

Tares Among The Wheat.

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Date: 29 September 2024

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[0 : 00] Thank you very much for that. Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here. I am in a little bit of a different role than I was the last time I was here.

Last time I came from Slave Lake as the pastor of the church there, now I come from La Crete as the conference missions director. And it's been a bit of an adjustment for us, for myself, even as I was just introduced as Pastor Billy. Technically not really a pastor anymore, but someone once told me, once a pastor, always a pastor. It's kind of like when you've been a president of the U.S., you know, they'll always call you Mr. President even if you've been out of office for years. And I feel like when your heart has been molded by God to shepherd His flock, that never changes. And so, I've been mulling around the idea of retitling myself the missions pastor instead of missions director. Maybe that's something that I'll write down one day. I don't know. But glad to hear you're praying for Florida as well. I was watching that on the news, or I just heard a little bit of it. And just to get a bit of an idea of how bad it is in Florida, the sheriff of the county where it was supposed to hit, or one of the main guys anyway, he told the people that were staying behind that refused to evacuate, because there's always those people.

He said, I want you to write your name, your birthday, and your next of kin on your body with a sharpie so that we can easily identify your body. 20 feet of storm surges coming off of the ocean.

It was a very, as was shared, a very devastating storm. And so, we want to keep them in our prayers. I would like to share a few things with you today. I want to do a bit of a presentation.

I don't know if we've got a blue screen up there yet, but it's coming. I want to share with you a little bit of what our conference is doing in missions. Obviously, all of our churches need to be informed about what we're doing.

[2 : 23] Now, fortunately for us, Abe Klassen comes around every once in a while. I'm not sure when the last time Abe was here, but he shares what he's doing in high level with the native ministry. And so, I share on behalf of our Bolivian ministry. Now, you guys have a connection to Bolivia, even if some of you don't know it. Your pastor, Pastor Wayne, used to serve in Bolivia as a missionary. And so, you guys have that kind of connection. And we've been privileged to send a new couple down to Bolivia in the last little while, actually. Daryl and Muffet Gertzen, they went to Bolivia in the end of August, early September. A year ago, in January 2023, actually almost two years now, Daryl and myself, Daryl and Muffet and myself went to Bolivia with several other people just to see what was going on in Bolivia, just to become acquainted with that ministry. When we came back, Daryl mentioned he was amakley in a good way, uncomfortable. He had a draw to Bolivia. He asked me, he said, do you feel the same way? I said, no. Not even a little bit.

I said, if there's anything I know about my ministry, it's that I am not called to Bolivia. Now, ironically, as a missions director, the vast majority of my work goes through Bolivia, what's going on there and dealing with missionaries and different things. But I am not called to Bolivia. The language is primarily Plotich in Spanish.

Acomplotich reden, but not well. I can speak it a little bit. I'm actually going to Bolivia here in November, and I'm going to be preaching in German, so please pray for me. That's going to be a challenge and an exercise. But Daryl and Muffet arrived in Bolivia, and their primary job is going to be renovating a building that we've had there for many, many years. It's called the Casa de something. Again, that's where my language problems kind of come in. But they...so they arrived in Bolivia, and they got straight to work. Daryl is not the kind of guy just to sit around Muffet either, and so they began to clean some things. And one of the things that they thought was interesting was the interesting animals that they were able to meet. According to one brave young lady, there's too many spiders in Bolivia to be scared of them. Daryl was counting on his wife to kill that spider for him. One day they went to church, and when they came home, they had a few unhaunted guests in their church...sorry, in their garden. A couple cows decided to wander in. That's apparently a common thing in San Jose. There's also benefits to living in Bolivia, so if you feel like you're called to

Bolivia and you want to, you know, contact me, there are beneficial things. It's not just spiders. Daryl's new best friend is the ice cream man who comes around every so often. And I think Daryl's going to get a share in that company, as much ice cream as he's going to enjoy from him.

And then there's also freshly squeezed lemonade from lemons found on the property. So for those of you who have...you might not be from Bolivia, maybe you're from Mexico, and you have, you know, you know what it's like to live in a tropical climate where you can actually just walk up and get the lemon straight from the tree. Daryl is quite content with that.

[5 : 59] But the actual reno project itself is quite intense. The building has got a lot of moisture damage, and that's what they're going to be doing for right now. I told Daryl, I'm...again, I'm coming there in November, and I expect my room to be top-notch. And so Daryl told me, well, then you need to raise the money so that I can do the job. So we're working together a little bit. So far, we've raised \$12,000 of our \$30,000 goal to that renovation. So again, if you feel led, if you would like to contribute to that, that is what we are planning to do there.

After the renovations are complete, Daryl and Muffet are going to be the caretakers of the home, just general maintenance. And Daryl has a heart. They both have a heart for the Mennonite people. And so the idea is that they want to build this place. It's actually sort of like a hotel, a little mini hotel. I think there's like 10 rooms or less. And what they want is to build a place where people are comfortable to come to stay a night, and they can minister to them. Maybe they're coming into San Jose to do some doctor's appointments or different things, and to get back to the colonies. Too much for one day's travel. And so then they want to have a place where they can minister to these people. And so that's their heart, and we're looking forward to that.

We do have a couple other projects for your consideration. Also in Bolivia, we have the Amanacer project. I don't know if you've heard of it. Raise your hand if you've heard that before, Amanacer. Okay, some of you. So another project that we have going on is this Amanacer project, which is a small parcel of land that we bought right beside the Belize colony in. Tres Cruces. How many of you have heard of Tres Cruces? A few. So our heart is obviously for the colony people, people who are trapped in a life of fear. They do not know Christ. All they know is God is always angry, and I hope that I'll be good enough. Right? That's the general gist of the people coming off the colony. And so what we did is we bought a parcel of land right beside the colony.

You literally have to drive right by it to get off the colony. And so what we want to do right now, the building that you see there, that's actually the school, the church, the everything building.

And we want to build a Team Lado, which is a big multi-purpose building. And we plan on sending a team up in November to finish that, or sorry, in January. And so if you want to be a part of that, you just need to give and designate your giving to that. We also, speaking of Abe Klaassen, we do have a bit of a project going on for him. That building that Abe uses is not his, but because we get rent really, really cheap, we do renovations to the building as kind of a thank you.

[8 : 47] And so as you can see, I don't know if you can see it really well in the picture, but those are old windows, and that building gets cold. And so we have ordered windows. The cost is around \$6,000. If you'd like to give to that project, you can also do that. Just designate Abe Klaassen window project. I just wanted to show you a few more pictures of a Montessor. We have three buildings on the property now. This all started like in November of last year, and already we've got the three buildings. There's a missionary couple that live there, as well as our Nancy Friesen, who is a teacher, and she is taking care of all of the paperwork and everything that goes into building all of that. And so we're very thankful for those folks that are living there, but we also look forward to helping them with a little bit something else. And so that is all I had for that presentation. I'm finding this a little bit challenging, giving a presentation, and then how do I transition that into a sermon? I'm not good at the transition, so this is just going to be where we stop and pause, and then we will move on. And so I'm just going to unplug this, gentlemen, if that's all right. And then we will make a quick transition here.

So, as you heard in the Scripture from Matthew chapter 13, Jesus gives His parable about the tares among the wheat, and you might be thinking, how are you going to preach on that?

Well, I have, as a pastor, I have a burden for God's people. As a missions director, I have a burden for those who do not know Him. And so you carry this two-fold burden, and when you go into a church, you have to try to figure out how to balance that. I want to preach to the church, but I also want to preach to those who do not know Him. And so these are the kind of messages that come out of that. Now, I don't know how many of you follow politics, but in politics there used to be a distinct line between what they call the left and the right, conservative versus liberal, right?

But some people try to play both sides. They say they're conservative, but they really don't act like conservatives. We like to call them Libcons in Canada. In the U.S., they call them RINOs, Republican in name only. And according to this parable that we read, the church has the same problem. There are, according to Jesus, tares among the wheat.

There are people who are Christian in name only. They look like wheat. They grow like wheat. But in the harvest, it will become very clear that they were not ever wheat.

[12 : 21] And they have been planted by the enemy. This I found fascinating. As I was pondering this portion of Scripture, this part was fascinating to me. Why would he do that? You ever ask the why questions?

I always ask why questions. Why would he do that? Why would the enemy take tares and plant them in and among the wheat? What benefit could he possibly get? Because there is a risk, is there not? Think about it.

If you take non-believers and you put them in and amongst the believers, what do you risk have happening? You're risking them hearing the gospel and becoming a believer. You're risking your tare being turned into a wheat. So, for the devil, as we've read, the enemy has done this. The enemy has taken tares and put them among the wheat. There's got to be a reason. And it would appear that tares among the wheat is worth the risk taking. See, apparently that the damage that is inflicted by the tares to the church, to the wheat, is worth it.

So, what is a tare? Well, one commentary writes, the weed spoken of by Jesus was probably the darnel plant, closely related to wheat and virtually indistinguishable from it until the ears form. Darnel seeds contain a toxic compound, which can cause nausea, vomiting, convulsions, and even death if ingested. So, when Jesus is talking to these people and he's talking about tares among the wheat, these people know this because these tares are dangerous. They understand this. If you made flour with a little bit of wheat and some tares amongst that with your seeds together, your bread could kill somebody. That's dangerous.

And so, when Jesus gives this parable, the original hearers would have known what he's talking about. The Christian tare also has some key characteristics.

[14 : 51] When they spread throughout the flock of God, the tares can discourage, they can distract, and ultimately leave the wheat disillusioned, stunting its growth.

So, this is where my heart comes in because on the one hand, I want to see all the tares turn to wheat. I want every single person who attends church who does not know Christ to know him. But on the other hand, I also want the Christian church, I want the wheat to grow and spread and make and multiply.

That is where my heart is, right there. Jesus' command. Make disciples spread throughout the world. So, do you know if you're a tare or not? That's a bit of a question.

See, I wrestle with giving messages like this because I know one thing that Christians often wrestle with is assurance of salvation, especially for those of us who come from a Mennonite background.

When you come from a Mennonite background where you were told that you cannot even know that you're saved. From this tall, as soon as you're old enough to remember, you remember hearing from the pastor that you can never truly know if you're actually saved. Now, for those of you who don't have a Mennonite background, you're like, what are you talking about? No, it's a thing. It is, truly.

[16 : 30] And so, when you do actually become a Christian, a lot of times there's in the back of your head, but am I really? And so, as a preacher and as a pastor, I'll say pastor, I wrestle with giving these kind of messages because I don't want to heap doubt on somebody who's already wrestling with doubt. But here's the thing, and I'll see if this makes sense to you. I would rather a true believer doubt his salvation than a false believer be confident in his delusion. Does that make sense?

Because if you're a true believer, you're still going off to be with the Lord. You might wrestle, and you might struggle, and you might, you know, drag your feet, and you might have all sorts of challenges, but at the end of the day, the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in heaven. And so, I feel like even though this may be a challenge for a believer, the risk for the unbeliever is worse because he's walking through the world confident in his ability to be a Christian, confident that he's good enough.

And then one day, he stands before Jesus Christ, and he hears, depart from me, I never knew you. Can you imagine what that day is going to be like for that man or that woman?

So, do you know if you're a wheat or a tare? Well, the one key characteristic of a tare among the wheat, they love the world. They simply love the world. You see, what they have done is they have attempted to add Jesus onto their life. They have a generally good life, right? I got a happy family. I've got a good job. I've got good things going on, and Jesus, he's a good part of my life. He completes the package.

It's like I've got a puzzle that's almost fixed, and I just add Jesus to the puzzle, and everything is good. Jesus is a part of a tare's life, but they have never renounced the world. They have never turned their back on the world.

[18 : 50] I still love the world, but I go to church on Sunday because it makes me feel good. It makes me feel better. And then Billy Dirksen shows up, and hopefully, by God's grace, the Spirit of God will make you very uncomfortable.

Terrors love the world. You see, repentance requires turning away from sin, the lusts of the world.

Terrors just want to add Jesus to their life. Ask him into my heart, and just everything is okay. We actually see examples of this in the Scripture. Near the end of the book of Colossians, Paul writes about his companions who have supported his ministry.

In Colossians 4.14, we read about Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, who greet you. Then again, in his letter to Philemon, Paul sends salutations on behalf of Epaphras, my fellow servant and prisoner in Christ Jesus.

Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellow laborers. These two men are mentioned both times, Lucas and Demas. We know what happened to Luke.

[20 : 11] He wrote a book. You might have heard of it. Actually, too, the book of Acts is also his book. But what happened to Demas? In 2 Timothy 4, we find out what happened to Demas.

In verse 9, Paul requests that Timothy do his diligence to come to him. Because, as we read in verse 10, Demas hath forsaken me.

Demas was mentioned twice as a companion of Paul, followed Paul on his missionary journey, even ministered to Paul in prison. But Demas forsook Paul, and by extension, forsook Christ.

So what happened, Demas? Why? What could have possibly caused Demas to turn his back on Paul and on Christ? Well, Paul explains it in verse 10.

Having loved this present world. Demas loved the world. He was able to fake it for a while. He was able to act like a Christian.

[21 : 17] I mean, think about it. It would have been kind of an exciting thing. This was the new religion of the day. This was all new. And so, Paul is this missionary that's going around, and he's preaching the gospel, and it's exciting.

You're going from town to town. You get to travel and see the world. People would just give you money, and you could just go travel. For Demas, this was exciting. So he joined on with Paul.

He said, I'll help you, Paul. And so he's ministering to Paul. Maybe he was making food. Maybe he was, you know, changing bandages. You know, Paul got beat up a lot. Whatever it was, Demas was there to help.

But after a while, Demas started to realize, this isn't fun anymore. This isn't exciting. Paul's just sitting in prison, and I'm just sitting here with him.

What a waste of life. I could be doing better things with my time. And so what did he do? He forsook him. Forget it.

[22 : 17] I'm done. I walked with you, Paul. I did it, but I'm done. You see, for the tares among the wheat, the cross is too much to bear.

They want comfort. They want ease. They want prominence. They want pleasure. Because that's what the world offers. Demas is just one example.

There's also Diotrophes and 3 John, if you want to write those names down. What did Diotrophes want? They want preeminence. He wanted to be the one in charge in church. You've heard of these people.

You might have seen these people. They come into a church, and they want to run everything. They want to be the one that says what we're doing, where we're spending the money.

They want to be the one that people come to and ask questions, because they want to be the ones with all of the answers. They don't actually want you to grow in your faith. They want to be the guy, the center, the focus.

[23 : 19] That's what Diotrephes wanted. He loved the world as well. Demas and Diotrephes, these tares have been among the wheat from the beginning. So what is the threat?

Well, we talked about it a little bit before. The tares discourage, they distract, and they leave the wheat disillusioned. How do tares discourage?

I'll give you an example. Recently, I was speaking with a missionary friend of mine from Mexico, and he was talking about going home, and he said, I don't like going home.

I said, why in the world would you not like going home? You get a chance to go home on furlough. Like, how exciting. You get to see family and friends. And he said to me, when I go home, I am always reminded of how much I'm wasting my life.

I'm told that I'm a bad father for taking my children to Mexico to work on a mission field. I'm told that I'm a bad husband for taking my wife. I'm told that I'm not a real man because my work that I do on a mission relies on the giving of other people.

[24 : 37] This missionary goes home, and he's discouraged. And, tears are always intensely practical.

You see, because tears, because they don't actually have faith, tears don't like to see radical faith. They don't like to see someone step out in faith.

Tears want to have every T crossed and every I dotted. They ask practical questions like, if you give that much money, how will you pay your bills?

They'll offer advice like, make sure you take care of yourself first. Jesus says in Luke 6, 38, give, and it shall be given unto you.

Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, shall men give unto your bosom. For with the same measure that you shall use, shall be measured back to you.

[25 : 39] See, the principle in Scripture is you cannot out-give God. You give Him everything, He gives everything back. Now, this isn't a prosperity message, because I'm not telling you that you're going to get money back.

But God will bless those who give. Sometimes they will pretend to be concerned for your family, and they'll say things like, won't your kids be bitter if you're too involved in church?

If your calendar is too involved in missions, what about their opportunity to be with friends? Well, Jesus said this in Matthew 10, verse 37 and 38, He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me.

And he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that does not take his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me.

Jesus said it a lot more plainly than I would have. Now, this, I don't believe that this means that I need to sacrifice my family on the altar of ministry.

[26 : 53] What does it help me to go and preach the gospel and lose all of my children? Okay, I'm not, that's not what I'm talking about. But the point is, is that radical faith and obedience to Christ may result in sacrifice, it will result in sacrifices in your life.

But God will bless those sacrifices as you give yourself wholly to Him in ways that you won't even understand. I'll give you another example in our own life.

When we first decided to move to Slave Lake 15 years ago, it was the first time in my life that I did not have a job. I mean, when I started working. This is like working from two years old, just, you know.

No, when I started working in the workforce, I always had a job. And when I went from one job to another job, I always had a second job lined up before I quit the first one. You know what I mean? You're always planning ahead.

Except this time. I knew we were called to Slave Lake. I knew that God had something for us. And so I quit my job at Quality Motors. And I remember the day that I was leaving, I said to my wife, I said, I'm not coming home.

[28 : 06] I'm not coming home until I have a job. I didn't know. I found out later that one of the mills had just shut down and laid off 138 people at the same time that I'm going to Slave Lake to look for work.

Practically speaking, this is a bad idea. What about your kids? Well, kid at that time. What about your wife? But I knew what the Lord wanted us to do.

So I went. And I got a job at the first place I stopped. The Lord provided graciously. Always does.

You see, the tares will continually caution against radical faith and they will discourage the wheat. The tares will also distract the wheat.

You see, because tares love the world, they're always involved in the things of the world, the entertainment of the world. And they want you to be as well. They're uncomfortable if you come up to them and you tell them that you actually have standards when it comes to things like entertainment.

[29 : 22] They don't want to hear that. They want to know if you've watched the latest movie or the latest movie series. They want to know if you're on top of the sports stats like they are.

They want you to be completely consumed with the things that they're consumed with. The world. Tares have time for everything except God.

You ask them how their Bible reading is going. Ah, I'm pretty busy. I'm just having a hard time getting Bible reading in.

I know I could read in the morning but man, how's your prayer life? Ah, it could be better.

You know, I have a real hard time praying. When was the last time you shared your faith with somebody? Ah, right. Shared my faith.

[30 : 23] That's the preacher's job. That's not my job. Would you like to join us for Bible study? Mmm, when is that? Wednesday night? Sorry, I'm busy.

Can't do it. Will we see you at the prayer meeting? We have those? You see, a tear has time for everything except the things of God.

Now, am I saying that Bible reading, prayer evangelism, and Bible studies and prayer meetings make you a Christian? No. But what I am saying is that if you have no time for any of these things, it is evidence of an unchanged heart.

It's evidence of a heart that does not see the value in drawing close to Jesus, in fellowship with His children, with His church, and serving in His kingdom.

You see, because when you become a Christian, all of a sudden you want to do those things that you did not formerly want to do. and every single born-again believer can testify to that fact.

[31 : 34] Finally, the wheat leaves us disillusioned, or the tares leave the wheat disillusioned. Genuine believers, and especially for young people, this is a danger. Genuine believers, they look out on the field of Christianity and they see that the church isn't what they thought it was or what it was going to be.

They ask a simple question. Why aren't the Christians acting like Christians? See, because when we come here on a Sunday morning, it's all pretty.

You got on your Sunday best. You know, maybe you're like me and you spent a lot of time doing your hair this morning. You want to make sure you're presentable. That's a pastor thing.

I don't know. But we come here and it's pretty. You look nice. You're a good-looking bunch of people.

But what about the rest of the week? And see, these people, they look out on the church and they see that the church isn't acting like the church. I remember we did a marriage counseling for a young couple out of La Crete.

[32 : 47] I don't know what it's like here among you young people, but this is what we heard from them. Because as you're doing marriage counseling, you talk about money, right? You talk about leave and cleave.

You talk about, you know, their relationship to their family and different things. And then you also talk about intimacy, right? Because you want them to know about these things as you are getting ready for marriage.

And I will always remember the girl that we were talking about, they said, well, we're actually one of the only couples that aren't sleeping together. I said, what?

She said, yeah. She said, it's normal. Teenagers do this all the time. And I almost, like, if I could have fallen off my chair, I would have.

Because there's, okay, I'll give you, there's gray areas in the Bible, you know, places where we can disagree. Fornication is not one of those areas. The Bible is pretty clear.

[33 : 51] And yet here, these kids that were going to youth group, they're going to church, they're going to the youth Bible studies, and they're fornicating together.

One of these things is not like the other. And so for the genuine believers who are doing the right thing, the challenging thing, for a young couple to stay pure, they're the oddballs with the Christians.

Barna Group, a Christian research organization along with Josh McDowell Ministries, partnered together to survey pornography use among the Christians. They found more than two-thirds of church-going men were reviewing explicit material on a regular basis.

two-thirds. The percentage among women is growing rapidly. And if you include romance novels as pornography, which they are, that number rises even more.

Young Christian adults, age 18 to 24, the number was 76%. Can you understand why this would be difficult for a young Christian, or any Christian for that matter, who is trying to follow God, who's trying to walk the narrow path, and they come to church on Sunday morning, and they know full well what their friends are doing, and nobody else is bothered.

[35 : 28] Nobody's convicted even. They don't struggle. They're diving into sin. You have husbands who are called to love their wives as Christ loved His church, refusing to do it.

Husbands ruling their house with an iron fist. I'm the king of this castle. This is my house. You are here to serve me. I'll be home when I'm home, and supper better be ready for me.

Christian men not loving their wives, and then you have wives refusing to submit to their husbands as the church does to Christ. a contentious woman.

Read Proverbs if you want to know what a contentious woman is like, and what it's like for a man to live with one. Christian kids rebelling against their parents, Christian businessmen just as hungry for money and greedy as the non-Christian businessmen.

Christian man. The disillusioned believer who wants to obey the Lord and take up his cross says maybe I am just a Jesus freak.

[36 : 50] I mean, if others aren't taking their faith seriously, why should I? If others can have all the fun in the world and call themselves Christians, why can't I?

2 Corinthians 15.33 says do not be deceived. Church, Christian, this morning, hear the words of the Lord. Do not be deceived.

Evil company corrupts good habits. A lot of times, especially young Christians, they say they want to go and win people to Christ, and so they join themselves together with unbelievers or tares among the wheat.

They know these people aren't living for Jesus, but they tell themselves that they want to be close to them so that they can lead them closer to Christ. And do you know what inevitably happens?

They're led away from Christ. It almost always happens that way because the scripture says evil company corrupts good habits. It will pull you the other direction.

[37 : 59] Do not be deceived. And so my concern, as I mentioned before, it's twofold. As a missionary director, I want to see a revival of mission activity in our conference and in our conference churches.

But frankly, it seems like the tares among the wheat are taking their toll. And I want to ask you some questions. And this is one of the great things about being able to deliver this message in a church like this. I don't know most of you.

And so you cannot say that I am picking on you. Because I don't know you. And so if it seems like I'm picking on you, then allow the Spirit of God to do a work.

Because He's the one picking on you. But I want you to ask some questions. Would you say that on average churchgoers are becoming holier or worldlier?

Would you say that on average as a church we are becoming more devoted to the mission of Christ or less? Are we more unified in our vision for reaching lost souls or less?

[39 : 13] Does the church seem to be growing in its desire to fulfill that? Do you grow in your desire to fulfill that? It's a question we need to wrestle with.

So on the one hand, yes, I want to see a revival in the mission field. I want to see a revival of people calling me and saying, Billy, I'm called to missions. What can I do? I want to see churches giving and just the coffers overflowing and the missions are like, I don't know what we're going to do with all this money.

we're just going to go find more people to reach. We're going to go find more people to serve. Not because I want money, I don't care, but I want you to be free to give to the cause of Christ because you want to see people saved.

But the second thing is I think about the ultimate end for the tears. and the reason that this is so personal for me, I'll give you a little secret.

It's not really a secret because I mention this every time I speak. I was a tear. I was a tear among the wheat. I went to church every Sunday. I had a Bible beside my bed and pornography underneath it.

[40 : 46] I thought I was a Christian and if you would have said I wasn't a Christian, I would have punched you in the face. Quite a Christian. Because I thought I was a Christian because I went to church.

I thought I was a Christian because my parents were. I thought I was a Christian because what else would you call me? What do you call somebody who goes to church and believes the Bible even if he never reads it?

I know what it's like to fake it. I know what it's like to think you're a Christian when in fact you're not.

And so my heart goes out to you, especially you here today. You young people who have been faking it so long. You older people who have been faking it so long.

You know full well in your heart there's no desire for Jesus. When you sing the song, what did we sing this morning? Second song, All to Jesus I Surrender, right?

[41 : 56] I Surrender All. Do you ever actually pause to think about what all means? Singing is dangerous because every word that we say we will give an account of on the Day of Judgment.

And if you stand up in a church and you say I surrender all and then you don't, what are we doing?

The ultimate end of the tears, Jesus explains. If you have your Bibles open to Matthew 13, we can read that. verse 36, then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house and his disciples came to him and saying, declare unto us the parable of the tares.

And he answered and said to them, he that sows the good seed is the son of man, the field is the world, the good seed are the children of the kingdom, but the tares are the children of the wicked one.

The enemy that sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the world, and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be at the end of the world.

[43 : 17] the son of man shall send forth his angels and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend and them that do iniquity and shall cast them into a furnace of fire and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

This is the end for the tares. And can you imagine what it is going to be like to have come to church, to have sat under good preaching, to have heard the gospel but refused to surrender truly to Christ, having refused to repent of your sins and be cleansed by Jesus at the end to be cast into the fire.

Paul echoes Jesus' warning in Philippians 3. He says, brethren, be followers together of me and mark them which walk so as you have us as an example. You see, Paul is pleading with the church, look away from the tares.

Do not watch the tares. And then he says this in verse 18, for many walk of whom I have told you often and now tell you even weeping that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ.

Christ, right now it's easy to come to church. It costs you nothing. Maybe a little bit of time. You had to get up on a Sunday.

[44 : 53] You could have stayed home, could have stayed in bed, could have got some extra sleep. But you got up. But ultimately it costs you nothing. But there is coming a day, and I'm not saying this as a prophet, I'm just saying this as somebody who looks out into the world and can see the trajectory of where we are headed.

There is coming a day when being a Christian in Canada will cost you, where it may become dangerous, where it may cost you financially.

There is coming a day when it is going to be dangerous. And if you don't surrender to Christ now, you will not surrender to Christ then.

if you are content being a terror now, you will most definitely be one then. Paul says, I've told you often that they are now enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.

Jesus loves his bride, and if you are a stumbling block to his bride, be warned. God will purify his church, and what will you do then?

[46 : 15] If you refuse to bear your cross now, you won't do it then. If the faith that you profess with your mouth has no works to back it up, if your faith shows no evidence of a changed heart, no actual true desire for Jesus, no desire to love him, and to serve him, and to grow in him, and to know him, if that's the kind of faith you have now, faith that is just out of your mouth, you look like wheat, you sit among the wheat, but you're not wheat.

what is the end according to Paul? Their end is destruction. Their God is their belly.

In other words, their God is their lust. Their God is their flesh. Their God is their pleasure. Their God is what makes them happy, and they most certainly will not take up their cross.

But I want to implore you today, take up your cross. Follow Jesus. Surrender your life to Jesus.

This is something that I remember thinking about when I still lived in Slave Lake. When I was younger, everybody, I knew very many people that smoked. Smoking used to be really popular.

[47 : 47] It used to be cool. You know, the doctor would smoke as he's doing, you know, your appointment. It's the craziest thing. But I remember thinking to myself, everybody that I know, as a teenager I had this thought, everybody I know is trying to quit smoking.

So why would I start smoking? Right? Nobody wanted to smoke, but they were all doing it. Well, I want you to, if you're a tear this morning, I don't want to, you know, point you out.

You know your heart better than I do. But I can make you this promise, that if you talk to any true born-again believer here today, you won't find one that says, I would rather be where I was.

There's not a single believer who says, I would rather live for the world than for Jesus. Every single born-again believer who is living for Christ, who is taking up his cross, and who is following hard after Jesus, says every little bit of suffering is worth it.

Because Jesus is worth it. Because Jesus is worthy. If you don't know Jesus, I can promise you taking up that cross is worth it.

[49 : 13] And even if you have to suffer for it now, the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. And so believer, I want you to take heart.

I want you to take courage. Philippians 3.20 For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able, even to subdue all things to himself.

The Lord Jesus, one day, is going to come back and he's going to make all things right. And he will send his angels and they will separate the tares from among the wheat.

And we will be with him in glory. And so I want to encourage you today, do not grow weary in well doing. Even if it seems like nobody around you is taking up their cross, don't put yours down.

Keep following after Jesus. It will be worth it. Give yourself wholly to him. And then one day you will hear those beautiful words, well done, good and faithful servant.

[50 : 35] Let's pray. Heavenly Father, Lord, we come before you this morning and again we thank you. we cannot begin to fathom how amazing your grace truly is.

Lord, that you would save a wretch like me, that you would die for your enemies, for those who opposed you.

Lord, that kind of mercy is inconceivable. That kind of love we cannot comprehend, but it is what you have written in your scriptures. You are worth all our praise and our honor.

And so this morning, Lord, as we close with a song for you, we pray that you would be blessed. We pray, Lord, that you would be glorified through this prayer and this song and this preaching and through our obedience to your word.

Lord, may Jesus be exalted. May all of our eyes be fixed on him. And Lord, if there are any tares among the wheat here this morning, you know the hearts.

[51 : 50] Lord, may your spirit, may your spirit absolutely attack them, pursue them. Do not allow them to continue in sin.

Lord, do not allow the enemy to take that word which was sown in their heart and snatch it away, but may they surrender their life fully to the Lord Jesus. God, we thank you.

We praise you. We honor you in Jesus' precious name. Amen.