

The Foundation of Christ

by Dennis Kinlaw

The sermon emphasizes the importance of knowing God, following Jesus, and recognizing the value of our needs in our lives.

Duration: 51:15

Scripture: Mark 9:33-35, Mark 10:35-37, Mark 10:41-42, Mark 10:50-52, Mark 14:27-31, Mark 14:51-52, Mark 14:66-72

Topics: "Foundation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker focuses on the second half of the Gospel of Mark, specifically the stories involving the disciples who now know that Jesus is the Christ. Interestingly, the speaker points out that there is not a single story in this section where the disciples look good. Despite having the secret of human history and salvation, they often fail to understand and follow Jesus' teachings. The speaker emphasizes the importance of not taking things for granted and having gratitude for each day and the people in our lives. Additionally, the speaker highlights the role of believers as witnesses for Christ, as Jesus himself sought witnesses to testify about him.

Transcript

Jesus then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter, out of my sight, Satan.

He said, You do not have in mind the things of God, or you think as men think, not as God thinks. Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said, If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.

What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels. We've been working our way through some of the gospel with the idea of finding out something of how Jesus went about making disciples. He came for that end that men might follow him.

But when he came to redeem us, the one thing he wanted was something that he, though he was the Creator of the universe, the Sovereign Lord, the Omnipotent God, he could not produce himself what he wanted, because what he wanted was a given, something that someone else had to give to him. They had to give themselves to where they would know him, and he could know them. I love that passage in Galatians where Paul is speaking about the Galatians and he refers to the time before they knew God, and then he says, No, before God knew you.

It's interesting that the omniscient God doesn't know some people, but that's true in the way that the Scripture speaks about knowledge. He knows all things, but it's one thing to know things and it's another thing to know persons, and you can't know a person who does not want you to know him. So then Paul corrects himself and says, Before you came to be known by God.

Now that's the kind of knowledge that Jesus is after with you and me. It's something we have to give. He wants us to trust him, and that's something that we have to give, and he wants us to love him.

That's something that we have to give. So he wanted us to know him. He did not dare tell us who he was, because we would have ruled him out before he started.

And so he looked for those that were about who could witness for him, and the best one he found was a Baptist, John, and so he came to him and asked him to put in a good word for him. He still seeks for witnesses for himself. If the world about us is to know Christ, it will not be by immediate, direct act of God.

It will be by God working through the likes of you and me. And so Jesus, the last word he had for his disciples was, As the Father has sent me, now I send you. We are called to be witnesses.

Now I think that's the significance of the passage, the conclusion of the passage here where he says, If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels. The one thing that we dare not be and the one thing that we by nature are is to be ashamed of the Lord Jesus. It's interesting that mortal men should be ashamed of God.

Ashamed of Jesus, that's the incredible thing. But it's not a person under this tent, but that sometimes has experienced that. And Jesus says, If you're ashamed of me in this generation, I will have to be ashamed of you when I stand before my Father and when you come to stand before the Father.

We are to be witnesses for him. But how are we to do that? We have to know who he is and understand that it would be absolute folly to be ashamed of him. It would be incredible.

It would be something we could not do. So he has to reveal himself to us. And we said he does reveal himself to us.

And he does it through our needs. And that's where we ended yesterday. That our needs, the problems, the tensions, the stresses, the pressures, the difficulties, the dismal parts in our life, they're our greatest assets.

The things that we look around and say, Thank God for these, usually those are the things that are least significant. And the things that are most valuable are the points where the greatest pressure, the greatest crunch is on. That is what it is that makes us seek him.

And it's our needs that gives him opportunity to show his grace and his power. And one of the wonderful things about life and one of the wonderful things about his providence, one of the wonderful things about the way he works is that he will see to it that life has its crunches, that life has its problems for you and for me. So that the greatest gift other than himself that he ever gives to us is the negative aspect of human life.

Now, that's hard for us to understand. I remember when I first worked my way real seriously through Genesis 3. God had given the man everything in the garden in 1 and 2. And in 3, man sinned. And then God gives to us pain and suffering and loneliness and frustration and meaninglessness and death, sickness and death.

God gives all of these things to us and we speak of them as curses. I'm sure that when we come to think the way he thinks, we will look upon them as incredible gifts, grace gifts, gifts of his love. We have a son who is a doctor.

He was interning and there were three of them operating on a young lady who had been on the drug route. And it was a bit of difficult surgery and the head resident was actually, had the instrument in his hand and his hand slipped and it penetrated our son's glove. And he picked up a deadly form of hepatitis.

It's the kind that usually is found in prostitutes and homosexuals. Has a little bit of the character of AIDS about it. He didn't know how serious it was.

He was sick for six months, flat. His wife picked it up and she was sick for six months. And then he got better and went back and did a year of residency.

And at the end of that year of residency, he was home for a weekend and before he left to go back, he said, dad, can I see you for a few minutes? And we slipped back in my study and he said, dad, I have something to tell you and you can't tell mother because I haven't told, I haven't told Marilyn, my wife yet, but he said, the hepatitis is back. And by then I had learned enough about hepatitis that I had a bit of panic inside me and I looked at him and said, honey, what's the prognosis? And he said, all he said was it isn't good. Now he said, I really don't know for sure, but I have some tests in the morning and I will not have the results on those tests until Thursday.

But he said, I think I know what the results will be. And so I stood there and knew very well that what he was saying to me was that every indication that I have is that I'm dying. It's an interesting experience when you only have one son.

On Thursday, he called me and said, dad, the diagnosis is confirmed. On Thursday at the beginning of the day, he could put his name on the line at a bank and get any amount of money he wanted because he was a becoming surgeon. At the end of that day, he couldn't pay his rent because they'd washed him out of medical school.

Two years before he could get a dentist who'd put his finger in his mouth with a rubber glove on. And so we brought him and his wife and his little boy and his wife was pregnant they had nowhere to go and they had nothing. So we brought them home and put them in our guest bedroom.

Now that was bad enough on Denny, but can you feature what it's like to be a 28 year old bride? Your husband is a surgeon to be, and you've got an unlimited future of affluence and security. And suddenly all of it is gone and you have to live with your mother-in-law and your father-in-law in a guest bedroom. For a

year we lived with that interesting experience.

The Lord touched him and he's at work now, but I'll never forget the day he turned to me and he said, dad, best thing ever happened to me was hepatitis. Now, we don't know what it will do. It's latent in his system now and that's a miracle of grace of God, but it may rear its head.

He started exercising, running to build up resistance. He wanted to finish his work in general practice and do a residency in that. And those fellows they have to work 36 hours at a time and he doesn't have that kind of energy.

So he said, I thought if I could build my system up, I could do it. So he started walking a mile a day and then he started running half of that mile and walking the other half. And what he has is sort of a virus type thing in his liver that as long as his energy level is high, his body controls it.

And when his energy level is depleted, it becomes viciously active. And so suddenly after about a month of that running, his liver began to die at an inordinate rate. And so he had to back away from that.

He lives with that. I don't know what it will mean. He doesn't know what it will mean.

But he turned to me and he said, you know, this is a good way to live. So I argued with God a little about it and said, you healed me, you touched me, but I thought when you touched me, you'd do it in such a way that I'd have a guarantee on tomorrow. He said, so I argued with God a little on that.

And he said, well, I didn't give the apostle Paul a guarantee on tomorrow. Why should I give you one? He said, dad, I don't believe he gives anybody a guarantee on tomorrow. He said, you know, it's a good way to live.

I don't take anything for granted anymore. I don't take my wife for granted anymore. Every day I look at her and think what a privilege to have her one more day and to live with her one more day.

It's a good way to begin a day, isn't it? He said, I don't take my children for granted anymore. I wake up every morning and look at them and say I have them for one more day to enjoy, to love. He said, I don't take my work for granted anymore.

There was a day when I didn't have it, but I've got it back. So he said, I thank God that I've got one more day work to do. He said, you know, some mornings, dad, and this is not like my son, he went through a period of great alienation to the gospel and to us, a lot of other things.

But he said, you know, I find myself on my way into Lexington in the morning on my way to work. I'll see the sunrise. I find my cheeks wet with liquid gratitude to God for a new day to give to his grace, just to enjoy a gift given by God to me for me to enjoy and to use for his glory.

He said, you know, dad, that's not a bad way to live. I know a lot of people who've never lived a day like that. They're the paupers.

They're the poor ones. You know, one day like that is worth a lifetime, isn't it? Now, what interested me was that a young man ambitious with a great career ahead of him, so he thought and all that. He said, the best thing ever happened to me was have it all thrown into uncertainty and perhaps stripped from me.

I am convinced that the things that we are most thankful for are the things that probably are least significant. And the things that we complain about are the ones that we ought to look up and say, thank you, God, for giving this to me. Without it, you couldn't do your redemptive work in my life and make my life significant.

I notice that the scripture says that Jesus, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross. Yes, it was pain, but it was an occasion of joy because through it came the redemption of the world. And so Jesus looks around for people who have problems.

And it's interesting, you don't know the name of a single soul in the gospels who didn't have a problem. The only people you know about that Jesus helped were people that had problems. And God's hands are tied if you don't have any need.

Now, that's the reason that you ought to look your needs straight in the face and you ought to say, God, you've gotten me here to a camp meeting. Now, don't let me go home the way I was. Make my needs very evident.

Make them painfully evident if necessary. Let me see where it is you want to work in my life. And then give me the courage and the grace and the faith to reach out and embrace it and say, now, Lord, what do you want to do here? Let's get it done so that when I leave this camp meeting, I'm different than when I came.

Now, we're about halfway through, aren't we? How are you doing? Are you letting him do what he brought you here to do? Because I'll tell you, if you don't move forward, you will move farther into illusion and delusion and game playing, form and ceremony, instead of moving farther and farther into real reality. Now, that's what we need. So, let's say, God, where is the need? Now, you know, let me say a word.

I've come to where that's a bit of philosophy with me about life. It's true individually. There's no one that ever can get life under perfect control without God, and he's not going to let you do it.

He's going to see to it. When you get it about under control, he'll pull one of the chocks out from under you because he loves you. He's going to let it come apart because he loves you.

Every time you think you've got things under control and sit without him in the center, you can count on he'll pull something out because he loves you. He hates delusion, and any man who thinks he can live satisfactorily, effectively, usefully, joyously without Jesus at the absolute center is living under illusion. He's the God of truth, and if your life is full of illusion, he's going to keep pulling away because he loves you enough.

He doesn't want you living under a lie and under deceit, self-deceit. I love that. You know, I'm convinced that's true about human history.

It's interesting we try to get an alternative to God. That's what idolatry is, isn't it? When the history of mankind is written, it will be described as the effort of man to find an alternative to God. All the religions of the world have tried it, haven't they? They've tried all sorts of other things other than the living God, and modern man is exactly the same way.

We thought science could do it for a while. It's interesting now, some of the most pessimistic people are the scientists, because we know that in science we have the potential for death, not for life. In the States, we decided that education could do it.

Lyndon Johnson decided that, so he pumped billions into education. Now do you notice what the most of the political speeches are about in the United States? They're about how tragically flawed our whole educational system is in the United States. We poured billions of dollars into it.

When I went to graduate school, every guy in my program was on a federal scholarship except me, and the reason I wasn't was because I was a preacher and had been a pastor, and because of that I couldn't get it. Government money, you know. But we were going to educate enough people to make America paradise, you know, the Garden of Eden.

And now Reagan thinks he can win re-election by showing what an absolute failure the American higher educational system has been when government got into it with its billions. You know, I think God says, see, that's interesting. We have tried a lot of other things.

I have had an interest in social sciences because of being in a college, and we started a social work program. And we have more Salvation Army students at Asbury than probably on any college campus in the world. And you know the kind of social work programs they run.

I remember the social scientists thought they could solve our social problems. The interesting thing is now they're the most subdued of all the people because nobody's ever found a social scientist that can really straighten out a human life. It's interesting how we've looked to psychology, counseling, and to psychiatry.

My son, at the end of his stint in medical school and in his residency in psychiatry, said to me, Dad, you know I've never found a psychiatrist who healed a single person mentally. The only thing I have ever found that a psychiatrist could do was to sort of help a person live with his problem. No record of one ever curing anybody.

We thought that was the way. Freud, you know, told us and some others. You know, we felt if you had the right political organization, you could do it.

I lived through the days of the organization of the United Nations. I can remember what starry-eyed idealists we were when we thought we were going to get rid of war. Now we've transferred the war from the battlefield to the United Nations pretty well, haven't we? That's not quite right because the battlefields are still raging.

But did you ever go in the meditation room at the United Nations? I've been in twice. First time I went in, I looked for that, you know, they said, we need a place where we can get inspiration to help us wrestle with the problems of peace in the world. And I went in and there was a block of petrified wood about that high sitting there, highly polished.

That was the central symbol in the meditation room at the United Nations about 1955. You know what I thought about? I thought about Jeremiah and Isaiah. They said a man went out in the woods and cut down a tree and with half of it he built a fire and cooked food and fed his family, and with the other half he made a symbol for his meditation room.

And the prophet said, that's what you call idolatry. But you see, the United Nations, somebody said, let's put a cross in, and the Buddhists said, you can't do that. Somebody said, let's put a lotus in, and they said, well, you can't do that.

Somebody said, well, let's put, you know, the Muslim symbol, the crescent. The communists said, you can't do that. In fact, the communists said, you can't have anything religious in it.

So they ended up with a block of wood. Man keeps looking for some hope somewhere. The last time I went in, they'd gotten rid of the bit of petrified tree trunk, and they had an oblong block of ore, of stone, with geometrical colored designs being played on it.

Man knows he needs something, but the one thing he will not use, the one person to whom he will not turn, is the living God. So you know what God says? I'll just make every effort to tell you. I love him enough, he'll never succeed until he turns to me.

I will not let him live in illusion. It's painless. That's not because God doesn't love us, that he hates us and wants us uncomfortable.

It's because he loves us and wants to save us. And it's just like the doctor that sticks that needle in your arm to put the penicillin or the streptomycin or whatever else it is in to save you. You say, I don't like needles.

He says, yeah, but I want to heal you. And God's going to keep you in trouble until you get him in the center. So Jesus took all the needs and used them as a means of showing who he was.

Now we ran down through the story, the first one, where Jesus says, yes, I am the Christ. And he says, now I go to Jerusalem and I suffer at the hands of sinful men, die, but I'll rise after three days. And Peter says, never.

And he said, you don't have the mind of God, you have the mind of man. You read the rest of Mark. Peter spends the rest of Mark trying to find out what Jesus is all about.

He can't understand it. Never does catch on in the rest of Mark. Go through the rest of the gospel of Mark and find case after case.

But the one thing that is evident is that in every case of overt human needs, when Jesus appears, he has the capacity to meet it. There's that succession of needs of every kind and he meets them. After three years of that, you will remember, Jesus turns and says, whom do men say that I am? And Peter looks at him and says, we know who you are.

You're the Christ. Now, let me talk for a moment about what I think that meant to Peter. I think it meant two things.

And the first thing you obviously know, Peter was saying, we're Jews, master. And we're the people in the world who've had a messianic hope. We're the people who believe that sooner or later, God would send one who would save us from our problems.

We're the ones who believe that the Christ would come and he would be the answer to our needs. It was implicit in the promise to Abraham. Moses described the one who was to come like himself, except greater.

All through the old Testament, there was the buildup of the prophetic hope. We believe that the one that Moses promised, that David prefigured, the one that Isaiah pictured, we believe that he's come. And the miracle of miracles is there are 12 of us here that have you.

The hope of the ages. It's a very moving moment, isn't it? The hope of the world, the hope of the Jewish world. But you know, I suspect that Peter also meant something else.

And this is the thing I'd like to get to before I move into the latter part of Mark. I suspect Peter said, Lord, we think we know who you are because we watched you answer our questions. We watched you master the demonic.

We watched you take care of the physical in healing. We watched you take care of the physical in feeding us when we were hungry. We watched you take care of us when we were in danger of our lives.

We watched you take care of a man who had guilt and you took it away. We watched you take care of those that were social outcasts, lepers, and those possessed of demons like legion, and you made them normal so they could take their place in ordinary society again. We watched you meet a woman who was in despair and we watched you meet the need of a man who was in hopelessness because his daughter was dead.

We've watched you meet all those things. We believe you're not only the one Israel was looking for, you know, we believe you're the one that everybody is looking for. Now, I wish I knew how to make that come home as pointedly as I think it is.

Because you see, I think somehow or other, just as that hope for a Messiah arose in Israel and they said, we've had rulers and priests and leaders and every one of them has been flawed, surely somewhere there will come the flawless leader. And so the revelation in scripture of the Messiah fitted the cry of the human heart, there must be somebody that can lead us out of our problems and our troubles. Now, if that's true universally of mankind, of the human race, you know, I wonder if it isn't true of the human heart.

That anybody you bump into, if you could take the lid off his head and get inside the workings of his mind and heart, you'd find that somewhere sometime there's a thought. There must be a way out. There must be something that I haven't found.

There must be an answer there somewhere that should be available for a person. Life should not be an unsolvable riddle. And you know, I think that's the one thing that we have to play on as witnesses as Christians.

Now, let me illustrate that. I was in a home in Florida, well-to-do home. Man and his wife, they had one daughter.

She was in her 30s. She was married, had two children. Her husband was well-to-do.

She had married well, and so money was no problem. We were having lunch, sitting out on a patio, little wrought iron tables in sort of a semi-tropical atmosphere that you can have in Florida, very beautiful. And there was the pool, magnificent pool.

And it was just, you know, American affluence at about its nicest. I found myself sitting at the table of the daughter. Her name was Susan, and we have a Susan.

And so we struck up a conversation. And I knew that her father and mother had become Christians, didn't know about her. But as the conversation developed, I figured she was.

So I looked over and thought I'll try her out. And so I said, Susan, how did you get into this family? And I didn't tell her which family I meant. So she said, you know, it wasn't easy.

It's been rough. She said, you see, my father was an alcoholic for years. Said he was a weekend drunk.

He'd start drinking Thursday night. And he was a man who had great ambition to make money. So by Sunday morning, he'd start sobering up so he could go to work on Monday.

And he was smart enough that between Monday morning and Thursday night, he could make enough money to take care of us and take care of us well. Said I suppose that he, because of his, he was a drunk, really an alcoholic, had enough guilt that occasionally, that's why he went to church. Never went often, but occasionally he'd go.

Now she said my mother was a different kind. Said she didn't have anything to do with religion at all. Said she was so uninterested in religion and so hostile to it that I think back now to some of our conversations and shudder at how close to pure blasphemy we were.

In fact, we were so pagan that when my children came along, we told them they were Jews. So the Southern Baptists at school would stay off their back and not try to invite them to church. She said that's the kind of home in which I grew up.

But she said the time came when I was to get married and she said I fell in love, at least thought I did, with a young man who was part of the McDonald hamburger chain. And said he had plenty and said we had sort of a picture book country club wedding. And she said I thought this will be it.

I've got a husband. He built me a beautiful new home. We've got everything life can afford.

And she said now we can have children. I can have a family. Surely fulfillment will be there.

She said, you know, I hadn't been married long until I knew that I had missed it. She said the children began to come, but she said I began to realize that I hated my husband. I didn't have any reason for hating him, just my own inner frustration.

She said one day I turned to him and said, Bob, the happiest moment of any day is when you walk out that door and the saddest is when you come back in. And if you loved me, you'd walk out and never come back and leave me alone. She said, you know, fortunately he loved me enough he wouldn't do what I wanted him to do.

She said we lived together that way for a while. And finally I thought, you know, couldn't be all his fault. Maybe it's our environment.

Couldn't be hers, see. That thought never crossed her mind. So she said maybe if we lived in a different community and had a different home.

So she said he built me a bigger, more beautiful one, more luxurious one. She said, you know, I hadn't been in it two weeks until I knew it was wouldn't work. And she said worse, I found that there was a religious lady down the street.

And when they told me, I said, good, I'll know to stay away from her. And she said, you can imagine my shock when I found a car pull up in my yard driveway with my two kids in it for the carpool for school. And

the woman driving the car was that religious lady.

And said she got out and walked over me and spoke and said, how are you? And she said, don't ask me how, why. But she said, I said, what do you mean? In total confusion. Said the lady looked back a little shocked and said, how are you? And she said, I found myself exploding and cascading into tears.

She said, the next thing I knew I was sitting in my living room with that religious woman sitting in my living room. And she was saying to me, Susan, there's a hole inside you so big that there's nothing in the world that'll ever fill it but Jesus. Now, listen, she said, you know what happened to me when she said that? She said, my first thought was somebody has finally said it.

She said, it was as if I had waited all my life for that moment. I remember she hadn't been taught anything about Christianity. She was hostile to it all.

But she said, in that moment, there was something inside me said, Susan, is what you've been waiting for all your life. And she said, the next two weeks, I found myself oscillating between pure hatred for that woman and sitting in her living room, asking her questions. And said, finally, after a few weeks of that, I was standing at the kitchen sink one day looking out the window.

Said, don't know whether you are or not, but if you are, if there's anything you can do for a mortal like me, please, for God's sake, start it. And she said, he did. Now, she said, it didn't happen all in a moment.

But she said, you know, more happened than I knew was happening. She said, my father turned to Bob and said, Bob, what under the sun's happening to Susan? And his comment was, don't ask me, I surely don't know, but I surely do like the byproducts. Now, there are two things that interest me in that theologically.

She knew nothing about the gospel, but when she heard it, she said, you know, it was as if I had waited all my life for that. And when her husband watched the change, he said, that's good. Pagan of pagans, but he says, that's good.

Now, you know, I think that's some of what is meant by this term Messiah Christ. I believe God made every person in the world so that he's made for God. And every person in the world is looking for him.

You know, I'm convinced that's the reason most atheists are so evangelistic and so hostile. They're all mad. I don't think they're mad because they found out there is no God.

I think they're mad because they can't find him. And Peter says, the unbelievable thing is we've got the one everybody in the world is looking for. You're the Christ.

You're the answer to every man's basic human need. Now, you know, when I came to that point, I decided that that's what it means to be a Christian. Now, I want you to think with me for a minute.

It's easy for us to say a Christian is a person who's been born again. What do you mean by being born again? You describe it and a typical person will walk away and say, that guy had a religious experience. But there are Muslims that have religious experiences.

There are Buddhists that have religious experiences. You know, traditionally, we say they've been baptized and they're members of the church and so forth. Yeah.

We say you have to believe in Jesus, believe that he's a son of God. You know, I think you've got to believe more than that. You know what I think a Christian is? I think a Christian is a person who's come in his own heart to believe that Jesus is the answer to every man's need.

Because, you see, if I really believe that Jesus is the answer to every man's need, I'll quit looking for other fountains to drink from. I'll quit looking for other means of finding the satisfaction for my soul. I'll quit looking for other means to meet the needs of my life.

But I'll bow at his feet and I won't leave until I've found whether what I believe is true or not. But I want to tell you something else. It will change my relationship to everything in the world and it will change it to Jesus.

It'll mean that nothing else in the world now can compete with him. If I believe that he and he alone is the answer to the needs of the human heart, I'll quit looking to other things. I'll look to him and I'll look to him night and day and I'll look to him in between if there is such a time as in between night and day.

I'll look to him perpetually. The psalmist says, I have set the Lord always before my face. You see, that's where he had come.

So he says, I've set the Lord always before my face. If we believe it. But if we believe it, we'll believe something about other people.

When we sit down with any human being or meet any human being under any circumstances in any place, we'll say, well, I don't know what his name is, but I know one thing about him. I know that the only answer to his basic heart needs and life needs is Jesus. Now, if you look at the climax of this passage, what he says is, if you're ashamed of me, I'll have to be ashamed of you in the judgment.

I think that's what he's getting at. I believe a Christian is a person who believes something about Jesus. Now, what does it mean here in a place like this? It means that when we think about teenagers over there, we're not content until the last one of them is born again.

Until the last one knows Christ. There's something in our hearts that says the last one of them needs Christ. Not an exception out there in that youth group that doesn't need Christ.

When we look at the little kids, we'll look at them and say, one thing we know about them. There may be a lot of other things to know, but one thing, and it's the central thing, every last one of them needs to come to know Jesus. And he needs to come as fast as he can come to know Jesus.

We look at the person who's sitting next to us and say, one thing I know about him in his marriage, he needs Jesus. Jesus is the only way to make that marriage work right. We sit next to somebody who's got children and we say, the only thing that'll make that family work right is Jesus.

Or a businessman sitting next to you. We say the only way that business will be what it ought to be is if Jesus is in control. Sovereign law.

We will look at everything in life in terms of the fact that he is the one that every man needs, beginning with me. Now I want to ask you, is that one of the reasons that we're so hesitant to witness for him because we really don't believe that? Is one of the reasons we're ashamed to stand up and be counted as Christians is because we think, well, maybe there's another way. I had to preach in a special spot and so I

looked for a special text and I found the one for other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Christ Jesus.

So I thought that's a good text. So I'll work on that one. Never had preached on it.

So I thought, no question about it. Jesus is the best foundation you can build a life on or build a home on or build a vocation on. Then I thought, but that's what the text says.

The text doesn't say that Jesus is a better foundation than anything else to build your life on or to build your family on or to build your home on. What the text says is for none other foundation can any man lay than that which is laid in Christ Jesus. What the text says is there is no foundation but Jesus.

And so Peter says, we found out who you are. And a Christian is a person who believes that. Let me ask you, if we really believe that, wouldn't the free Methodist shake Canada? I think you would.

I think if the free Methodist in Canada believed that, they'd shake Canada. Because you see, it doesn't bother you to help people. You enjoy helping people.

If every person you looked at you said he needs, the one I know, you'd be looking for any way you could find to get the word to him. It'd be the delight of your life. It'd be the delight of your life.

That's the way it ought to be. Now, I've sort of wandered around this morning and have done it very poorly, but I think that's what is being laid down in the first half of the Gospel of Mark to show that Jesus is the answer to the need of the human heart. And we spell it out in that confession.

You're the Christ. You're the Christ, the one people are looking for. Now, I want to give you just a preview, and I've got about two minutes, a preview of the next half of the book.

When I got to that point, I liked that, but I kept on reading. It's interesting, there's a whole stack of stories in the second half of the Gospel of Mark that have to do not with Jesus, but have to do with these disciples who now know who he is. And do you know one of the funny things? There is not a single story in the rest of the book of Mark where a disciple looks good.

There is not a single story where these people who now have the secret of human history and the secret of salvation look good. Let me quickly. Jesus says to Peter, now go to Jerusalem to be crucified, and he says, not so, Lord.

And he argues with God. They're coming down from the Mount of Transfiguration, and Jesus says, don't tell anybody what you saw this morning until I rise from the dead. And Peter, James, and John get off in a corner like three modern Methodist preachers, and they say to each other, what does rising from the dead mean? They get to the foot of the hill, and there's a big commotion in the crowd.

And Jesus says, what's the trouble? And a father comes up and says, your disciples here came through this country recently casting out devils, and I have a son with an evil spirit in him, and I thought they could help him. I brought my son in his need to your disciples, and whatever spiritual power they had, they've now lost it because they can't help him. I can ask you a question.

Is there as much of God in your life now as there was a month after you got saved? And as they walk along, Jesus says to them, I'm headed for Jerusalem and the cross, and Mark says, but they didn't understand. You get to the end of the day, and Jesus said, you had a rather animated conversation, didn't

you? What were you talking about? And they, with some embarrassment, hesitate, and he says, you don't need to tell me. You were arguing about who's going to be first in the kingdom.

Don't you know that's not the kind of kingdom I have? You don't look for the top. You look for the place of service. You want to become like a child.

James and John came up to him and said, we have one request. Could we have the right hand and the left hand in your kingdom? These stories are back to back. And the ten got hot as firecrackers and said, who do they think they are? We want the right hand and the left.

And John says, we did at least one good thing today. And Jesus said, pray tell me. And they said, we found a fellow casting out devils in your name.

We forbade him because he's not one of us. That's in the gospel of Mark. Right after they've lost God's power, they're kicking somebody who still has it.

I want you to read the latter half of the gospel of Mark and find out what believers are like. I want to see if you see yourself in any of those stories. It's interesting, the climax of the latter half is like the climax of this passage.

If you're ashamed of me, I'll be ashamed of you. The climax is Jesus looks at him and says, all of you are going to forsake me. Peter, two verses later says, not I, Lord, I'll die for you.

Two verses later, 11 more chime in and say, nor we. And 19 verses later, Mark simply says, and they all forsook him. And there was one young man in the crowd and the police grabbed him and he slid right out of his clothes, became the first Christian streaker.

And I suspect his name was the name of the guy that wrote the book, which brings me to this. The first thing I have to do is find out who he is. And the second thing is more painful is to find out who I am.

And you know, I don't believe you'll ever find out who you are until you're born again. It's only when you've been genuinely regenerated that you have enough mind, spiritually illuminated enough to see how sinful you are. There's the basis for our message of holiness, isn't it? We begin to walk with him and we begin to find out how profound our need really is.

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