

Discussion of "Comfort or Christ?" sermon

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[0 : 00] This morning's scripture text, John chapter 7, verses 25 through 36.

! I'll read that if you want to follow along, just for a refresher. And then we'll go through our application questions. John 7, beginning in verse 25.

Some of the people of Jerusalem, therefore, said, Is not this the man whom they seek to kill? And here he is speaking openly, and they say nothing to him.

Can it be that the authorities really know that this is the Christ? But we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from. So Jesus proclaimed as he taught in the temple, You know me, and you know where I come from, but I have not come on my own accord.

He who sent me is true, and him you do not know. I know him, for I come from him, and he sent me. So they were seeking to arrest him, but no one laid a hand on him, because his hour had not yet come.

[1 : 07] Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done? Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to arrest him.

Jesus then said, I will be with you a little longer, and then I am going to him who sent me. You will seek me, and you will not find me. Where I am, you cannot come. The Jews said to one another, Where does this man intend to go that we will not find him?

Does he intend to go to the dispersion among the Greeks and teach the Greeks? What does he mean by saying, You will seek me, and you will not find me? And where I am, you cannot come. In talking about this morning's sermon was how Jesus was undeterred by those who were instigators, those who were agitators, those who threatened him, those who had misconceptions about him, that throughout all of that, because he knew where he had come from, because he knew what his mission was and where he was going, that never deterred him from his task.

And so then we were talking about, as believers who are called to follow Christ, that in the same way, you know, we're following the Lord's example, that when we're called by the Lord to salvation, when we're called to serve him, and in particular, if he has a certain place of ministry or area of ministry that he wants for you, that oftentimes will be met by instigators, agitators, you know, doubters, naysayers.

And so in order to stay on task, we remember, like Christ, where we came from, but for us, that's, you know, that we were made by God, we were created by God, we were saved by God to glorify God, and then we know where we're going, which is because we've been saved, we're going to dwell with our Lord eternally in heaven.

[3 : 10] And so knowing where we've come from and knowing where we're going should be something that we, I think, are constantly keeping in perspective so that in the present, that helps us to live for Christ, you know, denying yourself, taking up the cross as he's called us to do, because we know where we've come from and we know where we're going.

We know that this life is short, that it's important to the Lord how we live it, making the most of it for him to advance his kingdom and his glory and pursue his righteousness, knowing that ultimately that's where we're going, to him, right?

So, you know, as part of that, in thinking about what it means to follow Christ and in thinking about our lives, and one of the things that, you know, was brought up this morning, is that we are often tempted to live comfortably, and it's not comfortable to take up the cross as the Lord called us to. And he said, you know, it wasn't going to be comfortable, but he told us that it would be worth it. And so the first question for us to consider tonight is, is the Christian life meant to be lived

comfortably?

No. Next question. Okay. Well, let's elaborate. All right. Josiah's got the mic. Cameron's got an answer.

[4 : 48] So when I was looking at this, I actually thought about it in two different ways. Uh-huh. Part of me says yes, but let me explain.

Okay. I think when you look at the eternal picture, there's comfort in knowing that our eternal security is preserved in Christ, right?

So I think there's some level of comfort there. So you could take it that way, that yes, I'm more comfortable in my life because I know my eternity is secure.

But then I also think, no, we're not, you know, told to live here of what this culture defines as comfortably. There's nothing in the Bible that, you know, promises the wealth, the riches, the health, everything like that.

You know, Paul even writes that they were wishing for the life sentence or, you know, whatever he words it, that they were at their wits end. They were ready to, you know, basically almost give up.

[5 : 52] And it was only through Christ that they were able to get through those situations. And so when you look at, you know, all the heroes in the faith, they all went through some pretty rough, down times.

So I don't think there, when this culture, when we say comfortably, I don't think we're called to live as comfortably as possible.

I don't think it's a sin to live comfortably, but I don't think we should expect to live constantly in our comfort zone. We're called to have tough conversations.

We're called to outreach. We're called to serve. And a lot of that is going to put us in uncomfortable situations. Good. Good answer.

Yeah, I agree. We are comfortable in Christ. Comfortable in the salvation that we have and the eternity that we know is secure.

[6 : 58] But we're not called to be of this world. We're called out of this world, but called to live in it for Christ. And that's a good point.

Because, you know, we look through, you look through Scripture, and you see people going through difficult things, you know, because of their faith.

I think it's Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, Daniel. I mean, we could go through all of Scripture, go into the New Testament. Stephen, as he's preaching. And they were comfortable in knowing that God would be with them despite the uncomfortable situation that they were in.

And thinking of the example of William Tyndale as well and many other martyrs who, you know, it's not comfortable to be tied to a stake where you know you're going to be strangled and burned.

And yet, even there, to be able to pray for the King of England, he was comfortable in knowing that this may be my last moment on earth. But I live because Christ lives.

[8 : 05] So, that's, I think, a tough one. Because, you know, it's not that we are, the answer is to say, well, you know, fine.

I'm not going to have heating and air conditioning in my house. I'm not going to have running water, you know, because that's too comfortable. I don't think it's a sin to have those things.

But I think it really gets down to the motivation behind your actions. So, that's what, you know, was the introspection for me in thinking about, like I shared this morning, about wanting to one day retire in a lake house.

And if I, this is what I was really thinking, if it's a byproduct of whatever the Lord calls me to do and says maybe there will be a time, though, you know, I think you're always called to be a Christian.

So, I can't imagine ever not, well, I can't imagine ever not being a Christian, obviously, but, like, not also being involved in the church and being involved in the ministry, whatever that may be. And so, if it's a byproduct, okay.

[9 : 14] And I don't think that that's wrong. But if I'm making my decisions today for you, the church, and I think, what's going to make my job safer, you know, or even, and we see pastors do this, what can I do here?

To get noticed by bigger churches that could pay me more so that I can save up for my retirement and be in a better position one day to be able to retire the way I want to.

And so, you know, there could be tempted in comfort for that and be like, well, instead of pushing some things, I'll just keep it comfortable. I'll just maintain so that I can one day get to that place

where I'm going.

And that's where I think it's sinful. You agree? That's where I think there's sin. That's where it's my motivation. Would not be for the Lord, but for myself. And I'd be working towards that end instead of working towards the ends that I should be working for, right?

All right. Wes? Hold on. We'll get you to the mic.

[10:24] It'd be okay to be exiled to Patmos for me? Yes, yes. Would that be? It's all part of serving God, and then that's where you end up. So, hey, thank you, Lord. I think it also means with that, too.

Like, if it doesn't happen, then so what? As long as, you know, I live the Lord's will for me. Whatever that may be. Whatever it may be for you. You know, if it's to die for my faith, then so be it.

If the Lord has other plans for us, so be it. As long as I've lived my life for the Lord and I've been obedient to what he's asked me to do, and I haven't sought my own comfort instead of doing what I know that he's called me to do and be obedient to.

Go ahead, Wes. I heard a guy on Bot Radio this week was talking about how originally he wanted to be in construction, not necessarily making things with his hands, but helping, like, an engineer or something like that.

And then he gets in the ministry, and next thing you know, they're building a new church. So it's like, hey, God helped me. Let me do the kind of thing I wanted to do. But he was just still serving God, though. And then he had two other examples of where God had him do something where it was just right in line with what he would like to do, too.

[11:34] But he was serving God. Yeah. Good. And I think there is, again, when you're doing what the Lord has called you to do, there is comfort in that, no matter the trial that you may be going through.

And we see that, right? We see that in the lives of the apostles. We see that with Paul as he's in prison writing letters to the churches. And he doesn't seem at all like he regrets in any way whatsoever whatever persecutions or chains that he's been placed into for his being obedient to the Lord's will.

Right? And so is the Christian life meant to be lived comfortably? Anybody else want to chime in on that one? Nick? And Kendra?

How about we'll go Kendra here? Because ladies first, and she's closer to you, and she's your mom. I was thinking earlier about two passages that stuck out to me thinking about this.

And I think I thought of it more like what you were saying towards the end about trials. And when we choose to be obedient, a lot of times trials will come.

[12:48] So at the beginning of James, it says, consider yourself. Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.

Let perseverance finish its work so that you might be mature and complete, not lacking in anything. And so there's purpose for those trials. But at the very beginning, it says when.

When they come. Not if they come, but when they come. And then 1 Peter 4, it says, Dear friends, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that has come upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you.

But rejoice in so much as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. And so again, it says, don't be surprised as if something strange were happening to you.

And this is what it means to follow Christ. These things will happen. You will be tried. It's not meant to be comfortable. Christ's life wasn't comfortable.

[13:49] You know, he was a man with that home. So we can't expect for our life to be uncomfortable when it comes to the Lord refining us to be more like his image.

That doesn't, like you said earlier, it doesn't mean that we all have to be homeless and live in a hole. But it does mean that we have to be obedient. And a lot of times that brings upon suffering. Yeah. Good answer. Very good. Would you say that, because, you know, again, the scriptures that Kendra uses, it's not a surprise when, not if.

If a Christian is not facing any kind of persecution in their life, what would that say? You know, does that mean that they look too much like the world?

And I mean, I'm talking about persecution. It comes in many different forms. I'm not saying that, like, your neighbors are coming at your house with pitchforks and rope to tie you up or anything like that. [14:55] But, you know, if you identify with Christ and other people identify you with Christ, there's going to be some uncomfortableness in this. There's going to be some persecution as a result of that.

It may take different shapes and forms. But if there's none whatsoever, you know, I kind of wonder, who do people associate you with?

You know, do they see a difference in you? All right, go ahead, Nick. I think echoing what everybody else has already said, today in the sermon I just started thinking about Christians that we know of, like the ones whose names we remember and whose stories we know that lived comfortable earthly lives.

So I was thinking of the patriarchs and the prophets and the apostles, and it's all pain. And then I was thinking of the church fathers and the martyrs of old, and then the reformers, and then Spurgeon and William Wilberforce, and then Adoniram Judson and the fathers of the missions movement.

I mean, it's just suffering everywhere. And then I was thinking about Elizabeth Elliot and Nate Saint and Corey Ten Boom and so many others, and it was almost like I was trying to think of believers whose names and stories I know who didn't live in times of danger and endure incredible trial.

[16:24] And I found a couple of exceptions. Okay. But very, very few. Yeah. You know, I was thinking C.S. Lewis, but no, C.S. Lewis, his claim to fame was that he was speaking about Christianity to the British people during the trial of World War II.

I mean, it's everywhere. Yeah. So I was just thinking about it like they all seem to have danger and trial and suffering in common. These are the ones that we know of.

Yeah. Great observation. Is that true? Do any of you guys like to read, like, biographies, Christian biographies, Fox's Book of the Martyrs, right? And you see that in all their lives, like Nick pointed out.

Men and women of the faith who, because of their obedience to Christ, were put in these uncomfortable situations, yet God used them in powerful ways. And none of us looks back on them with pity, do we?

I don't think any of us looks back and be like, wow, man, I pity them. I pity William Tyndale. I pity Corrie Ten Boom or anything like that. We love to read their stories and to share their stories because they speak so powerfully to us because we know that that's what genuine, genuinely living the Christian life, genuinely taking up the cross, that's what it looks like.

[17:47] You know, is the Lord calling all of us to that kind of suffering? Maybe not, but we see that he does say that for anyone who would follow him, it requires that they take up the cross and they deny themselves.

That's only like, well, these super Christians over here, they can do it. But the rest of you guys, you know, just piddle along and do your best.

He's saying anyone would come after me, they must deny themselves. And that's everybody who would follow him. Okay, hold on, hold on, hold on, hold on.

Josiah, will you come to Amy? That's okay, we still, if we don't put it on the microphone, then they'll yell at us back there through texting on the screen.

Profound thought for the day. Everybody's supposed to pick up your cross and follow him. Maybe your cross isn't as big as somebody else's, but it's still your cross to carry.

[18:58] And everybody that follows him is going to have something. Whether it's standing up for the truth in your family. Or, you know, sharing the gospel with a neighbor kid.

Yeah. And, you know, a smile at the grocery store when you want to just punch him right in the nose. You know, it's things like that.

Pick up your cross and get after it. Yeah. And, you know, and these are the well-known stories that we know, that we've been talking about. But, man, only God knows the countless, many other Christians who have done things just like that.

But they weren't doing it. And these guys, and these women, men and women weren't doing it to be written about and honored by others. They were doing it because this is what God called them to do. They wanted to honor Christ in what they did.

And so, you know, you think about, though, all, maybe it's not, you're not going to be. Yeah. Like you said, but what you, but that doesn't diminish any at all.

[20 : 05] Yeah. What God has called you to do and your obedience to it, no matter what. That's it. Uncomfortableness you may face in it. And as far as names, and, yeah, we know about Tyndale and Wormbrand and everybody like that and stuff.

But I think this week maybe we ought to stop and think about grandma and grandpa. And people in our own family.

Yeah. Who have carried their cross and told you about Jesus. And been there. So, yeah, stop and think about it. You know, my first Sunday school teacher's name was Mrs. Barnhart.

But I was three and I couldn't say her name. So her name was Mrs. Hartburn. You know, but I remember her. And I remember Nellie Wiggins.

And the ones that have gone before. Yeah. Yeah. So, yeah, stop and think about, you know, those names and what they had to suffer to put up with 15 little boys in a Sunday school classroom.

[21 : 17] Mm-hmm. Things like that. You know, we've got a lot of heroes in our lives. Absolutely. Yeah. And we shouldn't wait to tell them until after they've, you know, gone to be with the Lord to share those things as well.

Let's move on to the next question. What comfort have you been unwilling to sacrifice in order to obey God's will for you? You can speak generally here. If you're courageous enough, you can speak personally.

And not that, I mean, you know, this is a place where this is how we grow. And we love one another. And probably whatever comfort you're struggling with is a comfort that somebody else or many others in this room are struggling with as well.

So, what comfort have you been unwilling to sacrifice in order to obey God's will for you? Wes. I'd say in general, sharing the gospel with, like, family members, something like that, where it's just really tough to do.

I've done it just a few times where I just had to do it. I just felt so obligated, but need to be doing it more. And then maybe after that, friends at work and things like that where you don't want to risk a friendship or something.

[22 : 40] But we should be, I mean, if you love that person, you should be telling them about Christ. Yeah. So, just sharing the gospel again or for the first time with your friends and family.

Anybody else? Kendra? I told my husband I'm about to get specific.

So, moving to America was one of those things. I'm so going to cry. Sorry. One of those things that when God told us he was going to move us, I was extremely unwilling to do.

And it's been incredible to see how after, I mean, after I told the Lord no, I flat out told him no, I will go to any other country in the world and be a missionary, but I will not go back to America.

And he just, you will not what? I'm sorry. You will not obey me. And after finally surrendering that to the altar and my comfort, I could just feel more comfortable doing what I've always wanted to do.

[23 : 59] And seeing the ways that God has grown me out of my comfort zone. Sometimes it takes that to get those rough edges off just to be extremely uncomfortable.

Pointing out things like, I think I love serving God more than I just love sitting at his feet. Things like that.

So, that I was unwilling to do for a while. Amen. Amen. Thank you for sharing that with us. And we're glad you guys are here. It's funny as you guys, many of you know the Grassers working with VOM now, like the Caraways.

And they were IMB missionaries in China for 10 years before coming back here. And I love that you say that because I remember, you know, it's kind of like the joke and it's unfortunate.

But, you know, the teen who, Lord, I will go anywhere you want me to go. Just don't send me to some other country besides America. But, you know, for it to be the opposite.

[25 : 03] And, gosh, America is a place where, you know, yes, we send missionaries and we need to be sending them. But we need help. We're glad you guys are here.

And that's hard, isn't it? Whenever you know the Lord's calling you to do something and you're just, I know, I've been in that position before where I was like, no. Nope.

I don't think that, you know, I don't think that that's what I want to do. And I think, well, I know I've done that multiple times. And that's hard. But then when you do it, you know, that's where that paradox comes in as well.

You know, this is going to be uncomfortable. This is going to take me out of what is comfortable for me, God. And I don't want to do that. But then when you do it, the comfort of Christ in it, you're just like, wow, this was really, now I understand.

Or I get it. And that was, I'm glad that you called me to do this. Or be a part of this. Anybody else? What comfort have you been unwilling to sacrifice in order to obey God's will for you?

[26 : 13] Diane. A little confession time here. Okay. There's, first I'm going to start with another story.

My great-great-grandfather. When I look back on his life, it haunts me that I have done nothing comparable to what he did.

He was a circuit-riding pastor down in Texas in the 1800s. And at some point in his life, and this is where the story gets hazy in the family story, but he became paralyzed.

Hmm. And he did not give up his circuit. His family would tie him into the saddle of his horse.

Hmm. And he would make his rounds. Hmm. And his horse would bring him home at night. And they would untie him and feed him and bathe him and put him to bed.

[27 : 28] Hmm. Hmm. And the next day, they would help him back onto his horse, tie him into the saddle so he wouldn't fall off. Hmm. And one time he did, and he laid in a road, a very, a horse trail, really, for like two or three days before somebody came along.

Hmm. But that's how committed he was to the Lord. And that just humbles me. I think, you know, I have not done anything like that.

Hmm. The worst thing I can think of right now is when I left Texas and moved to Oklahoma. I didn't like that. Hmm. Hmm. You know, I'm embarrassed to say I kind of like it now.

Yeah. You know, we've lived here for almost 40 years, so I like, I like Bartlesville now, but I didn't at first. Hmm.

So. I just. I'm not really sure what I'm trying to say, except that some people are simply called to make larger sacrifices than others.

[28 : 51] Yeah. And I am humbled by that fact. I'm extremely proud of my ancestors who were part of the Reformation in Scotland.

And. Um. But the Lord's just been very, very good to me. And I've not been called to do anything to that extent. Yeah.

But. I pray a lot for those who are. Thank you for sharing that. And I think you made a good point, too. Um.

And I know, like, for your great, great, great grandfather. That's an amazing story. Um. I think for him and for these other amazing stories, they wouldn't, they wouldn't want us to look at their lives and be like, well, I have not.

I haven't done anything close to that. And feel like failures because we haven't, you know. And so I think that's an important thing to keep in mind, too, as we're going through this is.

[29 : 58] You know, we're all called to deny ourselves and take up the cross and follow him. That's going to come in. It's going to come in different ways. It's going to, you know, involve much of the same things. But the persecution and the trials that we face will not be the same as one another and as intense as others.

But you continue to do what the Lord has called you to do. And all of these brothers and sisters, they were, God, surrounded them by people who prayed and who encouraged them and who were a source of help for them in their difficult time.

And so just knowing, knowing what the Lord has called for you to do and playing that part to the best of your ability. And I know that you've been a blessing to many, many people.

And I think that's the other thing, too, is sometimes we look at, because I think of the same way and think, well, what have I done? And then you realize that later on, God has his way of saying, well, it was done a lot.

Just maybe you didn't even realize it. But little things that you did that you didn't think were a big deal, but you were obedient. You prayed for that person. You put your arm around that person. You shared something in a Bible study that was really helpful to somebody.

[31 : 09] It goes a long way in building the kingdom. And it takes us all. Like I got a little bit of an echo here. So, yeah. What comfort have you been unwilling to sacrifice in order to obey God's will for you?

Anybody else? I just encourage you to do it. And it may be different.

It is going to be different for each of us. You know, not everybody does the Lord call into ministry. Not everybody does he call to do, to teach a Sunday school class.

But thank God for the ones who are obedient to that. I think my pastor growing up would have been a terrible Sunday school teacher. I think I would be a terrible Sunday school teacher. But I thank God for my Sunday school teacher.

And Alma Ross, who I've shared about. And how she helped me. I remember when I quit my job to go to seminary.

[32 : 14] That was a really hard day. And I remember setting up an appointment with my boss. And he had no idea. I was just like, hey, can I talk to you later on?

Or when would you have time to talk to me? And he kind of looked at us. He was like, oh, maybe around one o'clock. And I was like, okay. That was in the morning. And I just remember dreading that meeting. And going in his office. And just my voice was quivering.

And it's like, I'm quitting my job. And he's like, why? Or I need to resign. Why? Because I'm going to seminary. And he's like, okay. But anyhow, that was hard to do.

But thank God that I did it. And I'm sure many of you can share those same stories. That God was calling you to do something maybe you're unwilling to. But if you did, you praise God for it.

That he was able to give you the strength to do that. Third question. How should knowing where you've come from, again, referring to your salvation, and know where you're going as a believer, which is heaven, shape how you live in the present?

[33 : 22] Knowing where you have come from, knowing where you're going, how should that shape how you live right now? Cameron. Okay.

That works. One of the things that I find very funny is, and I don't know how much pastor or other teachers can relate to this, but a lot of times I find that, you know, I teach, help teach the youth on Wednesday nights.

And sometimes it's, you know, something pops up and I go, hey, that's going to be a great topic.

And I'll study it and I'll get it ready. And so the last few weeks I've been touching on stress and how we deal with that.

And it's so amazing to see how much it's almost like I need to be teaching myself that whole time. Like I get more out of it than anybody else.

Like it's almost like God puts those subjects in your mind because he knows you are going to be the one that's going to need it. And so when we were talking about stress, it was a situation came up with us where our AC and our furnace went out in our house and I was just stressed beyond belief.

[34 : 53] And it hit me like a ton of rocks when I was driving home. Like I was sitting there stressing, how am I going to figure it out? How am I going to make the money? How are we going to make this work? And it was like, you know, I usually drive in silence.

And I mean, it was just like this all of a sudden calm of God going, hey, dummy, what have you been teaching the youth the past couple of weeks? You know, and so much of it we tried to base on that eternal view of, hey, we should be comfortable in Christ and knowing that our eternal salvation is secure.

And that makes my AC and my heat going out pretty minuscule compared to everything else I should be spending my nerves and my anxiousness about.

And so I think when you try to keep that eternal perspective on everything, that should really help shape how we live in the present.

When we get into those uncomfortable situations, if our mindset is already preset to kind of that eternal view on everything, it makes getting kind of jumping into those uncomfortable situations a little bit easier the next time we get into it.

[36 : 16] Yeah. Good. Oftentimes the Lord uses those uncomfortable things that we experience to refocus our attention where it should be, right?

I've been doing my Bible study. I've been in Luke. And I was looking at Luke 12 and the parable of the rich fool.

You guys know a lot of that story. The landowner had a bumper crop and then was all of a sudden making plans for the future. You know, I'm going to build storehouses.

I'm going to keep it all. And I'm going to be wealthy. And I'm set for life. Not realizing that that very night he would die. Jesus goes from that teaching then to talking about how we should not be anxious.

Repeatedly telling us not to fear. And then in verse 35 he says you must be ready. And he's talking about being ready for him and for his return, right? And so I think when we keep in mind where we come from, where we're going, we're focused on the present.

[37 : 29] We're better able to live our life for Christ because we're not living for, we have the right motivation for why we're living, right? I'm not working for a lake house in retirement.

I'm working for the Lord today, right? And so my motivations, the decisions that I make, if we're in the proper frame of mind, where I've come from, where I'm going, our priorities are straight. We're not anxious as much. It doesn't mean that we're carefree. Like, oh, well, it broke. Like, well, I don't know what to do.

I mean, you know, but we understand that still nothing can take our salvation away. Nothing can take us out of our eternal home.

And we know that this world isn't our home. It's a world cursed by sin. And we're suffering in its effects as well. Things like this happen. But it helps us to not be despairing.

[38 : 35] Not being despair. What am I going to do? I, you know, I don't think I can continue on. And then, and it also helps us to stay focused on being ready, right?

Jesus was always telling his disciples, he tells us to, through his word, be ready. You don't know when the hour will come, when he will return. But to have your lamps prepared, right?

Be ready for his soon and imminent return. And so, you know, in the present, also thinking about the fact that, you know, Christ could come back today.

And, and am I looking forward to that? Do I, am I, am I wanting that, you know? Today, Lord, come back. Like, and I guess I'm saying like the motivation.

Because I think sometimes as a, and I don't, I don't want to ramble too much. But, and I know our time is coming close. But, you know, I think I always, as a kid, and maybe you felt the same way too. It was like being a believer and hearing about the Lord's return.

[39 : 42] And that it could come at any time. And you're like, yeah, yeah, yeah. Yes, I want that. But I'd like to get married first. You know? I'd like to have this first. I'd like to do that first.

And, you know, and I was just a kid. But I think today, I mean, is that what you, are you, are you looking forward to that every day? Like, God, you know, I pray that Jesus come.

I hope that Jesus comes back. I hope that today is the day. And I think if you're thinking about where you've come from and where you're going, that also shapes your present. That, you know, we're not despairing. We're not despairing.

We're not making plans without considering Christ. And we're ready to be used by him. And we're ready for him to come back.

Let's move on to the next question. Actually, is there any other comments about how should knowing where you've come from and knowing where you're going should shape how you live in the present?

[40 : 45] Anybody else want to add anything to that? Wes? Fear in your life. You shouldn't be afraid of some of the things, like I talk about witnessing or if God gives you something to do.

I don't think I can do that. Yeah. Stop fearing. And you had hit on it saying, don't be anxious. But that same verse talked a lot about that. It should eliminate a lot of fear out of fear of death even. Talk about, you know, passing off. It's like we're all going to die. But as Christians, we don't fear that. It's not something we're afraid of and that final thing's going to happen. Hey, out of the body, we're with Christ.

Amen. Again, the Lord's saying, you know, fear him who has the authority to cast body and soul into hell. Right? Don't fear men who don't have that power. They don't have that authority.

And I agree. I think that's a good point. Living with this kind of perspective also gives you courage to not be a man fearer, but a God fearer as well.

[41 : 44] Good. Anybody else? Mike Runner has a question. All right. So, like, when your past experiences help you adapt to new ones, like, no one ever, like, touches a hot stove and then comes back later and then touches it again.

They learn that it's hot. That's hot. I should not touch that. Yeah. Yeah. Good point. It builds faith, too, doesn't it?

When you step out, when you get uncomfortable and you're obedient to what the Lord has called you to do, and you've experienced that comfort of Christ in it, then the next time you're more willing because you have faith.

Because you're like, well, man, that last time I didn't want to do that. I said, yes, the Lord blessed it. And so, yeah, it's I think that's a great point. It also it builds our faith for the present as well. And where you came from. Good. Good answer, Josiah. All right. Kendra. A good observation. Observation. So this comes from Hebrews 11.

[43 : 02] So we've just talked about the hall of faith, all of these different people who have been characters of faith. Right. Then it says in verse 13, all these people were still living by faith when they died.

They did not receive the things promised. They only saw them and welcomed them from a distance, admitting that they were foreigners and strangers on earth. People who say such things show that they are looking for a country not of their own.

If they had been thinking of the country that they had left, they would have had the opportunity to return. Instead, they are longing for a better country, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them.

And I think that is encouraging for us as we think about displaying faith and how that shapes what we do, looking towards the time when all things will be revealed.

And like you said, not everyone is called to the same kinds of sacrifices. But we are all called to obey. We're all called to exude faith.

[44 : 11] And I thought that was a really good passage. Yeah. Amen. Absolutely. Again, encouragement from God's word that you're not going to waste your life by being obedient to Christ.

You're not going to waste your life by denying yourself. And that's, again, that person who seeks to save his life is the person who loses it. That person who gives up his life for Christ's sake is the one who finds it, truly finds it.

And if you've, you know, if you've been saved and you've sacrificed comfort to be obedient to Christ, I think that you've experienced that.

All right, let's move on to the last question. What uncomfortable thing is God calling you to do? And will you obey it?

What uncomfortable thing is God calling you to do? All right, Diane. Actually, this is a little bit past tense.

[45 : 17] But when I was asked to pray about being the teaching director for community Bible study a number of years ago, I was very polite.

And I said, okay, I will pray about it. And then I went home and I prayed, God, give me somebody's name to give these people because I can't do this. You know, I've never even talked in front of people.

Lord, you know that. And so there's no way I can teach this class of 80 women every week. And long story short, the more I prayed, the more I was convinced he was calling me to do that.

I was so uncomfortable in doing it. And Amy and Teresa and several other CBS ladies still here can tell you that my prayer every Wednesday was, God, please don't let me throw up on these women on the front row.

Because I was very, very nervous. But I will say this. I did obey. And I learned a very important lesson in the midst of that, which was when we are out of our comfort zone, we are totally dependent on God.

[46 : 28] If we're in the midst of our comfort zone, we're working out of the flesh. And that's not good. But he calls us out of our comfort zone often in order to teach us to be dependent on him.

And I was totally dependent on him for those 16 years that I did that until my brother passed and my dad passed.

And then I had to take care of my mom. That was when the Lord called me out of that position to do something else that was uncomfortable. But I praise God for both opportunities.

Amen. It's a good testimony. And good encouragement. Amen.

Amen. It could be, and it probably is different for each person here. It could be that the Lord wants you to share the gospel with somebody, your neighbor, a family, friend.

[47 : 36] It may be that he wants you to confront somebody, a brother, a sister in Christ who is wayward. It may be that he's calling you to mission, to missions.

It may be that he's calling you to ministry. It may be that he's calling you to do a number of different things, right? And so my encouragement, and I think that as you've heard and as you've experienced, is you do what the Lord is calling you to do.

And you don't look at, well, you know, I can't, I don't like speaking in front of people. Or I don't know what I'm going to say. Or, you know, how am I going to provide for my family if I left my job to go to seminary or the mission field?

And, you know, and then other people come, it's too dangerous. Are you sure that you can do all these different things? But, you know, the encouragement that I hope that you receive is you have faith.

You trust God. And you don't pay attention to your weaknesses, but to who he is. If he's called you to do it, you will do it. And he'll be glorified in it.

[48 : 57] But, you know, like Diane shared, didn't want to be this teacher 16 years she did it, right? And the blessing that that was to so many women in our community.

And I'm sure we could go around and share lots of stories. Nick, you have the, go ahead, Nick.

Yeah, I was just going to say, I, you know, Katie and I just moved into our house downtown.

We're really excited about it. And, like, the first night we're there, we go for a walk and then we come home from the walk and somebody's pit bull is running around in our front yard.

And we're like, whose pit bull is in our front yard? And it's our new neighbor. And he's really rough. And immediately I was like, I can't believe this.

This is ridiculous. And then I was like, but wait, he's my neighbor. I'm supposed to reach this guy.

And yet I found in my heart a desire for either neighbors that make me feel more comfortable or for somebody else to come into my cul-de-sac to reach this guy.

[50 : 03] Yeah. And the Lord just spoke to my heart that it's like, man, this person has been put on our street at this time, renting this house in this season for us to try to win this guy to the Lord.

And yet there was so much resistance to that in my heart. So when I saw this question earlier today, it said, like, what uncomfortable thing is God calling you to do? It's for me to go and actually get to know this guy and to try to get involved in his life and to show the love of the Lord to him and tell him the gospel.

But I know that there's a lot in my heart that doesn't want to do that. Yes. Yeah. I have a neighbor.

He doesn't have a pit bull, but he's, I don't know if this is being live streamed. I have a friend who has a neighbor. And that's how, you know, the pastor is always talking about himself.

And I gave it away. If ever, it's like a pastor friend of mine. Same thing. He, you know, when we first move into our neighborhood, I always, I felt like the Lord.

[51 : 10] And I told Danny, I was like, I really want to, I really want to invite him to church. I want to share the gospel with him. And it's been hard to, like, honestly, because he's, he's a hard guy to, to be able to have those conversations with.

And in fact, our, our dog, one of them is a, an escape artist.

He's also named Spurgeon. He does not, he's not living up to his namesake. He's not, he's not a saint. But anyhow, he got out. He's like a, he's an Aussie doodle.

He's a poofy little, like, he's not menacing. He's not a pit bull. And, and we didn't know that he got out.

And since then, well, we had a small fence in the backyard. He would jump over and then he would go on his adventures. And we've replaced that fence since then. So he's, he's trapped now.

[52 : 18] But he got out and animal control came and knocked on our door. And, you know, Jack, I think it must have been, must have been over the summer.

And, uh, like, police bins at our door. And I was like, what? Like, yeah, one of your neighbors called. And, uh, and this is Spurgeon had gotten out before and he had grabbed him by the neck and brought him back to our house and said something not very nice, I think, to Danny.

And I wasn't there. And so, uh, you know, that was upsetting. And then we're like, it was him. You know, we're kind of asking the officer, like, so who, who called?

You know, can you point us in the direction of their house? It's like, well, over here. And I was like, was it that house? Yes, you know, uh, and I think he alluded to the fact that it was, but then we interacted later on and I really don't think that it was.

But again, you know, it was kind of like looking at my neighbor as an enemy instead of somebody who, you know, at, at this time in this place, just like you said, Nick, that, you know, we are and we need to be Christ to him.

[53 : 28] Um, and it's not comfortable. But how else is he going to hear? Okay, Jack, last one, Jack.

What uncomfortable thing is God calling you to do? So, you know how nervous I get before my games.

Uh-huh. And sometimes I get really, really nervous. Uh-huh. And so anyways, uh, it was Joshua in the battle of, uh, Jericho.

And he got really nervous because Moses was a really good leader. And he was the leader now.

And he was about to go into, like, a war.

And, um, he got nervous. And so when I get nervous before my games, I get really, really nervous.

And I throw up sometimes.

[54 : 23] But, so. What did Joshua do? Yeah. Joshua did it, but he faced his fears. So. Okay, good. Yeah. Good observation. That's a great one.

Um, and again, we can go through all tons of scripture. Joshua being one. Joshua chapter one.

Right? What does the Lord keep telling him?

Do not be afraid, for I am with you. You are going to go into the promised land. I will use you to conquer it. Do not be afraid, for I will be with you.

Do not be afraid, for I will be with you. Remember, it's like, Joshua, it's not about your might. It's not about your military expertise. You're going to be victorious because I will cause you to be.

And so, uh, just another encouragement from God's word that whatever the Lord calls us to do.

Being uncomfortable makes me feel fearful. But, you know, don't dwell upon your weaknesses and your inabilities.

[55 : 26] You dwell on the fact, okay, God, you called me to do this. This is what you want me to do. I'll be obedient. And, uh, and God will be faithful. So, so just do it. Just say yes.

All right, let's pray. Lord God, thank you for this night. Thank you for, uh, this group, for the ability that we have to come here on Sunday mornings and dig deeper into your word and, uh, and sharpen one another, uh, being real with one another, talking about the struggles that we've had in the past or the present.

And, uh, and, and just being a source of encouragement to one another, Lord, especially as we think about how, uh, you've called us again to deny ourselves, to take up the cross, how that's not comfortable for us, how oftentimes we can be fearful and we want to say no to you.

And so, Lord, uh, as we've shared in here, all of the suffering that we experienced, it's not always, it's not all going to be on the same level, but Lord, whatever you call us to do, it's important because you've called us to do it and it has an impact.

It builds your kingdom. And so, Father, whatever it may be, I pray that we would be faithful, uh, to you, that we would say yes to you, that we would deny ourselves as you've asked.

[56 : 50] And in so doing, Lord, that you would use our lives in mighty ways that honor the name of Jesus Christ. Father, as we think about where we've come from in salvation, where we're going, and that is eternity with you, Lord, may we continue to just live our, our every day with that state of mind so that we aren't despairing, we aren't, um, fearful of men, but that, God, we would be living each moment to the fullest for the glory of the name of Jesus Christ.

So help us to do that, Lord, and continue to encourage us to walk in your ways. Uh, Lord, we pray for each person here with the uncomfortable thing that they know that they're struggling with, Father, uh, myself included.

Help us, Lord, to, to be obedient, uh, to take your words to heart and to live our lives for Christ and say, yes, Lord, I'm willing.

Send me, have me do it. Um, thy will be done. We ask these things in Jesus' name. Amen. All right, God bless you guys. Hope that you have a great week. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.