

Why Are You A Christian?

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John 6:22-29

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So our motives can be funny things. It can actually be very powerful things, right? If you think about it, motives can transform bad actions into good actions. Like the bad action of tripping Grandma, for instance. Typically, not a good thing to... All the grandmas are like, "Yeah, that's not right." Yeah, it's typically not a good thing to do, trip grandma. Unless your motive for tripping grandma is protecting her from falling over a cliff. Then in that moment it's a very good thing to trip grandma. And it was your motive that made this bad action, good. In the same way, a good deed can be transformed into a bad deed, also based on our motives. So if your neighbor has a massive leak in his yard and it's seeping into your yard. And what's leaking is a pipe that you told your neighbor, "Hey, you need to fix that. That's going to explode someday and it's going to go everywhere." And you go and tell your neighbor, well, on the outside that might be a good thing. You're telling your neighbor that there's a leak in the yard. But if on the inside I want to let him know how stupid he is. "He should've listened to me, because I know what I'm talking about. And he didn't. And that's why I said..." Well, you just took that good deed and turned it into a bad deed. If you drive slowly in a school zone, that's a good thing to do. And if you do, you do that good deed for a good reason. Like protecting children and not breaking the law. But if you just happen to be driving extra slow in the school zone because somebody tried to cut you off as they got into the school zone, and now they're behind you. And you're like, "Hey, it's the school zone. Going two miles an hour here. Sorry." You just turned that good action into a bad action.

Now, as we look at our text today, twice in this text, the part of the crowd that was still there the next day after thousands were fed dinner miraculously. That crowd is described as seeking Jesus. They actually travel five to eight miles north on the Sea of Galilee, searching for Jesus. Looking for Him, trying to find Him. And on the surface, if you were there watching that that day, you might think, "That's a great thing. Look look at all these people searching for Jesus. They're seeking him. That's a great thing. What a great thing that they're all doing." However, that is not the response that Jesus had. No. And don't forget that Jesus has what we don't have. He knows people's hearts. John 2:25 says that, "He knows what is in people." He knows their thoughts, he knows their desires, he knows their motives. And 1 Samuel chapter 16:7 says, "This is an attribute of God. That that man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart." See, the problem that day was, not that people were seeking Jesus, on the surface in and of itself that's a great thing. Seek Jesus. The problem that day, which is still a problem in this day, is what's the motive? What's the goal? What do they really want with Jesus? Or or to put it differently, to to bring it home for all of us here today. Why are you a Christian? What is your

motive? What what do you really want? I know this is another, "Are you sure you're a Christian?" message.

But listen, why preach a message with a question, "Why are you a Christian?" Why do that? Well, it doesn't just match our text, which it does. You preach a message like this because Matthew 7:13, Jesus said, "The gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction. And those who enter by it are many." Many, not a few. Not some. Many. Why preach a message with the question, "Are you sure you're a Christian?" Why are you a Christian? Because in Matthew 7:22, Jesus said, "Many will say to me when they stand before him, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy your name? And cast out demons in your name? And do many mighty works in your name?'" And then Jesus says, "I will declare to them I never knew you, depart from Me, you workers of lawlessness."

So why preach a message with a question like, "Why are you a Christian?" Because I don't want you to be one of those many. I don't want you to be in that group of people. I don't want you to be one of the many who think they're going to heaven, when they're actually on their way to hell. I don't want you to be one of the many who think, "Finally I get to I get to see Jesus." Only to hear from Him, "I I don't know you, depart from Me." And if right now you are one of the many and you don't know it, then I'm preaching a message on, "Why are you a Christian?" Because I want God to open your eyes to this reality from His word. And if you are not one of the many, then I want to equip you with God's word so that you can help the people that you know who are part of the many. Who think, "I'm good, I'm saved. I have nothing to worry about." When they do. So in other words, this text is for all of us. All of us need this text.

So let's jump in, verse 22. "On the next day, the crowd that remained on the other side of the sea saw that there had been only one boat there and that Jesus had not entered the boat with his disciples, but that his disciples had gone away alone. Other boats from Tiberias came near the place where they had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks. So when the crowd saw that Jesus was not there, nor his disciples, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum", notice, "seeking Jesus." So the night before Jesus sends these 10,000 to 20,000 people, sends them away. "I fed you, now it's time to go away. It's nighttime. Go find a place to stay."

He goes up on a nearby mountain to pray. And he takes his 12 disciples and say, "Get out of here. Go north to Capernaum." And so they do. There's a storm. We talked about that last week. The next morning, the crowd that remained from that 10,000 to 20,000 people, they want to find Jesus but they can't find Him. In verse 22, they remembered that the night before there was only one boat. And that when the 12 disciples went in that boat to go north, Jesus wasn't with them. There were 12 on the boat, not 13. He's not there on the boat, but He's not there with them either. So they're confused. There's no way that they could see that he could have gotten across the lake that evening. So some entrepreneurial boat owners go from Tiberias on the western shore, go to the eastern shore. Maybe they see a bunch of people you know milling around. They're like, "Hey, Uber's arriving. Here's your water taxi. Where do you guys want to go?" And they're like,

"We want to go to Capernaum." I have no idea how they knew to go there. Text does not say how they knew. Did they hear Jesus say, "I'll meet you in Capernaum." Did they just know this is where Jesus, his base of operations... It doesn't say. Somehow they knew, so that's where they go. Verse 24, notice "seeking Jesus". That's their reason for getting into the boat. That's the reason for all of them going to Capernaum. This goal in mind, find Jesus. Verse 25. "When they found Him on the other side of the sea, they said to Him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?'" I don't know about you, I find that question kind of weird. Because verse 22, based on that, you would expect the question to be what?

Not, "When did you get here?" But, "How did you get here? There was no boat for you to get here. How'd you get here so fast? What's going on here?" Are they hinting at a miracle? I don't know. "Not enough time for you to get here without a boat. So when did you get here?" Who knows, but they do call him verse 25, "Rabbi". It's a term of honor and respect, but it's also confusing, right? Because the day before that, just the night before, the crowd was convinced that this this guy was not a rabbi, that he is the prophet. Meaning the Messiah, that they want to make him king. Now he's a rabbi. So, you can see there's confusion going on here. And I love this. Jesus ignores their question. He doesn't say, "Well, I got here last night when I walked on the water and got in a boat, and did another miracle. And we just ended up on the shore." He doesn't say any of that at all. Notice what he does. Verse 26, ignores their question, "Answers them, 'Truly, truly, I say to you, you're seeking Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.'" Translation, they haven't had breakfast yet, and Jesus knows that. And they're hungry. So they're back for more. And this is as far as they've gotten in their minds. And He's going, "You missed the point of the miracle guys." Sure they saw Him, they saw the signs, but the signs point beyond the miracle. They reveal truth. And in this case, it's truth about who Jesus really is. And they totally missed it. Why? Because they want food.

He exposes the false motives these people had for seeking Him, which is their own earthly desires. And if that's what He did on that day with these people, then you should, point #1) ***Examine your motives for following Jesus.*** He got them to examine their motives for following Him. You should examine your motives for following Jesus. He saw their hearts, He examined their motives, and He exposed those motives as illegitimate. And notice in verse 26, "Truly, truly, I say to you." These words front end this verse to show that what He's saying and what He's doing with them is something important. Not only for the people there, but also for us today.

Because the fact is that a lot of people come to Jesus, like these people did, with false motives. And 2 Corinthians 13:5 says, tells people to quote, "Examine yourselves to see whether you're in the faith. Test yourselves." Examine yourself, test yourself, is to be an ongoing practice for those who believe they are in fact saved. These people are drawn to Jesus, but missed who He actually is. And what the text tells us is that it's because this whole thing, seeking Jesus, trying to find him. All of that was not really about Jesus, it was about what Jesus could do for them. So you don't want to stand before Jesus like these people did that day and hear Him say, "Your Christianity, your your seeking after Me, it was really about what you wanted, wasn't about Me."

So to start like, "Okay, how would I even come to the conclusion that that would be me?" Well, you maybe start with a prayer, like the prayer from our Bible reading plan yesterday, Psalm 139:23. "Search my heart, oh God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts, and see if there be any grievous way in me and lead me in the way everlasting." Search my heart, what are my motives? What are my motives? What is it that I'm seeking here? Is it Christ? Something else? And how do you test yourself to see if you're in the faith? Well, that's the whole book of first John. So right towards the end of the Bible, there's a little book, five chapters called First John. And John says, "I'm writing these things to you. I wrote this letter to you so that you would know that you have eternal life." Not guess, not wish, not hope, but know, you have eternal life. Now, why did he do that? Because false teachers had entered this church and had split it down the middle. And some people went with the false teachers and other people stayed. And the people that stayed wondered, "Should I have gone with the false teachers because they said they have eternal life and that we don't. And some of our friends, some of our family went with them, should I have stayed or should I go?" And John writes them a letter to say, "Hey, this is how you know the truth from air, this is how you know true Christianity from false. This is how you know a true Christian from a false Christian."

He gives tests, proofs, evidence, so that you can know if you have eternal life. So first John, what do you do? You read it. You reread it. You re-reread it. You read it with a journal. You read it with a friend. You read it over and over again. You soak your soul in First John. And while you're doing that, you're praying, "God, show me where I stand with you. God, I want to be a true believer, not a make-believer. Make this clear to me." That's first John, but also just using our text today.

Why are you following Christ? Is it about Him, or is it about you? Or better yet, is it about what Jesus can do for you? Is that why you're a Christian? See the people there, were there, these thousands of people were there the day before for the show. He was healing people and there was an excitement, there was a buzz, there were the feels, there was all of that going on. And so they're there, thousands are there for that reason. That they want to get their healing. They want to see their miracle. They want to get their deliverance. According to 1 Timothy chapter 6:5, some people follow Jesus because they think it'll make them rich. And if you look out at the world, religion can make people rich. Filthy rich. Charlatans. Others like this crowd follow Jesus for this for this life reasons. Like getting earthly needs met, like food, or justice, or being right, or doing good, or becoming prosperous, or having a good feeling about myself. Jesus is the means to get me to all of that, but that's the thing that I really want. Jesus is just the way that I'm going to get it.

Others follow Jesus for power and influence. That's a guy in Acts chapter eight who saw the miracle working power of the apostles and goes, "I want that and here's some money I will pay you to have that miracle working power." And Peter confronts him and says to him, "Your heart is not right before God. Your motives are not right." And then Peter says to the guy, "Pray that if possible the intent of your heart may be forgiven." All kinds of reasons that people come to Christ. The question is, is underneath those reasons, is it really all about me? See, that's why

when Jesus calls people to salvation, He talks about it as denying yourself. Your self-interests, your demands. It's being done with you, being done with your will and what you want. And coming to Jesus with no demands. Taking Him as He is, for who He is. Not taking Him for what He can do for you in this earthly life.

I've seen this as a pastor now for years, people who seem strong and on fire for the Lord and super committed and all in. But who don't get what they want. And so they leave. Whether they want a spouse, or a job, or some problem in their life to be fixed. Or some tragedy hits their life and they don't get what they want. Which was a spouse, or a career, or a trial free life, or better marriage, or better kids, or whatever it is. And when they don't get what they really want from God, they leave. They come to Jesus and kind of test Him to see, "Are you going to give me what I want?" Like like we're the lord of heaven and earth and He exists to serve us. He is Lord of Heaven and Earth. He is the God man who came to give life to the world. He's not a vending machine or a bank account that exists to give you what you want, when you want it.

But if that's how you've been thinking about Him, this text, these people, this moment in time 2000 years ago, is a gift for you right now. It is a gift of God's grace that Jesus would have this conversation, that John would record it, so that in this moment your motives could be examined. Why are you following Christ? Is it for this life, earthly things that you think that you can get out of Him. That you that you would even use Him to get? Or are you following Him because of who He is? The savior for your sins and the only one that is truly worth living for? See what people live for is where Jesus took the people there that day next. Look at verse 27. It says, "Do not work for the food that perishes." All morning, you've been clamoring and trying to get over here and figure out where am I going to get food? And think about it, there's no, there's no Bashas', there's no Fry's, there's no Albertsons, for them to just stop in. They would have to pick the grain. And they would have to kill the animal and cook it. And they'd have to do all of that. He says, "Don't be don't be devoted to that, but work for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on Him, God the Father has set His seal." He's saying life is not about the material, physical, earthly blessings, but that's what people strive after. That's what they're dominated by. That's what they spend their time and effort and mental energy obsessing about. And He's saying what should be dominating you is the is the spiritual, is the heavenly, is the eternal.

In other words, He's saying, "You shouldn't be pursuing Me for food, for the earthly. You should be after Me for the heavenly, for the things that pertain to eternal life." Which really the food that they should be after is really Him. They are seeking Him, they're doing the right thing, but they have the wrong motives. But they should be seeking Him. He is actually the food, right? Verse 35, Jesus says that He is the bread of life. He is the food that He's talking about here. Verse 51, "I am the bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats this bread, he will live forever." He, in the words of verse 27, He is what they should work for, what they should be dominated by. And He is willing and happy to bless them with eternal life. He is the relief for those who hunger for to be right with God. He is the relief for those who know their sin and feel their guilt. And don't want to pretend anymore, and want to be forgiven. Who know they need mercy, who know they

need peace with God. He is the answer. And look at verse 27. Jesus "will give that". He will give that to all who come to Him. Just like He gave them physical bread, He will give them heavenly bread. And He is the only one that can. Because verse 27, "It is only on Him that God has set His seal", He said. What does that mean? It means that God has set His seal of approval on Jesus, and Jesus alone. That what He says and what He did actually gives life to the world. And He's the only one. God appointed Him and Him alone. And He has proven that through Old Testament prophecy. He's proven that through the miracles that God sent Him for this purpose, that the only God sent only Him for this purpose to give eternal life.

As you think about that text and contemplate it, He's explaining what they're striving for, and contrasting it with what they should be striving for. So point #2) ***Live for Jesus, not the things of this world. Live for Jesus, not the things of this world.*** The things of this world are important. Food, clothing, shelter, safety, they are they are important. All of that is important. But none of that should be what anyone should live for. And certainly none of that should be what dominates us more than Christ. None of it should be what people trade Jesus in order to have. These people are following a very good desire, the desire for food. And they know Jesus can make them breakfast because He made them dinner the night before. And Jesus calls them out for doing that. For pursuing Him for their own earthly benefit, rather than pursuing Him for what God sent Him here for. Which is for eternal life.

So when people come to Christ, He becomes their life. They trade their life for His. Their sin for His perfection. Their will for His will. Their desires for His desires. Their purpose in life, for His. What He wants for them. This is what it means to repent and believe. And then from there, it's a continual living for Christ and not the things of this world. Living for Him and not the things that we used to live for before coming to Him. And Jesus talked about this. He told the people around the Sea of Galilee one day. He said, "Look out at the grass." Now we're in the desert, do you know what grass is? Just make sure. Okay.

So He said, "Look out at the grass." Matthew 6:30, and He said, "If God's so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you? O, you have little faith." If God takes care of grass, gives it what it needs, think He's not going to take care of you? "Therefore, do not be anxious, do not be consumed, saying, 'What shall we eat?' Or, 'What should we drink?' Or, 'What should we wear?' For the Gentiles seek after these things." People that want nothing to do with God, they seek after these things. And your Heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But what should I seek then? Jesus says, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things that other people chase after, all these things will be added to you." You live for Christ and not the things of this world. So Philippians 1:21 says, "To live is Christ." Life is about Him. He's the meaning of life.

It's 2 Corinthians 5:15. Jesus, "died for all that those who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him." It's Paul in Colossians 3:1 saying, "If then you've been raised with Christ." If you're saved, "If you're raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is seated at the right-hand." It's not seek to have them, it's being dominated by those things. Fill

your life, strive for those things. "Set your minds on things that are above. Be consumed with those things, not on things that are on the Earth."

So it's earthy things that will keep people from coming to Jesus. And Christian, it's earthly things that'll slow you down in your progress, in your growth, when it comes to your commitment to Christ. So when a person says, "You can have all this world, just give me Jesus." The rest of their lives is a battle to stay true to that, and not let the things of this world, like a noise machine drown Christ out. His influence out of their lives. A little materialism here won't, won't hurt. And maybe some ungodly ideas, maybe some worldly influences, maybe some worldly pursuits. I mean, what's the big deal? God forgives. And all the other Christians I know are doing it anyways. And the last thing I want to be is a Jesus freak. That would be horrible. Don't forget this world system that we all live in is not neutral, right? It's not neutral. It's at war with God. And the way that it advances its war in our lives is it seeks to disciple us, seeks to influence us. It seeks to conform us to its image, to adopt its values as our values. To adopt its ways, as our ways. Our goals as its goals. Rather than the opposite, which is the discipleship in the Lord. Which is following Him. Adopting His goals as our goals. His ways as our ways. His ideas as our ideas. Both are seeking to disciple us. And so then in that moment, let's live for Christ and not the things of this world. And so this is this is another moment where it's right to pray Psalm 139:23 again. "Search my heart, oh God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any grievous way in me and lead me in the way everlasting." Lord, is there anything that I'm thinking about that grieves you? Is there anything that I'm feeling? Is there anything in the way that I'm living? My ideas, my priorities, my desires, my motivations that really have more to do with this world than you? Is there any of that that grieves you? Lord, show me what that is. Make that clear to me and lead me, direct me away from that into the paths of life that please you.

Well, Jesus goes after their motives for following Him, as well as what they're living for. But they key in on three words that He says in verse 27. The words "work" and "eternal life". So verse 28, "Then they said to Him, 'What must we do to be doing the works of God?'" Jesus just talks about what He will do for them, giving them eternal life and instead they hone in on what they can do to earn eternal life by what? By doing what God requires. If you think about it, take a step back for a second. They've been fed miraculously as a gift of God's grace, and through Jesus teaching that day as well. So they've got last night and the morning both this influence of Jesus and they're moving in a good direction. At this point they want to be right with God, but they're stuck in a man-centered 'man's ability to save himself by good works' mindset. They miss what Jesus says. That salvation is not earned, it's a free gift. So it's good to see they're not indifferent to their salvation like they're sitting listening to Him and like, "Oh my goodness, we got to find food. Let's go. Maybe we'll find it somewhere." No, that's not them. They're they're moving in the right direction. At least there's some interest. So Jesus says to them, verse 29, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent."

Wait a minute, did Jesus just say faith is a work? It's faith or works, not faith is a work. What's going on here? Well, faith is an activity. God doesn't believe for people. But Jesus is not talking

here about how a person earns their salvation by doing the good work of believing in Jesus. That's not what He's saying. Sinners cannot earn their salvation from the penalty they deserve for their sins by believing in Jesus. It is not a merit. The issue with faith is the issue of trust. Will they trust in their good works? Or will they trust in Jesus? And in the sense that believing is an activity, it's something the sinner has to do in that sense, it is a work. But it doesn't earn anything from God. It's not a paycheck. "Okay, you did that thing. Now here's your paycheck." No faith in Jesus earns nothing. It receives a gift with empty hands. Not hands that are full of good works, saying, "Here, I will trade my good works for salvation." Notice verse 28, and contrast to the laundry list of works plural. God has one work, verse 29. One requirement, one way to be pleasing to Him. So point #3) ***Know God's only requirement is faith in Jesus. Know God's only requirement is faith in Jesus.***

So to this group of people who experienced the miraculous. People who didn't understand who He is, who sought Him with wrong motives. Who lived for the earthly. Who lived for themselves, and sought to earn their own salvation. To those people, He cuts through everything and just says, "Believe in Me. Believe in Me." This is the one requirement, the one thing necessary, in the words of verse 27, for Jesus to give a person eternal life. The idea in this text is that only Jesus has it, and He only gives it to those who believe in Him. Not themselves, but Him. Not their good works, but Him. Not an organization, not some prophet or leader, but trust in Him and Him alone. To them, and only to them, does He give eternal life. And the New Testament could not be any clearer on this. Romans 3:20, "By works of the law, no human being will be justified in His sight." Not one person can or will be right with God, be accepted by God, by earning it with their good works. Not even one.

Why? Because this denies the one and only requirement to be right with God, which is faith in Jesus. Verse 27, the only one that God has approved. The only one verse 29, sent by God to give eternal life to this world of sinners. It denies all of that. That's why Romans 3:28 says, "We hold that one is justified by faith apart from works." It's faith on one side, works on the other side. That's why Galatians 2:16 says, "We know that a person is not justified by works of the law, but through faith in Jesus Christ. Because by the works of the law, no one will be justified." No one will be right with God. If you think about it, if there was going to be a set of rules that if you just obey these rules, you will go to heaven. It would be God's rules, God's law in the Old Testament. But we just looked at three different verses that say that you cannot follow God's laws to go to heaven.

If any law was going to do it, it's going to be God's laws. Which means that any other set of rules, or any other standard that I might set for myself, is going to fail to make me right with God. But what will never fail is faith in Christ. Titus 3:5, God is the Savior and He saves people "not because of works done by us in righteousness." If He doesn't save us because of our works, what does He save us according to? The verse continues, "He saves people according to His own mercy." And that mercy is only found in Jesus. Trusting in Him, giving your life to Him, believing in Him is the one and only requirement to be right with God. It can't be any clearer. Romans 4:5, "To the one who does not work but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly."

Justifies the ungodly. Accepts the sinner. Justifies the people that cleaned themselves up and started doing good things? Justifies the ungodly. "His faith is counted as righteousness." Good works to save on one side, Jesus, faith in Him on the other side to save. These two are at war. And the question is, why are they at war? Listen to the answer in Ephesians 2:8. "By grace, you've been saved through faith and this is not your own doing." The saving the faith is not your own doing. "It is the gift of God, not as a result of works so that no one may boast."

Did you hear it? Why is earning salvation by good works on one side at war with faith in Jesus for salvation on the other side? Because if salvation is by works, then all trust is in self to save me and not in Jesus to save me. And if I save me, then I can boast. "Good job. You did what you needed to do. You came to that conclusion. You jumped through the right hoops. You're a good boy. You're a good girl. Good job." That word "boast" carries the idea of worship. "I should receive worship. Why? Because I saved myself by my good works. But if I can save me, then there is no point in what Jesus did, right? What he did means nothing if I can just skip all of that and do it myself. And if I can skip everything Jesus did and do it myself, then I get the worship."

You see at the core of everything we've been talking about, at the core of being deceived by wrong motives, at the core of seeking to use Jesus to gain the things of this world, and at the core of earning salvation by good works is all the same thing. At the core of all of that is self. Self. Our pride, our desire to be in charge, to do what we think is right. To do what we think is good enough for God. "This should be good enough for God, what I think." Self is what has to be given up. Self is what stands in the way of Christ. And deceives us into thinking that we're trusting in Christ, and living for Christ, and doing all our good works for Christ when really the smokescreen underneath all of that, is that it's really all about us. Oh, the kindness of Jesus to look at people with sinful, selfish motives, living for themselves, trusting in themselves. What a kindness that He offers them escape from themselves through faith in Him.

Again, that is why Jesus says, "Salvation is about denying yourself, done with yourself, so that you can have Him." So what are you trusting in? Your good works? Your free will? The choice that you made? Your baptism? Your list of accomplishments for God? Your family line of believers, or pastors, or missionaries? I remember witnessing to a lady who said, "Thanks, sonny, but my grandma's in heaven right now. She was a missionary and I got I got somebody up there that's going to get me in, so I'm good." I just laughed at her. And I said, "You know, you're right about something." I didn't really laugh at her, I just chuckled. But I thought, "You know, you're wrong about that. But you are right about one thing. There is someone up there that can get you into heaven, but it's not your grandma. It's the one your grandma was telling people about, which is Jesus."

You're trusting in your feelings that you're a good person. "Hey, I know what you're saying, but listen, I'm a good person." Are you trusting in yourself? Are you trusting in Jesus and Jesus alone to save you? He is the only way to be right with God. Belief in Him is the only way for God to accept you. This is the one requirement, and there is only one. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved. Notice verse 27 again, "He will give you eternal life." He will give you

pardon. He will forgive you. But not on your terms, not ever on your terms. Only on His terms. And His term, His requirement is, one, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

So as we take a step back from all of this, our motives have been checked by God's word. What we're living for has been checked by God's word. Trying to earn our own salvation by our good works, that's been checked by God's word. So after examining yourself, did you pass the test? I assume most of you are, who are here, assume you did pass the test. You're not one of the many. You're trusting in Jesus to save you and not yourself. And not anyone else or anything else. You're trusting in Him and Him alone. However, if you didn't pass, or if you're not sure if you pass, this is what pastors are for. This is why I stand at the doors. This is why our pastors are all over the place, on campus on the weekends, is to help you with questions like this one. Because there is no greater question that you could ask than, "Am I saved? Am I trusting in Christ alone to save me from my sins?" There's no more important question for you to talk about or for you to answer. So please do not leave here with knowing whether or not you pass this test. Let's pray.

Father, what a kindness that this text is. It's a kindness because it can give us assurance of our salvation that we are following Christ. That we are truly trusting in Him. So it can give assurance, it can give us confidence. And a text like this is also a grace, because it can expose us. It can expose the truth. It's Your word, it cuts us. And it gets deep into our thoughts and our intentions, our motives. And so I pray that You would use this text in each of our lives. Help us not only to understand ourselves in light of these things, but please help our lives to change in light of these things. Do not let us be like those who see ourselves clearly in a mirror, the mirror of your word, but then walk away as if we never saw ourselves. Give us the courage, give us the conviction, give us the humility to do work with You and with Your truth. Because Jesus said, "We can know the truth. The truth can set us free." To do this for each and every one of us, I pray. Amen.