

I. INTRO/REVIEW

A. This is US

Acts 8:5, 8 (NKJV) ⁵ Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ to them. ⁸ And there was great joy in that city.

- A very simple belief: If we would preach Christ in a way that He could simply and effectively be made known and give people an opportunity to respond - there would be Joy great joy in our city
- This is US – We exist to help people know God

B. Two questions

- Jesus was confronting His followers – you're happy to follow me when it's easy but to follow me will cost you something eventually

Mark 8:36-37 (NKJV) ³⁶ For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? ³⁷ Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

- **Jesus asks two identifying questions we all need to answer**
 - What good is it to gain the world and lose your soul?
 - What would you give in exchange for your soul?
- **We tend to overestimate our sin and failures and underestimate God's grace**

C. Simon says

- **We play the "long game" - Christian growth and maturity is a process**

John 8:31-32 (NLT) Jesus said to the people who believed in him, "You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. ³² And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

- **This is US – We exist to help you find freedom**

D. What is God doing?

Proverbs 29:18 (MSG) ¹⁸ If people can't see what God is doing, they stumble all over themselves; But when they attend to what he reveals, they are most blessed.

- Let God have the last word not people or circumstances



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II. THE MISSING PIECE

A. This journey is an important one for you to take

Psalm 139:13-16 (NIV) ¹³ For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. ¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. ¹⁶ Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.

- Paul said much the same thing

Ephesians 2:10 (AMP) ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship [His own master work, a work of art], created in Christ Jesus [reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, ready to be used] for good works, which God prepared [for us] beforehand [taking paths which He set], so that we would walk in them [living the good life which He prearranged and made ready for us].

This is US – We want to help you to discover why you're here

B. Living the good life

1 Peter 4:10 (NLT) ¹⁰ God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

This is US – We want to make a difference

- Do something that will make a difference in the life of another

C. What does that look like?

- Some of that will depend on your gifting

1 Peter 4:11 (NLT) Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

III. YOU MATTER

A. Look at what we've learned today

- You'll be the most fulfilled when walk according to God's plan and He gets the glory!



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John 15:8-11 (NLT) ⁸ When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. ⁹ "I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. ¹⁰ When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹ I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!

B. This will bring great joy to central Minnesota

Joy Christian Center – moving at the speed of US

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