

JESUS AND MARSHWIGGLES

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[0 : 00] Father, you know how hard it is for us to pay attention to your word. You know, Father, how we prefer our own thoughts to what you're thinking, how we prefer the thoughts of powerful people around us rather than to your thoughts.

We prefer, Father, to hear ourselves talk than to listen to you speak to us. Father, we acknowledge this before you, and we acknowledge before you, Father, that we're not even aware of when we're doing it.

We ask, Father, that your Holy Spirit would gently but deeply fall upon us this morning, that you would help us, Father, to turn from ourselves and to listen to your word.

And not only, Father, listen to your word, but that you might help us to open our hearts, our minds, our wills, our souls to your word, that your word might enter into us and do its great work in us. Father, this we ask in the name of Jesus, your Son and our Savior. Amen. Please be seated. So as is my custom this week, on most days of the week, I was in a Starbucks working on my sermon.

[1 : 12] Actually, between the services, I go to a coffee shop. I'm fairly Catholic in my taste. It was a second cup. And it was sort of neat. There was a couple of people going by all dressed up for church.

And I happened to look up, and they saw me reading the Bible, and they smiled at me and gave me a little wave. I guess they were going on their way to church. But I don't always get that reaction when I'm in a Starbucks. But this particular time, just this week, I can't remember the day of the week it was, but it was the day after it was all in the papers about the Roman Catholic Church might or might not be changing its view on same-sex marriage and a whole range of things, contraception, et cetera.

I think that was Tuesday morning. I think it was in the paper on Monday, but maybe I have the dates wrong. Anyway, I'm there in my, I'm in the Starbucks working on my sermon. Bible's open. A couple of working-class guys come and sit down beside me.

And one of the working-class guys just says to the other that he'd been over at his grandmother's house the night, last night, and he said to his buddies, you know, my grandmother, she's Roman Catholic.

She goes to church. She goes to Mass all the time. And so I said to my Grammy, I said, Grammy, what do you think about what the Pope said? And then he said, my Grammy said to me that the Pope's wrong, that he's wrong in what he's doing.

[2 : 27] And then, you know, he said to the guys what, you know, his grandmother said. And then he said to his friends, he said, you know, I said to my Grammy, I said, Grammy, that's like, that's, you're just saying things like from 15 years ago.

Like, you have to get with now. That's like something from 15 years ago. Like, get with now. And then he said what his grandmother said. And then he said to this guy, he said, you know, I don't know what to say to my grandmother.

She's talking things like from 15 years ago. How on earth can I possibly talk to her? That was the conversation. So I'm not going to talk this morning about same-sex marriage.

It just happens to be that it's sort of as an illustration of something. Because what it is, is my sermon this week is going to be different than my usual sermon. Because I don't know how many of you were able to pay attention as I was reading the Luke text, the gospel text.

But if you were, it's sort of an odd text. It's a bit confusing. And it would have been even more massively confusing to the original hearers and the people who originally read it, maybe for the very, very first time.

[3 : 37] And so I'm going to have to take a sort of a step back from the text. And we're going to have to look at a couple of other things so that we can actually hear what the Bible says. So here's the first thing.

And this is why I'm telling you the story. I want to tell you something about what goes on in Canada. A couple of weeks ago, one of the people who gets into arguments with me or persistent discussions, might be a better way to put it, at Starbucks.

He's a committed secularist. He sort of said to me, George, you know, the fact is that the Bible's all wrong because everything just goes in cycles. Like, you know, we just, you know, you know, we die and somebody else is born.

And, you know, life, it's just a constant cycle. And that's just how life works. And I looked at him and said, I'm not going to answer that question because you don't believe that.

Well, let's talk about something you believe. You don't believe that. I said, you believe that things are getting better and better and better in a particular direction. And that in, you know, like in 40 years, there'll be no more religion and that there'll be great world peace and lots of prosperity.

[4 : 43] That's what you believe. And he said, yeah, I was just trying to yank your chain. But here's the thing. If you could put up the first point, Andrew. Virtually everybody in Canada believes history is moving towards something that matters or should be moving towards something that matters.

I didn't say throughout the world because it wouldn't be true of the world. In fact, there are parts of the world that would just believe that everything's just in constant cycles.

Like classic Hinduism, that there's this constant cycle. Classic Buddhism, constant cycle. Classic paganism, a constant cycle. But I think in Canada, they might all differ on it, but I think in Canada, virtually everybody in Canada believes history is moving towards something that matters or should be moving towards something that matters.

And I'm using, I was going to use the word life. I thought about using the word life, but I ended up deciding to use the word history because it's as if people have this sense in Canada that there's been the past.

And as the past is coming up closer to the present, there's this development. And it's as if there's a line going. And so, for instance, many people on the left refer to themselves as progressives because they have this sense that everything is moving in a particular direction.

[6 : 04] It's progressing in a particular direction. People who aren't of the left, at sort of a deeper level, they might have more of a Star Trek view of the future. You know, where, you know, in the future, I don't know how many years, I'm not a Trekkie, but, you know, so many years in the future, you know, you just have to press a button in a machine and your hot meal pops out and they've gotten rid of war, they've gotten rid of need, they've gotten rid of want, and they can go off and explore the universe and go where no man or woman has, you know, go boldly where nobody's gone before.

But, you know, many, many people, there's a, near where I live, when I'm driving to one of my Starbucks, there's a place that's called evolution physiotherapy.

And what they mean by that is that somehow we're evolving to something better and better. They don't mean that life is completely and utterly controlled by randomness and chaos, and it might very well be that cockroaches are the only life form living in 100 years when we completely annihilate ourselves, and that's just how evolution works, survival of the fittest.

And cockroaches might end up being, they don't mean that, right? So it's a very, very common idea that things are moving in a certain direction. And it's a very, very common idea that if we're depressed that things aren't moving in a particular direction, it's because we believe they should go in a particular direction, and we believe that this direction matters.

So it is that this working class guy sitting beside me, talking to some other working class guys, evaluates his grandmother's argument by saying that this was something that they said 15 years ago.

[7 : 34] That how history is moving matters, and how you understand right and wrong, how you live your life, how you make your plans, who you marry, what you struggle with, what you don't struggle with, what you celebrate.

That's a very, very common. So Canadians might differ, and there's many, many Canadians who say that because, let's say the government isn't following the policies that are progressive, that what's going to happen is some type of dystopia, that everything's going to go completely and

utterly bad, and so you better listen to us, but it matters.

Now, why does this matter? How on earth does this have anything at all to do with Jesus? Well, here's how it has something to do with Jesus and how it's to go back to the text, which we're going to, we still have to take one more moment before we get back to it.

But one of the things that people will make fun of about Christians is the Christian idea of the second coming of Jesus. For many people in our culture, it's kooky.

You go hunting through the TV channels, and, okay, I don't mean to offend anybody by that. I'm just trying to tell you how many people, if you get talking and they trust you, what they'll say. So they go hunting through the channels, they'll come to a Christian channel, and they'll see some sweating, overweight white guy going on with all sorts of lurid pictures and graphs about what's happening in the Middle East and what's happening with Russia, and where things are going, and they'll watch it for a few minutes to laugh, because it looks ridiculous.

[9 : 06] But here's the thing for us to think about for a second. If nobody in Canada thought that history was going somewhere, and that where that somewhere was going, that it was connected to the past, the present, and the future, and that where it goes as matters, then for Christians to talk about the second coming of Jesus would be really odd.

But if, in fact, virtually everybody in Canada believes that the past matters, the present matters, and that it's going somewhere, then even though they might or might not be right to make fun of the person that they saw on television, in fact, all it means is that Christians just have a different understanding of the direction of history than the culture.

See what I mean? I mean, it's hard to communicate, and I don't know how I would communicate this to one of my friends in Starbucks, but it's important for us to at least hear this, that one moment, everybody believes history is going somewhere, everybody believes something in the past, that there's some process that's going somewhere.

Christians also believe that. In fact, actually, and this would in fact be true, that one of the revolutions in human thought, actually, that it, like, people didn't believe there was a direction to history until they, in a sense, learned it, and then forgot that they learned it from the Bible.

It's ultimately a Christian and Jewish idea, a biblical idea that changed how people think. And, um, and so now it's a matter of, well, one moment, now we can sort of ask ourselves, like, why is it that we think these things in the past are affecting the future, and why is it that we think that these things in the future are going to happen, and how is it that the Christian things sort of are similar or different?

[10 : 50] See what I mean? Like, it changes it, even when we're reading the Bible. Maybe it will make us less defensive when we talk to others. Less embarrassed about the angular and, to the eyes of Canadians, kooky aspects of Christianity.

So, here's another thing. It's going to take us a while. You know, we're actually going to, you know, I'm going to do a lot of preview, and then actually we're going to go through the Bible relatively quickly. But there's one of, so what does the Christian story look like? Andrew, if you could put up the first screen.

So, the Bible has an overarching story, an overarching narrative, an overarching understanding of what's been going on in the past, the present, and the future.

And while, to most Canadians, they would understand that things, we got, things got the way they are through evolution, that it's just ultimately a combination of chance, coincidence, genetic mutation, followed by survival of fittest, which is just another form of chance, a physical process. The Christian story begins in a very, very different way. The Christian story begins by saying that we believe there is a God who exists, who's created all things. That things aren't random and by chance.

[12 : 06] And that when God created all things, he made all things good. And part of the way that he made all things good is he put within human beings who bear the image of God and are like God, he put within human beings not perfect free will, that they can have free will in every single thing, but substantial and real free will and within that free will, the ability and the necessity to love and to trust.

And that Adam and Eve chose not to love and trust God, but in a sense to usurp God's position and try to become like God themselves. And so the first part of the big story is creation.

The second is what's known as the fall. And that when human beings, our ancestors, Adam and Eve, did this, it creates a bentness in all human nature so that all human beings who descend from

Adam and Eve, which is everybody, that there's a fundamental bentness in us, that we're now not right.

And so that what characterizes human existence is two things. On one hand, we're made in the image of the creator God. We bear his image and likeness. And God didn't remove that from human beings.

He didn't turn us into tortoises or armadillos or aardvarks. We're human. We still bear the image and the likeness of God, but now that image and likeness of God is marred.

[13:38] It is bent. It is twisted. It is not the way it was intended. And God saw that we human beings could not fix ourselves. So in Genesis 3 and on, God begins what I'm labeling as promise, that he promises that he is going to fix what human beings cannot fix by themselves.

And what we believe then comes next is that Jesus is God keeping his promise. The promises originally were to patriarchs, like Moses and Abraham, I got the order wrong, and the people of Israel.

And in some ways, even the promises is different, other types of things, of intimations that other people had, that there would be some way that God was going to fix this. And Jesus is the coming of God, God, the Son of God, into our human story.

God keeping his promises to fix what human beings cannot fix. And that's what we have in the Gospels. In a sense, all of the Old Testament is what we would call that understanding, the unfolding, the revealing, the preparing of the promise.

Jesus is God keeping his promise and keeping his promise in a surprising way. Not in the way that the original people thought he was going to do it, but that God would first deal with the bentness in us before he dealt with the bentness and the fallenness in the entire created order.

[15:09] So Jesus comes to die. He dies upon the cross. And his death upon the cross is, in the words of Romans, a power of God from salvation. It's a power of God, from God, for salvation, that is accomplished with Jesus' death upon the cross.

And now God is taking a people for himself when we put our faith and trust in Jesus. And now, after Jesus' death and his resurrection, he promises he's going to come again.

And so now, every single one of us is living in the between. In fact, if you could put the next slide up. You know how you go to a mall and you try to figure out where you are? Okay?

That's where we are in the story. We're in the between. The between Jesus' coming and his second coming. And I've labeled his second coming the beginning.

Because it's not only a judgment, but it's the beginning of the new earth and the new heaven. The new earth and heaven that we will live in for eternity. And that's the overarching Christian story.

[16:17] And I think it's, the older I get and the more I talk to people at Starbucks, the more convinced I am of the profound wisdom and truthfulness of this overarching story.

That creation and fall and promise in Jesus in between and beginning makes sense of our longings and yearnings. It makes sense of science. It makes sense of history. It makes sense of knowledge. It just, it makes sense. And not only does it make sense at a whole range of philosophical and scientific levels and personal and existential levels, but also because of the reality of the death upon the cross and the historical event that there's actually some historical evidence that it might be possible that in fact Jesus did in fact defeat death and emerge on the far side of death on the third day and that therefore if he did that, he can return.

And it makes sense. It's a profound, profound story. So, you see, here's what I would say to the young guy if I'd had a chance to talk with him.

I mean, first of all, I would have had to have fought my urge to mock him. What, you think you tell truth by the calendar? Like, I probably would have tried to mock him.

[17:31] You know, that doesn't work well in conversations when you want to woo somebody and start mocking them. So, I would have had to have fought that. But, you know, what you could say, well, why is it that you think that history's moving in this particular direction?

Like, what sort of evidence is there for it? Because, you see, there's a new age saying that if you see the Buddha on the road, kill him. And, and in a sense, I almost thought of making a point when you hear of a utopia or a future, kill it.

That's like what the Bible says. And if you could put up the next point, Andrew, it's because I think ultimately the Bible says that we are made in God's image and we are fallen. And because of that, we presume to know.

But, God is sovereign and he knows. And this is true for Christians and for non-Christians. Many, many Christians think that they can figure out from the Bible all of the intricacies of what's going to happen in the last days, despite the fact that Jesus repeatedly says that nobody can figure it out. That they can't. So, if Christians, even reading the Bible, have a hard time, then how much more will our culture have a hard time? That on one hand, because they have this sense that this overarching story, I would suggest, is in fact a true historical real story.

[18 : 49] And on one hand, because we're made in the image of God and because we're fallen, we have this sense that it's moving somewhere, that it's not just a result of blind chance and blind processes, but there actually is a God and that it's moving to some type of a completion and that completion matters.

But because we're fallen and yet we bear the image of God, we presume to know. We presume to know that we're going to have a perfect Freudian future or a communist future or a Nazi future or a queer future or a Star Trek future or whatever it is and we presume to know and we try to evaluate others all in light of it, but the Bible would suggest to us that we are, on one hand, just like the most ardent skeptic and say, you have no evidence for any of that.

You're presuming, you don't know. And then to which if somebody says to you, George, you don't know either and I would say, you are very right. I am not claiming that I am smarter than anybody. But what if there is a God who does exist who tells us?

What if there is a God who exists who tells us? You don't have to be clever. You just have to listen. And no Christian should claim that they are more clever than others.

We are not. My favorite line from Spurgeon, we are one beggar telling another beggar where to find bread. We're not farmers, we're beggars.

[20 : 14] So, how does this fit with, we're going to actually read the Bible. This is very unusual. Usually if you come to one of my sermons, you don't wait 19 minutes before we actually crack open the Bible.

It's not a lecture. We're going to now, hopefully with this little thing in our background, we'll actually be able to hear and also sort of catch the surprise and the shock in the text. So, if you don't have Bibles, there's always some free Bibles up here at the front.

And it's Luke chapter 12. If you use an electronic version of your Bible, try to restrain yourself from checking your Facebook updates, Twitter feed, or anything like that and actually just stay with the text.

And it's Luke chapter 12 beginning at verse 34. And sort of mindful of the overarching big story and the fact that we live in a world where in Canada where virtually everybody believes something's going to be happening in the future that matters.

And so, it's not that Jesus is the only one talking about this, but that in fact he's just saying something very different than what is commonly believed. Let's listen to what he has to say. Verse 34. And by the way, let me see here.

[21 : 17] How many people here are familiar with the show Downton Abbey? Of course. Okay, well you'll be all glad to know that I actually spent some time researching Downton Abbey this week because Downton Abbey helps you to understand what's about to be said.

I'm not making that up. It's true. Very helpful to understanding the Bible in this particular context.

So, Luke chapter 12 verses 34 and following. Jesus speaking.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Say, stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning. And be like men.

And in this particular case it doesn't mean men or women. It means men because it's describing a particular type of servant. And in Downton Abbey it would usually be the men who answer the door. Right? Not the women. The men answer the door. The men escort you out. So this actually means men here. It doesn't mean women. It's not poo-pooing women.

[22 : 19] It's just it's the story. If you use Downton Abbey you'd say, oh, women don't go and answer the door. Men. So, stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning.

Be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast. In the ancient days at the time of Jesus wedding feast could go on for a week or less, a little bit less, a little bit more.

So if the master, if Lord Grantham went to a wedding back in those days the servants wouldn't know when he's coming back. Okay?

Because it wouldn't show. Is he going to get tired of drinking after five days? After eight days? Like, how's it going to go? Right? So stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks.

Blessed, it's a beatitude, blessed are those servants whom the master finds awake when he comes. Truly, it's actually the word Amen. Amen, I say to you.

[23 : 20] He will, the master will dress himself for service and have them recline at table and he will come and serve them. If you're wondering in a few verses why on earth it is that Peter can't understand what on earth Jesus is talking about is because of this.

If you watch Downton Abbey, do you think if Lord Grantham comes home after eight days of drinking and he's pleased to have the door open, he's going to say, my, you look tired, sit down while I make you a feast and I'm going to serve you.

Doesn't happen, does it? I mean, as you know, the Lord Grantham and his family, they can hardly boil water. This doesn't make any sense.

This doesn't happen. So what's going on? Okay, I promise I'm not going to skip over text. We're going to come back and read it but to understand what's going on we have to jump forward a few verses.

So jump forward to verse 49. And here we have, you know, sometimes I say to people, I was just saying to this, the guy at a Starbucks a couple of weeks ago because he was trying to tell me that I was just imposing my understanding of what Jesus came to do and I said, no, no, no, we don't have to try to figure that out ourselves.

[24 : 40] If you read the Gospels, Jesus will tell you why he came. Like he tells you, I'm just trying to listen to him. You're trying to impose something different. I'm just trying to listen. And this is one of those statements and it's verse 49.

Jesus speaking, I came to cast fire on the earth and would that it were already kindled. I have a baptism to be baptized with and how great is my distress until it is accomplished.

He came to cast fire and to have this baptism happen. Now this is a bit of an odd, odd story. It's an odd, odd line.

And here you sort of have to trust me on it but obviously he's already been baptized by John the Baptist. That happened earlier on in Luke and he's not obviously talking about what Christians do with baptism because that doesn't make any sense.

He's, in the original language, he's using an image from the Psalms and the prophets and the image of baptism in the Psalms and the prophets is an image of being inundated by God's judgment.

[25 : 50] Inundated or caught by God's judgment. It would be as if you're at a beach and a tsunami comes and you have a sense that not only is there a tsunami coming, it's going to inundate you and it's going to crush you and you can't run away from it and that it's going to overwhelm you and completely and utterly just, it's going to obliterate you.

There's been some Hollywood movies about these tsunamis and coming and what they do and Jesus is saying this tsunami while everybody else on the planet is trying to run from it and there's many, many people, maybe even some of you here today, many people that we meet in Starbucks and other places, they have a sense of impending doom.

Maybe it's the impending doom of the entire culture. Maybe it's the impending doom of the entire planet. Maybe it's just their personal impending doom when they have a worry about getting some news from the doctor but they have this sense of a tsunami wave and their whole life is a matter of turning their back from it and they live in the shadow of the tsunami which is coming and Jesus says, I came to walk towards the tsunami.

I came not to be like all of you who run from it, who live in the fear of the valley, of the shadow, of the coming tsunami. I came to walk towards that. It's what I came for.

If you could put up the point, Jesus came to be inundated by the judgment of God that I deserve. Jesus came to be inundated by the judgment of God that I deserve.

[27 : 31] You read the book of Luke from beginning to end. It's a story. Luke chapter 9, Jesus first reveals very clearly that he's going to Jerusalem to die, that he came to earth to be, he was born, all of that all had a particular purpose that he would go to Jerusalem to die and then to rise.

And everything that's going on in the book of Luke right now, it's all while Jesus and his disciples are walking to Jerusalem and Jesus in a variety of ways through Old Testament allusion, through right, straight, direct speech, continually telling the disciples, I'm walking to Jerusalem to die. I'm walking to Jerusalem towards the tsunami of God's judgment and I am walking towards that to be inundated by you. And I'm not coming because I myself deserve God's judgment. I come in love for you. I will bear the tsunami of God's judgment that you deserve. I will take your place and bear it in your stead.

You see, that's why if you were to go back to that screen that was up a couple of moments ago where you go from creation, fall, promise, Jesus is God keeping his promise in a way that nobody expected because we human beings, we watch, we expect that the powerful and the rich have privileges.

[29 : 00] We expect that the powerful and the rich do not serve. We expect that. We might resent it when we are the ones who are under their thumb but we also know that if we had that money we would expect to have those perks and privileges.

And so, we project this understanding onto God. That's part of our presumption. It's part of our fear. It's part of our fallenness that we project that onto God and Jesus is constantly trying to tell his followers that no, no, no, no.

You know that story just a few moments ago the master comes and he serves? I come to serve you. I will serve you most profoundly first and foremost by walking towards the tsunami of God's judgment and taking the inundation that you deserve and I will take your stead.

That from beginning to end it's always a matter of God doing something that we human beings cannot do and offering a power of salvation and all we can do is like beggars receiving free bread. Say, Father, I try to charm you with my charm. I try to do all sorts of things to put you in my debt. I try to presume that I know more than you do but all I can do is confess before you, Father, that I am a beggar.

[30 : 24] I stand naked. I have no resources. I can only receive that which you do, that which you whom I should serve, that you would serve me by this offer of salvation that I do not deserve.

See, at the heart of most modern stories of how the future is moving are irrational processes and at the heart of them is always that either you get with the program or if you're lucky you're like the grandmother and you're just in the dust bin of history.

If you're not lucky, violence befalls you because if we're moving towards the glorious workers' paradise, if we're moving towards this other type of great paradise and you're in the way, the hope is that if you don't get with the program and don't get with it, this irrational process that you'll be left in the dust bin, but time after time after time, when that comes to full flower, it leads to the death of the innocent.

But Christians believe it is not blind irrational force but a person and then that person who is sovereign and knows also loves and sent his son to be inundated by the tsunami of God's judgment that you and I deserve, that that would fall on Jesus as he dies upon the cross.

In fact, actually, in Luke's thing here, if you look back, verse 50, verse 50, I have a baptism to be baptized with and how great is my distress until it is accomplished. The word there, accomplished, can also be translated as finished and it's the word that Jesus says from the cross.

[32 : 05] It is finished. It is accomplished. It's the same word. It's the same word. So, the last week or two I've been watching some BBC movies called Hinderland about a London detective who goes to a remote part of Wales.

Scenery, spectacular. Best tradition of that type of, you know, depressed, struggling detective with demons trying to help people.

The Welsh have really interesting names. The whole shows, I find it very interesting to watch. But in the first episode, the first movie, there's a person who goes to chapel and she's very, very hard on the kids that she's supposed to be and they make the comment that she was always trying to scare them with the devil and beat the devil out of them but what she was really doing was scaring the devil into them and beating the devil into them.

Now I'm not trying to scare you but I'm going to talk about how it is that our story intersects. Andrew, could you go back a couple of screens to that thing where we are? There you go.

We are here. How do you and I get involved in this story? Andrew, could you put up this, I guess it's the third screen? I'm not saying this to scare you.

[33 : 25] I'm just saying this is, if you don't understand this you're not really hearing what Jesus says. That we're in the between Jesus and the second coming and I'm fallen, not perfect, I bear the image of God and I'm also fallen and I have before me a choice.

I can refuse what Jesus has offered, has done for me on the cross. I can resist the Holy Spirit that tries to keep drawing me back to Jesus and at the end there's a final rejection which works both ways.

Sometimes the Bible talks about God rejecting us and sometimes the Bible talks about us rejecting God but it means that we appear before the throne of God and we sing with Frank Sinatra I did it my way, I will always do it my way, I will never do it other than my way and God gives us what we want. The Bible describes it as hell. The other choice before us is that we accept what Jesus did for us and we're redeemed, that we live a life not saying that we're now redeemed by Jesus and now after this we just live by willpower but we're gripped by the gospel, we're mindful of the fact that God ultimately does something that we can't do for ourselves and it's a matter of as we're gripped by the gospel.

It draws us into change, it pushes us into change, it enables us to change and then finally either when we die or when Jesus comes that which we think of as the end but is really the beginning that we enter into that.

[35 : 12] If you want to use more traditional theological language, the next screen, my faith in Jesus makes me justified, mindful always of being gripped by the gospel and thinking about what Jesus did for me in the cross and that the power of salvation is not just to justify me but to make me more like Jesus.

My life between now and my death or my life and the coming of Jesus is to be sanctified and that when I die or when Jesus returns I will be like him because I will see him like he is and I will be glorified.

And the choice is ours. The choice is yours. There's a lot in the news lately about the Ebola crisis and it's come to the United States and of course I guess no surprise to anybody.

I'm not saying this to bash government. Big organizations and governments are very unwieldy and we're not prepared for this and we're still trying to figure out how to be prepared for it.

What the Christian message is something like this. Imagine if all of a sudden and maybe we discover that some of us have been infected in that 21 day period we don't realize that we have Ebola and we're going to potentially die from it but imagine that they were to announce that they found a cure that's both a cure and an immunization and you just have to go somewhere and they'll give you a needle and it's in you and if you have Ebola you won't die from it and if you don't have it you won't get it.

[36 : 44] And we'd all go. We'd all go. And what the Bible is saying is that when Jesus walks towards the inundation the tsunami of God's judgment that I deserve that dying on the cross that there's a power of God for salvation that is accomplished with his death upon the cross that has to get in us and the choice is ours that has to get in us and if it doesn't get in us then the normal process will be that which is up and to the right and I don't say it to scare you but I would not be a faithful servant of God's word that's what Jesus is talking about here in the text so now we're going to go back actually before some of you might say how's my time oh sorry we're going getting a bit stretched some of you might say well okay George how does this faith work you just sort of say yeah yeah I'll choose that I'll choose that path yeah sure Jesus whoa

I'll take that that path that goes that one there I'll choose that justified path it's not just a matter of a friend of mine Andy who's the pastor of Calvary Chapel we were out at Starbucks the other day and he found out that the staff have a secret drink and they called it I think they call it Rachel Shooters which is you put a big dollop of something sweet like vanilla and then you put a nice dollop of good whipped cream and then you take an espresso and you pour the espresso on a spoon to help cool it a bit and slow it down and it goes on top of it and it creates a drink with three layers a layer of syrup a layer of cream and a layer of espresso and then you take and you do a shooter you go you down it and he said wow that's good you get hot and bitter warm and creamy cool and sweet all one after another and a quick shot so is just saying yes to Jesus just like

I'm going to try a Rachel Shooter you know yeah sure give me a shot Jesus immediately after verse 50 warns you about something look at verse 50 so verse 50 says I have a baptism to be baptized with and how great is my distress until it is accomplished do you think that I have come to give peace on earth no I tell you but rather division for from now on in one house there will be five

divided three against two and two against three they will be divided father against son and son against father mother against daughter and daughter against mother mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law he also said to the crowds so on one hand he gives a profound warning okay this isn't just like trying Rachel Shooter okay this is about having a new treasure where your heart is this is about having a new master where you start to accept that Jesus I'm going to be your master it's about entering the Jesus way which you enter one by one but you walk the Jesus way with Jesus and others with Jesus as your savior and him as your lord and that's how you walk and on one hand

I want to warn you that this is going to potentially radically change your life if you're serious because it's not just a matter of trying to shoot her it's a matter of turning with your heart to accept what only God can do and I really do come in as savior and as lord and this will change you you enter into a covenant with me that changes everything verse 54 he said to the crowds when you see a cloud rising in the west you say at once a shower is coming and so it happens and when you see the south wind blowing you say there will be scorching heat and it happens you hypocrites you know how to interpret the appearance of earth and sky but why do you not know how to interpret the present time and the word there is kairos it's a significant moment it's that it's that that point where you go one way or the other why like I'm going to rise from the dead I fed the 5,000 I've walked on water like watch look listen to the story don't you understand how this overarching story how it speaks to longings and yearnings within you look at the signs look at the signs verse 57 and why do you not judge for yourselves what is right as you go with your accuser before the magistrate make an effort to settle with him on the way lest he drag you to the judge and the judge hand you over to the officer and the officer put you in prison

I tell you you will never get out until you have paid the very last penny and the implication there it's a Semitic term it means you'll never get out since Jesus says that's the divide before you so here's the thing Andrew if you could put up the fourth point the Bible warns me that when I am born again that's what happens when we put our faith and trust in Jesus it's not just like Rachel Schuter Jesus comes in it's a power of God for salvation it's like the immunization and the cure of Ebola it comes into you it changes you when I am born again through faith in Jesus I may be rejected by significant people in my life that might be your wife it might be your husband it might be your kids it might be your boss it might be the police it might be the government it might be the army it might be your employer Jesus wants us to know that but he wants us to do something else he wants us to choose to accept what he does

[42 : 17] I have to wrap this up quickly Andrew if you could put this up I have been waiting for over a year and a half to put up something like this as a sermon point dear God please help me to live like a marsh wiggles now those of you who have read the Narnia Chronicles might get a bit of a hint about what that means but for the rest of you I am not saying that you should want to be very very tall look a bit like a frog and a scarecrow like eating eels and all of that type of stuff but here is the thing about marsh wiggles is that marsh wiggles in that book you can read it's in the Narnia Chronicles it's the silver chair marsh wiggles pay great attention to what the master says and are faithful in trying to live it and they don't spend time thinking about their own views but they just want to have deep within their heart governing their actions what it is that the master says and Jesus says look at the signs so now just in closing let's go back

I told you we read the whole text I wasn't going to skip over anything let's read the whole text verse 34 just the part that I haven't read for where your treasure is there will your heart be also stay dressed for action and keep your lamps burning and be like men who are waiting for their master to come home from the wedding feast so that they may open the door to him at once when he comes and knocks what is it saying here it's saying that when we put our faith and trust in Jesus that one of the works of the gospel is that Jesus becomes our treasure he becomes our master and that what is it to be like to be a marsh wiggles it is to desire to be quick to obey quick to obey to be ready to obey and to be quick to obey not because we're hoping to impress the master in this case but it's in response it's in response to what Jesus has done for us on the cross that as the gospel grips us we desire to to pay attention to Jesus to listen to his words to be quick to obey blessed are those servants whom verse 37 the master finds awake when he comes truly I say to you he will dress himself for service and have them recline at table and he will come and serve them if he comes in the second watch or in the third and finds them awake blessed are those servants but know this that if the master of the house had known at what hour the thief was coming he would not have left

his house to be broken into you also must be ready for the son of man is coming in at an hour you do not expect this is telling us that we have to remember that Jesus is coming and we have to remember that we don't know when he's coming just that he is coming that it's essential to discipleship in Canada to believe that he's coming and to live our lives in light of the fact that he is coming and verse 41

Peter said Lord are you telling this parable for us or for all like Jesus Peter doesn't understand that Jesus is going to come back he can't figure out why Jesus you're here right now why are you talking about coming like I don't understand because he doesn't know the end of the story and then Jesus sort of in some ways ignores him because he's going to move forward to the baptism image he says who then is the faithful and wise manager whom his master will sit over his household to give them their portion of food at the proper time blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes truly I say to you he will set him over all his possessions but if that servant says to himself my master is delayed in coming and begins to beat the male and female servants that eat and drink and get drunk the master of that servant will come on a day when he does not expect him and in an hour he does not know and will cut him in pieces and put him with the unfaithful it's a severe punishment not death because he's alive in the next verse and that servant who knew his master's will but did not get ready for act according to his will will receive a severe beating sorry it was it's all part of 46 but the one who did not know and did what deserved a beating will receive a life beating everyone to whom much was given of him much will be required and from him to whom they entrusted much they will demand the more so what is it saying it's saying that as we're waiting that we're to serve others we're to serve the church we're to serve our community it says that we're not to live self-indulgent lives or be abusive and that we're willing not only to be quick to obey but to take on more to say yes take me not yes take her yes take me that's the good thing not yeah take them so here's just in closing here's a final prayer to try to wrap it all up if we don't want to understand if we can't understand entirely what it means to live like a marsh wiggle it's a prayer that I invite you to pray at the end with me

I'm going to say it and then we're going to have you all stand and then those whom the Holy Spirit is convicting you can say it with me out loud dear God please grow in me a humble trusting confidence in Jesus Christ crucified as my Savior please grow in me a humble trusting confidence that Jesus will return in glory as the Lord please grow in me a humble trusting doing of what your word written says please stand in light of the overarching story in light of Jesus walking into the inundation of God's judgment that I deserve in light of receiving that Jesus is urging us to receive what he does that he might serve us in this way just as he will serve us in a sense in heaven as we serve him to have a firm belief in his second coming and to live like a marsh wiggle eager to hear what God says and eager to seek to obey not to impress Jesus not to impress the Father but in light of what Jesus has done for us in the cross if the Holy Spirit so leads please join with me in praying dear God please grow in me a humble trusting confidence in Jesus Christ crucified as my Savior please grow in me a humble trusting confidence that Jesus will return in glory as the Lord please grow in me a humble trusting doing of what your word written says in Jesus' name
Amen Amen Liebe Amen Amen Amen