

# Bro. Tod Tanner Luke 5:27-32

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[ 0 : 00 ] Well, if you got your Bible this morning, I hope you do. I want to encourage you to get it out. We are going to study God's Word this morning. I don't know much, but I know this. My words are here today and they are gone tomorrow.

Two generations from now, my family want to remember my name. Think of it, how many of us in here know all eight names of our great-grandparents? I bet you very few of us.

That's our own family. They're not even going to remember our name. But God's Word will stand with us forever. If you got your Bible, turn it to Luke chapter 5. We're going to look at an encounter with Christ.

It's Luke chapter 5. We're going to be in verses 27 through 32. And you'll recognize the players in this text. It's Matthew. He worked for the IRS.

Nobody likes people that work for the IRS. Now, I've said that before, and there's somebody in the audience that worked for the IRS. I feared an audit at that point. Do you work for the IRS? You do?

[ 1 : 00 ] Oh, your husband did. Okay, I do not exist. I promise. They misspelled my name in the bulletin. I don't know who I am. We're going to look at a counter between Jesus and Matthew, the tax collector, and what took place.

This morning, there's really three players in our text. There's Christ. There's Matthew. And then there's the Pharisees. And I want us to take just a few minutes this morning to look at this encounter and see what everybody did do and what everybody didn't do.

So we're going to be in Luke chapter 5. We're going to start in verse 27. Scripture says this. After this, now, what's this? What is he referring to there?

If we were to turn the clock back a few verses, if you will, Jesus had just healed somebody, the paralytic, and they grabbed his mat and he took off. And there were some folks that were really upset about that.

And it's after this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector. That worked for the IRS. Named Levi. Now, that's Matthew.

[ 2 : 07 ] Now, you might go, okay, preacher, how did you get that? You know, all of us, some of us have a nickname. I'm Todd Tanner. I go by T squared. So if I hear somebody say T squared, I'll turn around. If I hear somebody just say Tanner, because that's my last name, but a lot of times it's the first name, I'll turn around.

Matthew, he was also Levi. And what was Matthew doing? He was sitting at the tax office, and he, that's Christ, said to him, two words, follow me.

We'll camp out on that here in just a few minutes. Jesus didn't say follow a set of beliefs. He didn't say follow a religion. He didn't say follow anything else, but he said this, follow me.

Follow me. Verse 29. So Matthew put a committee together. Is that what it says? Matthew put it on Facebook as a prayer request.

Matthew gathered all of his friends around him and said, what should I do? What's the Bible actually say? So leaving everything behind, he got up and he began to follow him.

[ 3 : 21 ] Matthew, verse 29. Then Levi, what did he do? He hosted not just a banquet. Scripture says a grand banquet for him. That's Christ. At his, that's Matthew's house.

Now there was a large crowd of tax collectors and others who were reclining at the table with him. Verse 30, the first word. That's an important word. You see it?

But. You've ever had somebody come up to you and go, well, you know, brother, sister, I love you. But. And that word right there, that negates everything on the front end.

If somebody comes up and says, I love you, but. You just sort of brace yourself. Because you know you're fixing to catch it. So Matthew, he gets an invitation to two words, follow me.

He leaves everything. He's throwing a grand party. There's a lot of other tax collectors that are around. Verse 30. But. That's a transitional word. The Pharisees.

[ 4 : 18 ] The Pharisees. Who's that? That's the religious elite. The Pharisees and their scribes. Who's that? The scribes are the ones that. The Pharisees would yak a lot. Talk a lot. And the scribes were the ones that were writing it all down.

So they're in cahoots together. But the Pharisees and the scribes were complaining to his disciples. Notice this. They were complaining to who? His disciples.

They weren't complaining to him. But they were talking about him to somebody else. Back into the text. They were complaining to his disciples. Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?

Verse 31. Jesus replied. I like that. He's talking. The Pharisees are complaining. They're complaining to his disciples about who?

Jesus. Jesus steps in. Jesus replied to them. It is not those who are healthy who need a doctor. But those who are sick.

[ 5 : 18 ] Verse 32. It's the key to the whole text. I have not come to call the righteous. But rather sinners to repentance.

Do you remember when we were growing up? You, me, all of us. And I grew up in South Texas. We made humidity and shipped it out to the world. We had an abundance.

That was our export was humidity. And we had an abundance of it. I have a brother that's two years older than me. And I always wanted to sort of live up to his expectations. You know, bust out a big brother's shadow.

That kind of thing. And his name was Trey. And Trey would come up and he goes, Todd, I dare you. Well, I'm just this little guy. And I'm thinking, okay, what might it be? And somebody says, I dare you.

And if you're really adventuresome, what you do is you say yes. And then you figure out what did I just agree to?

[ 6 : 14 ] Now, you do that two or three times. And then all of a sudden, the definition of insanity starts playing itself out. You know what the definition of insanity is? Doing the same thing over and over again, expecting a different result.

So big brother Trey would say, I dare you. I'd say, I'm in. And then I'd figure out what the details were. Only to find out that wasn't the smartest move in my lifetime, no matter how long or short that might be.

So next time he would come in, he'd go, well, I dare you. I'd step back a little bit and I'd say, well, what are you daring me to? So I'm wising up a little bit. Give me some detail and then I'll figure out if I want to do this or not.

Now, why do I tell this story? I dare all of us. I dare all of us to two words.

Straight from the mouth of our Savior. I dare us. I'm in it too. Okay, I'm a follower of Christ. I dare us. Follow him. Isn't it amazing?

[ 7 : 17 ] Because he walks up. Matthew is just sitting. It says he's sitting in his booth. He's sitting in his tax collector booth. His day is fine. He is used to this. It's status quo.

I do this all the time. I'm good. Here comes Jesus with two words, follow me. Matthew doesn't step back. He doesn't get a holy huddle up.

He doesn't say, okay, what do you want me to do? Let me ask a few questions first. Once I have some answers to my questions, then I'll consider it. How much time do I have to get back to you? I dare us.

No matter where we may be, we may be faithful followers of Jesus Christ. We're going to see in the text here in just a minute that follow me was not a one-time event.

If it was just a one-time event, then we get saved and we're done. That's not the invitation. You may be here today, though, and you'll hear the words of Christ.

[ 8 : 14 ] Follow me. Follow me. Do you all realize there's only 18 inches between heaven and hell? Did you know that? That's it.

There's 18 inches between heaven and hell because there's about 18 inches between your head and your heart. And he says, I dare you, follow me.

Here in the South, my greatest fear is that we have a working knowledge of Jesus. We just don't know Jesus. Can we take just a minute this morning to push into his word to see an invitation?

And that invitation that was around back then, it's still around today. So I want us to look at Matthew. What did he do? What did he not do? I want us to look at the Pharisees.

How did they respond? But ultimately, I want us to look at the life of the Savior and see what the invitation looks like and how it applies to us today. So I dare us, let's jump in without the details and trust a good Savior.

[ 9 : 20 ] Let's begin. The first thing I want us to do is to see Matthew. Let's see if we can understand Matthew. Look at verse 28 with me. We're just going to walk down the text together. Anytime I have the opportunity to share God's word, as I stated, my words are here today, gone tomorrow.

His word is eternal, so that's where we're going to focus. If we're going to understand Matthew, the first thing I want us to see is that he left everything. How do we know that? Let's pick up in 27. After this, we understand what that was. Jesus went out and saw a tax collector. Now let's stop and think about this real quick. Tax collectors back in the day, the way that they made their money, let's say that you owe the government of Rome \$100.

So a tax collector would say, he'd get his books out, he'd say, okay, Todd Tanner, you're on the roll, that's great. You owe Rome \$500. What? My books say \$100.

Sorry, my books say \$500. So I pony out \$500. Matthew would take \$400, put it in his pocket, and then he'd pay the bill with the \$100 that was left. So the \$400 went in his pocket.

[ 10 : 27 ] Now let's think about this. And I've waited to this moment to deal with this thing. It says in here, in this part of the text, it's Levi. That's a Jewish name. So our boy Matthew is hated by everybody.

The Romans, let's say that's them over there. They can't stand Matthew, Levi. Why? Because he's Jewish. The Jewish people, let's say they're over here. They can't stand Levi.

Why? Because he's working for them. So our boy Matthew has nobody. Now he's got everything that the world would say he would want and need.

Why? He's got cash. And we're going to see here in just a minute, he got a lot of it. So we're just walking down the text together. After this, Jesus went out, saw a tax collector named Levi.

He's just sitting, sitting at the tax office. And he said to him, or two words, here's I dare you, follow me.

[ 11 : 33 ] He doesn't say follow a set of beliefs. Jesus did not die for a set of beliefs because you and I are not a set of beliefs. He went to the cross for us in the freedom that we desire and need.

And that's the invitation, is to follow in a relationship. Follow Jesus. Follow me. So how did our boy Matthew respond?

Verse 28. So leaving, what does it say? Leaving everything. Leaving everything.

Behind. He got up and he followed. I dare us. You know, it took me two or three times before it got in my head, hey, maybe I don't need to play this game with my older brother.

It doesn't end real well for little brother. And I would, you know, once you say yes and you're in the game, you can't back out. I told Trey, yeah, I'll take the dare, whatever it is.

[ 12 : 43 ] I just want to, I want to be cool. I don't want to back down now. Two or three times of that. Okay, wisdom would say don't do that again. But yet the Bible shows us, what did he do?

Leaving everything behind. He got up and he followed. Now, here's an interesting thing. You all probably realize that the New Testament is written in what's called Greek.

And we take the Greek and then we put it down into English. Greek is like traveling through Murfreesboro and I-24. It's a super highway.

English, when you take it from Greek to English, it's Highway 64. I live right here in War Trace. My family and I live here, so, you know, it's great to be here in town for a Sunday morning. But the English is like 64.

You've got to take it from 24 and put it down to where you can understand it. Why do I say all of that? When it says leaving everything behind, that's a verb. Now, let's roll our clocks back a little bit.

[ 13 : 50 ] When we were in English class, probably didn't know you were coming to English class today. Don't worry, we'll all pass the test. So, you're in English class, it's a verb, that shows it's an action. Now, verbs can be written in various tenses or voices.

One is called passive voice. That's where the action is done to the person. For instance, I used to be a youth pastor. It was very common for me to get chunked in the pool.

You know, so youth guys show up at a pool party, you're going for a swim. It just sort of goes along with the job description. I wouldn't actively join in that, but nevertheless, one, two, three, there goes the youth pastor.

That's passive voice. That was done to me. There's active voice. That shows the subject is the doer. He or she is the one that is actively doing that.

Sometimes you drive on Mount Olivet Road, you will see me running. Not really fast, but nevertheless, I'm putting one in front of the other. I am running. That's active voice.

[14:54] Why do I say that? Look at the text. Verse 29. So leaving everything. Everything.

That's active voice. Our boy Matthew actively took a dare. And he chose to do it himself.

He walked the aisle himself. He didn't do it because big brother, little sister, mama or daddy, granddaddy, grandmama wanted him to do that. He said, I'm in. Now, here's an interesting thing.

The text, you can, if you really start pushing into the text, it starts to come alive and you can see it. It doesn't say he left everything behind. That shows a one time event.

It says, this is what the Bible says, he was leaving. So leaving, I-N-G. That's what's called a participle. What does that mean?

[15:59] Again and again and again. It was a daily endeavor. Leaving everything behind. How many times do we hear this? Oh, just walk the aisle.

Everything will be fine. Then you can go right back to your normal way of living. No. That's not the dare. The dare is follow me. And as we do that, he calls us to leave everything behind daily.

Daily. We could turn the text a few pages over and get to Luke chapter 9, verse 23. And here's what the text would say. Jesus says, take up your cross.

Next word, please. Ah, you left one out. Take up your cross in what time frame? Daily. There's a whole study, just your cross.

That's a whole sermon in and of itself. If we're going to look at Matthew, can we see that he chose to leave everything behind? It wasn't a one-time event, but it was a daily endeavor.

[17:06] And Jesus still calls us to that daily. What did he do? He left everything behind. Not only that, though. Our boy Matthew, not only did he leave everything behind.

I love this in verse 29. Oh, he got busy. He invited others. Oh, that's great. How do we know? Verse coming out of 28. So leaving everything behind, he got up.

He walked away from all the cash. He had all the money he wanted, but he knew money and possessions would not make him happy. Leaving everything behind, what did he do? He began.

It shows a journey to follow him. Verse 29. Then, by the way, you study the Greek, there's little to no delay between 28 and 29.

We're still in the same paragraph. We're in the same conversation, the same setting. We don't have, you know, five-year gap. Back to the text.

[18:05] Then, Levi, what did he do? He hosted what? Scripture says a grand banquet. Not just a, well, he hosted a banquet. Man, he had a grand banquet.

Why? For him, that's Christ at his house. Watch this. Now, there was a large crowd. Now, this is at his house. This shows us our boy Levi is loaded because he can have a grand banquet with a large number of people.

Where? At his house. He didn't have to go rent somewhere. Our boy's got some coin, and he left it all behind. Now, there was a large crowd of tax collectors, sinners, and others who were reclining at the table with him.

Our boy Levi, he invited others to the newfound relationship with Jesus. Now, here's something.

The Lord has allowed me to serve him, serve his bride for almost 30 years now. I mean, I love what I get to do. I don't take myself serious.

[19:19] I take what I get to do very serious. And one of the things that I've learned over my journeys and over the years is a lot of times people say, Well, preacher, you know, I'll start telling others about Jesus as soon as I learn some more.

I need to learn how to do this. I need to learn how to do that. I need to learn how to do this. If we're about waiting until we have all the answers, we're never going to share.

Because reality is we're never going to have all the answers. If we can have all the answers, that means God can fit in our little box of all of our answers. What did our boy Levi do? He said yes to the I dare you, and instantly he started inviting others.

You want to know what it takes to share? It's really pretty simple. It's our story. That's all it takes.

This is who I was before Christ. This is when I met Christ. And this is who I'm striving to become as I follow Christ.

[ 20 : 30 ] Our boy Matthew didn't go get a prayer team together. And I'm not saying don't pray. Please don't hear that. I did not say that at all. He didn't get into ten semesters of Bible study.

And I'm not saying there's anything wrong with Bible study. I'm a huge fan of it. That's why my words are gone here today and gone tomorrow. His word is eternal. Let's dig in there. But if we say I've got to have all of these answers before I start telling others and inviting others to a relationship with Christ, then we've got to punt on Matthew.

And we don't see Jesus going, Matt, slow down, slow down. We don't see that in the text. So what can we understand about our boy Matthew?

Well, he left everything. I don't think he ever got disappointed. It cost him everything. I seriously doubt he's up in glory going, oh, man, it so wasn't worth it.

I see him going, man, this is so worth it. He had everything the world told him he should have, possessions. And he walked instantly.

[ 21 : 34 ] And as soon as he did that, he started inviting others. So that's our first character. So we see Matthew. We understand him. Let's switch a little bit. And let's see the Pharisees.

What can we learn about this lovely group? You chuckle so you know. Ah. All right.

Back into the text. We'll come out of 29. Levi, that's Matthew. He hosted a grand banquet. For him, that's Christ. At his, it's Matthew's house. It's a large crowd.

Once again, we see this wealth of tax collectors and others who were reclining at the table with them. So back in the day when this was being written, having a meal was not a, hey, let's meet at Subway and grab a sandwich real quick.

I'll see you at Zaxby's, and we're there for 15 minutes. We're out. This is multiple hours. And they interact with each other. It was a huge social setting.

[ 22 : 37 ] But the Pharisees, here we go. Here we go. Our lovely folks are showing up. And they're scribes. They were complaining.

Some translations will say this. They were grumbling. What exactly does that mean? Have you ever had something or have seen something happen like this?

Well, brother, I need to chat with you real quick. Or, sweet sister, I need to tell you about this. You know, they're saying. And then all of a sudden, if I hear that, I think, okay, who's they?

And I'm the type of, well, tell me who they are. Well, you know, it's them. Okay, who's them? Well, it's they. Oh, everybody. Oh, everybody. Tell me, give me some names.

Well, you. And then all of a sudden, our hands go in our pocket and we're defensive. That's what our Pharisees here are doing. Scripture says they're complaining.

[ 23 : 39 ] They're grumbling. Just a minute ago, we saw how he was leaving everything ING. So it wasn't a one-time act.

It was a daily endeavor. You see another ING on our Pharisees. They weren't satisfied.

So I begin to wonder, what were they complaining about? What upset their little apple cart?

You want to know the answer? I'll give you one word. Jesus. Jesus. See, Pharisees are great about complaining about the things that Jesus was doing.

Because you had this group of tax collectors and other sinners, and according to the Pharisees, they're not worthy. We have it all figured out.

[ 24 : 45 ] We have the seminary degrees. We've got all the titles in the church. We've got it all figured out. How dare. Now, once y'all get cleaned up and start following our rules, by the way, they had a bunch of them.

Can't find them in the Bible, but nevertheless. Once you get cleaned up and start following our rules, then maybe we'll let you in.

And Jesus is the ringleader of this bunch. Because we'll see this in just a minute. Jesus came for all of us, even those that don't fit our model.

Here's a news flash for all of us, okay? Every one of us. Lost people act like lost people. Because they don't know Jesus.

And if they don't know Jesus, the Spirit of God does not reside within them. And the Spirit of God, His job, according to the Bible, is to convict us where we have stepped away. So as we walk out into Wartrace, Bedford County, 37183, we need to understand that lost people are going to act like lost people.

[ 26 : 03 ] We're the ones that get to go tell them about Jesus. That's a high calling. But dear God, don't let us be like the Pharisees. Let's say, get cleaned up first.

Then maybe we'll let you in. Maybe. If we're having a good day. Warren Wiersbe, he put it this way. The scribes and the Pharisees, they criticized Jesus because they did not understand either His message or His ministry.

The message is the one of the gospel and the hope for all of mankind. The ministry is to go to those who are sick. We'll see that here in just a minute in a couple of verses and not just stay in our holy huddles.

So Wiersbe says the Pharisees and the scribes, they did not understand either His message or His ministry. Jesus simply did not fit in their religious life. Dear God, let the Pharisees leave.

And let us be like Jesus. I'll speak for myself, okay? Just a little old me. Just a little old T squared. I need to hear that.

[ 27 : 10 ] Because it's a lot easier to stand over here and castigate and talk down upon the world. And then I can stay free of it and just go, well, I'm just going to get in my holy huddle. We're all safe here.

We all think alike. We all act alike. We all dress alike. We're all safe here. And just let the world go to heck. When God calls us to step into it, even just with our story.

That's what Matthew did. The Pharisees and the scribes, what did they do? They grumbled. And in verse 30, we see this. Oh, this is the one that really... They talked about people.

They grumbled, but they talked about people. Verse 30, but the Pharisees and the scribes, they were complaining. That's the grumbling. That was an ongoing activity.

Watch this. To his disciples. So we have it sort of set up, trying to create a little bit of visual. Jesus is over here with a lot of tax collectors, a lot of sinners, other people that nobody wants to have anything to do with.

[ 28 : 16 ] Pharisees are over here. Somehow or another, the disciples ended up over here. And Scripture says this. They were complaining to his, that's Jesus, disciples.

Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners? You want to know how to destroy a church? I'll give you one word.

Gossip. You want to know how to destroy a church? I'll give you one word. Gossip. And here's the way we'll try to cover it. All right?

Here's the way we'll try to cover it. Well, have you heard about brother so-and-so or sister so-and-so? We need to pray for. You're right, we do.

But if we never stop and pray, have we really shared a prayer request? You know how to destroy a church? I'll give you one word. Gossip.

[ 29 : 20 ] Man, let's pray for one another. I can find that in Scripture. We're going to support one another. I can find that in Scripture. We're going to love one another. I can find that in Scripture. We need to carry one another's burdens. There's a whole sermon.

Galatians chapter 6. I find that in Scripture. One another, one another, one another, one another. Let's do these things for one another. But let's do so with a heart of love and compassion.

Why? Because that's what Jesus does. And you see, he invited us to follow me, to follow him. The Pharisees, here's the amazing thing.

The Sanhedrin, Sanhedrin was a part of the Pharisees. That was sort of the ruling elite among the elite. There were 70 of them. Those are, when Jesus went on trial, he went before the Sanhedrin. Not all 70 was there. Aboard Nicodemus from John chapter 3, he wasn't there. But there were others that weren't there. Why am I saying all this? The Sanhedrin, they had this, the Old Testament, memorized.

[ 30 : 22 ] Memorized. They could give you chapter and verse. Memorized. They had it all here. None of it here. They had everything learned about what Messiah is to be.

And they're seeing him, and there was a total disconnect. That's the grumbling. That's the talking about people. And those are the things that I would contend can still, can still be around in today's church.

So we see Matthew. We see the Pharisees. Let's conclude with this. Let's look at Jesus. Let's look at Jesus. We're going to go back to verse 27 and see one of his first actions.

After this, that's where he healed somebody. Jesus went out and he saw a tactical link. That word saw, very interesting word.

You begin to study it. I can say, well, I see that. And then I just sort of keep walking along. That's not true to the text.

[ 31 : 28 ] But I see this. And I want to get down and I want to study this. I want to try to learn about what this is.

What's in here? I'm going to show great intent. I'm not going to just walk by it and go, well, you know, the fall decorations are out again, just like we've always done it. When scripture says he saw Matthew, that shows to show great intent.

Jesus doesn't just walk by us either. When we have an encounter with him, he looks upon us with great intent.

I have no idea what you may be struggling with today or what you may be celebrating today. I have no idea what may keep you up at night, tonight, because it kept you up last night and you're at your wit's end.

I don't know. But I know this. Jesus isn't going to just walk by you. He notices you. He knows what you celebrate.

[ 32 : 48 ] He knows what you fear. And he says, my child, I have an invitation. Follow me. Everybody else walked right past Matthew, rolling their eyes, putting their hands in their pocket.

I don't want to have a thing to do with that guy. And Jesus says, I see you. I see you. And I'm not walking past you.

What do we know about our Savior? The first thing that we see is right there in verse 27. He notices us. He doesn't just walk past us.

We see in 27 when he notices us, he invites us. How do we know that? Back into the text. After this, he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi sitting in the office.

And he said to him, follow me. You know, I can't help but wonder, was Matthew, it says he was sitting. So he's sitting in his booth and Jesus walked by.

[ 33 : 49 ] I wonder if Jesus said, follow me. I can't help but wonder if Matthew went. Yeah, you.

I'm not worthy. I know, I am. You ever heard that one before? I am. I'm not able to do that.

I know, I am. Follow me. I dare us. And what is he inviting us to follow?

Look at verse 32. I've not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

That's the invitation, to follow him and a call to repentance. Now, we have that word repent a lot. We hear it in our songs.

[ 34 : 49 ] We use it in church. If we're honest with ourselves, do we understand what that word means? It's a pretty easy way to define it. It's an about face. And then it's a forward march.

If I know I'm going this way and I hear an invitation to follow me, it's not an invitation to rededication. Let's be honest.

Show me that word in the Bible. It's not there. I'll show you the word repent. If I'm lost, what am I going to rededicate? My lostness? If I'm a follower of Jesus Christ and I'm marching along and he shows me, hey, you're not doing something I want you to do.

I need to stop. I need to about face. And I need to go a different direction as a follower of Christ.

Repentance isn't just walk an aisle one time, get dunked, I'm done.

That's not the finish line. That's the start gun. It is. That's the invitation. I love the fact that he doesn't say, hey, pray this prayer and everything will be peachy.

[ 35 : 56 ] Let's be honest. That's not in here either. Because what we do is we convince ourselves, all I need to do is just that one step and I'm done.

A journey with Jesus Christ is a lifetime journey. That's why he says, follow me. Now, we get to this point in service.

I always try to ask a question. I think it's an important question. And this question is this, what do we do with this? Because if we don't ask and answer that question, then it's just a religious endeavor.

And he doesn't invite us to that. And I always want to answer that question of what do we do with this from two different perspectives. The first, from someone in here that you know that you know, that you know Jesus.

If your next heartbeat is your last, you're not scared of that. Part of you looks forward to that. Paul said to live is Christ and to die is gain. So for my brothers and sisters in Christ, what do we do with something like this?

[ 36 : 58 ] I would contend we do exactly what Matthew did. When we walk out, mission field is right out there, by the way. When we walk out in 37118, just tell our story.

It's that simple. Who were you before Christ? When did you meet Christ? And who are you, watch how I say this, striving to be now?

It's a journey. And we daily leave everything behind for that journey. Because we've said yes to the dare.

I've jumped in. Don't have all the details. I promise you, I never would have saw myself doing what I get to do now. That wasn't in my story. God had a different story.

Thank God for that. So as a brother and sister in Christ, what do we do with this? 37183, right there. That's the mission field. Let's do this. War Trace, Bedford County, needs Jesus.

[ 37 : 55 ] Amen? Okay, I got a few. Awesome. But how about for the one here today? When I said there's only 18 inches between heaven and hell, I never heard that one before.

The Pharisees, they had this Old Testament memorized. Go memorize Lamentations. If I just said, hey, everybody turn to the book of Lamentations, you're going to Lama what?

Is that lunch? It's Jeremiah right after that. They had it memorized. They just didn't know Jesus. The invitation then is not just to be a member of War Trace Baptist Church, but to know Jesus Christ as your personal Lord and Savior.

If you're here today and you think you know about Him, but you don't know Him, I'm going to be right there on that front pew. There will be somebody here that will tell you about what it means to walk with Jesus because the invitation is still the same.

Follow me. It's that simple. Let's pray together. Jesus, thank you so much for extending an invitation to follow you.

[ 39 : 10 ] And I pray, Father, that we'd be found faithful in doing that. It's not about a religious endeavor, but a relationship with you through your son, Jesus.

And I pray, Father, that those of us that have that relationship, that we would constantly, even today, leave everything behind and follow. Father, I pray for the ones in here today that may know a lot about you, but they would have to confess they don't know you.

Would today be the day that they say yes? They'd go all in, just like Matthew did, leave everything behind and engage in a relationship with you through your son, Jesus. Father, this is your invitation. You do with it as you see fit. We do love you, and we pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

Amen.

Amen. Amen.