

5/3/20 - John 1:35-51 - "The Centrality of Christ"

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[0:00] I've been really encouraged by this entire series completely. I've been literally changed in my study time. I've read the Gospel of John before, and things are standing out that I hadn't seen before, and different components that are sticking out.

So I hope that the Lord speaks to us today. I trust that He will in His Word. And as you guys get turned to John 1, chapter 1, verse 35 through 51, I want to kind of stir up some thoughts of where we're going today.

And there is a man named Mordecai Ham. Maybe you haven't heard of him, maybe some have. Ham once preached a revival, a little crusade down in Charlotte, North Carolina, back in 1934. And this specific time, obviously, when you're preaching at a revival, a specific evangelistic event, there's a lot of prep work that goes into it.

There's a lot of time and prayer involved with it, all focused on serving the Lord faithfully. Unknowing, on this specific day, Mordecai Ham would have the honor of transforming one of the most influential Christians of our day, of my day, maybe specifically, arguably.

[1:26] There's always an argument to be made of that. But sitting in the crusade of this revival was no other than young Billy Graham sitting there.

And Billy Graham hadn't been a Christian. While many haven't heard of Mordecai Ham, maybe you've heard of Billy Graham. I hope we all have. Ham's influence became so significant in his preparation, in his time in prayer, that it led to the salvation of this young, well-known pastor, known as America's pastor, Billy Graham.

He passed away in 2018. This, because of the dedicated efforts of Mordecai Ham, all the time of serving the Lord faithfully, led to this young man who would soon preach to 215 million people, over 180 countries Billy Graham had preached at.

All because of one man serving the Lord fervently. Just as any healthy preacher getting into the pulpit, just as me today, we're completely dependent upon God.

But it's not on our own power, our own strength, the least bit. So, obviously, Ham was hopeful that his words would be fruitful, that the Lord would use his simple, dedicated efforts of serving the Lord to transform anybody.

[2:55] And on this day, it was Billy Graham. Church, simple, dedicated efforts of serving the Lord. And it was never about Mordecai Ham.

It was never about Billy Graham. It was about Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was central in this message. And so today, we're going to read about some similar examples of men who could not hold the gospel in.

Probably similar to Mordecai Ham and Billy Graham and many Christians of old. And once their lives had been changed by Jesus, the first thing that they could say to those closest to them was to come and see.

But the whole time, it was never about them. Jesus begins building an apostolic army here in these passages, in which an army begins to actually build upon itself.

Once one person encounters Jesus, that person goes and tells somebody else, and then that person comes to Jesus. Today, we'll see a couple different things in the text today.

[4:11] We are going to see discipleship. We're going to see calling and equipping. And we're going to also see skepticism and faith. So, let's take a look.

I'm going to read this whole passage in its entirety. And let's look at three different accounts of momentum and encounters of movements within Jesus' early days of ministry.

A time which was marked by wandering and lostness up until John the Baptist caused quite a scene. This time would divinely be directed and repurposed for God's glory.

And Jesus is the man in charge. So, let's turn with me to John 1, verse 35. We will continue in our text today all the way to 51.

Verse 35 says, The next day, again, John was standing with two of his disciples. And he looked at Jesus as he walked by and said, Behold, the Lamb of God.

[5 : 25] The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. Jesus turned and saw them following and said to them, What are you seeking?

And they said to him, Rabbi, which means teacher, Where are you staying? He said to them, Come, and you will see.

So they came and saw where he was staying, And they stayed with him that day, For it was about the tenth hour. One of the two who heard John speak And followed Jesus was Simon, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother.

The first found his own brother Simon, And said to him, We have found the Messiah, Which means Christ. He found him, Sorry, He brought him to Jesus.

Jesus looked at him and said, You are Simon, the son of John. You shall be called Cephas, Which means Peter. And the next day, Jesus decided to go to Galilee.

[6 : 38] He found Philip and said to him, Follow me. Now Philip was from Bethsaida, The city of Andrew and Peter.

Philip found Nathaniel and said to him, We have found him of whom Moses and the law, And also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, The son of Joseph.

Nathaniel said to him, Can anything good come out of Nazareth? Philip said to him, Come and see. Jesus saw Nathaniel coming toward him, And said to him, Behold, an Israelite indeed, In whom there is no deceit.

Nathaniel said to him, How do you know me? Jesus answered him, Before Philip called you, When you were under the fig tree, I saw you.

Nathaniel answered him, Rabbi, you are the son of God. You are the king of Israel. And Jesus answered him, Because I said to you, I saw you under the fig tree.

[7 : 45] Do you believe? You will see greater things than these. And he said to him, Truly, truly, I say to you, You will see heaven opened, And the angels of God ascending and descending On the son of man.

Let's pray. Father, as we enter your text today, And just thinking about What this means to us Today.

Father, let us not Move so far ahead In that mentality. Father, let us look at the, At John's intention, And how his original intention Has vital Means of implications And applications In our lives today. Father, let us steward your text well. Empower me, Father. Embolden me to preach with Power In truth Also in grace.

Help us all By the power of your Holy Spirit At this time. And we all pray this In Jesus' precious and holy name. Amen. Amen. So what we see here is Encounter one.

[9 : 06] Encounter one. The disciples, Two disciples Followed Jesus In verse 35. Just keep your Bibles open. Kind of how we do this At Youngstown Metro Is we have our Bibles open And our finger on the text Where we're at.

So keep your finger Look at with me At verse 35. In this short account We meet John the Baptist Again. The same guy Who was baptizing In the river.

And he said He said Behold the Lamb of God To his two disciples We meet the two disciples Two very close men Andrew And an anonymous disciple But we don't know Who the second disciple was Many scholars Scholars and theologians Have believed That this may have been The author of the book of John And obviously The significance Of their names Wasn't merely important To John The author of this book But instead It was something vital To point To Jesus Christ To point to Something greater than The author of the book I could go on and on With application In just that point In verse 35 But we could Probably understand That there was A unique bond Between John The Baptist And these two men That were close to him If you can imagine The unique relationships These men held These three men held

That of a discipling Relationship They probably had A profound bond Together That was so secure That even when they had Disagreements on On one thing Or another thing Of who's going to win This football game Or that football game They still were united In their relationship That God Jesus Christ Was central of And we see that He was central Of this relationship Between John the Baptist

And these two disciples Because upon Saying Behold The Lamb of God We see that The whole point There was no No hesitancy In this text These disciples Went after The object Of this relationship It wasn't until This day This third day That he shouted this And there Goes that relationship John the Baptist Left Alone And his two disciples Left to fellowship With Jesus Christ Look at that response Isn't that Tremendous This indicates Something huge That John the Baptist Discipled in such a way Which created A dependency Upon the Messiah Not him Not John the Baptist His aim His aim at discipling This entire time Is revealed In this simple account Here That one day He would Potentially say Goodbye To these men Behold the Lamb of God The one I'm teaching you about Go He's here Be with him This is precisely What occurred We see in Verse 38 And 39 Jesus sensed These two disciples Following him And it's kind of a Somewhat of a humorous scene Maybe in just my mind You kind of Think about These two guys Following Jesus And it says in the text That Jesus In verse 30 30 38 [12:41] Jesus turned And saw them following It kind of just Brings a picture Just like God-given Stalker sense Of when somebody's Following you You just Kind of look around Like who are these Two guys What are they doing But culturally speaking Their response Was a Cultural way Of a strong desire To learn more From him By inquiring of Jesus Where are you Staying This meant something Back then It kind of is like You're going to stay With this stranger You don't even know him You're taking John the Baptist Word for it The locust In Honeyloam Are you kidding me But They asked And inquired Where are you staying And in so saying We want to learn More about What you know Jesus Jesus Understanding their Intentions of that Cultural way Of saying it Invites them To come And see And these Three men Jesus

Andrew And presumably The author John Remained with Jesus That day And it was about Four o'clock In the afternoon It was getting late Which is the tenth Of the hour In their culture But what we have Here in this Short snapshot Of just five verses Church Is something That should be observed As biblical Discipleship Biblical Discipleship Which leads me To my first point This morning Jesus Is central In discipleship Jesus is central In discipleship I would tend To think Being in John's Shoes Having these Great relationships With these two Close men That Man I would Probably In my human Sense Hope that This lasts Forever That I love this So much I want this To continue It's so much

Fun I love teaching These guys They're learning So much From me I don't know What I'd do Without it I hope it Never ends That would be me And my Human frailty But John the Baptist Had a Christ-centric Approach To discipleship In this Relationship Which kind Of leads To something Important That discipleship Is seasonal There's a Seasonality In discipleship So for instance If you're Discipled By the same Person Your entire Life You're Robbing Yourself Essentially Of a dynamic Experience Of discipleship That God Can instill Within our Growth In Sanctification Of getting To know Him Or getting Complacent For that Matter Feeling So So dependent Upon The person Discipling You For instance And there's A tendency Of becoming The person Who's Discipling You There's almost A human Instinct I mean I never Thought that I'd pick up On my Wife's Mannerisms For instance In her Household But Like People will Talk to Beth Or talk To me And they'll Be like You said That just Like Beth Or they'll Say like Beth just Said something Like me We The longer We're Together We pick Up on Each other's Mannerisms We start Having figures Of speech Like one Another But the Beauty of Discipleship Is truly Experienced When the Strongest Bonds That God Brings Together Come to An end And the Fruit of That discipleship Blossoms To impact Others In that Discipleship Relationship It frees Up the Person Discipling To disciple Somebody else It's a Passing On The Christian Life Is not Only Receiving But it's Also Giving Receiving In one Hand Giving In the Other Hand And this Fights Against The human Instinct Of Codependency On man And dynamically

Grows you In through Your new Experiences You can Get You can Have ten People Discipling You at Different Seasons Of life For instance And you're Going to Get ten Valuable Perspectives In that You will This is how God grows Us and Matures us If you Depend upon A single Person in Life Like these Men may Have with John the Baptist Friends This isn't Discipleship This is More so A clique And the Church at Large can Have at Times too Many cliques I think I'm Preaching to The choir And all The while There are A whole Lot of Folks that Are kind Of just Marginalized Of receiving This type Of command That the Lord gives Us all Whether they Admit it or Not or Maybe some Become ignored In the Church So I Want to Kind of Ask you Two Questions The first Question Today Is who

[17 : 44] Are you Discipling If the Answer right Now at Life is No one I want to Put a little Pressure on You to Pray about Entering This in Life Every Christian Should be Working Toward Discipling Someone But also Being Discipled And we'll Talk about That in a Moment But who Are you Discipling A huge Portion of The great Commission In and of Itself Is concerned About Discipleship Go and Make Disciples Of all Nations Teaching Them You know It's In there It's This is The great Commission Sadly It's also A command And so Often Neglected Personally And most People depend So much Upon like A local Church Program Or maybe A Sunday School Class Or a Bible Study Rather than Finding a Bible Reading Partner And just Growing In a Discipling Relationship We're Going to Talk about That more In the Q&A; But if

You're In Christ You are A disciple Making Disciple There is No other Option It's for The introverts It's for The extroverts It's for The young It's for The old It's for The scholars And it's For the Learners It's for The Calvinists It's for The Arminians It's for Everyone Who are You Discipling What's Your Excuse For Not Fulfilling The Lord's Command And the Great Commission Of Discipleship And on The flip Side Who is Discipling You Every Person In the Church Should Have Somebody Also Discipling Them This is Important As well And no Sunday Mornings Are Not To Be The Sole Means Of Discipleship If That Is You're Missing Something Vital In In San San In Life If You're Neither Discipling Nor Being Discipled Maybe If You Kind Of Inventory Your Life And Your Connection With The Local Church Or Maybe A Group Of People In The Family Of God Maybe It's No Wonder You Might Feel A Sense Of Loneliness Maybe It's No No Wonder You Kind Of Feel Disconnected Can Everyone With Ears To Hear Me This Morning Please Consider This Significant Component Of His Church And We're Going To See The Narrative Continue In Verse 40 The Second Encounter Which Involves Andrew Finding Peter Verse 40 And 42 We See One Of The Two Came Back To His Brother Andrew And Upon Finding His Brother He Says We Found The Messiah Which Means Christ He Brought Him To Jesus And Jesus Renamed Him Gave Him A Name Simon The Son Of John You Shall Be Called Cephas And We See That He Says We Have Found The Messiah We Have Found The Messiah Which Means Christ And It Also Means Anointed One And While Many Believe It Designating Jesus To Jesus Last Name That Jesus First Name Is Jesus His Last Name Is Christ This Is Actually Designated A Certain Type Of Office Just As Some Refer To Me As Pastor Brent Or Dr.

Rick It It Represents And It Distinguishes His Office Office And Jesus Makes In Verse 42 A Prophetic Like Statement To Simon In Which Jesus Renames Him Cephas The Statement Was Significant Because The Term Cephas Means Rock In Aramaic This Is This Was Predicted And Predictive In Peter's Life Of What He Would Be Called But Also Of The Transformative Work That Jesus Christ Would Be Doing In His Discipling Of Peter Despite Peter's Immediate Flaws Despite Peter's Immediate Incapabilities That He Would Be Transformed To The Point Of His Confession His Miraculous His Vital Confession In Matthew 16 17 Through 18 Where

[22 : 12] He Says And Jesus Answered Him Blessed Are You After His Confession That Jesus Is The Christ Jesus Says Blessed Are You Simon Barjona For Flesh And Blood Has Not Revealed This To You But My Father In Heaven Who Is In Heaven And I Tell You You Peter You Are Peter And On This Rock I Will Build My Church And The Gates Of Hell Shall Not Prevail Against it Peter In Human Sense Was Not The Foundation Of The Church But Rather It Was His Testimony That Jesus Was The Christ Elevating Jesus Not Himself Jesus Was The Christ In That That Will Be The Rock Of The Church The Foundation Of Which The Church Pivots And Stands Upon Not On Man Not On Peter But On Jesus Christ Which Leads Me To My Second Point Jesus

Is Central In Calling And Equipping Jesus Is Central In Calling And Equipping Church Jesus Knows The Heart Thoroughly We See This In Psalm 139 23 He Sees The Depths Of Your Heart But He Doesn't Only See That He Transforms Our Hearts All Christians Into What He Desires For Them To Become Something That We Saw In The Baptism Of The Holy Spirit Through Inner Regeneration At The Moment You Put Your Faith In Jesus Christ This Is Not Dependent Upon Your Own Capabilities Of Natural Charm Of Skills Or Even At Logic Of Logic At Times It Brings The Introvert Into the Pulpit And Into Public Speaking It It Takes The Extrovert To Serve In A Quiet Prayer Ministry He

Qualifies Those He Calls This Is The Great God We Serve He Gives You All That You Need And And For For Those For Being Hard On You And Your Discipling Relationships Or Maybe Lack Thereof To Break Out Of Your Clicks Maybe To Start A New Discipling Relationship For The First Time This Is The Reality If You Doubt Yourself In That Be Encouraged Because It's Not About You

In The First Place It's Not Dependent Upon You Which Is Central To This Passage In There's Once A Young Man On A Monday Night December 31st 2007 At An Annual New Year's Eve Party This Young Man At The Age Of 19 And He Would Experience This Night The Last Night That He Would Ever Be Drunk

Again With His Friends Unknowingly Ten Days Later After This Hangover Wears Off The Lord Would Draw This Young Man The Age Of 19 Back To Faithful Fellowship With God And Not Only That But This Young Man Would Be Equipped To Be Drawn Back To The Strong Devotion To God And God Would Equip This Young Man With The Tools The Relationships And The Experiences That He Will Need To Prepare For The Journey Ahead In Ministry And Church This Young 19 Year Old Man Was Me An Unworthy Unqualified Individual Who Had Been Transformed And Qualified By The Only One Who Can Qualify If It This

Is True For Me Church This Is True For You It's True For Simon Peter Surely It Was True For King David And It Was True For Gideon Remember Gideon From Our Judges Series And All The Other Saints Of Old Including Moses Who Doubted Himself That God Had To Send A Helper For Him The Fact Is God Transforms Those He Chooses For The Task Deemed By Him To Fulfill God Transforms Those He Chooses For The Tasks Deemed By Him To Fulfill And Not Only Does God See Your Heart But He Transforms It Not Only Does God Call Qualify You But He Equips You In Your Calling Take Courage In Your Walk With Christ You Are More Capable Than You Can Ever Imagine And With A Humble Heart Dependent

[27 : 15] Upon The King Over Your Life The One Who Transforms Who Qualifies I Trust That You Will Survey Back In The Fruitful Efforts Of God Working Through Your Life And In Your Laboring And No This Isn't A Motivational Speech For You This Morning But This Is There's A Natural There's Naturally A Great Motivation When Christ Is The One Calling And Equipping He's The One Who Calls He's The One That Sustains It Has Nothing To Do With Us Today Jesus Is Central In Calling And Equipping Let's Move To The Third And Last Encounter With Philip Finding Nathanael We'll See Philip Finds Nathanael In Verse 43 Through 51 We have A lengthy Account Here And I Want To Kind Of Step

Back For A Minute Because I Hope That We Can Hopefully Together Identify The Reason Why This Account Of All The Others Were Expounded Upon Why Could This Be I Want To Ask A Question Why John Expounds Upon This Account Between Nathanael And Jesus Let's Consider Some Components Involved Here John Is A Contrasting Author Right We Learned That In Our First John Series He's A Contrasting Author Well We See A Long Section Let's Look A Little Bit Before This Long Section Between Nathanael Interaction With Jesus Let's Look At Possibly Philip Philip Became A Follower Of Christ With Just Two Words Jesus Saying Follow Me That's It And He Became Faithful You see We're On to Something Here In This Passage Because It Seems As If There's A Significant Skepticism With Nathanael As Opposed To Philip Two Words In The Dialogue Follow Me And Philip Was A Follower Of Christ Nathanael Took A Little Bit More Of Prying Through Some Of His Questions And Investigations Verse 45 Philip Calls Nathanael To Come And See This Is The Guy This Is The Messiah Verse 45 Talks About The Law And The Prophets All That's Written Philip Basically Summarizes The Entire Gospel Of John That Jesus Here Is The Fulfillment Of All The Scripture Of The Old Testament He Is Central In All Of It And It's Kind Of Humorous A Little Bit Because Nathanael Says To Him Or Philip Found Nathanael And Said To Him We Found The One Of Whom Moses And The Law And The Prophets Wrote Jesus Nazareth The Son Of Joseph But Nathanael Says To Him Can Anything Good Come Out Of Nazareth Obviously Nathanael Has Justified Skepticism In A Sense If Only We As Believers Would Test The Way That Nathanael Tests A Little Bit More In Depth According To Scripture Than Some Of Our Culture And Today Does But Culturally Speaking This Really Didn't Make Sense What He Was Saying That Really Can Anything Come Out Anything Good Come Out Of Nazareth Because Culturally Speaking Galilee Despised People Of Nazareth That Nathanael's Hometown Despised People Of Nazareth They Were Despised People It's Almost As If Ohio State Was From Galilee And Michigan

Was Nazareth They Despised Them It Was That Type Of Relationship Really Can Anything Good Come Out Of Here And Verse 47 And 48 Continue Nathanael Follows Through To Meet Jesus And Upon Jesus Warm Welcome Behold Another Behold An Israelite Indeed In Whom There Is No Deceit This May At Face Value Seem Like A Little Sarcastic Response Knowing That That The Sarcasm That Came Out Of Nathanael's Mouth Just Prior And Now Jesus Saying Behold An

Israelite indeed of whom there is no deceit maybe maybe a little sarcasm in this but the usage of such statement indicates that Jesus knew that Nathanael's investigation that he was conducting had no ulterior motives kind of in comparison to the priest coming from Jerusalem to

[32:17] Investigate John the Baptist who was baptizing Jews we see this in this passage in verse 48 can you imagine the humor in Nathanael's statement how do you know me and Jesus words to follow open Nathanael's mind that this this man know much more than who Nathanael is but this man is indeed Jesus the Christ who searches the heart and knows the mind know Nathanael not only does he know who you are he knows every bit in peace within your hearts verse 49 leading up to Nathanael's confession of Jesus being the son of God being the king of Israel we see a miraculous

glimpse of Jesus Christ divinity shining through the humanity that closed him remember Jesus in this narrative is fully human and fully God so we see his divine knowledge shining through his humanity in this encounter and Jesus supernaturally had awareness of Nathanael under a fig tree and I've kind of scoured some commentaries on this what could this possibly mean and literally nobody makes any significance of this it could have been a physical location under an actual fig tree it could have been his home whatever it may be the emphasis is upon Nathanael being to faith and it took the sign of a miracle of him supernaturally moving in a mighty way and Jesus makes a great statement

in verse 50 to Nathanael that if he believed through a simple act of divine knowledge well Nathanael you better buckle up because he says quote you will see greater things than these and Jesus was obviously referring to his earthly ministry to follow witnessing signs and wonders of his redemptive power however it was it was all laboring for the sake of knowing who Jesus is and that people would believe in who he is so it's not to hold up the miracles and think of the greater things as the miracles in and of itself holding those up on a pedestal because we have a tendency in our culture today of doing that very thing but the miracles are not observed merely for themselves but to point forward at the reality of who Jesus is and

the salvation that he brings and this is because he brings everything into full context if you wonder what these greater things means maybe maybe it's the miracles maybe it's maybe it's all these things that Nathanael is going to experience no don't narrow yourself in such a small view of scripture and who Jesus is Jesus actually brings everything into full circle of what he meant by greater things because he says he brings it all into context of what it means in verse 51 he says to them truly truly truly in listen up bringing emphasis upon everything truly truly I say to you you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the son

of man these are the greater things yeah miracles are great and all supernatural wonders are great and all but man it's it's not the point Jesus is central in it Jesus refers in this passage to an old testament reference that we find and that we've known in Genesis 28 verse 12 in Jacob's vision of a ladder or a stairway stretching from heaven to earth on which angels ascended to worship God and descended to do his bidding on earth so in other words Jesus was fulfilling this he's saying yeah miracles are great and all this is this was a miraculous experience for you Nathanael you came to to to to to faith because of this in who I am but you are going to see greater things because I am that ladder that is written about in this vision in

[37:19] Genesis 28 I am that stairway Jesus is saying that he is the link between heaven and earth that if someone in this vision to those angels if someone is to ascend to heaven or those who attain salvation and are justified and resurrect at this new birth he will he must do it through Jesus Christ the son of man and son of man is a significant title we're going to see this continue through through the passage because it's actually one of Jesus favorite terms of self reference self designation and it's a fulfillment of Daniel seven he uses it over eighty times associated with themes that MacArthur actually states of his crucifixion and suffering the son of man it indicates his revelation son of man also reveals eschatological authority so to see Jesus perform

this miracle or supernatural knowledge is terrific church it is but how much greater to see that Jesus is the way to salvation for all who believe the means of attaining eternal life church

Jesus Is Central In This He's Central To Jacob's Ladder He's Central To The Miracles He's Central To Your Calling He's Central To Discipleship Jesus Is Making John Is Making A Point In This That Jesus Is Central In All Things Which Kind Of Brings Us Back To The Point Of The Purpose Of Him Writing The Book And All The Way Back He Leaves A Thesis Statement That We Talked About A Couple Weeks Ago In John 20 31 30 and 31 He Says Now Jesus Did Many Other Signs In The Presence Of His Disciples Which Are Not Written In This Book Don't We See This Here They Weren't Significant But There Is Something Greater But These Are Written Everything That Is Written Here Is So That You May Believe That Jesus Is The Christ The Messiah The Anointed One The Son Of God And That Believing You May Have Life In His Name This Is The Message Of John Church Don't You See That Jesus Is Central In Everything That Our Responses Are Central To Who He Is Isn't This The Aim Of John And This Kind Of Leads Me To My Last Point Point Three And We're Going To Close On This Point I'm Just Going To Leave This In Your Lap Today Jesus Is Central In All Things This Naturally Flows Into This Text This Broadcasts The Whole Main

Point Of This Entire Passage He Is Central In All Things So I Have To Beg Some Questions Here I Have To Beg Some Questions Are You Skeptical Maybe Like Nathaniel Or Are You Maybe Cynical Like Those Pharisees Questioning John The Baptist Are You Skeptical Or Cynical Over The Implications Of Who Jesus Christ Is Maybe Due To Maybe The Last Church That You Experienced Abuse Spiritual Abuse A Physical Abuse Whatever Sexual Abuse It Happens That That You Have You Have Been Kind Of Completely Stone Cold To The Idea Of Anything Relating To Biblical Teaching To Being In A Church Again Of Feeling Comfortable in a body of believers, or maybe even believing in Jesus at all. If you are in any of those departments, you have to see in this passage, this passage begs a difference of saying that the gospel is a beautiful thing. The scripture is often used, obviously, to abuse and control people. We know that. We're not ignorant to that fact. It happens even today in churches that are still even nearby, potentially. But it was never intended to be like that. John is communicating something that it is not about man. It is not about control. It is about Jesus Christ.

It removes the shackles of control. It removes the shackles of doubt, and it softens the hardest of hearts, church. Jesus Christ is who he says he is. He suffered for you, and he died for you.

[42 : 14] So that one day, just as he rose, you will rise with him because of your faith in him. No abuse. No gimmicks. This is eternal hope for you. Believe in this today.

Is Jesus Christ enough for you? And for those who belong to Christ, who are Christians, do you ever find yourselves on extreme highs or extreme lows at times in your walk with Christ? thinking that, man, I'm feeling a little disconnected. Maybe I can't read this Bible anymore. I'll get something else, maybe something new, and maybe start fresh.

Maybe you get a new Bible. Maybe it takes a whole new year to start a new resolution. So all throughout the year, you just fail after fail, failure after failure after failure, just waiting for January 1st to start off fresh and new.

Maybe a new Bible. Maybe a new year. Maybe a different devotional. Maybe a new friend. Maybe a new church. Maybe a new car. Maybe a new something of this and that. Maybe another miracle. Come on, church.

[43 : 34] If this is you, church, if you find yourself in that department, in that category, I have to tell you, something is broken in your faith. Something is broken. It should bring out warning signs. It should bring out that check engine light that we all see flashing on our wonderful vehicles in life.

It's time to pay attention to what is fueling your engine. Let Jesus be enough for you, especially as we go forward in this series. Believe in him and tell others to come and see this is not some ritualistic sort of family and community that we've built and we've established just for our own edification, just for the potlucks, just for the coffee, just for some fellowship.

Yeah, those things, especially the fellowship, is very vital. Coffee, you know, we don't need coffee. We don't need a building. You know, all these things that can somehow creep their way as being central to the gospel are non-essential. Jesus Christ is central and we have to be excited about this. Let our words resound to our friends, our neighbors. Come and see. Hear the gospel.

Experience the gospel. Let them hear it and see it through your words and not only your words, but also your deeds. Let you proclaim the gospel through your actions as well.

I mean, thinking back to Mordecai Ham and Billy Graham's conversion, somebody invited Billy Graham to that revival. A simple act focused on serving the Lord fervently and Jesus Christ is

central.

[45 : 43] Church, this is what it's all about.