

**I. WE**

- A. What we are seeing around us right now... are you feelin' it?
1. Social unrest, injustice, election, pandemic, natural disasters.
  2. Creates... Fear, anxiety, depression (not medical)/despair, anger...
  3. Feel it? Me too.
  4. Same whether JF or not...
  5. **BUT... If what Jesus Followers say is true *is true* there should be proof**
- B. We believe in a God who loves, cares for us, in control- we know these things... but is it making a difference in our lives?
1. We wish we had more faith ("trust" in God is another word for faith)... like "so and so"
  2. Wish we could be zapped with more faith (trusting God) and have this worry and fear washed away.
- C. Realizing- Knowing about Jesus is not the same as trusting Jesus.**
- D. For many of us what we've been taught, shown, handed, or done is a list of beliefs and routines that help us know about God.
1. And it's good to have beliefs about and to know about God.
  2. For most of life those things *seem* like enough...
  3. But faith is like a **muscle...** we have to choose to work it out and strengthen it.
  4. If we are content with simply knowing about God, our faith muscles won't be strong enough to get us through when life gets real. We will never experience what it means to trust God.
  5. It's like a house... you have to build it with good bones in order to enjoy the benefits of its shelter and comfort.
- E. What we really need isn't more knowledge... what we need is REAL FAITH for a Real World.
1. That provides strength, shelter, and comfort in the reality of this hard world.
  2. We need to make the turn from knowing about God and believing in God to actually experiencing and trusting God.
  3. Series. 5 Things we can choose to let God use to grow our faith.
  4. Last week... 3 practical, daily habits
  5. This week a little more pointed... talk a lot about a dirty word. Obedience. Can be a little uncomfortable... can change it to Application if you want. Best way to experience God and learn how to trust him.
- 6. Discover- Real Faith is what we do.**

## II. GOD Matthew 7:24-27

- A. Jesus sermon on the mount: Taught what a life of real faith would look like... daily actions that create a foundation of LIFE CHANGE
1. "Someone with perfect faith would live like this... love their enemy, living for God not people or world, forgiving, not judging, being generous, allowing God to take our worry..."
  2. Their lives would be changed and they would experience trusting God and the effects that would have on their lives.
  3. Then drove it home

### B. V. 24a (Is wise)

1. Listens AND FOLLOWS IT.
  - a. There are no participation points for hearing about what you are supposed to do.
  - b. Hearing/knowing what Jesus says doesn't do much.
  - c. Maturity is not measured in how much we know... it's measured in how closely we follow, what we actually DO with what we know.
  - d. The knowing should move us to doing in order to experience God and have our lives transformed.
2. Me walking around the gym learning about the machines...never applying that knowledge to my life (oh, yeah, I KNOW about that row machine, sure)... help a little (not at the buffet and getting some steps in)... but is that going to grow my muscles?
  - a. Having friends who go to the gym and really are getting in shape...
3. Me sitting in a church and hearing someone talk about Jesus and what it means to follow him...(the more boring the more points you get)... never apply it to my life.
  - a. Having friends who follow Jesus and are having great faith...
4. And when that is what we think following Jesus is... and we aren't able to do that... we start cracking... we start getting angry... we start fighting. We start doubting or asking why "it's not working." We start seeing the issues we are seeing right now.
5. We start seeing that what we've built isn't strong enough to get us through real life.
6. But following Jesus isn't about simply hearing what he says...
7. **Following Jesus means doing what he says.**

### C. V. 24-25

1. Interesting dynamic- **Obeying Jesus is both the proof and producer of Real Faith.**
2. Interesting relationship between obeying Jesus and trusting him. Each obedience and faith are the cause and effect of the other. "Ok, Jon, how does THAT work?"
3. **Obedience is proof of real Faith**- It takes trust to obey- "Love your enemies"
  - a. What if's
  - b. But then I do it and I see that it actually works and it makes me trust him more the next time...  
b/c
4. **Obedience produces Real Faith.**
  - a. It doesn't make sense to submit to the needs of my spouse... but then I do it... and I see the difference it makes in my relationship... learn he can be trusted.

5. When you obey, especially when it doesn't make sense, you begin to experience God, begin to see your life transform, and you learn you can trust him more and more.
6. It's a cycle of exercising our faith, which then grows our faith so we can exercise it more.
7. Creating a foundation of trust.
8. Takes some strength to choose to lift a dumbbell... but you do it and it grows your muscles and gives you more strength to keep on strengthening.
9. The more you lift the more you are able to lift... we all KNOW that, but it only transforms/strengthens the people who make the choice to actually do it.
10. When we obey, we learn, we experience him, see him transform us, and learn can trust him no matter what happens.
11. We grow our faith to where we can trust him with more and more areas of our life.

#### D. V. 26-27

1. Someone who hears his teaching... No some distant unbeliever... someone literally listening to the words coming out of his mouth...
2. Someone can know everything there is to know about theology/God...
  - a. They can have 100% perfect attendance at church...
  - b. They can even work countless hours for "the ministry" and still have a life that is a disaster and completely miss what it means to follow Jesus
  - c. Pastors, professors, bible study leaders whose lives completely blew up and unraveled with a mighty crash when difficulties came or temptation hit because people weren't living out what they "knew". Weren't building a strong foundation... weren't doing the work of building the faith muscle.

#### E. If we want to really develop a real faith for a real world... we need to make the switch from knowing to really doing.

- F. For too long many of us have focused on **knowing** things about God...
  1. Bible studies that are deep
  2. Conferences / retreats / camps
  3. Sermons that teach us word for word exactly what Moses was writing about when constructing the tabernacle.
  4. Charts of the end times
  5. Not bad things.
  6. But stopping there does not build a real faith that can really handle the real world.
- G. But what is the point of any knowledge?
  1. #1 question in school... when am I going to USE this?
  2. Studying battle tactics in a classroom is different than when you know you are about to be shipped off to war.
  3. Studying angles and geometry in class is different than when you're designing and building a house a family will live in.
  4. Studying who Jesus is to know more is different than learning what it means to follow him when you are actually in the middle of real life.

5. Just focusing on knowing is also a lot easier. When we just focus on knowledge there's no challenge... there's no transformation.

H. The goal of Xianity is not more knowledge. The goal of Xianity is a transformed life.

1. You might be surprised to know that this is what God and Jesus want for you, too!

I. A lot of what we are seeing right now is the result of a lot of knowledge that hasn't reached the maturity of doing, hasn't created a strong foundation, built up faith muscle... and therefore hasn't really transformed lives.

1. We've built a foundation on going to church and gaining knowledge. Relying on someone doing the work for us...

a. We've built our foundation on the routine of Xianity and not on the source of Xianity- Jesus himself.

2. Knowledge has not produced a Real Faith that holds up to real life.

3. We know to love our neighbor/enemy... but then they show up and argue with us and how do we react?

4. We know God is in control and that he hears us when we pray... but the future is so uncertain how do we react?

**J. The best way to grow your faith is to consistently apply what Jesus taught.**

K. How?

### III. YOU

A. Not too late! Start today!

**B. Prioritize application over information dispensation**

1. Jesus always prioritized doing over hearing

2. Not satisfied just dispensing theological information. Believe me he could've.

3. That's what the religious leaders did. Jesus taught differently... **v. 28-29**

a. Not I think this... just theology... but DO THIS and you will be transformed.

4. He came to transform lives for eternity.

5. Teachings weren't super "DEEP".

6. Theologically deep? Those that killed him

7. So I made a switch in my teaching a few years back... still in process

8. Not ignoring theology and correct interpretation... BUT Focus on application "What does God want us to do with this?"

9. Goal to be Funny? Give a feeling or experience? Be a COOL church? Not the main point.

10. Is this helpful? Will it lead to transformation? Will it make me more like Jesus? Yes.

11. Even discussion questions- "What can we **DO** this week?"

12. If we leave a teaching/sermon/study and say that was great but we aren't challenged to DO anything and our life doesn't change at all what was the point?

13. It may have sounded "DEEP" but was it? Did it sink deep into my soul and start a change?

14. Not always comfortable... b/c can hide in information dispensation... hard to hide from GO and DO this...

15. What to do?

16. **Set a routine**: Time you watch, discuss/journal, evaluate how you are applying it, CONNECT GROUPS

17. **Read to Apply** (Matt 5-7, James, or 1 John)

18. Ask: God what are you saying to me right now? What do you want me to DO with this? When do you want me to do it?

### C. Practice Obedience

1. Can give you all the tools but if you don't apply it you'll be building on sand.
2. Crosscreek Contributing to a Sunday service wasn't the end goal... it was practice for everyday.
3. Find ways to practice and apply what Jesus says to do...
4. Instead of muting, cancelling, unfriending... see it as a chance to love others (PRAY for THEM like Jesus said to).
5. Spouse/parents/teacher/boss being a jerk? Chance to practice outdoing in submitting.
6. Don't believe me? Have doubts? That's ok... Try it and Watch what happens when you consistently apply what Jesus says.
7. Fears, worries, anxiety comes... where is your foundation? Freak out? Go to worst case scenario? Allow others to influence you and get you worked up? OR... Pray and trust that no matter what happens Jesus will not leave us?

### IV. WE

#### A. When we learn to obey Jesus we build a strong foundation of faith and we learn that we can trust Jesus.

No matter what storms might come

- B. Obedience displays our trust... parents and kids.
- C. It builds a foundation that we can rely on.
- D. Is your foundation based on hearing or doing?
- E. Going to a church service is good... but if we confuse that as our foundation... and don't do the work of building our own muscles at some point the load will be too heavy to bear and we will collapse
- F. If we want real faith that withstands real life storms we have to put in the daily exercise of trusting that Jesus knows what he is talking about
- G. What shakes your foundation? What does Jesus want you to DO to trust him more?
- H. Even if it doesn't make sense at the time.

#### I. Real faith means trusting Jesus with our real life.

### Questions

1. When you hear the word "obedience" what comes to mind? Why is that?
2. Read James 2:14-20. What stands out to you as it relates to knowing ABOUT God and DOING something?
3. What questions/issues/barriers/responses do you have to this message? How can your group pray for you this week?