

JESUS ON SIGHT & INSIGHT

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[0 : 00] Father, we think we know ourselves, but we really don't know ourselves. We don't know ourselves very well at all.

We often, Father, don't recognize why we do the things we do, why we feel the things we feel. We don't often understand what drives us, what pushes us and what pulls us and what draws us. We thank you, Father, that you have a perfect knowledge of us, and we thank you, Father, that having a perfect knowledge of us, still you loved us and sent your Son to die upon the cross to be our Savior.

We ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would deeply fall upon us, fall upon our minds and hearts and wills, our souls, fall upon us right to the very center of who we are. And, Father, in the face of Christ and what he did upon the cross for us, help us to see ourselves and know ourselves so that we might turn to you and love you and receive what only you can give and give you glory.

In all this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So, some people might be wondering what Jesus would say about the Supreme Court, unanimous Supreme Court ruling on Friday morning, which has changed the whole legal landscape of our country.

[1 : 33] You know, I'm unbelievably well organized and have lots of foresight, so I actually picked this Sunday with the scripture reading long, months and months and months and months ago in advance, just so I could say that.

Actually, that's not the case at all. You know, we're just preaching through the Gospel of Luke. That's what we do here at Church of the Messiah, is preach through books of the Bible. And I was just picking the text months and months in advance, having no idea that, although it's not at all the center part of the text, that, in fact, Jesus does make a comment upon the Supreme Court of Canada's ruling.

And it's also curious that the same text that makes a side comment on this, it's actually a very bristly text, because it also has a text in it that makes some people who believe that Jesus is the champion of spiritual, not religious, this text for many people shows how Jesus echoes Buddhist teaching. Muslims, on the other hand, there's a part in this text that Muslims like, because they think it shows how Islam is superior here to the Christian faith. And monks like parts of this text, health and wealth gospel people like parts of this text.

It's quite a text. So if you have your Bibles, please open them to Luke chapter 18, and we'll look and see what is it that Jesus says in this text that comments on the Supreme Court of Canada ruling the Anonymous one on Friday morning.

[2 : 55] If you don't have your Bibles with you, there's always some free Bibles here at the front of the stage. Just feel free to come up and take your seat. I mean, take a Bible, keep it if you want, or give it back after it's over.

And so what does Jesus have to say? Is Jesus a Buddhist? Are Muslims right? Sort of contradictory type of thing. What does Jesus say about the Supreme Court ruling?

Well, Luke chapter 18, beginning at verse 18, we'll look at the text, see what it has to say. And the text begins like, oh, just actually before we start, in terms of the flow of the book of Luke, remember that Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem to die.

And in fact, we have this Sunday and the next Sunday, and then after that, I believe, we have the Sunday where Jesus enters Jerusalem. But Jesus is on his way to Jerusalem to die.

So everything in the, from a literary point of view, everything in the gospel has to be understood within this sort of looming prophecy of Jesus'. And just before the story of the rich young ruler, you might not remember, but this is what Jesus said just before the text that we're going to actually look

at today.

[4 : 01] Verse 16. But Jesus called the children to him, saying, let the children come to me and do not hinder them, for to such belong the kingdom of God. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it.

And then we have our text for the day. And ruler asked Jesus, good teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life? And just sort of pause there for a second.

And this story is recorded in three of the early historical documents about the life and death of Jesus. And in all three of those historical documents, Luke being one of them, they record this story.

And so if you look at all three of the stories together, you discover three things. First of all, that it's a young man. Second, that he's a ruler. And third, that he's rich. Two of them you get from this text. The other one about him being a young man, you'd have to get from one of the other texts. So Jesus is talking to a very accomplished, probably in those days as well, he would have had to have had the wisdom to have chosen the right ancestors so that he could be born with some money.

[5 : 11] But he's polished, has money, is probably well-educated in that type of a context. And he's rich. And so that's who's speaking to Jesus.

And the other thing about it is that he asks a very un-Canadian question. You know, it's just really important for us to understand that as followers of Jesus, we follow Jesus in Canada.

And there's going to be many times in the Gospels where we can see that there's so many insights as Canadians that just come out of this whole biblical tradition and the teaching of Jesus. But there's things in our culture as well which are very, very different from Jesus and the time that he taught.

And if you think about it for a second, very few Canadians would say to Jesus, what must I do to inherit eternal life? Because most Canadians think that as soon as they die, they go to a better place.

So they'd never ask Jesus this question. They might ask Jesus, Jesus, what is the better place like? That's what they might ask. They might ask, you know, when is the world going to get better?

[6 : 19] And when I die, what is the better place going to be like? But most Canadians would not ask this question. Probably 60 years ago, many Canadians would have asked this question.

Our culture's changed. In many places of the world, for instance, Muslims don't believe that all Muslims will go to heaven. Muslims believe that many Muslims themselves will go to hell. So it's actually the type of question that a Muslim might ask Jesus.

You know, what must I do to inherit eternal life? They might be very curious. Jesus, according to Muslims, is the second greatest prophet. They'd be very interested to see what his answer is. But it's not a Canadian question, is it, really?

What must I do to inherit eternal life? And in fact, the way that Jesus is going to respond to the question, so it's an un-Canadian question, and Jesus is going to give a profoundly un-Canadian answer.

In fact, he's going to give an answer that for people who see Jesus as a spiritual figure, not religious, it's going to make them doubt, this first part is going to make them really doubt whether in fact he's spiritual, not religious, because he's going to sound judgmental.

[7 : 28] Like, how does he answer the question? It's in verse 19. Follow along. And Jesus said to him, Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.

No one is good except God alone. Just sort of pause there for a second. See, the Canadians would say, first of all, they wouldn't be bothered by the fact that the person's being called a good teacher, because one of the most important things for Canadians is that no matter what we do, that we're a good person.

I'm watching, I've watched a series on Netflix called Rectify, which is set in Georgia. And in the course of that thing, people do all sorts of really bad things. But even though they do very, very bad things, and it's sort of interspersed with sort of curious, odd conversations about God.

But in between all of that, they keep saying, Am I a good person? Are you a good person? And so Canadians wouldn't be bothered with the idea of calling Jesus a good teacher, because for us, it's actually profoundly important that no matter what we do, that we understand ourselves to be a good person.

But what makes us very un-Canadian is that Jesus says, Well, why do you call me good? You see, for Canadians, most Canadians, many Canadians, we would say, Well, it can be good for you and not good for me.

[8 : 45] It's your good, not my good. Our goods are both different. But Jesus completely and utterly challenges that entire notion. He says, No one is good but God alone. And by saying this, he's implying that God is the source and understanding, in a sense, a fixed, unchanging standard by which the good is to be understood.

In fact, from the biblical point of view, it's to be understood that the same God who is good is also the creator, so that, in a sense, the good is natural to us.

It's woven into the entire created order, the fabric of our bodies, and the fabric of our minds, that at a fundamental level, God is the one, I mean, it's fallen, it's bent, it's distorted, we don't understand it, we twist it.

The Bible's not denying that, but that God is the standard of all of these things. It's a very, very un-Canadian response. Our Muslim friends and neighbors like this text, by the way, because they say, Aha, you see, it shows that Jesus isn't God.

Did you notice that, they say? They'll say to you, look at this, your Bible, you think your Bible teaches that Jesus is God? Look how he answers this question. Verse 19, why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.

[10 : 03] And the Muslim will say, that shows that Jesus didn't think he was God. Well, that's actually mistaken. It's very interesting that if Jesus had responded and said, why do you call me good?

No one is good except the Father alone. Then he would be denying that he's God. But when he says that no one is good except God alone, he leaves open the possibility that he is God.

In fact, in the flow of the text, he's trying to figure out, because there's different times in the gospel text where people start to get this glimpse that Jesus is more than just a human being, that he's God.

If you go back and read earlier on in the text, remember this, this famous story of the disciples fishing all night and not being able to catch any fish. And Jesus comes and tells them to cast their net on the other side.

And in the original language, it's as if all of a sudden there's so many fish, it's almost as if they're jumping into the net. It's almost as if they're jumping into the boat, as if the net's going to pull them down and the boat's going to pull them down.

[11 : 07] And Peter has this recognition that Jesus is just not a normal guy and falls down before him in worship.

I mean, you know, he's Peter. Later on, he forgets about it. He gets all confused about it. You know, he's confused about who Jesus is. All the way through the gospels, all the apostles are all confused. But there's the...

So Jesus is asking the young man, one moment, you've seen the different miracles I've done.

You've seen my teaching. You've spent... Are you actually making a great claim about me?

Do you actually have some profound spiritual insight that's coming out? Is that what's going on?

And then...

And so... And then... And so Jesus sort of starts to begin to probe. He has a conversation with the young man. The young man's come to Jesus to have a conversation. And Jesus goes deeper into the conversation.

[12 : 05] So in verse 20, he says, You know the commandments. Do not commit adultery. Do not murder. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Honor your father and your mother.

And just pause. By the way, if you're worried about time and says, Good grief, George is spending five minutes of verse. This is going to be a really long sermon. We go through some of the other verses a bit quicker.

But these are sort of very important. We don't grasp the full weight of the story, the challenge of the story if we don't pause over some of these things. In this little aside in the text, which is sort of important in the flow of the text, but it's not the point of the text, Jesus' comments on the Supreme Court ruling when he says, Do not murder.

And what that says is Jesus is upholding what we know of as the Ten Commandments. And that text in the original language, in both languages, is that you do not, you are not to take, you are not

to kill innocent human life.

And so what Jesus would say is that the Supreme Court of Canada has made a terrible decision because it has ruled that people have the right to ask medical professionals to kill innocent human life.

[13 : 23] The ruling goes vastly beyond concerns about do not resuscitate. We already have do not resuscitate. All of us know that there is a profound problem with human beings wanting to play God, whether those are human beings who are the doctors who want to play God with medical technology and extend life way beyond what should be extended, or whether it's family members who want to play God and force doctors' hands to extend human life long before it should and do not allow or do not resuscitate or just the normal course of nature.

And those, that's a, there's already do not resuscitate in the context of both, whether it's a medical professional, it's not always a medical professional. I've counseled and been involved with many families where it's not the doctor who wants to extend life, it's the families who want to play God. And now we want to play God even more by giving doctors and families the right and the power and the authority to ask for the putting to death of an innocent person who's suffering.

And this, by the way, is the beginning of a profound challenge to those of us who are Christians. And it's, I'm just taking a time out of it. If it hadn't been for the Supreme Court ruling, I probably wouldn't have mentioned this at all.

But the time has now come upon us that Christian congregations have to be communities of life. We have to become communities of life.

[14 : 52] People in a culture of death need to know that whether it's doctors who are connected to our congregation, that you can come to a doctor connected to our congregation and you do not have to worry whether the doctor is assessing to kill you or to cure you.

We have to figure out how we can help the weak and vulnerable. We have to figure out how we help those. I mean, this just throws open the whole thing, whether it's abortion as well, which is also the taking of the innocent human life, how we respond to this.

It's just deepened the fact, whether it's dealing with the demonic, it's at a very, very profound level. We are always supposed to be a community of life. And this means that now in our culture we will have to figure out concrete ways that affect our budget and affect our time and affect our comfort that we can be seen as communities of life.

Pray for us that in the days and months ahead that we will figure out and that churches will figure out how to be centers of life. Now, somebody say, George, let's get back to the text.

You've made your point. Let's get back. So Jesus says to this young man, he says, you know, why do you call me good? Verse 19, no one is good except God alone. You know the commandments. Do not commit adultery.

[16 : 14] Do not murder. Do not steal. Do not bear false witness. Honor your father and mother. And the young man says, the young guy's a good guy. He's the type of guy you'd probably want to have as your neighbor.

You know? He's probably the guy you'd want to have as your boss. And he says, all these I have kept from my youth. And verse 22, when Jesus heard this, he said to him, remember one of the differences between Jesus and natural human religion and natural human spirituality is that Jesus always goes to the heart in the context of the living God.

And the Bible primarily understands the heart as the center of who we are. The very basis and depth of who we are. And Jesus is always going to the center of who we are in the context of the living God.

And so Jesus says he goes right to the heart. He's only mentioned five of the Ten Commandments. He hasn't mentioned the first or the second or the tenth. And he goes right to the heart of the matter and he says to the young man, verse 22, when he said this, when he heard this, Jesus said to him, one thing you still lack, sell all that you have and distribute to the poor and you will have treasure in heaven and come, follow me.

So is Jesus telling us that every single follower of Jesus has to be poor? No, he's not. He's, in fact, we're going to see that he's, in fact, very precisely not telling us that by the end of the story and as the story moves on to the two things which follow.

[17 : 46] That what Jesus is going at is, in fact, Andrew, if you could put it up, the first point, the young man chose his money and his power over eternal life.

Jesus is asking you and me a question. What do I believe that I need more than eternal life with the living God? What do I believe that I need more than eternal life with the living God?

That's what he's asking. He's asking us to make ourselves aware of the fact that there's things in our lives that are at the center of our lives that the Bible describes as an idol that we do not believe that we can live without, that we subtly serve.

We dread losing it and we only want it to increase it. We worship it. And for this young man it was money and his power, his ability to perform.

That's what he feared losing. In fact, as we're going to see in a moment, when Jesus says that he has to give up money, he's going to walk away sad. But for some of us it might not be money.

[18 : 58] In fact, it would be very, very interesting. It would be very interesting if we had just a confidential poll, no names put it, and we put down how much money we make. And then beside it we put down the smallest amount of money that we could possibly get and still be happy.

And if we put that up on the screen, there'd be all sorts of laughter because some of us would put up a number and maybe two-thirds of us would say, that's hilarious. I live on a quarter of that and I'm happy.

You know, one quarter of us think we can't live with less than \$60,000 and the other, you know, and maybe a quarter of us are saying, I live on less than \$15,000. I'm perfectly happy. What's that first person thinking about?

You know, I've been married to my wife for 33 years and my wife Louise is definitely God's gracious provision for me. When I was in grade 12, I broke off, no, I didn't break off, she broke off with me, my first girlfriend broke off with me and I had a hard time imagining how I would ever be able to live without her.

And I didn't even think about this until I was thinking about a sermon illustration and I've been married to Louise for 33 years and she's definitely, she was God's provision, is God's provision for me.

[20 : 16] But how many of us, if we were to go back and if God was all of a sudden to show us at different times in our lives in the past, what did we think we could not possibly live without and somehow or another that passes and another thing takes its place.

And we are in fact often even blind about what is right now in our hearts that we think we cannot live without. And maybe it's a job, maybe it's prestige, maybe it's physical looks, maybe it's a wound, maybe it's anger, maybe it's resentment, maybe it's hatred, maybe it's the nation, maybe it's our wife, maybe it's our kids, maybe it's a good thing, like a wife or a husband, maybe it's a bad thing, like being able to get stoned or have drugs or be able to have the power to kill yourself when you're unhappy.

I mean, whatever it is, what is in that Jesus is saying that you human beings, that there are things in your life that you believe that you need more than eternal life with the living God and you don't even know it.

I want you to know it. I want you to know it. See, that's why this text and the majority of Christian commentators have never taken this text to mean that we should all become like monks.

Jesus is asking a general question in a particular way. what do I believe that I need more than eternal life with the living God?

[21 : 53] Now, some of you might say, huh, George, Jesus is being so hard on this guy. You know, here I thought he was spiritual, not religious, and gosh, he took this un-Canadian question and he answered it in an un-Canadian way and he talks in an un-Canadian way about what's right and wrong and now he's giving this guy a really hard time.

Maybe Jesus is religious because religious people give people hard times. Shut people up. Isn't that what you religious people do? You just want to shut people up?

I think the desire to shut people up is a human problem. It's a human problem. In five years' time, we'll be told that we can't have a conversation about euthanasia because one side wins and then they want to shut us up.

It's a human problem, not a religious problem. Religious people and spiritual people have the problem because it's a human problem, not because it's religious.

But Jesus isn't trying to shut the young man up. Like, let's look and follow and see what happens. In fact, what we see happening is that, and this is a regular thing in the Gospels, we often see things like this and we miss what goes on in the text.

[23 : 08] Jesus isn't trying to shut the young man up. That Jesus is trying to have the young man understand something about who he is. He's actually trying to give himself knowledge and he's trying to begin and continue the conversation with the young man, not shut him up.

And it's a conversation, not a negotiation. You can't negotiate with God. I mean, you can try. But you can always talk to him. And the text shows us that the young man walks away, he walks away, but Jesus continues the conversation.

We'll see in the text that Jesus understands and the disciples understand that the young man could have come back and said something to Jesus. An honest question to continue the conversation, but he walks away.

That's the challenge to you and me. Does the word of God speak to us? Does Jesus speak to us in such a way and we experience it as a threat, an attempt to shut us up, when all Jesus is asking is that we'll come back to him with an honest question.

Continue reading at verse 24. So verse 20, sorry, but verse 23, but when the young man, the ruler, heard these things, he became very sad for he was extremely rich.

[24 : 24] And in the text, he disappears, he walks away. Verse 24, Jesus, seeing that he had become sad, said, how difficult it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God. for it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich person to enter the kingdom of God.

Those who heard it said, then who can be saved? But Jesus said, what is impossible with men and women is possible with God.

You see, the disciples, they don't walk away. They ask the second question. They ask what the young man, the ruler, the rich guy, could have said to Jesus.

Jesus, I don't think I can do that. Who on earth could ever do that? How could that ever possibly work? And you can ask, that's, Jesus wanted to have a conversation.

And the young man walks away. The idol of his heart leads him to walk away. Rather than just respond with an honest question, who on earth can do that?

[25 : 44] Who on earth can possibly be saved? It's a very, very profound moment in the text. How on earth can this possibly work?

And Jesus begins to give the answer. He gives it first, and it's going to get unpacked in the next verses. If you could put it up, Andrew. Jesus teaches me that a camel will pass through the eye of a needle before I enter the kingdom of God by my own accomplishments.

Jesus teaches me that a camel will pass through the eye of a needle before I enter the kingdom of God by my own accomplishments. You see, it's a very, very graphic thing.

It's, in fact, saying the very same thing that Paul says time and time and time again in the epistles. Some of you might have memorized a very, very classic text in Romans chapter 3, verse 23. For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. And for many of us, we like that type of image. Our minds are, I was talking the other night to a person and she said how she likes abstractions and sin, all sin, short of the glory of God.

[26 : 58] That fits, but some of us can't think in abstractions very well. And Jesus isn't just for those of us who think in abstractions. Some of us think with images and some of us think with very, very concrete pictures.

And so for those of us, he says, okay, you want to try to use your accomplishments to get into heaven? The day a camel goes through the eye of the needle is the day that's going to work for you.

And for those of you who've been told that this text is saying that there is a gate in Jerusalem where the camel had to get down on its knees and all of the stuff had to be taken off the camel, that gate was made in the Middle Ages, not in Jesus' time.

Jesus took and made like into a proverbial saying, he gave them the biggest animal they knew and the smallest opening they knew. And the disciples understood it.

They said, one moment, a camel will never go through the eye of a needle for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. There is none righteous, no doubt one. Abstract, concrete.

[28 : 06] So, you see, that's why Jesus begins to open up the answer that he gives to the young man. He says, the first thing is this challenge.

What is it that you believe that you need, that you can't give up and live without, that's more important than eternal life with the living God? And it's not just for the rich guy.

And in fact, Jesus is going to say, you know, those of you who think that your accomplishments, your keeping of the commandments, you're keeping of the word of God, you're keeping of whatever, you're being a good person, being successful, being blessed with God, and you add all that up and it's somehow going to get you into the kingdom of God.

No, a camel will go through the eye of a needle. Before that, any of your accomplishments will add up to that. That's what Jesus teaches. You see, some of you might say, okay, George, how does this all, it works.

So he's just going to sort of leave us here. Like, I thought that up until now, in fact, even when I heard that, I sort of thought that the camel and the eye of the needle, it was a little bit like, in fact, a lot of what Jesus has been saying up to now sounds very Buddhist.

[29 : 23] That Jesus is teaching non-attachment. That the problem that we have is desire. And the problem we have is attachment to things. And the camel through the eye of the needle, that's just a little bit like, it's just something to try to give us enlightenment.

It's like trying to think about the sound of one hand clapping. You're not supposed to take it literally, what is the sound of one hand clapping. If you think about things like these sayings, it gives you a type of enlightenment and it's all connected to just non-attachment to things.

But Jesus is going to actually go in a very, very, very radically different direction. He's not talking about non-attachment and he's not talking about enlightenment.

He's talking about God doing something which human beings find impossible and God will do and make possible what human beings find impossible.

And he's going to do it to real human beings like ourselves who the problem isn't attachment. The problem is that I have a disordered heart with disordered love.

[30 : 39] I'm going to show you that. Can you put up the point, Andrew? I'm going to show you, but we're going to read the text, but I want you to see this before we go to the text. Note that it's that Jesus warns me that my, I'll just say it, Jesus warns me that my disordered heart has disordered love.

Remember, Jesus is still giving us a type of insight about ourselves. Jesus isn't saying, once again, that we just have to get rid of all of our possessions and follow him and then that's going to work. Jesus goes even deeper and says, no, no, camels will go through eyes of needle before that's going to work as well. It's not a matter, George, of your accomplishments. God's going to have to do something and yet you have to understand that at the very center of who you are, you are disordered.

And part of what it means to be disordered is that you're going to love in a disordered way. Jesus warns me that my disordered heart has disordered loves.

Let's read what Jesus says in verse 28 to 30. And Peter said, we have left our homes and followed you. And Jesus said to them, truly I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God who will not receive many times more in this time and in the age to come eternal life.

[32 : 07] You see, it's very, very funny that Christians in the monastic movement often go to the first part of this story to justify why we should all be monks and health and wealth gospel people go to the end of the story to say whether, why, if you just put more money in the plate, God's going to bless you.

Put a thousand dollars in the plate today, folks, God will give you ten thousand bucks. That's what it says right here. Give to God, meaning us, God will give to you many times more.

Sort of an odd type of text. But it's odd because we don't understand that once again Jesus is trying to teach us something about who we are. That every one of us here, I'm not exempting myself, he's teaching me that my heart is disordered and I have disordered loves.

Andrew, if you could put up the image. Yeah, there we go. There's a throne with a question mark and a crown over it. See, what the Bible is teaching us, what Jesus understands is that God created us as human beings.

God created us and God is the beautiful, he's the good, he's the true, he's the just, he's the holy, he's the pure, he's the righteous.

[33 : 27] In a sense, it's saying that beauty, truth, goodness, love created all things. and God created us as human beings to dwell in a good, just, true, ordered, beautiful, created order in

complete and utter harmony with God who is the good, the true, and the beautiful.

And the way that God created us to do that is he created in the very center of every human being in a sense of throne. and on that throne sits God, the good, the true, the beautiful.

It's actually a profoundly beautiful picture of what it was originally meant for us to be as human beings. That the God, in a sense, who is outside, who is the good, the true, and the beautiful, made a created order which was, reflected the good, the true, and the beautiful.

And that very same God inhabits the throne of every human being. So the good, and the true, and the beautiful sits on the throne of my life in a good, and true, and beautiful creation made by a good, and true, and beautiful creator.

And there's a harmony. The Bible teaches in Adam and Eve the decision was made to cast the good, and the true, and the beautiful off of the throne of our lives.

[34 : 56] And we were going to put ourselves on the throne of our lives. And it's very, very interesting that the very, very first thing, if you go back and read Genesis 3, and it's told in picture language, the very, very first thing that starts to happen is that not only does Adam, in a sense, want to become on the center of the throne of his life, and Eve wants to become on the center of the throne of her lives, but instantly there is disharmony between Adam and Eve.

And instantly, Eve wants to also be in the throne of Adam's life, and Adam wants to be in the throne of Eve's life. And there's going to be conflict. And so every human being has this unfixable disorder in the very center of who we are.

And the throne of our lives doesn't just sort of disappear and go away, but the throne of our lives now becomes a battleground, which is part of the reason why we get so confused. And it's because on one hand, I'm on the throne of my life, and on the other hand, I think that I cannot live without, you know, whatever it is.

It's my money, my church building, my prestige, my health, my body, my power. And on the throne of my life, there's me, and there's all of these things, and they're all wrestling from control, and I go from one thing to another, which is why sometimes I want to be, think of myself as a kind and compassionate person, and another time I want to be a type A individual, and another time I want to be an athlete, and another time I want to be a scholar, and another time I want to be simple, and another time I just want to be a guy who drinks beer and watch football, and on, and on, and on, and on, all these idols on the throne of our heart.

And so what Jesus is saying here isn't, if Jesus was saying that attachment was the problem, then he would say that you would come to a time when you don't need your house, you don't need your father, you don't need your mother, you don't need your brothers, you don't have to be attached to any of those things.

[36 : 42] But when he says all of this, what he's pointing to is that the center of who I am are idols that drive me, that day by day I do not believe that I can live without.

And there has to be a way by which God does the impossible and redeems and heals that primal, primordial, fundamental wound in the center of who I am and the consequences of that and at the same time whereby Jesus, the Savior, the one who redeems comes and sits on the throne of my life and starts to kick off the idols.

It's his rightful throne. He's not an intruder. He's not a usurper. He's not a terrorist. He's not a tyrant. The throne was built for him.

And salvation is accepting the pardon and the forgiveness that is accomplished by Jesus. That's how we're made right with God. And it's why, if you go back and read in John chapter 14, it's very, very puzzling.

And Jesus talks about how the Holy Spirit inside of us is better than Jesus outside of us. And it talks about the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit coming and dwelling within. And it's this profound teaching that Jesus first reconciles us to God and that's how we become right with him.

[38 : 12] It's become how we become his adopted child. And then growing in grace and growing in life and growing in discipleship is all about the Jesus who now sits on the throne of our lives as he begins to reveal the idols of our lives and kick them off so that we don't have disordered love but ordered love.

See, the problem isn't that I have a wife. The problem isn't that I have a house and a home. The problem isn't that I have money. The problem comes when that's all disordered.

And so the profound mystery is that when Jesus comes and sits on the throne of our hearts and begins to deal with the idols of our hearts that part of what he does is heal our hearts and heal the center of who we are so that we can begin to love and have room in our heart in an ordered way. Andrew, if you could put up the fourth point. Jesus knew who he was dying for. He died for people with disordered hearts, with disordered love.

He died to save me and make me well. That's the gospel. That's how we become right with God and it's how we follow Jesus. Jesus knew who he was dying for.

[39 : 33] He died for people with disordered hearts, with disordered love. He died to save me and make me well. Now some of you might say, George, is this just your own opinion?

Look and see very briefly how the story concludes and then we'll end with a prayer. Look how the story flows. Remember, so he's, he, you know, the young man who walks away sad, what he could have just said to Jesus is, Jesus, that's impossible.

I can't possibly do it. And Jesus might have said, I'm so glad you said that. I'm glad you realized it's impossible because you know what? You need God to do the impossible for you.

And then, and then he could say, you know what? I'm so frightened that if God does the possible for me, the impossible for me, that it will mean that, well, I don't know, does it mean I'm going to have to be like a beggar on the side of the street?

Does it mean I, that people are just going to be able to kick me around? Does it mean that I, I can never have a wife or family or children? And, and Jesus is saying the problem that you have is that you have money in a place in your life, ruling your life in such a way that making you, it creates you, within you fears.

[40 : 42] It creates within you false longings and yearnings. It's going to poison how you relate to money itself and how it's going to relate to your wife and to your children and to your home and your neighborhood and your communion and your God. It's going to ruin all those things.

You have to understand that you have a disordered heart with disordered loves and I am going to do something to fix all of these things. I'm going to deal with the, with the fundamental brokenness that you have and if you invite me into your heart and in your life, you invite me, you recognize who I am and you call out upon me for mercy that I can save you and make you well.

Look at what happens in verse 31. And taking the 12, he said to them, see, we are going up to Jerusalem and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.

Just pause before we read any further. What that's saying is that the Bible, all of God's word, that God, from the very beginning of Adam and Eve and their fall, that God began to promise that he was going to deal with them, that they now were in an impossible situation and God was going to do the impossible for them.

And they didn't understand, although there's hints, even in Genesis chapter 3, there's hints that that's going to mean the death of God upon something like the cross. But Jesus now says that everything that you read in the Old Testament, everything in all of God's promises is going to be accomplished, it's going to be fulfilled.

[42 : 03] He's saying that I came for one purpose and my purpose, the word that's in the original language for accomplished is a telos word, a telos word, an end word.

In other words, it's my purpose, it's what I came to accomplish and fulfill, that I'm going to Jerusalem to die upon the cross and this is not a tragedy, this is not an accident, it's been promised by God, I am the promise of God, I came to die.

I came to die for you. I came to save you. If you go back and look, the kingdom of God, eternal life and salvation are all used interchangeably as the same image of the same thing that Jesus will accomplish in Jerusalem by his rejection and his death upon the cross for them.

Look how it continues, verse 32, for he will be delivered, that's himself, over to the Gentiles, the pagans, and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon and after flogging him they will kill him and on the third day he will rise.

But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them that they did not grasp what was said. We have to call out to God. We think we see but we don't see. The young man thought that he saw but he didn't see.

[43 : 19] We need to call out for mercy that we will see that Jesus is the power of God for salvation that God has provided that this death upon the cross on our behalf is a power from God for our salvation.

It has always been an offense to human pride and the human desire to be on the throne of our own hearts that God is to provide the power for salvation that we cannot provide ourselves.

It has always been a great terror to the idols on our hearts that the true person who belongs on the throne of our hearts will come and begin to rule and cast the idols far from our heart so that we might be well and we might be free.

And the text shows us this. It continues on. Verse 35 right after that it says that the disciples did not understand. They didn't grasp it. They didn't see it. And as Jesus verse 35 as he drew near to Jericho a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging he was living without all of the things that the rich man had.

He doesn't have sight he doesn't have financial resources and he doesn't have accomplishments. But he still has a profound need. The text doesn't analyze what is the treasure at the center of his heart that does not want to give up.

[44 : 35] But what it shows is that there is a person despite what other people say about Jesus that there is this moment of illumination that comes from the Holy Spirit whereby he is going to call out for Jesus for mercy understanding that Jesus is the Messiah the promised one of God who has come to save and to make well and to make free so that you can walk and live and praise God that Jesus is that one.

Verse 36 and hearing a crowd going by he inquired what this meant. They told him Jesus of Nazareth is coming by. That means Jesus of Brudenel. It means Jesus of nowhere.

It means Jesus who comes from someplace that's completely and utterly unimportant. And in verse 38 the beggar cried out and he doesn't cry out Jesus from nowhere from somewhere completely and utterly unimportant just a mere human being who comes from Hicksville.

He doesn't say that. He says Jesus son of David have mercy on me. And in that Jesus son of David all of the promises to David all of the promises of the Messiah all of the promises of God that he has this moment that he realizes that Jesus is the promised one who would come from God who provides a power for salvation and making well that makes the impossible possible even for a sightless beggar who's accomplished nothing.

In verse 39 and those who were in front rebuked him telling him to be silent but he cried out all the more son of David have mercy on me and Jesus stopped and commanded the beggar to be brought to him and when the beggar came near Jesus asked him what do you want me to do for you?

[46 : 22] Excuse me and the beggar said Lord calls him Lord calls him Lord calls him the son of David he calls him Lord let me recover my sight and Jesus said to him recover your sight your faith has made you well some of your versions might say recover your sight your faith has saved you it's because saved you and made you well are both ways to translate it in Greek it would be understood that both are true at the same time but you can't translate that into English so it has to either choose one or the other but that's what it means your faith has saved you your faith has made you well and immediately the beggar recovered his sight and followed him glorifying God and all the people when they saw it gave praise to God if you could put up the final slide this is a prayer to begin the Christian life it's a prayer to walk the Christian life this is what Jesus is teaching in the text you know I say to you over and over again I can't tell you how to be successful can't tell you how to lose weight can't tell you how to get promotions in your work

I mean I I don't know the Bible I can try to teach you how to pray and maybe the Holy Spirit is pressing upon you you realize that there's idols in the center of who you are that bind you and bend you and break you out of shape idols of unforgiveness idols of resentment idols of intellect idols of prestige idols of money idols of sex idols of around politics and ideology idols around money and maybe you've asked Jesus to be your savior and your lord but you haven't realized that as part of that process he's going to start to give you self-knowledge and kick the idols off the throne of your heart and for some of you you've never really asked Jesus to be your savior and your lord this is a prayer for all of us the invitation is I'm going to ask you to stand in a moment and those of you who want could join me in praying Lord Jesus Messiah I thank you that you did the impossible for me when you died upon the cross for me I thank you that you are the power of God for salvation please take your rightful place on the throne of my heart as my savior and my lord please remove every idol from my heart and make me free and well amen please stand if the Holy Spirit is pressing on you to pray by the way if you're always some people like to write these things down all of these things the notes will all be on the web page tomorrow and you can if you want to just as the sermon

will be on the web page tomorrow or Tuesday or whatever you can always look at them later but if the Holy Spirit is pressing upon you to pray then just a moment of silence then I'm going to pray it and if you'd like to pray it as well if you don't pray it that's fine just what the Holy Spirit is pressing in on you to pray then join with me in praying this prayer

Lord Jesus Messiah I thank you that you did the impossible for me when you died upon the cross for me I thank you that you are the power of God for salvation please take your rightful place on the throne of my heart as my Savior and my Lord please remove every idol from my heart and make me free and well as I follow you Amen