

Comfort or Christ?

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Date: 11 October 2020

Preacher: Mike Scrivani

[0 : 00] John 7, verses 25-36 will be the text for this morning's message.

If you please stand with me. We honor the reading of God's Word together. 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 : 10] Yet many of the people believed in him. They said, When the Christ appears, will he do more signs than this man has done? The Pharisees heard the crowd muttering these things about him, and the chief priests and the 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, for 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. I got out of blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated? This past Tuesday, 484 years ago, William Tyndale died at the stake. He was strangled there and then set ablaze. His crime was translating the Bible into the English language. Tyndale was a brilliant man.

[2 : 31] He spoke seven languages fluently. He attended the most prestigious universities in England, but nothing stirred his mind and his heart more than the word of God.

At the time, the only Bible translations that the Catholic Church allowed to be in use were written in Latin, a language that few spoke and even fewer understood besides the priests who read from them.

But the true reason for the church's opposition to the English Bible was that they feared that the doctrines that they taught for centuries, which contradicted Scripture, would be exposed.

And if people could read the Bible for themselves, it wouldn't be long before they saw that. Their power then and their control would be lost.

And so, those doctrines that they wished to conceal, primarily the doctrine that says that we are justified by faith alone, would finally be revealed to the people.

[3 : 50] They could not conceal it any longer. However, though Tyndale was repeatedly warned and threatened to cease doing this, to cease trying to translate the Bible into the English language, he remained resolute.

Though he was forced to flee England in order to continue his work, nevertheless, he pressed on in it. When he would complete a Bible or Bibles, they would be smuggled into England with the result that many were reading them and they were being truly saved.

This enraged the church. People found with even a page or a fragment of one of Tyndale's Bibles were burned at the stake for owning it.

Finally, in 1535, the church was able to seize William Tyndale. He was betrayed by a fraudulent friend and delivered to Brussels where he was imprisoned in a cold, dark, hard prison cell for 18 months.

Then on October 6th, 1536, Tyndale was escorted from his prison cell to the stake that he would die upon.

[5 : 10] And once there, his final words were recorded as a prayer and this is what he said, Lord, open the king of England's eyes.

And with those final words, the executioner snapped the rope encircling his neck and ignited the pyre which he was standing upon. He was 42 years old, never married, never buried.

But two years later, after a series of events, King Henry VIII of England authorized the distribution of the English Bible which contained much of Tyndale's work.

And then within three years of William Tyndale's death, English printing presses were cranking out Bibles to be distributed under the king's order that every man should have one.

Tyndale could have lived a much more comfortable life. He had the knowledge, again, he had the pedigree that would have seen him advance in the Catholic Church to high and to prestigious positions resulting in a plush life for himself.

[6 : 37] But he chose a different path. He understood that following God's call and accomplishing the spread of his saving gospel came at a high price.

I want to read to you an excerpt from one of Tyndale's books before he was arrested, obviously, called *The Obedience of a Christian Man*.

It's a little lengthy, but it's powerful. He said, If God promises riches, the way thereto is poverty. Whom he loves, he chastens.

Whom he exalts, he casts down. Whom he saves, he damns first. He brings no man to heaven except he sent him to hell first.

If he promises life, he slays it first. When he builds, he tears down first. He is no patcher. He cannot build on another man's foundation.

[7 : 37] He will let no man be partaker with him in his own praise and glory. Let us therefore look diligently whereunto we are called that we deceive not ourselves. We are called not to dispute as the Pope's disciples do, but to die with Christ that we may live with him and to suffer with him that we may reign with him.

He concludes by saying, For if God be on our side, what does it matter? Who is against us? In thinking of William Tyndale this week and in studying this text, God has pressed into my hearth a truth that I've wrestled with this week.

At this point in his ministry, we've read in John chapter 7, Jesus is six months away. Six months away from being crucified.

Six months away from the cross. We've seen that people were already seeking to arrest him. That they were already plotting his execution.

People were growing intensely hostile to him. But he pressed on. He continued on.

[8 : 56] Because doing so was necessary. It was necessary that he fulfill the Father's will. It was necessary for our salvation that he die on the cross making atonement for our sins.

And so he spent that final six months pursuing that final hour where on the cross he would declare, it is finished.

And so as I've studied this text this week, I've wondered how I would live if I knew that I only had six months left. I wonder how I would spend that time.

If I knew that people were seeking to arrest me and to kill me for my faith, what would I honestly do? How would I truly live those last several months?

Now I know what I'd hope I'd do. I know what I'd hope I would do. But I also know myself. And I like being comfortable. I like being comfortable.

[10 : 07] But Jesus never sought that kind of comfort for himself. Neither did his disciples. It wasn't what men and women like William Tyndale chose to do with their lives.

Why? Well, I think that they understood a command given by our Lord that tragically, I think, has often fallen on deaf ears within the church.

Matthew 16, 24 through 26. Let's look at this and think about this. Jesus told his disciples, if anyone would come after me, anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, an instrument of death.

Take up his cross and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? Now, when I read that, that doesn't sound very comfortable to me. [11:34] Yet this is what our Lord demands of his followers. So the question that I've wrestled with this week is this.

Is the Christian life meant to be a life lived comfortably? Is the Christian life a life meant to be lived comfortably?

Is our own personal comfort the object for which we should spend our lives pursuing? I've had a dream, a goal, of one day retiring in a house on the lake.

Maybe you've heard me talk about that dream. Certainly, Danny and I have, it's a dream that we share, right? Love to be able to do that one day.

And I love going to the lake and I love visiting people who live in a lake house and I always sit down at some point and just think, oh, this will be wonderful. You know, I would love to be able to do this one day.

[12:47] Just live here. Just rest here. Is that wrong? Is that wrong for me to want that? And that's what I've been thinking about as well this week.

And so, what I've come to understand is that it depends. It depends. If the way I choose to live, if the decisions that I am making now for myself, if the way that I choose to live my life today are made with the primary motivation of one day achieving that final comfortable end for my life, if I refuse to deny myself, if I refuse to take up the cross so that I can achieve that comfortable end, if I try to save my life by doing what is comfortable now so that I will be comfortable at the end of my life should I get to that point, what I've realized is that would be tragic.

So if I'm living my present day thinking, you know, ultimately that's what I want. That's my goal.

That's my end. And so I'm going to make whatever decision today that's going to help me, right?

Give me job security or whatever so that I can continue on and I can reach that ripe old age of 65 or whatever and transition from ministry right into that house.

that would be tragic and people would suffer. I don't merely want to admire Christ from a distance.

[14:33] I want to be like Christ and I hope you do too. I want to live this life that he's given me for his glory and I hope that you do too.

It would be a great tragedy if we who have been saved don't. Isn't this what we repeatedly hear from our Lord pleading to us through his word saying, I'm the treasure.

I'm the way. I'm the truth. I'm the life. I'm the bread of life that nourishes your hungry soul. I'm the light of the world whom truth and purpose and meaning is found.

Come to me. Follow me. Deny yourself. Die to yourself. Live for me. Pursue me and my kingdom and my righteousness.

Don't live for this world. Don't waste your life doing that. Live for me. Store up for yourself treasures in heaven. Not here.

[15:38] But despite these things, despite what we know, despite what we read in God's word, we are still, though, tempted to pursue comfort instead, aren't we?

We live in the most comfortable world, I think, in the history of the world. People go out in midday in their pajamas in our society.

And it's, like, become acceptable now. Like, well, they're out in their pajamas. That's what people do these days, right? Just trying to feel comfortable.

Maybe you do that. That's fine. No judgment from me, right? Okay? Just to say that we really like to be comfortable. We're seeing that it is becoming increasingly also more uncomfortable for Christians to live like Christ in this nation as well.

And that's probably not going to change anytime soon, if ever. When we stand for and live by our Christian convictions, when we proclaim truth and expose sin, it makes people feel uncomfortable.

[17:01] But isn't that what Christ has called us to do? Isn't that what He's commanded us to do?

To go and to make disciples? To go to the ends of the earth? I think the diminished impact of the church and our nation is because we've pursued what is comfortable for us too much with too great a passion.

We've sacrificed many of our Lord's commands on the altar of comfort and convenience. Now, what I'm not saying before I continue on is that the answer is that you cut a few holes out of a potato sack and that's your clothes and you dig a hole out in the woods and you live in that.

I'm going to be as uncomfortable as I can be. Right? That's not what I'm talking about either. It's the motivation behind your life. Are you living for comfort or are you living for Christ?

In this text, Jesus faces agitators, instigators, naysayers, and doubters who are collectively determined to end his ministry or at least alter its course.

[18 : 23] He's made them feel uncomfortable but he presses on because he knows where he's come from and he knows where he's going.

I think that truth is critical for followers of Christ to understand this morning. The altar of comfort that we sacrifice so many of our Lord's commands upon must be smashed to pieces.

If we are ever going to see our church, the church, live for the Lord to our greatest potential.

Do you want that? Do you want that for our church? That the Lord would use us collectively as this local body of believers to our greatest potential for the glory of his great name.

The main idea for this morning's sermon is this. Jesus knew where he'd come from, he knew where he was going, and that knowledge kept him from being deterred from his mission.

[19 : 39] Jesus knew where he'd come from, he knew where he was going, and that knowledge kept him from being deterred from his mission. God may not be calling you to make the ultimate sacrifice for him like William Tyndale, but he is calling all of us who follow him to sacrifice for him.

Maybe at this point in your life, it's to care for an elderly parent who needs your help. Maybe at this time in your life, it's to open up your home to an orphan child who needs a home.

Maybe it's to enter ministry, enter the mission field, become a pastor. Maybe it's to stay right where you're at, but to be used by the Lord to share the gospel with your neighbors, with your co-workers, with your friends, and with your family.

Maybe he's calling you to give more of your time, or your talents, or your treasures to benefit others. Maybe he's calling you to just stop pursuing comfort as your greatest goal.

As you do so, you will be met with criticism. You will be met with naysayers, and doubters, and enemies.

[21 : 12] peace. But if you know where you've come from, and if you know where it is that you are going, it will keep you from being deterred from our Lord's desire in the present to make you a disciple who makes disciples, who makes much of the name of Jesus Christ.

We've been given one life to live, and we're called to use it, to make the most of it for Christ, our Lord and Savior.

And we have this urging, don't we, from our Lord, from those who have come before us, do this. Don't waste your life.

Use it to the most to make the most that you can of Christ and His name. Hebrews 12, 1-3 comes to mind. And we hear the urging here, therefore, as believers, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely.

Let us not walk or jog, let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. Looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

[22 : 45] Consider Him who endured from sinners such hostility against Himself so that you may not grow weary or faint-hearted. Are you, though?

Are you weary of the Christian life right now? are you faint-hearted? You see what's going on this year, 2020, has been a rough year for everybody.

We have an important election coming up, and so are you fearful? Are you fearful even in living the Christian life? Brothers and sisters, this world needs you.

You. Jesus has instructed you to be the light, to be the salt of the earth, for us to be a city on a hill, a little heavenly outpost in this fallen world that's filled with darkness.

We can't forsake our mission for comfort. And so how do we do that? How do we not forsake our mission so that we can live more comfortably?

[24 : 04] Well, I think by considering and keeping our eyes upon, obviously, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who endured the cross for us and who has brought us peace with God as a result, who has secured our salvation, and look at how He did it.

So first of all, here we see that Jesus knew where He had come from. John 25-31, Jesus knew where He had come from. John begins his gospel introducing us to Christ as the Word of God and explains where He's come from, His heavenly origins.

John 1-3, in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. He continues on in verse 14, and the Word, that eternal Word, became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen His glory, glory as the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

In verse 18, no one has ever seen God, the only God who is at the Father's side. He, Jesus, has made Him known to us.

[25 : 31] John also tells us in this introductory statement that tragically, many did not receive the testimony about Christ. They did not believe that it was true, verses 10 and 11.

Jesus was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet, tragically, the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him.

And so, it's no wonder that as we've walked through this gospel, we have witnessed many different kinds of reactions to Jesus.

Chapter 7 is a chapter that covers extensively the many different beliefs and misconceptions that people had about our Lord. Some, as we've covered, said He was a good man.

Others said He was a deceiver who was deceiving the people. He was leading them astray. Jesus has performed many miracles and signs that give amazing testimony to the fact that He is the Son of God to His divine nature, and He's taught with such authority to them that people marveled when they heard Him teaching and preaching.

[26 : 45] But again, instead of receiving that testimony, many of them rejected it. Chief among the rejecters were the Jewish religious leaders and authorities.

They actively worked together against Christ, challenging His claims, seeking to convince the crowds that Jesus was not someone whom they should trust.

their interference in Jesus' ministry and their attempts to convince the people that Jesus was a demon-possessed deceiver saw them often engaging with our Lord in conflict.

And the people knew that when Jesus was in town and the Pharisees were present, that there was going to be some kind of a conflict. There was going to be some kind of a showdown.

And many of them, because Jesus refused to be the kind of Messiah that they wanted Him to be, chose the side of the Pharisees, of the Jewish religious leaders and authorities.

[27 : 56] And so here we see them beginning to repeat, the crowd beginning to repeat the talking points that the Pharisees had established in their opposition to Jesus.

In verse 20, after Jesus acknowledges that He is aware of the Jewish authorities' plans to kill them, they respond, you have a demon. Again, lending their credibility to the Jewish authorities' explanation as to how Jesus was able to perform the miracles that He did, saying that He was demon-possessed.

So here in verse 25, we see that there are some in the crowd who are just wanting to stir things up. They're just wanting to see a fight. Perhaps they've enjoyed the back and forth, exchanges that they've witnessed between Jesus and the religious authorities, and so they are drawn and entertained by that drama that can unfold.

In that, are they really that different from us? We are drawn to drama, aren't we? Reality television, right?

You know that those producers, they're working behind the scenes to look at certain personality types, and they think we're going to get these strong personalities, we're going to put them in a small space, and they are going to tear each other apart.

[29 : 24] And people are going to watch it, and they're going to love it. And we do, as a culture. Those shows get huge ratings because we're drawn to the drama and the conflict.

Same with the debates. A lot of people watch, you know, not watching to say, I'm really interested in what these candidates are running for.

Now, a lot of people, I think, well, I know that they're going to, it's going to be crazy. There's going to be some drama, and we're kind of waiting for that moment, like that moment where one of them gets hammered by the other, and we're just waiting and waiting and waiting.

We want to see it, even though we probably already know who we're voting for anyways, right? As Jesus is teaching here, we see some people creating that kind of drama, stirring it up, so to speak. They know what the debate is about between Jesus and the Jewish leaders, but maybe they've tuned out their arguments because they just want to see conflict.

[30 : 32] They just want to see drama. But we see that their efforts did not deter our Lord. Jesus was undeterred by instigators.

Jesus was undeterred by instigators. Verses 25 and 26. 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? And so again, we see some people just live for drama.

They enjoy the conflict. They like to stir things up. And that's what I think we see here in part in these verses. A group that wants to see some drama, wants to see some action.

I think that they already knew the answers to the questions that they were posing. Yes, they knew the Jewish leaders are seeking to kill Jesus.

[31 : 35] And no, they knew that, no, they did not believe that he was the Christ. But they asked these questions that I think they already have the answers to in an attempt to instigate and accelerate conflict.

Have you known people like that? Maybe you're someone like that. I'm sure that those of you have been in the church, a church, for a long enough amount of time, you've been in a contentious business meeting where there was conflict and there was drama.

And it usually, it seems so important at the time, but thinking back on it now, you can probably realize that really wasn't that important. I don't think that that really helped us as a church to spread and to share the gospel.

I don't think anybody really grew more like Christ and matured in their faith as a result of that business meeting. I remember one case for me where we were in a business meeting and an influential member of the church, not this church, just in case you're trying to figure out later on, who was that?

Not here. Towards the end of my time at the other church I was at, who I love very much, and the man who got up and spoke was an influential man, a man who I love very much as well, but who was upset with some things, and his primary concern was the furnishings of the sanctuary.

[33 : 20] And so I was pointing out all the changes that we had made to the furniture in the sanctuary, the pulpit, and some other things, and then he drew attention to the modesty rail.

Do you guys know what a modesty rail is? In the choir lobby? You used to have one, right? Maybe you had a contentious business meeting over that as well. Hopefully not. Just this divider, this little half-wall divider, and it was there for modesty's sake, right?

It had served its purpose for a time. People, I won't get into it, but we didn't need it anymore, okay? And so it was gone, it had been long gone, and he pointed up, and we used to have this beautiful railing back there.

You know, what happened to it? And I was like, well, it's in the shed, or it's been thrown away. I don't remember, but anyhow, I was like, seriously? And all the things that we have to do as a church, and how important it is that we be united in what the Lord has called us to do, we're seriously going to waste breath about a modesty rail?

Crazy. And it doesn't help. It doesn't help the church. It doesn't help those who are a part of those meetings. It certainly doesn't help the world whom we are called to be ambassadors of Christ to.

[34 : 46] So, instigators. When you want to live the Christian life, they will pop up. Be like Christ, knowing where you came from, and don't worry about what they are trying to say, or put an end to it.

Second, agitators. Jesus was undeterred by agitators. Verse 27, but we know where this man comes from, and when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from, they said.

An agitator is someone who urges others to protest or rebel. That's what an agitator is and what an agitator does. In this case, the agitators were motivated by a false set of facts.

They assumed that they knew where Jesus came from, and they assumed also that they knew what the Scriptures said, but they didn't know Jesus, and they didn't know what the Scriptures said.

They knew Jesus grew up in Nazareth, but they didn't care to find out where he was born, Bethlehem, in fulfillment of the Scripture, Micah 5.2.

[35 : 51] And also, they believed in a popular legend at the time, a popular tradition based on a misunderstanding of Malachi 3.1 that the Messiah would suddenly appear out of nowhere in the temple to redeem Israel.

So they didn't really know Jesus, they didn't really know Scripture, they didn't really know anything of what they claimed to be experts in. Jesus' response in verses 28 and 29 reveals that he was undeterred, again, by the instigators and the agitators that surrounded him.

Let's look at what he said. 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. As I was studying verse 28, I found that it could be in the original Greek that it was written in, it could be, and I think it's better translated as a question. Jesus is being ironic here, and what he's really saying is something like, so you think you know me? So you think you know where I come from? And then we see in John 8, 19, Jesus says to many of the same people there, you know neither me nor my father.

[37 : 11] So Jesus' words here in verse 28, I think, are intended as irony because in one sense, they knew some facts about him. Yeah, he was from Nazareth.

Yeah, he claimed to be the Messiah, but they didn't know him in the truest sense. They didn't really know him. They didn't really know God.

But because Jesus knew where he had come from, the instigators and the agitators could not deter or alter his mission. And we've seen another example where a well-known instigator and agitator confronted Jesus, Satan, the father of lies, tempting him in the wilderness.

And they phrased his temptations, his questions to Jesus this way, if you are the Son of God. If you are the Son of God.

But Jesus didn't take the bait then and he didn't take it here in John chapter 7. He never did. When you set out to follow Christ, to pursue his life or his will, excuse me, for your life, you will be met by agitators.

[38 : 34] people who protest what you're doing. Maybe you've already experienced this before. People who will say things like, it's too dangerous.

It's too costly. Do you know what you're really doing? Are you sure? Have you prayed enough about this?

grace. But if you know where you've come from, meaning you know that you've been created by God and that you've been saved by God and you've been sent by God, then you can tune those instigators and those agitators and those naysayers out of your mind.

Jesus did not listen to them, the instigators or the agitators. He kept on proclaiming the truth and the result as we see that as he did that, he didn't stop to address them, he just kept proclaiming the truth with the result being in verse 30 that what?

They were seeking to arrest him, some of them, but no one laid a hand on him because his hour had not yet come because he knew that God's providential and sovereign, that he needed to continue on his mission. And then in verse 31, we see what results from that again as he ignored those instigators and those agitators and their traps.

[39 : 55] In verse 31, as he continued to proclaim the truth and stay focused on mission, what happened? Many of them believed in him. They said, when the Christ appears, will he not do more signs than he has done?

As he continued to proclaim the truth, as he continued to be undeterred, many heard the gospel and were saved. saved. When I finally decided to enter seminary about eight years ago, or actually about eight years ago and about eight years after I'd been called to ministry, I was met with opposition.

And I'll tell you that most of that opposition that I was met with came from people in my own church. And I think they meant well.

They knew me well. They knew how poor of a student that I'd been. They'd probably heard my mother and father's prayer requests for me when I was in college. You know, they understood. I remember a lot of them were very concerned that I knew what I was doing. And I think a lot of them were also concerned that I had truly been called to ministry.

[41 : 19] And in their own ways, trying not to come right out and say that, that's what they were saying or meaning. Are you sure you're called to ministry? You're so dumb.

You know, you're so lazy. They said it in nicer ways. Some of them I kind of wondered too if they even doubted my own salvation because of the way that I had been living in college.

But I knew that God had called me. I knew that He had saved me. I knew undeniably that He had called me to ministry. And though I was afraid to go on to school because I hated school, I went and I came to learn to love it.

And I didn't listen, not because of who I was, but because I knew that God, if you're calling me to this, you're going to see me through it as well. Praise God that He did. And that's what He does for us.

Be like Jesus. Know where you've been sent from. Know that God has created you, that God has saved you, that God has called you to go and make disciples.

[42 : 32] to let your light shine brightly and brilliantly for Him in this dark world. And then secondly, be like Jesus in knowing where you're going. Next, we see Jesus knew where He was going.

He knew where He was going, verses 32 through 36. In verse 32, we see that while Jesus went undeterred by the crowd, the Jewish authorities responded by hatching another botched attempt to arrest Him.

The Pharisees, it says in verse 32, heard the crowd muttering these things about Him, and the chief priests and the Pharisees sent officers to arrest Him. So in knowing where we're going, we see that Jesus was undeterred by threats.

And knowing where He was going, He was undeterred by their threats. When the officers do arrive, these officers whom they sent for later on in chapter 7, Jesus was seen by them doing what He'd always been doing, proclaiming that truth, preaching the gospel, preaching and teaching, proclaiming good news, and look at what the result was.

We'll be here soon, maybe next week, John 7, 45 through 47. The officers came back to those who had sent them, the chief priests and the Pharisees, who asked them, why did you not bring him?

[43 : 50] And the officers answered, no one ever spoke like this man. The Pharisees answered, have you been deceived too? So even those maybe who are breathing threats against you, keep on proclaiming the gospel because maybe it will be that they will be saved.

Second, we see that Jesus was undeterred by misconceptions. Undeterred by misconceptions. In verse 33 through 34, Jesus revealed that just as He would be undeterred by instigators and agitators because He knew where He'd come from, so too He was undeterred by threats and misconceptions because He knew exactly where He was going.

Verses 33 and 34, Jesus then said, I will be with you a little longer and then I am going. I'm going to Him who sent Me.

You will seek Me and you will not find Me. Where I am, you cannot come. What's He talking about here? Well, we know He's talking about in this, He's talking about going to the cross.

He knew He was going to the cross. He knew He was going to die for sinners. He knew that He was going after that to the grave from which He would arise from the dead on the third day, victorious over sin and death, vindicating His claims that He was in fact the Son of God, that He had truly purchased our salvation.

[45 : 21] He would then go to His disciples and meet with them and prepare them to receive His Spirit before He would ascend to the right hand of the Father where He is right now as we meet, interceding on behalf of His people.

He knew here He was going. He knew that one day He would return, that He would call His church to Himself. And we will live eternally and blissfully and sinlessly with Him forever.

But there are many in the crowd who didn't know where He was going. And so they were speculating in verses 35 and 36 about where He might be going. Does He intend to go to the dispersion among the Greeks?

Is He meaning to go to the Greeks? What does He mean? You will seek Me and you won't find Me. And where I am, you cannot come. They couldn't understand it. But we know that those who reject Christ will never come to where He was going and where He is now.

Where He currently is. Because apart from placing their faith in Him and knowing Him as their Lord and Savior, knowing that His death on the cross was necessary to atone for their sins and trusting in Him, they will have rejected their Savior, their only hope of salvation.

[46 : 56] Instead of heeding these words of warning people in this crowd, many of them ridiculed Him instead. But later on in John 14, when that hour is close, Jesus will soon be on the cross.

He tells His disciples again, I'm going. But look, He says something different to them there. He doesn't say, where I am, you can't come.

Let's look at what He says. John 14, 1-7. Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in Me.

In My Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again.

I will take you to Myself that where I am, you may be also. And you know the way where I am going. And Thomas said to Him, Lord, we do not know where You are going.

[48 : 11] How can we know the way? And Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also. From now on, you do know Him and you have seen Him. Last Wednesday, our church bided a fond see you later to a dear sister in Christ.

Georgia Villarreal. It wasn't goodbye. Why? Because we know where she was going. In fact, we know where she is.

And here's the thing, we all know that we are going to die one day. But as Christians, we know where we are going when we die.

We know. We know that Christ has saved us. and so we know for sure where it is that we are going.

[49 : 29] And when we have that beginning, knowing where I've come from, meaning knowing God has created me, that God has saved me, knowing that day when I was saved, when I was born again, where I've come from, and knowing where you're going, one day, I will be with the Lord.

I will dwell in His eternal presence. I am going to heaven. Not because of who I am or what I've done, but because of Jesus Christ and who He is and what He's done for me.

If you know where you've come from, and if you know where you're going, man, that will affect your present day life. If you keep that in mind of where you've come from and where you're going, you will say, yes, Lord, I will go.

Yes, Lord, I will serve, I will give, I will follow because I know that it will be worth it. Totally worth it. No matter what instigators or agitators or naysayers or doubters or criticizers that may come my way, I know that it will be totally worth it.

[50 : 45] And so I've learned and I'm sure many of you have learned as well, this great paradox of the Christian life that whenever I've sacrificed comfort for Christ, Christ has greatly comforted me.

Have you felt that way before? You sacrifice comfort for Christ. You do what He's asked you to do. You deny yourself. You take up that cross. You follow Him.

He puts on your heart something to do and you do it that was uncomfortable. Man, God has a way of just bringing you this great comfort and this great peace.

That's so much better than sitting on your couch eating potato chips and watching reality TV. So let's look at our application questions now as we come to a close.

The first question I have for you is the question that I wrestled with this week. Think about these things, pray over these things, stick these questions in your Bible, come back to them later and do some work with the Holy Spirit.

[52 : 03] Is the Christian life meant to be lived comfortably? And I hope you know what I mean by that. Okay? But is it meant to be lived comfortably?

We'll be here tonight to talk more about that question and all of these questions. But is it meant to be lived comfortably? What has the Lord said? What has He asked of His followers and for His disciples?

Next, what comfort have you been unwilling to sacrifice in order to obey God's will for you? What comfort have you been unwilling to sacrifice in order to obey God's will for you?

And think about that one too. You know, is there something that you're just like, you know, it could be a number of different things. Lord, I will serve you in your church, but in my house.

I know this is true for me. This is my safety zone, right? But I need to invite people over to my house and I need to enjoy life with people over my house. I need to have, want my kids' friends to come over to our house to be in this Christian environment.

[53 : 09] It could be a number of different things. You think about that. Next, how should knowing where you've come from, again, speaking of salvation, and knowing where you're going, heaven, shape how you live in the present day?

How should it shape your present day? You know what the Lord has saved you from and for, and you know that one day you're going to spend your eternity with Him, so how should you live your

present day?

And then finally, what uncomfortable thing is God calling you to do? What uncomfortable thing is God calling you to do? And the follow-up question is will you obey?

And I certainly hope and pray that you will. And listen, I'd love to talk with you at any time about any of these things because one of the ways that, you know, we've got to use good discernment.

And God's calling you to something and maybe you feel that, but, you know, contact me or talk to other believers and say, okay, what do you think, what do you think about this?

[54 : 18] This is what I feel like the Lord is leading me to do. And I just, you know, this is what I see in His Word, but I just want to know what is your input? What do you think? And I'd love to be one of those people for you.

But let's, as a church, not seek to be thinking about well, what can we do that's comfortable? But always be thinking about what do we need to be doing for Christ?

How can we be living like Christ? How can we be emulating Christ to one another and to our community, to our state, to our nation, to our world? Let's pray.

Lord God, we thank You that You are a Lord who came from heaven, who put on human flesh, denying Yourself, not living for Yourself, but giving Your life for our salvation, dying on the cross for our sins.

Lord, You've made it clear that those who would follow You must deny themselves. But You've also made this amazing promise that as we deny ourselves, as we live our lives for You, as we pursue Your kingdom and Your righteousness, our lives will be abundant.

[55 : 44] Not in material possessions, not in comfortable things, but in close relationship with You, knowing that You are using our lives to impact and to build Your kingdom, something that lasts eternally, not temporarily.

So God, I pray for each one of us that You would search our hearts and our minds, that You would reveal those areas and those things that we are tempted to sacrifice Your commands for so that we can live comfortably.

And Lord, we pray, I pray for our church that we would remove those things and that by Your Spirit's help, Lord, You would take them out of our lives so that we would be focused on our present day, knowing where we've come from, the salvation we've received in Christ and knowing where we're going.

One day we will be with You. Forever and ever and ever. Lord, pray, we pray that You would please use our lives in the time that we have to make much of a great name of our Savior, Jesus Christ, in His name we pray.

Amen. Amen. Thank you.