

# Faithful to God's Call

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] I have, in the last few weeks, been privileged to conduct a winter Bible study in a few churches! through the book of Jeremiah. And knowing that I was going to be preaching this morning,! I thought, well, the opening introductory message for those studies would fit fit very well for this morning. And so that's what I'm going to do, kind of tweak it a little bit to fit the need here this morning, as we consider being the best we can be for 2020. And that involves God's call upon our life. And so with that in mind, stand together with me, if you will, and let's read out of Jeremiah chapter 1. And we'll read verses 4 through 8. Scripture says,

Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee. And before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified or consecrated thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, O Lord God, behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child or a youth. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, says the Lord. Let's pray together. Father, again, thank you for your loving grace to us. And again, Father, thank you for the privilege of coming together with your people to worship you and then to hear from your word. And so now, Lord, as we open the scriptures, I pray God that you will give us clarity of thought and mind and speech and open every heart and every mind to what you have to say to them individually and to our church collectively. And I just ask that in that all, you'll give us the grace to respond to you in obedience. And so we thank you again for the time and for the privilege of the day. And we ask you through it all to honor your son and thus honor yourself as well then. We ask it in Jesus' name and for his sake. Amen. Thank you. And be seated, if you will.

As we've studied through the book of Jeremiah, it wasn't, you know, it wasn't hard to discover or discern that God was using Jeremiah to speak to the kingdom of Judah, the southern kingdom of Judah, concerning their sin. It's a book of judgment from God, judgment because of their sin. They had rejected God, turned away from him, and turned to pagan idols. So God threatened judgment upon them. But also we see then that there was also the opportunity of repentance in that stern warning that he gives them.

God extends his mercy and his grace to the kingdom of Judah. And he does that through a man by the name of Jeremiah, a man that he called as prophet to the nation, to the kingdom. Now think about that just a moment, if you will.

God calls Jeremiah, we'll see a little bit more of that in a minute, calls Jeremiah to preach God's word to a sinful and ungodly rebellious nation. His calling to that nation is God's instrument that he's going to use to extend that mercy and that grace to the covenant people. So that throws an urgent responsibility upon Jeremiah.

[ 4 : 1 0 ] Jeremiah, in light of that, must be sure that he heeds the call of God, that he obeys the call of God, and does exactly what God says for him to do. Because it's through Jeremiah that the people of Judah are going to have the opportunity to repent of their sin and accept God's offer of salvation in that.

To either accept that, to reject that, to live, or to die. I want that to soak into you. That's the awesome responsibility Jeremiah faces here. Because he's now the instrument of God by which he offers that that redemption to a sinful and ungodly people. So it's got to be right. He's got to obey, and he's got to do exactly what God says for him to do. So it's vitally important for Jeremiah to respond correctly then to the call of God. Now there's a practical application in all of this for all of us. For those of us that have been saved by the grace of God, there is that practical application. Because we've got to consider the fact that if we've been saved by God's grace, God's placed a call upon our life. That he has saved us for a purpose, and that purpose is to be used for him and by

him in ministry. Now I discovered in studying for the winter studies through Jeremiah, that there seems to be a process that God uses whenever he calls someone into ministry. Now let me clarify something here. When I speak of God calling someone into ministry, yes we naturally think of people like Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, all of those great prophets of old, even modern day pastors and teachers and deacons and elders and so forth. But we cannot limit it to that. Those are special callings, but God has a call upon every one of us, and we need to learn to respond to that. So I looked at that and I thought, there seems to be a process here that God uses. And that is the process threefold of God's preparation,

God's providence, and God's provision. Now in preparation, in God's preparation, God directed Jeremiah's life to be acquainted with him and to be acquainted with his word. Jeremiah's father served as a priest to the covenant nation. His grandfather served as high priest during the day of David and his reign in Israel. So you see, he has that background. And through that then, God developed Jeremiah's life to know and understand the law of God and the word of God, and also to see and understand there's great value in the prophetic word of God. And so God prepared his heart, God prepared his mind to be able to do that. And now at a young age, and I say young, they believe probably between, you know, somewhere 25 years old or less, no older than 25, God calls him now as a prophet to the nation, calls him to be used of God to preach his word to that ungodly, sinful people.

Now there's a common thread that we see in God's call to many of the people in Scripture. We think of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, even the apostle Paul, that God gives some indication somehow, somewhere, that these are men that God has chosen to be his men. They're chosen instruments of God, and so he then prepares them for the task that would be theirs. Even the Lord Jesus went to the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights for preparation of the ministry that the Father has for him. We always think of that and see that as simply a time of testing face-to-face before before Satan and responding to what Satan does. And that's true. But understand that is a training ground of preparation for the Lord Jesus, for the ministry that he was going to fulfill in his earthly sojourn here. [ 8 : 58 ] And of course, he passes the test well. God has done that to the prophets as well. I think of Ezekiel. I'm glad I'm not Ezekiel. Glad I wasn't Ezekiel in that time. Understand that you look through the pages of his prophecy and you see some unusual things that God does for him and does to him.

One of the things he does is tells Ezekiel, Ezekiel, I want you to go lay on your left side for 390 days. How many of you like to sleep on your left side? A few. How many spend the whole night on your left side? Okay, yeah, you got to move, don't you? God says to Ezekiel, I want you to lay on your left side for 390 days. And that is 390 days that speak of the iniquity and the captivity, the punishment of that iniquity upon the northern kingdom of Israel. 390 years. So Ezekiel does that, lays on his left side for 390 days.

And then he turns over because God says, now Ezekiel, now that you're done with that, can't you imagine how glad he was on that 390 days? That's a little over a year that that was finished. But God says, now Ezekiel, I want you to turn on your right side. Then I want you to lay on your right side for 40 days because that's going to picture the 40 years that the southern kingdom is going to be in captivity.

Now, and there's some other things he was to do. He was to go around with an iron pan in front of his face, walk through the place, various, cut his hair in three parts. You know, I only had to cut mine in one. Cut his in three parts and do things with that as an indication to the southern kingdom and the northern kingdom, what God is about to do with them. But that went farther than that. And I really believe this is probably the crux of what God was doing here. Because even at that, the people of Judah knew Ezekiel was the prophet. And here he goes, laying on his side for a little over a year, and then on the right side for 40 years. What does that mean?

To Jeremiah, what God was doing is this. In order for him and Jeremiah and Isaiah and all the rest of them as well, for them to fulfill that call as a prophet of God, they're going to have to have ingrained within them the reality of what's taking place with the nation they're to preach to. And so now God has got Ezekiel here to the point where that message he's about to proclaim is ingrained deeply within his very being. He can't escape it. I mean, after all, over 350 days laying on his, or 350, 450 days laying on your side, it's deeply ingrained within him. He can't escape it. He can't get rid of it if he wanted to. And that's a picture of the preparation of God upon his people so that we can have deeply ingrained within ourselves that message. He plants a burden within his prophets, a

burden, a weight carried that they carried around within themselves, because that's what God pictures for them in the ministry that he gives to them. In Habakkuk chapter 1, we see God plants a burden within Habakkuk.

[12:50] The burden which Habakkuk, the prophet, did see, he says. Zechariah 12, 1, the burden of the word of the Lord for Israel, thus saith the Lord. That's to Zechariah. Then to Malachi, in first verse of the first chapter, the burden of the word of the Lord, the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi.

That weight, that burden could not be separated from them, because it became an integral part of their very being. Now, when God does that kind of work within the life of a believer, then there's no escaping it. There's no getting away from it. There's no shedding ourself of that message, even if we wanted to, because it becomes such a part of who we are. In that, then, when God does that, you begin to see that things aren't exactly as they ought to be. I think that's easy for us to determine today.

We look at the world around us, and we say to ourselves, no, this is not how it should be. This is not how God designed for it to be. We see that, and it burns within us, and God plants then that burden for us. We begin to see that, but we don't see that through the eyes of judgment, but we see that through the eyes of mercy and compassion. For you see, mercy and compassion sees things as they are, and that is the fact mercy is the idea of God looking down and seeing things as being very pitiful. But it goes farther than just seeing that there is a need here, because it's not like it should be. Mercy and compassion takes it a step farther and says, I see what it is that it's not like it should be, and I see the need to do something about that. That's what happens when we look at it through the eyes of mercy and compassion. We let God work through us to do something about that pitiful condition we see the world to be in. That's what God did when He looked down upon lost humanity and saw it as very pitiful. He sends a son to die on the cross to redeem a lost and sinful world. God sees us as pitiful, says, I'm going to do something about that, and He did. Sent His Son to the cross of Calvary so that we could have eternal life through the redemption that He gives to us.

And one of these days, He's going to do something to renovate the entire world and bring it back to His original intent and purposes. Seeing through the eyes of mercy. That's the product of God shaping and molding us, forming us. And that forming and shaping begins from the very time you're born. I want you to consider that just a moment. Much of the time we think, well, God begins to work and process within my life from the time I've trusted Him as Lord and Savior. Now, it goes farther than that. It goes back to our very beginning, if you will. That God, in His divine wisdom and sovereignty, sees us and knows us and begins to do that work of molding and shaping our heart, our mind, our thinking, our environment, to bring us to the place that He's got us today. To perform the work of ministry that He has for us to perform. Now, He prepares our minds. You know, think about that just a moment. It does us good from time to time to really look back. I know sometimes it's hard for some of us to think that far, but to look back as far as we can and say, God, I need you to show me and remind me and even show me things I've not seen before. Of the things you've done in my life that has worked together to bring me to the point that I'm at today with you.

Preparing our minds in His Word to know what the

Scripture says, to be able, as Jesus did in the wilderness temptation, to simply live the Word of God. God, He shapes our minds. He shapes our heart, prepares our heart by the Spirit of God to be tender toward the things of God and sensitive to the direction of God. Preparing our place in which He wants us to serve. Do you ever realize that God's got you right now exactly where He wants you? Yeah. And I'm going to go so far as to say, even if you've rebelled against Him, you're still at the place, because it would be the place where God can draw you back to Himself. God's ever busy within our lives doing those things to bring us to the place where He wants us to be. So when God has done all that and continues to do all of that, then ministry, His calling upon our lives, becomes the motivation of our life. You remember the event in the ministry of the Lord Jesus in John chapter 4, where He's weary and tired, and the disciples being the men that they were, were hungry and said,

[18:50] God, it's time to eat. Lord, it's time for lunch. So He says, well, go on into town and find yourself something to eat. They go. And in the meantime, He's at a well dealing with a woman of Samaria. And as He deals with her, she, of course, comes to the realization that He is the Christ.

She goes back and tells her family, brings them back. And meanwhile, here comes the disciples back to try to give something to the Lord Jesus to eat. And remember what Jesus says. He said, I

have meat to eat that you know not of. You don't know the vitality of the meat that I have, the character, the virtue of that thing that brings to me satisfaction. I mean, after all, with men especially, we like to eat. Amen? Amen? Yeah, good. Thank you, Wes. Yeah, we all bring satisfaction, doesn't it? Yeah, yeah. If there's one sidebar here. If, you know, every place I go with Calvita, or even without her, and they know that I'm married to Calvita, oh, she's such a sweet lady. And she is. Yeah, she is. No negative about it. But there's one thing that there, well, yeah, thank you. Yeah, thanks for the warning. Yeah. There's one thing about Calvita that to me is a negative, but it's not really a negative. I'll ask her when we go out to eat somewhere. I said, come on, I want to take you out to dinner. Okay. So we'll go, you know. I said, what are you hungry for? Where would you really like to go?

Yeah. She said, you know me. I said, yeah, I know you. It doesn't matter to me. Doesn't matter. Early on, she told me eating is not a big deal for her. I don't know how we ever got married. Yeah. Amen. Had to be God's grace and God's mercy and God's will. Amen. Yeah. Yeah. But notice what Jesus says here. He said, the thing that brings me nutrition and satisfaction is to do the will of him that sent me. Yeah. That's what brings him joy and satisfaction and enables him to sustain his life is to perform the will of God for him. So that should as well be the motivation of our life as well. Now, Jeremiah's call to ministry was not of his own initiative, not of his own choosing. It was God's call and that in accordance with his own desire and purpose. Notice what he said, I sanctified or consecrated thee and I ordained thee a prophet to the nations. Now that's God's preparation. Now we come to God's providence and God's providence, I look at it as our call into ministry. God knows us. He knows us from our very beginning, from the time we were conceived and even before that. Psalm 139 tells us that. God knows us. He knows who we are. He does what he does to form us, to shape us, even in our personality. God knows us from before we are formed and he has his good pleasure then in mind for us. So every believer has the call of God upon their life. Ephesians 2 verses 8 through 10 says, for by grace you are saved through faith and that not of yourselves. It's a gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, unto or which, those good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

[ 23 : 23 ] Things God has already predetermined that we are to accomplish and do within our life. The character and direction of those works are made ready by God before he ever created us in Christ Jesus.

He's destined these good works, made them ready for us in his purpose and his decree for us. Ephesians 4 verses 11 through 12 says, and he gave some apostles and some prophets, some evangelists, some pastor teachers for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Literally for the equipping of the saints to perform ministry or for ministering work.

And that resulting in the building up of the body of Christ. Philippians 2 verses 12 through 13, Paul says, Wherefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which works in you both to do, to will, and to do of his good pleasure.

Note what he says. He said, work out your own salvation. Work out in the Greek is a term that means to carry out to its ultimate conclusion. In other words, find out why God saved you. It was more than just to get you to heaven.

He has a kingdom purpose in mind for your life. Find out what that is and work it out. Bring it to its ultimate conclusion. And you do that with self-distrust, fear and trembling.

[ 25 : 03 ] Now, we need to be like the Apostle Paul when he writes again to the church at Philippi in chapter 3 verses 12 through 14. In other words, he said, In other words, he said, I want to apprehend that for which Christ has apprehended me.

The word apprehend literally is the word that means to grab a hold of and to pull it down. He said, he said, Christ has grabbed a hold of me and pulled me down to himself for a purpose.

So I want to grab a hold of whatever that purpose is and pull it down so it can be a reality in my life. Now, Jeremiah's response to God's call in verse 6 is just like the response Moses had.

Jeremiah said, I, I, I, excuse me, then said I, Ah, Lord God, behold, I cannot speak for I am only a youth or a young man.

Now there are reasons, really, for rejecting a call such as that, to speak to an ungodly people. He's young in age comparatively. He does, he has no experience in doing what God's calling to do.

[ 26 : 39 ] But we realize from seeing things in the word of God, it's an act of futility to give excuses to God when he calls. Now, God's response to Jeremiah was this in verses 7 and 8.

But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak.

Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Now, God's provisions, then, are seen in his response to Jeremiah.

You'll accomplish what I've set for you to do. The people are going to reject you and the message I give you, but I'm with you. Verse 9 says, Then the Lord put forth his hand, touched my mouth, and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

That's it. From that point forward, Jeremiah moves ahead, never stammers, never stutters, never slips, never stumbles, never falls, maintains his integrity, and obeys what God has him to do.

[ 28 : 01 ] His faithfulness to God's call is unrelenting. He, in the face of danger, in the face of sudden death, in the face of being placed down in a deep cistern pit full of mire, left there to die, Jeremiah stands faithful, as does God, in delivering him just like he said he would.

Now, God's provision for us, Hebrews 13, 5, Let your manner of life be without love of money, be satisfied with your present circumstances, for he himself has said, and the statement is on record. Now, catch this. This is what he says. I will not, I will not cease to sustain and uphold you. I will not, I will not, I will not let you down.

Boy, when he says it three or four times, that's pretty serious stuff, amen? He must mean what he says. I'm not going to leave you alone.

I will not let you down. So that being of good courage, we are saying then, the Lord is my helper. I will not fear. What shall man do to me?

[ 29 : 28 ] Amen? Now, the writer of the Hebrews says that, but it's for us. It's for us to stand upon. It's for us to grab a hold of.

It's for us to claim. God said, I'll never, ever forsake you, leave you in despondency and despair. I'll come to your rescue.

Now, Jeremiah wasn't really a well-known figure, only a young man. So he didn't hold the credentials that people would think you would hold to be a candidate for a prophet.

Now, many of us think the same thing, don't we? Amen? All right, great for God to call, but now he'll never call me. I'm just not the kind of person that God would call to do such and such and so and so.

But remember what the Apostle Paul says. I love this passage. I stand in tall cotton when I read this. Amen? 1 Corinthians 1, verses 26 through 28.

[ 30 : 35 ] Before we read that, let me say to you, years ago, when I was pastoring in New Harmony, I guess it was, Tom Cox, who was our DOM at the time, come from me and said, there's going to be a meeting at the Baptist building, and they're wanting pastors of small churches to come and be a part of that meeting, to give suggestions and input and this and that, and really would like you to go.

I said, okay, great. Never done that before. I'll do that. So I went down to the Baptist building, and you talk about walking in tall cotton now. I mean, everybody, the big dogs were there.

Even guys that wrote books, amen, were there. And seated around this table, and talking about the things that we talked about, and listening to what these guys had to say, and addressing questions, and some of them would say, well, in chapter so-and-so of the book I wrote, I thought, okay, that's good, that's fine.

But then this passage came to mind as we broke, and I was looking out the window of the Baptist building on whatever floor it was. Paul said, For see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble are called, but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty, and base things of the world in things that are despised, hath God chosen, and things which are not to bring to naught things that are.

I fit there, amen? Yeah. And why does he do that? That no flesh should glory in his presence.

Amen? Yeah.

[ 32 : 31 ] So none of us can say when we stand before him, God, don't forget what I did. Amen? Don't forget the book I wrote. Amen? You think I have something about people that write books.

No. I started to write one myself one day, but I didn't get it done. Now, now, the calling of God upon you, the calling God has for you, is something very, very precious.

It's imperishable. God has either already planted that within you, or he wants to plant that, ingrain that deep within your very being, your very soul.

That's a portion of the redemptive work that he has to be done here in the world. A small part that he can accomplish through you. All the small parts need to be accomplished in order for the whole to be accomplished.

And we do that in the power of the Spirit of God. So the question comes, are we willing? Are we willing to do our part?

[ 33 : 44 ] Are we willing to ask God, God, is there a burden that you want to place within me, ingrained deep within me, so that I can't get rid of it, and it stirs me, and it stimulates me to do the work you've called me, or want to call me to do?

Our submission and fulfillment to that call is so very vital. Just like Jeremiah was the instrument through which God was going to offer redemption and salvation to a fallen nation, God wants to do that through you and I as well.

Now, our submission to the fulfillment of God's call is vital. And it has the following as its undergirding or its framework.

Number one is the assurance of a saving relationship with God. Hebrews chapter 10, verses 21 through 23 again says, and since we have a great and wonderful and noble priest who rules over the house of God, let us all come forward and draw near with true, honest, and sincere hearts in unqualified assurance and absolute conviction engendered by faith, having our hearts sprinkled and purified from a guilt or guilty conscience and our bodies cleansed with pure water.

So let us seize and hold fast and retain without wavering the hope we cherish and confess our acknowledgement of it. For he who promised is reliable, he's sure and faithful to his word.

[ 35 : 33 ] And then the second aspect of the undergirding is a deep-seated love for God. Agape love we must have for God. That's what Jesus was trying to pull out of Peter.

Remember, whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? Well, you're the Christ. And then later on, Peter, do you love me more than these? Yeah, God.

I love you more, Lord. With phileo, not agape. Jesus trying to pull that out of him, knowing that Peter was going to have to have agape love for God to perform the ministry that he's going to perform.

You see, that's the purpose and that's the function of ministry, the expression of the love of God.

Thirdly, an intimate fellowship with God.

I want you to consider something with me here. Over in Matthew chapter 17, if you want to turn there, you can. That's the event of what we know as the Mount of Transfiguration.

[ 36 : 39 ] It comes after that time when Peter confesses that you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Shortly after that, remember what happens. Jesus speaks of the reality of the need for his suffering and his death.

And Peter rebukes him. Of all things, Peter rebukes the Master for even considering the thought that he would have to suffer and die. And Jesus rebukes him. Get thee behind me, Satan.

You don't savor the things of God. But six days after all of that, Jesus takes Peter, James, and John and they begin to walk up toward Mount Hermon.

And they go there for the purpose of praying. We kind of see a shadow of Gethsemane to some extent here. And as they walk up that mountainside to get to the top, I'm sure the three apostles are considering, why is it that Jesus has got us here to do this?

It's in the evening time, long walk uphill. By the time they get there, they're pretty worn out. They're not really mountain climbers to that extent. And they get there to pray.

[ 37 : 55 ] And they begin to pray. And after a bit of time, the Lord Jesus separates himself from the apostles a little ways and again begins to pray. Don't know for sure what he prayed about.

We can conjecture. But while Jesus is praying, and the apostles as well, they get sleepy. They get drowsy. They almost fall asleep.

Then all of a sudden, at least Peter sees something here. He sees the body of Jesus change.

Face glows white like the snow on the mountaintop. The rest of his countenance lights like fire, like light.

He's transfigured. And then, two men appear. And through an enhanced sensitivity to spiritual things, they're able to determine that this is Moses and Elijah come and communing and conversing with the Lord Jesus.

[ 39 : 03 ] And as they do that, a cloud begins to descend and wrap Jesus and Moses and Elijah and Peter, James, and John no doubt catch the shadow of that.

And it's the glory of God. And a voice comes and says, this is my son. Hear what he says. Oh, Peter's already confessed that he's the Christ.

But now, the Father verbally says, this is my son. Hear what he says. And that scene so enamors Peter, at least, probably John and James as well, enamors them to the point that Peter makes an expression the most feeble way he knows how.

And in essence is saying, oh, Lord, it's good that we're here. Can we not stay? I don't want this event to ever end.

I want it to always be like this. Lord, don't let us leave. When's the last time that we got beside ourselves with God, spent quality time with Him in His Word, and were so enwrapped in what Jesus became to us and said to us through His Word, that we said that same thing.

[ 40 : 42 ] Lord, I don't want to have to leave here. You see, most of the time, we're in such a rush, such a dither to try to fill our calendar or to fulfill our calendar, the things we've got to do today that are so insignificant compared to time with God.

But folks, if we're going to fulfill the call of God in our lives, that's what it's going to take to get the heartbeat of God to hear what Jesus has to say.

When's the last time we were overwhelmed by the presence of God, that we were overtaken by His magnificence, and that we were moved by the message that He proclaimed to us?

We've got to have that. Oh, that our fellowship with Jesus was that intimate. Fourthly, the undergirding of solid conviction of the truths of God's Word.

There's conviction and there's opinion. Opinion is just something that's formulated in our mind about a certain thing, usually based on human reasoning. And those opinions change quite often.

[ 42 : 09 ] But conviction, conviction is based upon a careful and thorough investigation of whatever it is. And after that thorough and careful evaluation, it brings about a settled, undeniable conclusion that becomes deeply ingrained within us.

Conviction. Some may attempt to cause us to compromise those convictions, but if they're deeply ingrained in our soul and spirit, then we'll stand firm upon them because they're based in God's truth.

Those are convictions concerning the person of Christ, concerning the authority of God's eternal Word. Remember the men after the crucifixion and resurrection of the Lord Jesus.

The men Jesus encountered on the road to Emmaus. He hears them talking, hides his identity from them.

Fellas, what are you talking about? We're talking about the things that have happened. What things are those? What, are you such a stranger that you have not heard what's going on here?

[ 43 : 30 ] Tell me. And very briefly, they begin to talk about Jesus and that seems as if he was a mighty prophet of God and they took him and they crucified him and then the ladies go to the tomb and found the tomb open and his body gone.

You know what Jesus said here? That was about a five-minute dissertation. Jesus says to them, oh, you fools. You foolish men.

Slow of learning. Don't you really know what happened here? and he spends the rest of that afternoon and then they bid him to come and stay with them and spends that evening with them talking from starting with Moses on through the resurrection of the things that God was purposing. He said it was rightfully so that the Son of Man died as the sacrifice of the world. And yet, we're satisfied with just five minutes, a five-minute devotional every morning instead of spending time and letting God.

Remember what they said after Jesus was finished with them? Oh, oh, how our heart burned. No, they said, didn't our hearts burn within us when he spoke to us about the things that were and are and are to come?

[ 45 : 02 ] They burned within us. They were excited. They drew a love of them for the Lord Jesus and the things that he spoke to them about. Oh, that we digest the Word of God to that point.

Then, fifthly and finally, undergirded by a willingness to die to ourselves. In Matthew chapter 13, Jesus gives us some parables.

One of those is the parable of the seed being sown, which was the Word of God and, you know, certain birds come and pluck them up. But then there's a seed that's sown that is sown in the

ground and tears and all of a sudden rise up.

Jesus gives explanation of that and he says in verse 36 and following, the seed that was sown are the children of the kingdom. the earth or the field is the earth and the tares are the children of the evil one.

And he said, leave, leave the tares alone. Let them grow. Let them grow with a good seed and I'll pluck them up later.

[ 46 : 23 ] Now think about that a moment. The children of the kingdom planted in the world amongst the weeds, amongst the children of the evil one.

And then later on in John's Gospel chapter 12 verse 24 Jesus says this, verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall to the ground and die, it stands alone.

But if it dies, it brings forth much fruit. Now I'm not a farmer, never had been, never will be, but I've worked around them.

You plant, I called this, I called this one time and it's an illustration, I said, you plant a piece of corn and I got ridiculed for that. It's not a piece of corn, it's a grain of corn or wheat.

You plant a wheat seed in the ground by itself, it dies, the outer shell falls off and what happens?

[ 47 : 34 ] All of a sudden a sprig comes up and if you let it grow to maturity, how many other grains of wheat are there in that one single stock?

and what Jesus is showing us is this, he's planted us right here, right where we are, right where he's got us, right where he wants us, in the midst of ungodliness, not in the church, I'm talking about in the world, in the midst of an ungodly world and he's planted us here to die, to die to ourself, to be alive unto God and let him in the work that he's called us to do and through our obedience to that calling, let him bring forth more fruit.

You know, the more I thought about that, here's a conclusion I came to. It's not just the idea of how God wants to use us in dealing with other people, but part of that fruit is what springs up from us.

Children, grandchildren, who come to know the Lord, who see by experience mom and dad, grandma and grandpa living for God, being used by God and God molding them and shaping them through what they've seen there to become instruments of God's grace and God's goodness and God's might and power.

Woo! Yeah! Yeah! That's why sometimes I look at kids and grandkids and I say, wow, I just, and not just mine, others, I just can't wait to see what God does through their lives.

[ 49 : 25 ] I hope I'm alive long enough to see some of that. Yeah, I told that somebody the other day, I said, it's going to be amazing to see what God does with these kids and they said, you're right.

Amen. Yeah. Oh, that we remain faithful to the cause of God. Now, well, we've got to uncouple.

We've got the Lord's Supper to do here. Remember what Paul says to the church at Galatia. Be not deceived, God's not mocked, whatever a man sows, that he's also going to reap.

Then he closes that by saying, let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we're going to reap if we faint not.

Amen. Yeah. That seed's going to germinate. It's going to bring forth fruit. Why? Because God's the one that's planted it.

[ 50 : 30 ] And it's going to work. Amen. No matter what kind of soil it's stuck in, it's going to work. Because God planted that. Planted us.

Thank you.