

Luke 15

Sunday 7/10/2022

If you have your Bibles, turn to Luke chapter 15 today. A couple of weeks ago, Bob came to me and said, "Hey, I'm heading out of town to Ohio, and I want you to get up there and preach." I'm not going to lie, I said, "Oh man, me again?" I actually started listing some of your names in the church, and he took offense to it. He said, "Well, man, if you want them to do it, but I want you to get them ready for camp." So I said, "Okay, well, if it's about camp, I'll go up there and do it." The only reason I'll throw that out there, man, is because I do feel spoiled with the amount of men that we have in this church who can get into the Bible and lay it out to other people. So I want you guys to know there were other options. Absolutely. My goal is to get us ready for camp in that mindset, speaking to the kids today for sure.

You guys ever gone to those restaurants that are mostly for adults, and they kind of always have those token things on the kids' meal or menu? You know, like the little grilled cheese or chicken tenders, or something like that, little smokies or something. Sometimes you go to those restaurants and you're expecting that adult meal, and you want to get satisfied, but it's just not that great. But praise God, you can fall back to what you ordered your kids. You kind of reach over there onto that plate, and you pick up one of those chicken tenders, and you find satisfaction and fulfillment in that thing. So today is going to be chicken tenders, but I think, Lord willing, they'll be all right for us.

I. The Sermon's Foundation: Realizing What We Already Have

When I was thinking about what we could talk about to get the kids ready for camp, Dean Hayes from Pensacola is coming in, and he's going to be talking about "Where's the God of Elijah?" I thought that was beautiful. Anybody knows that story: Elijah just stepped off the scene. He's going out in this awesome way; he's going out with chariots of fire. Fire literally came down out of heaven, swept this guy up, took him out. They see him leave like this, and they're like, "So you're the guy that's left, right, Elisha?" "Yeah, I'm the guy that's left." "You're going to have power in you like that man?" And he's sitting there kind of like, "Uh, I don't know." And so the question is, "Where's the God of Elijah?" It's good for us because a lot of our kids grew up around Bible-believing parents in a great Philadelphia atmosphere and everything like that. The question is, is God going to show up in their generation the way that He did in the previous? Where's the God of Elijah?

So Dean told me he's going to preach on that. I'm like, "Man, that's a beautiful message for camp. How am I going to prepare the kids to get ready for that?" I was thinking, "What can I give them? What do our kids need? What can I give them? What do they need?" Right about then, I realized I don't think our kids really need anything. I feel like we're kind of increased with enough. We kind of got enough, or sometimes I feel like our cup is running over, our sponge is full. I said, "Maybe it's not what our kids need, but maybe it's what they need to realize." Maybe there are some things they might just need to realize about what they already have. When they

take that time out to realize what they already have, then they'll find satisfaction; they'll find value in what we're getting ready for right here.

So this message came out of Luke 15, and I didn't quite originate it by myself. Right now, in youth group, we're having some parents come up and talk to the kids every fifth Thursday of the month. There are four or five Thursdays, and we're going to have four couples come up and preach to the kids. So far, we've had the Daris Scavages come up, and they've blessed us. Jim preached on the Gospel of the Periodic Table. This last time, John and Pam Busquack came up there and gave us a blessing, and John actually preached out of Luke 15. While John was preaching up there, and I was listening, it's always hard sometimes to keep up with these guys' messages because they throw out so many good things. You're up here writing notes, and then God gives you something that you're working on. John's not here today; I think he had to work. So I was going to thank him. If you guys like the message, thank John. If you don't like it, get right.

He gets going, and he hits one point on his outline. The point he made was that what you find is that this prodigal, when he came back home out of the far country, everything that he desired in the far country was already available for him in his father's house. I didn't hear anything else John said after that because the Lord put me on a completely different path. That hit home, man. Isn't that our problem, especially for kids that grow up in church? Mom and Dad tell you, "Yeah, you need to read your Bible. Yeah, you need to pray. Yeah, church is good. Your relationship with God is the most important thing." In the back of that kid's mind, they're thinking, "Is that so? Really? I mean, yeah, I'll show up because I'm not going to be rebellious, and I still want you to buy my shoes, pay my gas money, and cover my insurance and stuff like that. But I don't know. Is that really so?" So we're going to talk about that today in Luke chapter 15. I'm going to read the story just in case you're not familiar with it.

II. The Parable of the Prodigal Son

Luke 15:11-32

And he said, A certain man had two sons:

And the younger of them said to his father, Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me. And he divided unto them his living.

And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want.

And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into his fields to feed swine.

And he would fain have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat: and no man gave unto him.

And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!

I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee,

And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.

And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him.

If anybody's been in a Baptist church or around this type of preaching, you know what happens right here. Isn't that beautiful how this is a picture of salvation, how God the Father didn't sit up here and wait for us to come to Him? He saw us in our need, and He came to where we were. He came down into that mire pit and took us up and set our feet on a solid rock. Amen for that.

And the son said unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son.

But the father said to his servants, Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet:

And bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry:

For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

Now here's where I come into the story.

Now his elder son was in the field: and as he came and drew nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing.

And he called one of the servants, and asked what these things meant.

And he said unto him, Thy brother is come; and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he hath received him safe and sound.

And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

And he answering said to his father, I could just see him moaning and getting into a spiritual voice. He's the elder brother. He's been spiritual, right? He's been at home. He's been showing up at all the church services, all the Bible studies. He's been out passing tracts and knocking on doors with the father. He's been showing up to Lifeline and prayer group and all this stuff like that. I could just start to hear this sanctimonious, spiritual attitude rise up in him.

And he answered and said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends:

But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.

Oh no, I see him going off like that, man. That's right. "Have devoured his living with harlots. Thou hast killed for him, Betsy, the fatted calf. The one that just won the fair. The one that we brought all the Christian members and family over to see what God had done, how He had blessed us and been spiritual in our family and had blessed our habitation. You took that sacred cow and you killed it for that sinner."

And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

I want my friend Jim Daris Gavitch, would you please stand up and pray for us, and then we'll get into this message.

III. It's All Here: The Central Message

The name of my message is simply, "It's All Here." Everything you could desire is already right here in the Father's House. It's right here in the Father's House. You say, "Well, Zach, hold on now, brother, get your doctrine together. You know that in the New Testament, this sanctuary, this building itself, is not the Father's House." That's true, but have you considered this? Why focus on that? So you're telling me your body is that living sacrifice for God, holy and acceptable? It's all here. Absolutely. The indwelling Holy Spirit of God, it lives inside of you. We know that this right here is just the Old Testament temple. We've got stains in the ceiling. We've got things falling out. We've got a rat coming out a hole over here. Absolutely, I understand that. Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit of God. Praise the Lord for that. But doesn't God deserve a vacation home every now and then? It's okay for you to have a timeshare, but not for Him? It's okay for you to have other places that you make your own, but He's quarantined to you right here? He's not even in there, is He? It's all here! Everything you could desire is already right here in the Father's House.

You know, all the prodigal wanted was already waiting for him in the Father's House, but the devil tricked him. Have you kids realized that yet? The devil wants you to think that it's not. The Bible says over there in Ecclesiastes chapter 3, verse 11:

Ecclesiastes 3:11

He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.

Who was that? That was the devil, right? No, it was God. The Bible says God set the world in their heart so that no man could find out anything that God does. Why would God set us up like that? Why would He try to trick us? You know why? Because He knows about our lust, and He told us not to submit to those things. He told us to resist the devil, and he would flee. He knows one of our lusts is the lust of our eyes, the lust of our flesh. He knows about that pride of life. He

knows that this world is what we're naturally, in our flesh, going to have our sights and our attention set on. If you want to get close to God, you've got to walk by faith and not by sight. So that's the first reason you can't see it: because you're looking for it with the wrong thing. It's all here!

You might be wondering, "It's all here. I hear what you're saying, Zach. You're saying that everything that I need, I should find my fulfillment in this house, in the Bible, in the Word of God, in prayer with my Christian friends. So why is it that things outside of that look so appealing? Why is it that they look so satisfying and fulfilling for me?" Well, let's call it bait, folks. If it looks better, it's bait. The Bible says, "Ask now the beast, and they shall tell thee." If you can drop into the pond this afternoon, go find Nemo swimming around. You say, "Nemo, tell me, how did you lose some of your friends?" He said, "Because it looked better, and they went for it." It looked better than what was natural, what was swimming around, what we had to chase after. All of a sudden, there was something just sitting there dangling, almost just calling out to us and begging, and we went for it.

You kids might be thinking, "If this is what's going to fulfill me and satisfy me and everything that God has for me, why is it so hard for me to want to come and do it? Why does it seem like it's torture to come in here on Thursday night, go up to this little hot room in the youth group room, and sit here and listen to this big, bloated guy up here try to preach to me and sing twenty stanzas of the same verse?" Why is it so hard if this is what I need and what I desire? If it's better, it's usually bait. It's all here. The question that's probably on your heart and your mind today is, "If that's the truth, Zach, if it's all here, then why doesn't it seem that way?" My message, like I said, is going to be chicken tenders. It's going to be simple. But if we can apply this, guys, I believe God can do something for us in this upcoming month when we get ready for camp.

IV. Why It Doesn't Seem That Way: You Are Not Here

1. It's all here, but you are not.

Luke chapter 15. It's in the Father's House, right? Luke chapter 15. The Bible says in verse 25: Luke 15:25

Now his elder son was in the field: He wasn't in the Father's House. He wasn't in the Father's House. Have you found yourself more and more lately finding it harder and harder to show up at church, finding it harder and harder to put aside all the busyness in your schedule to show up on Thursday nights, Sunday mornings? I know our church does a billion, jillion different things like that, but I'm just talking about those two days. Is God worth two days? Can He get those two days, those two times of the week? I mean, the One that saved your soul, the One that saw Satan coming after you, that saw that devil that wanted to pull you down to see if he could pull you into hell forever. Is He worth just those two days, those two times? That hour and a half, twice a week? I mean, three hours? It's all here, but you're not here.

2. That's one of the craziest things about our day and age: just how much we have going on in our lives, man. Guys, I've got to tell you, I was so guilty of that when I was showing up here. I'll get to my little issue right after this one right here. But a lot of you guys, you've got to ask

yourself, "Why is it that they scheduled a soccer game during church? How did that happen? Why is it that whatever after-school activity had to be on Thursday nights right at this time? Why do concerts just have to be on Thursdays at that time?" It's a test. You think the devil is not sitting up there smiling about that? Kind of up there manipulating the teachers, the administrators, whoever it is that's over the league, like, "Hey, I know you're going to do it on Wednesday, or are you going to do it on Tuesday? Why not Thursday?" "Well, I don't know. Why should I do it on Thursday?" "I'm working on something right now. I want to see how much somebody really wants to be somewhere." "All right, whatever. Let's schedule it for Thursday." It's all here, but you're not here.

V. Why It Doesn't Seem That Way: Your Heart Is Not Here

Now, here's us right here. Most of you guys are very faithful. Most of you guys are in attendance. Most of you guys, if we go back to your record of church and everything like that, it's been beautiful. You're only thirty years old, but you've been in church for fifty years because of how many times you've attended. Beautiful. Great. But you're like that older brother. You see what the Bible says in Luke 15:25: "Now his elder son was in the field."

You guys that are going through Keys to the Bible that understand key words, what does that word "field" represent in the Bible? The world. Jesus Christ said over there in Matthew 13:38:

Matthew 13:38

The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one;

Your corpse is here. Your heart is where? Where's that heart right now? What do you truly desire? Do you come expecting something from God when you show up at church, or do you come tolerating God? You come tolerating the time the preacher gets up there speaking to you. You come tolerating all these things. Why is it that your heart is back in your bed right now taking a nap while your corpse is sitting here? It's all here. It's all here, but you're not.

I kind of love this thing right here. When you jump back up here to Luke 15:28, look at this. We saw how the father acted when that prodigal came home. He ran out to meet him. He was excited to see him. He ran to greet him, so willing to go and bring that boy into his arms. Isn't that funny? The father had to come out and meet that prodigal. But if that elder brother actually never went out to that far country like the prodigal, if he had always been doing the right thing, showing up for Bible studies, showing up for church service, and following all the principles in the Bible like he claimed to be claiming, and he had this self-righteousness that he was putting up on this podium, why in the world wasn't he already in the house getting the party ready for the prodigal?

Did you guys see where the father had to go? So the prodigal was out in the world, right? And the father had to leave the Father's House to come out and meet him and bring him in. But that elder brother, who was spiritual, he was already waiting in the house, right? No, the father had to go out and meet him just like that prodigal. He was angry and didn't want to come into the house.

Is that you today? Are you saved, but it just kind of irks your skin every Sunday morning? "Oh my gosh, I've got to get up and do this again." Or maybe you're not that blatant with it. Maybe you're just like, "All right, it's 11:38. He's only got about, what, twenty-two more minutes left? Twelve o'clock. I mean, last time Danny got up here, he preached, and he closed at twelve o'clock. So maybe he'll give us a special lesson like that too. I don't know. I've got to go out here to lunch after this." It's all here. See, you stayed at home, but you're still in the world, aren't you? At home, but in the world. You see, you're in the field too.

I love this. The father, he saw what God was doing with the sinner, bringing him home. If that elder brother was as spiritual as he claimed to be, he would have been in sync with God. He would have seen that sinner coming. He would have started singing, "Bring them in, bring them in," or "Rescue the perishing," or whatever else. But instead, you know where he was? He was out there in the field, just as lost as everyone else. "What's going on? Why are they getting so excited? Who got saved? Who is that?" Aren't you tired of coming in at the end of the program? Aren't you tired of not knowing where God's working in this church, who He's working with, what soldiers are getting reached out to, what families are getting reached out to? Aren't you tired of coming in at the end of the thing, saying, "So who was that on the way? What happened? Oh, saved? Okay. Can we really trust it though? I mean, you know it's the latency in church period, right?" At home, but in the world, in the field, but you don't see God doing anything. You don't see Him bringing in sinners to repentance. It's all here, but you're not. Where are you at today?

VI. Why It Doesn't Seem That Way: It's Too Far

3. It's all here, but it might be a little too far.

Luke 15:28

And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him.

You see, you've been saved, you've been in discipleship, you got in the book, you found the right group of people to hang out with. So what you're kind of doing, you're doing this thing like this: you're finding out what are the rules, what's accepted amongst my friends of believers, what do I have to do at Old Paths to fit in? You know what we find out there? You're not asking, "What do I need to do to fulfill my relationship with God anymore?" "What do I have to do to fit into the Christian circle?" Because asking God, "Lord, what is it that You would have me to do?" it might be a little too far. But asking Zach, "Hey brother, what can I do to help you out?" "Hey Bob, what would make you happy?" "Hey Danny, hey Charles, hey whoever, what can I do to fit in here?" Now that's a little bit more of my wheelhouse. The Lord convicted me about something a while ago along those same lines.

Come over here to Mark chapter 10. It's this idea on doing what's written versus what's right. We get to the point where you hang around church long enough, you know exactly what people are expecting from you. You know exactly how to put on the right type of facade. You know exactly how to be accepted amongst the believers. But when you get home and God starts to convict you about things, it's easy to brush it off because you already know you've got a good name amongst the folks at church. So it's easy to do what's written. It's easy to do what everybody can go in the

Bible and look at, and they can see that standard for it, and they can say, "Okay, he's doing his job. I can move on to somebody else." But it's not always easy to do what's right based off of what God put on your heart and told you to do. What's written versus what's right. You won't go all the way in. You'll go so far, but not all the way. You know in your mind you're thinking, "Well, I'm not trying to become a fanatic. I don't want to get too legalistic with this thing. After all, you know, you don't want to get out of balance, right?" What's written versus what's right.

Check this out. Mark chapter 10, look at verse 17.

Mark 10:17-22

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

Well, look at this guy. That's me right there. I mean, look at him. He's not running away from God; he's running to Him. He kneeled. He's submissive. He's worshipping Him. And he asked Him, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" He even shows up with the Thursday night Bible question. "What does it take to get eternal life?" Well, that's what Jesus Christ says to him.

And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

"That's not even a question I have, Lord. Why are You focusing on the minors? Why are You focusing on how I asked You it?" Because Jesus Christ read his heart. He wasn't listening to what he said. He knew that this guy was conceited. He's kind of stuck up. He knew that he was like in the forefront of the pack of spiritual people, and that now he was going to try to hit a home run by asking this one question that gave him everything he could ever desire. "What must I do that I might inherit eternal life?" And the choir of angels kept singing behind them after he asked that. Watch.

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and mother.

And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these things have I observed from my youth.

Guys, that's where our kids are today here. They've been brought up in this church. They know good doctrine. They know the Bible, just like that rich young ruler right there. You know what their problem is? They're still not fulfilled from any of it. Why is he here asking Jesus Christ a question like that? If you did all those commandments, if you've shown up at church, if you've gotten all those blessings, why aren't you fulfilled? Why aren't you satisfied?

Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: Go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and take up the cross, and follow me.

And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

You see, before He had to cut down all that pride and that arrogance. He had to cut down all that stuff about "Good Master" and this is that. Now Jesus Christ is getting ready to get to the heart of

the issue right here. What does He say to him? "Then Jesus, beholding him, loved him, and said unto him, 'One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come take up the cross, and follow Me.'" What does the Bible say? He rejoiced and said, "Finally, I've gotten my answer. Finally, I found it all in..." What does the Bible say? "And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved. Why? For he had great possessions."

You see, all that spiritual stuff he had done, all that learning that he got, was just to prop up his own reputation so that he could have a name amongst the believers out there in Israel. What Jesus Christ said, "Good job. You've shown me that you're committed to do what's written. You've shown me that you're committed to take care of the commandments and follow those commandments and get those things done, but now I'm going to check your true commitment. Why did you do all those things? Did you do those things as prerequisites to get to Me? Or so that you could come here and add one more spiritual thing to your lapel and say, 'Now look at me, I've got the eternal life badge.' You guys got that? Do you have it yet? Nope, you don't have it, do you? He just gave it to me." That's where we're at right now. Kids, do you have fulfillment in that book? Do you have fulfillment in your relationship with God? Maybe you're pursuing the possessions instead of the provider of the possessions. Maybe you're after the blessings more than you're after the One that blesses. Maybe you're pursuing something instead of someone today.

When you read your Bible, or we read in the book, or we listen to someone talk to us, guys, it's supposed to be a relationship. When you pray, what's going on there? It's supposed to be talking to someone, right? That's the thing. Why would Jesus ask him to give up what God blessed him with? You know, you go back there to Luke chapter 15, the same thing happens. If his father gave that older brother that inheritance, the Bible said he divided unto them their inheritance. And he was out there in the field and didn't want to come in. Couldn't he have justified that and said, "Father, why would I leave my inheritance?" I mean, he was the firstborn son, right? It was probably his field. He was probably out there where God had blessed him to be, giving him the right of the firstborn in the field. But you know what the father said, "Hey, if you want to have fellowship with Me, come out of that field, come into the Father's House, and get close to someone in here." That's what's going on right here. Do you want the field or do you want the Father more? Do you want the blessings or do you want the Lord? Are you here for something or someone? It's all here.

VII. Why It Doesn't Seem That Way: You Haven't Asked For It

4. It's all here, but you haven't asked for it.

Luke 15:31

And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.

It was meet that we should make merry, and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

Listen up, guys. This isn't some message about trying to make you feel guilty about the stuff that you've done and you should already be on this level and everything like that. What it is, it's a message about realization. Remember? It's not what we need; it's what we need to realize. That's what's holding us up. The question, if you've been here over a year, over two years, over three years, for any amount of time, you realize that Jesus Christ did what He did for you, how He left glory. The Bible says, "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich." If you've realized that and made that real for yourself, you've got to ask yourself, "How is it that we can still have folks that are coming out of the world, that are coming out of the cities, that are coming out from being lost and becoming found, and they're finding fulfillment in this, but I'm not?" Maybe they're wrong. Maybe they've got tricked, right?

How is it that we can have folks that are still getting saved today that are saying that line, "I found it all in Jesus," but we're just kind of pissed off that we're seeing this line again? I mean, I don't know, Alexis, you just got saved. Why is it that you're sitting up there crying in your car talking about, "I need to get saved, I need to get saved," but I'm looking forward to the COVID restrictions coming back so I can walk out of my underwear and sit on my couch and turn on church? I mean, maybe they're the fools, right? How is it that we've got one group of folks reacting one way to this same book, to the same promises in here, but me as an elder brother, I'm just still upset that they're throwing them a party, and they haven't recognized me yet? They haven't seen all the stuff I'm doing for the cleanup crew. They haven't seen all the sign-up sheets I've set out here. They didn't see all the stuff I brought in for Ukraine. They didn't see all the snacks and goodies that I bring downstairs every Sunday. They still haven't noticed yet. They don't know about my offering and my donations. They don't know about me opening up my spots for people to come out and, "Hey, where's my fatted calf?" Maybe you should put yourself on the altar. Maybe that's what we're missing out on right there, right? What's that all about?

You know what I said to the kids when we were up there on Thursday night, we talked about this? I would to God. Maybe this is the prayer that we need. We oftentimes pray for boldness to go out and witness and stuff like that and how hard it is. Maybe this, maybe this is where we need to get. Maybe just boldness to leave church. Maybe just boldness to quit playing the game. Maybe just boldness to actually go out in the world where our actual heart is. Because you know what the problem is right now? We've got a bunch of losers in both worlds. You're sitting here, but your heart's in the world. So you're missing out on making money, on your promotions, and all the things you could be doing out in the world to actually improve yourself. So to all of them, you're a loser for being here this morning. So your heart's out there, your body's in here, and so now you're not getting nothing for what's happening up here with the message. So now you're a spiritual loser too. We've got double losers sitting in here this morning. At home, but in the world.

You say, "Who does this guy think he is?" A sinner saved by grace in the same position that you are. How do you think I got this? God beat me upside the head with this thing. Or blame John Bisquack, by the way. It's not me, all right? This is John's message. Aren't you guys tired of being losers in both worlds? I mean, honestly, let's just level, man. I don't know how much time

we've got left. I mean, why waste your time in here? That's what I told your kids on Thursday nights. You might want to make it before sending them up there every Thursday, all right? This is the type of stuff they're hearing. I mean, seriously, quit playing, quit pacifying, grow a backbone. If this ain't it, go to where it is. Maybe I'm deceived. Maybe I'm the sucker. But stop playing the game, right? I mean, bless God, you know, that prodigal, he screwed up, he was jacked up. He goes out there in the world and does all that stuff. At least he was honest about it. He was like, "This Father's House, I don't know, man. I mean, it's kind of whack. You guys sitting around having family devotions and all this other junk like that and going, I mean, give me what I've got, and I'm out." Thank God, at least the boy was honest.

Another fellow, you know what he did? He was like, "Yeah, you get out of here, Lord, let's get through, let's get rid of these sinners. Go, go, go." And then he sneaks out there. He goes as far as he can up to that property line. He looks out into that far city and says, "Oh my gosh," starts panting for it, wanting it, desiring it. Didn't have enough guts to go for it. It's all here. The problem is simply this: we haven't asked for it. This is where we're coming down to. I told you, I'm only a sinner saved by grace, and that's where we're all sitting at right now.

Guys, watch this. God knows you really don't care for this. Say, "Zach, that's blasphemous." Let me say it one more time. God knows you naturally don't care for this. The Bible says light has come into the world. You know what He says about men? "We love darkness rather than light because our deeds are evil." The Bible says, "If ye then, being evil," and I'm talking about every one of you sitting in this room right here. I'm not talking about somebody else, somewhere else, some other church. I'm talking about you. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give to them that what? That what? Ask." Ask. He knows I don't naturally care for this thing. You don't have to, stupid. That's why He died for you. If you naturally love something that was good, you're good. But you're not. We've all sinned and come short of the glory of God. All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags in the sight of God. Right? Praise God.

You know what our problem is? We just think too highly of ourselves. We've been in church so long, we're like that older brother. We've been around the Father's House so long, we just think that we're so good. You're not. And naturally, you don't care about singing God's songs that are five hundred years old. You don't care about this book. We naturally don't, but that's all right. You know what? One of the coolest things is you don't have to naturally be on that level. You just have to realize that you're not and then ask for it. How about this novel idea? "Lord, I realize something. I'm pretty dirty and wicked, and I don't naturally care for Your things. But since You gave me prayer, I'm now going to ask You to change my heart so that I do." Amen. And that is now your life's goal: to be less like yourself and more like Jesus Christ. Isn't that crazy? If we actually focused on that, you wouldn't need five hundred ministries to fan your flesh to make you think you're doing something spiritual. That will keep you busy enough, don't you think? Amen. It's all here! But you haven't asked for it.

This isn't something that's about, "Look at me where I'm at." This is a message about what? Realizing. Realization. It's not something else that we need. It's something else we need to realize. God's given us everything that we need, but we're not here. He's given us everything that

we need, but it's just a little too far for us, isn't it? He's asking us to go just a little too far. He's given us everything that we need, but we haven't asked for it. Are you going to do that today?

VIII. Conclusion and Call to Action

This is the message that hits us all. I don't know where you're at today. Let's have every head bowed and every eye closed. I don't know where you're at. Maybe you're sitting here today, and the Lord God's convicted you, and you don't know for sure where you're going when you die. Maybe you're sitting here right now, and if God were to stop your heart, you'd have to take your last breath. You don't know where you would end up, man. That is not okay, and that is not where God wants you. The Bible says Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. If you're a sinner, if you're like me, He does not want you to die with that sin on you. Praise God that you've realized it, or have you? Do you see yourself as a sinner? Are you good enough to get into heaven? What are you going to say to a holy, righteous God that's going to impress Him so much that He looks over all the faults, all the sin you've ever done in your life, and says, "Oh my gosh, that's good. Come on into heaven with Me. Enter into the joy of My kingdom"? What are you going to say to God? I'm going to say one thing: Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, there's just something about that name. See? Do you have that name today? Have you called on Jesus Christ? Have you asked Him to take His blood and wash away your sin? Have you trusted in what He did for you on the cross to get to heaven, or are you trusting in something else? Are you trusting in your attendance and your proximity to the Father's House? Are you trusting in the fact that you've been around church so long that naturally God would just, He's got to just kind of see me as one of His folks now, right? Don't go out of here like that today.

I want to know, is there someone in here I can pray for? Is there someone in here that doesn't know for sure? Every head's bowed, every eye's closed. Is there someone in here that wants to raise their hand and say, "Zach, pray for me. I don't want to drop dead right now and go into hell forever"? That's what's going to happen. There's not this thing about where do we go, what happens, and all that stuff like that. It's either heaven or it's hell, folks. That might come as a shock nowadays because we can't say that word anymore, but that's what God said. That's what the Bible says. If you're here today and you don't know for sure where you're going when you die, raise your hand, and we'll pray for you. Amen. We'll see it out there. God does not want you to die with that sin on you. Jesus Christ came down here. The Bible says, "For this is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." Don't die with that sin on your heart today.

Heavenly Father, if there's someone here today that knows that they don't know for sure where they're going, Lord, I pray and ask that they would come up here after this message is over with, Lord, and get that thing settled, get it taken care of. Lord, don't let the devil win. Don't let the devil let them sink down when they take their last breath with that heavy burden on them, Heavenly Father, that burden of unforgiven sin. Lord, I thank You for the work that You did on Calvary, how that You shed Your blood so that we can be washed whiter than snow. We trust that You accomplished that in Jesus' name. Keep everybody's heads bowed and every eye closed.

Now to you that are saved in here today, my question to you is, will you ask Him? If you've been in church all your life, even if you haven't been all your life, if you're here today and you lost that joy, will you ask God to give you fulfillment and satisfaction in His things and stop trying to look for it in the world's things? That's okay. Naturally, we're not like that. Absolutely. I'm more excited about my truck, the next video game I'm going to get, where I'm going to go eat. That's my natural state. Absolutely. Okay. We've been honest about it. Now let's ask Him, "Lord, would You start to transition me out of that? Make Your things more desirable. Make my true affection and joy only be satisfied in Your Word and praying and esteeming others better than myself and doing the work of the ministry." He'll do it. The Bible says, "If we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him."

Guys, I love this church. This thing has made my life worth living. What God has done through Pastor Bob in establishing this, it's been the greatest thing that's ever happened to me. But don't let that thing die out by becoming the older brother. Don't be at home but in the world. I trust that each and every one of you that are serious about this thing, you'll join your heart with me and pray for our kids as we head into camp this year. This world's getting more and more crummy, man. Pray for these kids. The devil's going to be coming after them harder and harder and harder. Pray that they start having that same desire to be more excited about God's things than the things in the world. Pray for their realization that it's all here and there's nothing out there for them. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray and ask this. Amen. All right, guys, you're dismissed. Amen.