

Superficial (Compilation)

by Compilations

The sermon addresses the dangers of superficial faith and emphasizes the true cost and commitment required to follow Christ authentically.

Duration: 20:04

Scripture: Matthew 4:23, Matthew 6:10, Acts 17:6, Romans 1:5, Romans 6:17, Galatians 2:20, James 3:1

Topics: "Compilation"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of mixing faith with the truth of God's word. He shares a personal story of following specific directions to find a family's house, illustrating the principle of faith in action. The speaker explains that teaching alone is not enough; preaching is necessary to exhort believers to mix their faith with the facts they have learned. He concludes by highlighting the need for ongoing faith and trust in Jesus to guide and transform every aspect of our lives.

Transcript

Many people come, quote, believe on Christ, thinking that he's some kind of a cosmic Santa Claus to fill, you know, fulfill all your, quote, needs. This happens no matter how pure of a gospel that we present. The Lord Jesus Christ presented the purest gospel ever presented, and there was all kinds of people following him with a misunderstanding of what was being offered.

That's the mark of superficial faith. It happens no matter how pure of a gospel. But if we deliberately preach a carnal, debased, man-centered gospel, you're going to get people coming with superficial faith.

You're going to get them coming by the droves. And that's going on a lot today. I mean, you know, to start out, how many of you don't want to go to hell? Well, nobody wants to go to hell.

No, you can escape from hell. How many of you want to have peace and be happy all the day and not have any problems? Well, who doesn't want to have peace and be happy? How about this? If you came to Jesus, you could get free from those drugs. You could get free from alcohol.

Oh, man, my life's a mess. I would like to be free from alcohol. You know, it would make things a lot better.

Don't you see that doesn't have anything to do at all with God? It doesn't have anything to do with an apprehension of God at all. Or what God's really offering. It's just stuff for me.

It's centered on me. How about this? Come to Christ and you can have financial freedom. It used to be called prosperity.

You can have prosperity. You can have, you know, it's a carnal reason. And it's even the terminology.

I mean, those terms are used. Financial freedom. And this is, we're told this is what will really draw people to the Lord when they see how Christians have financial freedom.

You realize how carnal that is? I mean, you could have it all together and have your bills paid if you were a Christian. How about this one? You come to Christ, you could have a happy marriage. I mean, that one is presented a lot.

You know, you could have a happy marriage. And it was a few years ago we had a guy come to the campus there in Kirksville. And you'd know his name.

He's a world-known guy. And the title of his message? Maximum Sex. And the idea is, if you become a Christian, just think how much better your sex life could be.

Do you realize what this is? It's a prostitution of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Offering men things. And like I said, you give that kind of a message, and you present the gospel to people, that you're going to get something.

Men will try to use God to get something that they want that's big, that's bigger than God to them. See that? What's the real God? The thing they value over here that they want to use God to get. One of the hardest things that you can do is try to counsel with people that are having marriage problems and try to get them to really seek the Lord, because He's the Lord.

They're wanting to seek God so they can get their spouse back. They've got marriage problems. That's why they're coming.

People that have superficial faith, they don't realize what's involved in being a Christian. And you don't have to read very far in John before these same people here that believed on Him, and they started getting that far away look in their eyes, and they got interested in other things. And many of His disciples turned back and didn't walk with Him anymore.

They didn't realize, you know, if it's going to mean that, I'm not going to do that. And they turned back. Repentance is costly.

It really is. It's costly. It doesn't pay for anything, but it costs a lot.

It hurts. Matthew 16, 24-26, If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake in the gospel shall find it.

People say, well, that's talking about rewards. Well, you've got to read the next verse. What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? That's talking about salvation.

Taking up your cross, following Him, losing your life. John 12, 25, He who loves his life loses it, but he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal. There's no body that gets into heaven that doesn't hate his life in this world.

That's not an option, beloved. You've had people lie to you. If they've told you that you can love your life in this world and still keep it to life eternal, it directly contradicted what we just read, what Jesus said.

No man can be My disciple. He said that. Impossible.

What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul? Luke 14, 26-33, If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. So therefore, no one of you can be My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions. We're not talking about super-Christians.

He's just talking about what it is to believe on Him. It's going to cost you everything to be a Christian. It really is.

It's going to cost you everything to be a Christian. You're not doing anybody a favor by giving them the impression that that's not the case. It's going to cost everything.

One thing that God does insist on in saving a man is that he be his God. God does insist on that. That seems pretty reasonable, doesn't it? He says, concerning the New Covenant, I will be their God and they will be My people.

He insists on that. I'll be your God. I love that.

I am so thankful for that. I enjoy to visit them in their own homes, in their own country. And to this end, I would travel thousands of miles by car across the continent of Europe from one town to another across unknown territory visiting this village or that town and then looking up the youngsters, getting to know their parents, visiting their schools, their churches, their youth groups and proclaiming Christ and sharing Him with their friends.

And this, of course, meant that on many occasions I'd come to a city that I had never visited before and all I had was the name and the address of the boy, perhaps, whom I wanted to visit and his family on a piece of paper and I wouldn't have a clue how to get there. So what I would normally do is head for the center of the city and look on the sidewalk for the most intelligent looking face that I could find. And when I saw that, I'd stop, wind the window around, stick my neck out and say, excuse me, I wonder if you could help me.

I'm trying to find this particular address and I haven't any idea in which direction to go. And I don't know what your experience has been but normally when you do that, that very intelligent looking face suddenly becomes totally unintelligent. And when you've done it about six times and they've all said, I'm sorry, I'm a stranger too, you're almost in despair.

So finally you go to a gas station anticipating maybe that the man there can help. And so you drive up and say, I'm sorry, I'm in trouble. I've asked about six people away to this particular address and nobody seems to know.

I'm beginning to wonder whether there is such a place. I wonder if you could help me. And I give him the piece of paper and as the man reads it, his face lights up with obvious recognition.

And he says, yes, I know exactly where that is. As a matter of fact, I only live about 150 yards from that very place, just around the corner. Well, that's encouraging.

And then he takes me by the arm and leads me to the edge of the sidewalk and points down the road and says, do you see the traffic lights? I said, yes. Well, he said, don't take any notice of those traffic lights. Go on to the next, the second lot of traffic lights.

And when you get to the second lot of traffic lights, turn right. And when you've turned right, go as far as you can. It's a T-junction.

He said, you can't make a mistake. You've got to turn either right or left, so turn right. And you'll come to a multiple crossing, about five roads all coming together.

Can't miss that either. And there's a big store on the corner with a big gold clock and there's usually a packed policeman in the middle. Now, he says, you go all the way around until you come to the fourth of those five crossings.

Don't come to the fifth or you'll be coming back again. So, the fourth, the last, before the one you came down. Now, when you get to that fourth turning, go to the second turning on the left.

And when you take the second turning on the left, just about 100 yards on the right, you'll find that house. Well, you know, the more he speaks, the more I'm convinced that what he says is true. He's speaking with such detail, such accuracy, such confidence, that every word he speaks produces in me faith in the truth that his word is declaring.

Now, he can see that I'm a little simple, so he starts all over again. And by the time he's been all over it again for the second time, I'm absolutely convinced that what he says is true. I'm a believer.

An absolute believer. Have I arrived? No. No.

I'm still at the gas station. And at that stage, I took out a flask of coffee and put my feet on the steering wheel and read the newspaper. I'd still be at the gas station.

I'd still be there now. Because, you see, although the word that he has spoken has created in me faith in the truth that his word is declared, the truth that his word is declared will not profit me unless now I mix it with the faith that his word is produced. So I say, well, thank you very much.

That's been most kind. You've been extremely courteous. I understand exactly what you said.

I think I know exactly how to get there. And having bid my farewell, I get into the car, engage the engine, and not the first lot of traffic lights, second. And sure enough, there's the T-junction.

And I turn right and I go as far as I can until I come to a multiple crossing and there's the fat policeman. And I go all the way around very carefully until I come to the fourth turning, second turning on the left, and sure enough, as I look across to the house a hundred yards on the right, the number matches the number on my piece of paper, I get out, I look at the name under the doorbell, and sure enough, it's the name of that family. Knock on the door, and before long, I'm being greeted by the youngster who spent his holiday with us in England, and I'm sitting around the family table drinking beer coffee.

I've arrived. Now, do you see the principle? The word that he spoke created in me faith in the truth that his word declared. But the truth that his word declared didn't profit me until I mixed it with the faith that his word had produced.

Now, that's the nature of faith. From the word of God, you see, we get intelligent instruction. And the man who declares that from the word of God is teaching.

But teaching isn't adequate in itself. Because, you see, we can teach folk the facts until they can memorize the facts and repeat the facts backwards. And they may be absolutely convinced of the facts that you've taught them, never challenging one single thing about them.

But that wouldn't be adequate. We have to do more than teach. We have to preach and teach.

Teach and preach. And preaching, you see, is an exhortation to mix the facts now with the faith that those facts have produced. So that by the obedience of faith that does the truth, we look into God's face and say, I understand the facts.

And I understand that you are the only person who can translate those facts into the experience of my life and clothe them with the flesh and blood of my humanity. So now I obey the truth. And I ask upon what I know.

And I trust you to move into my life and redeem me. And having redeemed me now, Lord Jesus, knowing that you've risen again from the dead and you've come to indwell my humanity, I trust you. For every step I take and for every situation into which that step takes me by your Holy Spirit to instruct my mind, control my reactions, direct my will, and govern my behavior.

Now I've learned to exercise faith. Not just the one crisis of faith whereby we're reconciled to God, the day of our conversion. For that crisis of faith, you see, is designed to introduce us to a process of faith.

The act of faith is designed to precipitate an attitude of faith. It's designed to create in you and in me what I've described as this disposition that lets God be God in my experience. By yielding now my obedience to His instructions, instructions that I have invoked by my attitude that brings Him into action.

The Word spoken. The Word spoken. It didn't profit them.

Not being mixed with faith in them that heard it. Have you mixed the Word with faith? Or are you still at the gas station? There are tens of thousands of boys and girls and men and women who've been brought up in an evangelical context who go to Bible class every Sunday, who listen to good, sound Bible preaching from the pulpit, and they wouldn't challenge any of the facts. They believe that Jesus Christ was born on that first Christmas day.

They believe that He lived a sinless life that declared the perfection of His humanity. They believe that He died on the cross to redeem sinners. They believe that He rose again from the dead, ascended to be with the Father.

They believe that He promised the gift of the Holy Spirit. They believe that He's able and willing to save any boy, girl, man or woman who will come and receive Him, and they remain unsaved. And yet they believe it all.

They believe it all because they never mixed with faith the facts that they have come to believe. Unsaved believers at the gas station. And I'll tell you what, the passion doesn't get less, it gets deeper.

America won't stand another decade unless there's a Holy Ghost revival. The Russians won't destroy us, we'll destroy ourselves. We'll destroy ourselves with AIDS and all these other hellish diseases and all the

corruption in government.

And God's going to offer us mercy. And we have to plead now in wrath, remember mercy. He is a merciful God, otherwise He'd have burned us up today.

It's true of England and other countries. But you see, we don't have these passionate men. We're in God's name are the men with passion.

It's all so sweet and easy these days. Oh, God loves you. One of the big excuses some of the preachers now, you know, oh, you sin, of course you do.

We're only human. We're not human. How can a man filled with the Holy Ghost just be human? The man who's just human is a sinner.

He loves his sin, he practices his sin. He's not just human if he's a God filled man. Read Romans 8. He says he's filled with the Spirit of God, he's filled with the Spirit of Christ, he's filled with the Holy Spirit.

If he's really abandoned, why is he just ordinary? Why is the devil always trying to destroy that man if he's ordinary? He's not ordinary. He's different in the eyes of the devil, he's different in the eyes of God. And so with this, I expect at the judgment seat there's going to be a judgment of believers, there's going to be a judgment of sinners, there's going to be a special judgment of preachers according to James.

Be not many preachers or teachers, we shall receive a greater judgment. I expect to see preachers, brilliant preachers, well-known preachers charged with criminal neglect at the judgment seat. Why? Because they do not preach the whole counsel of God.

We're not just human. We're not here just to be human. We're here to be superhuman.

We're here to live. Why do you say, thy kingdom come, thy will be done in earth? It can only be done in earth as the kingdom is done in us. As we're subject to love and joy and peace and long-suffering and gentleness and meekness.

The intensity of our love to God will be measured by our intensity of our hatred for the devil and human systems. And they've all had their way and done nothing. We're on the edge of disaster.

We're on the edge of wrath. And God's going to raise up some men like this. I believe lots of these young men that keep coming in here, they keep writing to me, I came the other Friday night, God touched my heart.

That's my reward. Not reward, not offering. In fact, the offerings are the same every week at this place.

Never there is a dime. And I'm glad it is that way. But you don't say, well, there'll be an offering at the end.

Never have been, never will be as far as I'm concerned. But you see, this is an unusual hour. It's an unusual hour.

God wants unusual men. It's a crisis hour. Sin isn't normal anymore.

People don't, when those girls lying almost naked, they say, oh, I don't feel embarrassed. That's no compliment. It's a shame.

They can be in a Christian camp and not feel embarrassed. And fellows are going past looking and pointing at them and they're not embarrassed to say it. Where is our hatred for sin? Let me say this.

A fellow called me yesterday from West Virginia. Brother Ray, I want to encourage you. Good.

I said, that's great. There's not much of that stuff about. He said, we started praying in our church.

Young people get together, other people. And he said, the Lord came and a bunch of young men have really got quickened by God. I said, what's the proof? He said, they've gone back to their offices and businesses and they've been witnessing and they've brought Mormons into the church.

And the last few weeks, one or two Mormons each week is getting saved. Bless the Lord forever. In this day.

Why? Because some young men have been transformed. You can't contain it. Boy, I went to a tiny church.

You know what we did Sunday morning? We carried the church organ in the street where there was poverty. And we had our street Sunday morning. Where did Jesus preach? In a lovely church with stuffed seats and stained glass windows and a massive choir and an organ? No, He didn't.

He didn't often get in the synagogue. He preached in the street. What did we do Sunday night after the service? We went back in another area, a poor area, took the organ again and we sang for about an hour and testified and preached.

And it was wonderful. I thought, I got my first taste there of the real concern for the lost. And I'll tell you what it was.

It started through an American that went to the Indians. David Brennan. And I said, well, God sins the same.

And I lay in dust. I just started. I got everything printed to start my own business.

I took it to the altar. I said, it's there. I finished with it.

I didn't touch it. I'm glad a thousand times over that I have. I have one thing equal with Dr. Tauber.

I finished school in the eighth grade. If that's any congratulation, I helped you. And he did.

And I've learned to love the Lord and I want to love Him more. And if I had a thousand tongues, I'd preach. Boy, you'd be here a long while if I had a thousand tongues, wouldn't you?

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