

0 (1s):

From Jesus. What he taught us to do to prepare for the end and to prepare from the end, cannot be in the words of Jesus. If we're learning from him, it cannot be to hell with them. They are just ruining their lives. They're too far gone, not just those groups of people, but those individuals, because that's the problem. Isn't it. When we say I'm just done with them, they're too far gone. We write off human beings. There's an old comic strip from peanuts and Linus at the end of the comic strip says, I love mankind. It's people. I can't stand don't. We feel that way sometimes. Right? Or even more. So it used to be a joke. And now I think people are very honest and open about it, that they treat their pets better than they treat their people.

1 (45s):

Yeah.

0 (48s):

W when we say, Oh, everything's just getting worse. People are getting worse. We, we write people off. We cancel people,

1 (55s):

We kick them out.

0 (55s):

They can't do those things. And whenever we do that, that is actually the opposite of what we are called to do. As followers of Jesus. It's never to write anyone off, no matter how far we think they've gone, no matter how bad that person or that individual, that group, or that state or whatever, we don't ever write people off. See what Jesus is going to teach us today is that to prepare for the end means we need to change how we treat other people. Now, how we interact with the human beings around us, who are made in the image of God. And even, especially the people that we think they're way too far gone. There's no way they'll ever recover. There's no way they'll ever get over that or get better or, or stop doing such stupid things. Those are the people that we are supposed to love and care for the most.

0 (1m 38s):

And Jesus is going to teach us to put the least the last and the last

1 (1m 44s):

First. That's

0 (1m 45s):

What he's going to teach us today through his own example. And then through a couple of stories that he teaches is that we need to put the least the last

1 (1m 53s):

I lost first and

0 (1m 56s):

Is actually how we prepare for the end, not to say, Oh, I'm, I'm done with them. Enough of them. I'm going to, you know, just wash my hands with those people. I'm going to go make my own bunker and make sure that me and my family are taken care of at the end. No, no, no. That's not what we do to prepare for the end. We care for the least in the last, in the loss, then we're going to see this in Luke chapter 14, we got a lot of scripture to cover today. So we're going to go from verse one all the way through verse 24. So follow along. Cause the first thing we're going to see from Jesus and his own example,

1 (2m 23s):

You put the least first put the least first.

0 (2m 28s):

So we pick this up in verse one of chapter 14, where it says one Sabbath. When Jesus went to eat in the house of a prominent Pharisee, he was being carefully, watched there in front of him, was a man suffering from abnormal swelling of his

1 (2m 44s):

Body. So here

0 (2m 45s):

It says as a Sabbath, that was a Saturday. That was the day the Jews worshiped God. And they would take that. They would go to synagogue in the morning on Saturday or to temple. If they were close enough to the temple, they would hear a teaching just like we do today.

1 (2m 58s):

On Sundays, you go

0 (3m 0s):

To church on a Sunday and then afterwards, what do you do? Well, you hang out. Okay. That's what a lot of church family does. And Jesus probably was the visiting teacher. He was a rabbi and he come and he came. He was the speaker for the day. And he's come in. So the people that ran this synagogue, the Pharisees, the religious leaders are like, well, Hey, come on over after church for Sunday, brunch right Saturday. But you guys get the picture, right? It's it's everybody coming over. It's we got to invite the guy. Even if they maybe didn't like him. Cause it says they're carefully watching him. They're like waiting for him to mess up, but they invite him over because he's the speaker. I guess we got to listen to them and we're going to watch him because there's something off about this guy who cares how popular he is. There's gotta be something wrong.

0 (3m 41s):

And on their way to this Pharisees house, it says there in front of him was a man suffering from abnormal swelling in his body. So he has some kind of medical condition that's going on. That's causing swelling that there's fluid building up in part of his body. And in those days there was no ER, that they could take him to. There was no hospital, no doctors that could really see him at that time. So he's, they're suffering. He's probably in pain. That's what it means. He's looking for help. And Jesus sees the man on the Sabbath. This is interesting. If you follow real closely in this gospel of Luke twice, already, twice already, this is chapter 14 of 24 twice already.

0 (4m 22s):

Jesus has healed someone on the Sabbath day and people got mad at him. Why? Because the Sabbath was a day that you don't work. It was a day of rest. It was commanded. Okay. You're supposed to rest. And if you're going to heal, someone that's work. So you can't heal someone. So there's debates about this. What, you know, what's going on. So people would kind of confront Jesus about this the two other times that Jesus healed somebody on the Sabbath, but this time it's the third time this is going to happen. So Jesus is just like, I'm just stepping into this, right? This is kind of what Jesus did. I'm like inviting controversy almost. He's like, see that dude right there suffering in pain, swelling. You guys don't want to go near him. You're not going to help him because it's the Sabbath he says, is it lawful?

0 (5m 4s):

He asked these people, is it lawful to kill a man on the Sabbath? Nobody says anything. They're all. No, no, no. It's not lawful. It's it's not okay. It's it's the Sabbath day. But they don't want to say anything because here's this guy suffering right in front of him. So everybody's just silenced all these religious leaders. So what does Jesus do? He heals the man immediately instantaneously. The man is healed. His swelling goes away. He's no longer suffering. Jesus. Doesn't care about these religious rules that people have put together that they've put in place. He just says, no, no, we've got to heal this guy. This guy is hurting. He's in need. Let's help him. There's a need.

0 (5m 44s):

I can help with it. I'm going to do it. And then Jesus even confronts them again. He's like, Oh, by the way, if one of your oxen fell into a pit, would you bring it out on the Sabbath? And they're all probably like, yeah, I guess so. Because we treat our animals with them better than we treat our people. Right. Okay. What about your son? If your son was sick, would you do something to take care of your son? And they're all going to have to nodding along, even though they're silent, nobody wants to say anything. Just like you treat your animals, your pets, your livestock, I guess in that case, you, you treat your own family. Well, but you won't treat this person in need. Right? He's just showing now how messed up

1 (6m 24s):

We get about these things, right?

0 (6m 26s):

And some of us are like, Oh my gosh, how could those religious people do that? You know? But we do the, the same kind of things. When we put anything in front of helping someone in need, Jesus called these people, the least of these, the least, that's why I'm using that phrase. The least in Matthew 25, Jesus talks about this. And he talks about the people who are sick and in need of care. People who are strangers, he even talks about people in prison and he doesn't specify whether they were criminals or not. Okay. It says whatever you do for the least of these brothers of mine, you do

1 (6m 60s):

For me,

0 (7m 2s):

Jesus says these people who are considered the least in our society, if they are suffering and if they are in need, Jesus is showing with his own example that we put the least

1 (7m 11s):

First. We put the least first.

0 (7m 14s):

And this is important today. This is important today. I just a few years ago, I think this was this illustrated.

1 (7m 20s):

Well with Chick-fil-A. Yeah, Chick-fil-A right. Chick-fil-A which has arguably the best chicken sandwich in the world. We got one, one agreement here. Nobody better say McDonald's are you kidding me? What are they doing?

0 (7m 38s):

Chick-fil-A but Chick-fil-A has, since it started in the 1940s, they don't work on Sundays. Right? They take off the Sundays. Cause that's the Lord's day. That's their Sabbath. They want to give all their employees a day off. So they do that. And as I'm saying that, some of you are like, Ooh,

1 (7m 51s):

Chicken sandwich, sorry, not today,

0 (7m 58s):

But, but Chick-fil-A is famous for that. But it's also famous or infamous for their stance because their CEO is a Christian. So it's a Christian owned company. And Dan Cathy, the CEO of Chick-fil-A is famous or

infamous depending on your circle for his faith. Right. And just a few years ago, he really got smeared because he came out in support of traditional marriage between one man and one woman. So people were really attacking him and attacking his whole organization because of course that makes Chick-fil-A anti-gay. It means they hate LGBTQ people. Right? Well then fast forward, a little bit to July of 2016,

1 (8m 39s):

When a,

0 (8m 41s):

A man walked into a nightclub in Orlando,

1 (8m 44s):

A gay nightclub, and he shot it up

0 (8m 48s):

Killing 49 people and injuring dozens

1 (8m 51s):

Before killing himself. And the day after, which was

0 (8m 57s):

Sunday, cause this happened on a Saturday night lines, the hundreds and thousands of people were lining up to donate blood, to help those who were injured and wounded. And two Chick-fil-A's opened up not to make money, but their employees volunteered. Their time came in, made some great chicken sandwiches, got some sweet tea and they went down and they gave it to all the people standing in line to donate blood because they wanted to serve. And they showed, Hey, we're willing to, to work on our Sabbath, not for ourselves, but for others to put others first to put the least first. Right? You think we hate them? No, no, no. We love

1 (9m 35s):

The least. And I think

0 (9m 37s):

That we, as followers of Jesus can look at that. That's a, that's a great example for us that we can't put our own religious rules or anything like that above serving the least loving the least helping the people that are in need. So I just want us to think about in our society, who are the least, is it the LGBTQ community?

1 (9m 57s):

Is it people who are immigrants or refugees

0 (10m 3s):

Maybe right now, it seems like it's the Asian American community and our country, whatever it is. I want you to think about in your own life, who were the least of these, who are these people that are being downtrodden and hurt and left alone, and people are kind of walking around them, right? Jesus, go for those people, put the least first.

1 (10m 23s):

He showed us

0 (10m 24s):

By example, that that is what we're called to do, but it's, but it's not just the least. He says, Hey, we've got to take the people that are the last as well, the last. And we've got to put the last first, that's what he's going to do next in his teaching. Because, because he, then he shows up to this guy's party that he's throwing his great big banquet. And Jesus looks around at this banquet that they're having for him. And he notices people are kind of jockeying for position, right? They want to sit at the most important seat at the table, probably like next to the host or maybe because Jesus was the guest speaker. They all wanted to kind of sit next to him. And this would have been really important in a culture like that. There was almost like a pecking order of who could sit where people are jockeying for it.

1 (11m 6s):

And

0 (11m 7s):

You know, we have similar things in our culture. Maybe it might be like at the, you know, the host table or whatever. We, we, we think of it like at weddings, you know, there's, you know, the bridal party at the front, the close family next to them, more distant family. And then that weird guy that they knew in college, like way in the back, right? If you're that guy, I'm sorry, but you know, like the farther you get away, there's like a sense of honor to be closer, right. In the, in the farther away one time, Melissa and I went to a wedding and it was great. It was a friend we hadn't seen in a lot of time. So we, we far couples, except it happened to have a downpour of rain that day. So just like the first like 80 people got to be under the overhang.

0 (11m 49s):

And then everybody else had to like sit there in the freezing cold rain. And we were in like the freezing cold rain table. So I just imagine it's like that people are like, I don't want to be in the rain. You got to get at the best table. Right? So everybody's jockeying for position there. They're looking for the VIP. If you've been to a concert or, or, you know, any sporting event, you know, that there's like the special seats, the VIP section, you can't sit over here unless, you know, the, you know, the people. So there's all these different sections. And Jesus is noticing people are really wanting the best seats, right? They want the best seats of honor. And

Jesus says this to them in verse eight, he says, when someone invites you to a wedding feast do not take the place of honor for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited.

0 (12m 29s):

If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you,

1 (12m 34s):

Give this person your seat

0 (12m 37s):

Then humiliated. You will have to take the least important

1 (12m 41s):

Place.

0 (12m 43s):

But when you are invited, he says in verse 10, take the lowest place so that when your host comes, he will say to you friend, move up to a better place. Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled. And those who humble them

1 (12m 58s):

Cells will be exalted.

0 (13m 3s):

Do you say, Hey, we've got to flip things on their head because what we

1 (13m 7s):

Do is puff ourselves up.

0 (13m 9s):

We make ourselves important. We want to be at the best seat. We don't want to sit at the kiddie table, right? Oh, no. I don't want to be over there. Even though that's the best seat in the house, let's be honest. But, but we don't. We want ourselves to be more honorable. I want to be by the important people, the interesting people, you know, I want to be more important. And it's not just that Jesus is talking about wedding parties here. He's not just talking about when you go to a feast. Although I think you can apply this very practically at those things, but he's saying wherever it is, don't put yourself

1 (13m 37s):

First, put yourself last, because then you can always be lifted up. But if you put yourself too high, you will be

put down.

0 (13m 48s):

It's important to, and he says, those who humble themselves will be exalted. But those who exalt themselves will be humbled. What he's talking about is the great reversal that is going to happen at the end. The doomsday that we're talking about when Jesus does come to judge the living and the dead, those who have puffed themselves up and said, I am important. I am good. I'm the best. Those people are actually going to be humiliated on the last day because they have

1 (14m 9s):

Of themselves in this life. But those who have humbled themselves to put others first to put the last first, they will be exalted Jesus.

0 (14m 20s):

And that's why when we lower ourselves, when we humble ourselves, we actually do it to put others first. It's not just so that I can be self debasing. It's not just so that I can put myself down. It's I put myself down so I can lift others up. That's what he's going to continue. As he teaches in verse 12, it says, then Jesus said to his host, when you give a luncheon or dinner, do not invite your friends, your brothers or sisters, your relatives, or your rich neighbors. If you do, they may invite you back. And so you will be repaid. But when you give a banquet invite the poor, the crippled,

1 (14m 55s):

The blind, and you will be blessed.

0 (14m 59s):

No, they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection

1 (15m 2s):

Of the righteous on that last day. At the end, if we're really preparing for that, it's how we treat the last here, the lowest, how do we treat them?

0 (15m 17s):

Most people do. Do we invite the people that we like that are like us that are important? Will that'll be an interesting dinner guest, right?

1 (15m 24s):

I was a CEO, you know, Oh, you look like it's a millionaire. Let's invite him. No, no, no Jesus saying flip it.

0 (15m 29s):

I, I do think that this has practical applications for when we host things, right? Some of you are maybe looking ahead a couple of weeks, you're going to host something for Easter. People are starting to get a little more comfortable coming around. Maybe you can be outdoors for a barbecue, have more people over when you're thinking of your invite list. Could you maybe just add one person or one family that you might know

1 (15m 48s):

I've invited. They don't really fit in our circle. They don't really belong with, with our group of friends. Okay.
<inaudible>

0 (15m 57s):

Can be the poor. It can be the cripple. That can be the people with physical handicap. It could be people with

1 (16m 1s):

Mental and emotional handicaps

0 (16m 3s):

Too. We're looking at those people, the people that are like, I don't know, I don't know that's who you should invite,

1 (16m 10s):

But

0 (16m 10s):

I think it even goes beyond just like dinner parties, right? This is about how we do life. How we serve people. When, when we're having community groups, we're inviting people to church. When we're spending time with people, do we care

1 (16m 22s):

About the last? And do we take those people? And it's like, no, no, come on, come on. Even though you might seem like a Lowe's, I'm gonna put myself lower and I'm going to lift you up. As I do it, this is

0 (16m 35s):

What, what Jesus teaches us in the kingdom of God. Everything is so reversed. It's flipped around in our world. You want to lift yourself up. You want position, you want power. You want a claim, fame, whatever it is. But, but in the kingdom of God, it's

1 (16m 48s):

Humility. It's lowering ourselves to lift others up. And, and when we do gain power

0 (16m 54s):

Or when we do have privilege or stuff or money or whatever it is, we use it to help others.

1 (17m 0s):

God has,

0 (17m 1s):

Has raised us up so that we can reach down and lift up,

1 (17m 4s):

Up behind us. Right? That's the kingdom of God, John Newton, who is famous for writing amazing grace who wrote a whole bunch of other songs as well. He wants, wrote about this passage. If we can jump ahead, Jason, one more John Newton said

0 (17m 27s):

One would almost think that Luke 14, 12 through 14

1 (17m 30s):

Passage, we just read was not considered. Part of God's word

0 (17m 35s):

Was any part of Jesus's teaching been more neglected by his own people. If these words do not teach us that it is in some respects, our duty to give a preference to the poor,

1 (17m 46s):

Or I am at a loss to understand.

0 (17m 53s):

I, I think his words are just as true today as they were a few hundred years ago,

1 (17m 57s):

When you wrote them, the Jesus says,

0 (17m 60s):

Put the poor, the last first care about them. The most, one of the craziest things to happen in the Western world is that people view Christianity as the religion of the middle and upper class of the elite of the powerful people. That's not the kingdom of God though. That's not how it started out. It started out with the poor, the poor, the people that Jesus hung out with the

1 (18m 22s):

Last

0 (18m 25s):

And he invited them in. They were his followers. So a bunch of fishermen, stinky fish, have you ever smelled the fishermen?

1 (18m 31s):

They stink, right? Jesus invited them to be his followers. They were uneducated. And yet he loved them.

0 (18m 39s):

You're welcome them. And he put them first. That's what we're supposed to do. The poor.

1 (18m 43s):

That's what the kingdom

0 (18m 44s):

Of God is. And that's what the churches as well. And this is what we should be about as well. Donald Donald Miller. I think he got it right on when he said those who realize the Epic story of life is not about them, but actually about the people around them somehow win in the end. It's counterintuitive. But it's

1 (19m 4s):

True when you realize it's my role to put the last

0 (19m 9s):

First to lift others up those in poverty, those who are struggling, those with handicap, how can I help them students in your school, you look around who are the kids that are left out neglected, outcast teachers, the same way. How can we help those kids that they barely can make it in our classrooms? How can we help them? We think about in our workplaces, who's the one who's left out. Who's cast out. Who do we see? That's poor. And doesn't even feel like they're welcome. How can we invite them?

1 (19m 34s):

That's the kingdom of God. That's the way of Jesus to put others first. The problem is, is that

0 (19m 42s):

That our heads have grown too big, right? We're thinking too much about our own cells, about what I want. What would it be good for me? That's why people were jockeying for position at the table, right?

1 (19m 51s):

Worried about ourselves because that's all we think about. I, I,

0 (19m 58s):

I heard a story from, from his book that came out a couple of years ago from Dan rather, you know, the, the old CBS news, nightly news anchor. Well, when Dan rather took over, he took over from a very famous news anchor named Walter Cronkite couple of years before my time. Raise your hand. If you remember Walter Cronkite. Yeah. Okay. Type it in online. Okay. But he was very famous people. Loved Walter Cronkite. Okay. So when he was set to retire and Dan rather was taken over the CBS kind of warned him and they said, Hey, just plan on ratings, going down a little bit. It's okay. It'll take at least a year for them to come back up. It's all right. But the opposite happened when he took over things went really well.

0 (20m 40s):

And he was popular and his ratings went up and up and up. So according to him, his head just got bigger and bigger and bigger. He's like, I'm the best in the world. I'm the most coveted position in the news world. Things are good. Look at me and about a year. And he even said that his wife would tell him like his head was so big, it couldn't fit through the door. Right. He just thought he was the cat's pajamas. Right? So about a year in, he went with his wife and they were going on vacation to her hometown in the middle of nowhere, Texas. And it was this town, he said of about 37 people in the middle of nowhere. You had to go at the end of a highway to the gravel road, to the dirt road. And then maybe you could find this small town. Right. And they were going back to this town, driving for hours and hours in their truck.

0 (21m 21s):

And when they got to the end of the highway to the gravel road, he noticed that there was a brand new convenience store there

1 (21m 27s):

On the side of the road.

0 (21m 29s):

So they said, Hey, let's, let's pull over and check it out. So they pull over and his wife goes in to grab a Dr. Pepper. And she's in there in the convenience store for a long time. Dan is in the car, kind of checking his watch, figuring out what's going on. He looks in the window and he sees his wife talking to this guy about their age. And they seem really excited and happy. Their hands are in the air. They seem really good. And they keep talking and talking and talking, and he's just getting real frustrated right. In the truck what's taken so long. Finally, when he come, when she comes back, he says, rather condescendingly, what took 27 minutes?

1 (22m 2s):

Who is that?

0 (22m 3s):

And she said, Oh, it's an old friend from high school. And she said, Hey,

1 (22m 7s):

He was my high school sweetheart. Okay.

0 (22m 11s):

So Dan rather kind of smiles. And he said, honey, think about that. If life had turned out a little bit differently,

1 (22m 18s):

You'd be here. Nowhere, Texas helping Luther run a convenience store.

0 (22m 25s):

And she said, no, Dan, I think you got it wrong. If I had married him, he'd be the anchor for the CBS nightly news.

1 (22m 34s):

Right?

0 (22m 37s):

Yeah. Those of us who were married, we're like, yes, we understand. Right. But we get so inflated. We think it's all about us. Don't we, we puff ourselves up and our heads get inflated and we think we're so important. And yet it's luck. That gets us to the place we are, where people around us. And yet we think we're so important, but we need to do the opposite. We need to humble ourselves. Right. And realize we should be the lowest. And if we have anything, it's by the grace of God.

1 (23m 2s):

So I'm

0 (23m 2s):

Going to put myself lower so that I can lift others up. I'm going to put

1 (23m 6s):

The last first. That's what Jesus teaches us.

0 (23m 11s):

Then Jesus moves into a spiritual realm because we know we need to put the last first. First. We need to put the last first, but we also need to put the last first because there are people who need the saving work that

only God can bring in their lives to it, to put the loss first. And he's, he's going to teach us this through this parable that he does starting in verse 15. And in verse 15, it says, when one of those at the table with him heard this, he said to Jesus blessed. It is the one who will eat at the feast of the kingdom of God. Is he going to be great when we're in the kingdom? And we're getting rewards like this guys, like trying to be all, show me what Jesus.

1 (23m 45s):

And

0 (23m 46s):

Then Jesus tells a story of a parable about a man who was a wealthy man. And he was preparing a great banquet, a great feast. And they send out invites. And in that day they would have sent out probably like a save the date thing. Okay, Hey, we're going to have this big banquet, this big feast coming up, send out the, save the dates, get some RSVPs. So then when it's the actual day of the party, this master sends out his servant to go invite all these people to come. Now as the day that today's the day you said, you come to this day, they have this great banquet. And that's where we pick up this story in verse 18, it says, but they all alike began to make excuses. The people that were invited, the people that even said, Hey, I'm coming, began to make excuses.

0 (24m 28s):

The first set I have just bought a field and I must go and see it, please. Excuse me. Another said, I have just bought five yoke of oxen and I'm on my way to try them out, please. Excuse me. Still another said, I just got married. So I can't come. This may seem like legitimate excuses, but they're not. They're far from it because these people had had weeks, probably months advanced notice and had said they were. And the excuses they give, kind of just show that these people were just trying to get out of the banquet, that they just bought a field to go inspect it. Nobody buys a field before they've inspected it.

0 (25m 8s):

This guy's already seen his field. Hey, another one said they bought five yoke of oxen. I'm going to take them out for a spin. If you had five yoke of oxen in those days, you were wealthy. You had servants that could go take out the yoke of oxen for you and the person getting married. People knew way in advance that they were getting married. They were prearranged. So all of these people had no excuses, but they're using what's going on in their busy lives to excuse them from being where they need to be from doing what they're supposed to be doing. So these are people Who had been invited and said, yeah, sure. Yeah, I'm in. But now warrant living like they were supposed to, but let's translate this spiritually. These are people that had probably been baptized as kids that they had been part of a family of faith that they had gone to church at one point, maybe even got married in the church, but their faith isn't as important because they got busy with life with kids, with marriage, with work, with accumulating wealth and property.

0 (26m 6s):

And they had stopped living in their faith.

1 (26m 8s):

Yeah.

0 (26m 12s):

As in verse 21, the servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled,

1 (26m 27s):

The blind and the lame

0 (26m 32s):

22, sir, the servant said what you ordered has been done, but there is still room. They've already invited to all these people off the streets, the poor, the lowest, the last loss.

1 (26m 42s):

And then in verse 20, then the master told

0 (26m 44s):

His servant go out to the roads and country lanes

1 (26m 48s):

Translate that as back alleys

0 (26m 51s):

Compel them to come in so that my house will be full. I tell you not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet. That first group who had already said,

1 (27m 1s):

Then they'd raise their hand and say, I believe they're not going to be invited into that banquet at the end. But those

0 (27m 9s):

The very end who are poor, who are on the streets, who, who are maybe sinners in those back alleys, if they at the end say, I want to come,

1 (27m 16s):

No they're going to be there. That's what Jesus is saying about the end.

0 (27m 22s):

So it's going to be because the master who is God himself

1 (27m 26s):

Wants his kingdom

0 (27m 28s):

To be full. He wants every seat at the banquet to be filled. He wants heaven to be more crowded. And he's inviting everybody in anybody who will come, but sadly, some people would say, yeah, I'll be there. And then they won't because they've gotten so distracted by the busy-ness of life and others. The very last minute at the end, though, they are poor though, that they outcast the least the last and the loss. They will be there because they have said, yes,

1 (27m 50s):

It's the invitation. And that's why Jesus tells us to,

0 (27m 57s):

We need to put the last first, those people who don't know Jesus, put them first. We want to invite them in, go out and invite them and compel them. And even says that in verse 23, go and compel them. This is like doing everything sure. To force, to get people to come in. Don't you say, Hey, you want to come to church? You'll be like, Hey, we want you. And come on, please. I'm going to make you a meal afterwards. You've got to come. I'm saving you a seat. We're going to miss you. Okay? We're doing whatever we can to get people, to hear the good news, to be invited into the kingdom. So that one day they might be there.

1 (28m 26s):

Well, that's what Jesus is saying. Here. We need to learn to put the last first Jesus, lift them up, use whatever

0 (28m 36s):

We have to lift others up in Philippians two, three,

1 (28m 40s):

<inaudible>

0 (28m 40s):

One translation. It says don't allow self promotion to hide in your hearts, but in authentic humility, put others

first and view others as more important than yourselves. I want to make sure

1 (28m 54s):

I want to make sure they have a chance to accept the good news.

0 (28m 57s):

I want to make sure they know the love of God that is found only in Jesus

1 (29m 1s):

Christ. And even if they are

0 (29m 3s):

The poor, the outcasts, the people that no one wants to go,

1 (29m 6s):

The homeless, the immigrant, I want them in. And we should have that same heart, the heart of Jesus, part of Christ. Isn't this what Jesus did, isn't it?

0 (29m 23s):

Jesus did. He cared so much that he showed us with example that he

1 (29m 26s):

Loved the least the last in last,

0 (29m 28s):

He spent time with him. He cared about him. Not just, he didn't just hang out with the wealthy people, the religious leaders at banquets. He went with the poor. In fact, he was called a friend of sinners because he would hang out with prostitutes and taxpayers would rip off everyone else because he wanted them in. He loved them. He cared about them and even so much that he would go on the cross and die for them, shedding his own blood so that they could enter in.

1 (29m 55s):

That's what Jesus did for us to invite us.

0 (29m 58s):

And that's why we too must step out in the way of Jesus to invite those people

1 (30m 3s):

To our church, to our community, to our friendships, to the kingdom of God, but the least the last and the last

first

0 (30m 15s):

Years ago, when I was a student at Denver seminary, I heard Tony Campolo spoke. He came to chapel and spoke. He's a, he's a sociologist by trade, but he's a great preacher. He's been a pastor too. And Tony Campolo shared a story about a time where he got, he flew into Hawaii and he got in real late

1 (30m 32s):

At night. I

0 (30m 34s):

Remember this story. It's a great one. And while he was there in Hawaii, he got there real late at night. So he was trying to find a place to eat. You couldn't find anything, but one tiny diner. That was just one of those greasy spoon places. So he goes in at two 30 in the morning morning to get a cup of coffee and an old stale donut. And he sitting there and I think, you know, the, the guy at the cafe was a big guy. I think his name was like Harry or something. And they're sitting there talking and he's eaten his stale donut, drinking his coffee. And then in walks at three 30 in the morning, eight or nine prostitutes, you know, they just got off their shift, right? So they come in to the cafe and he's just kinda sitting there, feeling awkward. A pastor here, you know, two, three, three 30 in the morning with a bunch of prostitutes around him.

0 (31m 15s):

And then he overhears two of them talking. One of them says to the second, she says, Oh, did you know tomorrow's my birthday? And the second prostitute says, who cares? What do you think we're going to throw you a party or something. And the first woman says, no, I didn't think that I've never had a party.

1 (31m 33s):

My life never had a birthday party. Tony cam holo heard this in his wheel start attorney.

0 (31m 40s):

He was thinking about it. And, and he thought of this woman who in her life, she was about to turn 39, had never had a birthday

1 (31m 46s):

Party. So when

0 (31m 48s):

She and the girls left a few minutes later, he asked Harry the cafe owner, like who, who was that woman who came in? And he's like, Oh, Agnes. Yeah, she's great. And he said, well, does she come in here every night? And he said, Oh yeah, she always comes in. And about three 30 in the morning, Agnes is great. She's

super nice. So, so Tony can pull, asked him. He says, would it be okay if I come back tomorrow and throw her a birthday party? And Harry's like, sure, that'd be great. And Tony's like, okay. Oh, well, I'm going to go, I'll get a cake, I'll get some decorations. We're going to make this cafe look great. So we can throw Agnes a birthday party. And Harry's like, I'll make the cake. That's what I do. I'll make the cake. The guy's wife was really happy. She works there too.

0 (32m 28s):

So Tony Campolo comes the next evening at two 30 and he two 30 in the morning, he brings in all of these streamers and confetti and balloons. And he puts them all over the diner.

1 (32m 37s):

You ready for this birthday party? And word must have got out because

0 (32m 42s):

A bunch of prostitutes start coming to this cafe. He said, every hooker on the Island was there. Right? And, and as he's in this, this cafe waiting, Agnes finally comes in at three 30. And when she sees and everyone jumps out, yells surprise, she realized it's for her. And she's just crying just

1 (33m 5s):

Because she's never had a birthday party. She S

0 (33m 8s):

So just enthralled by the whole thing that she grabs the cake and says, I want to go show this to some people and runs out the door to show people the cake. She's never had a birthday party before.

1 (33m 19s):

And

0 (33m 19s):

Tony can pull a standing there with a whole bunch of prostitutes around him, this pastor and the three 30 in the morning. And he says, okay, I think we should pray. What else do you do? Right. So, so he says a prayer. He says prayer for all of them, for Agnes in particular. And then after he says, amen, Harry, the, the owner of the diner looks at him and he said, you didn't tell me you were

1 (33m 39s):

Preacher. Tony's like,

0 (33m 42s):

Yeah. And the guy says, well, what church do you belong to? Tony? Campolo said, I belong to the

1 (33m 49s):

Church that throws

0 (33m 51s):

Birthday parties for whores at three 30 in the morning. And the guy's like, no, you don't, you can't, I've never heard of a church like that. If there was a church like that,

1 (34m 0s):

I'd be a part of it. But that is our church. That's the kingdom of God.

0 (34m 7s):

It makes these people the lowest, the least the last and invites them in. Since we want you. We love you. We care about

1 (34m 14s):

Jesus died for you. So come on in because Jesus has died for your sins and what,

0 (34m 23s):

And then we can all feast in the kingdom of heaven together at the greatest party that will ever be thrown a birthday party for sinners

1 (34m 30s):

Like us. Right? Well,

0 (34m 34s):

We're going to have some baptisms here in a minute. I think we've got four people ready for baptism. And there's a fifth. I haven't seen him yet today. No, no. Just so we've got four. We had two in the first service at six today. And these people are publicly declaring that they believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and savior. They have accepted that invitation. Now, publicly, they're saying, I believe my life has been transformed by the good news of Jesus Christ. And I want other people to

1 (34m 56s):

Know it. So in

0 (34m 58s):

Just a minute, we're going to hear some of their stories and then we're going to get to watch them get dunked. But I want to do one more thing before we wrap up, because you should have had a cord on your chair.

1 (35m 10s):

See these cards, these cards are not for you.

0 (35m 16s):

And if you don't have something, there's a whole bunch of stacks on the table in the back, there's on the table on your way out. I want you to grab one to a hundred of these, because these are your ways to invite people in. Jesus said that, right? Go invite people. Even compel them, go into the streets, go into the alleys, whatever it takes to find people who are far from God, the least the last and the lost, and let's invite them in. And this an incredible opportunity like Mikayla shared earlier, people at Easter will come to church or they'll come online. And they would never anytime the rest of the year, but maybe this will be the chance where they will finally say, I believe I accept. And maybe you'll get to party in the kingdom of heaven with that person because you give them a card.

0 (35m 58s):

Now that's awesome. Right? So I want to make sure every single one of these cards gets in the hands of someone that, you know, if they're too afraid to come in, person having come online, okay, there's, there's a hundred thousand ways we can invite them, but just do it. 82% of people will come to church. If you invite them, did you know that 82%. So go out there and let's invite, let's compel them to come in so that they can come to and experience the goodness of God. A God. That cares for so much, that loves the least and the last and the lost so much that he would send his own son to die for us. Now. That's awesome. Let's pray, Lord God, I thank you so much for your word.

0 (36m 38s):

This word, that convicts us to go and care for the poor, the needy, the outcast. I pray Lord God, that we would follow in the footsteps of Jesus to help those who are in need around us to not care about rules, not care about how we look or we're putting ourselves first, but Lord God, we would put ourselves last that we would lower ourselves. Humble ourselves. Love people, invite them in and care for the least the last and the lost, just like your son. Jesus did. And Lord God, I pray that when we look forward to the end of that, that last day that we would be lifted up and we're God, we long for that day, that party at the end and keep that on our hearts. So we will never forget that everything we do in this life for others is worth it.

0 (37m 21s):

Jesus name. Amen. Okay. We're going to watch these videos and we're going to dunk some people if you're here and you've never publicly declared your faith in Jesus Christ, and you want to do it, come on up and I'll dunk you.

2 (37m 34s):

Hi, I'm Justin I'm Lysa. And my spiritual background. I, I grew up in a Catholic family. We went to church

every Sunday. I then went to live with my dad. We had gotten divorced. My parents did kind of only went during the holidays. Again, her faith has kind of inspired me and made me reflect on some of my past background. I'm honored that Lisa and I have been able to cross paths joined together, basically because of this church I met the night I met Jesus, better dome.

2 (38m 22s):

My grandma take us, my sister and I to the church every single Sunday. And then when I entered to the chorus and the chores and my mouth went to see us and Judah received Jesus Christ that, that morning, and that was very important for us. And then we became a family that believer I worked with kids. I have a work in me chance, and I have that. I don't experience with God when I was young and like a college. I, I recognize for myself that I need Jesus in my, in my soul, like Jesus to do, be a part of my life.

2 (39m 4s):

And, and because without him, I can be anything. I can do anything. So he was very happy because I was a believer and I, and with DACA, a lot about Jesus, we would read a lot about. And we came here in the church and we decided to get about this up together, like Steph up over here or over to Jesus. And I dunno to make a van together, say thanks to God and recognize that all that he did the in our life, I want to be baptized. I mean like Jesus, before he gave his ministry as the ultimate example for us in our lives and Jesus, you know, basically it's like, you know, no, this is the example that you believe in me.

2 (39m 55s):

I mean, even though I was a believer before, I think we can always, you know, reflect upon God, you know, like we'll always have struggles and testaments, but that can be for others, you know, for them to turn to God. So kind of to make a good example, we decide we want to do this for each other. So,

3 (40m 22s):

Hi, my name is Samantha Ruiz. I've been here for a month now. I'm really excited to be here. I grew up in the church. I came from a life of my mom was a drug addict and an alcoholic, and she found the Lord and we ended up coming to church and it was just amazing how it happened. I didn't know that I was going to fall. So in love with God as I did. And I didn't know what he had planned for me at all. It was just amazing how it all happened.

3 (41m 5s):

And just knowing that I have a calling and I have a purpose in this life and knowing that he has always been there is just, it's just something that is unexplainable. I guess I want to renew my relationship with God. I want to renew just everything that he, for everything that I have known and straight away from him, I know that he's always faithful on. He has never left my side. So I definitely want to remove that.

3 (41m 48s):

I'm just excited to be here and excited to renew my faith and renew my relationship with him and get closer to where he wants me to be. And my calling for that, he has on my life.

4 (42m 5s):

My name is Timothy Williams. I've been at horizon church for a month. I was born and raised in the church. My mom and dad are from a ministry, a really well known ministry. And so with that, I, I strayed away from, from the faith for awhile. God delivered me pretty much from witchcraft. Really. I used to be afraid to, to mention that to people. But now that I realized that straying away from God and him bringing me back to him, that's my testimony of knowing that, you know, not to take his discipline lightly.

4 (42m 45s):

So I'm just happy that he kept me from, from that stuff, just to make my faith known, renewing my faith and my relationship with Christ because that's, what's, what's important. You know, knowing that he has great plans for me, I know he's called me to, to, to minister, to people around the world. And as an evangelist, having that heart to, to just reach people for Jesus. I'm just so happy that I, that God's blessed me with my wife and son and my children. So that's just a testimony in itself that even though I'm faceless, he's faithful because he can't deny his own.

2 (43m 25s):

Hi, my name's <inaudible> and I can't wait to get baptized. I was born in Georgia and I'm from Africa and I've always been a Christian and raised my Christian mom and the Muslim that were not born. They gave my life to Jesus. They committed me to use every night. We used to read our Bible and worship. Yeah. I mean, like I decided like about a year ago because yeah, I really like this is, but COVID hit shotgun. I read my word every morning at night and yeah, I read Matthew, Mark, Luke, John X, and I just finished.

2 (44m 9s):

I love Matthew 10 20 says you are not the one who speaks by speak through you. I feel more least happy. Yeah. That doesn't mean to me, a new life in Christ as Christ died. A noise again,

4 (44m 29s):

All right here at rice church, baptisms a party. So

0 (44m 32s):

Yeah, you guys can stand up. They're a party they're celebrations because we are celebrating with the angels. That's what it says. When one sinner, repents angels are rejoicing in heaven and we were Joyce. We celebrate, we cheer when, when people make that decision to get in the water. So Liza, do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and savior? Therefore, I baptize you in the name of the father and the son and the Holy spirit, buried with Christ and baptism raised to walk in newness of life.

5 (44m 60s):

<inaudible>

0 (45m 28s):

The person helping them. Each person gets to invite someone who's been really important in their spiritual journey to help them in the water. So thank you guys for

5 (45m 36s):

Help him with these battles too. Justin,

0 (45m 39s):

You believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and savior. Yes. Therefore, I baptize you in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy spirit, buried with Christ and baptism raised to walk in newness of life.

5 (45m 48s):

<inaudible>

0 (46m 21s):

Do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and savior? Therefore, I baptize you in the name of the father and the son, men of the Holy spirit, buried with Christ and baptism raised to walk in newness of life.

5 (46m 32s):

<inaudible>

0 (47m 10s):

Do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and savior? Therefore, I baptize you in the name of the father and of the son and of the Holy spirit, buried with Christ and baptism raised to walk in newness of life.

5 (47m 20s):

<inaudible>

0 (47m 27s):

Right. Let's worship our Lord savior together.

6 (47m 49s):

<inaudible> we love you guys here to ride.

6 (50m 36s):

Come back next week, bring a friend let's baptize for my family. We love you guys.

5 (50m 49s):

<inaudible>.