would heal them with some



type of word or some type of action that he would do. So most of the time, a crowd would kind of follow him like he was a rock star.

But this guy is totally different. He has a totally different posture in the way that he approaches Jesus. He's like, "I can't go up to him. I can't go up to Jesus. He's the authority. He's over me. I have no right to speak to this authoritative figure over my life, and plus I'm not a Jew. I'm not a Jew. I'm not one of you guys. He's one of you guys. He's a Jew. So why would he come to me, a Gentile, a non-Jew? Why would he ever do this?"

And so what Luke's showing us here about Jesus is that Jesus cares beyond the Jew. He cares also for the Gentile, which has always been his purpose by the way. He's always been for the Gentile and also the Jew. It's been both. He's always been for both. And so he's going here to this Gentile, and what he does is he sends these elders, these Jewish elders who are these religious leaders that he would send to go and speak to him.

So Jesus is extending his ministry. And so it's very interesting here because this centurion doesn't have this understanding of – he's got this understanding of "I have to now get someone to speak on my behalf to Jesus. I need someone to mediate between me and Jesus. And I just think this is so awesome, because aren't you glad that we don't have to have a mediator between us and Jesus, that we because he is our great high priest, we can go to him directly.

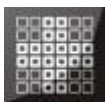
We don't have to have religious leaders to go and speak on our behalf. We can go to him and ask for forgiveness of sins and come to him in times of need, that he will bring us off of our burden, and we can go to him directly, such a beautiful picture.

So this man does come humbly, and that should be our posture when we approach Jesus. Look in verse 6.

*<sup>6</sup>And Jesus went with them. When he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends, saying to him, "Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof. <sup>7</sup>Therefore I did not presume to come to you. But say the word, and let my servant be healed. <sup>8</sup>For I too am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me: and I say to one, 'Go,' and he goes; and to another, 'Come,' and he comes; and to my servant, 'Do this,' and he does it."*

Now, I want you to notice this man is not arrogant in his position, but he's just saying, "I understand how authority works. I understand that when you command something to happen, it will happen. I have people under me, and I have people under me. I get authority. I get authority."

And he has attached authority and control to the very character and nature of Jesus. He knows that this is what Jesus is. This is who Christ is. He is one over authority. And notice what he says. He says, "You don't have to come and touch this man for this man to be healed. Just say the word. You don't even have to be at the house. You don't even have to be under the roof. Just say the word, and this guy's going to be healed. You can be miles away. You can be in another country, and if you speak, this man will be healed."



So he gets God's character. And this is totally different than the way the crowd understood Jesus. The way that the crowd understood Jesus – let me just show you this in Luke 6:17.

*<sup>17</sup>And he came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, <sup>18</sup>who came to hear him and to be healed of their diseases. And those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured.*

And notice how the crowd wants to see Jesus.

*<sup>19</sup>And all the crowd sought to –*

What?

*– touch him, for power came out from him and healed them all.*

The crowd wants to touch him, to touch him. Their understanding of God and his control over all things is limited to just his touch. "If I am close to him, he can do this." The centurion Roman official's understanding of God is he has control without touching; he can speak and he will be healed. I love this. I love it.

If you think back in Luke 4, Peter's mother-in-law is sick. Notice what it says in Luke 4:38.

*<sup>38</sup> And he arose and left the synagogue and entered Simon's house. Now Simon's mother-in-law was ill with a high fever, and they appealed to him on her behalf.*

And look at what he does.

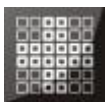
*<sup>39</sup>And he stood over her and rebuked the fever, and it left her, and immediately she rose and began to serve them.*

See the difference? These people who had faith in Christ, they knew that he had the power to just say the word, and these people would be healed. Say the word. I know that you control these things. We don't need to have you right here in our presence for you to do this. You have control, and you can just telepathically heal this guy. It's crazy. It's crazy.

So we look at this. It's a different response. And let me show you why this is different. You guys ready? You guys ready? Verse 9 of Chapter 7:

*<sup>9</sup>When Jesus heard these things, he marveled at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith." <sup>10</sup>And when those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the servant well.*

He had faith, and this is the difference. This is a different language that Jesus uses here. He says, "He has faith. He has faith in the character and the person of Christ. He has faith that Christ did not even have to be there in the flesh to do this, that he can control the cosmos, that this man can be healed. He



had faith in knowing the person of Jesus, and this is totally different than the crowd. The crowd's like, "There's power oozing out of this guy. I've just got to touch him, and I'm going to be fine."

But this guy understood God's plan and sovereignty over all things, that this guy's sick, but if he does heal this guy, all he's got to do is just say the word, and this guy will be fine, totally different. He has this type of faith.

And so something else happens the very first time. Jesus, it says he marveled at him. Most of the time, people are marveling at what Jesus says, but this time, Jesus is marveling after what someone actually says. It's totally different. And he says, "Not even do people of Israel get this. They don't even understand your character. They don't even understand the way that you are. I get the way that you are that you have authority over all things.

And so this Gentile, non-Jew, gets it, and his people do not. And I think sometimes we take faith as it's some type of caddy word that we use. And we usually do it when we want to bail ourselves out of a situation. Like, for instance, when I went to school in upstate New York after high school, it was a Bible institute. And what they would put me through, it was like Bible boot camp. I'd have to read systematic theology and all these things that everyone loves to do on a regular basis. And I had to do Bible survey and I had to do who wrote which book and what year it was written. So I did that for a year. I signed up for it.

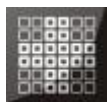
And what they would do is they would put us out on the streets. And as 18 years old, I thought it was awesome. Now, I think it's like the worse thing I could ever do. But they would put me out on the streets in New York City to get up forth and share the Gospel. And so I had a little paint set that I had to do, and I had to paint, like, two cliffs, and there's one in the middle, and you're trying to get to God, and you can't make it on your own, so the cross is always going to be the bridge builder. You guys ever see that before.

And so here I am with a Southern accent, and the very first place they put us is Greenwich Village, which I don't fit the profile, right? I had a Looney Tunes tie on, because that was cool then, I think. And I'm upfront. No, it wasn't? Okay, it was never cool. Somebody told me it was.

So I was there with a Looney Tunes tie in Greenwich Village, New York, sharing the Gospel. And I remember we would just have these conversations with people in Greenwich Village about the Gospel.

And so this one guy comes up on a bike, and I think he's a professor. And he has a bike, and he's pulling up. He says, "You know what? Faith is impossible. I will never believe in Jesus because of faith, and faith can't happen." And I was so bold at 19. I knew everything. And so I told him. I said, "Well, you didn't think about faith when you got on that bike. That bike's holding you up. You've got faith in that bike. I bet you do have faith, because you're sitting on that bike right now, and it's holding you up."

And I was really happy, and he just was like, "You idiot." He just looked at me like, "Aw, that's cute," and just rode off. And I thought to myself, "Yeah, I showed him." And I was like really cocky about it,



really cocky about, “I get faith. He’s just an idiot,” like it’s that easy, right? Like faith can be equivalent to sitting in a chair or riding a bike. I think it might mean more than that when we call people to faith.

We’re saying, “Do you believe that God came in the form of a man through a virgin, lived a perfect, sinless life, died on a bloody cross for your sins – he took on all the sins of the world at once. And when he died, three days later he rose again from the grave. And by the way, he’s from Nazareth, and nothing good ever comes from Nazareth. And now, you should worship him and submit your life to him, because he’s the creator of all things?” That is a little bit different than a bike. I’m just saying. I’m just saying.

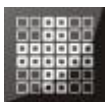
And so I think we cop out so often with the word faith. We kind of use it like it’s a junk drawer word that gets us out of really tough conversations, like the person who comes to you and says, “How do you know the Bible’s real?” What do we say? “Just have faith,” right? Really, I think we can go a little bit further in the conversation than, “Just have faith,” right? “If God is so good, why do bad things happen?” “Oh, just faith.” “Oh, okay. Well, let me pray and receive Jesus right now.”

Has that ever happened? Has that ever happened? No, I think we should just say, “I don’t know.” That’s better, okay? So let’s just practice this. “I don’t know, but I will find the answer for you,” right? That’s better than just saying, “Just have faith.” That’s trash, man. You don’t have that faith. Somebody answered that question for you. Somebody answered that for you.

And here’s the thing. I think there are points in which the Sovereign God of the universe begins to soften the heart of the nonbeliever to where their objections won’t matter as much as their response to Jesus. That’s a great doctrine called irresistible grace, where the grace of God is just so overwhelming in your life, and you say, “You know what? I don’t know how the Bible’s written, and it’s crazy. It doesn’t make a lot of sense that Jesus was born of a peasant girl who says she’s a virgin. That’s a little strange. But I do know that he really loves me, and he died for me, and he’s calling me. It’s strange. I feel this unbelievable tug on my heart that all of the sudden I’m aware of my sinfulness and my wickedness. And I want to respond to him, and I’m going to. I don’t have a choice. I’ve got to respond to him. He’s so good, and he’s so loving to me.”

And then the questions come later. Somebody explains how the Bible was really written. Somebody explained that to me. And we work through it. We process that, and we want to know the answers later, and that makes sense. But I don’t think we should just do that to people and just throw it out and say, “Just have faith. Trust me. It will all work out.”

I want to be the church that goes there with people, that we have some of the answers. And the answers that we don’t have, we’ll say, “You know what? I’ve got people in the church that might know a little bit about that that might be able to answer that for you. But in the meantime, let me just show you the greatness of Christ and who Christ is and the Gospel,” and we want to point them back to the cross and what Christ has accomplished for us.” But I don’t want to just throw that out like it’s something that’s really easy, because it’s hard, man. It’s hard. I mean, it’s hard for me. I’ve been a



believer most of my life, and this thing is still difficult. It's still challenging. It's a gift from God. Let's not forget that.

So when we hold ourselves up high like, "They just need to have faith. I've got it," just remember that thing that you got was given to you by the goodness of God that you might believe. Let's go further. It gives us a second story in the text, Verse 11.

*<sup>11</sup>Soon afterward he went to a town called Nain, and his disciples and a great crowd went with him. <sup>12</sup>As he drew near to the gate of the town, behold, a man who had died was being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow, and a considerable crowd from the town was with her.*

And this is very strange, another strange story, by the way, two really strange stories in Luke 7. She was probably a very popular woman, because most of the time, if you have someone in your family die in Jewish custom, you would have to hire people to kind of be a part of the procession as the person would be buried. And so what would typically happen, you could hire musicians. I was somewhere that there always had to be a flute player present, which I really don't want in my funeral, but these people always had a flute player present at a procession, and then they would hire professional mourners.

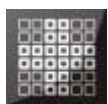
They were hired to basically mourn at your procession. And I think that's really strange. How did you get that job? "I'm a professional mourner. Here's my card." That's who these people were, and they were hired to do that. Now, this lady didn't need it, because she had most of the crowd that was with her at this procession. Now, maybe her son was a popular young one, or maybe she was a very well known woman throughout the community, but it was very, very bothersome to this whole town that we know very little about in Scripture.

And so they are walking along, and she is weeping, and we see Jesus begin to show her compassion. And he's showing this widow compassion. Now, I want you to see this, because throughout Scripture you see Jesus consistently pouring into the hearts of those who are really broken and distraught. Like, I can't image losing your son or losing your daughter. And for those of you who have faced that in this room, I know that that is probably one of the worst things that you can face is watch your own child die.

And this woman is experiencing this, and in this culture, it's a lot different. They didn't have nursing homes then for this woman to be set up in. That means that there would be no one that would provide for her. She's a widow, and now her son has died. That means that she would not be taken care of. And so Jesus is giving this widow compassion in a very profound way.

And later, the church adopts Jesus' mentality in how he communicates to the widows and orphans. If you look at James 1:27, it says:

*<sup>27</sup>Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world.*



And so Jesus is showing us what the church would do later, through the Holy Spirit, through the truth of his Word, that we're going to do this later. And so what you see here is Jesus filling in the gaps of where men fail, of where men cannot.

You see this consistently throughout Scripture. Jesus is going to the broken woman at the well. He's going to the woman who is caught in adultery. He's consistently showing up where women who without fathers, he replacing them and becomes their real father, becomes their true father. You see women who do not have husbands, and he becomes the place, and he becomes the substitute for that.

And I've got to show you ladies that. This is important for you to see where your fathers or where your husbands fail, Jesus will often pick up the slack. For you fathers, he wants you to do your role and fulfill your role as a father, as a husband. But Jesus is coming in in multiple places in Scripture, and he does this. It's beautiful. So Jesus is coming to this woman, and he's filling a void in her life.

And what he does, this stranger coming to town, let's look at what he does for this woman's life, Verse 14.

*<sup>14</sup>Then he came up and touched the bier –*

Which, by the way, is the dead body. It's the casket. There's an open casket that people would take people out of town in in their procession. It says:

*– and the bearers stood still. And he said, "Young man, I say to you, arise." <sup>15</sup>And the dead man sat up and began to speak, and Jesus gave him to his mother.*

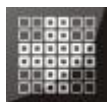
The man sat up. I want you to see now the response from the crowd as this man sits up. There's a few responses. These are very mixed emotions that you're going to see here in the text, Verse 16:

*<sup>16</sup>Fear seized them all, and they glorified God, saying, "A great prophet has arisen among us!"*

The very first thing that we're going to see is fear. That's the first response that they had to seeing God's healing over this man. And I want you to remember this, because in the first century, we forget that people were afraid then too when they saw miracles. But I want you to think about it. You're at a funeral, and it's open casket. And a man just comes up, and the guy sits straight up. I mean, how would you respond, right?

It says fear seized them. They're having heart attacks, right? And they go, "Oh, wait, wait, wait. This has got to be a prophet. This has got to be something amazing that's come." And they understood this idea of a prophet healing people. I won't read the text, but if you look in 1 Kings 17, you see Elijah do the exact same thing. It's the exact same healing that just happened in 1 Kings 17. Elijah, a great prophet, was known for doing this miraculous healing.

And so when people look at Jesus, they attach that to, "This is a great prophet." The prophets of old, the prophets in the Old Testament, they healed people. And Elijah goes up to a woman who just lost a



child, and he heals her, and the exact same thing happens. Jesus is just duplicating that. And so they attached this to, "This is just a great prophet. This is just a great prophet."

So is that enough. Is him being a great prophet enough? No. Let's finish what they said, because this is the key.

*"A great prophet has arisen among us!" and "God has visited his people!"*

Now, that is totally different. They began to see him beyond just a prophet, but they began to see him as God.

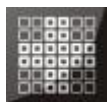
This understanding here, this is an Old Testament understanding of who God is. They would consistently say, "When God is going to visit his people. When God is going to visit his people." If you look early in Luke, you see three different songs saying that. One is by Mary, and she said, "The Lord is with us." You see Zachariah who also sings this song. He says that he has visited his people. You see Simeon, the very next chapter, early in Luke 2. He says the very same thing that God has visited his people. And they continue to sing this song as an act of worship saying, "The God of the universe has humbled himself as a man. He's pitched his tent among us, and he's here with us. He's in our presence."

And they knew at this point that this is God. This word visit is where the word Episcopal comes from. Episcopalians would have a ruling bishop who's a pastor or shepherd over his church. And they understood the way that he would visit was he cared for his flock, and he meets the needs of his people, and he's aware of wolves. And he's there active and proactive in your life. And this is the way that they understood what it meant when God visited his people that this is the man who would shepherd us and shepherd our hearts. And he would come to us in our afflictions.

So this is their understanding of God immediately when they begin to see this miracle happen. They go from fear to, "He's a prophet" to "No, he's God. He's visited us. He cares for us. He cares as we're mourning and grieving over our lost friend."

So we have two different stories. The centurion believed, because he knew Jesus' character, even though he was far away and he couldn't see him. It was just faith, Hebrews 11. Then we have this woman, this widow in the crowd, that believed because they just saw right in front of them what Jesus had done.

So there are times in our lives where we need faith in God, and sometimes it's right there in front of us, and we can just see it. "God you're real, because this is what you've done just in front of me, and I can see it. You provided in this way, and I can see it. You've helped my sick family member become well. I can see that right in front of my eyes. And it's beautiful. I'm so grateful." Aren't we grateful when he does that and we can just see it? "God, I got that job I've been praying for, and I can just see it right in front of my eyes."



And there are other times that we need the faith like the centurion guard that says, "I can't see it, but I know your character, and I know who you are that you are a God, a provision, that you are a shepherd who cares for his people, and that even in the suffering right now, even in this crazy time of my life where nothing makes sense, that you're the God of the universe, that you are ordaining my steps and my suffering for your good and your glory, because you've shown that you love me through the cross of Christ."

And there's times we're going to get both just like this. It's going to be right in front of our face, and it makes perfect sense. God's here. God's present. He's doing things for me, and there's going to be times where it just seems he's really distant. But if we know his character and know his control over all things, including our hearts, that he is our bishop, he is our shepherd, he cares for us, and he's proven that on the cross.

So this is really a matter of trust in God's authority in our lives. And what if our church was known for just responding and seeing that on a daily basis? And we would mature in Christ in this way that, "We get you, God. We understand you. We know you." I think it would make a huge difference in the city who we're reaching, who we're meeting on a daily basis that God is ordaining your steps, and he's proven his love for you on the cross." Let's pray.

