

IS HE WORTH IT?

WHAT DOES YOUR LIFE SAY?

John 15:1-27 ESV

- Some of the men were together last night talking about being the same man at church and at work.
- The question underneath the whole weekend is not mainly, “How do I share the Gospel better?” It is: Is Jesus worth it?

Is Jesus worth it when following Him costs you something, obedience is uncomfortable, or He puts His finger on something you do not want to release?

- The Gospel can be presented like a trade: give up the life you want here, endure a hard life, and trade it for a great eternity later.
 - Allowance / retirement illustration: that does not help an eight-year-old understand why the sacrifice is good now.
- Salvation is more than escaping hell. Hell and judgment are real, but the Gospel is bigger than “turn or burn.”

The Gospel is the good news that through Jesus Christ sinners are reconciled to God. Christ does not merely give us a better destination later. He brings us to God NOW.

THE TO-DO-LIST

- Christianity can get reduced to: clean up your language, be a better spouse, read more, pray more, witness more, try harder.
- That produces one of two things:
 - Pride in the person who thinks he is pulling it off.
 - Exhaustion and guilt in the person who knows he is not.

The Christian life is not an unchanged heart learning how to do right.

- Jesus lived the life we have not lived, died under the judgment our sin deserved, and rose defeating sin and death.
- Through faith in Him, sinners are forgiven and brought to God. The life He gives works from the inside out.

1. LIFE COMES BEFORE FRUIT

John 15:1-11

ABIDE: LIFE COMES FIRST

- Jesus does not begin with a list. He begins with Himself.

Fruit does not make the branch alive. Fruit shows that there is life in the branch.

- Abide means to dwell, put your trust in, and remain in Christ.
- The temptation is to try to produce fruit while omitting the only One who can produce it.
- Father illustration: “I don’t want to bother God with that, so I’ll take care of it.”

- That is where self-reliance gets us in trouble. He wants us to come to Him for everything.

God's grace comes first. And our hope is only in Christ.

- Grace keeps us from pride when we are doing well and despair when we fail.

PRUNING: THE FATHER IS STILL WORKING

- The Father prunes the branch that is already alive and already bearing fruit so it may bear more.
- Pruning is not condemnation. If you are in Christ, Jesus has already borne the condemnation your sin deserved.

Romans 8:28

None of what you are going through is meaningless. God is working even this for your good.

JOY: WHAT JESUS WANTS FOR US

- After abiding, obedience, and pruning, Jesus says His purpose includes our joy being full.

John 15:11

- We are made to want joy, but we often trade true joy for a cheap knockoff.

Psalms 16:11

Jesus Christ is the only One who can truly satisfy us.

2. THE FRUIT OF CHRIST'S LIFE BECOMES VISIBLE

John 15:12-17

LOVE WE CANNOT PRODUCE ON OUR OWN

- The first fruit Jesus points to is love not ordinary love, but love "as I have loved you."
- That takes us right back to "Apart from me you can do nothing."

The first fruit Jesus puts in front of us is something we cannot produce without Him.

- His love serves, gives, tells the truth, is patient, and ultimately lays itself down.

HE CALLS US FRIENDS

- The Creator of the universe looks at people like us and says, "I have called you friends."
- He knows every failure, weakness, regret, and place where we still need to change.

There is nothing about you He is going to find out tomorrow and He still calls you His friend.

HE CHOSE US AND APPOINTED US

- Some of us feel God can use everybody else, but probably not us.
- Jesus knew exactly who He was choosing. He did not overlook your weakness or miss your past.

He knew. And He chose you.

- He appoints His people to bear fruit, and that life begins showing up in how we love other people.

WHAT THIS LOVE LOOKS LIKE IN REAL LIFE

- At home: how I speak to my wife when tired, respond to my children when frustrated, and treat people who are hard to love.
- The first place Christ's fruit may need to become more visible is not at work. It may be at home.
- Christians still fail. The difference is what grace teaches us to do when we fail.
 - Own it. Stop hiding or blaming. Ask forgiveness. Make it right where you can.

FAILURE, REPENTANCE, AND OUR WITNESS

- When people were asked what causes them to doubt Christian beliefs, hypocrisy was the top response among the groups discussed in the sermon.
- Have we become more concerned with keeping up a Christian image than actually walking with Christ?
- One clear way Christ's fruit shows up is that we stop pretending: own failure, repent, and make things right.

The world doesn't need us acting like we never get it wrong. They need to see what grace looks like when we do.

3. BELONGING TO CHRIST WILL NOT ALWAYS BE APPLAUDED

John 15:18-21

Following Him does not mean a painless life. And it does not mean a cost-free life.

PRUNING VS. OPPOSITION

- Pruning is the Father working in us. Opposition is the world pushing back because we belong to Christ.

Jesus never promised us a life with no pain and no cost.

THE COST QUESTION

- For many of us, especially where we live, persecution can feel foreign. Other believers have lost jobs, homes, freedom, family, and lives for Christ.
- Jesus is not asking us to compare suffering. His words should make us examine ourselves.

If following Jesus doesn't cost me anything or hasn't really put me out of step with the world, have I become too comfortable here?

Have I learned how to keep enough of Jesus, and still fit in?

- Do not go looking for trouble. Not every Christian will experience the same suffering.
- But obedience may cost approval, being left out, a friendship, trouble at work, an opportunity, or far more.

Is Jesus worth it when following Him costs me something?

Philippians 3:8

That is the answer: not pretending the cost is small, but seeing Christ as worth it.

4. THE HELPER COMES

John 15:26–27

- Recap the chapter: abide, fruit, love, opposition and now Jesus says help is coming.

WHY THE SPIRIT'S PRESENCE SHOULD CHANGE US

- Scary-movie illustration: Hollywood is not our demonology textbook, but the picture makes one point when a powerful presence takes over, the change is noticeable.
- A demon is a created, finite being. How much more should we anticipate from someone filled with the Holy Spirit of God?

ROMANS 8: WHAT THE HOLY SPIRIT DOES FOR US

- Sets us free from the power of sin and death. Romans 8:2
- Gives us a new mindset and new desires. Romans 8:5–6
- Dwells in us. Romans 8:9
- Gives spiritual life to us. Romans 8:10
- Guarantees resurrection life. Romans 8:11
- Empowers us to kill sin. Romans 8:13
- Leads us. Romans 8:14
- Gives us confidence that we really belong to God. Romans 8:16
- Helps us in our weakness. Romans 8:26
- Helps us pray when we do not even know what to pray. Romans 8:26
- Intercedes for us according to God's will. Romans 8:27

5. “YOU ALSO WILL BEAR WITNESS”

John 15:27

MONDAY MORNING: THIS IS OUR MINISTRY TOO

- When we hear “ministry,” we often picture an evangelist, overseas missionary, or pastor.
- Inviting someone to church or giving them the pastor's number can be good, but our job is not merely to get people close enough for the pastor to take over.

Ephesians 4:11-12

The pastor equips us, and then we go.

THE BADGE: GOD HAS GIVEN US ACCESS

- Your pastor can teach and equip you on Sunday, but Monday morning he does not have your badge.
- He cannot walk through the security gate on your job-site. But they let you through.
- God has given every believer access somewhere: job-site, hospital, school, factory, office, shop.

YOUR WORKPLACE IS YOUR MISSION FIELD

Your mission field IS where you are going tomorrow morning.

- Missionary / visa illustration:
 - In a restricted country a missionary may learn a trade so the country will let him in.

- He gets a job, builds real relationships, and waits for God to open a door to share Christ.
- How is that fundamentally different from the place God has already put us except we do not have to fear jail for sharing the Gospel?
- God is sovereign and has placed you in a particular spot. Are you doing your part?
- Machines worth millions will one day be scrap metal.

The people standing beside them are eternal.

Have you left your mission field without a missionary?

- Do not force every conversation or make every interaction awkward.

Colossians 4:2-6

- Pray for an open door. Pay attention. When God opens one, make Christ clear. Speak with grace.
- Open doors often come when somebody's marriage is falling apart, a diagnosis scares them, or the joker finally says, "Man, I am not doing very good."
- We do not know every answer or understand every situation, but we know where true peace and joy are found.

All I am is simply one sinner who needed mercy telling another sinner where mercy can be found.

JOHN 15 RECAP

- Abide in Christ. His life produces the fruit.
- That fruit shows up in love, repentance, and change.
- We keep following when it costs because He is worth it.
- The Helper comes. The Spirit bears witness about Christ.
- And Jesus says: "And you also will bear witness."

CLOSE: IS JESUS WORTH IT?

- Close the weekend where it started: Is Jesus worth it?
- Do not let your words or opinions answer last. Let the Holy Word of God answer.
- **Philippians 3:7-10**