

The Discipline of Determination - 17

by Jack Hibbs

Jack Hibbs emphasizes the importance of determination in the Christian faith amidst the challenges of an evil day.

Duration: 56:02

Scripture: Matthew 28:18-19, 2 Corinthians 4:5-7, Ephesians 6:13-14

Topics: "Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that we are living in an evil day, where callousness and lack of compassion are prevalent. He mentions that the evil in the world can be witnessed through uncensored content on platforms like YouTube. Despite the darkness, the speaker encourages Christians to stand firm and advance in their faith. He references Philippians 2:12, urging believers to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that God is working in them. The sermon also highlights the power of God and the importance of determination in one's walk with Him.

Transcript

And Father, that you would not only anoint us by your Holy Spirit that are gathered here right now, but Lord, those that are gathered around their computers, Father, that are with us on service right now, live in various parts of the world and across America, we pray, Father, that there would be no disconnect from our fellowship, from the corner of the Holy Spirit, from this sanctuary, Lord, to the ends of the earth. We thank you for all that you've provided for us. We ask in Jesus' name, and again, all God's people said, amen.

Grab your Bibles tonight and turn, if you would, to Matthew chapter 28. You're probably wearing out that part of your Bible on Wednesday nights. Matthew chapter 28, and you're going to place your finger there, and then you're going to go to Ephesians chapter 6. Matthew chapter 28 and Ephesians chapter 6. Tonight's message is entitled, The Discipline of Determination.

Determination, as we walk through a 31-week series on discipleship, we are now tonight in the 17th part of our 31 series of these teachings regarding the disciplines of life. In Matthew chapter 28, verse 18, Jesus says, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples.

That's what's happening here on Wednesday nights, making disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, verse 20, teaching them to observe all things.

That is, be obedient to what Christ has commanded, that I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Now go a little bit to the right, to the book of Ephesians, and here is our verse for this evening, Ephesians 6, 13, and a little bit of verse 14.

Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand, stand therefore. What an awesome challenge, and we break it down regarding the discipline of determination, that you may be able to withstand, Paul says to the church at Ephesus, in the evil day. That word implies that as we get closer to the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, the days are going to increase in evil.

Jesus said it. Jesus said that as the days get further on or closer to his second coming, the Bible tells us, Jesus said it, that men's hearts will begin to fail them for fear when they see the events of this world coming upon this world and those who dwell on it. Jesus said that because of lawlessness, love would grow cold.

That word means that there'd be a profound, dark, sinister callousness on the hearts of people, where people would be maybe robbed or beat up or raped or murdered, and people wouldn't care. People would pull out their cell phone to record it rather than get involved and help someone. That's the age we're living in today, a time like this, an evil day.

Are we not in an evil day? Horrible things. You can watch murders, actually, on YouTube and on the internet. Uncensored there.

We're living in an evil day, and Jesus said because of callousness, men and women's hearts will become very, very cold and without compassion. It is the evil day. But Paul says to the church in the last days, in the evil day, to stand.

We are to be standing. It's clear that in the last days, as evil advances, the Christian is going to advance as well. There's going to be a grand collision between light and darkness.

Now, I don't know if you have the liberty to watch this or not. I don't know if your conscience is OK with you to do this. But a Christian man wrote a book about World War One, how he perceived that book or how he perceived that war.

And that guy was J.R.R. Tolkien. He wrote Lord of the Rings. And that book exposes a profound collision between light and darkness.

The movie that came out was extremely graphic. I think it's excellent for those who can handle it. It's pretty terrifying because it's so portrays evil that you can almost feel it.

You know, these orcs and these things represented the demonic world clashing against the light and against the kingdom. And yet we would look at a movie like that and say, oh, wow, that's boy. Well, that's evil.

And you walk out of the theater. Hey, let me tell you something. The stuff that's outside the theater is worse than what's on a movie screen.

The Bible tells us that we are in the evil day and that we are to stand. And the great thing is we can stand because God is good and powerful and we can be a determined people. In the book of Philippians,

chapter two, verse 12, Philippians to 12, the Bible says, therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

For it is God who works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Very quickly, you all, you just heard a moment ago was work out your own salvation. How am I going to do that? If you read the next verse, it says, for it is God who has at work within you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

That word work out your own salvation means get determined about your Christianity, get serious about it, because you and I are living in an evil day. And let me tell you right now, you're not getting serious about Jesus. You're going to get swept away in the evil day.

So when it says, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, it means to be gravely serious about your walk, defending your walk, having a very tender heart towards God. The opposite of the way the world is going. The world is going calloused heart, cold heart, dark heart.

Your heart is getting more tender, more illuminated, more loving worlds in collision. And so we come before God tonight and we say, Lord, I want to be determined as a believer. I want to be serious as a Christian.

I want to walk with you. We would use the word enthusiasm, enthusiasm. That word is a compound word.

It means someone who is filled with a spirit or zeal or a passion for a cause. It means to be filled with enthusiasm of special intercourse with God, says Noah Webster, for or of revelation from God. It is to be filled with God to the point where God's interests consume you.

Yes, your personality is what it is. God has given you your personality. Listen, are you guys listening? Don't let anyone ever try to dictate to you what your personality should be.

That's like walking up to a Rembrandt and trying to fix the painting. It's a Rembrandt for crying out loud. Don't touch it.

I love Monet. You know who Monet is? I'm a sucker for a museum, man. If they got a Monet, I'm pulling over.

I got to see it. I've had a chance to see Monet's all around the world. Incredible.

I could just stand there and drool looking at him. Can you imagine somebody walking up and saying, I got to fix that? I don't like the way that. Yeah, you slap the guy for even getting near the thing, you know, slap him in the Lord, that is with your soft, tender, illuminated heart.

But why? Because it's it's the expression of the creator. Your personality is what God has given you. Don't have somebody tell you, well, I didn't.

You know, you're too serious for me. You're too funny for me. You're too in between for me.

Like Goldilocks is trying to pick something out. Listen, Jesus didn't die for your personality. He died for your sins and he painted your existence, your person the way that he likes.

Listen, for those of you who are insecure, maybe you've been beaten down, whatever. I don't know. Understand this.

Jesus died for your sins. He loves the person that you are, and that should cause you to have a sense of security and excitement, which breeds enthusiasm. God, thank you for loving me.

Maybe nobody else loves you in the world, but God loves you. And that's enough. In second Corinthians four, verse five, the Bible says, for we do not preach ourselves, says Paul, but Christ Jesus and ourselves, your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness. Listen to this, who has shown in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Let me continue on in a second.

Verse seven. Have you ever seen a reflector when you shine the flashlight at it or the headlights on it? It bounces back at you. That's exactly what that means.

Verse seven. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels. That's our flesh, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us.

The power is of God. Are you going to make it to heaven? Yes. You know why you can be so sure? Because God will get you there.

You, my friend, determined tonight to exercise determination in your walk with him. Yes, he saved you. But now it's time to get up and follow him.

Number one, jot it down. Then the disciplines of determination. It's this.

There will always be enough reasons to quit. You see, determination is the opposite of us giving up. There will always be enough reasons to quit.

Will you write that down? Jot that down. Because listen, sometimes you and I, we discover that the thing we're working on, the thing that we're excited about, we either lose interest in it or we think now we conclude now that what I'm working on is not worthy of finishing. Henry Ford built cars.

And the story goes that when he began to work on his very first vehicle, his very first Ford car out in the back of his garage, he was working on it. And he was so smart, goofing around that before, listen, before he finished the first car, his mind had already gone off on what the next third, fourth, fifth, sixth generation car would be like. You know what that's like, right? You start something.

You think, well, I can fix that. I can make it better. And Henry Ford backed away.

And this is pretty amazing. As far as I know, he was not a Christian. He concluded, wait a minute.

If I just discovered by working on this first car, what I'm going to do to the next car, then I'm going to restart my enthusiasm. I'm going to get back at working on the original car until it's done. Listen, because maybe as I continue, I'm going to learn more insights and more insights about the next car.

Think about that as a Christian, I'm going to get up and I'm going to do this Christian walk with God. I'm not going to be a pew potato anymore. I'm not going to be a spectator.

I'm going to follow Jesus all the way to the end. And so let's go. And then you might lose interest.

What do you do? Do you quit? Listen, there's always, always enough reasons to quit, but that doesn't make them right. Organized sports. I don't know about you.

I think they're great. If I had a, if I had a son or while my daughter actually played organized sports, she wound up going all the way to Orlando with the, I don't know, they won the national championship for, you know, cheerleaders who fly in space and flip and crash and gymnastics, wild, crazy stuff. Amazing.

Organized sports is awesome. You don't know why it causes you to have a bonding and a camaraderie with a team. And even though you don't feel like going to practice, you got to go.

Even though you don't feel like, uh, running faster, you've got to, or being stronger. You got to, whatever it is, it forces you. It's a great discipline, but a wonderful thing about it is this, that it causes you to reach down inside of you and grab something that you didn't think was ever there.

Everybody, in my opinion, should play some form of organized sports, not to get the trophy. Although let me say this. If you're going to play organized sports, get the trophy, win the championship.

I'm serious. I don't believe in that. Well, I'm going to be a Christian and let everybody else win.

No man, do it for the glory of God, crush all your opponents and get the prize. Come on, man, be your best. And just after you, after you beat the guy, pray for him, tell him you love him anyway.

You know, but listen, do your best. Why? It's not if you listen, it's not if you win or you lose, although it does matter if you win, but here's the thing. It's the character building that is built up in you year in and year out and the commitment and the fact that, you know what I, man, I was able to go the hundred yard this fast last year, maybe this fast this year, whatever it might be.

It's awesome. Jot this down. If you would, there's always reasons to quit, but there will always be listen, there will always be reasonable reasons to quit.

Well, should I quit? Of course. Hey, listen, you want to quit? You'll think of a thousand reasons and they're all going to sound great. Well, I don't know if I'm going to listen.

It's a tough time right now as a Christian boy, then, you know, the economy is bad and you're going to quit Christianity. So what? You're a fair weather follower of Jesus. Is that what it is? Jesus had those people around him.

He said, listen, you guys are following me right now, not because you love me, but because you're hungry because he just got done feeding five thousand people. And they said, this is cool. Travel with him.

Free food. People do that in Christianity. There's always reasonable reasons to quit as a Christian.

You don't have the right to quit as a Christian. I don't have a right to make my own decisions. Well, then I'm not going to be a Christian.

Well, that's right. You're not. I don't listen.

I'm supposed to be we're supposed to be slaves of the Lord Jesus Christ. He calls the shots. I we together get our marching orders from this book, the Bible.

And so, listen, Exodus chapter four, verse 10 says, then Moses said to the Lord, oh, my Lord, I am not eloquent. Listen, these are reasonable reasons to quit. I'm not eloquent neither before nor since you have spoken to your servant.

But I am slow of speech. Moses stuttered. And slow of tongue, his tongue was tied.

So the Lord said to him, I love it. This is how God talks. Who made man's mouth or who makes the mute, the deaf, the seen or the blind have not I, the Lord now therefore go and I will be with your mouth and teach you what to say.

That's God. Don't you recognize that voice? Don't you recognize that kind of speech? That's how he speaks to us. Lord, I can't go.

God says, I want you to do that. I can't do it. Moses, can you imagine Moses? You know, man, God says, I want you to go now.

I want you to do this. I can't. I stutter.

I stammer. And God says, who made the mouth? You did. Then I'm going to take care.

I'll control your mouth. You go. Listen, what God calls you to do, tells you to do.

Number one, you will be able to have a bazillion reasonable reasons why you shouldn't do it. Listen, everybody will tell you also we'll come to this in a moment some more, but people will tell you, friends will tell you, maybe your husband or your wife will tell you maybe. I don't know.

Although you pray that the husband and the wife will be on the same page, walking together in unity on something, whatever it is, there'll be a thousand million or more reasonable reasons why to quit. In this Christian life, in this Christian experience, the days, listen, I have this on a based on a biblical source. The days are going to get rougher.

Oh, great. I've come out here on a Wednesday night to be encouraged like this. They're going to get harder.

The Bible says it's going to be more difficult and harder. The Bible tells us in Jeremiah one, verse four, listen to this, a reasonable reason to quit. Jeremiah is a young man.

Verse four, chapter one. Then the word of the Lord came to me saying, before I formed you in the womb, I knew you before you were born. I sanctified you.

Listen to this. God is saying, go, you go, Jeremiah. I ordained you a prophet to the nations.

You go, Jeremiah. And then said, I, Jeremiah speaks. Oh, Lord, God, behold, I can't speak.

I'm a youth. I'm just a young punk kid. And God says, I'm with you, Jeremiah.

Those are reasonable. I stutter or I'm young. Those are good arguments.

Everybody in the neighborhood would remind these guys, Moses and Jeremiah, you shouldn't do this. Don't you know how young you are? You look like a fool and who's going to listen to a kid and Moses. I can't get three.

I can't understand three words coming out of your mouth. That's how God gets the glory. He loves it.

Listen, I don't know if you've come to figure this out, have seen this happen in your life. I hope so, but there will never be in our Christian experience. There will never be enough time.

There will never be enough help. There will never be enough people alongside you. There'll never be enough money.

There'll never be enough energy. There'll never be enough of anything. You understand that? That's the way it is.

Well, we can't, you know what? We can't do it until we have enough. You know, churches, a lot of churches get in trouble because they'll have this big thing. We're going to have a drive.

We're going to have a, we're going to have a construction drive. We'll have a thermometer on the stage and we'll have all the numbers there. And we want you to pledge pledge.

Well, everybody, people, and they don't look like an idiot. So everybody, it's just a pledge. Yeah.

I'll give a thousand bucks. And here's what happens with good intentions. They'll embark upon the promise of a human rather than the provision of God.

And then they wonder, Oh no, be very, very careful. Listen, God will lead. God will guide.

God will provide. And here's the thing. People will come and give reasonable reasons why you should quit.

What is going on in your life? Don't quit. People will sit down. Maybe it is a husband or a wife and give reasonable reasons why the marriage should come to an end.

There are no reasonable reasons why the marriage should come to an end. God wants it to fix, to be worked out, to be healed. Yeah, but my husband or my wife committed adultery.

And I, now I, it sounds like this. Sometimes I get to divorce them. That's the second option.

The first option is for God to heal that relationship. Forgiveness, mercy, grace. That comes first.

Zechariah 4:10 says, For who has despised the day of small things? God always begins with small things. And maybe it's a little bit of forgiveness, or maybe it's a little bit of repentance or a little bit of mercy. But listen, there will always be reasonable reasons why you should quit your commitment to Jesus Christ.

Don't do it. Count the cost, my friend, of what you're fighting for, and then fight for it to the end. Just listen.

Count the cost of what you're fighting for. Is it of eternal value? Listen, people are so caught up in the temporalness of things that they'll die on an anthill for nothing that's going to last. You want to be fighting for something that is eternal.

And in all of your life's experience, there'll be nothing more profound and more rewarding and more eternal than your Christian commitment. Don't quit. I had someone come up to me this last Sunday and said, You know what? The older I get, the less friends I have remaining with me in my Christianity.

Can we all say I know what that's like? Very few friends that were walking with Jesus with Lisa and I 33 years ago are walking with Jesus now. It's a heartbreak. There'll always be reasons to quit.

Secondly, there will always be emotional reasons to quit. This is a rip off big time emotions. Listen to this numbers.

In the book of Numbers. Chapter 13. Listen to this.

It says, And the Lord spoke to Moses saying, Send men to spy out the land of Canaan, which I'm given to the children of Israel from each tribe of their fathers. You shall send a man, everyone a leader among them. This is the cream of the crop.

Go up this way into the south and go to the mountains and see what the land is like, whether the people who dwell in it are strong or weak, few or many. Then when they came to the valley of Eshkol there, they cut down a branch with one cluster of grapes and they carried it between two of them on a pole. Then big grapes.

They also brought some of the pomegranates and figs. This is from the land of Israel. Now they departed and came back to Moses and Aaron and all the congregation, the children in the wilderness of Peron at Kadesh.

And they brought back word to them, to all the congregation and showed them the fruit of the land. Then they told them and said, we went to the land where you sent us. It truly flows with milk and honey, and this is its fruit.

Nevertheless, the people who dwell in the land are strong. The cities are fortified and very large. Moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there, you know, Goliath.

Goliath was one of the sons of Anak. Giants are there. Then Caleb quieted the people in front of Moses.

How cool is that? Caleb just, Hey, listen to this. And he said, let us go up at once and take possession for we are well able to overcome it. But the men who had gone up with him said, we are not able to go up against the people for they are stronger than we are.

You don't say that before you go to battle. Can you imagine? All right, you guys lock and load. We're probably going to get blown up.

Let's go. Not the thing to say. And they gave the children visual a bad report of the land, which they had spied out saying the land through which we have gone as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants.

All the people whom we saw in it are men of great stature. There we saw the giants, the descendants of Anak. And he says we were like grasshoppers in their sights.

Well, how do they know that? Oh, my gosh, look, we must look like grasshoppers to them. Fear speaking, it's powerful. You guys, everybody can be ready to go.

And somebody says, I think we're going to die. And then that gets in someone's head and it's bounces around in their emotions will get you to quit. Emotions get you to think things yet not to be thinking.

It goes on to say, and all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to the people said to them, if only we had died in the land of Egypt, if only we had died in the wilderness. But my servant, Caleb, God says, because he has a different spirit inside of him, he has followed me fully and I will bring him into the land. But all for the rest of these people, they're going to die.

Where do you want to be in this? Are you guys with me? Where do you want to be in this battle? We are living it now. You want? No, it's never going to work. Stay home.

I've given you this quote before. I love it. Samuel Adams said, let us awaken then and invent a different spirit that's like Caleb, a spirit that shall inspire the people with confidence in themselves and in us, a spirit that will encourage them to persevere in this glorious struggle until their rights and liberties shall be established on a rock.

That word events means to show a clear manner, to prove beyond any reasonable doubt, to manifest, to make evident, to be certain, and to act on your certainties. Do you believe in the Bible? Yes. Then act on it.

That's what the scripture says. Just do it. If you're a brand new Christian, I highly recommend you do what I did when I got saved.

First book I ever read in the Bible, I got saved, went home, read the book of revelation. That's the way I am. I want to see how it ends first.

Read the book of revelation. After that, all the rest of the Bible was easy to read because why I read the back of the book first. I know how it turns out.

So I'm reading, reading. Oh my goodness. These guys are attacking those guys and it looks bad, but I read the end of the book.

We win. So I'm just going to keep reading because I know it turns out. I read this today.

The certainty inspired Adams who was religious in nature, that he believed that God had intervened on behalf of the United States and would do so as long as the citizens maintain civic virtue. We shall never be abandoned by heaven while we act worthy of its aid and protection. What a great boldness that is.

Did you know the Bible in the old Testament, David came out to his troops and he said, now look, this is, this is how they talked back then. All right, you guys, we're going to go to war in three days. I don't want anybody messing around with any girls.

That's what he told them. Purify yourselves from any women, no messing around, focus on the fight. And then that day came and he said, let's go.

And they went David's mighty men of valor. There's always reasons to quit. When you think about there's always reasons, historical reasons to quit historical reasons.

What I mean by that is this. If you're a Christian tonight, one of the things that you and I constantly deal with, which is a it's a great thing is suppressing the. Memory of your past, your BC days, you know, before Christ's days, BC.

You suppress that every time that comes up in your mind, no, maybe it's a person's name, maybe it's a place, I don't know what it is, but you fight it, you push that back. But listen, there's people in your history. I'm going to say something that's probably going to upset some people, so I'll say it really loud.

Historical reasons to quit. If you're on the Internet chatting with somebody that used to be somebody from your past. Man, you are flirting with death.

Are you Christian and you're talking to somebody who was your old junior high boyfriend or girlfriend? You're flirting with death, man. Are you chatting with somebody who was your old. You know, lover in college.

You're flirting with death. And you look at the statistics that people who. Look at that or talk that or do that and where it goes off to, and if it never manifests physically, there's an emotional relationship going on.

It'll kill you. It'll rip you off. There will always be historical reasons why you should quit Christianity.

Satan will see to it. In 2nd Corinthians 5 verse 16, the Bible says, therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. That's powerful.

Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know him thus no more or no longer. Listen, if you listen, if you were once. And therefore, if in Christ, he says, if anyone is in Christ, verse 17, he's a new creation.

All things have passed away. What? Behold, all things have become new. And I thought about that today.

You know what? Imagine if somebody turned right now. Imagine we don't know from now on. He's saying we knew Jesus in this world once when we met him face to face in Galilee.

We knew him, but now we don't know him like that anymore. What does that mean? We know him enthroned in heaven above. And now that we are new creations in Christ, we're believers.

How do we relate to one another now? Not according to our historical past. You and I know each other in this world, in this plane of being redeemed, walking with Jesus. I would be crazy to say, hey, nice to meet you.

Why? You know what? Well, I guess if we're going to be friends, you should know that I used to be and that I used to be and that I used to be. Christians don't do that. We don't know anyone after the flesh any longer.

We only know one another in Christ. So if you're a former ax murder, don't tell me about it. I don't even know that unless you plan on, you know, backsliding, then I'd like to know that.

But you don't walk around. Sometimes I get a little nervous about testimonies. People parade somebody out in front of the church.

Tell him your story. Oh, you know what? I used to be a this and a that. And that's great.

You know, if true, that God delivered that guy from that thing or that place or that whatever. But I got news for you. Whoever heard him say it.

Hey, did you see that guy the other night? He was at the church. The guy used to be a ax murderer. Hey, there he is.

He's shopping over there at Walmart. He's that's the guy. Hey, see that guy? He used to be the ax murderer.

Do you know I'm saying it's in the head. Hey, what's your name? You go to Calvary, right? You're the you're the guy who was ax murder, right? Isn't that true? I don't want to know. I just want to know you in Jesus.

Now, the Bible says in Philippians 3:13, Brethren, I do not count myself as apprehended. But one thing I do for getting those things which are behind reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Number two, point number two, there will always be days when we want to quit.

There'll always be days in Christianity when your mind, your emotions, your feelings just want to quit. And you need to be determined to press on the discipline of determination means this because we think we see something better. We've got to determine now to arrest that and put it out of our minds.

There'll be days when I think I'm just going to quit. I'm going to take a break from my Christian commitment. You can't do that.

Why would you do that? Well, I think I see something better over there. That's called temptation. Satan will dangle it.

And determination anticipates. I love this. Listen, determination right here anticipates a hostile attack to be determined, anticipates a hostile environment, a hostile attack.

There's a danger of a lack of determination when tough times come, when difficult times come, sick times, perilous times, financial hardship, attack. Jesus warned that there are a lot of people who profess to be believers and we don't know how long, but time goes on, he said. And then they will be ridiculed, mocked and attacked for being a Christian.

And they have a day in their mind where they say, man, I can't. I'm not going to take this anymore. I can't take it anymore.

Everything. Everyone's coming down on them. Maybe it's the family.

Oh, you Christian. Oh, boy. You know, there goes Holy Joe.

And you start to cave. Listen, you need to run to Jesus. Are you there right now? Run to Jesus.

Don't quit. Don't give up. Be determined.

He'll see you through. Hang on to him. In First Kings 21, the Bible says, and it came to pass after these things that Naboth.

Remember this story? Naboth, he had a vineyard, beautiful thing, beautiful vineyard producing great crops. And Ahab saw it. And he wanted that vineyard.

He wanted Naboth's vineyard. I want it. And he offers Naboth.

Hey, I'll give you, I'll trade you some land. I don't want it. I don't want to trade.

I'll give you some money. I don't want any money. This is this land is inheritance of mine.

It's in my family. And listen to this. It says in verse four of First Kings 21.

So Ahab went into his house, sullen. You know what sullen means? He goes into his house and he's displeased because of the word of Naboth. And he says, I will not give you the inheritance of my father's.

That's what he told me. And he laid down on his bed and he turned away his face and he would eat no food. This is a, this is the king.

What's the matter? He won't give me his vineyard. He winds up killing the guy to get it. Unbelievable.

Giving up on following God because you think you see something better. Doesn't God want me happy? No. Where'd you get that idea from? Follow Jesus and he'll make you happy.

That's what it says. God wants you holy, happy. It says blessed.

That's the word happy. Blessed are the, yeah. Blessed are the what? Blessed are the peacemakers.

Blessed are the pure in heart. Blessed are the fill in the blank in obedience to him. Your life becomes happy, but you don't, you don't sign up for Jesus.

Okay, man. Yeah. I want to be happy.

What do I sign? Just raise your right hand. You know, Jesus come into my heart. Why, why, why are you praying that? I want to be happy.

Hey, that's a by-product man of coming to Christ and having your sins forgiven, understanding he died on the cross for your sins. If you were the only human to have ever lived theologically, correct. Absolutely.

If you were the only, imagine Adam and Eve got together and they never got together again after that. And you're the only one walking around. He would have died for you.

If you're the only one ever born, that's how valuable you are, but you have to come to him. But we get our eyes off him. We think, oh, that's better.

It's better. If I go over there or do this or whatever, the danger of wanting something that God doesn't listen, that God doesn't want us to have the danger of wanting something that God doesn't want us to have. Here's the scary part.

Is there something that you're hounding God about? I want this thing. I really want it. I really got to have that.

And you've wrapped it all up and you're even praying, dear Lord, if you want me to have that thing, you know, and you know, down deep inside, it's like, you better give it to me. I told you that story years ago. Maybe it's time to retell it.

That little kid, he goes up to his mom and he goes, I want a bicycle for Christmas, please. And she goes, honey, it's really economically downturn, you know, healthcare reform and stuff. It's a bad time.

Bush tax cuts have expired and it's bad time. So he asked his mom every day, mom, can I have a bike for Christmas? And she got so fed up. She goes, go ask your dad.

So he goes, dad, can I have a bike for Christmas? He says, no, there's no money. So mom picks junior up from school one afternoon and he's all bummed out. And it's a few days away from Christmas.

He's looked all around the garage. He's looked everywhere. There's no box that looks remotely like a bicycle box.

So he's really concerned. He's really upset. And so mom stops the car and she goes, I'll be right back.

Stay here. I'm going to go get something. I'll be gone a minute.

And so on the dashboard, there was a little statue of Mary on the dash. And so the little kid looks at Mary on the dash and he has this incredible idea. He looks to the right.

He looks to the left, make sure mom's nowhere around. He reaches over and snaps Mary off at the ankles off the dash and puts Mary in a brown, his lunch bag, rolls it up, folds his hands and he prays. And he says, dear God, if you ever want to see your mother again, you'll get me a bicycle.

That's great. Listen, there'll always be days and times when you want to quit because we don't see any good coming out of what we're involved in. We don't see any good coming out of the stuff that we're involved in.

So we're thinking, I'm just going to quit. Listen, Christian, it could be J. Hudson Taylor. His ministry was bearing no fruit and he stayed at it.

And one convert to his ministry later went on to lead thousands of people to Christ. Hudson Taylor leads one to Christ. His convert leads thousands to Christ.

That's believe it or not, in heaven, that is ministry to his account. Stay at it. Well, I don't see any good coming out of this.

Stay at it. You're a Christian. You have no right, no authority to quit.

You're under orders. You have a master, you have a general, you have a king. You can't quit.

Remember when the disciples said, can anything good come out of Nazareth when they're talking about Jesus? Yes. Can anything good come out of this? How can something good come out of this? I just lost my job or my child is sick. Watch God.

And listen, let me be brutally honest. If everything in your evaluation fails, it hasn't failed from God's evaluation, from his point. Are we willing to trust him enough? Tears and all vomiting, gut wrenching, sick to our stomach over grief.

For that situation, that sickness, child, marriage, whatever it is where your guts are coming out in grief and you say, God, you alone have the words of eternal life. I have nowhere else to go. I cry out with Job naked.

I've come and naked. I go. Blessed be the name of the Lord, though he slay me yet.

Shall I trust him? What are you going to do? Listen, can you imagine if Christians that are backslidden tonight woke up and stopped quitting and decided I'm going back to church to serve the living God? Maybe they've been huddling and nursing and burping and cuddling their little emotions or feelings because somebody hurt them. Hey, we all get hurt all the time. And the more you're out there, the more that you're going to get hurt.

Listen, you're not doing it for anybody else. Everybody else is blessed by what you're doing for the Lord, but you're doing it for the Lord. But imagine if you realize if if backslidden Christians decided to come back to church next Sunday, we wouldn't be able to have church here.

There's no church, no church. Hey, let's think about that for a second. No church in America would be big enough to receive all of God's backslidden kids if they decided to come back home next Sunday.

We'd have to have a service at the stadium and that wouldn't be enough. Think about it. We have to go to Angel Stadium and there wouldn't be enough.

There's enough people in just a couple of cities that are around us that are Christians and because of feelings or whatever, they've allowed this to be. A governor of their life, and they've said, hey, God, I'm not going to follow you anymore because you got my feelings hurt. What did he do to you? A friend of mine up in Sacramento said ministry would be awesome if it wasn't for people.

You do it for Jesus. Psalm 106, 13 says this. They soon forgot his works.

They did not wait for his counsel, but lusted exceedingly in the wilderness and tested God in the desert, and he gave them their request. He sent leanness into their souls. That's the danger.

Oh, God, I want this. I want it. I got to have it.

I want it. And God says, OK, you know what? You're making me sick. You've been crying about it, crying about it.

You won't get off of it. You won't listen to me. You won't obey me.

And God just back. Listen, God backs away. He doesn't give it to you.

He backs away and he lets you have it. You want it so bad it comes in. And you think you go, oh, man, all right.

In a week, a month, six months, a year goes by. And there's leanness in your soul now. You're not quite so hot for Jesus anymore.

Oh, man, I got to have her. Oh, if I had her. Oh, she well, she's the best.

She's the brightest. She's the cutest. She's the sweetest.

And it's not God's will for you. And then you have her in six months later and a year later, you're far from Jesus. This happens every day.

There'll be days when we want to quit because we've seen others who have quit the arguments this way. Well, you know what? This walking with Jesus stuff's tough. Yes, it is tough.

Let me tell you, I'd rather have it tough now and easy later than easy now and tough then. What do you honestly what do you want to say, man, I want it easy now. OK, just don't come crying to us, you know, in the end.

What am I doing back here in the back of the line? I've been here in heaven way back. I can't say where's Jesus. I can't see a thing.

You should have thought about that sooner. We've seen others quit. David said, you know, why is it King David? I love it.

Man, if you're excited, read the book of Psalms. If you're apathetic, read the book of Psalms. And if you're depressed, read the book of Psalms.

Right. David goes, you know what? I've looked around and all the heathen, they're making all the money, he said. They got tons of people in their family.

They're all happy and they're just doing great. And David was whining and complaining, and then he said, but then I went into the house of the Lord and I was reminded of their end. For some people today, this is heaven for them.

It's the best they've ever had. And in hell, they will be crying out to God and he cannot hear. They will be weeping, Jesus said, gnashing and the breaking of teeth in the mouth.

Where you've had pain that bad, you had to bite a stick, except there's no stick to bite in hell, apparently they just break their teeth off with pain and they lament that they didn't receive him. Notice in scripture, Luke 15, Luke 16, when there the scripture shows you a man who refused and he's in hell and he's blaming himself and he's saying, I should not have rejected. He's not saying, well, you know, no final points, this point number three, it's always too soon to quit.

Always. Because it's not listen, it's not about you getting what you want. It's too soon to quit always.

And it's not about you and I getting what we want. It's about doing what's right. We need to do what's right.

In Second Corinthians four, seven, the Bible says, but we have this treasure, as I mentioned earlier, earthen vessels, that the excellency and the power may be of God and not of us. Listen to this. We are hard pressed on every side, yet not crushed.

We are perplexed, but not in despair, persecuted, but not forsaken, struck down, but not destroyed, always caring about in the body, the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our bodies. For we who live are always delivered to death for Jesus's sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh. So then death is working in us, but life in you.

He's talking about the love, the commitment of a bond servant minister, like a parent is to a child, like a Christian is to those around them. This is awesome. It's too soon to quit.

Because listen, it's not about you knowing what you know. It's not about you and I knowing what we know. I am going to follow my own counsel.

I'm going to do my own thing. Information church is powerful. We've all been taught that.

You get information, you have power. Well, here's the cool thing. You have the Lord, don't you? Let him inform you, and that will be the ultimate power.

But it's not about what you and I know. You and I, we don't know that much. That's why we are called by the Lord to consult his book and his spirit and pray and seek him.

Colossians 1:9 says, For this reason, we also, since the day we heard of it, do not cease to pray for you, Paul says, and to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will and all wisdom and spiritual understanding that you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing and watch this being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, strengthen with all might, according to his glorious power for all patients and long suffering with joy, giving thanks to the father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints and the lights. Wow, man, could Paul talk or what? And then finally, this will end here. It's always too soon to quit.

Because it's not about you and I having our own way. Years ago, you guys, we went to the ghost town up in Bodie, California. You ever been there? You should go.

It's amazing. In Bodie, California. It's I mean, people just got up and walked away.

It was the gold rush days. And when they ran out of gold, people just got up and left. It's still standing there.

It's awesome. Walk down the streets, you're going to walk in. They have books from the from the.

Time. Eighteen forty nine ledger right there. Some guy walks in the guy's name's right there.

They waited out and they made like eight hundred thousand dollars in one day. Then the guy was back like three days and made three hundred thousand bucks. People were made.

In fact, Bodie once was the richest city in the world. Bodie, California, produced more millionaires in like a nine month period of time than any other place on Earth. And who's heard of it now? It's a ghost town, but there's a story there where this one guy, this one guy's digging, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding.

Ah, this stinks. And he sells his. License his claim to some other guy.

And the guy goes, the new guy gets it. Hey, thanks. OK, bing, bing, bong, goldmine, gold vein, two more dinks away.

And you're like, what? You've got to be kidding. And people in the crowd, when they're telling you, everybody in the crowd goes, what a fool. What a fool, what the guy stopped two dinks short of being a bazillionaire.

But you know what? What if you and I were there? Would we keep dinking along? Huh? I'm going to quit now. It's too soon to quit. You can't quit.

You can't stop. So here we go. We wrap this up.

Listen, don't give up on Jesus. He will not give up on you. Don't quit.

He'll never quit you. Jesus said when he was in his moment of crushing. In any olive press, Gethsemane, the olive press, the place of crushing Jesus, his father, if it's possible, remove this cup from me.

And the Bible says an angel came and strengthened him. Jesus said, not my will, but your will be done. If the son of God himself said, not my will, but your will be done, who are we? And so I want to just have you close your Bibles.

I want you to close your eyes. I want you to bow your head. I'm going to ask people not to move right now, please have some respect as we invite people to make a decision for Jesus tonight because your life.

It's like a boat at sea without a rudder, without an anchor. Christians be praying right now, I'm going to ask you to make this decision. I want you to think for a moment, the ultimate determination.

Is for you to make this final decision for Jesus tonight. I want you to know tonight, I want you to hear clearly that the biblical Jesus, the Jesus of the Bible is not the Jesus of the cults. I'm asking you to come.

The Bible says that he's God who came from heaven to earth to die on the cross for you and I. He's not the Jesus of Buddhism, of Hinduism. He's not the Jesus of even Judaism. He's the son of God.

He's not the Jesus of Islam, Jehovah Witnesses. He's not the Jesus of Hollywood or the New Age movement. He's not the Jesus of the Discovery Channel or the History Channel or the National Geographic.

He's not Time Magazine's definition of Jesus. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever would believe in him would not perish but have everlasting life. And I'm going to ask you tonight while your heads are bowed and your eyes are closed.

If tonight you're saying, I want Jesus to be my Lord and Savior, I make this determination tonight. I'm going to become a Christian. I'm not joining this church.

I'm not joining the club. I want Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior. I want my sins forgiven.

I want to know that I have eternal life and I determine tonight to walk with him from this moment on. If you're willing to tell him that, will you raise your hand right now up high wherever you're at. God bless you on the aisle.

Anyone else over there to my right? Anyone else in the back? To my left? God bless you. Over here and you. God bless you.

Pray this prayer. If you want Jesus tonight, maybe you didn't raise your hand but you want him. Dear Lord, come into my life now and save me from my sins.

I have offended you, Holy God. And tonight I receive the offering of Jesus on the cross as my redemption, as my sacrifice. He died in my place.

I'm confessing that tonight. And I'm coming to you now. As we sing this song, those of you who raised your hands, will you be bold enough to come forward? I want to meet you right up front right here.

Don't be shy. I want to give you a Bible, but I just want to personally just greet you. And if you didn't raise your hand and tonight's the night where you want to stand for Jesus publicly, you come with these that will come in a moment.

Stand for Jesus. He hung on the cross for you and for some of you tonight, you need to seal that with a public commitment to Jesus. So let's remain seated unless you're coming forward.

As Gia leads us in this song, you raised your hands. Come on up front here to the foot of the stage and I'll see you there in a second. Come on up.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/21/SID21849.mp3>

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