

Lesson 5: Love Your Neighbor

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[0 : 0 0] I want us to continue tonight in our discipleship series that we've been going over, the Ministry of Reconciliation. And tonight is about loving others.

The central scriptures that we've been referring to in these lessons are found in Matthew chapter 22, where Jesus tells us the greatest commandments.

And so let's refresh our memory and open our Bibles to Matthew chapter 22, verses 35 through 40.

Matthew chapter 22, verse 35. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law?

Verse 37, Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all of thy heart, all of thy soul, and all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment.

[1 : 0 1] And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. And on these two commandments hang all of the law and the prophets. Amen. Let's pray. Lord Jesus, I thank you, God, for your word.

I thank you for the idea of discipleship, God. I thank you, Lord, for the idea that we could be disciples of you, that we could be disciplined followers of you, Jesus. And I pray, God, that your word would help us, God, become that, that your word would touch us today, God, and touch our minds and change our hearts and our hearts' desires, God, that we would be a disciple of you, a disciplined follower of you, God, that we would follow in your footsteps, Jesus, and that we would be pleasing unto you, God.

I pray that you touch us all with your word today. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. You may be seated. So let's just do a quick review.

It's been a minute since we started this series of lessons. And so we have learned that when we love God like we're commanded to do, because thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, and mind.

Thou shalt love your neighbor as yourself. We understand those are commandments, just like thou shalt not steal, right? And so they're commandments. And so when we love God like we're commanded to do, it will lead us to and help us find salvation through repentance and being born again of the water and the spirit.

[2 : 3 1] We've learned this. We've also learned that when we are to love ourselves because we're of great value to God. I hope you remember that lesson, that we are to love ourselves.

And we can tell how valuable we are to God because of what he was willing to do for us and what he was willing to pay for us. He was willing to lay his life down for us.

God of glory was willing to leave his throne in glory and take on flesh and be born of a virgin. And to experience all the things that we experience, all the temptations that we experience, all the issues of life that we experience.

He was tempted in all things and he was without sin. And he was the perfect spotless lamb that was to be in our place for our sins.

And he was willing to give himself and sacrifice himself. And so we understand that based on his sacrifice and we understand that we are to be followers of Christ and to understand that what such great sacrifice he made for us, that we must be of great value to him.

[3 : 43] And we're to understand that we're to be a royal priesthood. We're called to be a royal priesthood in the kingdom of God and that we're a temple of the Holy Ghost. We learned about that. And so we don't want to defile the temple.

We're to live separated lives from the world. That doesn't mean we don't talk to people in the world. That doesn't mean that we don't hang out with people in the world. That doesn't mean that we don't have dinner with the people in the world or we avoid them.

That means that we don't think like them. We don't talk like them. We don't act like them. We might not go to all the same places they go to. We might not partake in all the same things that they partake in.

We don't talk like them. We don't look like them. We don't even smell like them. and I'm not trying to be rude, but sometimes you can smell the world, and so we're to be holy unto God because our God is holy, and he's called us unto holiness, and it's not because that we think we're better than anybody in the world. That's not what we're, what I'm trying to say. That's not what the way we think. We're not better than those in the world.

We're, we're just as sinful as they are, but the difference is that we serve God. The difference is that of who we serve, we've decided that we're going to serve God instead of serving things in the world, and so we understand all that, and tonight we're going to learn about the obvious part of what the second commandment is, which is like unto the first, so remember the one that was subtool that you kind of had to really look at and break it down was to love our neighbors as thyself, meaning that we should love ourselves, but the obvious part of that is that we're to love our neighbors, so let's learn about this love your neighbor part tonight, and so I want to direct your attention to Luke chapter 10.

[5 : 31] Luke chapter 10 verse 25, and behold a certain lawyer stood up and tempted him saying, master what shall I do to inherit eternal life? What is it with these lawyers by the way?

What's he, a lawyer, another lawyer stood up and, and said, master what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, Jesus said unto him, what is it written in the law? How do you read it?

How readest thou? And the lawyer said, thou shall love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy, and thy neighbor as thyself. So he knew, he knew what I'm trying to teach you guys. He knew that. And he said unto him, thou hast answered right, this do, and thou shall live. He asked, how do I get eternal life? That was the question. And he told him the two greatest commandments, the ones that we're studying. In verse 30, and Jesus answering said in, verse 29, I'm sorry, verse 29, I'm sorry. So then the lawyer says, the Bible says, but he, speaking of the lawyer, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, and who is my neighbor? And who is my neighbor?

And verse 30, and Jesus answering said, a certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Verse 31, and by chance there came down a certain priest that way, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. The priest crossed the street and walked around.

And verse 32, and likewise, a Levite, okay, the Levites were one of the 12 tribes of Israel. They're the ones responsible for the temple, okay? And likewise, a Levite, when he was at that place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side. Verse 33, but a certain Samaritan, now a Samaritan is, in those days, the Jews considered them like dogs. They were half Jews and half something else. They were considered mixed breeds. They were half Jews and half Gentile.

[7 : 57] It could have been, they were just not full-blooded Jews. They were looked down upon, okay? And so verse 33, but a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was, and when he saw him, he had compassion on him, and went to him, and bound up his wounds, pouring in oil and wine, and set him on his own beast, and brought him to an end, and took care of him. Verse 35, and on the morrow, when he departed, he took out two pence, and gave them to the host, and said unto him, take care of him, and whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again, I will repay thee. Verse 36, which now, Jesus asked him, which now these three thinkest thou was neighbor unto him that fell among the thieves?

And the lawyer, he said, he that showed mercy on him, then Jesus said unto him, go, and do thou likewise. Okay? This is a super powerful story, and it's known as the Good Samaritan. That's what it's known by.

And I've heard this taught many different ways, okay? Many different examples out of this. Everything from breaking down racial barriers, to having compassion and mercy, those are some obvious things that you can see in this story. There's a lot to learn from the Good Samaritan, but it's possible that the main point of this story, that Jesus is teaching this lawyer, has been missed, okay? And it's simple when you actually really look at it and understand what the context really is. So first of all, let's remember why Jesus is telling this story in the first place. The reason for the story is because the lawyer asked Jesus, what must he do to earn eternal life? So the question is about eternal life. This is about, how am I saved? How do I get to make it? How do I get to make it to the end with you and get to continue eternally? How do I, the great reward, how do I get this? How do I obtain this? What must I do to be saved is the question. And Jesus is answering that. And he answers with the two greatest commandments that we've been talking about. That's discipleship. It's the two greatest commandments. Everything hangs on those two things. And Jesus asked, how do you interpret the law regarding that? And he answered correctly. He gave him the two greatest commandments. Love God with all your heart, soul, and mind, and your neighbor as yourself. And Jesus acknowledged that that was the correct answer. That is how you obtain eternal life. You have to have those two things in order. You have to understand those things and you have to put those things into practice in order to obtain eternal life. Jesus acknowledges that 100%. It's right there in scripture. And he reassures the lawyer that if he does those, those things, he will have eternal life. Okay. So the same should be true for us today. And it is true. But here's the purpose and the point of the story. The Bible says that the man was trying to justify himself.

And so he's only really concerned about securing his own salvation. He's, he's looking past the point about the neighbors. Really. He understands that he can quote it. He can, he can relay that information back to Jesus. But the point that the very mere fact that he asked, well, who is, who's my neighbor?

He, in the Bible specifically says that he's trying to justify himself. And so his only concern is about his own salvation. Even though he answered correctly that he, he's to love his neighbor as himself.

[11 : 52] Jesus didn't accept what the man had done to that point for others. Because Jesus is God all knowing. In the flesh, he could look that man in his eyes and know his whole entire life.

And come to the conclusion that yes, you know how to answer this question. You know the right answer. But you haven't been, you don't, you may not understand it. You haven't performed it.

Or whatever it is. Because you haven't really been loving your neighbor as yourself. Okay. And that's, that's the contention here. That's the, the, the topic of concern. It's not whether he loved God enough. It wasn't whether he loved God with all of his heart, soul, and mind.

That wasn't even what Jesus, he probably did. But that's not enough. Because we, and it probably wasn't that he didn't love himself. He probably did. He probably had a big ego.

It was the one thing that Jesus pointed out was about his neighbor. And that was the original question in order to obtain eternal life. Right? That was the original question. And so the original question really, and Jesus, that Jesus is bringing, pointing out now, is was he neighborly enough?

[13 : 05] That's really what this boils down to was, was that man, that lawyer, was he neighborly enough to earn eternal life? Because remember, we're talking about eternal life. You can love God with all your heart, soul, and mind. And you can live a life of holiness. You can dress right. You can talk right. You can act right. You can avoid all the places you shouldn't go. You should, you could show up every service. You'd be the first one here and the last one to leave. And be as holy as possible.

And do all those things. But if you're not neighborly enough. And that's the whole point of this story of the Good Samaritan.

It's about how neighborly are we. And so that is the whole point. And get whatever other spiritual nuggets you can from the story of the Good Samaritan. But the main point is to have eternal life. And to have that, you have to fully adhere to both of these great commandments. And so we better learn what it is to love our neighbor in the context of this commandment. In the context of what, how God, how Jesus expects us to love our neighbors. And so the following story in which the religious leaders of that time, the ones everyone looked at as righteous and holy. They walked past them. Remember the priest walked past them. Remember the Levite walked past them. Those are the ones that everyone looked to as the holy ones. The ones that were closest to God. The ones that knew the word of God the best.

The ones that you looked to as examples. And they all went on the other side of the street. And it was the least likely of the three that stopped and was neighborly to the man in need.

And so following that story, Jesus told the man to go and do the same. Have a sense of urgency about your neighbor. And that's what we have to do. We have to have a sense of urgency about our neighbors.

[15 : 13] And who's our neighbor? It's the people around us. It's the people in our life. It could be a family member. It could be literally our neighbor next door. But you walk outside the the these church doors on our way out and just look around and that's our neighbor. This is where we're called to be to serve God's kingdom. Every person we walk by around here is our neighbor. The priest and the Levite had no sense of urgency for the man in need. They had a false sense of security in their own salvation. Our salvation is secure based on the actions we take to care for others as ourselves.

And that's the whole point of the story. So this story shouldn't be known as the Good Samaritan. It was more than just a story to convince people to help those in need. Okay. You can't fulfill this just by being in the Red Cross or going and help rebuild the houses in Haiti or something.

Although it is that too. But that's not all of it. The story should be known as the save another to be saved story. That's what we're talking about. We're talking about eternal life. We're talking about salvation. And we have to understand that everyone in this world can relate to the man that fell among the thieves. Everyone in the world, everyone sitting here today, everyone that ever listens to this message online in the future, whatever it is, every person in this world can relate to the man that fell among the thieves. We have all been subjected to the works of the devil. As the man in the story was robbed of his raiment, wounded and left dead. And that's the state of everyone in the world that has not yet experienced the truth, not yet experienced salvation like we have. We have all been robbed of our royal raiment, wounded and left for dead with a terrible curse of death. And that's the work of the devil. And that's what the work of the devil was in the Garden of Eden. That's his work that he did.

And the reason you're sitting here today is because you have already benefited from a Good Samaritan. We've all benefited from a Good Samaritan, someone who understood what I'm preaching about today, someone that was willing to share this gospel with me, someone that was willing to share the gospel with you, whether you grew up in it and it was your parents or your grandparents or whatever it was, or maybe you didn't grow up in it and somebody else had to share that with you. But we're all reaping the benefits. If you're sitting here today, you're reaping the benefits, because somebody understood this and put it into action. Okay. And, but now we're called to bind our neighbor's wounds and to carry our neighbors by our own means. He put that man on his beast, the Bible says. That means he got off his high horse and put his neighbor on the high horse. Okay.

And he took him to get taken care of and provide that safe place while that he recovered. And that's what we're called to do. We're, we're to carry our neighbors by our own means, provide them a safe place while they recover and see it to see it through to completion. Like he did, he paid the endkeeper and said, if this is enough, when I come back, I'm going to, I'll pay the rest. Even if it requires things of us, we have to do this. It might, it's going to require things. If it takes time, it takes effort. It takes resources. It takes money to do what the good Samaritan did. And it, and it's no difference for us today. We have to make an investment into our neighbors. It's going to take these things to do that. Nothing's changed since we, this story took place. Nothing's changed in the way this works. It still works the same way today. And that is our calling as disciples of Jesus Christ.

[19 : 02] That is the Royal law. The Bible calls it the Royal law that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. James chapter two, verse eight says, if you fulfill the Royal law, according to the scripture, thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself. You do well, it's the Royal law. The Royal, it's the only law in the whole Bible that's called the Royal law. So we got the two greatest commandments. And then, and then the Bible describes as the Royal law, and that's loving our neighbors as ourselves.

It's the Royal law. It's because it's sovereign status. It has sovereign status among all the other laws. God takes this loving others business seriously. He's the, the perfect example to look to and to what is his highest, greatest expectation, loving others. He was moved with love for others.

That that's what moved him to the cross. That's what moved him towards the cross is his love for us. And so we, it has to be in our DNA. If we're disciples of Jesus Christ, we, nobody demonstrated it better than Jesus did. And so if we're to be disciples of Jesus Christ, we're to follow in his footsteps. And so today we're not walking and following in Jesus's literal footsteps like the apostles and the disciples of Jesus did during that day. We're, we can't, we don't see his footprints in the dirt, you know, and follow. We can't look up and see him walking and follow him. That's not how it works today. That's not our experience today. But now we have his spirit dwelling in us and we are to follow after the leading of the spirit. Okay. And we're still talking about the two greatest commandments. We're still talking about loving our neighbor as ourselves. And, but we're also still talking about how to earn eternal salvation, how to earn eternal life, because that's also part of the subject here. So that, but the evidence of our salvation is walking in the spirit of Christ. Let me show you some scriptures. There's, there's a lot of teachings out there about how to be saved. Uh, what, and what signifies salvation, but God's words clear on what the actual sign of salvation is. Now you, the grace of God comes to you and you get an opportunity to respond to his word and, and hear Acts 2 38 and repent, be baptized in Jesus name and, and receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. And you put that into action. You, okay, you're in the door. You, you've made it in, but then we have to stay saved because it's a, it's an active thing that we have to do. Remember all the rest of the epistles from Romans to Revelation is all about what we must do. Once we've experienced salvation, the, the salvation experience is just the beginning of our life and our walk with God. Okay. And so how do we stay saved? What are the actual signs of salvation? How do we know we're still saved? Let's look at Romans eight and one. There is therefore no, now no condemnation to them, which are in Christ Jesus who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit. So we're to walk after the spirit, if we walk after the spirit, that means the spirit walked first and we walked after we're following after the spirit. If we do that, we don't have condemnation.

Our sins continue to be remitted. Our, the blood is still covering us as we walk and follow the spirit. Okay. Romans eight and five for they that are after the flesh, the ones that go after the flesh, do mind the things of the flesh, but they that go after the spirit, the things of the spirit.

Romans eight and nine, but ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit. If so, be the spirit of God dwell in you. Now, if any man have the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. If you don't have the Holy Ghost, you're not his. And we are to follow after the spirit. It's going to lead us and guide us into the things that God wants us to do. That's how we follow Jesus today. That's how we follow Jesus. We understand his word. And when the spirit moves, we move just like they did in the wilderness. When that pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night move, they moved. And when, and when Jesus came, when, when God robed himself in flesh and Jesus appeared, what they followed him, drop your nets and follow me. They followed after him, the spirit. And then today, how do we do it? We have the spirit dwelling in us. And when we follow after the spirit, we're still to follow after the spirit.

[23 : 32] Okay. And so, uh, while he was on this earth, Jesus is going from town to town, healing and delivering everywhere he went. And that's, that was the purpose of Jesus Christ to destroy the works of the devil. Sin brought in death and, and sickness and disease is the precursor to death.

Nobody dies of old age. They die of a disease that's common in old age. So we're all gonna, we're, we're sentenced to die. Okay. Because of what happened and all these diseases and things that we have to go through in life is just the precursor to that. We're just, it's just, we're born to die. Literally we're born, get to a certain point and then it's all downhill from there. And that's our life in the flesh.

Okay. But the good news is that the purpose of Jesus Christ was to destroy those, that works of the devil that, that came into place to destroy that. And like I said, although he's not walking here in the earth today, the spirit is now in us. And as it says in Romans, his children, okay, it's in us. And we are, uh, that body of Christ that we've talked about. He's the head of that body that we've talked about. And so what do you think about, what do you think that the spirit of Christ would be doing if he was here in the flesh right now? If he was here in the flesh right now, what would, what would Jesus be wanting, leading us to do? If he, if we were following him, literally, where would we be? Would we be in here all the time? He did go to the temple. He did, he did preach, you know, to people. He did teach people. There was fellowship, there was interaction, there's all the things. So we would be here sometimes, but there's a whole missing part that most Christians today, most Pentecostal, United Pentecostal churches don't participate in.

And that's the whole other half of what we're supposed to be doing. And that's going out and finding people going out into the next town, going, finding people going to where they are, the people that are in need. That's what he did. He had compassion on the people everywhere he went.

And so if, if he did that then, he would be doing this. He, he's doing the same thing through the spirit in us now. He's trying to lead us and guide us to spend our life, uh, building up our careers.

[25 : 58] No, that's not what's important to the spirit of Christ. That's not what's important to him. It, he, he's trying to lead us and guide us to Disneyland for a vacation. No, he's not trying to lead us and guide us to Disneyland for a vacation. I'm sorry, Miles.

I'd appreciate an amen. What do you think the spirit is, would be trying to lead us and guide us to do? He would, he would, he's still concerned for lost souls. The spirit of Christ is still concerned for lost souls. He's, he would be leading us and guiding us to destroy the works of the devil. The same, the mission hasn't changed to break the chains of sin and death that grips all the loss of this world.

And if we're walking in the spirit of Christ, our purpose is destroyed or works of the devil. It's the same purpose. The purpose hasn't changed. Luke 19 and 10 for the son of man has come to seek and to save that which was lost. That mission has not changed. The spirit is still seeking and to save those that are lost. And now it's in us and it's, it should be drawing us and pulling us in a certain direction.

And we can't resist that. We can't. Cause when we do, what we're doing is we're walking across the street and walking on the other side, past the ones in need. And we're being a Levi and we're being the priest that's in that story. We're not being that good Samaritan. But if we submit to the leading of the spirit, then we, and we actually follow after spirit and we're, we're neighborly. That's what it, what it becomes. We're, we're fulfilling that second command. It's so important. Remember it's like unto the first. It means it's just as important as loving God with all your heart, soul, and mind.

It's just as important as that. And that's how our salvation comes from walking in the spirit of Christ. Jesus did not save himself. He saved others. He didn't save himself. He saved others.

[27 : 59] If we have the spirit of Christ and we fulfill that, we have to fulfill that same calling with love for our neighbor. That, that is the intent and the purpose of the gift of the Holy Ghost is to lead us and guide us into the things that God wants for us to do. And we have to follow after the spirit.

Ephesians 5 and 29, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth it and cherisheth it. Okay. So there's, there's, there's something innate. There's something built within us that we fight for survival. We want to take care of ourselves. We do what we can to make it. We know we were made for eternity. We know that we want to live with God. We want to please God. We, we, you know, we've, we've experienced salvation. We want to make it to heaven. We, we understand all that. But the second commandment that which is like unto the first and all the laws of the prophets hang on it, include the expectation that we would care for others as we care for ourselves and that we do everything we can to obtain and ensure our own salvation with that same fervency, that same attitude towards our own salvation. We should strive to bring salvation to our neighbors. And in doing so we secure our own salvation. This is the only way to truly fulfill the Royal law, to love thy neighbor as thyself.

You can feed them every day. You can, you can take them to Disneyland every day. You can do the most wonderful, spectacular things for your neighbors, all you want to do. But if you never tell them about Jesus, if you never teach them a Bible study, if you never invite them to church so they can experience the presence of God like we do, if you never invest in them, if you never bind their wounds and, and put them on your own means and take them in to a safe place, then it's all for nothing.

Those other things don't matter. And that's not being neighborly. It's not loving your neighbor as yourself. So in closing, I want to look at the scene of Jesus experiencing his cross.

Jesus is hanging nailed to a cross in Matthew chapter 27. He's suspended on the cross, nailed to a cross, fulfilling his mission that he came to do to destroy the works of the devil. And ultimately, that's how he was able to do it. So he's there in Matthew 27 verse 39. And let's look at the scene of Jesus as he's experiencing his cross. What was going on? What were people doing?

[30 : 40] Matthew 27 verse 39. And they that passed by reviled him, wagging their heads and saying, thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself. If thou be the son of God, come down from the cross because he, he has said, I'm going to destroy this temple and rebuild it in three days. And he's talking about his own, his purpose. He's talking about his resurrection, but they took it literally of that. He's going to destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days.

Okay. And they're, they're wagging their heads. I'm just seeing them snap their fingers and in their little head wag. You said you're going to do it. Let's see you do it.

They're mocking him. If you're, if you're the son of God, come down from the cross. And it says, likewise, the chief priests mocking him with the scribes and elders said, he saved others himself. He cannot save. If he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross and we'll, we'll believe him. If you, if you are who you say you are, come off the cross and we'll believe you. We'll worship you. We'll follow you. Just come off your cross. And the Bible describes at the scene of the cross, they mocked him. Jesus saying he saved, he saved others himself. He cannot save. And this thing that they're saying, it's actually true.

It is true. It is true. They weren't lying. This thing that they're saying is ironically true. Jesus did save others, but because he chose to give his life on the cross to do that, he could not save himself. So what they're saying is true. He, you know, he saved others himself. He cannot save. That's true. But notice the attitude of his enemies, the ones who put him on the cross.

In verse 42, the chief priests and the scribes and elders also said in verse 42, if he be the king of Israel, let him now come down from the cross and we will believe him.

[32 : 49] It's the enemy of God, the enemy of God that demands a crossless Christ, a Christ without a cross. That's the enemy of God that would demand that. It's the enemy of God. And it's not a true disciple of Jesus Christ that demands a crossless walk with Jesus. We're not going to have a walk with Jesus. We're not going to be a disciple of Jesus without a cross.

Let's stand. Hear me today. If you aren't making extreme, extreme sacrifice because the cross was extreme. If you're not making extreme sacrifices to advance the kingdom of God by undoing the works of the devil and following after the spirit, you cannot call yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ. You simply cannot. If you're not making extreme sacrifices because Jesus made an extreme sacrifice, the cross hurt the flesh. The cross was unpleasant.

The cross was a burden. The cross was an instrument of death and torture. We, we see people wearing necklaces with crosses. You see crosses and it has become a symbol of, of Christianity and mercy and grace and something positive. But really a cross was a device the Romans made to torture people to death.

You go back in time to that day and you see a cross, you wouldn't have the same feeling as you do today because it was meant to kill in a, in a vicious way.

It was meant to hurt and kill. It was an instrument of death. Matthew chapter 16 verse 24. Then said Jesus unto his disciples, if any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it. And whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. And so I want us to leave here tonight with the understanding that the cross has not changed in its nature. The cross that Jesus says that we as disciples of Jesus Christ are to pick up and follow him, that cross, it is still an instrument of death. It's still an instrument of death.

[35 : 15] Jesus didn't bear his cross for himself and we as disciples of Jesus Christ don't bear a cross for ourselves. Jesus experienced his cross for others. We have to experience our cross for others.

When we love God with all of our heart, soul, and mind, and we love our neighbors as ourselves, the cross that we bear is also for the sake of others and the advancement of his kingdom and his purposes. We cannot be focused on our own life and saving others at the same time. You can't do it.

We can't be focused on our own life and fulfilling the purposes of God's kingdom. Jesus wasn't focused on saving himself while he was on the cross. While he was carrying the cross to where he was going to be crucified, that wasn't him focusing on his life. It was him focusing on his mission. It was him focusing on what was to come. The kingdom of God was being established. He submitted himself to the cross so that he could save others. And that's what the disciples cross is. It's a sacrifice of our own personal life so that it's a sacrifice to save another. Amen. So being true disciples of Jesus Christ cannot be reduced down to just warm, fuzzy experiences like many false Christians out there like to think that it is. Every true Christian, every true disciple of Jesus Christ understands that we're in a life and death spiritual war for the hearts and the souls and the minds of our neighbors. And so that's what we need to be focused on. Lord Jesus, I thank you, God, for your word today.

I hope it opens our eyes.