

The Parable of the Wise and Foolish Builders

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[0 : 0 0] Well, apparently there are more here than was anticipated. Oh, ye of little faith. So if you haven't got an outline, put your hands up and we'll make sure you get one.

I think the base is covered. I'm of the generation, and some of you will be too, when whether your parents went to church or not, they sent their kids to Sunday school.

And we did, and I liked it. And I can still recall the songs I learned back in Sunday school, as you probably can too, and the actions. So for fun, I thought we'd begin.

I'll do the actions, and tell me if you can remember the song. Okay? Sound good? Just... Sing it out. Terrific. That's good. Well done. Well done. That's a great start.

[1 : 1 0] And then there's, if you're happy and you know it. If you're happy and you know it, stamp your feet. Move your ears. Say the Apostles' Creed. And whatever. And then this one.

The wise man built his house upon the rock. The wise man built his house upon the rock. The wise man built his house upon the rock.

And the rain came coming down. You're going well. And the rain came down and the floods came up. The rain came down and the floods came up.

The rain came down and the floods came up. And the house upon the rock stood forever. Well, I think you should quit while we're ahead, and I'll just close and pray. And the next verse is, And the foolish man built his house...

And the sandal came crashing. Then the final verse. So, build... Well, let's do it. Build your life on the Lord Jesus Christ. Build your life on the Lord Jesus Christ.

[2 : 1 1] Build your life on the Lord Jesus Christ. And the blessings will come down. The blessings come down. The prayers go up. Okay. So, build your life on the Lord.

I'm available for hire, if you want to be. So, I mention that because... It reflects how I think most people understand this parable. Another bit of memory lane stuff.

You won't admit this publicly. Do you remember Cliff Richard? Yes. He had a song called... Jesus is the rock, and... He rolled my blues away.

Do you remember that? No. You won't admit it. I know you do. You won't admit it. But it's the same idea. Jesus is the rock, and when the blues... Tough times come. Rain, stream, storm.

If we trust him, we'll come through and be firm. That's the basic... Most... The most popular understanding of the parable. And if you rip the parable from its context... You can see it that way, I guess.

[3 : 1 0] If you rip it from its context... Which you won't do tonight. We'll see it in its context... And see the very powerful meaning that it has.

I teach preaching, as I've just said. And an important thing is conclusions. I tell the people I preach... End well. I aim for what I call...

The killer ending. That really drives it home. Well, tonight... We're going to hear... I think... The killer ending to a sermon.

The Sermon on the Man ends... Not with a whimper... But a bang. Which makes it sad... That so many people get the ending wrong. I'm going to give you tonight...

A bird's eye view of the sermon... So you understand the context. We know it well... It's sublime sayings... Blessed are the pure in heart... Turn the other cheek...

[4 : 1 0] Don't judge... Do to others... Have them do to you... It's essentially the sermon... A description of Christian discipleship... And the key verse... Is Matthew 5.20...

Unless your righteousness... Which in Matthew is... Are good deeds... Exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees...

You'll never see the kingdom of heaven... And then we have throughout the sermon... Many, many commands and exhortations... To this righteousness... Don't harbor anger...

Don't lust... Keep your word... Love your enemy... Don't do your righteous deeds... To be seen by people... And praised by them...

Seek first his kingdom... And if you read this parable... By itself... Without the context of Matthew... You could get the impression... The parable is saying... The whole sermon is saying... Do these things...

[5 : 09] And you'll be saved... Turn the other cheek... Keep your word... Seek the kingdom... And you'll find salvation... And with that... Outside of context...

It sounds like... A work of salvation... So you've got to read the sermon... In context... That's why Matthew begins... With chapter 1... Not chapter 5...

In chapter 1... We meet Jesus... Whose name means... He will save his people... From their sins... It begins with announcing... The saviour has come...

You turn the page... To chapter 2... And the coming of the wise men... The Magi... God by a star... Gets them to Jerusalem... By the Bible...

Gets them to Bethlehem... And they see the saviour... And fall down and worship... These Gentiles... These pagans... These stargazers... Are saved... What grace... Then right before the sermon...

[6 : 07] In chapter 4... Our Lord quotes to the disciples... Isaiah 4... Galilee of the Gentiles... The people living in darkness...

Have seen a great light... And those living in the land... Of the shadow of death... A light has dawned... So you see... With Jesus coming... Where there's darkness...

There's now light... Where there's death... There's now life... Where there's judgment... There's now salvation... So the context of the sermon... Is grace... The grace of life...

And light... And salvation... So because he's shone his light... Upon us... And given us life... This then is how we should live... Here's our response... To salvation... And the amazing grace of God... And just to begin... It begins... With the Beatitudes... In describing people... Who live this way... This is you and me... They are the poor in spirit...

[7 : 05] They mourn... They hunger and thirst... For righteousness... They're pure in heart... And merciful...

And peacemakers... And therefore... They're persecuted... And those people... Says Jesus... Are the salt of the earth... And the light of the world...

What do you mean by those terms... Salt and light... Well he tells us... Let your light shine before people... So that they may see your good deeds... And glorify God...

Show forth... For God's glory... Your good deeds... Shine... And if you ask... Well Lord... What are those good deeds... He goes on to tell us... Don't bear anger...

In your heart... Don't lust... Keep your marriage vows... Keep your oaths... Care for the needy...

[8 : 10] Don't seek revenge... Love your enemy... That's chapter 5... Then chapter 6... Don't do these deeds... So people will praise you...

Don't amass wealth... For yourself... Trust God... To meet your needs... See in essence... It's a life of love... So he ends the sermon...

With chapter 7... Verse 12... So in everything... Do to others... As you have them do to you... For this sums up... The law and the prophets... Now let me say two things...

In the light of this... Number one... This kind of life... Is not... An optional extra... For disciples... We must live this way...

Trust... And obey... Because he says back in 5:13... You're the salt of the earth... But if salt... Has lost its saltiness...

[9 : 14] It's good for nothing... Except to be trampled out... And trodden underfoot... A saltless Christian... Is a waste...

You're the light of the world... You're a city... Of lights... What's light do? It shines... You put it on a hill...

So all can see... If you don't want your light... To shine in the city... Stick it in a forest... Or a valley... But a city and a hill... Must be seen... The light can't be not seen...

And the Lord calls this kind of life... In chapter 5 verse 20... The greater righteousness... Which succeeds that of the Pharisees... Now I often do a little...

Kind of test with people... I'll do it with you... I won't do it with you... I won't embarrass you... I say... Hands up those who think... That their righteousness...

[10:13] Surpasses that of the Pharisees... The most religious people... Of their day... Now I won't say... Hands up because people... Are scared to put their hands up... Because they know... There's a trick there... There's always a trick...

When a preacher says that... They know it's a trick... So I won't say... Put your hands up... But in your mind... Do you think... Your righteousness... Surpasses that of the Pharisees... If unsure... Let me ask you this question... What words... The Lord use... Again and again... To describe them... Hypocrites...

They are whitewashed tombs... Glowing on the outside... Full of death inside... When they make a convert... They make him a hurt... Twice as fit for hell... They tithe... And reject... Mercy and justice... And their cranny achievement... Is they loathe Jesus... And tried to kill him... And did so... That's their righteousness... Now you can put your hand up...

[11:11] Does yours... Surpasses theirs... Yes... Yes... Of course it does... So that's the point... It should... Surpasses theirs... That's the sermon... In a nutshell...

That's what we signed up for... As a disciple of Christ... To live that way... To live in essence... The life of love...

That's the sermon... And now he ends... As many sermons do... With a challenge... It's stark and simple...

Having heard this sermon... We have two clear choices... Do... Or don't do... Live this way... Or don't live this way...

And he drives it home... Again... And again... And again... And again... Verses 13 to 14...

[12:09] Enter through the narrow gate... For wide is the gate... And broad is the road... That leads to destruction... And many enter through it...

But small is the gate... And narrow is the road... That leads to life... And only a few find it... Remember... This is a sermon... Addressed to disciples... Not the crowds... But disciples... To you and me... It's striking in the sermon... How many... Metaphors... Similes... Illustrations... Parables Jesus used... Over 30... And often... Like here... Not explained... We're to work them out... By the context... He begins... With two pictures... Of roads... And gates... So in your mind... Picture... A wide road... And a broad gate... And a narrow road...

[13:09] With a narrow gate... We like wide roads... That's why I prefer... Melbourne... To Sydney... Isn't that right... If you live in Sydney...

When they built Sydney... They planned for the future... We live on King Street... Wide road... In Sydney... They never planned for the future... They planned for a horse and cart... So... There are roads... That's why... You're taught to... The first complaint... Is the traffic... It's so hard to get around... We can get around here... Fairly easily... We love wide roads... And... This metaphor... Is common in the Bible... The road... For how we live... The metaphor... For life... Psalm 1... Blessed is the one... Who does not walk... In step with the wicked... And what's the end of the wicked... But the way of the wicked... Leads to destruction... So there's this wide road... This way of life... That many... Walk...

[14:05] And find destruction... There's a narrow road... That leads to life... And few find it... It's about how we live... It's again... The distinction between... The greater righteousness... And that of the Pharisees... You've heard it said... It's okay to divorce... It's okay to hate your enemy... It's okay not to help people out... Take revenge... To ignore the needy... Wide road... But I say to you... Keep your vows... Don't seduce... But love... Narrow road... Two ways to live... So... Our Lord's making two points... In these little pictures... The first... Is the number... The division... On the roads... Is between...

[15:03] The many... And the few... And Jesus' point is simply... That there are more... Phony Christians... Than real Christians... More nominal... Than genuine... More who fall away... Than persevere... That's...

The parable of the sower... As we'll see later... The other point is... In the short parables... That walking... The narrow road... Is by definition... Harder... Than walking... The broad one... Harder... To drive around... Sydney... Than Melbourne... I used to go to... Before COVID... To Rwanda... Every year... And teach preaching... And... I was with a group... Called... African Enterprise... And we begin each day... With devotions... And I was giving a talk... One morning... On forgiveness... I gave my talk... [16:00] And sat down... And the leader said to me... Mike... There's a man here... Who wanted to pray for him... And then another...

And then another... And another... And another... Now... If you know the name Rwanda... You know the association... Genocide...

In 1994... 800,000 killed... Butchered... In a matter of weeks... By neighbours... Some of whom were Christians... Many were Christians... And there were men there...

I take it... Who had seen their families... Butchered... And for 25 years... Had harbored... I think... Understandably... Anger...

How hard would it be... To get up... And say to someone... Who killed your wife... Your kids... I forgive you... And they stood there... This row of men...

[16:56] Saying Mike... Pray for us... We want to forgive... Easy not to... Hard to forgive... The narrow road...

And it's a road... Our Lord's talking about... A way of life... It's not talking about... Isolated acts... We all fail sometimes... We get angry... We lust...

We play to the crowd... Break... I would even... Sometimes get divorced... But he's describing here... A lifestyle... A way of living...

The kind of behaviour... That marks consistently... Our lives... It's the road... We choose to walk... The life... We choose to live... And if we live that way...

The end of the road... Is life... That's point one... In the conclusion... Point two... Is the same thing...

[17:55] With a different picture... This time... It's not roads and gates... It's fruit... And trees... And the focus is... False prophets... In the Old Testament...

They were the Jewish... Religious leaders... In Jesus' day... The Pharisees... The Pharisees lie behind so much... Of what our Lord says... The sin is basically... A word for disciples... Against the Pharisees...

They're the false teachers... And they come... Like wolves... In sheep's clothing... On the outside... They look like they're part of the flock... They look like they're the real deal...

They follow the shepherd... But they're phonies... Inside vicious... Cruel... Killers... Of the sheep... And... The surprising thing is... How our Lord tells us... We'll know them... Not by their deeds... If that's true... But by their words... And...

[18:57] Sorry... Not by their words... But by their deeds... By their fruit of righteousness... Their fruit of lovelessness... Yes... I'm sorry...

You know the Pharisees... By their lovelessness... Their hypocrisy... Their merceness... They're judgmental... The true believer... Bears good fruit... Paul picks this up... In Galatians 5...

We bear... The Spirit's fruit... Love... Joy... Peace... Patience... Gentleness...

Kindness... Goodness... Faithlessness... And self-control... Good fruit... Then there are... The works of the flesh... Wrath... Sexual immorality...

Debauchery... Hatred... Impurity... Envy fits of rage... Two trees... Different fruit... Again...

[19:58] Let me make... A couple of points... First... Again... He's not talking about... Isolated acts of... Sin... Or... Disobedience... We all sin... We get angry...

Impatient... Are unkind... Harsh... Impure... We're still sinful people... But that is not the essential mark of our lives... We're not...

Perfectly loving... Loving... But we are... Consistently loving... We're not perfectly patient... But we are... Consistently patient...

The good tree... Will bear good fruit... The nature of a good tree... And of course there are... In any order... Differences...

Some trees are full of luscious juicy fruit... In your baskets... Others less so... But the point is...

There's fruit there... Which is observable... Thirdly...

[21:01] 21 to 23... Not everyone... Who says to me... Lord... Will enter the kingdom of heaven... But only the one...

Who does the will of my Father... Who is in heaven... Then you will say to me... On that day... Lord... Did we not prophesy in your name... And in your name... Drive out demons... And in your name... Perform many miracles... Then I will say to them plainly... I never knew you... Away from me... You evil doers...

An important point in teaching... And teaching of course... Is repetition... To drive a point home... To drive a point home... To say it... Again... And again... And again... So people get it... And the Lord... Repeats here... His main point... Four times... This time though... With no metaphors... Just plain teaching... And he makes clear... That the distinction...

[21 : 59] Is drawing... Is not between... Christian and non-Christian... But between... Disciple... And disciple... Just look at what they have in common... Both call him Lord...

Both claim... He's the master of their lives... What do they do? They... They prophesy... They cast out demons... Do mighty works... He might add today... They run in my name... Orphanages... They serve in soup kitchens... In my name... They lead the music team... In church... They... Preach on Wednesday night... In Sunday night... Summer studies... Do mission trips... Teach Sunday school... Run youth group... Are pastors... And deacons... And parish counsellors... What did Paul say... In chapter 13... Of 1 Corinthians... If I have the gift... Of prophecy... And can fathom... All mysteries... If I have faith...

[22 : 58] That can move mountains... If I give all I possess... To the poor... But have not love... I gain nothing... I gain nothing... So those things...

Aren't the mark... Of a true disciple... Then what is... So Jesus tells us... The one who does... The will... Of my Father in heaven... And if you ask the Lord... What's that will... He'll say... The last two and a half chapters... It's the life... Of greater righteousness... Of loving the enemy... Of keeping your word... Of being generous... Of seeking the kingdom... And how... Or when will we know... Which is which... Who is the true disciple... Who is the false... Verse 22... [23 : 59] Many will say to me... On... That... Day... What day? What's the great day... Of the revelation... Of the secrets of people's hearts? The great day of separation... Sheep... From goats... Wheat... From tears... Wise... Bridesmaids... The day of judgment... That's the day... When we'll know... Who's who... And what's what... Martin Luther said... There are only two days... In my calendar... This day... And that day... And then I think... One of the scariest verses... In the whole Bible... On that day... [24 : 58] Many will say to me... Many walked the broad road... And many... Enter through that road... To destruction... And few find it... And so we come... To the end of the sermon... To the... The killer ending... We sumpt up all he's saying... With a picture... Of two builders... He calls them... Wise and foolish... So when you hear the terms... Wise and foolish... Where do you go to in the Bible? Well... You go to Proverbs... Don't you? What's wisdom in Proverbs? It begins... For gaining wisdom... And instruction... For understanding words of insight... Doing what is right... And just... [25 : 59] And fair... That's wisdom... Righteousness... Justice... Fairness... The greater righteousness... Love... And what's the beginning of wisdom... We're told... The fear of the Lord... Why fear him? Well... We've heard... And we'll hear it again... He describes... The work of these two builders... One built his house... On the rock... One on the sand... Nothing... Outwardly... To distinguish them... Like the two confessions... Both call him Lord... Both do miracles... Both prophesy... There's two houses... Both... Three bedroom... Red brick... Double garage... They look the same... On the outside... What do you mean by these pictures? [27 : 05] What's the rock? What are the houses? What's the sand? Well... He tells us plainly... The wise man... Who built his house... On the rock... Is everyone... Who hears these words of mine... And puts them into practice... He said it... Again... And again... And again...

By their fruit... You'll know them... But only the one... Who does the will of my Father in heaven... The wise and foolish man... On the rock and the sand... Are pictures of those... Who either do... Or don't do... The words of Jesus... So what's the storm? The rain... The streams... The winds... And what's it mean that one stands... And one crashes? As I said commonly... People say... Well it's the storms of life... The rocks... Jesus... That's nowhere in the Sermon on the Mount... What's the event... [28 : 05] That'll show the true disciple... From a false one... He's just told us... What's the harvest... That will reveal a fruitful tree... From a fruitless one? What's the event... That will show whether... A person stands or falls... On... That... Day... That's the wind... And the streams... And the waters... How did God destroy the world? In a flood... Rain and water... How did God destroy Pharaoh's army? In the sea... What was Job's judgment... To be thrown into the storm... It's the storm... Of the judgment day... To live now... In the light of that day... And that's why... The fear of the Lord... Is the beginning of wisdom... [29 : 07] In context... The problem of the meaning... We could not be clearer... The problem sums up... All he's been saying... For three chapters... A disciple of Jesus... Hears his words... And does them... Or... In the famous words... Of his brother James... Be doers of the word... And not... Hear his own... I think he got that... Straight from Jesus here... And we do that... Because the day is coming... The day of destruction... The day where those... Who don't bear good fruit... Are cut down... And thrown into the fire... Then I'll tell them... Away from me... You evil doers... I never knew you... [30 : 07] And it fell with a great crash... That's a... Pretty sober stuff... Isn't it? Let me make two comments... I just said... That we obey Jesus' words... Because a day of judgment is coming... And that should be... A motivation for obedience... But not the only one... Or even the main one... We love... Because he first loved us... It's the cross that motivates obedience... Both... And love... Both to God and others... So... To repeat what I said... In the beginning... The whole context of this sermon... Is grace... It's grace... Which motivates obedience... It's grace... Which gives us the power... [31 : 07] To obey... That changes us... You may have heard the story... Back in 2008... The Times newspaper in London... Ran an article by a man called... Matthew Paris... The title was... Missionaries... Not aid money... Are the solution to Africa's greatest problem... The amazing thing is... That Matthew Paris... Then and still today... Is an atheist... He described... The land he grew up in... He saw the work of... Government charities... And he was impressed... But then he wrote... But travelling in Malawi... Refreshed another belief too... One I've been trying to banish... All my life... But an observation... I've been unable to avoid... Since my African childhood... It stubbornly refuses... To fit my world view... [32 : 13] And has embarrassed my growing belief... That there is no God... Now a confirmed atheist... I've become convinced... Of the enormous contribution... That Christian evangelism... Makes in Africa... Sharply distinct from the work... Of secular NGOs... Government projects... And international aid efforts... These alone... Will not do... Education and training alone... Will not do... In Africa... Christianity... Changes people's hearts... It brings... A spiritual transformation... The rebirth is real... The change is good... In the city... Yet working for us Africans... Who have converted... And were strong believers... The Christians... Were always different... Far from having... Cowed or confined as converts... Their faith appeared... To have liberated... [33 : 14] And relaxed them... At 24... Travelling by land... Across the continent... From Algiers to Niger... Cameroon...

The Central African Republic... Then right through the Congo... To Rwanda... Tanzania and Kenya... Wherever we entered... A territory... Worked by missionaries... We have to acknowledge... Something changed... In the faces of the people... We passed and spoke to... Something in their eyes... The way they approached you... Direct man to man... Without looking down... Or away... As you know... It's evangelism... It's the gospel... Of Jesus... Which leads to conversion... New birth... And a life of obedience...

And only that... Secondly... One of my saddest experiences... As a preacher... Was some years ago...

[34 : 14] At a men's convention... I spoke in this sermon... And I said the kind of things... I said tonight... At the end... Two young men...

Walked up to me... One... Was upset... No more than upset... He was angry at me... Well I think of Jesus... But I'll take the blame... He said...

I didn't want to come today... I knew you'd say... I knew you'd say... That if I'm angry... I'm a murderer... If I lust... I'm an adulterer...

If someone rips me off... They give them more... I knew you'd say that... And I can't do it... And when I try... I just feel worse... I come... I hear these things...

And I walk away... Feeling worse than when I came... I wish I hadn't come... And I tried to... Encourage him... And... It didn't work... I can appreciate how he feels...

[35 : 13] But it's not how I feel... I love this sermon... I love this sermon... Like you... I genuinely hunger...

And thirst for righteousness... I want to be like Jesus... Don't you? I want to be merciful... And pure in heart...

And generous... And generous... I love to be with people... Who are peacemakers... And go the extra mile... And keep their word...

I love that... And the great news is... That the one who gives the command... Gives the power and the resources...

To keep them... He gives us his word... His spirit... His people... He makes this kind of life...

[36 : 18] Our delight... And our joy... And our passion... We don't do it perfectly... Far from it... But we do it consistently...

And when we fail... As we do... Remember... At the heart of this sermon... Is a prayer... And at the heart of that prayer...

Is a petition... Forgive us... Our sins... The heart of this sermon... Takes us...

To the cross... To the place of forgiveness... And cleansing... Where we go... Repent... Are empowered... To rise again...

Tomorrow morning... To shine as lights... In the world... In Melbourne... For the blessing of others... And the glory of God... Let me pray...

[37 : 23] Father... We thank you so much...

For... Sending to us... The Saviour... Who both... Washed our sins away... By his blood... And then sent us... His spirit...

To live lives... That please you... And bless others... Again we pray tonight... Forgive us our sins... Cleanse us... Fill us again...

By your spirit... That we might... Be men and women... Of love... Pure in heart... Merciful... Hungry for righteousness... Bearing the fruit of the spirit...

Keep us persevering... We pray... Keep us loving you... And fearing you... And that day... Until we see you...

[38 : 23] And you welcome us... And call us the blessed... And bring us into your kingdom... We pray this in Jesus name... Amen... Thank you... Thank you...

Thank you... Thank you... Thank you... Mike... For your word... Both challenging... And full of grace... As well... I'll just give you a minute... Maybe if you want to...

Catch your breath... Have a drink of water... And the rest of you... May have some questions... In your mind... Maybe you're formulating them... At the moment... So you can either...

Raise your hands... Or... You've got my number... At the back... So either way... It's always... Most difficult... To be the first one... And then after that...

They just keep coming... So... Who wants to... Kick things off? Sorry... Yes...

[39 : 23] Thank you Mike... Um... You said that... We will sin... We... We are sinners... That's been my experience... Yes... And I just wanted to...

Get the... Get the verse here... It says... Every... Likewise... Every good tree... Bears good fruit... But a bad tree...

Bears bad fruit... A good tree... Cannot bear bad fruit... And a bad tree... Cannot bear good fruit... So... Is our sin... Not...

A good tree... Bearing bad fruit... Yes... I think it's the nature... Of a parable... And a metaphor... To have these kind of... Stark contrasts... So...

I mean... Our Lord could... Then... Just... Could keep qualifying things... But the nature... Of the imagery... He uses... I think... So the wise man... Builds his house... On the rock...

[40 : 18] He doesn't... Well... He doesn't obey all the time... He just... He is an obedient person... So I think he's talking about... The general... Consistency... And orientation... Of a person's life...

So that's the way a parable works... There are... Of course... If you take it apart... As you're not meant to... Then there are qualifications... But the point he's making is... This is the consistent mark... Of the true disciple...

I think they're similar... So I'll read them both... Mike... And then... If you think they're different... Then answer it separately... First one... How would you define the fear of God... And how do you... Not grow complacent... To the fear of God... Whether it's because of time... So the first one is... What do I mean...

What does the Bible mean... By the fear of God... Yeah... Yeah... I think... You hear people say... It's respect... Or awe... Or reverent worship... I think it's more than that... I think it is...

[41 : 15] There's a degree of fear in it... And I think we fear... As I've said before... In the light of the coming day... Work out your salvation...

In fear and trembling... So fear and trembling... Go together... So that sounds mean... More than just... Deeply respect God... Paul says... Knowing the fear of God...

To persuade people... In the light of the coming judgment... So I do think... I mean it's not... Again... I don't know... It's not the dominant emotion...

Of the Christian life... We are people of love... Gripped by love... But... At the same time... I've just done Hebrews... At Belgrade Heights...

At the same time... Spoken to Christians... Our God... Is a consuming fire... It is a fearful thing... To fall into the hands... That's the last day...

[42 : 07] Of the living God... So I think the fear of God... Is a recognition of that day... Our Lord said... Don't fear the one... Who can... Kill a body... But not the soul...

Fear the one... Who can destroy a body and soul... In hell... That day... Fear that one... And that doesn't change for us... As Luther said... This day...

And that day... In my life... A banner... Every day... Judgment Day... Integrity... You know... I live... I live in the light of that day...

And I have a godly fear of him... To whom I'll give account... And I... But that goes alongside... My deep... Love... And... And that's the tension we live with...

I mentioned this at Belgrade... He's my loving father... And I relax in his presence... He's my awesome God... Before whom I tremble... And somehow in this life...

[43 : 01] We have to marry those two... And it's hard... So... I hope that answers the question... Yeah... Yeah... Next one... So I think... It follows and on from there... How do you not grow complacent... To the fear of God...

Whether because of time... Or because of... Understanding Jesus' grace... As in... Cheapening the grace... I guess... And then the other question... Maybe related...

Yeah... Is also on that day... If there is a way to know for sure... Today... Whether we're a true or false disciple... Or whether it'll only be revealed... Okay... Can I just... Have a look at that...

Sorry... It's a lot to take in... I'm reading very badly... Okay... Is there a way to know for sure... If you are a true or false disciple... Before that day...

Good question... Can you know before that day... If you're a true or false disciple... Well yes...

[43 : 57] So the heart of a man and woman... Is deceitful above all things... We can deceive ourselves... Let's be honest...

And... Our Lord wants us to be assured... Nothing will separate you... From the love of God... In Christ Jesus... But the danger then... Is to presume on that...

And be complacent... In our Christian living... So that's why the Bible... Gives that wonderful balance... Of deep assurance... At the same time... Fear... That we give an account to Him... Do I have... Am I... Am I the real deal... Without a doubt... I wouldn't be here tonight... I couldn't be here tonight... And preach this... And not be a man of integrity... Without a doubt... And let me say to you... With a clear conscience... What you see is what there is... And I trust you can say the same thing... [45 : 02] In your heart of hearts... But... Tomorrow is a new day... And I make sure I live tomorrow...

Like I've done today... With integrity... Blessed... So yes... You can know... And the other thing... The Christians... We're all different... Some have a very tender conscience... Don't they? And they sit... And they think... They think they've lost their self... Oh I'm a terrible sinner... I'm a woeful sinner... And you say... Angela... I know you... You're a godly woman... Don't be so hard on yourself... So some have a tender conscience... And here's tonight's words... And go away discouraged... Because they've got a tender conscience... Others have a seared conscience... And go away tonight... And think... That's not me... When perhaps those around you... Would think... Well actually brother... Sister... We're not so sure... [46 : 00] So... If you ask me... Which kind of... Disciple am I... I'd say...

Tell me about yourself... Do you love Jesus? Do you hunger and thirst for righteousness? Is that what you long for above all else? Etc, etc... If you say yes... I say... Well I see in your life... The fruit of the work of the Spirit... And genuine trust in God... Be assured... But... The last day will reveal it... So... There'll be three kinds of people here tonight... Those who stand with me and say... Yes... For all my sins... I know I belong to him... And I seek to serve him... Those who say... If you really knew me... [47 : 02] As God does... You couldn't give me the word of assurance... And those caught in between... And to those in between...

I say again... What's your heart? What's your passion? What's your desire? That comes from the Spirit... I see they're the mark of those... Who truly love God... Whose faith... Is genuine... I hope that's... Helpful... Give your phone back... Yeah... Any others? Fiona... Hi Fiona... Mike... You mentioned that... This... I think the reading that we had tonight... You said was addressed to Jesus' disciples... Yes... Rather than to the crowd... There in the background... Okay... How... I can't see that in the text... Okay... [47 : 58] Good... Can you show us that... And what difference does that make... To this section... Yes... Um... So he begins in Matthew 5... Now when Jesus saw the crowds... He went up on a mountainside... And sat down... His disciples came to him... And he began to teach them... And I take it that means the disciples... With the crowd... So the thing is... The sermon is not primarily evangelistic... It's for disciples... Blessed... There you go... Blessed are the poor in spirit... Which in the Old Testament... Are the faithful people of God... So all those terms... Poor... Mournful... Hungry... Are all terms drawn from Psalms and Isaiah... To describe... You know... In Israel... There are two Israels... The majority... While of Abraham... Were faithless... Rebels... Idolaters... Unjust... There was in the middle... [48 : 52] A remnant... The faithful few... Who loved God... Were obedient... And were persecuted by... The majority... Cain killed Abel...

Joseph's brothers... Tried to kill Joseph... So it goes on... The nation... Tried to kill Moses... And Aaron... It goes on... The faithless... Persecute the righteous... Who are the poor in spirit... The mournful... The meek... He said... That's you... Blessed are those... So he's talking to them... To describe their discipleship... But in the back... There are the crowds... Listening in... Who are Jewish... And we hope that... As they listen in... The penny will drop... Oh... Oh... Oh... That's... I want to be part of that kingdom...

I want what he's offering... And they'll be saved... But the focus is... That's why I say... The distinction throughout the parable... Is between disciple and disciple... Lord and Lord...
[49 : 48] It's written... It's designed... It's written to... Christ... Those who claim to follow Christ... That's... One question here...

What are some shortcuts to God... Or easy paths... The voice... Here... There right there... Mark, it's you... I'm really... Sorry... What are some shortcuts to God... Or easy paths... That you may be tempted to follow...

Are there shortcuts to God... Well... One might be...

All that matters is faith... As long as you have faith... And it's good to have works... They're helpful... Once you trust in Christ...

All that matters is faith... So really... How you live... It's not irrelevant... But it's got little to do... With any real salvation... So just keep trusting Jesus...

[50 : 45] That can be disastrous... When you read the sermon... Well... Read the whole Bible...

Faith... Where that works... Is dead... Salt... Has lost its saltiness... The light doesn't shine... That's...

That's a shortcut... For I think... That'd be dangerous... Now... I mean... The flip side... Of course... Is to take what he's saying here... As the way to get saved... Of course it's not...

We're saved by grace... Through faith... For a life of good works... That's one shortcut... That I think... Is dangerous... And maybe to avoid...

The hard things... Blessed are the persecuted... It's a narrow road... That leads to life...

[51 : 42] It's a hard road... That leads to life... So maybe... Detection to avoid that... When hard times come... That can be... A shortcut... Which can be dangerous... I guess...

Okay... We might have one more... Tell me... I'm around afterwards... If you want to... Chat with me... Yeah... Privately... Yeah... Mike's going to hang around... Can you give a bit more context... On the true and false disciples...

And what is the difference... Because... Both appear to be... Trying to follow Jesus' instruction...

That is... I presume the question is saying... They're hearing God's...

Jesus' words... They're trying to obey... Yeah... I don't know... That both are trying to follow... A law of instruction... Which maybe implies... Both are hungering for righteousness... It doesn't say that... I guess he just says... It just says... Certain actions... You do... Don't indicate true salvation... We've all heard of pastors...

[52 : 41] Who've proven to be duplicitous... Immoral... And we all know people who... Claim to be a keen disciple... Have lived a lie... So what he's saying is...

Don't make those things... The measure... That someone is a disciple... The measure is what he's... What he said throughout the sermon... Is the person merciful...

Is the person merciful... Does he or she have a heart of compassion for those in need... Do they keep their word... Do they hunger for God...

Is their heart good... Is their heart good... Are they peacemakers... Or peacebreakers... The things he's taught us... About obeying him...

That's the mark... Not that... You're a preacher... Or... Or the church treasurer... Or a good song leader...

[53 : 43] That's where it can be... I guess... Deceptive... So again...

Look back... At the desire of the heart... And how that desire... Then expresses itself... Not perfectly... But consistently... Now...

Maybe like... I confess my sins... Every day... I repent... And confess... Every day... Because every day... In thought... Word or deed... I let my Lord down... But I do think...

By his grace... I like you... Live a life... Of consistent obedience... To the one who gave himself for me... That's...

What Paul calls... Walking... In the spirit... That's the mark of a Christian...