

Not All Who Hear Truly Hear

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Date: 22 August 2021

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[0 : 00] The following message is given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in Athens, Tennessee.! For more information about Trinity Grace, please visit us at TrinityGraceAthens.com.

Mark chapter 8, we're going to dive into this wonderful letter yet again before we do baptisms down on the hill and see what God has for us. Mark 8, I'm going to be reading verses 1 to 2.

So if you'd have a copy of the scriptures, that would be helpful for you. Keep open and reference this morning. Mark 8. Mark 8, chapter 1, beginning in verse 1.

In those days, when again a great crowd had gathered and they had nothing to eat, Jesus, He, called His disciples to Him and said to them, I have compassion on the crowd, because they have been with me now three days and have nothing to eat.

And if I send them away hungry to their homes, they will faint on the way, and some of them have come from far away. And His disciples answered Him, How can one feed these people with bread here in this desolate place?

[1 : 24] So He asked them, How many loaves do you have? And they said, Seven. And He directed the crowd to sit down on the ground, and He took the seven loaves, and having given thanks, He broke them and gave them to the disciples to set before the people, and they set them before the crowd.

And they had a few fish, a few small fish. Having blessed them, He said to these also, should be set before them. And they all ate and were satisfied.

And they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full, and there were about 4,000 people. And He sent them away. And immediately He got into the boat with His disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha.

Verse 11, The Pharisees came and began to argue with Him, seeking from Him a sign from heaven to test Him. And He sighed deeply in His spirit and said, Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation. And He left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side.

[2 : 41] Verse 14, Now they had forgotten to bring bread, and they only had one loaf with them in the boat. And He cautioned them, saying, Watch out! Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.

And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread. And Jesus, aware of this, said to them, Why are you discussing the fact that you have no bread?

Do you not yet perceive or understand? Are your hearts hardened? Having eyes, do you not see? Having ears, do you not hear?

And do you not remember? Remember, when I broke the five loaves for the five thousands, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up?

And they said, Twelve. And the seven for the four thousand, how many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up? And they said to Him, Seven. And He said to them, Do you not yet understand?

[3 : 46] Grass withers, flowers fade, but the Word of God abides forever. English philosopher Jeremy Bentham died in 1832.

He gave all his money and possessions to the University College Hospital in London with one surprising and odd condition.

He stated that his body should be dissected and then his skeleton put back together, preserved and clothed so that he could attend all the future board meetings of the hospital.

To this day, prior to the start of each board meeting, Jeremy Bentham is rolled into the meeting, decked in his 19th century clothing.

When he arrives during the roll call, the chairman announces Jeremy Bentham present, but not voting. Many Christians could be characterized as present, but not voting.

[5 : 01] Many have the appearance of godliness, as Paul warned us in 2 Timothy 3, but lack its power. Many attend church. Many say the right things.

Many do the right things, but few are truly present. Few taste the goodness of God. Few walk in the fear of the Lord and the comfort of the Spirit. Few know the power of God.

Many know things about God and Jesus Christ, but few experience the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus Christ, our Lord. Many are present, but not voting, but not engaged.

This morning, we come to kind of an odd cluster of scenes this morning, but I think they're carefully crafted together to call us to be truly present when it comes to Jesus Christ.

As we've seen throughout the Gospel of Mark, many who we thought would have ears to hear do not hear. Many who we thought would have eyes to see do not see.

[6 : 04] Many who we thought would be overwhelmed with a sense of the love of God are not. In these scenes, this reality comes to the forefront again. We see 4,000 unclean Gentiles come to Jesus Christ, the very people that should not have ever come to Him.

We see the Pharisees who know the law and know the things of God reject Him again. And we see the disciples who've been with Him for quite a while now misunderstand what He is doing yet again. There's quite a lot to see here. I believe God has brought us these verses to call us to be more than the many who go through the motions of Christianity.

To call us to stop at nothing until we've embraced Jesus Christ fully by faith. So, in a word, where we're going is not all who hear hear, not all who see see, only those who fully embrace Jesus receive salvation.

Not all who hear, hear. Not all who see, see. Only those who fully embrace Jesus receive salvation.

[7 : 17] So, we're going to break this out in three points. The first is the Gentiles receive Jesus. The Gentiles receive Jesus Christ. The opening scene in this passage is the story of the feeding of the 4,000.

Now, if you remember five weeks ago, we studied the story of the feeding of 5,000. But today, we come to another miraculous feeding. But this time, it's 4,000 people.

No less wonderful, right? A wonderful feeding of 4,000 people. But the details are strikingly similar. So similar that many folks over the years have said, this is just a repeat.

Essentially, they say that, you know, Mark, or Jesus, maybe he did the 5,000 miracle. And they began to talk about it so much that gradually, it began to develop into two kind of different stories, two different locations, two different things going on, such that when Mark wrote his gospel, he was just kind of preserving what was going on in those days.

So he put two in there. It didn't really happen two times, they say. It was only one time it happened. Now, that doesn't seem to be the case in my opinion.

[8 : 23] you know, I read quite a few pages on this argument this week, so I don't have all the time. But they seem to be, yes, strikingly similar, and yet different in the central, different in very central ways.

The most important features are different. The miracle is for 4,000 people, whereas the 5,000 was just for 5,000 men, so likely 15,000 to 20,000, including women and children. The miracle is seven loaves and a few fish.

The other one was five loaves and two fish. The miracle includes seven loaves, or seven baskets left over. The other one includes 12 baskets left over.

Now, if it was a repeat, the most important features you would think would be similar, not different. I actually think the feeding of the 5,000 is an equally amazing miracle to say something incredible about what Jesus came to do.

Jesus performs the miracle twice to say something about where his gospel is going. He's trying to make very clear that the gospel is for the Jews, but it's also for all the Gentiles who will receive him.

[9 : 34] He's trying to make clear that the gospel is for the Jews, but it's also for all the Gentiles, any Gentile, any tribe, tongue, people, and nation that will receive him. So Jesus performed this very similar miracle in a Gentile region for Gentile people to show that the good news he came to bring was for them.

Now, I want us to look closely at this for a few minutes as we continue through this passage. Jesus is firstly surrounded by a crowd of Gentiles. If you look down at verse 1, in those days, that's the way our text begins.

So if you remember last week, Jesus had another showdown with the Pharisees and he went outside the camp to the surrounding nations, Gentile nations. He went out to people who did not know him, did not know the living God, did not obey the commandments of God, and in those days connects our passage with the one that came prior.

So Jesus, after healing the Gentile woman's daughter and the deaf man, he's still among the Gentiles. Right? He hasn't left where he is and he's still there.

Apparently, he's begun to teach and he's taught for three days now with nothing to eat. Now, they must have been satisfied with spiritual bread, something going on there, but he taught for three days.

[10:46] That's way longer than Eutychus and Eutychus fell out of the window and had to be revived. Three days and he gathers quite a crowd. Look at verse 1. In those days when again a great crowd had gathered.

They gathered around him. They gathered to hear him teach. We've seen crowds all throughout the Gospel of Mark, but this crowd is different because this crowd is a crowd of Gentiles.

And then Jesus has compassion on the crowd. Look at verse 2. He says, he looks out at this great crowd and he's been preaching two for three days. He says, I have compassion on the crowd because they've been with me now three days and have nothing to eat.

And if I send them away hungry to their home, they'll faint on the way and some of them have come from far away. Where he was was very remote and traveling home would have been quite long.

And you wouldn't have to travel far after three days of not eating to faint, right? He has compassion. You remember that same thing that he said. He had compassion on the crowd right before he fed the 5,000 because they're like sheep without a shepherd from numbers.

[12:09] This word for compassion literally refers to one's innards, to one's hearts and lungs and liver and kidneys. So it's referring to the guts, you know, the insides of someone.

But it's not, it's used metaphorically to refer to the core of who they are, to the essence of who they are. We still use it this way a little bit. We might say, I hate your guts.

Now, what we mean by that is not, I hate your liver. You know, I mean, maybe we just go out. You know, if you hate the liver, you hate the innards or something like that, they're saying, I can't stand anything about you.

I hate even your guts. I hate the core of who you are. Now, kids, don't go home and say that to your brother or sister or anything like that. I'm not commending that. But in the same way, this word for compassion is referring to the guts, to the innards, a way of referring to someone of the essence of who they are.

And so what it's saying about Jesus Christ is that the essence of who He is and this compassion coming from within Him is compassion and love for people. They describe this as a gut-wrenching emotion.

[13:19] It's that emotion like when your mother dies or when your child's going through something that you can't help with and you're left to the waiting on the diagnosis of the doctor or something like that.

But what stands out in this passage is not that Jesus has compassion but who He has compassion on. It would be one thing for Jesus to have gut-wrenching emotion for His family.

It would be one thing for Jesus to have gut-wrenching emotion for the disciples. It would be one thing for Him to have gut-wrenching emotion for others who attend the synagogue. But here Jesus has this compassion for Gentiles.

This is scandalous. Jesus experiences gut-wrenching sympathy not for those who color in the lines but for those who are far off. For those who are outside the camp.

For those who are whom the religious leaders have discarded. Those whom He should have nothing to do with. Matthew Henry Puritan says it like this, whom the proud Pharisees looked upon with disdain.

[14:25] The humble Jesus looked upon with pity and tenderness. So it should be firing off some things in our mind when you see Jesus treat these Gentiles with this type of compassion.

And then He satisfies them. You know, they have this little back and forth, you know, He says, I don't want to send them away. The disciples are, how can someone feed these people in this desolate place?

See, I did, you know, there's nothing grazing around that you can kill. How many loaves do you have? Seven. Can it go back and forth?

He gives thanks. And look at verse 8. He says, And they all ate, or they ate and were satisfied. They took out the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full, and there were about 4,000 people. It's a staggering miracle. We talked about this last time, but, you know, some people try to explain it away, that it's really a miracle about loving your neighbor, that Jesus kind of shared it with the concentric circle around Him, and it just kind of kept overflowing and going around until the whole crowd ate and was satisfied.

[15:42] Interesting. I think it's an immediate act of the power of God to create something out of nothing. Something that would have taken a minimum of days in preparation, not to mention weeks of planning for a team of people.

Jesus works in a single moment. There's another important detail going on here that underlines how this miracle makes clear that the gospel is not just for the Jews, it's also for the Gentiles.

There were seven loaves left over. Or there were seven loaves and then afterwards there were seven baskets, right? Now we have to be careful with numbers in the Bible.

We'll start predicting the day when the Lord returns and no one knows that, not even Jesus, apparently. But this seems to be a moment where this is of important significance.

Now if you remember when He fed the 5,000, there were 5,000 Jews and He fed the 5,000 and then there were 12 baskets left over. So if you know the Old Testament, that's a very important number of the Old Testament.

[16:48] 12 sons of Jacob, 12 kingdoms. So what He's saying is I am the one who's come to regather the people of Israel. I'm the living God.

But here, when Jesus feeds the 4,000, there's seven left over. Now seven is a number for completion. Jesus is saying I'm not just the promised one for the Jews, I'm the light to the nations. So that the full and complete number of the family of God might be brought in. That's kind of what, that's what's going on. If we saw, remember the story last week, they said the gospel had to go first to the Jews, first to the children in the house, then to the dogs.

That's the mystery we came upon last week, but first to the Gentiles. And then to, first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles. I'm not ashamed of the gospel. It's the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.

First to the Jew and then to the Gentiles. Now it's coming together. The whole family of God, there's not a Jew house and a Gentile house. The whole family of God is one people through Jesus Christ.

[17:55] Ephesians 2 brings this together wonderfully. For through Him, through Jesus, we, both Jew and Gentile, have access in one spirit to the Father so then you're no longer strangers and aliens, but your fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure being joined together grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

So Jesus is gathering His family of Jews and Gentile, all those who are true Israel and building a church. And so He satisfies His disciples and He sends them away.

Not all who hear, hear. Not all who see, see. Only those who fully embrace Jesus. Two, the Pharisees reject Jesus. So the Gentiles receive Him.

The Pharisees reject Him. After traveling back across the sea to the region of Galilee, Jesus has another encounter with the Pharisees. If you remember, He's had quite a few run-ins with these guys and now they come seeking to test Him.

Look at verse 11, they came and began to argue with Him, seeking for Him a sign from heaven to test Him. You know, these guys, we know enough about these guys by now, they're not seeking an objective test, you know, like an ACT or something like that.

[19:09] Not seeking to undertake a science experiment with our Lord. They're after something. They want to disrupt Him and dismantle what He's coming to do and you see it immediately in their attitude and in their aim.

They begin to argue. They are seeking a sign. They're seeking to do something to Jesus. It's the same word used for the family of Jesus when they go outside the house and convert Him and they

say, come on out, man.

They thought He had lost His mind so they came seeking Him. So they're seeking to put Jesus in His place. Their attentions are clear by their aim.

They're seeking to test Him. Now, they're seeking to, they want to test Him. Now, the Old Testament, when a prophet was a man of God who performed signs and wonder, he must perform a sign on the spot to prove it.

That's all throughout the Old Testament with Elijah. But you remember when the Lord said to Moses, go into Pharaoh's house to let my people go. Go. Go. He knows that Pharaoh would say to him, prove yourself.

[20 : 16] So what's the Lord telling him to do? Take this staff, right? You remember that? Throw it on the ground and turn into a serpent. Turn into a snake. So this type of asking for a sign is quite common.

Every prophet must prove by a sign. That's why the prophets did signs and wonders all throughout the Old Testament and proved that they were men of God. So is it wrong for these guys to be asking for a sign?

No. It would not be wrong if Jesus had not already given numerous signs. So look at how Jesus responds. Look in verse 12a.

They came to him seeking a sign to test him and he sighed deeply in his spirit. We studied a sign last week. Jesus is at a, this is a different, he's at a loss for words.

He's appalled. He's provoked. He sighs not because they've asked for a sign but because they refuse to believe the signs he's already performed. Well you have to see this clearly.

[21 : 21] Jesus is not sighing because they're asking him questions. He's not sighing because they begin to doubt and want to learn more. Jesus is not annoyed by questions. Nor is he sighing because he merely wants them to take him at his word and follow with blind faith.

Jesus is sighing because they continually refuse to believe. Jesus is not sighing because they refuse to believe without enough reasons. Jesus is sighing because they refuse to believe with more than enough.

Do you understand? And then Jesus swears to give them no more signs. Look at 12b. He says, why does this generation seek a sign?

And truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation. Essentially he's making an oath. He says, I'm making an oath. Truly, truly, I say to you, I'm swearing an oath. I'll die before I give these people a sign.

I'll die before I give these people a sign. And that's why we have to see what's going on here. You see that reference to this generation. Why does this generation seek a sign?

[22 : 32] Truly I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation. This is a provoking warning to the Pharisees. Now again, the backdrop is the wilderness.

The backdrop is the people wandering in the wilderness. And so, this recalls the first Israelites who were led out of Egypt through the Red Sea and into the wilderness. The Lord provided with them bread from heaven, just like He did a moment ago.

Water from a rock. The Lord delivered them from countless enemies. Drove them out for their very eyes. The Lord made clear that He was their God and they were His people. Yet they grumbled.

Remember. They complained. They turned away. They chased other things. They trusted in other gods. According to Deuteronomy 35, they were a perverse and twisted generation.

So, this reference is a reference that would have been very live for these Pharisees. This reference is to that first generation that passed through the Red Sea and died in the wilderness because the Lord cut them off.

[23 : 34] Jesus is saying the same thing is happening to you right now. Jesus is saying, you are my people. You have all the promises. You have all the privileges. You have the covenants, the law, the worship, and all the promises about the Messiah.

You have more than enough reasons to follow me. Your problem is not that you refuse to believe without enough reasons. Your problem is you refuse to believe with more than enough. You are a wicked generation. Do you understand? So, He's saying, I'm about to sweep you away just like the first generation of the Israelites who were swept away and died in the wilderness because of their unbelief.

Now, the shock of this, it doesn't land on this in the same way, but the people with privileges reject Him. the people with all the access.

Sometimes I say, it's a liability to be raised in a Christian home because spiritual things become external things.

And God becomes a little petty little God you put on your dash. It's a big deal. And Jesus leaves them.

[24 : 53] Guys, Jesus is, this is an act of judgment. He leaves them. Look in verse 13. Well, look in verse 9.

There were about 4,000 people. Then after He fed them, He sent them away. So, He sent them away. He says, be warm and well fed. For real. Then in verse 13, no sign will be given to this generation.

Verse 13, and He left them. Got in the boat and went to the other side. Jesus is reasoned with these guys. He's argued with them. He's rebuked them.

Now He leaves them because they refuse to believe. They will come back and try to test Him. But really, they'll only come back to try to kill Him. Not all who hear here, not all who see, see, only those who fully embrace Jesus receive salvation.

Point three, the disciples continue to misunderstand Him. Disciples continue to misunderstand Him. There's just another scene of this.

[25 : 53] How do you respond to Jesus Christ? There's another scene that's laid in here that relates to the other ones. Jesus gets into the boat with His disciples, crosses the sea with them again. He's again alone with them in the boat.

This is the third time He's been alone with them in the boat and we've heard about it. This time, there's a veil removed to see how they misunderstand Him. Mark gives us a little context.

Look at verse 14. He gives us a little context. Now, this is like an aside. Now, they had forgotten to bring bread and they only had one loaf with them in the boat. So Mark's kind of setting the stage for what's about to happen.

They've forgotten to bring bread. You know, they failed to pack for the journey or something like that and they only had one loaf with them in the boat. So, and then as, as they, they get away from the shore, they all knew they didn't have any bread, I guess.

Maybe they'd talked among themselves to figure that out. Jesus warns them about Pharisee and Herod. I mean, the Pharisees and Herod. Look at verse 15. He says, watch out. Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod.

[27 : 00] Now, continuing with this, this passage is focused on bread. Jesus compares the Pharisees to tainted leaven. Now, leaven or yeast, I am told, is a wholesome subject, substance used to make bread rise.

When it's time to make bread, a little bit of leaven, when added to a ball of dough, permeates the whole dough so that the bread rises and gives it that delicious, light, and fluffy texture.

Unleavened bread is like a cracker. You know? But leavened bread just kind of melts in your mouth. That's why we like leavened bread.

But in the ancient world, there was a way of making leavened bread that was unwholesome, unhealthy. They would take a bit of dough from this present week and kind of keep it away for the next week.

But if they did not watch it very carefully, it could easily be tainted. Then once you use that into the next week's ball of dough, you just, in the same way that the leaven permeates, making it rise, the tainted leaven permeates this whole loaf and poisoning the whole loaf.

[28 : 18] And what he's saying is that the Pharisees are like that. They're tainted leaven. If they just get a little bit into you, they'll permeate all of you.

If you just get a little foot, a toe slide into their unbelief, toe dip into their unbelief, they'll take it all away.

Then he says, if you look there, he says, watch out for the leaven of the Pharisees and the leaven of Herod. Now, Herod and the Pharisees have nothing to do with one another.

The Pharisees are like the religious goody-two-shoes guys, and Herod's just a crook. I mean, he's sunken in iniquity. It would be like saying, watch out for the Tennessee and Georgia fan.

We could not be more different. We hate Georgia, but you know what? The unity is there's one thing we both hate, and that's Alabama.

[29 : 33] That's what he's kind of saying. Jesus is not saying the Pharisees and Herod, they're definitely strange bedfellows. He's saying they're united in hatred and rejection of Jesus Christ.

They hate me. And they'll be joined together to do whatever it takes to stop him. We saw that in 3-6. We're going to see it later.

So Jesus warns them. So he warns them, beware, and then look at their response. Look at verse 16. And they began discussing with one another the fact that they had no bread.

You know, you probably had that sensation. You're talking to one of your kids about something. Well, Dad, what are we having for dinner tonight? You know, or something like that. They're just totally clueless to the meaning of what's going on. It's almost comical.

I mean, Jesus has just fed 9,000 people with a few loaves and a few fish. And they're arguing about, how are we going to have enough food for 13, for a picnic of 13 here in the boat?

[30 : 33] It's almost comical until it's not. They're failing to see what Jesus came to do. And this is where those scenes in the boat are landing on top of one another.

If you remember the first scene, Jesus was asleep in the storm. They said, do you not care as the boat begins to be filled with water overflowing the side? Do you not care that this is happening to us?

And he stood up and said, be still. And the winds ceased. And he turned to his disciples and said, why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith? The second one, they went into the boat without Jesus and he salted them in the night rowing against a hard northeast wind.

And he came to them walking on the water. And he said, do not fear, it is I. So they did not just experience the calming of the waves, they experienced the Lord walking across the waves.

And they would know from their scriptures the only one that walks across the sea is the living God himself. But they didn't get it. We have it for you. Mark 6, 51 and 52. And he got into the boat and the wind ceased and they were utterly astounded for they did not understand about the loaves but their hearts were hardened.

[31 : 40] And now we come to this third scene in the boat after Jesus has fed 4,000 people and they still don't get it. They continue to misunderstand who he is and what he came to do.

And he kind of explodes with a string of questions. Look down there with me in 17. He says, why are you discussing bread? Do you not perceive or understand?

Are your hearts hardened? Have you no eye? Having eyes, do you not see? Having ears, do you not hear? Do you not remember when I broke the five loaves for the 5,000? How many baskets were left over? 12.

Seven for the 4,000. How many baskets full of broken pieces did you take up? Seven. Do you not yet understand? Jesus is shocked. He's already said that those outside the kingdom of God are those that have eyes that don't see and ears that don't hear.

Now he says, did you not see? Do you not hear? Do you not understand all the miracles that have been happening? They're trying to reveal that Jesus is the promised one. Do you not yet understand?

[32 : 40] Jesus is concerned that they've hardened their heart. Jesus is concerned that that leaven, that little bit of unbelief is beginning to leaven the lump of their faith.

Os Guinness says, faith is not torn up. It's merely frayed. It's not eaten away suddenly but nibbled at the corners. It is not hit by a bolt of lightning.

It is the victim of a slow erosion of many winters. A hard heart is a heart that's gradually closed. a heart that gradually closes so much they can no longer hear, no longer see.

It's a heart that has drifted away. And it's a, it's a hardened heart is, it can only happen to those who are once in the know. James Edwards says it like this, the hardened heart is a particular problem for religious and moral people.

An ignorant heart, someone who doesn't know anything or know something cannot harden itself. Only a knowing heart can harden itself and that is why those closest to Jesus, the Pharisees and disciples stand in the gravest danger.

[34 : 06] It's striking. Jesus says to the, the Gentiles receive him like on the spot. 100%. The Pharisees reject him and he rejects him right back.

Disciples misunderstand him. It's almost, he's pleading with them. You know, many have the appearance of godliness.

Many say the right things and do the right things but their hearts are far from the Lord. Isaiah 29 reminds us. Many drift, many become hard, many become complacent, many become dead branches and lifeless members.

Don't be like them is what the scriptures are saying. Turn in full faith to Jesus Christ. Not because you know all that you would like to know. Because he's given you more than enough in order to know and truly trust him.

Turn and embrace him fully. You know, over the years, you know, today we're celebrating baptism of nine individuals and over the years, historically, the church has talked about just how do you define faith and, you know, faith's not merely knowing a fact, right?

[35 : 20] Like, we could all agree that Jesus was a man who lived in first century Middle East, right? We could believe in a fact. We could believe, we could believe in the fact that this man is the savior of some people, right?

We believe in a fact and even believe in the fact might be helpful to some people. But it's only by putting our faith in that fact that not just that Jesus is the son of God, not just that he's the savior, but that Jesus is our savior.

You know, so they define faith. You've heard it said like a three-legged stool or something like that, that it's not merely knowing things, but it's trusting things. I was reminded of this a couple months ago.

When I was a little kid, I was really scared of heights. you know, anytime, I remember one time I did this thing called a pumper pole and I needed a pumper after I was done with it. But you would, you would climb up and you were like belayed in, but you'd climb up a telephone pole and all you had to stand on was that little, whatever diameter it is of a telephone pole on the top.

Stick both feet up there and then you're supposed to jump out to this bar that was hanging. Now you were belayed in, but you didn't feel the belay in the moment, you know. And I remember my, I climbed down in shame because I was too afraid to do it.

[36 : 36] So I feel like a couple months ago I had a chance to redeem myself. My dad, my father, my 70-year-old father and I climbed this, a zip line. I don't know what it was. 75 feet up in the air and same thing, you're belayed in.

They checked all those belays, all those carabiners like five times. I'm like, one more time, come on. You know, and they said, I said, well, how do we get going? I said, you just got to walk out.

I was like, what do you mean we got to walk? You weren't you going to push me or something? And we had to walk out. It was hilarious. So Dad and I, I'm a 70-year-old father. I said, Dad, we got to just walk out.

We got to step out. Step off the boat. We had to step off that landing. Then we shot down to the end and screamed the whole time.

I won't say who was scared or, but that's kind of the way faith is. Jesus is saying, I've showed you more than enough.

[37 : 41] Don't you see? Come to me. There's salvation in no one else. There's no other name under heaven by which we must be saved than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Truth of Scripture is very clear. The Word of God for you this morning, you don't need another experience to know whether you believe Jesus Christ. You need to believe and respond to this one word, the Word of the Gospel.

The Word, the good Word from God that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures. Then the third day He rose again for our salvation, was raised for our justification.

And so we rest completely in Him. Not all who hear, hear, not all who see, see, only those who fully embrace Jesus receive salvation. And wonderfully, one little thing, one final thing.

Did you catch the end? Do you not yet understand? I love that little yet. It's like the Lord is saying, just follow me.

[38 : 43] I'll show you more and more until you believe me completely. Let us pray. Father in heaven, we thank you for your Word this morning. Thank you for the opportunity to study your Word.

We pray that we would be those people who know you, trust you, follow you, who don't have an external form of godliness without power, but true godliness from the heart.

Full faith and trust in Jesus Christ. We call on you and we hide in you. In Jesus' name, amen.

You've been listening to a message given by Walt Alexander, lead pastor of Trinity Grace Church in

Athens, Tennessee.

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