

# How to Get Nothing Out of the Christian Life

by Helene Ashker

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*To experience the abundant life, we must learn to compare ourselves to God's plan, not others, and commit to trusting in His goodness and sovereignty.*

**Duration:** 43:28

**Scripture:** Numbers 14:6-9, Psalm 37:4-5, Matthew 6:33, Galatians 5:22-23, Hebrews 3:7-11, James 1:2-3, James 1:22

**Topics:** "Christian Life"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of making Jesus the center of our lives. He encourages the audience to cultivate a thankful spirit and to delight in the Lord, promising that He will grant the desires of their hearts. The speaker also challenges the audience to evaluate their own lives and consider whether they are truly resting in God's promises or trying to take control themselves. The sermon concludes with a prayer of gratitude for Jesus and a reminder of the freedom found in gathering around God's Word.

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## Transcript

Well, we welcome you in the name of Jesus Christ today. And the subject, as you well know, is how to get nothing out of your walk with God. This past year, as I've traveled, it's been a grave concern to me to note how few Christians really are happy.

And I thought about others, and then the Lord began to speak to me about myself. And as I evaluated my own walk with God, I thought, am I really happy? Do I, in everything, give thanks? And then I thought, what keeps us from having this abundant life? It's our inheritance. And why doesn't my life reflect, or your life reflect, an inner glow? Billy Graham says that's how you can tell a beautiful woman.

And a woman is only beautiful when she knows Jesus Christ, personally. Because he says there is something from within. Well, if we are beautiful, and if we have this within us, why doesn't it always show? And so, I began to evaluate my own life, and from that, this message has come.

And so, why don't we start with a word of prayer, together. Heavenly Father, we thank you today for Jesus Christ. We thank you for everything that we have in Him.

For the freedom that we have today of sitting together, gathering around your word publicly. We think of many Christians around the world that do not have this privilege. And we thank you for it, Lord, and let us

not take it for granted.

We thank you for Jesus Christ, who has permitted us to have this relationship with you. And we ask that you would speak to our hearts now. Quiet them.

We pray that every one of us will allow your Spirit to speak personally to us. Let us not regard the things that are coming up, or the troubles and the concerns that are on our hearts. But let us allow your Spirit to speak through the channels that you have provided.

In Jesus' name, Amen. The first observation I made, that keeps me from the abundant life, is this matter of comparing. Do you find yourself evaluating the gifts that other people have, and then comparing them with your own? See, personally, I would like to play the guitar and sing.

I think that would really be neat. Or to play the piano, like Ruth does. Or I'd like to be a gifted artist.

You'll discover that I barely am able to print in a few minutes. But I look at other people's gifts, and if you look at them long enough, don't you begin to think, well, you know, why don't I have that gift? Why didn't God give that to me? And then you begin to compare, and if you compare long enough, envy can set in, and jealousy. And then if you really have a thing about someone, and you hear something, a remark made about them that's critical, you secretly enjoy it.

Now you're laughing because you know what I'm talking about. I was on the East Coast recently, and I was spending time with a girl, a college student at a big, large university. And she began to confide that she was very jealous of her pretty roommate.

She said, when we go out with fellows, the fellows spend all their time paying attention to her, and they don't pay any attention to me. And you could tell that there wasn't much joy reflecting on her face or in her life. The thing that this girl had overlooked was that God had given her an unusual intelligence.

She was so busy looking at the other girl's gift that she had not noticed her own. And frankly, I had spent time with both girls, and my time with this girl was much more interesting. See, she had developed her intellect and was quite an interesting companion, but she couldn't see that because her eyes were clouded with jealousy and envy, and it had taken the joy out of her life.

I'm sure that's not true of any of you, but I thought I'd bring it up. 2 Corinthians 10.12 says, But when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise. And what this tells us is, if you want to be unwise or foolish, do this.

Compare yourself. What is much more advantageous, I have discovered, is working at developing the gifts that I have. And you don't really notice them.

You don't know what they are. Often other people will tell you what they are. You know, you're really good at this or that.

And then we usually say, oh, no, I'm not. And they say, oh, yes, you are. And you've played that little game, I'm sure.

But this intelligent girl had allowed the comparison to rob her of joy and gratitude. She wasn't thanking God for the gift He had given her or the gifts. And that may be true with some of us today.

The thing we tend to forget, girls, is that God has not given us gifts to glorify ourselves. He has given us gifts to glorify Him. And we get that out of perspective, don't we? And when we get it out of perspective, we get into trouble.

I remember once being asked to babysit for a family of children. And the husband told me that his wife really needed a break. She had had a tough year, and he said, I'd like her to go, but she does not feel like she can leave the children unless you stay with them, Helene.

I was her good friend. And, you know, I got to feeling sorry for myself. I had been working hard.

I didn't have a husband that told me that it was time to go on vacation. And so I felt sorry for myself for a while. And then it dawned on me what I was doing.

So I went to the Lord. And in a very real way, girls, the Lord is my husband. And so I said, okay, Lord, you're my husband.

You know I need a break. I'm tired. I don't have any money.

And if I had it, I wouldn't know where to go. So when you think it's time for me to have a vacation, you provide the means and the place. The next day, I received a letter.

And as I pulled it out, it was a card. And on it, it said, Aloha. Aloha.

That's right. Inside was a check for \$500 designated for a trip to Hawaii. Well, you know, I was glad that I had settled that before the Lord, before I got that envelope.

But you know something, girls? It was already in the mail before I had committed the situation to the Lord. Do you live on a miracle level? Do you turn to the Lord to provide your needs? Are you grateful when he does? I've learned the hard way, and I'm learning. But comparison is something that will take all the joy out of your life, and especially if it's hooked up to a particular person.

The second C is complaining. And that was another observation I made, that we seem to do an awful lot of complaining. Now, to complain means to express grief, pain, or discontent.

It sounds like this. Why did God allow this to happen to me? Or, I wonder why I don't have more money. Why doesn't my boss appreciate me? I wish my roommate would change her attitude.

That's a sensitive one, isn't it? Why am I not married yet? How come God gave her that husband? Doesn't he realize her faults? Or the boyfriend? Not unusual, are they? You know how I figured these out. I didn't take a survey. Why doesn't God answer my prayers? God is answering your prayers.

He's answering my prayers. It's just that we don't like the answer. So we'd rather accuse him of not answering prayer.

That's another. And it goes on. Why aren't the girls in my Bible study more interesting? And we could go on and on, couldn't we? Complain, complain, complain.

And we spread discontent wherever we go, if we can. We criticize, we gossip. And we always want more, don't we? Whatever we have, whatever God has given us.

Just a friend of mine to whom God has given much in this world said to me the other day, why is it that as much as we have, we always want a little more? What have you complained about today? Did you complain about having to clean your house? About having to come to a conference? Let's see, what would you complain about? Can't complain about the weather very well. Maybe the wind. Or what is it that you continually, repeatedly complain about way down deep in your heart? I was wondering the other day what to wear to an event, and I was planning dinner at the same time.

And then I took a break, and I was reading Time Magazine. And I was reading about Guatemala. And I discovered that many of the Guatemalans that were involved in this earthquake, 20,000 lives were taken.

Many were left without homes, without clothes. Some were eating rats to stay alive. And I thought, now they don't have to worry about making choices about what to wear or what to eat.

The choices are being made for them right now. Rags and rats. And that really got to me.

And I said to the Lord, I'm really sorry for the ungrateful heart that I have for the abundance that you've given me. I could be one of those Guatemalans. So could you.

And it really got to me. Well, you know, one group of people that God speaks of as having complaining spirits are the Israelites. And let's turn to Numbers 14.

Together. We'll start out. I'll give you a little of the... Yes.

You can't hear me? You know, I really... This mic is working. Can you hear me better now? Can you? Okay. I'll try to speak up.

Being very shy, that's difficult. God had continually demonstrated his power to the Israelites. He had gotten them out of bondage in Egypt.

He had parted the Red Sea and destroyed their enemies. He had fed them with manna. And when they complained about manna, they were sick of their diet, he gave them quail.

And now they have approached the very borders of the promised land. God way back had given the promises to Abraham and to their nation. And now they're on the threshold of the fulfillment of those promises.

And we take up the story in chapter 13 first. What they did was they sent out 12 spies into the land. And these 12 spies were supposed to find out what the inhabitants were like and what the land was like.

Well, 10 of them came back and said there are giants in the land, you know, we'll all be killed. Caleb and Joshua... Let's look at verse 30. Then Caleb calmed the people in Moses' presence and urged, let us confidently go up and conquer it for we are well able to do it.

But the men who went up with him said, we are not able to go up against these people, they are too strong for us. And they brought to the people of Israel this discouraging report out of the land which they had spied out. And they said, the land through which we passed as spies is a land that devours its inhabitants.

And then it said at the end of verse 33, even to ourselves we look like grasshoppers and so we look to them. Now that's the report of the 10. Now we'll pick the story up in chapter 14.

Then the entire congregation raised their voices and the people wept throughout that night. God had promised to give them the land. They get to the very edge of the land, they see it, and they spend a whole night crying.

Okay. The Israelites make a choice. They choose to believe God or to disobey God.

And in this instance, as usual, they forgot all the miracles that God had done, the parting of the Red Sea, the getting of them out, all of those plagues that they were a part of in Egypt, all of that they'd forgotten. And they come up with their own plan. And we'll take it up in verse 2. The entire nation began to complain against Moses and Aaron to such a degree that the whole concourse said to them, oh, that we had perished in the land of Egypt or we even had died in this wilderness.

What was in Egypt? Slavery. And they're saying, oh, if we had only perished in Egypt. When they were in Egypt, they were complaining about slavery.

And so God delivers them from Egypt. And now they're in the Promised Land, close to it, and they're complaining again. They forgot the miracles and they did not see the situation from God's viewpoint.

God wanted to demonstrate His power through them. Now, if there were no enemies around and they just marched in and took over the land, would anyone know that God was Almighty God? That the God of the Israelites was the true God? No. But they were looking at it from man's viewpoint.

And they begin to weep. Verse 2, they begin to complain against their leadership. I'm sure with you girls that this may not be a problem, but it was a problem with the Israelites.

And verse 3, they begin to complain against whom? Who? The Lord. And that's, girls, the usual procedure. We start out by complaining about people, but ultimately we are complaining about the Lord.

And that's exactly what they're doing. And so they decide, would it not be preferable for us to return to Egypt? They said to one another, let us appoint a leader and go back to Egypt. Had not God given them leadership, Moses and Aaron? They wanted to destroy, and you'll notice, Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before the entire congregation.

And verse 6, Joshua, the son of Nun, and Caleb, the son of whoever, said to the people, the land through which we passed as spies is extremely fertile land. And they tore their clothes and told the whole gathering, you know, let's go take this land. If the Lord is pleased with us, this is the condition, verse 8, if the Lord is pleased with us, he will bring us in and give us this land which is flowing with milk and honey.

Above all, do not neither rebel against the Lord nor have fear of the native population. They shall be as bread to us. In other words, we'll eat them.

Their defense is as a vanishing shadow, for the Lord is with us. Do not fear them. At these words, the whole crowd was on the verge of hurling stones at them, when suddenly the glory of the Lord appeared to the entire nation of Israel in the tent of meeting.

If God had not intervened, the Israelites would have thwarted God's plan by stoning their leadership and going back to Egypt. And God speaks to Moses and says, how long are these people going to spurn me? How long? Complain, complain, complain. The reason they complained, girls, is because they had complaining spirits.

No matter where they were, they found something to complain about. Now, that isn't unusual, is it? Down deep, what is their basic problem? They did not believe God. That's what the text says.

They didn't trust God, so they took life into their own hands. And whenever you get disheartened with what God might be doing in your life and the testing might be too difficult, our tendency is to reject God's plan and take life into our own hands. God is not going to take care of us, so we'll take care of ourselves.

That's what they said. Consequently, God sentenced them to 40 years of wandering in the wilderness. Here they are, right on the verge of taking it.

And God let them wander for another 40 years, or a total of 40 years. You know, they're not too different from us, are they? We commit our lives to the Lord and we sing songs like, Oh, How I Love Jesus, and all these pretty songs we were singing today. I'll go where you want me to go, dear Lord.

I'll do what you want me to do. And down deep, we do not believe Him and we do not trust Him. And if the path He takes us on is kind of tough, we do what Pat says.

You run. You take life into your own hands. And maybe you're doing that today.

And maybe life is kind of olive drab as a result. It's a good indicator. We start out with a commitment.

We go forward and we kneel at an altar and we say, Lord, I'll do anything you say. And then as soon as things get a little rough, we take it back. Let's turn to Hebrews 3 for a moment because there's a warning that Scriptures give us about the Israelites.

Hebrews 3, verses 7 to 11. Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your heart, as in the rebellion at the time when you put God to the test in the wilderness, where your fathers for 40 years tried me by putting me to the test and saw what I did. So I became sorely displeased with that generation and said, they are always going astray in their hearts.

They did not learn my ways. As I swore in my anger, they shall not enter into my rest. They were not thankful.

They forgot what God had done. And they had no rest. And it's very difficult to be joyful girls if our lives are full of complaining and comparing, isn't it? And we will not have rest.

God won't give it to us. You know, no doubt God has given you some promises for your life. Maybe He gave you some for this year.

Are you believing Him? Or are you complaining? Thank you. I'm sorry you had to come all that way. There are several glasses of water all around here.

It's just my voice, thank you. I know. But she wanted to bring it, and that's okay, Delora.

Thank you. But just like the Israelites, girls, you have a choice. Are you going to believe God for those promises and the fulfillment of them? Or are you going to take life into your own hands? If you're resting on His promises, you are enjoying the Christian life.

And it radiates, and others notice it. The third point is commit. How do we enter into the rest? Well, these verses are almost my life verses.

Psalm 37, 4 and 5 starts out with, Delight yourself also in the Lord, and He'll give you the desires of your heart. Boy, when I first read that, I thought, Terrific! God has promised to give me the desires of my heart. Well, this is the list, Lord.

Six foot two, eyes of blue. What I didn't realize is that I was supposed to delight myself in the Lord. I wanted all the desires of my heart.

I did not want to pay the price. And the price is putting the Lord first, the very center of your life. And then He changes our desires, conforms them to His will, and then grants them.

There are so many things, girls, and I'm sure you've had this experience, that if God gave you all of the desires of your heart, you'd have ruined your life by now. Some of you will. In a group this size, there will be some of you who will make wrong decisions that will determine the course of your life.

And rebellion will be a part of it. Unbelief will be a part of it. Pride will be a part of it.

Rebellion. Just because you're a Christian does not guarantee you a full life. Obedience is a part, and we're going to go into that in a minute.

And then the second part is to cultivate a thankful spirit, from verse four. Delight yourself in the Lord, and He will grant you the desires of your heart. Let Him be the center of your life, is what it's saying.

And I'd like us to study together an illustration to visualize what is involved in committing your life to the Lord. It not only involves a decision, but a process. And we're going to see if this works now.

Isn't that beautiful? It's artwork. Very good. Is something wrong with it? Oh, good.

Thank you. Okay. Let's say that this flower represents your Christian life, okay? And we're going to start out and dissect the flower, so you agronomists or botanists or whatever you are can help us out.

And I want you to answer the questions. What... You'll notice down here the roots. What is the function of the roots of a plant? Nourishment? To take water and nutrients? Support.

Good. Okay. What should be the support for the Christian life? Where do we get our nutrients, our nourishment from? I won't belabor it, but turn to Ephesians 3.17 and see what it says, okay? Does somebody have it? What are the roots of the Christian life that you're supposed to be grounded in, girls? Love of whom? The love of God, right? Okay.

So let's say that the soil... Well, let's see if this works. Is that printing? You notice how artistic? The love of God. Ephesians 3.17. Right.

The roots give stability. What is the function of the stem? What does the stem do? It supports the plant, doesn't it? Okay, and it carries the nutrients from the roots on up to the rest of the plant. Okay, for the Christian... It's going to work.

I have great confidence in this. Jesus Christ. I'm just going to put Jesus there because I'm not sure I can get the rest on.

Can you read that? No. Well, you can do it on your own diagram. Jesus Christ is the stem, let's say, in this illustration, okay? The stem connects the rest of the plant to it, doesn't it? Okay, what is the function of the

leaves? There are the leaves.

I knew they would be here somewhere. What's the function of the leaves, girls? Are you all whispering photosynthesis? What does it photosynthesize? Come on, if I have to talk, you can talk. Light into what? Food, energy, dynamic.

Isn't that right? The dynamic of the plant comes through the sunshine into the leaves, okay? What is the dynamic of the Christian life? What provides the energy, the vitality? True? Don't bug my illustration. He works through something. Yes, but he has to work through something.

The word, okay. Thank you. Very good, little navigator here.

This is not working. Anyway, you can write that. The word on one, what else? Prayer, okay.

Pardon me? Well, no, you won't either. You know, this really isn't a very effective pen. Do you have, where's the one that you said wouldn't work as well? As well as what is it? Okay.

There, the word. Why are you laughing? It works. Prayer, what else? Oh, can't fool you.

See, it's fine to say the Holy Spirit, but if that's true, girls, then every Christian should be equally mature. Isn't that right? If it was all up to the Holy Spirit. We've got to give him, we have got to give him something to work with.

Okay, and the last one you know, fellowship and what is it? Witnessing, okay. Okay, is that a pretty flower? Now, something is missing, isn't it? Let's talk about the leaves for just a minute more, because I think this relates to our lives in a little bit better order. The plant, a plant has many enemies, doesn't it? Where do the enemies attack? Hmm? The leaves? Uh-huh.

The roots? Uh-huh. Okay, let's just stop there for a minute. I have a tree in my backyard that I suddenly noticed the other day is turning brown.

And these are expensive trees. I don't own the house, I don't own the trees, but I feel very responsible for the property that I'm living on. And so I went out and I tried to diagnose what was wrong with this tree.

And I went down to Kmart and I told this man, and we both looked very worried, and he asked all these questions, and he diagnosed it. It probably has boars, is it? Worms? You know, I don't know what it had, so I bought whatever he said and came home with it, and I doused the whole tree with this stuff. Well, then my roommate came home and she had diagnosed it another way.

She decided it needed iron. So she's got a jug of iron. We have now doused it with iron, boar killer, and water.

Now, if the tree survives all that, we may get to the enemy of the tree. But we're very busy trying to diagnose what the problem is. If it is a boar, if it is some sort of bug, and we have not killed it, it will eventually destroy the life of that tree, won't it? And the same is true with this flower.

If the leaves and the roots, if the enemy attacks the roots of it, and the leaves, will there be a flower? Of course not. And if there is one, it'll be very funny looking. I had a whole bunch of funny looking, eaten away flowers last year around a tree, and I keep going over and looking at them, and we'd water them, and then I discovered that something just ate across all of the blossom.

So even if it does have one, it won't be very pretty. Okay. So the Christian has an enemy.

Who's the enemy of the Christian? Okay. 1 Peter 5, 8 to 9, says that our enemy is stalking around, seeing whom he may devour. When the enemy attacks you, what does he attack, girls? Does he attack you physically and knock you on your back? No.

What does he do? Your mind? But what does he attack? What did he get you to stop doing? Believing what? Uh-huh. And where do we find out what God says? I'm going to get to our illustration. The Word of God, right? He attacks the Word of God.

And you know another thing he attacks? The character of God. God doesn't really love you. Why should he? Look what you're like.

As if God's love was based on what we are like. God demonstrated his love, girls, before we were ever born, unless we have a couple of thousand year reincarnation here. Jesus Christ died on the cross for our sins, the greatest demonstration of God's love before any of us existed.

And we walk around with our heads hanging low with spiritual inferiority complexes and say, God doesn't love me. Why should he? Look at all the problems I have. Well, you do have problems and so do I. He loves us because we are sinners and that's a qualification of coming to him, that we have problems.

We need him. You know, Jesus said to the Pharisees, I came not to the well but to the sick. Were the Pharisees... He attacks your life through the Word of God.

And then do you notice that you don't really have much to say? Mary Pat mentioned that in her testimony. She didn't have much to say about God. She didn't want to tell anybody about Jesus Christ.

She was hoping she could get out of it, right? Well, if you don't have much to say, it's because whatever we say to other people is an overflow of your life. And so he attacks that as well. And then you don't really want to be around Christians.

They make you feel uncomfortable. You have a feeling they look right through you and they can see all of your sins and all your rebellion and it makes us very uncomfortable. Isn't that true? Okay.

And then he attacks the love of God. So if he can get to that, there is no flower. Now what is the blossom on a plant? The fruit.

It's the overflow, isn't it, of a healthy plant? What is the fruit for the Christian? Here's your big chance. Oh, okay. The fruits of the Spirit.

Is that right? Okay. But let's talk about the flower for a minute. Why do you like a flower? Why is it when somebody comes to our home and gives us flowers? We had a beautiful bouquet the other day of flowers.

It was a thank you. Why do people give flowers? They're pretty. We like the looks of them.

What else do we like about them? The smell. There are two things majorly that we like. Okay.

I can't write fruits of the Spirit in there, but that's what this is. Okay. The fruits of the Spirit.

And here they are in living color. The fruits of the Spirit. Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness.

I don't know what it says on that. Don't you want all these qualities in your life? How are they developed, girls? You know, I used to think, oh, I'd just love to be patient. And, you know, I'd pray, Lord, give me patience.

And you know what I expected? A little pink cloud from heaven to drop on me and give me patience and suddenly transform me from the excitable person I am to a very quiet spirit of what I envisioned a godly woman to be like. Very saintly. Very out of character for me, but nevertheless, what I got was trials and tribulation.

I didn't like the means. And you probably don't like the means either today. If you're suffering through something, many of you have pain that none of us know about.

You have heartaches. And you're thinking, why has God abandoned me? God hasn't abandoned you. He has brought these things into our lives to develop the fruits of the Spirit.

And if you'd like that documented, there must be a verse. Let's see. Where is it? Oh, think it not strange concerning a fiery trial which is to try you, James 1. It's interesting.

It says, count it all joy. In Berkeley, it says, consider it complete joy, my brothers, my sisters, when you become involved in all sorts of trials. And you think, why should I be joyful with all sorts of trials? And in our next session, we're going to be talking about that.

Well aware that the testing of your faith brings out steadfastness. Steadfastness I see as one of these. I really don't see it, but I'm sure it's on here patiently.

It's one of the fruits of the Spirit. And how does it come about according to this verse? Through testings and trials. Well, I don't want testings and trials.

I just want that quality. But that's not God's method. And you see, it says we obey the Word of God.

It's what we do with what we know, girls. It's not just knowledge. Most of us know more than we ever use.

Do you girls need to stand up? A couple of you are yawning rather profusely down there. It's what we do with what we know. That is the determining factor as to whether our flower is blooming or not.

How does your flower look today, girls? Is it all eaten up by the enemy? Is it even there? Let's turn to 2 Corinthians. 2 Corinthians 2 has something to say about our flower. Verse 14-16 says this, But thanks be to God who invariably leads us on triumphantly in Christ and evidences through us in every place the what? We have a scent, don't we? Right now in this room there is an aroma that reflects Jesus Christ.

Isn't that what it says? The fragrance that results from knowing Him. For to God we are Christ's fragrance. For those who are being saved and to those who are perishing.

So we also have a scent horizontally, don't we? And isn't it that which we sense in one another when we're around other Christians? The scent of Jesus Christ. What is the scent that the unbeliever smells? According to the scent of death. They're around the Christian and they think, You know, I don't know where I'm going.

I don't know Jesus Christ like she does. There are some things about her life that I don't have. And that's what draws them to the person of Jesus Christ is the fragrance of the love of God in us.

That's kind of exciting, isn't it? To the one, it says in 16, a fatal aroma that brings death, but to the other, a vital aroma that brings life. Girls, where are the seeds of reproduction in a flower? Not down here. The roots don't reproduce, do they? The leaves don't reproduce, do they? No, it's the healthy flower that reproduces another healthy flower.

And it's the healthy Christian that reproduces healthy Christians. How does your flower look today? Now, if I had the power, I don't think I do, I would remove the stem. Let's say that that stem is covered up.

What happens to the flower when you could cover the stem? If Jesus Christ is not the center of your life today, you probably feel like you're falling apart. You know, I showed this illustration to some women in Latin America. And when I was done, a couple of days later, one of the young gals came up to me and she said through an interpreter, I don't speak Portuguese and they don't speak English, many of them.

And through an interpreter, she came up to me and she said, you know, when you took the stem off, if I have visual aid here, I can take the stem off. She said, when you took the stem off, I made a decision. I wanted Jesus Christ to be the center of my life.

I don't want to be a disconnected Christian. Maybe the reason today you feel like a disconnected Christian, that the joy is gone from your life, is because Jesus Christ really isn't the center. And if he isn't, who is? If it isn't Jesus Christ, you may think it's a boyfriend.

But really, ultimately, the only reason we want a boyfriend to meet that is to meet our needs. And that's what Pat was saying. He was the center of her life.

No, really, it's you or me that's the center of my life if Jesus Christ isn't. And God says, thou shalt have no other gods before me. So we should be doing a little plant inspection.

And in the next session, we're going to be covering more about how to thank the Lord. But before you can thank the Lord, you've got to deal with the problems, don't you? The things that keep us from thanking the Lord. And I believe they're wrapped up right here in our new revised wheel illustration.

Do you like this better than the wheel? Don't tell the navigators, but I do too. See, people cannot see Jesus Christ visibly except through us. And that's why God has planted all these little flowers around the world to represent Him.

So people spotting them say, boy, there's something different about that person. It's the fruits of the Spirit that they're seeing. Do we create a hunger? When people are around us, do they want to know God? Do they think, boy, there's something I want in my life, and she's got it.

And there may be some of you here today that do not yet know Jesus Christ. And we want to give you an opportunity to consider receiving Him. Then your life can begin.

He can begin to be the center of your life like He is and should be of ours. And then you too can have, as you obey the Lord, you can have the joy and the peace and the rest that He's promised. It's available to all of us.

And there are many restless souls today, girls, and we're all concerned about society and the world. And if you were to help the world, what would you do? What would you offer the world? Would you offer them your philosophy? If they followed your philosophy, would they be happy people, full of rest and joy? Or

would they be like you? And see, we need to have a philosophy that works, not just one to talk about in the dorm. So how does your flower grow? Has it even started to take root yet? And if you don't know Jesus Christ, we want you to talk to someone perhaps that brought you about Him or to any one of us.

We'd be happy to discuss your walk with God. So we're going to close this session now with a word of prayer. And I guess, Dolores, we'll turn it over to you, okay?

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