

Will You Be His Disciple?

by Dan Mast

The sermon encourages listeners to consider the cost of being a disciple of Jesus, including following Him into the unknown, and trusting in His goodness and faithfulness.

Duration: 58:31

Topics: "Discipleship", "Gods Mercy"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher starts by highlighting the stark contrast between the luxurious lifestyle in Miami and the dire conditions in a nearby country where children are starving. He emphasizes the need to think of those less fortunate and hopes that God will show mercy and uplift them. The preacher then discusses the power of God to silence the devil and the importance of observing and understanding God's loving kindness. The sermon concludes with an invitation for the congregation to respond and share their thoughts, with one person expressing their resounding desire to continue being a disciple of God.

Transcript

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I was blessed already this morning and felt, I feel really unworthy to be here, but it's been a long time since I've been here and so many faces have changed. And so many of the children that used to be about this big are now this big and taller yet, some of them. So, God has been good to you all.

I can see that. It's good to see some brothers and sisters I haven't seen for so many years. I was blessed with the thoughts of both Brother Manny and the children's lesson also.

I guess that was just for me this morning. One of them old farmers that looked across the valley too. I saw a mountain over there.

I'm closer to that mountain than I used to be. The old farm doesn't have as much attraction anymore. I'm getting my nose out of the dirt and I want to look more to the other side.

I'm going there. We're going there. We're all going somewhere, aren't we? Depends on where you're at, what road you're on.

Depends on where you're going. Well, this morning I thought, I've been thinking about this for some time, but a scripture in Matthew 8, the title of the message this morning is, Will you be His disciple? I thought I'd ask you this morning to raise your hand if you would be His disciple. I don't think there'd be much question.

Most every hand would go up. Everyone wants to be His disciple. I do too.

My hands would go up. I want to be His disciple. But there's an important word that goes with being a disciple, and we want to talk about that this morning.

Let's turn our Bibles to Matthew 8. I'll read a portion of scripture here. In the beginning of this chapter, Jesus was somewhat in all His glory here, ministering to the sick. I believe it was His heart.

He was ministering to many people. Multitudes were coming to Him and following Him, and lepers, and people possessed with devils, and all kinds of people were coming to Jesus. And they wanted help, and Jesus was there and healed them.

And in verse 18, I believe we'll start reading in verse 18. We'll read down through verse 27. Now when Jesus saw great multitudes about Him, He gave commandment to depart unto the other side.

And a certain scribe came and said unto Him, Master, I will follow Thee whithersoever Thou goest. And Jesus said unto him, Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head. And another of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father.

But Jesus said unto him, Follow me, and let the dead bury their dead. And when He was entered into a ship, His disciples followed Him. And behold, there arose a great tempest in the sea, inasmuch as the ship was covered with the waves, but He was asleep.

And His disciples came to Him and awoke Him, saying, Lord, save us, we perish. And He saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then He arose and rebuked the winds in the sea, and there was a great calm. But the men marveled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds in the sea obey Him? Shall we pray? Lord, this morning we want to be disciples.

And Lord, we don't always know what's ahead for us. And sometimes we are just like these disciples. We're afraid that we tremble at the things that might befall us.

And Lord, we pray, give us some new insight this morning, what it means to be a disciple, what it means to follow You, and Your faithfulness to us. Lord, we thank You this morning. You are very faithful.

You've been good to us. You've been true to us. You've not failed us, never.

Though many times we fail You, You've not failed us. Lord, You've been so good. I pray this morning You just awaken us, faith to believe, courage to follow, and to be Your disciples through thick or thin, through adversity, through trial, whatever comes our way.

You might be faithful to us. Lord, we know You are. We might be faithful to You as You lead us through this journey of life here on earth till we reach the other side, till we get to that mountain, Lord, that beautiful place that You've prepared for all of us.

Bless us, Lord, now this morning and give us manna from Your throne. Give us food from Your heart, Lord. To ours in Jesus' name we pray.

I've asked myself a question here. I wonder why when Jesus was so busy ministering to all these people and everything was going well, why did He suddenly decide to go across the sea? Why wouldn't He stay there? There were some multitudes were there with Him. And they were coming and showing their deeds and their needs.

And why would Jesus do such a thing as this? As saying, giving a command that we're going to go over on the other side. That wouldn't be logical, would it? And it says here, a certain scribe came and said to Him, Master, I'll follow You wherever You go. And Jesus told him, the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man doesn't have anywhere to lay His head.

Now, who would be crazy enough to follow somebody like that? Now, we would say somebody like that wouldn't amount to much. I mean, He doesn't even have a place to stay. No place to lay His head.

The foxes, they have holes to go to and the birds, they have nests. They can fly too. But Jesus said, I don't have anywhere to lay My head.

Why would you want to follow? You want to be a disciple of somebody like that? You know, down in Paraguay, before we would baptize people, I would often ask them, I would give them some... I'd go through the Scriptures and I'd point out a lot of things. Like, are you willing to forsake this and follow the Lord? Are you willing to... You know, some of them would have their rings and their jewelry and all that hanging on them and they wanted to get saved. And so, that's one of the things I'd ask them.

Are you willing to lay all that stuff, ditch it away and follow Jesus? Are you willing to wear one of them things on your head, you know? Are you willing? Because people are going to make fun of you. They're going to mock you. Do you still want to get baptized? Do you still want to follow Jesus? Do you know what? I think many times people don't know as young Christians, and maybe you're here this morning, you're a young Christian and you don't know what you said when you said you'll follow Him.

You're going to follow someone that didn't have a place to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Now, that was a pretty noble excuse, wasn't it? I mean, after all, that would be a good reason, wouldn't it, brother Emanuel? If your father was about dying and you needed to go take care of him and when he dies, you need to give him a decent burial.

That would only be reasonable, wouldn't it? That we have at least that much thought for our friendship, that we would go and bury our relatives, our moms and dads. We would take care of them. But you know what Jesus said? He said, let the dead bury the dead.

You come and follow Me. Boy, that sounds radical and unreasonable, doesn't it? Surely, this must be an unreasonable man to follow. That's the cost of a disciple.

It's the cost of a disciple. Let the dead bury their dead. And then verse 23, and when he entered into a ship, his disciples followed him.

His disciples followed him. Will you follow him? Will I follow him? Are we going to follow him now into the ship? You know, disciples in Revelation 14.4 tells us about those who followed the Lamb wherever He goes. That's what disciples are.

That's what disciples do. They follow their Master. Wherever He goes, they go.

That takes away a lot of this idea of I believed and I'm a Christian and so that's all I have to do. You know, to really believe is more than just believing in your head, but if you really believe, you will follow. It's more than just accepting Jesus.

It's more than just accepting Him. Here there were multitudes here that believed in Jesus. That's why they came.

There were many here that accepted. They accepted it when He healed them. They accepted the loaves and the fishes.

They accepted the things that He offered them. But now He says, come, we're going to go over to the other side. Are we going to go with Him? Will we follow Jesus? Will we be His disciples? Another thing that a disciple is is he's a called out one.

He's one that recognizes that he's been called out. He's been called out of this world to follow Jesus. Jesus, when He picked His disciples, He went out and He said, you come and follow Me.

He found one standing under a tree and He called him. Come, follow Me. He found some out along the seashore and He said, come, follow Me.

And He found a tax collector out there sitting at His table and He said, Levi, come, follow Me. And they just left it all and followed this fellow that had no place to lay his head. This fellow that seemed to... He wanted them to follow Him wherever He goes.

He asked them to come into the boat with Him and they were going to go over to the other side. And this boat, no doubt, I don't know if it was still daylight or not, but probably if it would have been, you could have seen in the horizon the dark clouds coming. And I know that it's not recommendable to go out on the sea when there's this thunderstorm coming, to go out on a boat like that.

I was out at one time on a boat like that in a thunderstorm and it was a fearful sight when the lightning flashed. And the waves were getting higher and higher and we were catching fish out there and we didn't want to go in because they were biting so well. But my, did we ever get soaked.

We were wet all over. But that's what Jesus was going to do here. He was asking His disciples to come with Him into this boat and away we would go into the sea.

And then it says, behold, there rose a great tempest in the sea and as much as the ship was covered with the waves, but He was asleep. Now, He didn't just go into the boat and His disciples followed Him. Then

He set His sails ahead right into that storm and then guess what happened? He goes and He lays down and goes to sleep.

This fellow that we're following, now He lays down and He goes to sleep. And the rain comes and the storms and the waves come high and they come crashing into that boat and the boat starts to fill up and they were probably standing in there up to their knees in water and trying to bail water out and they couldn't. It was catching up and more waves come up and they were soaked.

Finally, they said, where is this fellow? Where is this Jesus? And He was back in the back end of the boat sleeping. They toiled and they worried. Are we going to make it? Do you still want to be His disciple? Would you still like to be His disciple? What if He would take you in a storm like that? What if He would take us through something like that? Would you want to be His disciple? I can't swim hardly anything.

I'd probably be a dead man. Would I still want to be His disciple? Well, the disciples came to Him and woke Him up and said, Lord, save us! Save us! We're perishing! Lord, don't You know what's happening? The boat's going under! And Jesus woke up and said, why are you fearful? Oh, you of little faith? Well, He would have said that to me too. He would have said that to me too.

I'm sure He would have if I was on that boat. Then He arose and rebuked the winds of the sea and there was a great calm. The men marveled saying, what manner of man is this that even the winds in the sea obey Him? This is amazing.

We don't know. We don't know what we're all facing when we go with Jesus. You don't know, my dear people.

I don't know. As a disciple, we can't see too far ahead in the future. And we don't know what we all may face.

We live in America and we think that everything is pretty good here. But you know, we don't know what can come up shortly in the future. There is some storms brewing.

Do you still want to be His disciple? We don't know the tempests that are ahead. We don't know the floods that we need to pass through. We don't know what kind of fiery trials might come like the three Hebrew children.

They went through some fiery trials because they were disciples of Christ. They were God's people. And they stood, but they were cast into a fiery furnace and they didn't know whether they were going to make it.

They didn't know when they were being cast in there whether it's going to be their end or not. They knew that God was able to deliver them. They had faith in that, but they didn't know whether He was going to.

But what a surprise when they got down there and the king looked down into that fire and he saw not only the three Hebrew children, but there was another one with them walking through that fire. Glory! You know, there's a Scripture in Isaiah 43, verse 2. That's very precious indeed. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee.

Through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee. When thou walkest through the fire, thou shall not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy

Savior.

I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Saba for thee. Since thou was precious in my sight, thou has been honorable and I have loved thee. Therefore, will I give men for thee and people for thy life.

And verse 5, I love that. It says, fear not, I am with thee. Fear not, I am with thee.

As Christians, as disciples, there's something we need to get a hold of and that is not to be fearful that God is with us. We need to live in such a way, I believe, that God will always be with us. We don't need to be afraid.

When He asks us to go through the storm and through the fire, or whatever we need to go through. And I believe this, that if you and I are going to be disciples, we will go through those things. We will.

Because it even tells us that all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution. Something that we don't hear too much in America. But it is a fact.

If we live godly, we will. Jesus said, I don't have no place to lay my head, but we have a place to lay our head. We do.

We have a pillow to lay our head on. We can rest our head in the bosom of Jesus. We can rest our head on the promises of a heavenly Father that cares for us.

Isn't that wonderful? I mean, no matter what He takes us through, we have this confidence that He will go with us through it. And that He will help us when we find ourselves in deep need. So will you be a disciple? Will you follow Jesus? In Psalms 107.

I'd like to read that psalm this morning. Psalms 107. Oh, give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever.

Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He has redeemed from the hand of the enemy. And gather them out of the lands from the east and from the west and from the north and from the south. They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way.

They found no city to dwell in, hungry and thirsty. Their soul fainted in them. This is God.

This is God working. This is how God works. As we look through this psalm, it shows us so many ways that God works and has ways to bring people to Himself.

Here we see those who walk in a solitary way, like this man that was on his farm that couldn't see that city. He was walking alone. He was lonely.

And there's probably people sitting in this crowd today that are lonely. There's probably people in here that you may be in a crowd of people, but you are lonely inside. You're walking in a solitary way, hurt and bitter.

Maybe you're hard to get along with and you know it. You know you don't have many friends. You're a loner.

You'd like to have, but you're alone. You're walking in a wilderness. You're not understanding why you are the way you are.

You're hungry and thirsty. Then it says in verse 6, Then they cried unto the Lord in their trouble, and He delivered them out of their distresses. And He led them forth by the right way that they might go to a city of habitation.

A city of habitation. There's a way, my dear one, if you're here today and you're lonely and you're hurt and you're bitter and you're hard to get along with, there's a way to get to a place where you can have fellowship. Something that you long for.

And that is found when you cry out to the Lord. When you cry out to the Lord, oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men, for He satisfies the longing soul and He fills the hungry soul with goodness. Such as sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, being bound in affliction and iron.

It makes me think of that Scripture where it says, if an eye be dark, how great is that darkness. And then the shadow of death. Living in the shadow of death.

Many times we don't realize, but if we have sin in our life and that thing trails us around, it brings a shadow of death. And we have these shadows walking. We walk around and we leave a shadow behind us.

The shadow of death is following you around. Wherever you go with sin in your life, you have a shadow of death following you around. Sinners sit in darkness and in the shadow of death because they rebel against the words of God and condemn the counsel of the Most High.

They want their own way. They take their own way in life. They go against the will of God and He brings down their heart with labor.

They fall down. There's none to help. Rebellion.

Rebellion as such will bring you down. It will. It will bring you down.

It will bring you to a place where you never expected to end up. But rebellion will bring you down. Well again, he says, they cried unto the Lord.

If you have a rebellious heart this morning, there's a way to get rid of that too. It says they cried unto the Lord and He saved them out of their distresses. I've seen men come under great distress through rebellion.

Bondages of rebellion. Hate. A place where people hate someone.

They hate their mom and dad. They hate the preachers. They hate that church.

They hate, hate, hate. And they're bitter. They eat sour grapes.

They set their children's teeth on edge. They're bitter. A lot of selfishness comes out.

But they cried unto the Lord in their troubles and He saved them out of their distresses and He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death and break their bands in sunder. Glory! I mean, he's able to do that. Those old bands of rebellion, hatred, those things that keep you and hurt you and bind you up, He can break those.

We cry out to the Lord. He can break those out. He can make us different.

Do you want to be different this morning? Would you like to be His disciple? Would you want to be different? He can do that. He can break that apart. Oh, amen.

It says, Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men, for He has broken the gates of brass and cut the bars of iron in sunder. Fools, because of their transgression and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhors all manner of meat and they draw near unto the gates of death.

Fools. Oh, how many of us have been fools. We've been such fools, haven't we? We take our own way.

We do our own thing. We end up in trouble. We draw near to the gates of death.

Our hearts are... We're sunk. And because of our iniquities, we're afflicted. We get troubled.

And we're... We have all kinds of troubles. We despise help. We don't like God's Word.

We despise help. Have you ever met someone like that? They don't like God's Word. Don't preach at me, they say.

Go talk to somebody else. Don't you preach at me. I'm miserable enough.

What a fool. It says fools because of their transgression. That's what happens.

But God is merciful to the fool too because He wants to be a fool. Or wants to be. It says in verse 19, Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saves them out of their distresses.

Isn't that a wonderful God? I mean, think of all the times, all the things that people get themselves into. And then, we get ourselves into such messes in life and then God... We cry out to God. We humble ourselves.

We cry out to God. And God gets us out of the mess. He will.

Isn't God good? Isn't God good? Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men. In verse 28, He says, He sent His Word and healed them and delivered them from their destructions. The Word, that Word that we so despise, that Word that we didn't want to hear, He sent that Word and it brings healing.

It heals our infirmities. It heals our troubles. Oh, praise God.

That is a real answer. It brings healing to us. Hear the Word, brothers and sisters.

Be a disciple. Hear the Word. Hear when God speaks to us.

Let's hear. And it will bring healing to us. It won't hurt us.

Sometimes we just don't like it when somebody tells us something. But let's hear. Let's open our ears and hear the Word and it will bring healing.

Verse 22, And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving and declare His works with rejoicing. They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, these see the works of the Lord and His wonders in the deep. For He commandeth and raises the stormy wind which lifteth up the waves thereof.

They mount up to the heaven. They go down again to the depth. Their soul is melted because of trouble.

They reel to and fro and stagger like a drunken man and are at their wit's end. Have you ever been there? Have you ever been at wit's end? When you're at wit's end, you're not very far from the kingdom of heaven. You're not far from the kingdom when you're at wit's end.

But to get us there, that is sometimes a problem. We have much endurance sometimes before we get there. But when we get there, we reel to and fro like it says there, like a drunkard and stagger and we're at wit's end.

I've been there already. I've been there. When life is such a turmoil and it seems like those waves get so high and everything comes crashing in and we don't know which way to turn anymore, then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble and He brings them out of their distresses.

Again, when those things come crashing in on you, my dear people, when we realize we can't handle life ourselves and those waves come in so big upon us and it seems like we hit the bottom of the ocean. I don't know if you've ever been on a boat like that that was a real big storm. I've never been on one that was that bad.

I've been out there where you'd go up and down and up and down and I'd get all oozy when something like that happens. I just can't take that kind of stuff. But I can just imagine what it would be like and it would not.

It would not be a very good place to be, but I thank God that when things like that come in life, when things like that come in life, we can cry out to God and God will hear us. God will hear us. He says in verse 29, He makes the storm a calm so that the waves are over still.

Then are they glad because they be quiet so He brings them to their desired haven. Glory. So He brings them to their desired haven.

Oh, that's what we long for. Oh, pilgrims, we're going through a life here that goes up and down. It really is.

We're on a sea that is unstable and we will face storms that will blow us off the map if we don't have Jesus in our boat. We better have Jesus in our boat. Even if He's asleep, we can cry out to Him.

We need Jesus in our boat more than anything else. We'll make it to the other side with Him. We will.

I'm confident. I read the last chapter in the book and you know, it tells me that He's going to bring us through. He's coming to get us and He's going to take us through.

Glory. Oh, that men would praise the Lord for His goodness and for His wonderful works to the children of men. Let them exalt Him also in the congregation of the people and praise Him in the assembly of the elders.

Oh, I remember some time back I read that and it kind of struck me. Sometimes we elders, we get together and we have all our troubles and we talk about all our troubles and we talk about all these people that they're not living the way they should and this and that. We have all our struggles and our troubles.

And you know what it says here? It says, Let them praise Him also in the congregation of the people and praise Him in the assembly of the elders. I wonder what would happen, brothers, if we'd get together and

we'd have a praise service and praise the Lord for His goodness to us. And we'd just get so overtaken with that that we'd forget all our troubles out on this little boat that we're in that we're going through.

I don't know if we'd even see the storm when we go through it. We might not even notice the storm if we'd be praising Him so much like we should. He says here, He turns the rivers into a wilderness and the water springs into dry ground, a fruitful land into barrenness for the wickedness of them that dwell therein.

He turns the wilderness into a standing water and dry ground into water springs. He can do anything. He can turn the desert into an ocean and He can turn the ocean into a desert.

He can do anything. That's God. He can.

And there He makes the hungry to dwell so that they may prepare a city for habitation and sow the fields and plant the vineyards which may yield fruits of increase. He blesses them also so that they are multiplied greatly and sufferers not their cattle to decrease. Again.

So here He blesses them. And the crops, they flourish. And the fruits of the earth, they get plentiful.

And we have bumper crops and all is wonderful. We rejoice when it's all like that, don't we? We're so glad when the corn crop yields over 200 bushels a year and the soybeans do great and the gardens yield big tomatoes and beautiful fruit. We love that, don't we? We thank God for that.

But you know what? In verse 39 it says, again, they are diminished and brought low through oppression, affliction, and sorrow. And He pours contempt upon princes and causes them to wander in the wilderness where there is no way. Yeah.

Princes. You know, men of God. He brings them down low.

Leaders. Presidents, rulers, kings. Oh, they're sitting up here in all their glory and suddenly He brings them down.

Brings them down into wandering in a wilderness where there's no way. They can't find their way anymore. Then says He, the poor on high.

Oh. Then He takes the poor people, those people that are always despised and rejected, and He picks them up. And He sets them up there on high from affliction and makes them families like a flock.

Glory. You know, when I look at Scriptures like that, I have to think of Haiti. That little despised country down there off of the coast of Florida that the people are so poor and they literally, I don't know what would happen if they wouldn't get no aid from another country.

A lot of those people would plain starve, I think. Because they cannot raise enough food to supply for their families on that little island. And they can't get off.

There's no way for them to get off. They don't have money to go. And up an hour and a half north, by airplane, there's a big city called Miami.

And there they drink their wines and feast and throw away their food an hour and a half away from a country where their little children would starve to death if there was no aid from any other place. But I have to think of them. Maybe someday He will set them on high from affliction.

Maybe God will be merciful to them. Set them on high and give them families like a flock. It says, verse 42, "...the righteous shall see it and rejoice and all iniquity shall shut her mouth." All iniquity shall shut her mouth.

I think it's time God wants to do that. He wants to shut the mouth of the devil. "...whoso is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord." God is good.

You want to be His disciple? You know, if we go through life, we go through life without Him. We go in a solitary way. We're lonely.

We're discouraged. We feel like we're left behind. Maybe despised.

Maybe this morning, you're bitter at choices that you've made in life. Or your life is confusing and uncertain. You feel like you're going through a wilderness.

Maybe you cry bitterly in anger. You're hurting. Jesus says, come.

We're going over to the other side. We're going over to the other side. Do you want to go along? Do you want to be His disciple? Would you mind a boat ride with Jesus when He sets His sail to head right into a storm? Would you be willing to go? Would you want to follow someone who doesn't have any place to lay His head? But He'll give you a place to lay your head.

Come, Jesus said. Let's go on. Let's go over to the other side.

May God bless you. Whoso is wise will observe these things and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving kindness of the Lord. I love that verse.

It follows that beautiful chapter there. Seeing how that God raises people up and brings others down to the valley of the shadow of death. He does it with a purpose because of His loving kindness to bring them to the end that they might turn from their evil ways and give themselves to Christ.

It is the result of our foolishness and our going our own way that we end up in difficulty in many straits. And, you know, at the bottom, at the end, at our wits' end. In my center reference of my Bible here at verse there where it talks about they are at their wits' end in verse 27.

They're out there in that ocean, the stormy wind, and they're at their wits' end. It says that all their wisdom is swallowed up. They have no more wisdom left.

They've done everything they thought to do. Their wisdom is all swallowed up and there's nothing left to do except to cry out to God. They're done with their own way.

They're done with trying it on their own strength. And they're willing to say, Lord, if you don't save me, I will perish. That's where God wants to bring us.

And that's where Jesus takes us. Will you follow Him? Are you willing to follow Him if that's where He'll take you? That's the question. It's true.

When He said, follow Me, He didn't tell me all the storms that would come. He didn't tell me about all the difficulties that would be on the way. He just said, follow Me.

And I said, yes, Lord. I will follow You. That is what He wants.

He wants a people who will follow Him everywhere He takes them. But there is joy in following Him. There's sweet blessing there.

Thank you, Brother Dan, for sharing with us this morning. God's Word speaking to our hearts. I would like to just open up for some testimonies.

What is God speaking to your heart? Give you an opportunity to respond. Get your hands up. We'll get some mics to you.

You can share. This morning. One up here.

Others? I'd just like to say amen to what Brother Dan shared. Such an encouraging message. You know, he asked the question and I pondered the question over in my mind.

Do I want to be his disciple? After knowing what God has showed me and again refreshed my mind on this morning. Do I still want to be his disciple? I would like to answer that out of my soul with a resounding yes. Amen.

My thoughts went to the words of the song that I can very well identify with. You know, I've come too far to look back. My feet have passed through the valley.

I've crossed mountains, crossed rivers. Desert places I've known. But I'm nearing that home port.

Wherein there is rejoicing. Heaven's angels are singing. I've come too far to look back.

Amen. I have tasted that the Lord is good. In the middle here.

Well, praise the Lord. This was a blessed, special morning. I have a... I'd like to just take us back to the opening.

I just feel like there's a... We need to really hear that. It was a beautiful morning. For so many years I walked with my withered hands in my pockets.

Afraid to pull them out because people would point to it. And I didn't know what to do about it. But I've learned to walk.

Pull those hands out, that sin, and expose it before God. Until I can say, stand before God and it's a beautiful place to be. And say, as the Word of God says, who shall ascend into the hills of the Lord? Or who shall stand in His holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart.

And I can say, Lord, thank You my hands are clean. It's something worth striving after. The beauty that follows.

The blessing. I've... I've seen something better than the farm on the hill with the torn down shacks. I've seen how dilapidated they were and I've gone down into the valley.

And many times I've stumbled. But my eyes have seen a vision of a better place. A heavenly place.

And I'm pressing on for that. And I testify with Brother Dan. Yes, I am a disciple of the Lord Jesus.

I'm not worthy to be called a disciple. But the beauty of following one that has no place to lay his head. And I can say, after years of walking, that with Jesus, the wildest storm is more peaceful than anything the world has to offer.

May the Lord bless. Thank you, Brother. Others? One over here.

I just want to thank the Lord for this church. My wife and I came from Michigan here. And I just want to encourage you all that the Lord is using you and using your church to touch people.

We had a great friend share the gospel tapes with us, the ministry tapes. Some of Danny Kenniston's tapes and some of the ministry tapes. And it's really completely changed our family.

And we had to come and see it for ourselves. And we've been so warmly welcomed. And I can just feel the Spirit of the Lord here.

And I've just really been blessed. I just want to thank God for this church and encourage you all to stay the course. And what you're doing is affecting people.

People that you may even never meet. So just continue to stay true to what you're doing. What a joy.

What a joy to follow Jesus. You might never know, we will never know here on earth the effects that we have if we just simply follow Him. That's all He requires.

Just follow Me. I rejoice. Thank you for sharing.

That's always very encouraging to hear.

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