

The Walk of Faith - Part 2

by Larry Ainsworth

The sermon emphasizes the importance of following Jesus and living a life of purpose, using character studies to illustrate practical lessons for the Christian walk of faith.

Duration: 58:26

Scripture: Matthew 4:19, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 8:18, Matthew 8:22, John 3:16, 1 John 4:8, Revelation 1:1

Topics: "Faith Formation", "Biblical Guidance"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of having a strong foundation in the Word of God. He observes that many Christians today lack guidance and fail to apply the teachings of the Bible in their lives. The preacher then introduces six biblical characters, including men and women, who serve as examples for the congregation to learn from. He highlights the lessons to be learned from each character, such as commitment, faith, and prioritizing God. The sermon encourages the audience to listen to the Word of God and not solely rely on the preacher's words.

Transcript

Well, it's good to be with you again. It's been a couple years since I've been down here and I can echo the words of our leader earlier when he said that the changes that have been going on are just something really to behold. I know it's going to be a good weekend.

I understand that there's going to be people adding to our numbers throughout the day and through tomorrow, and I'm sure that we'll have a good time. How many of you here know me? How many of you don't know me? All of you that know me, stay away from those people. Don't listen to anything that Mike has to say because he's a misplaced Omahaan down here helping out.

He's been a real big help to us in Omaha. This weekend, we're going to share from the word of God some practical lessons on the Christian's walk of faith. We're going to look at a number of things this weekend.

Basically, I'm going to share with you six character studies, three from the Old Testament and three from the New Testament. If I look around, I see we're pretty evenly divided between men and women. I hope it stays that way over the weekend.

I work for a company that is very conscious, because the government has made them conscious, of equal opportunity. This weekend, so I wouldn't be in trouble, our character sketches will be three women and

three men. I didn't want the women to feel that they come for naught.

We have some character studies, and the lessons that we'll learn from the women are three positive lessons, so you can be encouraged in that. The men are not so lucky. Out of the men that we're going to study, only one out of the three really gives us a positive lesson.

But nonetheless, we're going to have some positive lessons, even from those that we sometimes look at with a negative type of look. We're going to be looking at a man who was a priest before God. We'll look at a woman who served God, a man who was dissatisfied with God, a woman who gave all to God, a man who walked with God, and a woman who pleaded with the Son of God.

We'll be looking at those six. I'm not going to tell you their names. You probably already guessed a few of them.

We're going to be looking at these six people, and these lessons that we're going to look at over this weekend are not six people that we normally study. They're not the big names of Scripture. One of them might be, but they're not the big names of Scripture.

I read an interesting verse in Timothy, and it says this. All Scripture is inspired by God, spoken by God, and it is profitable. If those men and women's lives are in the word of God, they're there for our profit.

But what happens so often is that we take those... I forgot about you people over here. I won't do that anymore. So often we look at people when we're going through Scripture, and unless something is really dynamic and we've heard it a number of times, we tend to gloss over their lives.

In the last several months, since our brother called me and asked me to come and share the word with you, I've been looking at these people in depth, dissecting their very lives from the word of God to see what has God got for us in their lives. He's got something for us, lessons to learn, principles to hang on to. You know, so often today as I minister among the children of God, is that I see so many people today that don't have a set of handlebars on their bicycle as they pedal through life.

They have nothing to guide them. They understand that there is the word of God, but getting a hold of it and making use of it in their lives is a sad tragedy that is so prevalent today among many Christians. They read the word of God, but they don't grasp hold of it and put it to use in their lives.

And this weekend I'd like to share with you these six lessons from these biblical characters. This morning will be kind of an opening lesson. We're going to be looking at several men this morning, one that our Lord Jesus Christ said was special to him.

He chose them. We'll be looking at their lives from the book of Matthew. Now, this morning, so as not to tire you, I don't know about you, but I was after getting done singing with our brother Glenn.

And from now on it's Larry, not Mr. Ainsworth or Brother Ainsworth. It's Larry. And all of you that don't know me, be sure and come by and introduce yourselves because I want to get to know all of you.

That's what this time together is about. And I hope you won't look at me as being an old fuddy-duddy speaker. I may be fuddy-duddy, but I don't want to be old and I don't want to be fuddy-duddy either.

I'm like Brother Glenn. I'm just a little nigh over 16. A couple times, maybe almost three times.

Now that's sad, you know. But anyhow, I want us all to get acquainted together and it's good to see. Denise, how are you? Here's my little lovely girl from Omaha down here helping out this summer.

I want to get to know all of you that I can and I would pray that if there's any of you here this morning and as we go through the weekend, if you're experiencing some problems in your life and there's just a wealth of help around here. As I look around I see some people that I know and there's just a wealth of help around here. And if you would like to speak to somebody that you need some help in your life, be sure, don't go away.

Don't let the weekend be unprofitable. Make it a profitable one for you. We just want Christians to be built up in the faith and encouraged in these last days.

We were singing just a few moments ago. The day is coming. It won't be very long.

This life of toil here will be ended and we're going to be standing facing him. And dear Christians this morning, I want to ask you, what are you going to have to put into his blessed hands? What kind of crowns are you going to be able to cast at his feet? The day of toil I firmly believe. As we see the world events shaping up around us, how can we have any other thought in our mind but he is coming soon.

He will be here soon. Now, I don't know about you, but after singing with our brother Glenn, I was about woofed. And I was going to have you all stand up and kind of shake it loose, but I know that he kept us going.

And our brother that was over here tickling the iris, boy, if you need a job, come up to Omaha, man, we'll put you there. He does a beautiful job, doesn't he? And I know that you're going to have some people that are going to come and talk to you about singing because, boy, I don't know who was over in here, but I heard some real nice voices coming from over in here and I'm sure if I'd have said over here the same. So you ladies and some of you men, you guys can't sing as well as the women, but give it a shot, man.

Show them that we can do a good job. Don't look to me because I can't read a note. In fact, in Omaha, they give me a little stipend each month.

They say, just don't sing. Keep it down because I have a tendency. He had me going this morning.

I was about ready to jump up and say hallelujah. And I said, no, you remember, you're the dignified preacher. Keep it cool.

So we want to have a good time this weekend. And so sharing your gifts that you have truly will make it a good weekend. When you turn in your Bibles to the book of Matthew, please.

Matthew chapter four. And it's terrible when we have to use other things so we can see better, but this is a necessity. The words have a tendency to dance if I don't use them.

And like I said, Glenn, it's terrible to get old, isn't it? I feel sorry for those of you that are. Matthew chapter four. We're going to look at some verses in the book of Matthew.

And I would like you to turn to the fourth chapter and we'll begin reading at verse 18. I'm going to be reading to you from the New American Standard. If you have the King James or anything else, that's fine.

King James, you won't have any problem if you have any other version. It may be a little bit different, but the intent is still the same. And walking by the Sea of Galilee, he, that is, Jesus, saw two brothers, Simon, who was called Peter, and Andrew, his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen.

And he said to them, Follow me. Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. And they immediately left the nets and followed him.

And going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James, the son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, in the boat with Zebedee, their father, mending their nets. And he called them. And they immediately left the boat and their father and followed him.

We see on the shore of the Sea of Galilee a solitary figure. He comes down the beach. Those that are sitting in the boat, mending their nets, know who he is.

They've been very impressed by him. They've heard him. They've been involved somewhat with him.

And they see him coming. And he stops and speaks to them a very important message. It's a request, a challenge to them.

Follow me. Follow me and I will make you fishers of men. They leave their nets and follow him.

The solitary figure continues down the beach. He comes a little farther and he comes upon another boat. This time there are three in the boat.

A father with his two sons. And he gives them the same challenge. Follow me.

Follow me. It is said that during the Civil War, General Philip Sheridan, while engaged in the fierce battle of the Shenandoah Valley, came out to see his troops one morning in the midst of battle. And as he came upon them, he saw his troops in hasty retreat before the onslaught of the Confederate soldiers.

Standing tall in his saddle and riding to the forefront, he said this to his men. Stop. You're going the wrong way.

You're going the wrong way. Follow me. And he charged into the midst of the Confederate army.

His men stopped in their retreat and they saw their leader. And they turned and they challenged the Confederate foe and defeated them that day. Follow me.

Follow me. Many people today are challenging you to follow them. Are you going to follow those whom you know and trust? Or are you just going to follow anybody? As this solitary figure came to speak to Peter and Andrew, their hearts had already been touched by the Holy Spirit and by the very Lord himself while he was here upon Earth.

They gained that day by his challenge. Thoughts of eternity. Thoughts of eternity.

The eternal souls of men. What about you? Ever think about eternity? The eternalness of a soul? The eternalness of a life around you? Some five years ago, I had the very precious privilege of accompanying my wife into the delivery room when our last daughter was born. There has been no other experience, physical experience in my life, to equal that.

To see one come in and take that first gasp of air and let out that cry and to see her there, life beginning in the wee hours of a Sunday morning. I thought about that soul many times. Here is one who has come into the world whose soul will be eternal.

On that day when our Lord Jesus Christ talked to Peter and Andrew, the thought was of eternity. I will make you fishers of men. Those two men arose to the challenge because eternity was now emblazoned upon their lives and their hearts.

For we read later in the book of Acts that Peter, oh, we think of that life that Peter lived while he was walking with our Lord Jesus Christ here upon this earth. We see all the failures of Peter. We see so little of the triumph in his life until we come to the book of Acts.

And then we begin to notice some changes, some dynamic changes in a life. But the seeds of these changes were made that day there by the Sea of Galilee. When Peter and Andrew step forth from that boat never again to enter into that work, but to enter into an eternal work for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Many of us, as we walk life, we try to put eternity to one side. We really don't want to think of the things of eternity because they have a tendency sometimes to bring up within us a fear, a fear. Yes, there are souls perishing around us.

There are those that are hitting in a mad dash for eternity to the broad road, going down the broad road that leadeth to destruction. So oft times when we see this, our lips remain silent. For we find it very difficult to say a word, but the thoughts of eternity are still there.

But when will they come forth to speak to others of eternity? Of an eternity that will be with Him who is the lover of our souls. We read in the book of Acts that Peter stood one day emboldened by the power of the Holy Spirit and he spoke. And 3,000 souls were added that day to the kingdom of God.

3,000 souls. Boy, we don't hear preaching like that anymore. It is very difficult to get good preaching anymore, isn't it? But yet, you know, God uses these feeble lips of clay to do His work.

For it is by the preaching of the gospel that souls come to a knowledge of eternity. Of an eternity lost or an eternity gained. For that day, Peter and Andrew came to a knowledge of the eternity of man.

One author has so aptly put it, that day they found an everlasting kingdom, an eternal influence, an enduring name. An enduring name. For it is one who calls us.

Follow me. He's not just anybody. You know, I'm amazed at the people today as you pick up the paper.

You read about guys like Sun Yung Moon who speaks. And the millions around the world flock to him. I was amazed that when he was in New York, 400,000 people come to hear this man.

Thousands commit their lives to following him. We hear of others that draw people to them. Follow me, and I will show you what utopia is.

Hundreds of people found what utopia was like in Guyana. As they gave their lives to follow their Savior who ordered their execution. Who are you following this morning? Who are you following? Are you following Him who says, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men? Or are you following some other leader that this world has to offer? Maybe it's not a flesh and blood leader.

Maybe it's just a leader that says self first. But that morning, or on that day, that this solitary figure walked. It wasn't just Peter and Andrew he brought the message to.

It was two others. A father and his two sons. James and John that morning were sitting there mending their nets.

They too had heard of him. Maybe they had interacted with him before. Scripture doesn't really give us a whole lot to base our fact upon.

But he said, follow me. What did James and John hear in that message that morning or on that day when the Lord Jesus Christ said to them, follow me. Now when a man comes by and says, follow me, we said, why? For what reason would I follow you? But he spoke to them and he says, follow me.

And they understood from him who he was. Here. Here in this man by following him is an opportunity for us to live.

To live. To be alive. Some years ago, the Peace Corps had this advertisement.

If you're not doing something with your life, it doesn't matter how long it is. If you're not doing something with your life, it doesn't matter how long it is. I was reading a book not too long ago and the author made this comment.

He said the sad tragedy of many people dying today is that they have never really lived. They've never lived. Let me ask you this morning.

Are you alive? And when I got in here this morning at a little after, a little before nine o'clock, I wasn't too sure I was alive. We didn't go to bed until almost two o'clock and then it was back up by four and on the road to cover the last part of the journey. We had made some commitments in Kansas City yesterday.

And you know, when you meet old friends and relatives, you know, you've got to get it all in while you can. And so this morning when I arrived, I said I'm not too sure that I'm all here. I said when I told Tim when I walked out the door, I was telling his wife, I said I think I've got everything.

I've bowled in all the right places. So I must be ready to go. But are we alive spiritually? To be alive spiritually is to hear that same one who ordered those words to the apostles that morning, follow me, is still speaking today to you and I. He's speaking to us today.

And are we hearing the words of life? He says, I am come that you might have life and that you might have it more restricted. If you might have a life that is burdened down with the cares of eternity. No, he tells us this.

He says, I am come that you might have life and that you might have it more abundantly. Not a life that is burdened to a care so great that we cannot walk. Have you ever seen people that were so burdened that you knew they weren't walking in life? They were just barely able to shuffle through life because the burden that they bore were so great.

I think we've all come across people like that and our hearts go out to them. Oh, if there was only something I could do to help them. And many times we can't.

Well, you know, the problem today is that many of us avoid responsibilities. We avoid the opportunity to live for Jesus Christ. We avoid the responsibility of drawing alongside of those in need and undergirding them and lifting them up.

You know, there's times when I come home from work. Our company right now is not putting any plugs in. I don't want sympathy and I don't want you to come with your complaints.

I work for American Telephone and Telegraph. And you understand that we've undergone a dynamic change in our corporate structure. I work for AT&T Technologies.

We're the manufacturing part of the AT&T system. But we're undergoing, along with the rest of the corporation, we're undergoing some dynamic changes. And they're placing a lot of demands on us.

I know many of you have gone under the same thing in your jobs. 12-hour days, 7 days a week. And you know the burdens you carry out with you.

You go home and you're carrying these things with you. You know, sometimes I walk in the door and my wife says, what kind of a day was it? And I tell her. She wants to carry a burden.

But you know, there's one there in our family that she doesn't know what's going on as far as what kind of day I've had. But she, with a couple of words, can pick up my whole day. That little 5-year-old, all she has to do is look up at me and say, Hi, Dad.

Hi, Dad. And my teenagers, you know how they are. Now, they're with us and they won't acknowledge that I'm their father, so you know.

They'll only give their first names. They won't say anything. But I love them anyway.

But anyhow, they acknowledge our greetings. But they've had their own cares of the day with school and so forth, their challenges. But here's one that doesn't really realize what she can do with those two little words.

And a lot of times she'll just come in when I'm sitting at my desk going over things and she'll just open that door and she'll come in real quietly and she'll just stand there. She'll come over and she'll say, Can I sit on your lap? Sure. Put her arm around me and say, Love you.

You know, those are the experiences we as the children of God need to share with one another. To tell one another, We love you. And when you're going through experiences, sometimes we just need somebody to put an arm around us.

To be an encourager. I was listening to a tape by a Christian woman here a few weeks ago that my wife had. And I'd heard about this through Chuck Swindoll.

And she said, You know, there's two types of people in the world today. There's basement people and there's balcony people. There's people that are up there in the balconies that are cheering us on.

And there are those that are down in the basement and they just want to drag us down there with them. I ask myself so many times, Larry, what type of person are you? Are you a balcony person? Are you up there cheering your brothers and sisters in the Lord in their walk through life? Are you being an encouragement to them? Are you a basement person dragging them down? You know, it seems it's

almost ironical. When we're a basement person, we seem to want to drag everybody else down in the basement so everybody else can be miserable along with us.

Misery does love company. But you know, the Lord has called us to be encouragers. To be those that can encourage another in a time of need.

That's living. You know, as I said in my chair as a counselor on many occasions, especially in the area of marriage and premarital counseling, I think it's very important today that young people especially understand the principles and the precepts of marriage as laid down in the Word of God. And to me, it's absolutely just one of the most enjoyable things is when we're talking about marriage.

It's to see young people take a principle from the Word of God and all of a sudden, it comes clear. It comes clear to them. And they understand what God is talking about in His Word.

About the two becoming one flesh. And how it is for a lifetime. It's a commitment.

It's a work. It's a responsibility. And to lay hold of that.

To me, that's living is to see the Word of God becoming important to other people. Becoming a part of their life. These two men, James and John, saw the opportunity to live.

Where would we be this morning in the Word of God without John? Dear John, the one whom Jesus loved. Whoever just loved to lean upon the breast of His beloved Savior. Wonder what His thoughts were in the final years of His life as He sat on the Isle of Patmos and through the power of the Holy Spirit penned the words of the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Where would we be without the Apostle of Love? What would we be without the great Gospel of John? The Gospel of the Son of God. Jesus become flesh to die upon a cross for us. For God so loved the world.

John 3.16 is probably the most memorized verse in all of the world. And here, on a day, He hears the Son of God made flesh say, follow me and I will make you fishers of men. Follow me.

You know, failing to trust God, failing to trust Him and to follow Him, we miss the opportunity to live. Are you alive today? Are you living? Or are you existing? Well, let's not get too convicting for it's a beautiful morning, isn't it? And we come here to have fellowship. But we need to hear the Word of God.

We need to hear the Lord Jesus Christ say, follow me for following me, you live. Matthew 8. Let's look at another event. Matthew 8. We begin reading at verse 18.

Matthew 8.18 Now when Jesus saw a crowd around Him, He gave orders to depart to the other side. And a certain scribe came to Him and said to Him, Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go. And Jesus said to him, The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.

And another of the disciples said to Him, Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said to him, Follow me. Follow me and allow the dead to bury the dead.

Did you notice the first scribe? Jesus, I'll follow you wherever you go. How about you this morning? Would you make that statement? If the Lord Jesus Christ were to manifest Himself alongside of you this morning, would you be willing to tell Him, Jesus, I'll follow you wherever you go. Wherever you go, I will go with you

no matter what the cost.

I will follow you because I love you. I'm committed to you. You are my number one priority in life.

And I will follow you wherever you go. I've often wondered why God in His Word never puts the answers to the questions I have to ask. I ask, what did the scribe do? When the Lord Jesus Christ gave him this answer, the foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has not where to lay His head.

I wonder if that scribe sat there and scratched his head. What is he talking about? Or did he know? You can bet he knew. You can bet he knew.

Because it was the greatest challenge that that scribe had probably heard. And it was this. If you say, I will follow you wherever you go, let me ask you the question.

Have you counted the cost? For you see, it does cost something to follow Jesus. To follow Him, it cost the disciples their lives. For of the twelve we read in tradition, but one died a natural death.

And even that being an exile. The other eleven all lost their lives in violent death to the man. You don't find their deaths recorded in scriptures, but a few.

But if we go back and search the history and look at the ancients, we find they all died violent deaths. Some were flayed alive. Some were run through with a spear.

Some were boiled in oil. Some were hung upon a cross upside down. They counted the cost and they followed Him.

And that morning or that day, that scribe was challenged with a commitment and with a priority. Do you know what you're saying? Do you know what you're saying? For you see today, many of us count the cost and we say it's too great. It's too great to follow Him.

I will only give up this much. But Jesus says to us, I want all. Follow me.

But know the cost. Know that there is a cost. There is a cost in the commitment to Jesus Christ.

When we look at that cost, do we say it is too great? Do you know what the greatest problem today is? People don't know how to add correctly. People have never understood the scriptural way to add up the cost. I was challenged, or I have been challenged many times in various ways, especially in the working area, to compromise my faith, to step out of line, to be one of the guys.

Now I know none of you probably, and you aren't challenged with that I'm sure. I'm the only one that falls for that gimmick. Come on, be one of the guys.

You ever have that problem? How about in the schoolrooms, young people? How about at school? Not so much in the schoolrooms, but how about when you're with your friends? Come on, be one of the guys. You know, everybody's doing it. Who's going to know? Who's going to care, you know? Nobody really digs that Christian stuff so much anymore.

You know, you don't want to be a religious fanatic. I'm always interested in meeting other Christians at work and hear what people have to say about them. Oh, you know, he's a fanatic.

He's one of them Christian guys. One of them holy guys. Oh really? What about him? Well, you know, he's a little bit weird.

A little bit weird. Weird in what way? Well, you know, he doesn't drink and he doesn't smoke and he won't look at our dirty books and he doesn't cuss. You know, he's a nice person to be around.

But he's weird. That is one of the hardest things for us to accept, is to be different. We don't want to be different.

We want to fit in. We don't want to be noticed for something that will count. That's because we don't know how to add scripturally.

We don't understand how God keeps score when it comes to adding up the essentials of life. Believe this from the Word of God. You make an idle commitment to God, He's going to challenge you on it.

You make a commitment to God, you can rest assured that He's going to test you on it. You know, it's always very interesting to me, you know, I say, I'm not going to let this person bother me. You ever have anybody in life that bothers you? You don't have that problem? Okay, well, we won't go into it.

But just listen from my standpoint, you know. In the workplace, being a supervisor over 40-some people, you know, there are days when people challenge me. And there are times when I say, Lord, if you don't do something with them, I'm going to.

And you know, I say, I don't know about you, but I have to pray for patience. But then on the other hand, I go back and I read in the book of James that, you know, if you need it, ask from God and He will give it to us. But don't ask like the storm tossed in, you know.

And I really don't think I trust God that He's going to give me patience. But I say, Lord, I need the patience to deal with this person. And I know that with You, I can do it.

Because You tell me with Your strength, I can do all things. Amen. And boy, I'm off to work.

I remember one morning, I had gone to work and I was just... The morning quiet time was just great. You ever have those mornings? Get into the Word of God and the Lord just seems to empty the basket out all over you. Eat, you know, take it all.

And you have a feast. And you're feeling so good and you go to work. I remember I was just feeling great.

I thought, Oh Lord, this is going to be another great coat off. And one of my employees was going to do a biology job on me. That would dissect me.

She says, I'm unhappy with you and I'm going to tear you apart. And she was working on it. And I thought, Lord, what happened? Where did I go wrong? All I said was good morning.

You know, and we don't really think that God understands us. That He's committed to us. So we find it hard in our lives to be committed to Him.

To accept the challenge that He lays before us, to follow Him. He says, I will never leave you nor forsake you. But He said, rest in this and know this.

You will be tested. You will be tested. Hey, you ever think about Peter? Think of all the tests he went through.

Lord, I'll never forsake you. Here's a cock crowed a little later on, remember? And he wept. For he had denied the one who said he would never forsake.

You know, a good old Peter. The Lord came walking in the late hours of the night. Come walking up on the water and they're out there in the boat.

You know, it was Peter that got out of the boat. None of the rest of them were dumb enough to get out of the boat. Peter got out of the boat, didn't he? Peter had a faith, though, didn't he? He said, Lord, bid me to come to you.

He said, come on, Peter. Peter stepped out. He's just like us, isn't he? Man, I can relate to Peter.

I'm so much like Peter. The Lord lays a challenge before me. And I walk out.

One step. Two steps. Man, dig them ways.

Look at that sky. Hmm. Lord, save me.

And he's there, lifts me up. But oh, wouldn't it be wonderful to time after time after time when we're given a test of our faith to show our commitment to him to not fail, to be consistent Christians every time. Wouldn't it be great to be a consistent Christian? I'm here to tell you.

We're not going to be consistent. Not until the day we're made like him. We're perfect.

Only then will we be perfectly consistent with the Son of God. But as we encounter these tests of faith, as we encounter the tests of faith, and we do want to stand by our allegiance to him and our commitment to him, and we do want to stand fast in our priority that he is number one, number one in our lives. He's Lord of my life.

We want to stand by that. But we must understand from the word of God that we're going to be tested. You don't believe that.

I think James gives us a very good answer. Let's take a look at the book of James. James chapter 1. I'm sure you know, if you probably know these verses by heart.

You've probably been through this. I'm probably telling you something you may already know. But let's go over it again.

James 1 verse 2. Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance, and let endurance have its perfect result that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. Lacking in nothing. But if any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

But let him ask in faith without any doubting. For the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man expect that he will receive anything from God, being a double-minded man and stable in all of his ways.

How's your stability this morning? How's your consistency? Basically, our problem is if we're inconsistent, we haven't counted the cost. We haven't taken the time to say, this is what God expects of me. This is what is commanded of me in order to meet the tests of faith.

But you know, some people look at the cost, and they have done some good arithmetic, and they just say, I'm sorry, but it's not worth it. Now, we've known them by a variety of names. We've known them as backsliders.

We've known them as those who slipped. Sometimes as we look at ourselves, we say, I'd have to count myself as one who slipped. One who's backslidden from the word of God and from following him.

Daily. Daily we count the cost. Our Lord Jesus Christ himself said it very appropriately.

Take up your cross. Take up the cross and follow me. You know, those are words that have a tendency to scare us away.

We don't like words like taking up a cross. Responsibility, commitment, priorities. Those are heavy words.

Those are words that, you know, we don't want to mess around with those. We want to have fun in life. But there will come a day.

There is coming a day. And every one of us, every one of us is here this morning. Someday, and it may be a lot sooner than we anticipate, we're going to stand before him who bears the nail prints of Calvary.

Who bears the thorns, who bore the thorns upon his head for us. Someday we're going to stand before him. We'll stand before him and look upon him as Savior.

Or we're going to stand before him on that day in the judgment. I would trust this morning that each and every one of you that is here knows the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. Now, maybe this morning I've said things that you say, well, if that's true, I don't really think I want to be involved with him who would put that much of a demand upon my life.

You can look at it this way. Either way, we're going to stand before him. But as I look at my Christian life and living it for his glory, I haven't lost anything.

For I believe that he is true. But there are those who tell me he is not true. That this is just another figment of man.

That man has put before us to challenge us in a spiritual way, to fulfill something of man. I don't believe that for a minute. I believe Jesus Christ is everything that the God's Word said he is.

And to follow him, I've lost nothing from this world. But let's say this. If what he says is true, if all the words that we find in the God's Word are true and we reject him, what have you lost? Everything.

You've lost it all. You've lost everything in rejecting him. For you see, this life is but for a moment.

But eternity? How long is eternity? As long as you want to believe. For as you examine the word eternity, it means without end. This life here is but a prelude.

Remember when we were singing a few moments ago as our brother was leading us in these songs? Our brother over here, he says, play a little introduction. Remember how beautiful it sounded? But then, the

voices came together and we sang the whole song. The introduction is just a little tiny bit.

This life here is just a little tiny speck of eternity. What of eternity? As we think of these things this morning, there are many more. We could go on to discuss Matthew.

We could look at others as our Lord Jesus Christ spoke to them and said, follow me. But our time is up. And as we look at these things, just a few of the things we've discussed this morning, and considering what it means to follow him, the touch of eternity, the thought of living, the thought of commitment and priority, and the challenge to my faith.

These are but a few things that we can see in these verses that we've looked at this morning from God's precious word. They are viable words. They are important to us as children of God.

Will you listen this morning to the word of God? Don't listen to me. I'm just a man. I'm just flesh and blood like you.

If I die, I go the way of all men to dust. But I have a soul that lives eternally. And that soul will be with Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior.

Can you say the same this morning? Will you think about the things that we've considered this morning in the Christian's walk of faith? Think about it. Let's pray. Again, our Father, we come into your presence.

Thou art the living and the true God. You who have given life to all men, we come to you this morning and we thank you for giving us life. And our Father, it would be our fervent prayer this morning that every soul that is here can say, Thou hast given me eternal life through Jesus Christ, your Son.

And dear Father, we pray that as we gather this weekend and as we look into the Word, your Word, that it will speak to our hearts for eternity's sake. And Lord, we would count the cost to follow you. But can we give too much to Him who gave us all? For or not we challenge to follow Him and to live for Him day by day.

For it was Paul who said, For me to live is Christ, to die is gain. Father, may it be our challenge this morning as we would look at it that nothing is too great to give to Him. And Lord, we thank you again for these blessed hearts that are here this morning.

And we pray, our Father, that the words of thyself might speak to them for eternity's sake. May the words of man be set aside. Only that which is living and true may it be heard from thee.

May it prick their hearts and their consciences for your name's sake. We thank you for this beautiful day. We thank you for this time in your court, our time in your courts.

And we commend ourselves to you for the remainder of this day, if our Savior be not come. We pray in His worthy and precious name.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/7/SID7914.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/larry-ainsworth/the-walk-of-faith-part-2/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net