

The Experience of Every Christian Life - Part 8

Feeling Godly Grief

Luke 13:34-35

Well it's been a good morning already, lots of good and warm and joyful experiences certainly meeting new families and celebrating life and hope and parenting and Dads. It's been a great morning filled with some cheerful experiences and that's the way we like it. That's the way we like it, joyful experiences, happy feelings. Our culture likes that so much that it seems to have absolutely little to no tolerance for its inverted emotions. I mean you can't it seems in our day have any affirmation for or value found in the opposite, unhappiness, unpleasant experiences, emotions that aren't happy. I mean that's a vehement response from our culture that those things are bad so much so that if you get a bad thought or you have a bad feeling you should quickly try to replace it with a good thought and a good feeling. If you have enough of a series of bad feelings well then you ought to take some medication that will make you feel happy again, and even the times you think it would be unavoidable like a funeral well we don't even really have times for grieving and mourning there anymore. Now they're celebrations of life and we get up and try and crack jokes and I mean that's how we're even dealing with the most seemingly grievous times of our lives. That's where our culture is, no time, no value for weeping and mourning. (01:30)

And yet back in the sixties I was told to everything turn, turn, turn. There is a season, turn, turn, turn. A time for every experience, right? Every purpose under heaven and it included in that song, I'm told, weeping and mourning, there's suppose to be a time for that. Of course that wasn't written in the sixties, you understand. That was written you know almost 10 centuries before Christ. That old wisdom from Ecclesiastes 3 tells us of course there's a time for laughter and a time for dancing but there's also a time for mourning and a time for weeping. That is a normal appropriate and expected human experience. But more than that weeping and mourning and grieving is a not only expected and acceptable human experience it's also a godly experience actually. So much so is it positive in the scripture presented to us as a positive and godly emotion that when God sends Jesus to this world when he comes as perfect humanity righteousness clothed in humanity and lives among us as he was prophesied about back in Isaiah 53 before his coming he was said to be the one who was called a Man of Laughter and acquainted with happiness. Is that the verse? No, no, a Man of Sorrows acquainted with grief. (02:50)

Now that's not the kind of person you want to hang out with I suppose at a party, right? A man of sorrows acquainted with grief and yet it wasn't because Jesus had a lot of bad days strung together and he had a lot of bad experiences that he was in the corner with his Kleenex kind of feeling bad for all the things that were happening to him that were bad. Matters of fact the next verse in that very passage in Isaiah 53 he says, "No, surely he has born our griefs and he carries our sorrows." See that's the difference between a kind of selfish grief which I understand is appropriate. It's the normal human experience. Bad things happen we should expect some grieving and mourning and weeping and crying in our lives. But the mature and godly kind of grief that I want to talk about today is that kind that's able to see someone else's plight and to be able to have that emotional response toward them. I mean that's what we're seeing in Christ's life as we get to Luke chapter 13 verses 34 and 35 concluding our 8 part study of Luke chapter 13. If you haven't opened your Bibles to it yet, please do so now. Call it up on your devices, take a look at this, scroll down to verses 34 and 35 as we look at the last two verses in this passage where Jesus is clearly grieving. The word is not there, the word mourning is not there, crying, but you cannot read these words without clearly catching the emotional state of Christ and it's filled with bad feelings. (04:08)

Those bad feelings of weeping and grieving and mourning in this passage are not just something we would say well if Christ is our example that we're to emulate as Christians, right? If you abide with him walk as he walked. But if we identify the things that he's mourning over and I can at least show you two in this passage that he's mourning about, two things that we can say that's what he's mourning about, things that still exist in our day today and because of that I can look at this passage of Christ mourning and say if I find in my life that I don't mourn in response to those things, well then it says something about my Christian life. It is really a diagnostic about some deficiencies in my character. There's something lacking in terms of the virtues of my life that God would say are important and valued if these responses emotionally are lacking in my own life. So this becomes a very convicting passage. (05:00)

Now again this is a passage I would never preach on were I just a topical preacher. I'd bounce around to the happy text and I would avoid it but preaching verse by verse through the scripture we run into this passage and we have to look at it fairly and look at what Jesus is mourning over and then say well wait a minute, how do the things that he's dealing with effect me? So let's take a look at these last two verses, beginning in verse 34 when Jesus says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets. Now just stop right there. If you glance back up at where we were last time, he just over there in Perea which is the modern day kingdom of Jordan across the Jordan River to the east. He had been over there and basically warned by the Pharisees that Herod Antipas was trying to kill him and therefore get out of the region. He said, "I'm not getting out of the region, I'm going to do what I'm going to do. I'm going here today, tomorrow and the third day - proverbially speaking - I'm going to go finish my course in Jerusalem." And he knows as he already said he's going to die in Jerusalem and so this gets him thinking about Jerusalem. And as you read even that opening line you'll say I know this passage it's over there in Matthew and almost identical words. And if you're thinking this is the same scene you need to readjust your thinking, this is not the same scene. This is three months before Jesus comes to Jerusalem and has the very same experience and recites the very same words. Almost verbatim. (06:19)

This is simply the catalytic moment here was he had thought about his own dying in Jerusalem and says, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem the city that kills the prophets." That's where he's going to die, the ultimate prophet the Messiah, and he's looking forward to that and he recognizes that this is the city that has not been receptive to the truth at all. And the spokespersons for the truth, the spokesmen for the truth the prophets they've rejected them, they've killed them. They hear enough of what they say and they say we've had enough. The city that kills the prophets verse 34 and stones those who are sent to it! O Jerusalem, Jerusalem. Now look at this, tender statement here of regret about what they're missing, how often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Behold, your house is forsaken. Now look at that, that picture of him personifying the city as a you which is really an it, right? You have these children, the people of Jerusalem, surely represent the people of Israel, the whole of them, and he says I would have loved to gather you - here's the illustration - like that mother hen pulling the chicks close to it and accepted you and embraced you and drawn near to you but you wouldn't draw near to me. You rejected the truth. And when you reject me and you don't draw near to me and I don't draw near to you then you become forsaken. Your house is forsaken now question is, is that the temple that's there in Jerusalem? Well, certainly it's included in that. But like is often stated in the Bible that idiom the house of Jacob or the house of Israel this includes the whole people, the nation it seems now desolate or forsaken. (07:58)

And then it ends with this strange line. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' That's a quotation from Psalm 118 and it certainly brings to mind the images of Palm Sunday and the Triumphal Entry, does it not? Well, we'll look at that closely, but let's just get it all again. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing! Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' Well, the city that kills the prophets and stones those that are sent to it is not really all that unusual of a reality for us as we pull up our computer screens every morning and read the newspaper and see what's going on in our world. And you say, well Jerusalem was rejecting the truth, what about our society. Man, it rejects the truth. So the catalyst for his bad and negative emotion here the sadness and the grief of crying out, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, I mean there ought to be in our heart some reflective kind of emotional response to our world when you open up and see what's going on in our culture and say O America, America, a city that rejects the truth and rejects the spokespersons of the truth, rejects the catalyst or the channel or the channel of truth, the conduit of truth to our culture. Let's put it this way if Jesus is going to grieve over those things, as the ultimate example of godliness, well then we ought to too. We ought to, number 1, grieve truths rejection. (09:39)

1. Grieve truths rejection

If you're taking notes, that would be a good little phrase to jot down there. We have to, if we're going to follow in the footsteps of Christ, be willing to look at the rejection of truth and have our heart so positioned in our own mind that we're saying, you know what? That should create some kind of reaction in my own heart. You see because it's not only a godly thing it is God himself that feels this way. If you're a note taker jot down Genesis 6:6. You might remember just before the flood there, God looks down at the people and he sees the evil in their lives and it's says



God, verse 6, was grieved to his heart. Now think about that, God the holy one, looks down at sinful people and it hurts his heart. Jesus looks at a truth rejecting city and a nation and it hurts his heart. He cries out, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem." If you and I can look at our news feed in the morning and not feel some kind of pain, well then there's something wrong with our sanctification in our Christian life. You've done something to position yourself to protect yourself to callous your heart to where you don't feel that and we need to feel that. But you say, "I don't like to feel that." Well, I don't like to feel it either. I thought Christianity was supposed to solve that problem. Well, it does solve that problem and one day it will be completely solved and that's why I need to remind you that the first silver lining to point out in this message as negative as it appears at this point, is that you and I although we are called to emulate Christ who is going to feel these feelings, these negative feelings of grief and mourning, you need to know it's a very temporary thing. It's temporary. (11:12)

The Bible says this if you are a note taker; jot it down, Revelation chapter 21 verse 4. It says there will be a day, you remember the phrase, where he will wipe away every tear away from our eyes and there will no longer be any mourning or crying. Among other things listed there it ends this way, for – purpose clause, here's the reason why – the first order of things has passed away. So whatever is going on now in the first order of things the season in which we live, sin is rampant in our world, at one point the kingdoms of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. And we will have a kingdom where righteousness dwells and we look forward to that hope and that brings us a lot of joy to look forward to that but in the meantime it will be punctuated by these feelings of grief. But one day it will be over. (11:58)

So you may say, "Well I'd like to know Christ and feel joy all the time." Well, we can feel joy a lot of the time and we can have an underpinning underlying anticipatory hope, and that brings us joy even in a prison in Philippi. As Paul had there singing hymns of praise. But it doesn't mean the Apostle Paul or Jesus or Jeremiah or Ezekiel or any other godly person in the Bible, including God himself doesn't have a lot of grief in his heart because he looks at a world that rejects the truth. (12:29)

Now we're no lack of illustrations in that regard. I was reading a story this week in the news about a Christian publishing company that was rejected, their ad was rejected, it wasn't overtly preachy ad if you want to put it that way. But they were rejected simply because they were a Christian company. Lawyers got involved and a lot of controversy and it ended up they finally accepted but I thought what a hassle for a company that's going to pay retail rates for advertising and not be accepted simply because they're a Christian company. That made me think back if you've been a long time Compass person, you can think back to one of our Eaters when we tried to put our ads in the theaters, remember that? Smile at me if you remember that. And we paid retail rates to put our ads there before the movie comes on in the theater and all those ads that come up. We were simply just trying to get people to come to Easter and they banned our ad. Why? Just because we were advertising a Christian meeting, our Easter services. Well God got the last laugh because I mean we paid for a few screens here in South Orange County, that became international news. I mean I was getting contacted from all over the place because of you were the church that had your Christian ad rejected. And I thought of so many examples there's a charity right now I was reading about in Florida just trying to give out food to poor people in the name of Christ and the USDA said we'll only let you use our provision of food as we've granted to your organization if you stop saying Jesus is Lord and stop quoting the ten commandments and stop any Christianity that's related to your charity and then we'll let you use it. Now when an organization won't even give food to poor people if there's a Christian label on it, man we've got a real truth rejecting culture that we live in. Not to mention you can go to a mosque go to a night club kill a bunch of people, cry out Allah's name in the process and the next week in the newspapers, Christians get blamed for it, I don't know how that works. But if you read the news I mean that's the world we live in. Christianity singled out as this kind of organization that we're not going to tolerate your truth claims. Now that can make us mad but it ought to grieve our hearts. (14:30)

Here's a passage you ought to jot down, Psalm 119, the longest chapter in the Bible, Psalm 119, jot down the verse 136. Psalm 119:136. The Psalmist says this; my eyes shed streams of tears, because of people do not keep your law. Now that's one foundational reaction to the fact that here was the Psalmist looking at people that reject the truth and he feels this emotion of grief. Now there are two other passages that say almost the same thing in regards to what's prompting a negative emotion. Let me give you those verses, 158 same chapter, 119:158, it says I look at the faithless with disgust, because they do not keep your commandments. Well that's a little different emotions, it's also negative and then 53, 119:53, which says hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked, those who forsake your law. So now here's the same impetus, the same thing that's causing a negative reaction. People that not do what God

asks, people that reject the truth, people that don't keep the law. And he says there's indignation, there's disgust and there's tears. Now I find this sermon by the way perhaps is more needed in seasoned Christians than it is for new Christians, which is a switch for you mature Christians that often lean back with the L-shaped Amen saying, preach it Pastor, tell all these young Christians what to do. Now here's the thing, you've been around the block a few times in the Christian life, I would assume because this passage really convicted me this week. That it's easy for us to protect our hearts from that emotional response of grief and to get right on to disgust and indignation, am I right? Easy to feel that way when I see the world going down the tubes. When our culture starts to collapse I can get angry at those who forsake the law, who reject the law. I can be disgusted by them but here's the missing element, at least as it relates to Psalm 119. We just don't feel the grief of it all. I mean if you've gritted your teeth, if you've furled your brow but you haven't shed a tear over people that reject the truth then there's something missing in your emotional response to the sinful culture we live in. (16:54)

To put it in another way, Ezekiel 9 when there was this all out collapse of the nations righteousness and Ezekiel now is recording what God is doing in this vision regarding his judgment on the people, he says before the people are judged – I'm paraphrasing now – but he says go out, he tells the angel, and put a mark on all of those who groan over the wickedness of the culture. Why are you doing that? Because those people are not going to receive the judgment that I'm going to bring. Now think about that, there were the absolute reprobate people doing the horrible things including a child sacrifice and idolatry and all the rest and then you had people that just didn't seem to care, and then you had the people that went around groaning over it. He says mark all those that groan, I'm going to protect them, they're not going to incur the judgment that I'm going to bring. And I wonder how many of us because we're in the category of I'm not doing those things but we no longer groan over it anymore, we can no longer stand emotionless on the sidelines of a culture that is collapsing and think that we are godly people reflecting the heart of Christ. We're not, not until it starts to effect us emotionally and our heart begins to break over that. I suppose if someone you deeply love like maybe your child comes in and tells you a story of rejection at school on the playground, I mean I hope there's not just quick indignation and disgust over people that have treated your child badly. I hope there's a sense of sorrow as you engage in the fact that there are people there that look at your child and respond in the way that they do and you don't have that sense of even a kind of zealous kind of zeal for the honor of God that you think, "Ah this pains me." And we have a culture right now that's rejecting Christ and there's a kind of truth rejection going on that ought to bring us not to indignation and disgust but also to what we're talking about this morning a real grief that would cry out as Jesus did, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem or O our culture, our culture. (18:54)

Don't have time to develop this but at least jot it down, 1 Corinthians chapter 5, 1 Corinthians 5 when the Apostle Paul looks at a group of people that should have been mourning and they weren't mourning he diagnoses the problem as arrogance. Now there's a good homework study for you. The connection between the problem of looking at sin, in this case in the church, and he says you weren't mourning; you should have been mourning over the collapse of the standard of righteousness in your own church. But instead of mourning you were arrogant. Now there's something there and there's are many theories about how that relates to how they responded to that sin but you've got to look at your own life and say well what's the problem here if I don't mourn. In the passage speaking of the Bible or God giving us direction regarding our emotions I can't avoid James chapter 4 when he says you should mourn and you should weep and you should let your laughter turn to mourning and your joy to gloom. And all of that is about the sin that is in their environment as a church or as a people of God and he says the problem is you haven't humbled yourself. He says cleanse your hands you sinners, purify your hearts you double minded. There has to be this sense of repentance and humility. There's a real theme there that we don't have time to develop this morning but if you find the absence of grieving in your own heart it's not just a compassion for people, there's something about your own view of yourself that is lacking that leads to an emotionless response to the rejection of Christ and his truth in our world. It's a short statement but it's a mouthful, to grief truth's rejection. Conviction for me I trust it's a conviction for you as we think about the world we live in. It's not any better than Jerusalem when it comes to receiving and embracing the truth. (20:38)

Middle of verse 34 back to Luke 13, Jesus now puts it in a very different category when he says there's some thing about what you could have had, there's something about what you're missing. How often would I have gathered your children together, speaking of the citizens of Jerusalem, like a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing. Therefore look at the connection between that and the first line in verse 35. Behold, your house is forsaken. It reminds me of when he goes on to say there in James if you draw near to God, he'll draw near to you. The problem is, invert that, if you don't draw near to God, he doesn't draw near to you. And there's that sense of

distance. He'd love to reconcile himself with people that we know in our culture and in our world. But when they don't draw near to him and they don't recognize the problem and receive the truth he stands at a distance from them and eventually he's completely gone from them. And speaking of whether this is the temple or the people, even when it comes to the temple there's that Hebrew word in the Old Testament, Ichabod, where God says fine then I'm withdrawing and a lot of you analysts of our American culture can say look at how God's hand of blessing and involvement has withdrawn from our culture in America and I understand there is a lot of truth to that and I think there is some accuracy to that kind of assessment. But recognize that all of that is a response to rejection of the truth, that is sins consequence. And not only should we, number 1, grieve truths rejection, number 2, we ought to mourn sins consequences. (22:10)

2. Mourn Sins Consequences

Because there will be much like Jesus points out a loss of something they could have had an occurrence of something that they're certainly not going to want. They don't want their house to be desolate, they want the blessings of God, they just don't want the truths of God. And when it comes to our culture that's where we're at right now. And if you say I don't feel those emotions toward it. Well then I would say why not just start to ponder what your people that you know that reject the truth, your neighbors, your coworkers, your extended family members, just think of what they're missing. (22:40)

Again back to Psalm 119 for you seasoned Christians, if what you do in looking at lost people and sinners. If you say, "Well listen, I am indignant and I'm disgusted by it but I don't feel the mourning that you're talking about." I certainly would say you're going to look at the scripture through the lens of that indignation and you're going to miss how often the mourning and the grief is there, the compassionate grief for the lost, you're going to miss that when you read passages, some passages that I'm sure are familiar to you. Romans chapter 1 about God giving people over. It's much like withdrawing from the house of Israel. We look at God as it relates to individuals saying at some point if you don't want the truth, fine. I'll give you over to your sin and they'll get the desolation that goes with that. Now if you read that passage in Romans chapter 1, matters of fact let's look at it together real quickly. Romans chapter 1, you'll see that there are statements there about what they could have had that we just rush right over when we read it. Perhaps because our hearts have become callous and we don't feel the feelings of grief, there's no streams of tears from our eyes there's just indignation and disgust. (23:50)

Romans chapter 1, drop down to verse 23, just to pick this up in the middle and look at this important word, exchanged. We'll have this twice in this context, Romans chapter 1 verse 23, these people have, now note this, exchanged, now there's no reason he had to talk about what they lost but here it comes. They've exchanged the glory of the immortal God, now that's a mouthful. The glory, the great, the gravity, the importance of, the beauty of, the value of, the immortal God. I mean here's a statement of what they could have had, they had it offered to them, but again if you look up, they've suppressed the truth in unrighteousness, that's how this passage started. The truth was there, they knew the truth, they didn't honor God, they suppressed the truth and in doing that they exchanged what they could have had, the glory of the immortal God. And instead now they're drinking from the gutter, right? Images resembling mortal man, and birds and creeping animals and things, and you may not have that image of idolatry as they did maybe in an idolatrous culture in Rome but we've got idolatry of all kinds here going on where people are exchanging what they could have in terms of relationship satisfying relationship with the living God that they've exchanged for something else. It's based on that that we get the turning over verbage in verse 24. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves. If all you see is that, then you're going to be like a lot of people seasoned Christians who look at people and say, "Well, they get what they deserve. God gave up on them, they just shined God on too long, they rejected the truth too much so God has written them off." (25:30)

Now you can say that in a very uncaring way, but this text is very clear, that you need to give some thought about what they're missing. That'll drive you to the real empathy for the situation; a real kind of mourning that I'm saying is godly that Jesus feels in Luke 13. It says it again in verse 25, only this time with a word. They exchanged the truth, that's a big word for the Apostle Paul. The truth, they could have had the truth. This truth though they suppressed and when they suppressed it they lost it, they exchanged the truth about God for a lie. And they worship and serve the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason – here it is again – God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones and on it goes and you can look at all that with disgust and indignation. Or you can say, now that's really sad what they could have

had, the truth about God, the glory of the immortal God. I'm just saying spend a little bit more time next time you start getting hacked off in your emotions about someone rejecting the truth and say, "Look at what they've missed." God said that to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 2, be appalled O heavens, be shocked, be utterly desolate declares the Lord, for my people have committed two evils; they've rejected me, he says, the fountain of living waters, there it is again, look at what they could have had. And instead they've dug out for themselves, hewed for themselves, cisterns. And the problem there is that they're broken cisterns that can hold no water. I could have given them a great meal but instead they're eating out of the gutter. And all I'm saying is a lot of us can look at what's going on in our society, we can look at people that reject the truth, we can look at a culture that's slouching toward Gamorrah as its put. And we can say all of that is awful and terrible and you can say well they're drinking out of the gutter now aren't they. Without any real concern about what they could have had. And that will lead you to a kind of sorrow that I think is a biblical mature selfless grieving, that a lot of us are missing because we haven't learned to weep with those who in this case will eventually weep. Why? Because sins consequences will come to roost. (27:31)

Paul can't get out of the second chapter of Romans after talking about people that suppress the truth and he grieves you can image with this statement, they're storing up for themselves wrath for the day of God's judgment. I mean that's sad for the Apostle Paul and it reaches a crescendo by chapter 9 when he says this. Listen to these words, Romans 9, he says I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. What's the context, I wish that these kinsmen of mine, these Israelites I wish they were saved. I wish I could trade my salvation for their salvation. You may call that hyperbole but here's a man who feels a real pain in his heart about the coming anguish of – here's the word he uses – of being accursed. He's thinking they're going to be accursed. They're going to receive the curse of God. And that leads him to, let me read it again, great sorrow and unceasing anguish. Now I know you can run to the bookstore after and you can buy a card or you can have a pillow or a you know wall art and rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice. And I'm going to say that's a biblical thing, get it, send the card, fantastic. I believe in that. The Apostle Paul believes in that and he can say rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice. But much like a conversation that's moving in a direction, there is something that punctuates Paul's joyful perspective that he now describes as great sorrow and unceasing anguish, you understand what that means? (28:54)

It's much like having a conversation with a hacking cough. The conversation maybe joy, I want be joyful in what will come, I want to be joyful in my forgiveness, I want to be joyful about a lot of things but always and periodic throughout my Christian life there is this sense of grief because I live as someone trying to emulate Christ's character as a righteous, growing in sanctification Christian in a world that's unrighteous and increasingly rejecting the truth and we're living like it is in the days of Noah and its going to be heart breaking. How can Paul say rejoice in the Lord always and then say I'm in unceasing anguish? Well these some how have to be harmonized in the way we view the ideal Christian life. And I know as I said if I were preaching topically I would never choose a passage like this but that's one thing about preaching the whole council of God, you're going to get texts like this and recognize there's not a one dimensional emotional experience in the Christian life. And I'm not talking about personal grief, did I make that distinction? I mean when it comes down to it, I understand we're going to grieve as a natural response to our own pains, I talking about looking at your friends, your neighbors, your relatives, your coworkers, our society and grieving simply because they are going to be weeping. Because they're lives are left desolate because the cities are going to be destroyed and our country because they turned away from God. Where's our grief for that? (30:09)

Mourn sins consequences. Well I'm so glad I came to church today, grief and mourn, that's awesome; let's go to lunch it's so good. Well, you notice the last verb there on the worksheet? Oh good I hope it gets better at this point. Well it's going to get more positive; it's going to get more positive because an interesting statement Jesus makes at the end of this lament over Jerusalem. Bottom of verse 35, I tell you, you will not see me until you say – now even that is a negative statement, right? You're not going to see me, there won't be this idealized embrace and acceptance of me, until, so there's the hope, you say now, here it is – "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" One of the disadvantages we Americans have in reading the scripture is you pop into the scripture, you read it, you become familiarized particularly in the New Testament with the way these things are stated on the page, you may go around the block a few times in the Christian life and you know passages like this but because you don't put yourself in the sandals of the original recipients and you don't recognize that these are just the words of the tip of the iceberg of a entire Psalm that they understood in its context you miss the real weight and gravity of what's being said by a statement like this. Your study Bible says in the margin what I hope it says as I read it the first time, this is a quotation from Psalm 118 and you need to turn there to try and understand what this brings to mind in Christ's mind when he says this about the future of Jerusalem. (31:42)

Psalm 118, let's turn over there. Before we even fill in the third point we're well into the third point but I'll give you the wording in a second. First let's understand Psalm 118 if we can. Familiar verses, this second half in particular was understood by the Rabbis as a Messianic expression of what is to come, though there was an immediate historical context which is a bit of a mystery for commentators as we look to figure out what it is, this is some kind of restoration or revival in the kingdom, perhaps even a postexilic discussion about what God has done after the Babylonian captivity. Clearly focus on Jerusalem and the temple mount, we understand all that but we also know how Jesus utilizes this passage and applies it ultimately to himself. And even the Rabbis could understand that before Christ came that there's something idealistic about this that it does not speak to simply to some kind of restoration in Nehemiah or Ezra's day. (32:33)

Psalm 118 let's start in verse 22 that'll probably be one of the most familiar phrases in this chapter. We'll get to the quote that's there in Luke 13 in a minute. But let's start in verse 22, the stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. Now smile at me if you've heard that a million times. You know that verse. Now when you read that verse you know how it's quoted. In the New Testament it's quoted on more than one occasion to refer specifically to Christ. Christ is the cornerstone. Now it was a stone initially that was rejected by the builders. Now even in the original context this was probably some poetic about the fact that there was a nation that was counted out and a worship center that was probably written off and it was destroyed by fire and now this thing that was rejected and seen as despised and desolate now that thing is, wow, it's become a cornerstone and a key and a central figure and feature and building in the nation. And so the fighter was down and out and they were counting him out on the mat but then all of sudden he rallies and that thing becomes the cornerstone. Well the ultimate rally is the fact that people that were rejecting Christ, that Christ becomes the key to everything, as it's put in the prologue of John. The word, Jesus, comes unto his own but his own, do you know the verse? Receives him not. But to many who receive him to them he gave the power to become the children of God, even to those who believe on his name. What's the point? Jesus comes to Jerusalem, he comes to the nation of Israel, he presents himself as Messiah and they reject him. Well what happens as Paul reflects on that later? That person that was rejected becomes the cornerstone, the edifice of the people of God, and God is building the people of God. Jesus Christ the cornerstone. Clearly that's how we read that now. (34:18)

Keep reading, this is the Lords doing, verse 23, this is sovereign, this is God's work, this is his plan. It is marvelous in our eyes. Now think on the two levels, remember we've got co-authorship in this. We've got the Psalmist who writes with historic revival of the nation of Israel in mind and we also have God writing it and Jesus comes on the scene who is God and says this applies to me. The Apostles say, as writers for Christ, this is applies to Christ. So we've got this dual picture here. And what's marvelous is the city and the building, the temple, and the nation that was counted out is now come back, that's God. Now you can see that in the Babylonian captivity and the revival and the restoration in Ezra and Nehemiah. You can see it in the intertestamental period with Judas Maccabeus, and even the successive they're down and out and no they're not and the revival and restoration of the temple. All of that, I mean we can see that. That's a God thing, that's a God's doing, it's marvelous in our eyes. And what do you do when God does that? Verse 24 is another familiar verse from this Psalm. This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. (35:27)

By the way what are these exiles all about? Why were they punished? Why did God allow the Assyrians and the Babylonians and even the intertestamental enemies Antiochus Epiphanes, why were these people allowed to destroy the people of God and the worship center? Because of sin. What did it take for them to get it right? Well we read about in our DBR recently in Ezra and Nehemiah, repentance, repentance, repentance, repentance. The joy of this Messianic feature here in this Psalm is the fact that there is great joy when there is repentance. And when people embrace the truth. Okay, now that's enough, well I don't want you to leave Psalm 118 but that's enough to write our third point. Let's put it down that way, clearly when they say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord and we're going to get to that verse in a second. That's cause for rejoicing. So number 3, Let us rejoice over the repentant. (36:17)

3. Rejoice over the repentant.

Follow me now. I'm grieving over the rejection of truth. I'm mourning over the consequence of sin. But I am rejoicing whenever there is repentance. And when there is a repentant person thinking now selflessly I not only want to weep with those who weep or will weep. But I want to rejoice with those who rejoice and when there's

forgiveness, man that's cause for celebration. (36:39)

Now back to our Psalm, Psalm 118. The stone the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. Right? The temple that was down, now it's back. Christ that was rejected by his own, becomes the cornerstone, becomes the key figure in the people of God. Whoever who receive him, the Gentiles, the Barbarians, the Sythians, the slave, the free, this is the LORD's doing; it is marvelous in our eyes. Verse 24, this is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Now look at this. Save us, we pray, O LORD! O LORD, we pray, give us success! Now here's some more interesting tie-ins. To finally get around to thinking out loud what you thought the first time you heard me read this morning, verse 35. When he says I tell you will not see me again until you say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!" Every Sunday School Graduate is going to think, I know when that happened. When did that happen? Palm Sunday. Now you're afraid to answer. Palm Sunday. Triumphal Entry. This word right here, this Hebrew word that translates, save us, we pray O Lord. That when you transliterate that into Greek becomes what we read there in the Triumphal Entry, Hosanna. Remember that? Palm branches, he rides in, Hosanna, Hosanna. This is a quotation from Psalm 118. Save us, we pray O Lord, we pray give us success. Now I've often pointed out on Palm Sunday or any reference to Palm Sunday there's a lot of concern about Jesus saving them. Now the question is, is Jesus saying well your house is forsaken and I'm not going to see you again until you say this. And so they said that on Palm Sunday, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord, Hosanna, Hosanna. And that's when they, it's not that simple. Because as I've often point out there's a kind of quest and desire to see Christ save them in a way that Christ did not come to save them. I said the context here is repentance. The context on Palm Sunday I would argue is not repentance although that seems to be falling out of favor with some commentators these days. They wanted salvation from all kinds of things. The kind of success they wanted was not the kind of success Jesus came to bring. He came to bring contrite people forgiveness. He came to heal the sick who could see their sickness. He came to let the blind see, who could see that they were blind. And this was all symbolically spoken about their grave problem of sin and their need for forgiveness. (39:00)

So when he came in on Palm Sunday and they were saying "Save us, save us now. Give us success." Not the kind of success Jesus came to bring. Therefore this Messianic Psalm was not fulfilled on that day, even though the very next phrase is the phrase in the mouth of the people on Palm Sunday, verse 26, Psalm 118. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the LORD! We bless you from the house of the LORD. The LORD is God, he has made his light to shine upon us. Bind the festal sacrifice with cords, and to the horn of the alter! Now when is all that happening? That's a picture not of what took place on Palm Sunday, though I suppose some could argue there was a foretaste of that there. But the repentance the cornerstone the acceptance the embracing the real rejoicing the understanding success and salvation the way that Christ did the blessing and acceptance of the prophet and Messiah of God from the house of the Lord that is not Ichabod, not forsaken but where God is happily blessing the light shining on the people. It wasn't just a segment of the population with the Pharisees and the Chief Priests plotting to kill him a week later. No, that wasn't it. This is yet to come. As a matter of fact when Jesus speaks of this later he says in Luke 21, they will fall by the edge of the sword, speaking of Jerusalem. And the people of Jerusalem will be lead captive among the nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled underfoot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. (40:32)

Now follow this, Jesus says, "You know when I come into Jerusalem, I'm going to teach about Jerusalem now and Jerusalem is going to fall by the sword. And there will be Gentiles that trample the temple ground underfoot, specifically Titus the Roman Emperor comes in, soon to be Roman Emperor, and he destroys the temple in 70 AD and then there's going to be Ichabod in Israel here at least corporately and nationally until, there's hope there, the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled. Now Paul picks up on that in Romans chapter 11. If you're taking notes, I hope you got the first one, Luke 21:24, I just quoted. Romans 11 verses 25 through 27. This would be worth turning to if you're deft in getting around in the text this morning. (41:14)

If you can quickly get there, Romans chapter 11 verse 25 through 27, I know this is a couple layers deep but this is good, this is what we need to hear. The hope of the revival of the people of Israel when Christ comes back and comes to the city when they truly from the heart rejoice and say, "Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord." And that will be the day that the Lord has made and that will be the ultimate embracing of the Messiah. Now you Gentiles, he's speaking to the Gentiles here, drop down to verse 25, lest you Gentiles be wise in your own eyes, I do not want you to be unaware of this mystery. What was the mystery? Brothers a partial hardening has come upon Israel. So there is an ethnic national Israel most of them as it says in the prologue of John he came unto his own, his own received him not. Well wait a minute, time out, technical. That's not true, there were a lot of Jews that

responded, Peter, James and John, let's just talk about those three. Well of course, you're right. It's partial, but in terms of national acceptance he was rejected. He came unto his own, his own received him not but to as many that did receive him, guess what a lot of those were, the people that John was writing to in the prologue. He writes his gospel to Gentiles. A partial hardening has come upon Israel. Here's the word again, it picks up the same phrase of Christ, until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. Okay, then what's going to happen. Well, verse 26, and in this way, when the Gentiles are all on the bus as I like to put it, all Israel will be saved. Now all we're not talking about people that are past dead, we're talking about the generation when the bus is filled and all the Gentile Jewish partial Jews and mostly Gentiles come into the bus through repentance that we should all celebrate. Then that generation will all, nationally, be saved. As it is written, now he quotes Isaiah 59, the deliverer will come from Zion, and he will banish ungodliness from Jacob. Did that happen on Palm Sunday? I'm just trying to make my argument stronger now. It didn't happen on Palm Sunday. (43:16)

Verse 27, this will be my covenant with them when I take away their sins. Well the real forgiveness of the people there in Jerusalem only took place in a partial way at his first coming. He will come completely when he returns a second time. In this sense there's two things to rejoice in, we rejoice over the repentance of a city that rejected him who one day after the time of Jacob's Trouble and the times of the Gentiles will embrace him and Christ will come through physical Jerusalem through the gates of Jerusalem and the people will accept him after 144 thousand Jews do their missionary work and they will be saved as a generation and the nation will embrace their Messiah. That's good news, we look forward to that. In the meantime I'm looking at this as a Gentile, I'm looking at this metaphor I like to use, the bus not completely full. The fullness hasn't come in, therefore I want to get people on the bus. Get people on the bus, get them saved. How do you get on the bus? Repentance, matter of fact that's what 2 Peter 3 says is the "problem". The holdup is he's not slow in keeping his promise but he's patient not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. And when someone repents, what should I do? Well when I get to Luke 15 if we ever get there, Luke 15, it says when one sinner repents we ought to rejoice. Rejoice over the repentant. So I'm trying to see this great fulfillment of God's promises to Israel, when that great Messianic Psalm, Psalm 118 is fulfilled in the meantime I'm trying to get Gentiles on the bus. And everyone who gets on the bus should be like a Shepard who finds that 100th lamb. That one lamb out of 100 that was lost, puts it on his shoulder, comes back rejoicing. Or like the lady who lost her coin, her gold coin and she needed that, she's poor, she doesn't have a lot and she finally finds it after sweeping up the whole house. She calls her friends together and says rejoice with me I found the lost coin. Or like the father with the wayward son. I'm quoting now all the parables of Like 15. And he goes and he squanders his inheritance and in a moment of clarity regarding his sin he repents and he comes back to the father. And the father embraces him and says, "Now my son was lost, now he's alive, he was dead and now he's alive. He was lost now he's found. Bring the fattened calf, put the ring on his finger, put the robe on him. Let's celebrate." You know why Jesus told all those stories. Same reason I'm preaching this sermon, because there were some people who could not rejoice with those who rejoice. And frankly they could not weep with those who weep. They were the Pharisees and that's how that chapter starts. (45:49)

The Pharisees were grumbling that Jesus was spending all these times with sinners. Now why was Jesus doing that? Because he wanted to be a cool, hip Christian in Southern California, 21st century hanging out with non-Christians? No, that wasn't it. He was there as a light shining in darkness. He said it's not the people that think they're well that need the physician. It's the people that know they're sick that need it. He went there to win people to Christ. He said you guys can't rejoice that's why the real point of all three of those parables ultimately was the older brother, who hadn't left and squandered the father's inheritance. Those were the Pharisees. And you remember what happened? Verse 28 of Luke 15, the older brother was angry and refused to go into the celebration. And his father came out and entreated him. And part of his lecture ended with what I just said. It is fitting, we must celebrate and be glad for this your brother was dead and now alive, was lost and now he's found. What is he saying? What's wrong with you guys? You can't rejoice with those who rejoice you can't see repentance as a big thing, you know there's rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents. I'm trying to get us not just to celebrate our own victory, not just to grieve over our own hurts but to do what Jesus did when he sat there on a hillside looking at Jerusalem three months later and he began to weep and he said, "If only you knew what could have brought you peace." And then when he finds a sinner that does repent he's willing to cheer it and celebrate it. I want us to begin to emulate Christ with that kind of mature ability to weep with those who weep and rejoice with those who rejoice because there are individuals certainly in the time of the Gentiles who will begin to say with the accuracy and sincerity of every convert that's ever been in the church age, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. And when that happens we ought to rejoice. (47:32)

Two months ago there was a story in the news about the Norwegian Cruise Line that leaves from New York and goes down to the Bahamas spends a few days down there and then makes its way back. It was aptly and ironically named, it was the biggest ship in the fleet, it's called the Breakaway in the Norwegian Cruise Line. Breakaway. And it made a break away from the dock there in the Bahamas without a Mom and Dad, I don't know if you remember this story a couple months ago it's worth looking up. Mom is really the culprit in that she goes out, I don't know, she can't keep track of time but, they're trying to get out of there, if you've ever been on a cruise there's a very hard line about when you're suppose to be back on the ship because then we're pulling out. Well, it was a 5:30 call time and they were supposed to be back on the ship. Well the Dad made it back and the kids were back but the Mom didn't make it back and the Dad was frantic and he leaves the plank there, gets off the ship, this is a gigantic cruise ship and goes out trying to find her. And we know all this because everyone starts taping from the balcony the drama that's taking place. And word spreads. So go on YouTube you got a lot of people taping what's happening down there. And they're watching Dad and everyone is commentating on as Dad goes looking for Mom, and finally the ship has had enough and the horn sounds and it starts to [brrrr] pull away from the dock. Just when it does, from way down on the dock, on the little golf cart, here comes the Dad finally found the Mom got out of some taxi on the Bahamas and they're making their way down that long road down the dock to get to the edge and finally, finally they get there and at this point the ship is only like 50 yards if that from the dock and the pictures of everybody with the video, the Mom is on the edge going [ahhh] her three kids, it's reported are on the ship. One news organization said two kids but whatever. Two, three kids on the ship, Mom and Dad there are like the most dramatic scene there going [ahhh] come back. As the ships going [brrrr]. Now that's the nuts and bolts of the story. (49:32)

Now the interesting sociological observation about this story is all the YouTubers that are video taping it. Because of course they're all narrating this, unscripted narration. I found two categories of narration on that interesting news story I ran across. A lot of people who were very compassionate, like oh can you believe this is out there, oh are they going to find him, oh I don't know. Oh there she is, there she is, we're pulling out, oh go back, go back, ohhh. A lot of that kind of narration. And there were some that were not quite caring. And I found one with over a million hits, I might as well name him, he was pretty bold, Scott Thomas, YouTuber, over 1 million views, narrates it this way. When it gets down to it and they're pulling away and she's there on her knees with her hands up wailing and weeping, he says, you know when they say we're pulling out at 5:30 it's 5:30, we're leaving at 5:30, not 5:31 and not 5:32, we're leaving at 5:30. Whoa. Interesting thing about that is the Norwegian Cruise Line had broken protocol and had already waited an extra 30 minutes to get this gal onboard. This guy didn't even check his watch but he was making his point. No mercy, no mercy, right? She missed it, she should know what time we leave at 5:30, not 5:31, and not 5:32 we said 5:30 on the ship. Bye. That was his commentary. (51:12)

Now I hope we don't have many Scott Thomas among us because there's a lot of people that you know that are rejecting every sign that they have to get on the ship before it's too late. And there's a couple different ways to articulate the words "don't miss the boat", right? You can do it with a hard and calloused heart or you can do it with some sympathy knowing there but for the grace of God go I and to recognize that the people in your world that are not right with the living God need to be right with the living God and if they don't the consequences of that are horrifying. Rejection of truth should bring some grief, the consequences of sin should bring some mourning and by the way when they do make it up the gang plank there, if you call it that, they get up that breeze way and they get on the ship in time there ought to be some great celebration for every sinner that repents. That's a mature menu of godly emotions that we need to experience more often selfless joy for the repentant and selfless grieving for the lost. Let's pray (52:27)

God, I know this series was entitled the experience of every Christian and I hope when it comes to this last one that is so countercultural to our societal values that there would be this experience among every Christian here at Compass, every Christian that hears my voice, that we would more often feel these feelings that Christ felt with a real sincere empathy for the lost. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets. There's a time for indignation, there's a time for disgust but if those are emotions we experience a lot without the experience of real grief I pray you'd work on our hearts today. I know it's easy for us to be irritated but we want to be more sympathetic which should lead us to more focus and heartfelt evangelism, so motivate us in that regard God. Thanks so much for our study of Luke 13 and what we learned in this and I pray this last lesson about our emotions might be helpful, one that helps to round out what it means to be a Christian, and to feel the things that we should feel and to have the values that we should have. So God thanks so much for this study. Dismiss us now with a sense of urgency regarding the gospel. In Jesus Name. Amen. (53:44)