The Fruit of the Faithful

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 18 February 2024

Preacher: Dr. Michael Staton

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang. Thank you for joining us.!

There are a few things I'd like to take just a brief moment and draw your attention to. One, inside of your bulletin you see a sheet, an insert that says Deacon Recommendations.
Our church for the next three weeks will be going through a process of asking you as a congregation to recommend men to serve on our Deacon body. On the front side of that form you see just a brief summary of our Deacon ministry along with the biblical qualifications and the expectations.
that our church has for those servants. On the back of that form you see some areas of emphasis that our Deacon ministry would serve in along with the 21 men who currently serve as Deacons in our church.
We would invite you as a congregation to recommend up to three men that you think would be faithful servants for us to be added to our Deacon body.
[1:13] You can recommend one or two or up to three. And then right out here in this lobby at our ministry connection you'll see a drop basket there where you can put this form and turn that in and recommend up to three men.

Just a quick note. We go over this in our new members class for those who are new to our church. But just to remind each of you, biblically deacons are servants.
They are a group of men who serve the church, who look for ways to be the hands and feet of Christ to those that are in need. And our Deacons at our church here for years have been faithful servants.
These are men who are active in ministry and just help us to strive to meet the physical, tangible needs of our body. Depending on where you come from, you may come from a church family where the deacons ran the church or a church where the deacons were power hungry men or a church where deacons didn't really even come that faithfully.
They just kind of showed up to do what they do from time to time. That's not what we have here at our church. We have faithful, godly men who love the Lord Jesus Christ, who love this church, who all actively serve and seek to do no more than to bring honor to Christ by strengthening the families of our church by service and ministry.
[2:53] These are good, good men. And just as our church has grown, we have the need to add to that deacon body. So take this form, think through it, read through it, pray through it.

And you've got the next three Sundays to respond by recommending men to serve in that role. This process will take us several months. It is a slow, deliberate process when we add men to our deacon body.
And so this process won't be completed until probably the end of May. But the first step in it is to give you as church members the opportunity to recommend men.
And so any member of our church can participate in doing that. Let me also remind the ladies of our church this Tuesday. We've got our ladies' night of theology.
It will be Tuesday night in here from 630 to 830. As always, any lady of any age is welcome to join us for that night. If you're able to come, help us to spread the word.
[3:57] Invite friends of yours and family members of yours that you think would enjoy an evening of study and fellowship. We have such a great time when we do these throughout the year.

And so that's this Tuesday. Let me invite the men in our church, as the Lord would allow you to do so, to pray for those who would be gathered here on Tuesday night.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

One of the things that is very important is that we are a praying people. And you know that Tuesday night we're going to have hundreds of ladies in here seeking to learn more about the Lord.
And so gentlemen, your role this week can be to pray, if you would, for the ladies who will be here. The Lord would honor that night. One last thing I want to share with you is, you've heard me say most each week of this new year, to remind you that we're reading through the Bible as a church. Many of us are doing the same Bible reading plan. And as I keep saying, if you haven't started that, or if you started and got behind, it's never too late to start reading with us.
[5:02] It's always a good week to start that practice. So even if you haven't done any of it, or even if you made it through Genesis, and you once again read the creation account, and that's all you got, it's not too late to jump back in.

Now, I particularly bring this up today, because if you're following along with our reading plan, today, we're starting a new book of the Bible to read.
And it's the book of Leviticus. Now, some of you say, well, that's a strange book to give this commercial to start. However, here's what I know. Many, many, many in this room have started a read through the Bible plan at some point in their Christian life.
And many of those soldiers did not make it through Leviticus. You've read Genesis. You're very familiar with Abraham, and Noah, and Joseph.
You've read Exodus. You're very familiar with Pharaoh, and Moses, and the burning bush. And you're vaguely familiar with Leviticus, because that's where your check mark stopped on your read through plan.
[6:16] Leviticus is a challenging book. It's a book that seems a bit strange to our ears today. However, it's an important book of the Bible.

We're going to be in Leviticus for eight days, so it's just about a week that we're in Leviticus. But for so many, you've tried to read through the Bible in the past, and this is the book that got you.
This is a perfect day to jump in and start reading through the Bible with us, and maybe make it through an entire book that you may have never read in its totality.
There's a lot of detail. There's a lot of information there that at first glance you say, I'm not sure what to do with this. But just to remind you, every single day through our reading, I'm recording 15-ish minute videos that go along with the reading and trying every day through the entire year to help bring some application to what we're reading.
And so for the next eight days, I'm reading it with you and striving to try to shepherd and help you to think through what does this mean for us today? In light of the New Testament, what do we do?
[7:30] How do we apply? What's our takeaways from the book of Leviticus? I've already recorded and done the video early this morning for Leviticus 1, 2, 3, and 4.

That's already out there for you. So I just want to invite you to join with us. And even though Leviticus may seem like a strange book for you to start reading with us, I think it's a great day to do it.
It's a brand new book of the Bible to start day one with and maybe be a help in some application for you for some things that perhaps you've not read before or thought through.
So let me invite you to consider joining with us today. Those reading plans are still at the Ministry Connection. Reading plan is still online on our website. And so let me give you that encouragement and invitation to join with us.
We'll turn with me again, if you would, to Mark chapter 11. As we continue our study through the gospel of Mark, we have entered into the Passion Week this last week leading into the life of Jesus.
[8:33] Jesus has been looking toward Jerusalem. His life has been headed for Jerusalem for a very specific purpose. If you'll look with me in chapter 10, let me just remind you of the very words of Jesus.

He spoke of why he's going to Jerusalem. It says in verse 33, See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man, that's Christ, will be delivered over to the chief priests and the scribes, and they will condemn him to death and deliver him over to the Gentiles.
And they will mock him and spit on him and flog him and kill him. And after three days, he will rise.
This is what everything's been leading toward. This is the purpose for which he has come. He tells us plainly in verse 45 of chapter 10, For even the Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

So that's what everything's pointing toward. Everything in the gospel, everything in this book is all building to this crescendo of Jesus going to the cross where he will be a ransom and pay the price for our sin.
[10:04] Now, along the way in this journey, in these final days leading up to what we call the triumphal entry of Christ going into Jerusalem, there was one question that was asked two times before the triumphal entry.

Two different times, Jesus said to someone, What do you want me to do for you? Two different times, you had someone coming to Jesus asking for something, and he asked the exact same question two different times.
Verse 36 in chapter 10, he says to James and John, What do you want me to do for you? And a little bit later in chapter 10, verse 51, for the blind man named Bartimaeus, verse 51, he said to him, What do you want me to do for you?
So as they're making their way up to Jerusalem for the purpose of laying down his life as a sacrifice for our sin, James and John say, We have a request, and Jesus says, What do you want me to do for you?
And their request that we've already studied in detail is they want notoriety. When you come into your kingdom, can we sit on your right and your left? Can we have first place?
[11:26] It's a strange question to ask on the heels of Jesus saying, I'm on my way to lay down my life as a payment for sin. The next time he asks that question is right before the triumphal entry, and he's passing through Jericho, and we meet a man named Bartimaeus, and Bartimaeus is told that Jesus is passing by.

He's blind, so he can't see, but he hears the sound of footsteps, and someone tells him it's Jesus who's passing by, and Bartimaeus, who believes in Jesus, says in verse 51, Here's what I'd like you to do for me.
Let me recover my sight. Now, it's an interesting request he makes because he's a beggar. His request he makes of everybody else is for money, for change.
It's his only way to eat. It's his only way to live. The one request he has of everybody is for money, but something is different when he meets Jesus because he knows Jesus is different.
He has faith in Jesus to do what nobody else can do, which is why he asked of Jesus what he wouldn't ask of anybody else, Can you restore my sight?
[12:41] And Jesus, knowing his heart, speaks to that in verse 52. He says, Go your way. Your faith has made you well. And that shows us that when people look at Jesus, even among the religious people, people sometimes look to Christ in faith.

They sometimes look to Christ to simply give them what they want for purely selfish reasons. Some ask in faith, which the Lord blesses.
Others ask for motives short of honoring the Lord, which the Lord does not bless. And all of these different thoughts are going on, even as Jesus is making his way up to Jerusalem.
And I mention all of that just to say that even this morning, as we're gathered in here, I'm very aware there are all kinds of different thoughts on your heart and thoughts on your mind and all kinds of people here that have different views of Jesus.
Some who love him and want to serve him. Others who are still perhaps trying to get Jesus to be conformed into your image and just do for you whatever you want him to do.
[14:11] Others who are wondering about the truth. Others who maybe don't care about the truth. Just as Jesus is walking through preaching the gospel, he's going to lay down his life.

There are all kinds of responses to that. And the same thing is true, no doubt, even in our sanctuary today. All kinds of different responses to Jesus.
He then begins this, what we call the Passion Week. Latin word meaning suffering. It's the last week of his life leading up to his crucifixion.
He's going to ride into Jerusalem, in so doing, fulfill part of the prophecy of the Old Testament of what Messiah would do. Just another way to show he is indeed the Son of God.
And when he gets into town, he's going to go straight to the temple. The place of worship. And he goes to the temple, chapter 11, verse 11 tells us, and he looked around at everything.
[15:18] He took it all in. What he sees is not good. He sees people there who are cheating others and robbing others and taking advantage of people.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

He sees spiritual leaders who are supposed to be shepherds, but instead are thieves. And he takes it in. He looks around. He observes it all.
It's late. He's going to go to Bethany where he'll spend the night. The next morning, he's going back to the temple.
He's going to deal with what he saw the evening before. We looked last week at the cursing of the fig tree, which was a picture of judgment.
You take that picture there of the fig tree, and then he goes to the temple itself, which was the place of judgment. And there at the temple, he deals in detail with all that's going on.
[16:24] We looked at this in a lengthy way last Sunday morning. We won't go back through all of it, but just remember, Jesus is dealing specifically with two things. One is what's called the money changers, who is these people who are ripping people off as they're exchanging their currency.

The other, these who are selling sacrifices at ridiculous profits, none of it with a heart of worship, all of it with a heart to get themselves wealthy.
Jesus then draws upon the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah, and says, this is the temple. This is God's house. This is supposed to be a light to the nations.
And yet the leaders were nothing more than thieves, as he called them in verse 17, that they were a den of robbers.
And then he takes this scene, which would just be the most amazing thing to witness. In this large place that would be able to have probably a quarter of a million people present, talking and buying and selling and exchanging and loud noises of people and conversations and animals and the authority of Jesus on display like you've never seen before.
[17:52] And Jesus steps forward and in front of this massive crowd of people, he shuts the whole operation down. down. An unbelievable display of authority takes place in verses 15 to 19.

Evening comes, verse 19, they go out of the city once again to sleep. Verse 20, as they pass by in the morning. So now we're the next day.
So they rode into town, he went to the temple, watched it, went back home, slept. Got up the next morning, cursed the fig tree, went to the temple, cleansed it, drove him out, went back out of town, slept.
It's the third day now of that week. And what's going to happen now in the Gospel of Mark is a very detailed look at this third day.
here from chapter 11, verse 20, all the way through the rest of chapter 11, all of chapter 12, all of chapter 13, and the first couple of verses of chapter 14 are all this one long day.
[19:14] He'll go to Jerusalem, he'll go back to the temple, he'll battle with the Sadducees, he'll be confronted by a lawyer, he will give warnings to the scribes and the Pharisees, he will observe a widow's offering, he will teach in parables, all on this very long day.

We get started here in verse 21. Peter remembered and said to him, Rabbi, look, the fig tree that you cursed has withered. That's what happened yesterday.
Verse 22, and Jesus answered them and said, have faith in God. Truly I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, be taken up and thrown into the sea and does not doubt in his heart, but believe that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.
Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours. And whenever you stand praying, forgive.
If you have anything against anyone so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses. It's a very interesting dynamic that right on the heels of Jesus cursing the fig tree and right on the heels of the day before, Jesus driving out the money changers and those who are selling animals, Jesus brings the whole temple exchange, what was known as the Bazaar of Annas, the former high priest, shutting all of that down.
[20:50] Right on the heels of that, the next morning, they pass by the way, Peter sees the fig tree that had been cursed the day before, notices it's completely withered, and Jesus now takes this opportunity to teach them about prayer.

prayer. Which I think is a very instructive thing for us. That just a couple of days now before the crucifixion, Jesus knows what he has prophesied three times in Mark, it's been recorded, that he's prophesied he's going to die, lay down his life as a payment for our sin.
He's already said he's going to be raised back to life. He's going to appear to a number of witnesses for a few days, a couple of weeks, and then he's going to ascend.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

He's going back to heaven. And what the apostles, and by extension, those who are followers of Christ, what we must have is a clear, precise doctrine of prayer, because this becomes not only our great defense, prayer is also our great weapon of power.
They're not going to have Jesus physically with them much longer. What they are going to have is the sending of the Holy Spirit and access to the throne of God through prayer.
[22:23] And so as Jesus is taking these final couple of days right before the crucifixion, he is making sure that his followers know very important things about how to be strong.

And the answer is not for them to be strong in themselves. The answer is for them to be strong in prayer. That same thing is still true for us today.
Your greatest defense is prayer and your greatest weapon of strength is prayer.
The greatest thing you can do for your children is pray for them. The greatest thing you can do for your grandchildren is pray for them specifically.
The greatest thing you can do for your church is pray for your church. And even right just a couple of days before Christ goes to the cross, he wants to make sure his disciples understand how important prayer truly is.
[23:48] Churches will often do a lot of things. Christians will do a lot of things. Christians will teach, they'll study, they will read, they will give. faith. But what so many Christians are so slow to do is truly pray.

And Jesus reminds his people in light of the crucifixion that prayer is our greatest defense and our greatest weapon of power.
And he tells them that they are to believe. He tells them that they are to forgive.
Forgiveness is very purposefully linked with our power in prayer. We see that in verse 25.
Whenever you stand praying, forgive.
We're to be forgiving people. The way we forgive others speaks a lot about what we believe the Lord has done for us. And so what would Jesus teach his people, his followers, in light of the cross, what would he want them to know in these final days?
[25:12] Well, if you're taking notes, I want to give you a few things. And we're going to look at some this week and we're going to look at the ending of it next Sunday, Lord willing. But if you're taking notes, write down this first.

Have faith in God. Have faith in God. We see this in verse 22. I'm taking straight from the words of Jesus here. Jesus answered them, have faith in God.
When you pray, we pray from a position of faith in God. We saw this in Bartimaeus. He prayed, he asked the Lord believing with faith in what Christ could do.
Which tells us, friends, that ritual and routine are not the answer. We must pray with genuine, authentic faith. And when we think about faith, I want you to think in this way.
Faith is confidence in the promises of God, which means his word. When we pray, we pray having confidence in his promises that we know through his word.
[26:25] And secondly, that faith is confidence in the divine will of God, which speaks of his character. So when you think of prayer, we start by saying we need to have faith in God.

What would that mean for us? Well, these two things. We have faith in his word, and we have faith in his character. So we want to pray in accordance with his word, that's the Bible.
And secondly, we want to pray in accordance with his divine will, his character. Now, here's the reality. There are some parts of God's will that we know, and we know it because it's been revealed to us.
But that's the first part of it that we pray with confidence in his word. That's what we know. There are other parts of God's divine will that we don't know. If you're 14, you don't know who you're going to marry yet.
If you're 16, you don't know what your career is going to be yet. If you're newly married, you don't know how many children you're going to have.
[27:39] Zero, two, six, you don't know. If you're 45 and working, you don't know how long you're going to work and what the future holds.

You don't know when you're going to take your last breath. The Lord does. Your days are numbered by him, by his will, but you don't know what that is.
What you do know is his character, that he is a God who is sovereign, a God who is good, a God who is wise, and so when we pray, we look to his word and pray according to his word, and we look

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

to his character as we pray, trusting in things that we may not yet know.
We don't want to pray selfish prayers, we don't want to pray worldly things that would just make us look good, we want to pray in a way that shows we have faith in God, that we know and believe his word, and that we trust in his character.
Now, remember, anytime you're reading the Bible, you read it in its context, so whatever you're reading, it always matters what came right before it, you always want to know what comes right after it, so remember, as Jesus is teaching here on prayer, all of this is right coming right after this episode of cursing the fig tree and cleansing the temple.
[29:13] Now, what were the lessons of the fig tree? Well, the fig tree we looked at last week, the tree represented Israel, the leaves, there were leaves on the tree, it looked good, it looked full, it looked pretty, and that's all of the religious ceremonies and the religious rituals.

the problem was there was no fruit on the fig tree, and that fruit is a picture of genuine faith. The root of all fruit is our faith in God.
He then curses the fig tree, that's a picture of judgment, and the withering of the fig tree was the result of God's judgment.
Right on the heels of that, he teaches his followers about prayer, and he starts by saying, have faith in God.
Meaning, if you go to the temple without faith in God, he's not pleased. If you offer sacrifices without faith in God, he's not pleased.
[30:28] pleased. If you go through these long prayers to sound pious and holy and religious and impressive, and you don't have faith in God, he's not pleased.

And so he tells his followers that what he's just done in cursing the fig tree and in cleansing the temple is because he was dealing with a people that were deeply religious, but we're not relying on God.
And the same thing can happen today. You go to church because you think that obligates God to give you something. We give an offering because we think that obligates God to give us something in return.
And we can so quickly turn our worship into something that just becomes manipulation, and the Lord says to his followers, here's where real worship starts.
Faith in God. You can sing songs in church and not have faith. You can listen to somebody preach and not have faith.
[31:43] You can take notes and not have faith. You can learn names and dates and history and not have faith. And Jesus says, make sure if you want to have power in your life, you have faith in God.

It's a great hymn. Some of you would remember from a long time ago. Have faith in God, he's on his throne. Have faith in God, he watches or his own.
He cannot fail, he must prevail. Have faith in God, have faith in God. God. This is the very teaching of Jesus to his people.
So let me just ask you an honest question. When you open your Bible and read it, are you reading with a heart of faith?
When you pray, are you praying to the Lord with a heart of faith? When you serve the Lord and you seek to serve others, are you doing so because you want recognition?
[32:54] Are you doing so because you think it earns you points with God? Or do you truly have faith that God is doing, through your prayer, through your service, powerful things that only God can do?

See, here's the problem. If you become religious without faith in God, then all of your hope is in yourself. Your strength, your teaching, your ministry, your power.
And that's the exact same thing happening in the temple. Deeply religious people going through all the religious motions apart from faith.
Hebrews 11, 6 tells us, without faith, it is impossible to please God.
So you connect all these dots, and from this one simple phrase in verse 22, have faith in God, it's telling us that's where the power comes from, that's what the purpose of all things is, and this is how you please God.
[34:10] because without it, it is impossible to please Him. Number one, have faith in God.
Number two, his second word of instruction is believe and do not doubt.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

Believe and do not doubt. Verse 23, truly I say to you, whoever says this mountain be taken up and thrown into the sea and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will come to pass, it will be done for him.
So Jesus here uses hyperbole to show that faith in God is more powerful than any earthly resource we have.
This was, in Jesus' day, a proverbial statement. It was a common understanding that to speak of moving mountains was to speak of doing the impossible.
It's a figure of speech. And Jesus uses this common, well-known figure of speech to say, if you want to have power that you don't have by yourself, if you want God to do what only God can do, then have faith in God, and then secondly, when you pray, believe and do not doubt because God can do things that you on your own could never do.
[35:39] Have faith in God, believe, and do not doubt. Now, this same idea is restated for us later in the New Testament.

James chapter 1, you don't have to turn there, but just make note of it. James chapter 1, verses 5 to 8, where James says, if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.
But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt. For the man who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. He is a double-minded man, unstable in all of his ways.
What James is telling us here is that when you pray, you must believe. Believe in what? Believe in what we've already looked at, his word, and his character.
I want to believe that what God has said in his word is true. I also want to believe when I pray that his character is faithful. So when I'm praying for things I can't know the answer for, what I can rest in is the character of God and that God has chosen to so arrange things that some things come to pass simply because God's people pray.
[37:06] Now, when we pray, we all need wisdom. In fact, praying without wisdom is a dangerous thing. So James 1 says, if anyone lacks wisdom, let him ask of God.

And when he asks, he must believe and not doubt. God. Where did James get that? It's the exact words of Jesus in Mark 11.
This is the consistent teaching of the New Testament. That God's people are to pray, that we are to have faith in God, and we are to believe and not doubt.
I don't know when the Lord's returning. That's a secret thing. Deuteronomy 29, 29 says that the secret things belong to the Lord, the things revealed are for us.
There are some things that I know Christ is returning. There are some things I don't know. When is he coming back? So what I want to do is as a believer, I pray.
[38:19] I pray for the Lord's return. I pray for the church to be ready for his return. I pray for my own heart to be ready for his return. I pray for my family to be ready for the Lord's return.

And I don't know when it's happening. But I do know his word that promises he will, and I do know his character, and I know that his return is consistent with what he's revealed he's going to do, but I don't know when it's going to be.
So when I pray, I want to have faith in God, his word, his purposes, and I want to believe and not doubt. Now what we sometimes think to ourselves is that we need to know all the answers to be able to trust God.
No you don't, because you are not God. And so we pray, believing in him. And so when you come to the Lord in prayer, Jesus says, have faith in God, believe and do not doubt, and then thirdly, ask in prayer.
That's verse 24. Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received and it will be yours.
[39:45] We need to ask. We pray. our prayer must be consistent with his word and consistent with his character. Consistent with what he's revealed, acknowledging there are things in his divine will that we cannot know.

I don't know who's going to be the president of the United States in two years. I don't know what our economy is going to look like in four years.
here's what I do know. God is on his throne building his church, working all things together for our good, and will one day call all things to their appointed end.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

That's what I do know. And I don't need to let what I can't know stop me from being faithful in what I do know. And I want to every single day take my mind and take my heart and reorient them around the centrality of the purposes and the plan of God.
And that happens as God's people pray. So when you pray, there are two things I want you to make sure are true of your heart.
[41:08] Number one, that when you pray, you have complete confidence in God's power, and secondly, you have complete surrender to God's will.

Complete confidence in God's power and complete surrender to God's will. Now just think with me for a minute about this.
Complete confidence God's power, complete surrender to His will. If you pray with complete confidence, but no surrender, then your prayers are going to be selfish and worldly.
Conversely, if you pray with full surrender to His will, but no confidence in His power, then your prayers will just be some religious ceremony you do to go through the motions without any faith or trust.
Which goes against the very first thing Jesus just taught us about prayer, that we are to have faith in God, believe, and not doubt.
[42:37] So we pray with complete confidence in God's power and complete surrender to God's will. Now next Sunday we're going to say more about those things and how do we pray in complete surrender to His will.

We'll look at even more detail of why forgiveness is such an important part of our own prayer life.
But I want you to think with me about one last thing this morning.
and that is that this teaching that we've looked at this morning happens the day after Jesus went to the temple and put a stop to it.
Which tells us that it's very possible to be active and engaged in religious things and yet not be right with God.
That was true in Jesus' day and that's true in our day. that there are people who are trying to be good citizens hoping that somehow will earn them heaven.
[43:59] It doesn't. Or people hoping that if they're religious, go to church, sing the songs, give an offering, that will earn their way to heaven.

And it doesn't. That there are people who are striving to just find themselves and maybe if they do that, they'll be enough.
And it's not. There are people who go through life trying to say, maybe if compared to other people, I'm not as bad as they are, surely that will get me into heaven.
But remember, friends, that other sinners are not the standard by which we're judged. It's according to God's holiness. So if Jesus needs to give attention in his day that you can be religious and not right with God, certainly that's a word we must consider in our own day.
You can love your family. You can love your kids. You can love your grandparents. You can respect the work of the church.
[45:15] You can even be involved in the work of the church and not be right with God. What would Jesus' first word be to us about that?

We know because he told us. He would say, here's the answer. Have faith in God. faith in God. Not faith in a God. Not faith in yourself. Not faith in religion. Not faith in works.
Faith in God. Who demonstrated his love life. By sending his only son, Jesus Christ, who went to a cross.
Where he took upon himself our sin. And absorbed in his own body the wrath of God as a payment for your sin.
[46:18] That all who would believe in him would not perish but have everlasting life. Salvation is available because of the work of Jesus.

And for those who would believe in him, who would have faith in him, their sin is forgiven. But do please understand that as Jesus teaches these words, words that we've just studied today, that just the day before, there were as many as 250,000 people and he had to shut it all down because their worship was a mess.
The answer for heaven is not found simply in being busy, nor simply in being religious. It's found in belief, in the promises of God revealed in the person of Jesus Christ and being covered by his grace.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

So today, with all of my heart, I mean it when I tell you I am so glad you're here. God, I also need to make sure you're clear that just because you've come does not mean you're right with the Lord. Believe in him. Call upon his name. Repent and turn from your sin. Trust in the promises of God. [48:14] Believing that Jesus died and was raised back to life. And you will be saved. It's our hope in God.

It's God that we hope in, that we find our rest. Not our works, not our religion. salvation in the God of the Bible who gave his son Jesus.
That even you this day could find salvation. Lord, we do thank you for your word.
I pray that it would help us today. I pray that it would encourage us. I pray, Lord, that any who do not know you as Savior, that even this day they would consider what they have heard.
That even this day you would call them to, in a moment of honest prayer, acknowledge their sin, pleading for your grace, knowing that you are a God that still saves.
[49:25] It's in Christ's name. Amen. Before you're dismissed, let me remind you, as Jeremy mentioned earlier in our service tonight, it's a great night for our church. We resume our Sunday evening service.

We've been off for a few weeks while we're doing our growth seminars tonight. We start again our Sunday evening service at 5 o'clock right back in here. We're going to sing together as always. We'll pray together as always. Our adult choir will be back tonight. They're going to sing and lead us in worship. It's always a great time to do that on Sunday nights. I'm going to begin a new study through Psalm 23.
We'll spend the next six Sundays or so on Sunday nights looking at what it means to know the Lord is my shepherd. I think you'll be greatly encouraged. If your heart is just hurting at all, if you feel concerned or anxious, if you wonder how to live with hope, these next six Sunday evenings are just for you.
As we look at the sweet words of the psalmist that says, the Lord is my shepherd. Be back tonight if you at all can. Make evening worship a part of your day.
[50:35] Amen. Amen.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host