

The Discipline of Disillusionment -25

by Jack Hibbs

Jack Hibbs explores the discipline of disillusionment, emphasizing its impact on faith and the importance of hope in God.

Duration: 1:04:06

Scripture: Matthew 28:18

Topics: "Discipline"

Description

In this sermon, the pastor emphasizes the importance of following Jesus and keeping our eyes on Him. He references 1 John 5:3-6, which highlights the love of God and the victory that comes through faith in Jesus as the Son of God. The pastor also shares the story of Jesus appearing to two dejected disciples on the road to Emmaus, where their eyes were opened when Jesus broke bread with them. The sermon concludes with a focus on the Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20, urging believers to go and make disciples of all nations.

Transcript

Father, we ask you to bless, Lord, the going forth of your word. And Father, we pray right now that wherever we may be, as we are gathered as the body here, there are those traveling, there are those on the road and other states and other countries right now. And Father, we pray right now that you'd be with all of our friends and family that is joining us, Lord, through his channel.

And Father, those of us that are here, right here, right now, we ask you, Lord, to take your word and rivet it to our hearts. And we ask it in Jesus' name. And all God's people said, Amen.

Amen. Church, grab your Bibles tonight if you would, and turn to Matthew chapter 28, which you know well by now, Matthew 28. And as soon as you get to Matthew chapter 28, go a little bit further to Luke 24.

Matthew 28, mark your spot, and then Luke chapter 24. And we're looking at tonight the discipline of life and specifically this evening, the discipline of disillusionment. What does that mean, disillusionment? We are in week 25 of our 31-week series.

So we're getting near to the end. And tonight, I've got to tell you, tonight is one of those topics regarding our disciplines of life that is extremely hard to teach on, is extremely hard to receive as students of the word, which we all are. This is tough stuff.

And here's the reason why it's tough stuff. It's not that I've got something tough to say. It's that the very topic is tough because it's something that you and I deal with in our lives.

And it is not a pleasant thing regarding disillusionments. Very, very serious. Matthew chapter 28 is our theme for the entire series.

Jesus said, verse 18, all authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples. That's what's happening tonight right here.

Of all nations, 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 have commanded you and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Now look over to Matthew or Luke, excuse me, Luke 24, 21. Luke 24, 21 says Jesus is speaking.

No, Jesus is not speaking. They're speaking about Jesus. It's the road to Emmaus.

And listen to what they have to say. They said in verse 21, the two disciples that were walking along, they said, but we were hoping, you gotta circle that word, that it was he who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things have happened.

The context is Jesus Christ had been crucified on that close of the weekend there in Jerusalem. He had been now laid in the tomb and it is now Sunday. In this particular verse, verse 21 of Luke 24, the Emmaus road disciples have left Jerusalem.

So in your mind's eye, Jerusalem's behind them. They're walking back home to Emmaus. If my memory serves me correct, it's about seven miles away from, or the original Emmaus, I should say, is about seven miles away from Jerusalem.

The location today is different. And as they're walking, it's getting late on Sunday afternoon and Jesus comes up alongside them. And as they are talking, Jesus says to them, now remember this is after his resurrection.

This is later that day on Sunday. Jesus says to them, why are you talking among yourselves? What is it you're speaking of? And why do you look so depressed? Why do you look so down? And they said to him, are you a stranger in these parts? Haven't you heard what's happened here? And it's really cool because here's God in human flesh. Jesus now forever, which blows my mind, when Jesus rose from the grave, he's the resurrected God-man, Jesus Christ.

God forever and eternal, yes, but resurrected Jesus Christ in human form, glorified state. Amazing to think because we know from scripture that he bore all of his scars in his resurrected body. In fact, the Bible tells us in the book of Zechariah that when Christ returns in the second coming, Israel will recognize him and they're gonna ask him about his wounds and his scars in his body.

Wow, and so he comes up alongside them asking this question and they said, we're talking about Jesus, mighty in word and deed, a prophet. And we had hoped that he was the Messiah. Now listen to the past tense of verse 21.

But we were hoping, they've lost hope, that it was he who was going to redeem Israel. Do you hear that? This is key. This is how you and I think and feel when we've experienced disillusionment.

I'll define that in a moment. Indeed, besides all this, today's the third day since these things have happened, we've lost all hope. It's the third day.

Why do they say that? Because those two walking in the road had heard that Jesus was saying previously, I will go to Jerusalem. I will be betrayed into the hands of sinful men. I will be beaten, crucified, but on the third day be risen again.

They had not heard the good news. Somehow now they're heading back, dejected, disillusioned, depressed, and Jesus comes alongside them. And knowing that these two people who are forever recorded in the Bible, it concerned Jesus enough to pull up alongside them and say, hey, what's going on? And the Bible says that as it was evening, they invited this stranger who was with them in for supper.

And Jesus went in with them. And the Bible says that as they were going to eat, Jesus broke the bread. And with that, their eyes were opened and he then vanished from their sight.

They got up out of their house and they ran back to Jerusalem, yelling and screaming. We've seen the risen Messiah. Disillusionment to absolute delight.

Why? What about your life? What about my life? Disillusionment, we've all suffered it. If you have suffered it in the past, or maybe you're going through it now, or I guarantee you no matter who you are, you will go through it in the future. And by the way, disillusionment can visit you more than once in life.

So cheer up for those of you who think you missed it, your day's coming. It is an amazing, it is an amazing power. And let me say this, regarding disillusionment and the discipline on how to combat it.

Listen to this. Webster defines disillusionment as the feeling that arises from the discovery that something is not what it was anticipated to be. Stronger than disappointment, disillusionment is the feeling of loss, especially when a belief central to one's identity is shown to be false.

Wow, did you hear that? One's identity, when proven to be false, devastates a person's perspective on life and disillusionment then swallows them up. That's why, listen, that's why the Bible says, all those who hope in God shall never be put to shame. Think about that tonight.

If you are not a believer in God, I wanna ask you why? And I've been asking this question of people for 35 years, and I've not yet once heard a decent answer. I've heard personal responses as to why I don't believe in God because my dad beat me. I don't believe in God because my mom was ugly.

I don't believe in God because my, what? It's always something that has nothing to do with God, but people are blaming the situation on God. And the very statement that they make, I don't believe in God because, because what? Because you're blaming him for something, and it's a funny backhanded way of having faith that you're blaming a God that you say you don't believe in, but you're blaming the God you don't believe in. Your very argument is hypocrisy.

When you believe in some evolutionary answer for your existence, there's gonna be a day of disillusionment coming to you. Imagine how disillusioned tonight Charles Darwin is to have the chance to believe in God, and he didn't. In fact, you know, Charles Darwin did originally believe in God.

He went to seminary, did you know that? Charles Darwin went to a Baptist seminary in London, and he gave up on his faith and went on a pursuit to discover some other reason for man existing. One thing's for

sure, Charles Darwin's theology is perfect tonight, no matter where he is. Disillusionment.

Now listen to this, this is very, very important. I read this today and it's excited me very much. Satan is the master craftsman of disillusionment.

Though unable to splash us with it, he creates the groundwork, the atmosphere for disillusionment that it be formed in us. Satan cannot cause you to become disillusioned. He can't do that.

He doesn't have that power. But he can lay the groundwork to get you to experience disillusionment. He can get you so excited about something.

He can lead you on. He can, what's the word? He could drop breadcrumbs along the way to get you all enticed. You know, a drug pusher does that, right? Doesn't he give free drugs to people at first? And it's smart for him.

It's easy for him. It's a good investment for him. He gives a little bit of drugs.

Maybe he gets you hooked on this or hooked on that. And you're thinking, well, this guy's great. He's giving me free drugs.

Uh-uh, it ain't free. What happens is he gets you hooked on it and then you'll come back. Oh, let me tell you something.

I'm interrupting myself right here, right now. Listen to this. Trust me.

Will you trust me right now? Do not miss this coming Sunday's message. Don't miss it. I have a surprise for you.

You will never be the same. And I'm not talking it up. You will have a life-changing experience this Sunday.

If Satan can bait somebody along and hook them, he'll lead them down a path of disillusionment. He sets us up. He builds something up.

The world tonight is experiencing disillusionment because the world, it oversells, it overhypes, it overpromises. And then when people sign up, buy up, get in, go for it, they come out on the other end and they say, is that it? Is that all? Is that what we've paid for? And life is that way without God. You can go after the greatest pursuits and come up empty in the end.

The world is designed in such a way that it cannot fulfill who you are because the world is material, but you are spiritual and you have spiritual longings. But Satan is a master craftsman of disillusionment, laying all of the groundwork. Now, I'm gonna give you part of a verse and we'll come back and visit it later tonight, but it's Matthew 13, 18.

Listen to this. Matthew 13, 18 says, "Therefore," Jesus says, "hear the parable of the sower. "When anyone hears the word of God "or the word of the kingdom and does not understand it." Notice this, the burden of understanding is laid upon the hearer, Jesus is saying.

"Then," what? "The wicked one," reference to Satan, "comes and snatches away what was sown in their hearts." Do you hear that? The very, very hope and cure and meaning of their lives, Satan wants to take it away. Every time the Bible goes out, either truly in the life of a Christian, maybe you're a Christian tonight

and when the Bible study goes out, Satan's desire is to get you to not put it into practice as a believer. If you're not a believer, Satan's desire is for these words to come out and he's targeting those words.

And by the time it lands into your ear, to try to get you to misunderstand what's being said, to try to get you to have some feeling that overrides the theology, to try to get you in a place where you'll think about it for a little bit, but don't make a mistake. Satan is out to steal the word of God out of your heart. That's one of the reasons why all of us, when we leave a message or a sermon or a context where God is being glorified and we walk out of the building or we get out of the car, maybe we're listening to a study or something and immediately there are things there to try to take our attention away.

And I know how that is. I do the same thing. We'll leave church and we'll look at the clock and we'll say, oh man, the Laker game's on.

There's nothing wrong with the Laker game. But I need to be still, so do you. I'm saying, I'm indicting us together.

We need to be still and meditate and take it in. Why? Because the Bible says Satan is out to pluck the word that is being sown in our hearts. So number one, as we look at the discipline of disillusionment what we're really talking about is learning to recognize and to resist the enemy of our faith.

Mark this down, number one. Disillusionment deceives us by breeding confusion. Confusion, that sense of confusion.

Disillusionment breeds confusion. And listen, when we're disillusioned, we become confused and confusion breeds fear. Whenever we are confused, fear will be right behind.

It'll be right there when you're confused. Confusion undermines our faith. Disillusionment is when we begin to back up, listen everybody, we back up and we say, wait a minute, have I believed wrong? Is God not God? Am I saved? You start to question.

Confusion comes in. What you know to be true based upon your faith in God and doesn't even have to be God. You can have faith in something, faith in a thing and it fails.

Maybe it's a system. Look, maybe it's the US economy and it fails and you're disillusioned and people don't know what to do. What happens? It's that definition.

It's when you are attached to something that you expect to bring blessings or hope or meaning or love or life or security. Maybe today it's retirement. Nobody in America soon is gonna have retirement they're talking about and all this stuff and people get disillusioned and the letdown is so huge.

Now, when that happens, church, listen, spiritually, Satan is out to destroy you and I spiritually in that area. This is a big deal. And if he can get you and I to become disillusioned in God, in the Bible, why do you think Satan's always attacking the Bible? To try to get us disillusioned.

Why do you think the National Geographic Channel is always pushing theology at Easter time? To get you in a sense of confusion. Cults will confuse God's truth. False teachers, false prophets to confuse God's truth.

One of the most dangerous things is for a Christian to get confused. Now watch this. It's okay for a Christian to be attacked and challenged and that's okay, that's fine.

But what we are to do every day, listen, everybody, you and I every day are to pick up our Bible and I'll tell you, I'll put it this way. Every day we are to pick up our Bible and we are to read it so that we can have a good brainwashing. You wanna know why? We listen to stuff in this world and it's filth.

Man, you Christians are brainwashed. I pray to God I get brainwashed. What do you want me to do, think like you do? I wanna think like God thinks.

And if I think like that, my faith is gonna be strengthened. But when I get my eyes off of his word, I begin to suffer disillusionment. And fear comes in because of confusion.

It happens to so many of us. And we have to be very careful. No one's exempt from this.

It's how we handle this discipline. In the day of battle, I think y'all know this, but in the day of battle, it's key that you confuse your enemy's ability to communicate. I'll never forget as you probably will never forget at the opening moments of Desert Storm One back in the 90s, remember that? And what did we do? We first of all, flew aircraft into the region to do electronic warfare, electronic warfare, that it sends signals that damages your enemy's ability to communicate to their equipments and to one another.

And then the next thing you do is you send in your stealth bombers. Because once their system is disabled, now you send in your planes that are invisible, and they start to take out the things that can make your life uncomfortable. And war is on.

You take out your enemy's ability to communicate. Satan loves getting people to be confused in their conversations. I thought you meant this.

No, I meant the other. Oh man, husbands and wives who love Jesus and serving the Lord, that's one of Satan's great plans is to get them to be not communicating. Communication is a big deal.

More people get a divorce over communication. Some people say finances. I think it's over communication, unable to talk about finances.

It's always communication. Isn't that how you fell in love in the first place? Communicating. I mean, you know, communicating could be a wink, but it's communication.

And then you're talking, and you know when you're insane, you're on the phone and you're talking to her, and you lay awake at night with a phone on. Hey, are you still awake? Anybody remember that? You guys are all sick, man, sick. The Bible says in Ephesians 2, verse 2, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, Satan.

By the way, that's atmospheric. Satan is the power in the atmospheric realm. Imagine right now what's going on between you and I right here in this room.

What is my hand passing through right now? Can you imagine? All kinds of things in there. There's angels in here, and there's demons in here, and there's stuff going on, big war going on. Absolutely amazing.

He's in the atmospheric realm. The Bible says the spirit who now works, that word means actively, he's at work, never sleeping, never stopping. And the sons of disobedience, he's at work.

The world's coming unhinged right now. Like I've never seen it in my lifetime. Violence everywhere, nations are losing governments.

Look what's going on in Tunisia. Look what's happening in various parts of the world. Nations are coming unhinged.

Unbelievable stuff. The Bible says in Psalm 61, one, hear my cry, O God. Listen to the psalmist and his sense of disillusionment.

Hear my cry, O God. Attend to my prayer. From the end of the earth, I will cry to you when my heart is what? Overwhelmed.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I. You're supposed to pause right there. I don't know if you know that or not. That's his prayer.

He's crying out. He's disillusioned. He's overwhelmed.

And you wait, and you wait, and you think about what he's talking about. There's a pause. And then you look at the next statement.

For you have been a shelter for me. This is the answer now. It's come.

You have been a shelter for me, a strong tower from the enemy. I will abide in your tabernacle forever. I will trust in the shelter of your wings.

And at the end, it says, Selah. Selah is Hebrew. It means this.

Pause and meditate on this. It means get it under your skin. Don't go to the next statement without getting this under your skin.

How do you like that? Every time you see the word Selah, you're supposed to stop and pray that into your life. How do you fight off disillusionment? There's times people in life, and it will come to you, where you'll sit down as Job did in a heap of ashes and just sit there and no one can understand you. No one can relate to you.

No one feels what you feel. You can't even form words anymore. Have you ever been to that place? And you just sit in that moment and you say, oh God, where are you? I'm filled with fear.

I'm filled with confusion. I don't know which way to go. And you wait.

Selah, wait, wait. My soul waits for the Lord like those who wait for the morning. In 1 John 4, 18, the Bible says, there is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear.

That's God's love because fear involves torment. Are you terrified? Are you fearful and timid? But he who fears has not been made complete in love. What does that verse mean? It means that if you and I are tormented and confused and disillusioned, then we have not let, we have not allowed, listen church, we have not become dyed in the wool as it were in the love of God.

Oh, it's present. The love of God is there, but I've not let it saturate my life. Why? I'm too busy texting, working, eating, whatever.

And no wonder why we have such a hard time. Listen, if you're going through a trouble in life, the greatest thing you can do right now is grab a Bible and sit down and say, Lord, in fact, here's a bonus verse. Not in my notes, coming right off the top of my head.

It's John 15, seven. Jesus said, if my word abides in you, you may ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you here and as my father glorified. You just sit down.

You let the word of God come in your life. Why? Because that's what you're gonna speak out. If the word's in you, it's gonna come out, but when it gets into you, it changes the whole situation.

James chapter one, verse 12 says, blessed is the man who endures temptation. Maybe you're going through it now. For when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life, which the Lord has promised to those who love him.

Let no one say when he's tempted, I'm tempted by God, for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he himself tempt anyone with evil. God doesn't use evil to tempt people. So right now, if in your life, you are fighting the disillusionment, just know this, that it's coming against you to deceive you, to breed confusion.

If tonight you're saying, man, I don't know what to believe anymore. I was talking to some Mormons, and I was talking to some Jehovah's Witnesses. I was talking to some Muslims, and I'm talking, and I don't know what to believe anymore.

Listen, the enemy loves confusion. Get back to the Bible, back to the word. It's always your rescue.

It's always your place to go. Psalm 127, one says, unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it. Unless the Lord guards the city, the watchman stays awake in vain.

What does that verse mean in light of disillusionment and confusion? Lord, I need you. Didn't Elijah, if you think about it, he was really, he put himself in an awesome position on Mount Carmel when he was the only one up there. And all the prophets of the Ashtoth and Baal, by the way, which were 850 in total, if you count them all up there on the mountaintop, and they're all there with the false gods, and Elijah's there with the real God.

He put himself, listen. You say, well, I wanna see God move in my life. I wanna see God shake the earth.

That's cool, but you gotta put yourself in the place where God is gonna shake the earth. He's just not, you're not gonna walk out on the street and say, okay, God, I wanna see some action. Do something.

He's not gonna do nothing. What's he gonna do that for? So you go, wow, that was great. No, you know what? You follow him.

Wherever he's going, there's gonna be action. As long as God is active in this church, I'm gonna be here. When he moves on, dude, I'm moving.

If he's not moving here, I don't wanna be here. Wherever he's going, you can bank on this. He's gonna be doing something.

Imagine all the crowds. Jesus is preaching and teaching, raising the dead, cleansing the lepers. He's going along, and no wonder why Josephus, for example, tells us at one point there's 100,000 people following Jesus.

Can you imagine? The Rose Bowl is following Jesus. 100,000 people, and they saw stuff. Why? Because they didn't go to some theater or rig it up that way.

They followed Jesus. You wanna see stuff? Follow Jesus. Keep your eyes on him.

So how do we get clear of confusion? I'm gonna give you a verse. You say, well, pastor, you told me about it. What do I do? This is what you do.

It's 1 John 5, three through six. 1 John 5, three, six. Watch this.

"For this is the love of God." Yep, God loves you. "That we keep his commandments, "and his commandments are not burdensome." They're not heavy. "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world, "and this is the victory." All right, here it comes.

"That has overcome the world, our faith. "Who is he who overcomes the world, "but he who believes that Jesus is." What? "The son of God." There is no heaven, no salvation, no eternity for you if you do not believe that Jesus is the son of God. "This is he who came by water and blood, Jesus Christ, "not only by water, but by water and blood, "and it is the spirit who bears witness "because the spirit is truth." Point two tonight.

The discipline of disillusionment is this. Disillusionment breeds or deceives, I should say, us by generating doubt. Listen, very important.

Notice the buildup. Confusion leads to doubt. If you're gonna write this in a chronology, confusion, if we allow it in our lives, if we don't deal with it with the word of God, it will lead to doubt.

You say, well, you know, what's the big deal about doubt? Doubt can kill you. Doubt's a big deal. Whenever I think of doubt, this is where my mind's wired, when I think of doubt, I think of a situation that happened when I was so young and I was soloing my instructor.

He thought I was ready to fly the plane by myself. And so he signs my logbook, puts it in the back of the seat behind me, and he says, and he gets out of there, he steps out of the plane. I mean, we're on the ground, steps out of the plane.

And he says, okay, you're ready to go. Man, let me tell you something. I can't exactly describe to you all the sensations I was having at that moment, but you are expected to go fly that thing around the county and bring it back down while he stands there and waits.

And you're the first time you've ever been alone. And let me tell you something, when you get ready to go, it's either, it's do or die. And if you hesitate, if there's doubt, then either you were not paying attention.

And by that, at that moment, you wished that you would have been paying attention. Doubt will fill your heart. And you probably, I can't imagine you have a heart attack or something.

So you pull into position and the tower says, two, six, nine, Juliet, cleared for takeoff. And you push in that throttle, man. And you start going and you start thinking.

You think thoughts you've never thought before. What if this thing doesn't get off the ground? What if the wings don't work? What if the engine cuts out? What if a dog runs across the runway? What if I have to go to the bathroom? I mean, it's like everything comes up in your mind. And it's that moment, getting goosebumps.

Chris, you know what I'm talking about? You know what I'm talking about? Yeah, you pull back, man, for the first time you're all by yourself. It's just you and God. And you start, and you tick off.

And it's like, I can do this. But if you hesitate, the runway's only so long. Doubt will cause you to hesitate.

Hesitating, hesitating is never good when God said go. Waiting is a great thing. Don't confuse waiting with hesitating.

God says, wait upon the Lord. And you, so you say, okay, God, I'm gonna wait. I'm waiting.

And then when he says, okay, now go. You don't hesitate. When the Lord says to Moses, he's got two and a half million Jewish brothers and sisters behind him coming out of Egypt.

And the Lord says, Moses, pull into position and hold. Moses, stand by. Wait, wait, Moses.

You're cleared for takeoff. You know what Moses did when God said that to him? God says, go. And Moses says, he turns around.

Hey, everyone, I want you to see the salvation of God. And the Lord says, Moses, Moses, what are you doing? Stand and you're speaking to the people. I said, go.

Then he gets into the water and then the rest is history. Wait upon the Lord. But when the Lord says, go, you go.

And listen, doubt will keep us from going. Doubt is what you and I hear all the time in our heads. It ain't gonna work.

I'll look like a fool. Nothing's gonna happen. Do you hear that in your head? Yes, you do.

We all hear that. We hear that. That's why we don't sign up for stuff.

I know, I'm not gonna do it. You sign up, I'm not gonna do it, I can't. We don't wanna fail because we have doubt.

Disillusionment generates doubt. In 1 Peter 1, verse three, the Bible says, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. That's your foundation.

To an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and that does not fade away. Thank God. You need to write that verse down.

If you just looked at your stock portfolio there. If you looked at Wall Street, you're gonna want that verse. And it's reserved in heaven for you.

Now, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. In this, you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, disillusionment, that the genuineness of your faith being more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Man, that's awesome.

I don't wanna beat this with a stick, but all of this stuff about buying gold, buying silver, buying gold, buying silver. I wish I was a bazillionaire because I would have commercials come on right after that guy's commercial and say, the Bible says your faith in God is worth more than gold and silver. And you can have all the gold and silver in the world, but if you don't have faith, when the Lord comes back, you ain't got nothing but gold and silver and you can't eat it.

The greatest thing. You say, well, pastor, you make fun of gold, but you know what? That's gonna be the currency, man. That's gonna be the big deal.

You know what? So what? I read my Bible. I read all the way through. And the end of my Bible says there's gonna be a day coming.

You wanna be rich? First of all, put faith in God. Number two, if you don't wanna put faith in God and you wanna go through the tribulation period with your hair on fire and stuff like that, the Bible says you better have a lot of wheat. So start buying.

Go down to Wonder Bread, get a bunch of bread because the Bible says you're gonna have to work all day for one slice of bread. Think of that. I'd rather have faith in God.

Why? Well, if I get shot, get old, drop dead, get hit by a truck, lightning strike me, fall off this pulpit and break my neck. It's an insurance against everything. Think about that.

What do you have? Aflac, I heard that. I can hear everything from up here. Aflac.

Jesus, man. It's Jesus. You guys, Satan hates our faith.

He hates our faith so much. So I read it in the opening. We'll read it in totality.

Matthew 13, 18, we looked at it earlier, but watch it all the way through. Jesus said, therefore, hear the parable of the sower. When anyone hears the word of God or the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away that which was sown in his heart.

This is he who received the seed by the wayside, off to the side, didn't care too much about it. But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word of God and immediately receives it with joy. Ah, I got born again.

I went forward, I went forward. They're all happy about it and you're happy for them. But watch this.

They immediately received the word of God with joy. Yet, verse 21, he has no root in himself, doesn't let it, say la, doesn't let it grow deep, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, they mock him for being a Christian.

Immediately he stumbles. Now he who has received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word of God and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word and it becomes unfruitful. But he who received the seed on good ground is he who hears the word and understands it and who indeed bears fruit and produces some a hundredfold, some 60, some 30.

Listen, Satan hates your faith. Charles Spurgeon said, and it's a wonderful quote. He says, when we doubt, we are putting faith in Satan.

That's the world he traffics in. So how do we overcome doubt? Matthew 14, 26. Matthew 14, verse 26 to 31.

And when the disciples saw Jesus walking on the sea, they were troubled saying, it is a ghost. I think you guys know by now, we haven't gone through the gospels. In the Jewish mind, they believed in their traditions that right before you die, the proof of your impending death was that you would see a ghost before you died.

That's why they shouted, it's a ghost. Translation, we're all gonna die and there's no hope for us. We're disillusioned.

And they cried out for fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them saying, be of good cheer. What an awesome contradiction.

Jesus is walking along. Hey, what are you guys doing? Be of good cheer. Imagine, he's not going, guys, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no.

He's just walking along on the water. Oh man. Be of good cheer, it is I, do not be afraid.

And Peter answered and said to him, Lord, if it's you, I love this, watch this. Lord, if it's you, command me to come to you on the water. You can analyze that forever.

Why did Peter, why did he say that? Was it a God moment? Did God put it in his head? Probably. So I don't know, that's reading too much into it. Okay, well, what was going on? He's in a boat.

He hears Jesus say, peace, it's all good. Don't worry about it. This is my thought, not Bible, my thought.

Peter says, I'm out of this. Call me, if it's you, call me. I think Peter's saying, get me away from these guys.

Get me out of this boat. I don't wanna be in this boat with these guys. We just go from thinking we're gonna pass from one world into the next in death.

You come walking on the water. I wanna be with you any old day, even if it's walking on water, then in a boat with a bunch of screaming, maniac, panic people, I can't take it. Now you would say, but Peter's just like them.

They were all crying. Yes, but when you see the light, you don't wanna hang around that anymore. When Jesus says, be of good cheer, it is I, don't be afraid, the last thing on earth you wanna do is hang around with people who are absolutely terrified at their shadow.

Come on, let's go. It'll never work. No, come on, let's go, let's follow Jesus.

It'll never happen. You're gonna get killed. Watch out, you're gonna poke your eye out.

Peter says, that's it, I'm coming. It's safer with Jesus on the water than in a boat with all these crybabies. It's amazing.

Doubt is dangerous. So how to overcome it? I'm gonna give you just two little statements and I think it's beneficial. Receiving the word of God into our hearts.

The Bible says, faith comes by hearing, hearing by the word of God, Romans 10, 17. So receiving the word of God, determining I am gonna receive the word of God. You say, what does that look like? No, listen, tonight, tomorrow morning, get up and you say, I'm gonna receive the word of God right now.

And you're gonna read it. Number two is putting ourselves into a place where faith has to be exercised. This is the number one I can handle.

I'm gonna pick up the word of God. Now watch, watch. I'm gonna pick up the word of God.

Okay, and the next thing you're supposed to do is put yourself in a place to exercise faith. You guys, the Bible, you guys, are you with me right now? Can you hear me? The Bible, we read it. What are we reading it for? If you're not, if we're not gonna, if we're not determining to put it into practice, then read the newspaper.

When we read the Bible, we're supposed to put it down after we're done and put on our gloves and strap on our helmet and go out into this world. That's why we're in the Bible. It makes all the difference in the world.

Number three, disillusionment deceives us by causing regret. Disillusionment, this is painful. Regret is a painful, brutal taskmaster.

Disillusionment causes regret. When we're disillusioned, we become regretful and regret causes bitterness. Disillusionment.

You and I, we struggle with bitterness because we regret something because we were disillusioned by what? A promise, a broken promise, a vow, and regret sits in it. Now, listen carefully to this. Regret is a trap.

It's like quicksand. It'll destroy your life. Regret, all of us right now, if we don't understand and get this discipline of disillusionment down, regret will destroy your life as a Christian.

Now, let me tell you, you're not gonna go to hell if you're a regretful person. If you're a Christian, you're gonna go to heaven. It's just horribly miserable until you get there.

Do you know how many Christians are living a horribly miserable life? And when you strip away all of the veneer and you talk to them, there's deep-seated regret. Why? They're bitter. Why? My wife ripped me off.

My ex-wife ripped me off. My kids, my mom and dad. This is where we hear from people all the time.

This is the stuff. Look at the stuff. Don't look at this.

I don't mean it. These TV programs, which I don't watch, but I've heard about them, where people come on the show and, now, what happened to you when I was nine years old? And that's very real stuff. But there's deep-seated hatred.

Why? Because there's regret. People are angry and hurt. You wanna know what the most dangerous thing regarding regret can be in our lives, church? It is justifiable hurts.

A justifiable hurt that this thing really did happen to you. And you can even point to the people or person who did it to you. And in a court of law, you win.

There's no doubt about it. But you could win at the Supreme Court and you wouldn't feel any better. You wouldn't do any better.

Because why? Regret, if left unchecked, causes bitterness. And bitterness, you can see it on someone's face. You'll hear it out of their mouth.

And they're Christians. But they live all of their Christian life, never making an influence for good. And they live their days out in like a Christian daze.

They never progress. It's very sad. It causes bitterness.

Psalm 108, 12. Psalm 108, 12 says, "Give us help from trouble, "for the help of man is useless." That can cause bitterness. When we have hoped in others, when we have hoped in their wisdom or their might, maybe we've hoped in the strong arm of man, we can easily enter into regret or bitterness when that happens.

You said that you were gonna rescue me. You said that you're gonna change things. You said that you were gonna love me.

And things change. You see, Jack, man, that's why I'm not gonna love anybody. We're coming to that at the end here pretty soon.

Hebrews 12, 12 says, "Therefore, strengthen the hands which hang down." Pictures of man exhausted and defeated. "And the feeble knees, "and make straight paths for your feet, "so that what is lame may not be dislocated, "but rather healed. "Pursue peace with all people and holiness, "without which no one will see the Lord.

"Looking carefully, lest anyone fall short of the grace." Listen, everyone. "Fall short of the grace of God, "lest any root of bitterness spring up, causing trouble, "and by this, many become defiled." Bitterness spreads. In families, there'll be that bitter person.

Maybe it's a grandma or grandpa. It's an aunt or an uncle. It's a cousin.

Someone is bitter. And they're, oh, here they come. They come, they're at the holiday dinner, and oh, man, there it is.

Often, most often, it's the person that's doing most of the drinking because they're miserable. They're bitter. And bitterness is a lie.

If you're, the more miserable, bitterness tells you the more miserable you are. And you walk around, you're grumbling, and you're griping, and everything's run that stupid government, and I can't stand it. And you know what? Oh, those Christians.

And you know what? And everything's wrong. I read a story a long time ago. There was a man, it was the turn of the century, in a farmhouse, big family, and a little kid was goofing around before dinner.

And the little kid stuck his hand and munched up all the Limburger cheese. You ever smelled Limburger cheese? I've been to Limburger, Germany. Limburg, where the cheese came from.

And that stuff stinks, man. Limburger cheese. And the little kid walked over, and he didn't know anything.

He's walking around, he's walking around, and there's grandpa laying on the couch sleeping, big mustache. And the little guy, he's petting his grandpa's mustache. He's petting it.

And the little guy wanders off. And the grandpa wakes up. And listen, the guy goes, this house stinks.

He gets up, walks into the room. All of his family's in there cooking. You guys all stink.

Walks outside, opens the door. The whole world stinks. He had Limburger cheese all over his mustache.

Bitterness is like that. It's on your mustache. You stink.

All of you stink. The whole world stinks. No, you're the one who stinks.

You're like Pigpen and Charlie Brown. Everywhere you go, there's the fumes rising up from wherever you're at. And bitterness, nobody wants to be around a bitter person.

And you say, well, Jack, you know what? You're making fun of my bitterness, and I don't appreciate it. You know what? You wanna live? You gotta kill the bitterness. Only you can do it.

Nobody can do it. You can go to your therapist. You're just gonna spend money.

Nobody can do it but you. Let's just face that fact right now. You can't get somebody, you can't pay someone to take away your bitterness.

It ain't gonna happen. It's only between you and God that bitterness is fixed, period. You can travel the world.

I'll save you the flight. Go straight to God. You can run around the world.

You'll still be bitter because it's down in the heart. And you gotta let it go. Ephesians 4.29, let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth for what is necessary for edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all, what? Bitterness. Notice it's first in the list.

Watch what comes after that. Wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking, put away from you with all malice and be kind to one another. You choose to do that.

Tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you. That's the key to bitterness. You wanna unleash bitterness from your life and get it away from you so you can be free? The answer is forgiveness.

Listen, forgiveness, forgiveness in your life exercise, I told you before, is not for the other guy. That's a lie from Satan. People, I'm not gonna forgive that.

Why should I forgive that guy? And it blows my mind. Where did that thought come from? But from Satan himself, I'm not gonna forgive that guy. Excuse me, sir.

You don't even know what you're talking about. That's like being starving. You're starving to death and there's a turkey dinner on the table.

I'm not gonna eat that. You don't even know what you're talking about, dude. You need that.

God gave us the ability to forgive others so we could go free. It's for you to be relieved. Well, I'm not gonna give them the satisfaction of forgiving them.

They don't care. You think they're missing sleep over it? It's for you to be set free. So how do we stop bitterness? Matthew 6, 14.

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Why? You're refusing to be set free.

Number four, and we'll be done at this point. Disillusionment deceives us by building walls. Notice the progression.

Anybody taking notes? What was the first one? Confusion. What was second? What's the third? What? Okay, and look at this fourth one. Walls.

Some of you didn't know the answer, and it's on the screens. But you see how it starts. Look, it seems so benign.

Confusion. What's the big deal? Leads to doubt. It's okay.

Regret. Ooh, that's a bitter thing. Takes years, by the way.

Could take years. Walls? Ooh, walls. Walls are a big deal.

Walls most always take years. It deceives us. Why? Why? Listen to this quote.

Just keep on handing me another brick, and I will build a wall so high and so, think that you'll never be able to hurt me again. Just hand me another brick. People like this, living life, been hurt in the past, not gonna feel again, not gonna love again, not gonna serve God again.

I'm just gonna, I'm just gonna anchor down, wait to the end. And your justification is, I'm not gonna get hurt again. Well, I don't think that's very Christian.

Yeah, I think if you're really living Christianity, you're gonna get run over about as many times as a person can get run over. I mean, let me be honest with you. If you brought your friend here tonight who's not a Christian, then let me just be honest.

It's an awesome life being a Christian, and it's a wonderful peace, no matter what happens in life, to know that you're living in the truth. But we're not of this world as we talked about on Sunday. And this world will not only run us over as Christians, it'll back up and run us over again.

Okay, just because Christians are fun to attack. Did you see the news this week, ladies and gentlemen, by the way? Egypt and Iraq and Southeast Asia? United, which is now they think, I saw it on CNN yesterday, they think it may be a global movement to kill Christians worldwide started this week. Global persecution of Christians.

They're killing Christians in Iraq and in Egypt and Southeast Asia right now. They're killing Christians in Thailand and Vietnam and Cambodia. By the way, I'll give you one guess what group of religious people are killing the Christians, but it's easy to kill Christians.

It's easy, because they don't put up that big of a fight, as though the fight meant something. Isn't it interesting that our leader laid down his life? You know what Waleed Shoebat told me? He told me, he said, you know what? When we were Muslim terrorists, among terrorists, he goes, I'll let you guys in on a secret. I tell you the best prophecy conferences take place back in the room, back where no one's listening.

We're all sitting around the table, it's amazing. He's gonna tell you a secret. Muslim terrorists are terrified of how a Christian dies.

I said, what are you saying? He said, we freak over the thought of dying, because we don't know nothing about what we believe. He said, a Christian, they know what they believe. And this world's not that big of a deal to them.

And they just pass right on in, they don't kick, they don't scream, they don't flop about, they just go with Jesus. The Bible say precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints. So you think about that for a minute.

Is what you're believing worth dying for? You say, man, I don't know about that, I don't know. Let me tell, okay, let me rephrase it. You will die in this world for something.

We've all seen it in movies, sounds very romantic. But are you living for something bigger than you? Well, you've read it in books, but what is it? It is a noble thing to die for your nation, whatever nation you're from. God has put it in the hearts of people.

To have patriotism, no matter what country you're from. What? You lay down your life for a greater cause. That's fantastic.

But if you're gonna lay down your life, why don't we just go for all the marbles? Let's lay down our life for the Lord. I mean, I'll go to war to defend America and I'll go to war to defend your freedoms, even if I don't agree with your view on freedom. I'll go to war to defend your ability and your right to hate me.

But what's greater than that? My master said, follow me. And building walls, you can say, I'm not gonna love anybody again. I've been burned too much.

That's a lie and it's a deceitful lie from Satan and you're gonna get ripped off. And you'll never see the power of God. And God is greater than all the pain that we can experience, disillusionment.

I read today this quote. I wanna give it to you. It says, maybe you have felt the heavy hand on you from God and you're more like a bird in a cage than a free and liberated soul that you are.

Remember this, the Lord's hard word is not his last word. Maybe God is saying to you, you know what? You're all these things that Jack pointed out tonight and that's a hard word to hear tonight from the Lord, but it's not his last word. He has his last word is, come to me.

You are burdened and heavy laden and now we'll give you rest. Jesus said that. Psalm 30 verse five says, for his anger is but for a moment, but his favor is for life.

Weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning. You build a wall to protect yourself. I'll paraphrase it for time's sake.

Psalm 42 is awesome. The psalmist is crying out, my heart is like a deer, it pants for you, God. My soul longs for you.

And as he's crying in his distress, he says to himself, why so downcast? Oh, my soul, why are you so depressed, my soul? And there's Selah, he waits. I'm so, so disillusioned. And then his help comes from the Lord.

My soul will take strength in the Lord. Disillusionment is destroyed by three golden spikes. One, tonight church choose to become fearless again.

Listen, disillusionment says, I can never take another risk. I'm telling you right now, trust God and become fearless again. Number two, become obedient to God again.

I wish I could talk to somebody. They're not here right now. There's tens of thousands of Christians that are no longer going to church because something happened to them.

They got angry, bitter, disillusioned, whatever, and they decided to no longer go in fellowship with God's people any longer. And if somehow you know somebody or if somebody's listening tonight, I'm gonna say, forget them. Forget the people that have hurt you.

Follow God, become obedient to him again. Put your eyes on Jesus and stop looking at people and get over it. Number three, it's this.

Choosing to become trusting again. This is the biggie, huh? Choosing to become trusting again that you will trust and you'll trust the Lord. Confusion, doubt, bitterness, loneliness, because that's what this causes in our lives if we build up walls, loneliness.

You can be in a room full of people and you're lonely. And Jesus said, listen, this is the final word. This is it.

You say, Jack, none of the stuff that you said puts any help into my court. Well, I thought you'd say that. So I built this verse in right here, right now.

There's stuff that has gone on maybe all of our lives that the answer we've not found even in a Bible study. What do I do? What do I do? I'm disillusioned. Are you ready for this? It's gonna sound like I'm pouring salt on a wound, but remember the same salt that burns is the same salt that heals.

Then Jesus said to his disciples, if anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. There comes a time in all of our lives. This is a bitter pill, people.

You can close your Bible. We're done. This is the biggie.

There comes a time when we are so disillusioned and we don't see the answer coming. And you know what the absolute ultimate answer is? Deny yourself. Deny yourself.

Stop putting your feelings and your position and your justifiable hurts and all of your argument front and center. Take it off the mantle and throw it away. This is tough medicine and it's the best.

Deny yourself. Stop thinking about you. Stop looking at your hurts, pains, and the wrongs that have been perpetrated against you.

Get over it by taking it to him. And you tell him tonight, if you've got to go climb a mountaintop tonight, if you've got to drive around all night or take a walk, do it. But you say, Lord, I have to have victory in my life in this situation.

It's disillusionment's killing me. And I'm coming to you tonight, God. And I'm just going to take the shortest route possible.

And that is this. I am choosing now to deny myself. I am going to quit thinking about this.

I'm going to give it up and I'm going to follow you, Jesus. I'm not bringing it up again. And if I bring it up again, God, don't listen to me because I'm done with it.

I am not that important to have me ruin my life because the more it is of me, myself, and I, the more miserable you are. Father, this is your word. It is holy.

It is pure. It is power. And Father, tonight, all we need to do is simply choose to obey you in these things.

And the discipline of disillusionment is this. We give it to you, God. We cry out to you.

We take your word and we trust it completely. We will not listen to men, to the left or to the right. We will not give audience to those who undermine your word, to take away the authority of your son, to deny the Holy Spirit.

We will not listen, but to the word of God. We will not succumb to our own devices. We choose tonight to say to you, Lord, we deny ourselves and we are gonna become soldiers of yours.

We are gonna become followers of yours. We're gonna become fishers of men. We're gonna become lovers of God.

And we're gonna stop talking about us and start praising you. In Jesus' name and all God's people said, amen.

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