

# Can We Skip to the Good Part?

- CAN WE SKIP TO THE GOOD PART? Spoiler Alert: no.
- Why not?
  - Because life is about something MORE.
  - It is about living on mission.
  - And living on mission come from the “in between”
    - The parts of life in between “the good parts”
    - All the little things, the journey, the struggle and the victories make the end goal sweeter, more meaningful, and allows us to experience it to the fullest
    - It's **PREPARATION** and **PERSPECTIVE**
    - It's Spiritual Growth

**THREE THINGS** we need to know about Spiritual Growth:

## 1) It doesn't just happen

- The fruits of the spirit don't automatically download when we decide to follow Jesus
- GROWTH takes ACTION and CARE ... it's not an accident
- He wants us to participate in the blessing
- **James 5:17-18**
  - *Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years. 18 Again he prayed, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.*
- They kept planting in hope & faith even when they couldn't see the end in sight
- Often when nothing is happening PHYSICALLY, something is happening SPIRITUALLY

## 2) Knowledge isn't everything.

- BUT Information DOES NOT equal transformation
- Jesus openly rebuked people who knew the Scriptures back and forth yet did not live like it
- Knowing God, living on mission, growth = not just intellect

- Knowledge is power BUT power IS NOT progress, peace, or presence
  - Knowing about him and knowing him are different
- Recognition IS NOT trust, belief IS NOT surrender to God
  - Even the demons recognized Jesus
- A life of following Jesus does just transmit data to others, it introduces them to a person
  - A true sign of growth: DOES MY LIFE LOOK LIKE GOOD NEWS?
- **Matthew 7:24-27**
  - *"Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. **25** Though the rain comes in torrents and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't collapse because it is built on bedrock. **26** But anyone who hears my teaching and doesn't obey it is foolish, like a person who builds a house on sand. **27** When the rains and floods come and the winds beat against that house, it will collapse with a mighty crash."*
- A lot we CANNOT control in life, but **we can control if our CONDUCT matches OUR CONFESSION**
  - Does our life matches the knowledge in our head and hearts

### 3) We can't do this alone

- A proverb:
  - "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."
  - Some you said FAST - Stick with me!
- Eugene Peterson:
  - *"There can be no maturity in the spiritual life, no obedience in following Jesus, no wholeness in the Christian life, apart from an immersion in, and an embracing of, community. I am not myself by myself."*
- OTHERS help make us who we are and who we want to be
- Community is not just for us to benefit - we can help others in return

#### THE POINT

- We can't skip to the "good part"
- BUT maybe the good part isn't just the end...
- It's all the stuff in between too
- ALL of it together is transformative and others - and HE makes it GOOD!