

Setting the Mind

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[0 : 0 0] I want to turn to Mark chapter 8. Mark chapter 8. Last week I challenged you to write down four names I handed out a little card that looks very similar to what they handed out today.

It's got a perforation on the bottom. And if you didn't get one of those, I encourage you to write those names down and grab one of these afterwards. You tear off the bottom of it.

You write the names twice. Tear off the bottom of it. Lay it at this cross. And I'll join you in praying for those names as we lead up to Easter. And then take that top card. That's your prayer card.

And you pray that God would intervene in those dear folks' lives as well as in your life and set up a divine appointment where you can share with them and have the opportunity to invite them to come to worship with you.

And I simply ask that you ask God daily and faithfully to prepare their heart for an invitation, to prepare your heart to share, and to give the opportunity to invite.

[1 : 3 1] I want you to understand something, folks. We're not responsible for the soil or the state of the soil to where the seed falls. We're responsible for the scattering of the seed.

In other words, we're not responsible for somebody's heart or for their response. We're responsible to get the message out, to share with them, to get the invitation out, to get the consistent prayers that changes everything.

And as you came in this morning, you should have received another card that has perforated three times and it has four invitation cards.

And the idea is that as you pray for these dear folks and God gives you opportunity to invite, that you just tear off one of these and hand it to them.

Let them know the details of the worship. Let them know which hour you'll be in worship. Let them know you'll meet them at the door and you would love to sit with them. If you're in the choir or orchestra, can't do that, that you'll line up somebody to do that and to be able to sit with somebody and to worship with them.

[2 : 4 8] And if you didn't get one as you came in, make sure you get one as you leave. You're not gonna turn this in today. You're gonna give it to somebody. It needs it. God's laid on your heart. And if you got one and you need another, go get another, okay?

Because we got extra of these and they won't do diddly for us on April the 21st. Okay? There's nothing good but the landfill.

So I encourage you to take advantage of that. As well, we have yard signs that are available in the foyer. Last year we bought them. We ran out. We ordered more. This year we ordered more to start with.

And they won't do us any good on April the 21st. Matter of fact, get them up out of your yard. I don't like political signs hanging around after an election. And these aren't political.

These are gospel. But still, get them up out of your yard after Easter. But put them in your yard until Easter and make sure that we take advantage of that. There shouldn't be one of them left.

[3 : 43] Don't let them go to waste at all. So I want to share something with you this morning. But let me say this. And I meant to say this earlier, but I said too much anyway. I don't have time to say it this morning, but I'm gonna say it anyway.

So last week we started finding out about meals for folks and all that stuff that were working up there. So I contacted South Carolina Disaster Relief.

And I said, are y'all aware of what's happening at Table Rock? And the lady, although she was in Alabama with her mother who had been severely burned trying to put out a brush fire.

And she was at UAB. That dear lady emailed me back and let me know that she had works in progress and those type things. And they worked with the people up in that area to respond.

They got in touch with the people who were responsible for food and lined up some things. And I don't know how that panned out. There was some changing of direction and those type things. But we wanted to make sure we could do more than what just we could do and make sure that that was taken care of.

[4 : 47] But at the same time, I had Jeff go to Holly Springs Fire Department, which at the time was the reception area. And I said, talk to them and find out what they need.

I know we get lists and all that stuff. But sometimes I've seen pallets of water laying around after the fact. And so I said, find out what they need. And what they needed were small things.

They needed things like Allegra. They needed things like nose sprays and eye cleansers and those type things. And so he went and got hundreds of dollars worth of stuff.

And listen, when you're buying allergy medicine and eye wash, it don't look like much, okay? You can spend a few hundred dollars in a heartbeat. But anyway, but we took that up there and got that up there and took care of that.

Now, I would have asked you to give to make sure that we cover the cost of that. That came out of our missions budget. And we got a lot of people going on mission trips. And I'm thankful for that and all that stuff.

[5 : 47] But if I ask you to give, you'll over-respond. You'll give too much money. And we don't want to keep buying stuff. So just give faithfully as the Lord allows you. And it'll all pan out in the end, I think.

That's my executive decision. I'll get in trouble for that in a little while. But anyway, you just give and trust God. But I want you to know that First Baptist Church responded and wanted to make sure that we let them know we love them and we appreciate them and wanted to be there for them.

I want you to see something this morning that the Lord showed me years ago and that I often think about. And as we approach Easter and our outreach challenge, I want us to follow the Lord's pattern.

As we look toward Easter, once again, we have a wonderful example in our Lord Jesus. And I want us to see how we're to set our minds as he set his mind.

I want you to see this. It's in Mark, beginning in Mark chapter 8, verse 31. And it says this. And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed.

[7 : 04] And after three days, rise again. And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, Get behind me, Satan, for you are not setting your minds on the things of God, but on the things of man.

Now, the passage that precedes this begins to change the climate of the ministry of Jesus. When he sat down in Caesarea Philippi and asked them, Who do you say that I am?

He was preparing them for the last days of his ministry. Unless they knew who they believed in and was persuaded to keep that which they committed unto, As 2 Timothy chapter 1, verse 12 puts it, It was going to be rough and shaky times for them.

It already was not going to be easy. Not knowing who or what to believe was going to make it worse. He told them how those that had scoffed him, those that had questioned him, those that had probed him, those that had drove him into a corner, those who would turn vicious.

[8 : 34] It would change. He told them that the courts would become kangaroo. He told them that the charges would become exaggerated. He told them that punishment would lead to death.

And he told them that when they thought their faith had ran out, that he would rise again three days later. And he made no bones about it. Verse 32 says that he said it plainly.

He laid it out there. He shot it straight. He didn't let up. He didn't let back. He told them how it would be. Now, that's quite different than the veil of secrecy that he spoke of in earlier days.

Because if you'll notice, when he spoke in the parables, oftentimes it was mysterious the way he said it. Oftentimes when he told those who were healed, after he healed someone, he told them not to tell anyone.

It was veiled of sorts. He had some tasks to take care of. I believe he told them that because he needed more time.

[9 : 34] Because Christ came to die for the sins of the world, but he also came to establish the infrastructure for the church to thrive after his ascension.

Pay close attention to the gospels, and you will see that he used every event that we see in the gospels as a training ground for the apostles to learn from and to do, as he put it, even greater things than he had done.

That's what he said in John 14, verse 12. However, at this point, it was time. The training of the 12 was winding down.

However, the longest discourse that we have of any point in scripture of Jesus' teaching was in John 13 through chapter 17. And that was in the upper room when he spent time with the disciples, right before he went to the garden to pray and then be arrested.

But now he's coming to the point where the training is going to begin to stop because there's a greater task, the one that makes the church possible, to take place.

[10 : 46] Now is the time, and they must know. And when he tells them in our passage today, it's more than Peter can take. He took Jesus aside, and Peter tried to order Jesus.

Don't talk like that. Don't tell them that people are going to hurt you. We're not going to let anybody hurt you. Now remember the man that said this to Jesus was the one that kept a dagger on his thigh.

He was also the one that was in the garden when the soldiers came to get Jesus that reached for that dagger and aimed for somebody's neck and missed and hit their ear.

That's what I believe happened anyway. Why cut their ear off when you cut their head off? But in reality, that's Peter. That's who he is.

He's a zealot. He's excited. And he says, don't talk like that. We're not going to let anything happen to you. What Peter did not understand was what must come forth.

[11 : 47] And so in response to that, Jesus rebuked Peter. And notice that in verse 33, it says that Jesus saw the disciples watching them talk about this. And as he watched the disciples hear them talk about this, he ordered Satan to get behind him.

In other words, either you'll follow the Lord or you'll follow the evil one. Peter's ignorant words were like a follower of the evil one. That was attempting to tempt Jesus to back away from the responsibility that God had commissioned him to do.

And that was to go to the cross. He then makes a statement that I want to unpack for the rest of our time together this morning. And it's in verse 33, and it says, for you're not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.

Scripture is clear that the way one sets his mind makes a world of difference. And Jesus set his mind.

After he was baptized by John the Baptist, he went into the desert for 40 days to prepare his heart and set his mind toward the mission that his father had for him.

[13 : 05] This time of fasting and praying came with great temptation as well. And the temptations in the desert had more to do with the direction of his ministry than it did with his physical state.

People would have a lot of expectations for the coming Messiah based upon their interpretation of the prophecy that proclaimed that he was coming.

And a lot of them misunderstood prophecy or they took part of prophecy and understood part of prophecy and didn't understand the rest of it. Or they picked their favorites and they hung on to that.

But they misunderstood a lot of prophecy. And by the way, people still do today. They still do the same thing. The question was, for Jesus in the desert was, was he going to meet the expectations of people?

Was he going to do what they expected the Messiah to do? Or was he to stick to the path needed to fulfill what I believe was a two-fold ministry?

[14 : 14] The primary one being going to the cross sinless and dying in our place. And the second one being to establish the church of Jesus Christ to carry out his will after he ascended.

There were three temptations in the desert that are mentioned. They're mentioned in Matthew chapter 4 and they're mentioned in Luke chapter 4. And the first one is the same, but the second two are in different orders.

One in Matthew, one in Luke. I don't have time to dig into those two passages very much, but I want to summarize it for you this morning for the sake of time. The first temptation was to turn the stones to bread.

Satan tempted him to do that. And he answered Satan in Matthew 4.4. It is written, man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Now don't misunderstand me this morning. Jesus was hungry. He hadn't eaten in 40 days. However, this temptation was not just about filling his own belly. It was more about being a Messiah that provided physical needs.

[15 : 30] Because people would have a great anticipation that Jesus was going to provide their physical needs if he was the Messiah. People would expect that. If you remember, they were in a place alone.

Just he and the disciples. And 5,000 men and their families came to them. They'd come a long way. They were not near a local fast food restaurant.

And they were hungry. And the disciples asked him how it was going to happen. And he fed those 5,000. And then as immediately after he fed them, he immediately retreated from the crowd.

Whose scripture says wanted to make him king. Why did they want to make him king? Because they got their belly full. That's why. It's a gravy train.

That was never a temptation for him. To just keep throwing out meals for folks. To make them really like him. Or to reach their expectation of what a Messiah ought to be.

[16 : 35] It was never a temptation for him. To simply provide. Even though expectations were high. And the reason why it was not a temptation for him is because he dealt with it in the desert.

With the first temptation. Another temptation that's mentioned in the desert was the attempt to get Jesus to throw himself off the highest point of the temple.

And the highest point of the temple is thought to be the temple's southeast corner that looms over a cliff. The Kindred Valley is below it.

And if someone were to leap off of the top of the temple wall there and fall into the Kindred Valley, they would fall 450 feet below. And so what Satan's saying to Jesus is, jump.

Let God the Father save you. And Jesus was not about tempting the Father. And he was not about challenging the Father.

[17 : 42] Nor about marveling people with what God could do. Because of how he acted. If you could get there this morning, I think the road's closed.

And you went to Caesar's head and crawled over that fence and stood on the edge and said, God, catch me. I got news for you. A pine tree would probably catch you. It's not smart.

Satan knew what he was doing. Tempting Jesus to become a miracle worker. Now don't misunderstand me.

Jesus was a miracle worker. But it was never about the miracle. It was always about the message of the miracle. And throughout scripture you'll see this.

If you pay close attention. Every time there's that miraculous miracle, there's another message there. Sometimes it's implied and sometimes it's spoken. But there's always another message there. I look forward one day to digging into the miracles of Christ with you and showing you the message there.

[18 : 44] I enjoy that. But it's fun to see how God used miracles. But they were never the focus of Christ. Satan wanted them to be. The other temptation was to rule the world.

And Christ does rule the world. And he will rule in a more sane fashion in the future. But it's not a kingdom of this world.

People expected another David. And David was a mighty king. And a mighty warrior. And a mighty warrior king. And he expanded the borders of Israel larger than it ever had been.

And they expected another David. Based on prophecy, they expected another David to come to grow Israel further than even David could. But that's not exactly what Christ's mission was at this time.

So the devil tempted him to provide for people. To provide their needs. That's a social gospel. Instead of a saving gospel. And I want to be clear this morning.

[19 : 55] You can feed the hungry. And take care of their needs. All you want to. But if you never give them the gospel. They'll go to hell with a full belly.

But they'll still go to hell. I'm not saying bypass the need. I'm saying open the door for them to listen by loving them.

And then really love them. And give them the gospel. The devil would love to get that backwards for us. He tried to do that with Jesus. When he talked about turning the stones into bread.

It was a social gospel instead of a saving gospel. He tempted him to be miraculous for the sake of being great. He tempted him to amaze people.

And to get glory instead of saving and giving God the glory. He tempted him to rule the kingdoms of the world as people expected. But as Jesus said when Pilate questioned him about being the king of the Jews.

[20 : 58] Jesus responded in John 18 verse 36. My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world my servants would have been fighting. That I might not be delivered over to the Jews.

But my kingdom is not from the world. So because of what happened to Jesus in the desert. Because these temptations were not only physical temptations because he was fasting.

But because they were temptations that had to do with what kind of ministry he was going to carry out. I call that his seminary experience. And I base that on my own experience. Because the seminary experience is a time to become more clear on your ministry.

After one's called to the ministry and if they go in a traditional format as I did. And they go to seminary. It's time to become clear of your ministry.

It's time to become clear of your theology. It's time to become clear of your focus. At least it was for me. And I gained a great confidence in God's word. I mean it wasn't easy.

[22 : 02] I'm a mama's boy. And I didn't care anything about driving 600 miles by myself. To New Orleans. There's nothing glamorous about New Orleans. The beignets are alright.

And the jambalaya is good. And so are the red beans and rice. But besides that. There's nothing glamorous about New Orleans. It's the armpit of America. But God led me to go there.

I packed everything I had in a Honda Civic and drove 600 miles away from my mama. And got down there. And hadn't been there long. To where I walked out in the president's garden behind his office.

There was a fountain in the middle. And there were some benches around there. And I looked up to heaven and said. Dear God. Why am I here? Why did you take me away from everybody that I knew?

To come down here. I'm half afraid to go across the street. And eat at Popeye's. Too poor to do it if I had the strength.

[23 : 09] Something happened that day. I don't know what. But I walked out of that little garden changed of sorts. Wasn't long after that before God allowed me to pastor a church.

Well before I ever thought anybody. Why in the world would somebody. Want somebody who was. 23 years old. Single.

Never pastor a church. To be able to pastor. And God used that time. As I commuted with my buddies. Back and forth to New Orleans. Sitting in class.

And listening to people that. Mentors to me still to this day. He used that time in my life. To help me gain a greater confidence in God's word.

To gain a greater passion for the pastor. And to gain a greater appreciation for the calling. Clarity is a good thing.

[24 : 10] And Christ's mission. When he comes out of the desert. Was set. It would not be about marveling. It would not be about appeasing.

It would not be about crowning people. It would be about the training of the 12. And going to the cross. And he set his face. He set his mind. Toward that.

He does it again. The second time that he sets his face. Is in Luke chapter 9 verse 51. Which is the verse that kind of awakened me. To all of these times. And it says.

When the days drew near for him to be taken up. He set his face to go to Jerusalem. Here his ministry takes a turn. For Jerusalem.

Before this. He had spent the bulk of his ministry. In Galilee. But the last six months or so. Before he would go to the cross. He spent it in Jerusalem. And that turn is made here.

[25 : 10] And it said. He set his face. Toward that. That reminds me of Isaiah chapter 50 verse 7. That says. But the Lord God helps me. Therefore I have not been disgraced.

Therefore I have set my face like a flint. And I know that I shall not be put to shame. The Luke passage. About the setting of his face. Does not happen long.

After our focal passage. Of him telling them plainly. What was to come. He told his disciples openly. That what was coming. And then he went to Jerusalem. And openly ministered as the Messiah.

He was on his way to Calvary. And there was a narrowing of his vision. That was taking place. And then we see a third time. Where he sets his mind.

Or sets his face. And it's in the garden of Gethsemane. In Luke chapter 22 verse 42. He prayed. Father if you are willing. Remove this cup from me. Nevertheless not my will.

[26 : 09] But yours be done. But the father did not spare Jesus. The cup of his wrath. And we know from Old Testament prophecy. That the cup that he's referring to.

Is the cup of God's wrath. That he was to drink down to his drigs. Because he was taking on the sin. Of the world. And the father didn't spare Jesus.

The cup of his wrath. And because he didn't. Now we celebrate. We'll have a wonderful celebration. In three weeks together. When it comes Easter time. And hopefully many folks.

Who need to hear the gospel. Will hear the gospel on that day. But it's only because he was willing. To take the cup up. 2 Corinthians 5 verse 21. Says it this way. For our sake.

He made him to be sin. Who knew no sin. So that in him. We might become the righteousness. Of God. I'm convinced. It was not the physical agony. That Christ would endure. That he dreaded the most.

[27 : 04] But it was the weight. Of literally taking the sin. Of the world upon his shoulders. When he was sinless. And hadn't even been born into sin. However when he left the garden. After agonizing in prayer.

His heart. His mind. Was set. On what needed to be done. And thank God. He went to the cross. And he died for me. And he died for you. And then he rose again. And that's what we remember.

And that's what we celebrate. During this season. It's also where we live. The rest of our lives. And that is in the shadow. Of the cross. As the old hymn says. Jesus keep me. Near the cross.

Christ. Christ. Did what he did. To provide our greatest need. But he also did it. To provide a pattern. For us. Because he set his mind. Toward the task.

At every stage of his life. He set his mind. Toward the task. That was at hand. And in the same way. We must set our minds. On him. As he set his mind.

[27 : 58] On ministry. So we must set our minds. Toward ministry. He didn't do what he did. To appease people. He did what he did. To please the father. He didn't do what he did.

To marvel people. But to give honor. And praise to the father. He didn't do what he did. To conquer the whole world. He did what he did. To save the whole world. We don't need to appease folks.

We don't need to marvel folks. We don't need to conquer folks. We need to share. We need to serve. We need to bring honor. To the Lord. We need to set our minds.

Toward the task. That is at hand. And that calls. For all of us. To remove. Every hindrance. In our life. Philippians chapter 3 verse 13.

The apostle Paul said. Forgetting what lies behind. And straining to what lies ahead. I press on toward the call. For the prize. Of the upward call of God.

[28 : 54] In Christ Jesus. Now for Paul. What he needed to put behind him. Was his religiosity. Because he had a lot of it. He knew the law. Like the back of his hand.

But before he met the Lord. On the road to Damascus. He didn't know Jesus. And he would have died. And went to hell. As a well educated. Religious man. He said.

I put that behind me. Now for some today. It ain't your religiosity. You need to put behind you. It's the wickedness.

In your life. You need to put behind you. It's the compromise. In your life. You need to put behind you. It's the failures.

Of the past. Possibly. That you need to put behind you. And by the way. The devil's going to try his best. For you not to put that behind you. He'll whisper his sweet nothings.

[29 : 50] In your ear. And let you know. You don't amount to anything. When I want you to know. Jesus thinks so much of you. That he died. And went to the cross. On your behalf.

Forgetting. Whatever it is. In the past. I press on. I press on. To do what God has called me.

To do. Paul speaks in athletic terms here. He's a has-been athlete. I bet. He said. Keep your eyes. On the prize. He says.

Run through. The tape. Hold on to the ball. Until you get. All the way across. The goal line. Sprint to first base. Leave it all on the field.

Christ. Set his mind. On accomplishing his task. And he has laid. A task. Before us. Folks. And that is. To love him. And to love others. To serve him.

[30 : 51] And to serve others. He also set his mind on the cross. And we must set our mind on the cross. Matthew 16 verse 24. Jesus told his disciples. If anyone would come after me.

Let him deny himself. And take up his cross. And follow me. What does it mean to deny yourself? It means to say no to you. That's what it means.

And it's hard to say no to ourselves. We know what we want. And it feels quite legitimate. Quite honestly. And the world will encourage us.

To live for ourselves. It's the worldly way. Do what you want to do. You do you. That's what you want to think.

Whatever you want to think. You think it. Because it's all just in your mind. That's not what the word of God says. Folks. Philippians chapter 4 verse 8 and 9 says this.

[31 : 53] Finally brothers. Whatever is true. Whatever is honorable. Whatever is just. Whatever is pure. Whatever is lovely. Whatever is commendable. If there's any excellent. If there's anything worthy of praise. Think about these things.

What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me. Practice these things. And the God of peace will be with you. Don't expect the peace of God to be with you. If your mind is full of garbage.

Don't expect the peace of God to be with you. If your tongue is full of foul. Don't expect the peace of God to be with you. If your heart is on a wayward path.

The reason Jesus stood strong in the midst of the temptation. Was due to what Luke chapter 4 verse 1 said. And it says that he was full of the Holy Spirit. My friend.

We can't be full of the Holy Spirit. And yet full of this world as well. We can't be full of the Holy Spirit. And be full of ourselves. There's not enough room in us for both. And the truth will come out.

[32 : 50] So let's set our minds on God's will for our life. Let's forget our ways. In the power of God. Walk out of the strongholds of the evil one.

In our lives that weaken us. God's enabled us and empowered us to do that. The devil will tell us we can't do that. But he's a liar. And he's a thief. And he tries to steal our lives.

And our testimonies. The same Lord that faced temptation and conquered. Is the same Lord that lives in believers. He's the same Lord that gives us strength. That we need to walk away from sinful patterns.

So today. Leave the past behind. Strain toward the goal in Christ. Live to please the Lord. Live to honor the Lord. Live to share the Lord. Sharing the love of Christ with others.

Will be one of the most encouraging spiritual sources. That you will ever experience in your life. It feels like it's the biggest task. But the reality is when we do it.

[33 : 49] God blesses it. Not only does it change other people's lives. But it changes our lives. It encourages us like nothing else does. So share the love of Christ with others.

It will be one of the most encouraging spiritual sources in our lives. We need to share and they need to hear. So let's set our minds. Let's set our face.

Live for him. Seek him. Share him. Be bold about it.

Share him. I want to ask you something and I'll close. And normally when I ask a question, it's rhetorical. And I don't want your response.

Please don't give it. Because I'm ADD and I may never go back to where I was preaching. But this morning, I want a response from you. Not a verbal response. A physical response.

[34 : 51] And I just want you to be honest. I want us to see something this morning. How many of you got saved in a toilet stall after seeing a gospel track on the back of a toilet?

How many got saved that way? Now, ladies, y'all may not know what I'm talking about. But fellas, you know what I'm talking about, don't you? You can use a public restroom. You'll see a good presentation of the gospel on the back of the tank.

Interesting form of evangelism. How many of you got saved from a message that you watched on TV?

Be honest. How many of you got saved at a crusade? Raise your hand. A couple.

Yeah, three. Yeah. We had about three in the first service, too. How many of you got saved because someone personally shared their faith with you and told you how to come to the Lord Jesus Christ?

[36 : 01] Raise your hand. I want you to look across this place. People need the Lord. And when you give him away, all you get is more in return.

So let's set our face and set our mind toward what God would have us to do and let God use us in his kingdom.

With every head bowed and every eye closed, I ask you this morning, have you ever given your heart and life to the Lord Jesus Christ? If that's never happened to you, I want you to know today is the day of salvation.

And I'd love to share with you what it means to give your heart and life to the Lord. Maybe you're here and you have done that, but you've never acknowledged that publicly.

Jesus, by his commission and by his example, tells us that the way to do that, the first step of obedience is by baptism. And if you've never done that, I encourage you to come.

[37 : 11] We're not going to do it this morning. We're lining up a time to do it in the near future. So I encourage you to come and we'll set that up for you. Or maybe God's leading you to First Baptist Church.

God's doing a mighty work in our church. I'm thankful for that. And if God's leading you in that way, you come. I'd love to share with you how you can be a part of our fellowship. Or maybe you're here this morning and you just got to forget some things in the past.

You got to put some things behind you. And move forward, focusing on the goal that God set before you.

Letting nothing hinder you from being everything that God would have you to be. And if that's your story, then you take that to the Lord today, right now.

You can do it in the pew where you'll stand in just a moment. You can do it at this altar. I'll be happy to pray with you. I don't have a clue how God spoke to you. I know what he told me to say. And so I encourage you to be obedient as you follow his will and his way.

[38 : 22] Lord Jesus, work in our lives right now and help us to be obedient to follow you in every way that you would lead us. In Jesus' precious name, amen.

If you would stand together. Amen.