

Seeds and Weeds (Matthew 13:24-43)

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[0 : 0 0] And now, because we believe that God speaks through His Word, we're going to spend some time hearing from His Word. So you can flip with your Bibles, if you have one, to Matthew chapter 13. We're going to pick up straight from where we left off last week, from verse 24 of chapter 13.

So I'll just put these things down. So I'll give you a moment to do that. Yeah, and so last week we started looking at this chapter, didn't we?

This chapter of the Bible where Jesus starts to speak and teach in parables, these stories that have a point. And so today we continue that journey.

We're going to be looking not just at one parable, but actually three of His parables together. So we'll be looking up to 43, verse 43. But I thought what we'll do is we'll put it on the screen.

Thank you, Serena. And this is the first parable. So let's all just read this together as we're in the kind of reading together mood. So you can join us if you're on live stream to read together. So we'll just read this first parable together and pray that God would give us ears to hear from this and the other two as well.

[1 : 0 8] So on the count of three, one, two, three. Jesus told them another parable. The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field.

But while everyone was sleeping, his enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat and went away. When the wheat sprouted and formed ears, then the weeds also appeared.

The owner's servants came to him and said, Sir, didn't you sow good seed in your field? Where then did the weeds come from? An enemy did this, he replied.

The servants asked him, Do you want us to go and pull them up? No, he answered. Because while you are pulling the weeds, you may root up the wheat with them.

Verse 30. Let both grow together until the harvest. At that time, I will tell the harvesters, First collect the weeds and tie them in bundles to be burned.

[2 : 1 1] Then gather the wheat and bring it into my barn. And then I'll just read the last bit. And it says, yeah. Sorry, we'll pause there.

Let's pray together and ask God to speak to us. Father, give us ears to hear. Give us eyes to see. That your kingdom, it's small but will become the biggest blessing.

Your kingdom, it's hidden but will influence everything. And your kingdom, it may look mixed right now. But it will become clear in the end. So would you help us as we hear from your word?

Please help us to also do then what you say to us to do. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Sometimes looks can deceive.

Right? Sometimes looks can deceive. Have you ever had that experience where you scroll through social media and you've seen just an Insta-worthy post? But then you ask the person who was there and they tell you a totally different story of what was actually seen on screen.

[3 : 11] Right? Or maybe a beautiful flower arrangement. It looks great from afar. Once you get up close, you realize, oh, it's actually plastic. Or it's made of chocolate. Or both. I don't know. Maybe you've been scrolling and someone looks quite nice on their profile picture.

But then once you meet IRL, it's a rude shock. Or maybe a pleasant surprise. I don't know. Yeah. Whether it's a stylish Airbnb listing. Right? An Alibaba purchase.

A discount or deepfakes. Sometimes, right? Looks can deceive. Looks can deceive. And I want to suggest that's kind of a common thread we see in the next three kingdom parables that Jesus talks about.

Right? Jesus wants each story that we hear to get under our skin. And I think to show us, right, when it comes to the kingdom of heaven, looks aren't everything.

Looks can deceive. So I want you to just keep that big idea in your mind. Right? Looks aren't everything. Looks can deceive. When it comes to the kingdom of heaven. And I don't know.

[4 : 20] Maybe it's your first time or second time at church. And you're thinking, Oh, this is pretty unimpressive, I think. Right? Compared to the other parts of your life that look far cooler.

Far nicer. Or maybe you've been exploring whether you believe in Jesus. But then actually you go, What? A crucified saviour? A murdered messiah?

What does that have to do with my life? And it doesn't even seem that nice compared to Elon Musk or compared to Kim Kardashian or something like that.

And so these kingdom parables are for you and me. Right? You and I, we need to know that looks can deceive when it comes to the kingdom of heaven. Last week we had to go practicing our own storytelling.

I don't know if you're still recovering from that. But this is how Jesus taught. He told stories a lot of the time. Right? And he loved to do this. And so I want us to notice this week in our section from 24 to 43, Notice how Matthew, who wrote this gospel, has arranged the stories Jesus told.

[5 : 30] Right? So I kind of laid it out for you. Kind of A, B, C, A. Right? So Jesus tells the first parable. Right? About the good seed and the weeds in the mix. And then he adds kind of two parables on top of that.

He said. And then we get a little aside that says, Actually, this is how Jesus taught all the time. From verse 34, 35. And then actually it's after all these. Right? We hear three parables.

A bit of an explanation. And then we go back to the first one. And we get an explanation for the first parable. I wonder if you can see that in front of you in the passage. And so you notice.

Right? That it's kind of like a sandwich. Right? A parable sandwich. You've got the longest story surrounding kind of the other fillings. Right? And we're going to see why this matters soon.

Because I think the fillings relate to kind of the outside parable. Right? The details in the middle are going to help us understand. Right? All three.

[6 : 27] But particularly the first one. And give us more depth. I want to draw your attention in particular to verse 34 in your Bibles. Right? Where it says this. Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables.

He did not say anything to them without using a parable. As we heard last week. He has a method to his madness. These stories.

They take work. They take effort to sink in to us. They're either going to drive crowds to him. Towards him. To find out more.

Or away from him. But as a savior is spinning these stories with a point. Matthew makes this interesting point. Right? Verse 35. Of how Jesus telling parables directly fulfills what an ancient songwriter in Psalm 78 says.

You see that quote. So was fulfilled what was spoken through the prophet. And he quotes Psalm 78. Which says. I will open my mouth in parables. I will utter things hidden since the creation of the world.

[7 : 35] You know that Psalm. As you can see on the screen. It goes on. Right? To say. We're not going to hide these things that others have told us. We're not going to hide them from the next generation. We're going to declare the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord.

His power. And the wonders he has done. And so at the very least. These parables. These three parables. Are meant to point us to praise God.

That is direction that these parables should move us towards. Okay? And we don't move there. Then we've misunderstood them. So. Praise is the direction we want to head to in the next few minutes.

And so to do that. I want us to. Firstly. From today's three parables. I want to share three praiseworthy things. Right? About the kingdom of heaven. Firstly.

It starts small. But becomes a huge blessing. Secondly. It starts hidden. But will impact everything. And thirdly. The first two mean that.

[8 : 32] Whoever belongs in the kingdom of heaven. Is not always clear now. But will be. In the very end. Alright? Three praiseworthy things.

About heaven's kingdom. About the kingdom that Jesus brings. So let's go into the first one together. The first point I want to make is that this. The kingdom of heaven. It starts small.

But grows to be. A huge. Blessing. I've got here my. Hand. It says.

Greg's. Yellow mustard seeds. I wonder if you can see that. Anyone have this. In their spice rack. At home. Yeah. Anyone noticed it. Tried to use it. In cooking. Well.

I don't know how to do this. But. Here. Ivan. You can have one. Take one. Yeah. Oh. Sorry. You took more than one. Yeah. Why don't you tell us.

[9 : 27] What do you notice about. The mustard seed. Or the mustard seeds. That you've got in your hand. They're small. Right? They're small. They're small. I mean.

I. Oh. Sorry. I dropped some. Okay. I'll clean that up later. Or the sanitizing team. No. I'll do it. I'll do it. Look. If you took this home. Right? And imagine you could plant.

A mustard seed. One obvious challenge is this. Right? You need to keep holding on to it. It's so tiny. Right? How could you tell this apart from like a piece of rock. Or some sand. At the beach. You know.

What good is it if I put it here. And then I lose it. Or. It just sits there. And you go. Oh. This looks pretty small. Next to. A pumpkin seed. Or. I don't know. Sunflower seed.

There are other seeds that are way bigger. Than these. Mustard seeds. And Jesus' point is so simple. The kingdom of heaven. Can seem like this.

[10 : 23] So small. Companies like. Tesla. Meta. Google. Google. Whatever. They seem huge. Don't they? Right? Seem like they could take over the world. And then there's God's kingdom.

Sitting. In a little corner somewhere. Or. The visible expression. Like our church. Right? We just sit on the corner of Te Rakao Drive. Like a mustard seed. We think of activists.

Who are opposed to God. Right? They actually want to hurt and harm the church. They actually preach against the church. They don't want the church. Ever. To. Have any influence. In our society. And they seem so well funded.

And. And supported. Don't they? And then there's just Christians. Maybe on campus. In the workplace. On media. You and I. Small.

Like mustard seeds. Or have you even thought about. The gospel. Right? The saving message of Jesus. That we hold on to. It can seem so small.

[11 : 23] Compared to. Life's problems. Divorce. Depression. Anxiety. Addictions. Family dramas. Relationship issues.

These seem so huge. Compared to. The gospel. Like a mustard seed. But Jesus would have a say. And know. To look closer.

Because. He says. The kingdom of heaven. Verse 31. It's like a mustard seed. Which a man took. And planted in his field. Though it is the smallest. Of all your seeds.

Yet when it grows. It is the largest. Of garden plants. And becomes a tree. So that the birds of the air. Come. And perch. In its.

Branches. We don't need. A detailed explanation. Of what the birds mean. Or the tree branches. And so on. Right? It's so simple. The main point is clear. This tiny seed.

[12 : 20] Looks small. And unimpressive even. Grows into a huge. Tree. That brings refuge. Safety. Blessing. To.

To all the birds of the air. And so it is. With God's. Kingdom. It starts small. It may look unimpressive. But. It grows to be a huge blessing.

To everyone. Who dwells in it. Looks. Can deceive. Whether it's Jesus. Versus the. The big religious rulers. Of his time.

Whether it's. Peter and Paul. The first disciples. In the early church. Versus the Roman Empire. At the time. Whether it's. Our brothers and sisters. Overseas. In places like China.

And North Korea. Small. Versus the might. Of paranoid. Powerful governments. Whether. You. Feel small. As a Christian. In your classroom.

[13 : 16] At your workplace. Around your. Dinner table. Looks. Aren't. Everything. God's kingdom. Starts small. But it becomes. It will become.

The biggest. Blessing. In the end. That's what Jesus. Wants us to know. And even that message. Christ died for you. That we hold out to people. Seems tiny. Doesn't it?

Sometimes. But praise God. This tiny message. The gospel. Can grow. To be a shelter. For all of life's problems.

It can be the foundation. Of. A Christ-centered marriage. The gospel. Can empower us. To fight. Sin. The gospel. Can show us. The wisest way.

Of living. With each other. Praise God. For that. Praise God. For that. Let's have a think. About the second thing. Worth praising.

[14 : 09] About the kingdom of heaven. And for that. We need to look at. The second parable. Right? And the second parable. We'll look at. I think. Teaches us. That the kingdom of heaven. Starts hidden. But will influence.

Everything. And Jesus. Kind of. Switches stories. He switches from a man. Planting. Planting a mustard seed. To a woman. Who's working on some. Homemade bread. Right?

Have a look at verse 33. He told them. Still another parable. Where he said this. The kingdom of heaven. Is like yeast. That a woman took. And mixed into a large amount of flour.

Until it worked. All through. The dough. So my wife Cheryl. Is at home. With the kids. And she's the expert.

With bread making. So I'm really sorry Cheryl. If I get this wrong. But here. Is what's called starter. Has anyone heard of starter before? Right? Kind of active.

[15 : 05] It's alive. It may not seem it. It's kind of. It's actually growing. And you need to feed it with dough. And water. Okay? And. We normally use.

Yeast today. To do the same thing. That a starter does. Right? And actually starters. Have become more and more popular. You know. Some of you. Have done homemade baking. During lockdown. You might have been. Keeping a starter alive.

Right? It will just keep growing. And growing. As long as you give it flour. And water. Right? Or it will die out. Or it might. Yeah. It's tiny though. Isn't it? Look at it.

How's that going to help. Make bread? But actually. If you want something more than. Flat bread. Or pizza bread. Or unleavened bread. Actually. You need your dough to rise.

That's the basics of bread making. And so actually. You hide some of the starter. Into the dough. Right? That you've got. Kneaded. And this will.

[16 : 01] Eat the sugar. Or kind of. Make some gas. Right? Chemistry 101. Eventually the bread will rise. And that's how you get. Bread. That's how you get bread. And I think this is a powerful analogy.

I think. Especially for the people who are hearing this parable. Right? Something so hidden. Can impact everything. That it touches. Remember what the people under.

The rule of King Herod at the time. Remember those. Oppressed. Under. Military. Occupation. People. Wanted. When they thought. Oh. God's kingdom. God's king is coming.

If someone preached. As Jesus did. The kingdom of heaven has drawn near. What's the first image that comes to mind? Not. Not yeast. Right? Not starter. But. Maybe a sword. Right?

Maybe a shield. Maybe let's go fight. Let's go attack. A full frontal assault. An open rebellion. That's what we're talking about. Isn't that how our ancestors did it?

[17 : 01] Right? They might have thought back to Joshua number one. Okay? Back in the times when the Bible was thin. Joshua number one. He surrounds the city walls. Right? With armies. And conquers it in the name of the Lord.

That's right. Kingdom of the Lord. But Joshua number two. Right? Jesus. Yeshua. Says no. My kingdom of heaven is like leaven.

It's going to start hidden. But. Be patient. It will grow to impact everything around us. When all is said and done.

Nothing will be left untouched by the power of the gospel. That's what he's trying to teach them. The saving rule of God's chosen king is. It starts hidden. But it will influence everything. Think of heaven's kingdom.

As the ultimate disruptor. Okay? The true kingdom of God does not grow. Right? By political might. Or corporate strategy.

[17 : 59] Or an advertising blitz. It's never confused. Kind of worldly success and fame. With true kingdom growth. Which seems hidden.

But will spread all over the world. The true kingdom of God. So heaven's kingdom. It's like mustard seed. It's small at first. But a huge blessing.

It's like yeast hidden at first. But noticeable everywhere in the end. And I think these two simpler parables. Once we understand it. Helps us to make sense of this first and largest parable.

And I think what the parable of the wheat and the tares. Essentially teaches us. About the kingdom of heaven. Praise God. Is that who belongs in it.

Is not clear now. But will be in the end. I'll say that again. Who belongs in the kingdom of heaven. It's not clear now is it? But one day it will be. And we see this actually.

[18 : 58] Because Jesus explains this parable himself. Doesn't he? Right? If you look at verse 36 in your Bibles. Through to 43. How about I read that for us. And we'll see his own explanation.

Have a listen. This is God's word. Then Jesus left the crowd. And went into the house. His disciples came to him and said. Explain to us. The parable of the weeds in the field.

And Jesus answered. The one who sowed the good seed. Is the son of man. The field is the world. And the good seed stands for the sons of the kingdom. The weeds are the sons of the evil one.

And the enemy who sows them is the devil. The harvest is at the end of the age. And the harvest is our angels. As the weeds are pulled up and burned in the fire. So it will be at the end of the age.

The son of man will send out his angels. They will weed out of his kingdom. Everything that causes sin. And all who do evil. They will throw them into the fiery furnace.

[19 : 58] Where there will be weeping. And gnashing of teeth. Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father. The one who has ears.

Let them hear. Notice when the disciples. When they asked Jesus a question. At the start of this section. Right? We actually heard them ask a question.

Right? Last week. About the other parable. But here. When they ask a question. It's slightly different to that first question. That first question before. They wanted to know why Jesus spoke in parables in the first place.

If you remember that. But here this time. They don't question his approach. But they do want him to explain clearly. In particular. The parable of the weeds. What's going on here?

They're trying to find out. That questioning approach. That's what we want to be like. I think a genuine follower of Jesus. Cares. About getting Jesus' teachings right.

[20 : 57] They'll ask questions. Again. These parables. They point to the state of our hearts. Don't we? Don't they? As God's followers. Do you not know? And not care?

Or do you care? Even if you don't know? You see the difference? How you see this parable. These parables will point out. Whether you're on the Jesus road. Or not.

Speaking of roads. This is the road. Kind of very near. Where our family have been house sitting. For the last two weeks. So. Different view to Pakaranga. That's us. Eating lunch out on the deck most days.

We're very grateful for the weather. And notice on the top left. We've been looking after a cat. Right? Her name's Leopard. She's a good old lazy cat. Just comes in for food.

And then goes away. That's great. Not really a lap cat. But we love her. And as actually. You know. The first time our kids have really had pets. You know. For. So it's been really nice. And just house sitting for some ministry friends.

[21 : 56] It's been a real blessing. Right? Another one of the highlights. Other than Leopard. Are the tubs of Lego. Oh. Some of you know. Some of you know. Huge tubs of Lego.

Man. These guys love Lego. Tubs overflowing. With possibility. You know. I wonder if you've ever played Lego so much. That bright shiny sound of stirring plastic bricks.

You know. That's been a big part of our life this past week. Right? And after a week of finding pieces. Big and small. I think actually. Some of the kids in particular. They're getting really good at telling Lego pieces apart.

Right? You know. Just this morning. Dad. I found this piece. The exact piece. In this massive Lego haystack. They're getting really good. But sometimes Lego can be hard to tell apart.

I mean. For example. Can you guys. Tell these two apart? It's pretty hard. Right? Okay. One of them is genuine Lego.

[22 : 58] And the other one is. Mega blocks. Not quite Lego. But on face value. They look pretty similar. Don't they? Okay.

They look pretty similar. And actually. This is exactly the point. That Jesus is trying to make. In this parable. All right. That when it comes to telling. Wheat. And what's called weeds.

In the Bible. Apart. They sometimes look really similar. When these two plants. Grow. Side by side. At a particular phase. In their growth. Now.

We don't actually know exactly. What the Bible's word for this. It's translated wheat. I'm sorry. Weed. In our Bibles. We think it's possibly. This particular. Plant.

It's called. Darnal. Okay. Darnal. Think of. Darnal. All right. As wheat's evil twin. Darnal looks like normal wheat. All right. And most of us.

[23 : 54] I think. If we weren't farmers. Right. Would not be able to tell them apart. But actually. Whereas wheat. Actually. You know. Gives us food. And sustenance. You can turn it into useful things. Darnal wheat.

Actually. You can't really eat it. To feed yourself. In fact. It's poisonous. If you eat too much of it. Or. If you ate enough of it. Actually. It could. Give you hallucinations. You'd go dizzy.

You'd. Get nauseous. Nauseous. Think of it. As like. I don't know. Like the wheat bix of death. Darnal. Right. And in verse 38. Jesus says.

This. Darnal wheat. It refers to the sons of the devil. Those who do evil. While the good seed. It refers to the sons of the kingdom. But none of us will be able to tell them apart.

Not even the farmers at that stage. It's just too hard. And now look. It's tempting to go and take Jesus' parable here. And then us go out and become weed inspectors.

[24 : 51] Right. And start profiling people. Our friends and family. You're a good seed. You're a bad seed. I don't know. But the parable says we shouldn't. Right. We should not do that.

The master of the house says this. Verse 29. Look. Don't. Don't go out pulling out weeds. You might root up the good wheat with them. Just wait till the end.

God will judge. He will sort. He will repay. When it comes to God's kingdom. Looks can deceive. Yes. Who belongs is not clear now.

But in the end it will be. Because in this world. In this field as it were. There is an enemy. Right. Who was sowing evil in the midst of good.

Who was an expert in putting fake Christians within the true church. Who was in hell bent. This enemy. On fooling people. To think if they're religious.

[25 : 51] Without true repentance. They're okay. This enemy loves it when people call themselves Christian. They don't want to do anything different in their lives. This enemy loves it when people change their behavior maybe.

They look good. But actually their hearts are not truly changed. But in this age. Now when we haven't seen Jesus return yet.

It is sometimes going to be hard to tell. Who is a child of God. And who is not. We leave it with the Lord. And you might think.

Hang on. You told me. Right. That these parables should lead us to praise God. I don't feel very praiseworthy God right now. What is there to praise about having fake Lego among real Lego.

Or weeds among wheat. But maybe I can give an example from earlier this week. I was driving on the motorway with one of my kids earlier this week. And I was shocked actually.

[26 : 53] Because on the billboard heading back towards Pakaranga. There was an ad. A full billboard ad. For Shincheonji. Some of you may know the name. Shincheonji.

It's a cult. Basically. The leader believes that he is the fulfillment of all of the prophecies that talk about Jesus. Leman. He thinks that he is the Messiah.

And the way they grow their cult is shocking. The past few years they have been actually visiting churches. Pretending to be genuine seekers.

And then they draw you out. They say, let's go meet for coffee. And then suddenly you're sucked into this web of intense Bible study. Mind control. Isolated from friends and family.

It's heartbreaking. And there's a full billboard. Out in the open. I was shocked actually at their new strategy. I was telling my daughter this. Right?

[27 : 47] They are weeds among wheat. For them to go public is huge. I don't know. Maybe their previous strategy hasn't worked.

Maybe COVID has forced them to change strategy. But they are weeds among wheat. And when I saw it initially.

My first reaction was. Was anger. How dare you? How many families have you ruined? How many churches have you split apart with your false teaching?

Your blatant lying. Your pressure. Indoctrination. There was this urge within me. To kind of almost stop the car in the middle of the motorway. And try and tear it down or something.

I don't know. This passage has been good. This parable has been good for my soul. God said to me. Remember. I've allowed this.

[28 : 52] I've allowed evil to coexist with good for now. I've allowed wheat to grow alongside weeds for now. Be patient. Be gentle. Have mercy on those who doubt.

Snatch others out of the fire. But judgment will come. I will sort it out in the end. It's unclear now. But it will be in the end. And for that.

We can praise God. We can praise God. It has been a comfort to me this week. It has been a comfort to me this week. To know that looks aren't everything. A true church may look small and hidden and unclear right now.

But we should be patient with the evil around us. We should keep trusting Jesus as Lord. We should keep running to him for our refuge.

Keep your eyes fixed on his kingdom for true blessing. True influence. True belonging. So yes. While I can warn people.

[29 : 54] Don't sign up to their false teaching. I need to be patient. I need this kingdom parable to sit in me. And remind me to be patient. And because these kingdom parables are true and good for me.

I want to suggest three things that all of us should expect. A couple of implications. As we too. Live for heaven's kingdom in this broken world. So just three takeaway points.

The first is I think we should expect to feel small. Okay. Whenever we're doing God's work. Whenever we are sowing for eternity. Look our culture is obsessed with numbers.

Right. And bigger is better. We peg our identities on how many followers we get. We think we're worth more because we have more likes. Or that our portfolios are increasing in value.

And God's kingdom on the flip side feels small. Like a mustard seed. Maybe even in a pandemic season. We get reminded that size is not everything in God's economy.

[31 : 01] So expect to feel small. But let's keep investing into eternity. Whatever it looks like for you. The message of Jesus you and I carry may seem tiny in comparison.

But expect that we'll feel small for now. When that gospel roots and takes soil. When it grows it will bless so many, many others.

Praise God for that. But for now expect to feel small. Secondly, expect that we should find evidence of Christianity's hidden influence everywhere.

Everywhere. I know we're actually a secular country here in New Zealand. But if God's kingdom spreads like leaven. Then those who live by Jesus' melody will actually be not always obvious.

But they will be present everywhere. Whether it's the critical role that missionaries played. Right? And even shaping our country's history. Right?

[32 : 01] They were there at the signing of the treaty. Whether it's the Christian influence actually. Eleanor Roosevelt. Strong Christian who helped to shape and draft the declaration of human rights.

That we all just assume as gospel today. Whether it's the fact that actually on the front lines of refugee crises. Humanitarian disasters. Even probably going to Tonga right now.

There are Christians. Whether it's your kindest teacher at school. That understanding family member. Or that secret Christian at work.

You should expect Jesus' influence everywhere. Because that is what God's kingdom is like. And finally. We need to expect that not everyone.

Not everything that seems spiritual. Will be gathered into God's kingdom in the end. We celebrate this because we don't want cult leaders.

[33 : 00] Right? To enter God's kingdom. Or Christian celebrity pastors who sleep with their assistants or whatever. Or worship artists who abandon their faith.

These parables also tell us not to look at the outward appearance. The Lord looks at the heart. Not just the heart of Lee Man-hee. Or other celebrities. But also my heart and your heart.

And in a church our size. There will sadly be some. Who seem spiritual. But may not be gathered into God's kingdom.

Because they are not born again. Because they do not trust Jesus Christ alone. For their salvation. They will be embraced not by the Father. But by the fire.

Weeded out. Jesus says. In his word. Verse 41. Hard words but true words. There is a final judgment.

[34 : 00] The Son of Man will. Right? Send out his angels. They will weed out of his kingdom. Everyone that causes sin. And all who do evil. Those who are not repentant. But where those who are righteous.

Right? Righteous not from. Our own strength. But through the saving goodness of Jesus Christ. Through his death and resurrection. Where those are gathered into the Father's arms. Sheltered forever.

Impacting the world right now. Praise God for that. And I just want to say. If you're here. And you wouldn't call yourself a believer yet.

Jesus invites you. To enter his kingdom. Not on your terms. But on his terms. He says. Come to me. Matthew 11. 28. Those who are weary.

And burdened. And Jesus says. I will give you rest. He does it. So come to Jesus. Turn away from anything. And anyone else.

[35 : 03] Who might give you true joy. But won't. See Jesus there. Hanging on the cross. Dying for your sins.

On a hill. Seems random. Seems far away. It's small. But it's not secret. Seems hidden. But not for long. As he nailed our sins to the tree.

As he was crowned the king of heaven. Something world changing began. Did it not? A new kingdom was started. Where true shelter. True influence.

True blessing can be found. So come to him. Come to him. And no one else. And if you still got questions about this. Yeah. I'd love to chat with you more about this.

About the saving message of the gospel. About Jesus Christ. And having a relationship with him. Looks aren't everything. Friends. Jesus.

[36 : 04] Seems small and unimpressive. But he is calling people to himself. He has been doing so for thousands of years. And he invites you to. Lay down your burdens. Lay down your other gods.

Your other kings. Come to King Jesus. To him belongs the kingdom. The power. The glory forever. And ever. Shall we pray? Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Jesus we thank you for these stories. We thank you how they sink deep because.

We can even imagine what it might look like to be small. To be hidden. To not be sure who's in or who's out. Father, would you just take all these anxieties and as we cast these cares upon you, would you comfort us?

Would you encourage us, assure us? To you belongs the kingdom, the power, the glory forever and ever. To you alone. And so Father, I pray even now for those who have not put you, Jesus, as king of their lives, as king of their hearts.

[37 : 24] Father, do a work in their hearts, please. Help them see the kingdom of heaven and the king of heaven for what it truly is.

Help each of us again today to turn away from any other rivals. To put our trust in you. Because Jesus, yours is the kingdom, the power, the glory forever and ever.

Amen.