

4. What are our only “credentials” for entry into the kingdom of heaven? Consider what Jesus says about knowing us and what Paul says about keeping the law below.

Philippians 3: 4 ...If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. 7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

5. Read Matthew 7:24-27. How does a storm reveal the foundations of our lives?

6. In times like these it's good to reflect on our foundations and see the cracks. We all have them. Some of us may have a house built on sand. What are you learning about the foundations of your life?

7. How can you redeem this time to strengthen your foundations?

Good & Beautiful Life (The Sermon on the Mount) - Part 11

“Finding and Living a Better Story in Times of Crisis”

Matthew 7:21-27

What's the story you _____ in your own mind? You have a story in your mind, you have characters in the story, you're a character in that story. What's that story?

A life lived for self and apart from a relationship with God will get for eternity what it always wanted in the _____.

“I never knew you” = “You and I were never in a real and personal _____.”

The foundations are different. And the only thing that will reveal the difference is a _____.

1 Peter 1: 6 In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. 7 These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. 8 Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, 9 for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

“If the map doesn't agree with the ground, the map is wrong.” (Gordon Livingston)

“[In the Sermon on the Mount,] Jesus is not demanding we live his way in order to get his blessing or get into heaven when we die; he is simply telling the truth about our reality.” (James Bryan Smith)

Resources:

- If you would like to investigate Christianity or better understand the gospel, the best way is to reach out to a friend like James Bryan Smith. If you can't think of someone like that in your life, email Pastor Henry at hwilliams@fiveoakschurch.org. He would love to walk with you in your search or connect you with someone in your search.
- Five Oaks offers a course that orients a person to the whole Bible story, the Story of God. It also offers a framework for spiritual growth and formation that is relational. Go to <http://www.fiveoaks.church/story-of-god> for more information. Since we can't meet in the near future, email hwilliams@fiveoakschurch.org for more information on an online option during the Coronavirus crisis.
- There are lots of great books for investigating Christianity and it's hard to recommend one without knowing the reading habits and questions someone has, but here is some direction if you're looking for a good book:

Tim Keller, [On Death \(How to Find God\)](#)

Nicky Gumbel, [Why Jesus? Expanded Edition](#)

Rebecca McLaughlin, [Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the World's Largest Religion](#)

Two good books that systematically investigate Christianity include Lee Strobel, [The Case for Christ: A Journalist's Personal Investigation of the Evidence for Jesus](#) and J. Warner Wallace, [Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels](#). Both of these have youth and children's versions.

A more challenging read if you're up for it is Tim Keller, [Making Sense of God: Finding God in the Modern World](#).

A timeless classic is C.S. Lewis, [Mere Christianity](#).

Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. What are the potential distractions right now, during the Coronavirus crisis, that can keep us from reflecting on our story and God's story?
3. Read Matthew 7:21-23. How can someone be as seemingly engaged as these people yet have Jesus say, "I never knew you"?