

The Discipline of Detail - 16

by Jack Hibbs

The sermon emphasizes the importance of paying attention to the details of life and recognizing God's presence in every aspect of it.

Duration: 1:02:07

Scripture: Psalm 118:23, Matthew 21:42, Matthew 28:18, Romans 11:25, Philippians 1:21, 1 Thessalonians 5:18, James 1:17

Topics: "Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of slowing down and taking time to appreciate the spiritual matters in life. He criticizes the fast-paced nature of society and how it affects churches and Christian programming. The speaker reminds the audience of God's unchanging nature and encourages them to trust in Him. The sermon also focuses on the discipline of detail, highlighting the significance of living a purposeful life centered around Christ.

Transcript

Father, we ask you Lord that tonight, as we look to this topic, this portion of our Disciplines of Life series, Lord, that you would invade right now by the power of your Holy Spirit. Lord, the process, the recesses of our mind, the very depths of our soul. Lord, it is so great to be not only one of your children or all of us tonight, your children together in corporate worship, but Lord, it's so great to have you as a real, true living God.

We don't have to drum you up, we don't have to do incantations or shout, jump up and down, go crazy to try to get ourselves into some lather to maybe sense or feel something. You are so awesome to have made the gospel as it is, that from Old Testament to New Testament, you said that you would inhabit your people. And Father, we just pray right now that you would just be inside of us by the power of your Spirit.

And Lord, I just rejoice tonight, I just have an extra appreciation tonight that we're not Christians this evening because maybe in America or some part of the world where we've heard the gospel, that it was just the thing to do. We're not Christians because we're in a club. We're not here tonight because there's nothing else going on in the city.

We're here, Lord, because we've come to worship you, because we've encountered you. And it's amazing, Father, from all walks of life and various levels of life we've come together around the name Jesus. The

very one in your scripture that I love so dearly, Lord, in Proverbs, thousands and thousands of years ago, written in the book of Proverbs, you're asking Israel right then and there, what is my name and what is the name of my son, if you can tell me? And I thank you tonight that we can say it's Jesus.

And we praise you for that. Bless our study time, bless our worship. And it's in your name we pray.

Amen. Well, church, grab your Bibles tonight and turn, if you would, this evening to Philippians chapter one. Philippians chapter one.

And you know the verse by now, Matthew 28, those two locations, Matthew chapter 28, Philippians chapter one, we're looking at our titled special series. And the special title tonight is the Discipline of Detail. And what does that mean? The Discipline of Detail? We are in week 16 of our 31 week series together.

Philippians chapter one, verse 21. But first, Matthew 28, 18. Jesus came to his disciples and spoke to them saying, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth.

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, all peoples. The word there is ethnos, all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I've commanded you and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. And now Philippians chapter one, verse 21.

This is where we'll spend our time in tonight. Paul said to the church at Philippi, for to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. One of the most radical statements made by a disciple of Jesus Christ, none other than by the apostle Paul, a man who knew something about religiosity.

He knew something about formality. The man was a Pharisee. He was a Jew.

He was a leader in the nation of Israel regarding Judaism. And he had achieved, he had the status that today in the world, probably nobody can claim. And he gives a litany of his both God-given rights, his birthrights and his achievements.

Paul says that he was a Hebrew of the Hebrews, that he was circumcised on the eighth day concerning, and of the tribe of Benjamin, mind you, concerning righteousness and the law. He was blameless before men. Nobody could accuse Paul of any wrongdoing.

Can you imagine? By the way, that's the way you and I are supposed to live. Now, let me explain that for a second. I love what my pastor Chuck Smith says.

He said, listen, you stand up and you take a stand and you're going to be accused. Just make sure there's no bite to the accusation. That's cool stuff.

If you take a stand, you're going to be attacked. Let them attack. And listen, you don't need to defend yourself when they attack.

If you know that those attacks are false, he was an amazing witness for Judaism. And Paul goes on to say, you know what? When I encountered Jesus Christ, I threw my Judaism out the window. And I don't mean to say that in a derogatory way.

He says it himself that all of the things that he did to meet the requirements of righteousness, he did all of these things. Imagine religious zealots today. They do all of these things to earn a status or a position with God.

And they're never quite sure if they're good enough. That's how legalism is. You're never quite sure if you're going to make it.

You're never quite sure if you're walking straight enough or or whatever. You're always insecure. Legalistic people who are trying to earn their way into heaven or impress their God or gods by their performance are are terribly insecure people.

That's what legalism does. And Paul, though, was not like that in the sense that he said, man, I've looked at the requirements of the law, and I've met the requirements. Now, that's what he believed in his mind.

And that's what he did in an outward performance. But what Paul admits was the spirit of knowing God. That's what the New Testament is all about.

Don't think for a moment that the Old Testament and the New Testament, those are two separate books and they don't relate to one another. Not at all. They're exactly a dovetail connection.

It's not some different thing. The Old Testament declares the holiness of God and the demands that he places upon man if he's going to try to be perfect to get to heaven. And the beautiful thing about the Old Testament is that if you read it carefully, for that matter, just read the Ten Commandments carefully, you'll come to the conclusion that you can't be good enough to get to heaven.

That's what the law is all about. In the book of Galatians, Paul used the word to the church at Galatia that the law is in the Greek, it's pedagogous. In the English, the closest thing we can use is the word schoolmaster.

You know, we don't even have schoolmasters anymore. You know what a schoolmaster is, though? A schoolmaster is that person that's in class that actually makes you do your homework to the point of death if necessary. They walk around, you know, really high-end private schools, they have a schoolmaster.

And the guy or the gal walks around kind of dressed like Hitler. And if you're cheating, you know, they'll whack you. I mean, they're just... You say, Jack, really? Yeah, that's what the Bible says regarding the law, that the law was to walk around and look at you and bust you the moment you stepped out of line.

And the Bible tells us that by the works or keeping of the law, no man shall be justified before God. Yikes. That's why when you read in the Bible, Abraham's life, when you read David's life, these guys had New Testament lives in the Old Testament.

God tells Abraham, I love this. This has nothing to do with my notes. I haven't even started yet.

You guys, I love this about Abraham. Abraham, oh, listen, because this generates mail every time I say this. And yet, because it really hits feelings, it hits emotions.

But it's theologically perfectly accurate. Check this out. Abraham, Abram, before he was called Abraham.

Do you know, does anybody know where he was from? Ur, of the Chaldees. Okay, Abraham came from the region that today would be more Babylonian than our mind of thinking. Well, he's a Hebrew.

Yes, he's a Hebrew. He's a descendant from Eber. Eber was a guy.

He was of the DNA of Eber. Yes. But Abraham, we say is a Hebrew.

But listen, God tells Abraham that he's justified by faith. Right? It's in the Bible. God declares Abraham righteous.

Guess what? How could God declare Abraham righteous when Moses hadn't even been born yet? There was no law. There was no 10 commandments when Abraham was walking around. Moses came later.

And God says, you're righteous. Why? To rub it into our hearts and heads that you can't get to heaven by keeping the law. And then God says to Abraham, you're, you're my friend.

You're justified. The just shall live by faith. God said that to him before he was ever circumcised.

Abraham was a Gentile before he was a Jew. I've said that in Israel and almost got killed. I'm not kidding.

It is true. God says, you're my friend, you're righteous. I declare that so because you have faith in me.

He was not circumcised. He was not able to keep the law. The law didn't exist.

Why? Because it is all by faith. And Paul comes along and encounters Jesus Christ. On that road, as he was heading to Damascus, Syria, 2000 years ago, he encounters Jesus Christ.

And Paul says, everything that I racked up in my religious achievements, all of my degrees, all of my successes, all of my power and being a Pharisee, all of my wealth evaporated in the second. I've counted all things lost that I may gain Christ. Do you know that in your life have you encountered God personally to where you know you're his? And if listen, if you know what it's like to love and to care and to concern and to show emotion, you being one created in the image of God, how much more does God show those things toward you and wants that relationship with you? It is awesome.

And so when Paul meets up with this God of the Bible, he says, you know what? For to me to live as Christ and to die is gain. You can't stop someone like that. Paul, what are you doing? I'm living life.

What for? What's your purpose? What's your meaning? What's your cause? Christ? Well, what are you going to do when you're dead? What are you going to do when you die? What are you going to do if I kill you right now, Paul, to get I'm just going to gain you want to want to help me out, send me to the gain. You want to put me into retirement, retire me. Isn't that amazing? You can't stop somebody like that.

He's got a purpose. He's got a reason. And that's the great thing about detail tonight, the discipline of detail.

It is this our God is a God of detail in the Bible. You find that out clearly consider his creation. Our God is a God of detail.

Consider yourself being a created being. You are an amazingly detailed human being. Your blood cells, your, your very DNA genius, brilliant, unbelievably amazing.

When you're conceived in your mother's womb and all of the science that's going on, there's an explosion of information. When sperm and egg come together, that is unparalleled in the universe. There's more data taking place.

At conception, then Mars and Jupiter and all the stuff and their astronomical angles and speeds and gravities, it's amazing. God is a God of detail. It's the details of life that make life worth living.

Think about that. We're people that have a tendency to skim over the details. And the more listen, the more you and I are in a rush, the more danger it is for you and I always in a hurry, always in a hurry.

This is a danger of our culture. I, it may be incurable unless God knocks us out and we have to lay down for a while, constantly going, constantly moving. And you know what? We can miss the details and life is lived in the details.

You guys, I think you know this. I've said this before. I love graveyards.

I love old graveyards. I love taking black and white photos of an old graveyard. This is just awesome.

And it's amazing because you've got all of these names and stuff. And you've got this guy born in 1796 and he died in 1834. And what's between the two years of those what's between those dates is a dash.

Who cares? Who cares when he was born? Do you think anybody really cared? Walked around life saying, when were you born? Nobody walks around saying, hey, when were you born? Oh, look, look, that's the year he died. We look at a tombstone and we go, that guy, he was born then and he died then. And if you've ever, does this sound morbid? You ought to try it sometime.

Go to a really cool old graveyard and look and think for a moment. And you wonder what's, how was the dash part? What's how'd the dash part work out? Who is this guy? It's the dash that you live your life. It's in the details that you live in your life.

This is an amazing thing because you and I can be in such a great hurry all the time that we've lost the art or discipline of detail that God is in the details. You know, it sounds corny, but you know, slow down and smell the roses or whatever. You know, people will say that, hey, listen, there's a lot of truth to that.

Slow down in spiritual matters. We need to slow down. It's a dangerous time where we are a 15 second media soundbite generation.

And I'm afraid churches like that. I've noticed some Christian programming on radio. Now they'll, they'll teach for 10 minutes and then they have to have a commercial in between the 20 minute program.

And you find out, you call them, you know, Hey, why do you guys do that? Well, because people don't have attention span. So what do we, we feed that next is going to be every five minutes. You have to have a commercial.

What's the matter with us? Jesus said in John 10, 10, I have come that you may have life and that you have, that you may have it more abundantly. And we rarely take notice of that. The details is where we encounter God.

The Bible says in Psalm 139, verse one, listen, Oh Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know, my sitting down and you know, my rising up, you understand my thoughts from afar off. This is how awesome he is.

You comprehend my path and my lying down and you are acquainted with all my ways. That's the God of the Bible. That's detail.

Now, listen, everybody, if God's acquainted with all of your ways that should dictate how you and I live our lives. He knows what you're going to do tomorrow morning, tomorrow afternoon, and three weeks from now on a Wednesday morning, he knows if he knows that. And we meditate on that.

It should affect our lives. It should, we should slow down a woman. What happened to us today? What happened? What's going on in our lives? God knew calm down, slow down.

He is acquainted with all of your ways. Psalm 139 goes on. Verse 16 says your, I saw my unformed body.

All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. God saw you coming together in your mother's womb. How precious to me are your thoughts? Oh God, how vast is the sum of them? Where I, where I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of the sand of the sea.

That's what he's referring to. When I awake, I'm still with you. Every believer knows that sense.

Tomorrow morning, when you wake up, you're going to have the sense that God's with you and his thoughts for you. And, you know, listen, I'm telling you this right now. And if you're not paying attention, if you're not paying attention to detail, this goes right over your head.

It's like, oh yeah. Oh, I've heard that before. But do you believe it? If you believe it, that his thoughts toward you are more than the sands of the sea, then that's very encouraging.

And your worry scale is going to go down about 99%. Details at first are often overlooked by us in life. And yet God is in those details.

So listen, point number one is this tonight, the discipline of details. It's seeing the Lord in all things. It seems so obvious.

You see, that's a ridiculous point. Everybody knows that, but we don't practice this seeing the Lord in all things and everything. And we're going to define what that means in a moment.

Some of you are in college. You need to hear this because you're getting hit with this. Number one is this.

He's in the good stuff. The first thing we want to realize is that seeing God in all things is obviously he's in the good stuff. He's in the good that happens in the world.

The Bible tells us clearly in our humanity and, you know, in our weakness, we want to be people who notice things that are good. And when we do good things, don't you want to be noticed for doing a good thing? You're going to act all humble tonight and say, no, I'm... But it's human nature to want to be noticed for doing a good thing. I'm not saying it's humble, but it's human nature.

But that's because you want to be appreciated. That's the human side. God's in the good stuff, not to be appreciated for the reasons that we seek appreciation.

But God is in the good stuff because God is good. He's good. And people will say things like this, and we'll talk about it more in a moment.

But God who is good, says the Bible, a person will come back and say, well, if God is good, how can there be bad? I don't understand that question. Honestly, I don't understand the question. You can't have bad without good.

And by the way, if you've had a class on logic and debate, bad is once or was once good that's gone bad. If a person is a real weirdo, just a real strange weirdo. Look, no, I'm talking to weirdo.

I'm talking about a person who's dangerous to the society. They are. They'll kidnap somebody and they'll drive around the country with them and and talk to them.

And and then it winds up what happens? They wind up abusing them and maybe even killing them. Why does that happen? People will say, how can God, how can your Christian God exist when that happens? What is that? I don't understand your argument. The funny thing is, if I listen to what you're saying, you're actually upset with the God that you claim not to believe in for, in your opinion, not doing something about it.

Your very criticism announces that you believe in the God and you think he should do better than what he's doing. When in reality, the whole Bible has built in the answer to that a person who was out kidnapping and holding captive somebody and then winds up molesting them or killing them. Where does that come from? It comes from good gone bad.

Did you know that? They they want to they want to have a sense of a relationship with someone. Now, you've got to admit it's sick and wrong and dangerous and godless. But their desire is something that was good and it went bad.

Good always has to be in existence before bad. It was very good in the garden of Eden. And then it went bad.

Why? God did the good stuff and man comes along and does the bad stuff. But then somebody will say, well, then God made a bad man. No, God made a good man who chose to go bad.

And therein is your dilemma doesn't have to be, but it is. No one in this universe appreciates anything that is pre-programmed. When it comes to a relationship.

You are a person of individual choosing, you you have a sense of sovereignty. You can choose who you will love and who you will hate or who you will choose to be with or not be with. You can hear him saying the Bible tells us that God is in the good.

In Psalm 27:13, the Bible says, I would have lost heart unless I had believed that I would see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. It's the psalmist that says God's good. That's what kept my feet on earth.

And he wants us listen. Yes, of course, God wants us to speak well of him, not because he needs to hear that is because it is true. In the details, listen, church, are you speaking well of God in your life? Well, no, it's because you're not focusing on the details of God.

It's the small things. Is it not the details when Elijah's in the cave and the thunder comes and the earthquake comes and the storm comes and all that stuff's going on and Elijah says, well, I didn't I didn't find God and all that stuff. And then came the still small.

I like to substitute voice for this study, the still small detail. Huh? It was the Lord. He always speaks gently.

He's always speaking softly. And if you don't take the time to listen to his details, you'll miss him and you'll get caught up in religion. You get caught up into fanaticism.

You'll get caught up in a mass movement of people all running in the same direction and they're all flying down the path. And. God forbid, somebody should stop and say, what are we doing? And yet God wants you to stop and say, what are we doing? The Bible says in James one seventeen, every good and perfect gift is from God or is from above and comes down from the father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

Isn't that awesome? God's nature never changes. You can trust him. He is good and he's in the good stuff.

All the good that happens in life, and I got to tell you, I confess I'll be the first to tell you, I rarely, rarely thank God for all the good. We made it here tonight, people. And if you're hungry right now, you'll probably satisfy that after service.

You won't starve to death. And if you're broke and you don't have a pen in your pocket, guess what? We're not going to let you go hungry. You have clothes on.

There's a roof over your head. You're you're comfortable right now. Isn't that good? Last night, you guys on my street, just my street, all the power went out, was out for hours and then it was out again this morning.

And you know what you start learning? Neighbors out there with candles and flashlights last night, you know, you know what you start learning. Wow. God, thank you for things like flashlights, candles.

Isn't that amazing? And it's kind of fun because, you know, there's all the neighbors have their own, have their different thing. My one neighbor, they had, he comes out, he's got it. He had his popcorn.

He had just got done popping popcorn and all the power goes out. He comes out, he's got his popcorn and he loves, he loves fires. He loves, uh, uh, like a, you know, campfire and he goes, let's have a campfire.

And my other neighbor, neighbor to the north of me, he, um, runs out to his truck cause he was in his garage watching a game, an angel game, runs out to his truck and turns on the engine so he can listen to the game. And he's, and he's in his robe listening to the game, the angel game. And it's just funny how people respond, but listen, all those things, if it was expressed or not, they're thankful.

They're thankful. And we're hardly thankful enough. I need to slow down and appreciate the details.

Why? Because God's in those details and they're good. Second Thessalonians two 13 says, but we are bound to give thanks to God always for you. Paul said to them, brethren beloved by the Lord because, and he goes on and I stopped right there though, because you feel in that because, because what, because what God is so good.

We could write a book on that. And first Thessalonians five 18, the Bible says in everything, give thanks for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you, man, that right there is look at that verse. First Thessalonians five 18.

We could go home right now. We, we could put that. We, we, if we stapled that onto our head and walked around, can you imagine we'd walk around here? It's on, we have to see it.

It's on everybody's head. Oh yeah. And everything gives thanks.

Man, that'll change. Give this to your kids tomorrow, put it in their lunch, put it in their lunch bag. If they even eat lunch bags like that anymore, give it to your wife, your husband, your girlfriend, boyfriend, give it.

What a great thing that is. And everything give thanks. That'll change, that'll change your life.

Oh man, someone scratched my car. And, and everything. I know this personally, and it's great to be, it's great to be older now.

And I've already gone through all that stuff. I remember buying my first new car when I was a kid and I'd go to the South coast Plaza and park a mile out in the parking lot. So nobody parked next to it had to walk to the mall.

As long as nobody parks next to the car. And then I took her to church. Okay.

And, and at church, somebody drug a key across to that church. Let me tell you something. I came out of church praise the Lord, man.

I was in the flesh that fast. And you know what, when I calmed down, took a couple of weeks. When I calmed down, when I calmed down, I felt the Lord.

I've never heard God say jerk, but I felt him say that car is too important in your life. And he was right. What do you do with that? You're right.

You're right. He's good. And you give thanks there and they, Hey, you know what I drew? I didn't walk home from church.

I drove home in the scratched car, but I had a car to drive home and we get all crazy and weird about stuff. I thank God for this economic peril. It's all evaporating.

We don't have nothing much left anymore. Praise the Lord. It's just anchored to our hearts.

Anyway, it's messing us up. Guess what? Americans can live. Okay.

That's if we focus on the details, God is good. And listen, he's in the bad stuff too. God's in the bad stuff.

I always have to think of bad stuff. If you know God, is it really bad stuff? Feels bad, looks bad, smells bad. And if I didn't know God, it would be very bad, but I know God, he knows everything's going on.

So it ain't that bad. Many Christians today have a pagan view of God. We would never admit that, but we do because listen, when you're lightweight in faith, listen, thoughts like this go through your head.

God can only be involved in the good stuff. He's not involved in the bad stuff. He's absent.

He's nowhere. He can't be there. God's not involved in Iran.

He's not involved in North Korea. He's not involved in what? What? He's the God of the whole earth. Oh my goodness.

But he's not, he's whoa, whoa, whoa, wait, wait, wait. What do you have? You have some little fragile God. What kind of God is this you're worshipping? He knows all about the bad stuff and he uses it.

Listen, he doesn't create bad. Man creates bad. Satan creates bad, but God uses the bad to bring about good.

Tragedy does that. One of the greatest ways to test your culture. I know right now this broadcast is going out over a bazillion cultures around the world right now.

160 different countries right now, different cultures. Listen, test your God or your gods. When a calamity comes, how do you act? The God that you worship, what has this God or gods that you worship embossed upon your heart when calamity comes? And you'll see that and how a culture mourns and how a culture grieves in our American culture, we've lost sight of God.

And so now when people lose control, get hurt, get upset, get angry, they riot. Why? Because the Bible says where there's no God in your mind, every man does that which is right in his own eyes. Our culture has removed God from the public place.

So what do you expect? People, you listen, it's a double, it's a double whammo. You remove God from the public square and then you've been breeding your kids with the knowledge they're just animals from a primordial mud hole. They're just a big tadpole.

And then we expect them to be civil. It's the biggest ridiculous contradiction in history. You cannot tell a kid that he's an evolutionary byproduct and expect him to clean up his room.

No, I'm serious. Why should he? Who are you to tell him that? He's younger than you. He can run faster than you.

He's going to start working out and playing sports and he can beat you up soon. Yeah, really? So survival of the fittest, is it not? No, you have to act civil. Why should I act civil? I'm an animal.

I've been hearing that for 13 years in school. 13. Did you count? Now when I go to college, I'm an animal.

It's amazing to me. No, you're not an animal. Bambi's an animal.

You are creating the image of God. Okay. That's why you have that struggle down deep inside.

God's even in the bad stuff. Romans 8 38 says, Paul speaks to the church at Rome. He says, for I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth.

Isn't this beautiful? Nor any other created thing. Man, fill that in. Shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord, man, you can almost, you can almost see him in our Lord.

Right? I mean, it's like, yes, you can hear all those Italians going. It's amazing. He's on a roll there, man.

He's just nothing can separate us from God. That implies bad stuff. This guy was left at sea beaten on Malta.

Remember he got bit by the snake, just the snake comes out of the fire and he bites him. That would, that enough right there would enough. That just freaked me out.

Bitten by snakes beat up. The Bible says he was attacked by false brethren, stoned, not with drugs, with rocks stoned left for dead. The Bible says he was left for dead.

Paul gets back up, walks back into the same city that just stoned him with rocks. What would you have done? You could, they, they, they cute. They think they killed you with rocks.

Maybe he did die. I don't know. Gets back up.

Oh man. Goes back into town. My third point was, can you imagine how do you stop a guy like that to live as Christ to die is gain.

He was in the details. He's a man who lived in the details. He saw God in everything, in the good stuff, the bad stuff, in the ugly stuff.

God's in the ugly stuff. When I talk about ugly, this is what I mean by ugly. I'm talking about the stuff that requires death to ourselves.

This is something that no other religion on earth even pretends to believe in death to self. Hey, I'm not talking about strapping a bomb on yourself and I'm not talking about jumping off some building death to self. Only the Christian understands that this is our God who in the details is in the ugly.

I call it the ugly. Cause you know what the ugly is. Maybe you won't appreciate it, but it's, it's, it's, I like it.

It's this way. Living the Christian life is the hardest thing on the planet to do. Maybe that's why Paul said to live as Christ to die is get me out of here.

Why? Because we have a keen understanding, man, this is tough. There's people, there's people. I don't even understand how this works.

You guys, you're looking at a guy who was raised by a Marine, who was raised to hate. And then Jesus comes into my life. And I remember freaking out over people I didn't like and was maybe this far from Hayden.

And then I got Jesus in my heart. And you know how you know what I'm talking about? If it's happened, you know that when he puts love in your heart for some person in your life that you couldn't stand before. And you wind up having this bizarre internal impulse that you're wrestling with.

What in the world am I thinking? Am I freaking out? Who am I? What is going on in my life? I actually want to do my enemy some good. I need my head examined. And the Lord is saying, that's me.

Just do what I'm telling you to do. You take all the religions of the world tonight. And if you're an atheist this evening, which religion would you pick if you wanted to have a good, nice sleep tonight without worrying about who's sleeping next to you? You think about that for a minute.

The guy next to you could hate you, but if he's a Christian, it's like, man, I have to love my enemies. That's the ugly. That's denying yourself daily, the Bible says, and taking up the cross and following him.

Mark 8, 34 says, when he had called the people unto himself with his disciples, he said to them, whoever desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. What kind of a recruitment program is that? Is that amazing? Can you imagine Tony Robbins? Hey, this is Tony Robbins. Pick up your cross, deny yourself, follow me.

I'm asking you to come and follow me with a life that you're going to surrender all your rights and you're going to live for the glory of God. And it's not about you. It's Jesus went on to say, whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospels will save it.

He's not talking about dying. He's talking about dying every day, not dying. You die once it's over to live as Christ, to die as gain.

As a Christian, listen, it's easier. You guys truly, truly easier. If, if tonight we were to die and go see Jesus, that would be easier than if the Lord said tonight, Hey, all you guys at Calvary, I know you love me.

Hang in there because I'm not coming back for 30 more years. Tell me what's easier to die for Jesus tonight or to live faithful for the next 30 years. It's easier to die for him tonight.

You can only die so long. The ugly stuff in life is stuff like this. It's when it's hard to see God in the situation.

That's ugly. That's reality, man. Are you going through something right now? And you're wondering, you want to kind of pound your fist because you can't see God in it.

That's the ugly stuff. He's in that. You'd want to cry right now.

You hold him back tears. He's in that big time. You can't figure out the answer.

Seems like the heavens are brass. It's an ugly time. He's in it.

What about the stuff, the, the evil stuff of life? If God is good, as I said earlier, people will say, well, then why is there so much evil? But you can't have evil without good. Why is, what's with all the sickness in life? The Bible tells us, Jesus said that when sin came into the world, it was Satan coming to rob and to kill and to destroy. And what about the pains of life? Life hurts.

I heard someone say recently, my life hurts. Why is God so angry at me? Isn't that a heartbreak? You just want to hold that person. God's not angry with you.

You need to understand that God is in the ugly, but you'll never know that you'll, you'll wonder back and forth. Well, what kind of a God is he? Who are you? You will always ask that question until you get into the details of who he is. I have a little saying of mine.

I don't practice it always. I practice it a lot. I'm getting better at it, but I'm not perfect at it.

If it blesses you, steal it, use it for yourself. And it's this, when I don't understand what's going on, I default automatically. I punch default.

I go, I default to his nature. What in the world? I don't get it. This doesn't seem right.

That's unfair. What? I can't wait. Whoa, whoa.

Default. Who is God? I've read his book. I've read it.

I'm not saying that because I need to commit. He's good. He's good.

He's good. He's good. No, I've read the book.

He's good. Well, what about your situation right now? I don't know what the answer is, but I'm going to stand here and wait. I'm going to press default and trust in his nature.

I know his nature. I may not know the answer to my ugly right here, right now, but I know his nature. That's why Paul said, because he knew his nature.

What can separate us from the love of God? That's what he's saying. He says, I've been persuaded to know this. I love that.

It doesn't mean I've been bribed to know it. I just chanted it into my life. I went to Sedona, Arizona, sat on a rock and put a crystal in my navel and went, hmm.

Right. They do that. I've been there.

I've seen it. You don't have to do that. He's real.

He's alive. And he's in the ugly of life. And he'll get you all the way through it.

Ecclesiastes 311 says he has made everything beautiful in its time. He has also set eternity in the hearts of men. Yet they cannot fathom what God has done from beginning to end.

Press default. It's awesome. He's in the ugly stuff.

You don't know what ugly stuff is. This to me, this would be ugly. According to Jewish history, based upon some pretty serious verses in the Bible, mind you, when they were building Solomon's temple, this has always been passed down and told among the Jewish communities.

Pretty cool. That when the temple was being built, Solomon's temple, the quarry, because that was in a distant location, the quarry sent up to the temple mount, the cornerstone and the supervisor of the project on the temple mount didn't know what to do with it. Maybe somebody lost the node, who knows what we'll just park it right there.

And they're building and they're building and they're building. And years later, the supervisor says, you get this stone's ridiculous. We keep falling over it.

We keep tripping over it. And they pushed it down the Kidron Valley. Many of us have been there.

You've seen it. They've rolled it. They rolled it down into the valley.

And then they're, they keep years go by. They're building and building and building and building. And then the supervisor calls to the quarry manager and says, get it.

Okay. Time for the placement of the cornerstone. Bring it up.

The guy sends a messenger. I send it to you years ago. You've had it for years.

And they remembered that ridiculous stone that kept getting in the way. We're stumbling over it, tripping over it, falling over it. We pushed it down the hill, get it back up, get it, bring it up.

And the second time around was way harder than the first because they had to bring it up the Kidron Valley. That's why later on the psalmist, a psalmist wrote in Psalm 118, the psalm of ascent, the stone,

which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing who would have thought it is marvelous in our eyes.

Is that amazing? Isn't it amazing that the new Testament says that for the Jewish people, Jesus was the rock of stumbling that they stumbled over and they rejected him. And he's known as the cornerstone. It's interesting.

The Bible says in Old and New Testament that he'll come back to them. There's a day when he comes back. They had to become a nation first before that could happen, but that's already happened as well.

And we have nine minutes to go through the second point and we'll do it right here, right now. The discipline of detail is this, is letting the Lord guide in all things. And listen, he knows where he wants us to go, you guys.

He knows where he wants us to go. There's no such thing as a destination unless you have a target, unless you have that destination in sight. We're, you don't, you don't, I mean, this sounds kind of fun.

You start driving. Where are you going? I don't know. We know we'll know when we get there.

No, you don't. You'll run out of gas and that becomes the spot. Where are we going to stay tonight? We don't know.

We'll know when we get there. No, that's not a destination. That's an accident waiting to happen.

But when you, listen, can you imagine the pilot getting on an airplane saying, okay, we're going to New York City now? That dude, he's just, there's satellites guiding that plane to New York City. In fact, that pilot doesn't have to touch the yoke of that cockpit of that plane. He doesn't even touch it.

The plane can land by itself. Why? Because it has a programmed destination on it. God has that for your life.

And we're so, here's, here's us. God, it's right here. We start here and he wants us to go there and we go like this.

Bing, bing, bing, bing, bing. And the Lord says, man, could have flown direct by letting me lead you. All these detours you and I throw in.

Why? These detours are not in the details, but he's with us, but he knows where he wants to take us. You guys know this verse too much. You're so familiar with it.

I'm afraid you've missed the detail of it. Jeremiah 29, 29, 11. He says, I know the thoughts that I think toward you.

You keep the, keep that up on the state, on the screens. You guys, it's almost like now I know God cannot get frustrated. He's, he can't, but listen to this.

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you. My insert, God would say, so stop telling me how to do my job as God. I know what I'm thinking.

You have, you know, you talk with somebody, you know, like a husband or a wife. I know what I said. I said this.

No, you didn't. You said, I know what I said. God is saying, I know what I know.

And this is what I know. The thoughts that I, he says, the Lord, the thoughts of peace and not of evil to give you a future. And I hope then you will call upon me and go and pray to me.

And I will listen to you. This is the God of the universe talking to us. And you will seek me and find me when you search for me with all your heart.

Is this not, is this not an amazing relational God? He's awesome. Listen, letting the Lord guide in all things is this. He holds the map for our journey.

In Psalm 32, eight, the Bible says, I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. Isn't that great. I will guide you with my eye.

Do not be like the horse or like a mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle else. They will not come near you. God says, don't be like a donkey.

Don't be like a horse. The guy's fighting with it. Got a yank on it.

That bridle and that bit pinches on its tongue and its mouth and the horse got says, come on, let me guide you. Walk with me. I've got a map here for your life real quick, the map.

He's been teaching us this. Think about the Exodus events of Israel out of Egypt. Think about Joshua and the crossing.

Think about the promised land and all of the wars of the promised land and go from there on and on. It goes roadmap. God holds that for us.

And then finally this lending the Lord guide in all things. He knows what time will arrive. This is a big one because you know what? We're always in a hurry.

You guys were always in a hurry. Come on. We rush.

I remember growing up and I don't know what the deal was, but we'd go on vacation and it was like not even a vacation because you get in the car. You're going to think I'm telling the truth here. This is wild.

My dad, we'd get in the car and he's been rigging the car up for a week. We get in the car and he gets going and can we have a drink? No. Why? Because then you'll have to go pee.

Yeah. And we're not stopping. I mean, it was, everything was down to the military minute and what are we driving so fast for? Oh, look, there's this, look right there.

There's a historical monument right there. And then listen, then we get to the destination. Oh, here we are.

I couldn't tell you what we went by the States. We blew by just what's in them. I don't know.

It's all a blur. We live like that. Come on, let's go.

What are we doing? It's a day off. Let's go. Okay.

And it's, listen, God says, he said from the beginning, I want you to learn how to Sabbath. I want you to know how to rest. You guys, we think that's a sin to relax.

I do. I don't get anything done when I relax. I feel like I'm sinning.

And God says, I don't want you to get anything done right now. Think about it. We got to do this.

And even in our business, even in our lives, even in our families, even in our existence, we go, go, go. Have you noticed you guys? And I'm ending. We're truly done.

We're done. I'm ending. I even have time left right now.

Remember when you were young, time just seemed to go by so slow. And then you get a little older, then you get a little older. And then I remember it slapping me in the face at about maybe junior or senior in high school.

It was like, hey, I'm going to have to grow up soon. That's a shock. You know what I'm talking about? And then you're involved and you got your school or you've got your career, you got your career in school and you got all this stuff going on.

And have you noticed that it just all races by so fast. And now, now you're older, but your mind, your time zone in your internal clock is about 10 to 15 years behind the person you see in the mirror. You know what I'm talking about? Every morning you get up and you go, what is that? I don't.

Why? Why? Because time is something God controls the Bible. We don't get this because we don't slow down to study this. The Bible tells us that in Isaiah chapter nine, verse six, it's about Jesus Christ, the Messiah of the world.

It says there that he's the counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace, everlasting father. It's about how does that it's Jesus? How the word everlasting father, the word in Hebrew is he's the governor of time. He controls time.

He's the possessor of time. Jesus, according to the Bible, old Testament, Isaiah nine, six, he's the one that controls time. So what does that mean? That means you are going to arrive at your destination with him at just the right time.

What does that mean? Stop worrying about it. Tomorrow, when you go to work, tonight, when you get home, the day you die, whatever goes on, whatever's happening. That doesn't mean that we listen.

That doesn't mean that we relinquish everything. It doesn't mean we become a bunch of crazies. Did you guys see in the news recently, at least that's the way it's being spun in the news? I don't know.

But some people went out in the desert in California this last week waiting for the rapture. They're just that's what the news is spinning it. Oh, only God knows what the truth is, because you get it from the news.

You don't know what you're getting. But supposedly, they said on the news, they believe the rapture was coming. Well, wait a minute.

So do I. And they went out in the desert and they were singing songs. That's cool. Why not? That's fun.

Sometimes a bunch of guys get together, we'll go in the desert, take water and our Bibles and telescope and freak out and praise the Lord. That's great. Okay.

But they were waiting for what, you know, supposedly they're waiting for Jesus to come back. Well, some of the Bible, the Bible doesn't say to do that. Bible says to occupy till he comes.

You know what that means? That means regarding about arriving at the destination and God's timing. It means guess what? It means that you registered to vote and you go vote this November. It means that you it means that you get a job.

I'm waiting on the Lord, man. Oh, yeah. Well, you wait on the Lord at your job.

You got a son hanging out, man, you know, just waiting on Jesus waiting on Jesus. Yeah, you go wait on Jesus with a lawnmower in your arms right now. Get out there.

You know, I'm saying he doesn't need our help. He requests our help. He doesn't need it.

He allows us to be involved. And that's how we'll arrive. But as we arrive starting tonight, let's not lose the details.

He's in them. That's where he'll speak. That's will instruct.

That's where he'll teach us. We just need to slow down. We're going to get to the destination.

Let's just get there in his time. You get there too soon. You're just going to stand around.

You want to do, Father, we thank you for your word and Lord right now tonight. We rejoice and we can be bold and we can be. Almost silly with joy over the fact that you rule and reign in our lives.

And father, that just gives us such a liberty and such a freedom that it's in some degree almost intoxicating in our hearts. But father, I pray that this evening, if there's a man or if there's a woman. A boy or a girl who does not have this joy in this piece.

In fact, their life is evidenced by the worry they have lost sense of detail and they're consumed by the negative, the the painful part, the ugly. What they perceive is bad. They don't see you in it.

They need you. My friend, as we are in an attitude of prayer tonight, if if tonight you have never understood nor heard perhaps that Jesus Christ from Genesis to Revelation, since the beginning. In the Garden of Eden, it was prophesied by God himself that he would provide the covering for you.

That the innocent had to die for the guilty, that sacrifice, atonement, forgiveness was invented by God for you. That tonight you can choose Jesus. The Bible says that he died on the cross for our sins.

The Bible said he would do that before he was ever born in the very city that the Bible said he would be born in, Bethlehem. That very same Bible said that you'd recognize him when he would do this, that and the other thing. On and on it goes.

The mathematical odds of him not being savior are impossible. They are actually mathematically impossible. He is the Messiah.

The Bible has shouted this clear. That same Bible has said that he would die in our place, take our punishment, that he would be raised from the dead three days later, says the scripture. And that by doing that, he would guarantee your justification forever.

Not only did he die, but he rose again from the grave to enforce his work for you. But here's the catch. You have to come to him on his terms.

And he said that you have to believe that he died and rose again from the grave and that you have to listen, you have to agree with him, that you need him as savior. We use the old English word repent. It's an old nautical term about turning your boat around.

Means to turn or change your mind. Well, heads are bowed and eyes are closed. Maybe tonight you're saying, you know what? This is the God I want.

I want to be set free like Paul was set free. I want to be set free like Abraham was. I want to be set free like all the rest of you in here tonight.

And I want to confess tonight that Jesus Christ is my Lord and savior. Well, heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If that's your vote tonight, if that's your decision, will you raise your hand wherever you're at? And the Lord will see your hand go up.

And the reason why I'm asking you to raise your hand is because throughout scripture, everyone who was called, they called publicly. God bless you in the very back. Anyone else on the aisle over here? God bless you.

People were called publicly, even Nicodemus. God bless you in the back. Even Nicodemus eventually came public with his faith in Christ.

Anyone else tonight? Does the Holy Spirit speak in your heart? I want to, before we wrap this up inside, if any of you sense this bizarre pressure, like everybody's looking at you, no one's looking at you. And you've got this feeling inside your stomach area, just in your chest. And it's like, man, I need to do this, but I don't want to do this.

What's happening to me? That's his finger saying now's the acceptable time. Today's the day of salvation. Is that happening to anybody? Put your hand up.

God bless you. Anyone else? Yep. You and you.

Cool. Beautiful. Let this prayer fall from your lips.

Lord Jesus, I come to you now. I ask you to forgive me of my sins. I thank you for speaking to me tonight.

I pray that you'd write my name in your Lamb's Book of Life right now. Save me, Lord, and do that thing I heard tonight. Work on me.

Come inside. Do your thing from the inside out, not religiously, but relationally. I confess you tonight as my Lord and Savior in Jesus' name and all God's people said, amen.

Amen. Listen, before we stand up, those of you

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