

Frikkie Grobbelar: Jesus Is Everything

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[0 : 00] It is an absolute delight to be with you. If you're wondering about the accent, I don't want you to get stuck on it. I am from the south, very far south.

It's called South Africa. And I hope that when I start screeching and speaking too fast, I don't lose you because I get excited. I mean, it looks sometimes like I'm going through puberty.

But I just love Jesus. He just ravishes my heart. And I just am getting more and more like a crybaby the older I get.

But if you can survive this, I salute you. So we are reading two texts this morning.

And one's out of Matthew and the other one's out of Philippians. And the text out of Matthew is a Jesus story about a lady who has a very sick child.

[1 : 05] And the part of Scripture out of Philippians is actually part of Paul's letter. He was a leader in the early church, wrote a lot of the New Testament.

And he's writing to a church he really loves. And what you may notice right from the beginning, the two texts, what they have in common is they both talk about dogs.

So for those pet lovers amongst us, this may be for you. So let me get at what I'm going to tell you. So if you go to sleep in the next 30 seconds, you'll be able to tell mom and dad or grandpa or grandma or whatever.

You'll be able to tell them what you learned. And this is it. Okay. This is the punchline. I'm going to give you the punchline first. Basically, the punchline is Jesus plus anything equals nothing.

Jesus plus anything equals nothing. And those of you who aren't good at equations and that kind of thing, I'm just going to give you a picture.

[2 : 18] So if I was to make brownies, good old American brownies, right? And I had my brownie mix here and I had the eggs and milk and everything.

And I mixed up some brownies for us, but I added one ingredient. And that ingredient won't really change the taste at all.

You won't taste it. The texture is very similar. The color, you won't notice it, but it's dog poop. All right? And I added dog poop to the brownies.

And I guarantee you it'll look no different, taste no different. It'll be good old brownies. Suddenly, brownies plus something equals nothing.

That's what we're talking about. All right? Real simple. Picture, equation, let's roll. First passage, Matthew 15, verses 21 through 28.

[3 : 29] And Jesus went away from there and withdrew to a district of Tyre and Sidon. And behold, a Canaanite woman from that region came out and was crying.

Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David. My daughter is severely oppressed by a demon. But he did not answer her a word.

And his disciples came and begged him, saying, send her away, for she's crying out after us. And he answered, I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

But she came and she knelt before him, saying, Lord, help me. And he answered, it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.

And she said, yes, Lord, but even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table. And Jesus answered her, O woman, great is your faith.

[4 : 40] Be it done for you as you desire. And her daughter was healed instantly. Philippians chapter 3, verse 2.

Look out for the dogs. Look out for the evildoers. Look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision who worship by the Spirit of God.

And glory in Christ Jesus. And put no confidence in the flesh. Though I myself have reason for confidence in the flesh also.

If anyone thinks he has reason for confidence in the flesh, I have more. Circumcised on the eighth day of the people of Israel. Of the tribe of Benjamin. A Hebrew of Hebrews.

As to the law, a Pharisee. As to zeal, a persecutor of the church. As to righteousness under the law, blameless. But whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

[5 : 49] Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake, I have suffered the loss of all things.

And count them as rubbish. In order that I may gain Christ and be found in him. Not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law.

But that which comes through faith in Christ. The righteousness from God that depends on faith. Father, thank you for the reading of your word.

Thank you that it's powerful. That it's able to save. In Jesus' name. Amen. So we're going to try to answer three questions here. The first one is, why did Jesus hide? Why was Jesus hiding?

Number two, why did Jesus ignore her when she found him? And why does Jesus and Paul call some people dogs? All right.

[6 : 47] First question. Why did Jesus hide? Why was Jesus hiding? Now actually, the same story of the woman and her kid is told in Mark chapter 6.

But Mark adds this in verse 24. He says, So he's not only in, Tyre and Sidon was sort of on the coast.

And they were, it was like out of bounds. It was where no one knew him. All right. And so he finds this house. I don't know if it's an Airbnb or what, but he finds this house.

And no one's going to know he's there. And answer to the question, why did Jesus hide? Or why was he hiding? Well, I think the first and obvious reason is, Jesus was suffering from great popularity and great persecution.

Now, both of those are very dangerous. And they're very painful. Especially when you're popular for the wrong reasons. So people would be like on a high with Jesus as long as there were miracles and meals.

[8 : 08] But the moment he started teaching, they wanted to kill him. That's just the cycle, right? What men make, they can break. Make you popular, they'll break you. And so Jesus was in this crazy world of ours.

And I think that's one reason why he was hiding. The second reason why he was hiding is because his father, God, there's a part of God that is hiding.

God hides. God, I'll give you a classic example. Matthew 6, 5. Jesus is talking and teaching his disciples how to pray. And he says this. And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on the street corners that they may be seen by others. Listen to this. Truly I say to you, they have received their reward. But when you pray, go into your room, shut the door, and pray to your father who is in secret.

If you read that chapter, Matthew 6, it talks about the father who is in secret, sees in secret. It says it like three or four times. There's this part of God that seems hidden.

[9 : 22] And sometimes in times of desperation or when we want our friends to see Jesus, we're like, Lord, can't you just like flex a little, you know?

Just boom, blow this guy away. Have you ever felt like that? I just feel like that often. But this is God that's hidden.

And, you know, I'm thinking of one of my nieces in South Africa. A few years ago, she was held up at gunpoint.

She was in her car, and the door flew open. And this guy sits down next to her. She's a college student. And she's looking down the barrel of a gun. And he starts talking to her.

And when I said to her, Shani, what was it like? She said it was weird. I wasn't afraid. In fact, this weird sense of peace came over me. And the world stopped. Like, my whole world was inside that car.

[10 : 26] This man and I were the only two people on the planet. Time stood still everything. And we started having a conversation. And he asked me what was in my bag.

And he said, I want that. I want that. I want that. And she said she didn't know how long it was. And then fortunately, he took what he wanted. And he got out of the car.

And he walked away. And she said it was a few minutes later that the anger and the fear and the tears just began to wash over her. And the outrage.

You see, the point I'm trying to make is power doesn't produce relationship. It doesn't produce love. And if God just kept going, there is no love.

There's no relationship. And I'm reminded of the Danish philosopher, theologian, Søren Kierkegaard, that tells the story of the little peasant girl who is working, you know, a day job in the fields alongside men, harvesting.

[11 : 38] And she's sunburned. And she's just trying to survive. She doesn't have a family. And she's just working day by day, just hand to mouth. And often she's harassed and hit on and abused by men.

And she's just trying to eke out a living. And one day the king's chariot comes past. And she recognizes what's happening.

And she just buries her head in the grain fields. And she's just doing her job. And she's learned not to look at powerful men in the eye because they just take advantage of you.

And if you don't look and you don't notice, the chances of you staying invisible are greater. And she just goes about her business. And the chariot goes by. And she thinks, well, I missed the bullet. But what she doesn't know is that the king saw her in the field. And his heart went out to her. But at that moment, he knew that if he stopped the chariot and tried to have a conversation with her, it would never work.

[12 : 47] And so he comes back disguised as a peasant himself. And he enters the field. And he starts working the field. And he gets sunburned and sweaty and stinky.

And slowly he works his way towards her. And at first she's very cold. And she brushes him aside. But he does more listening than he does talking. And he's tender.

And there's a sensibility about him. And slowly over time, a friendship develops. And she finds that her heart begins to trust him.

And it isn't long. And he says to her, I want to give my life to living with you. And I want to marry you.

And they exchange their little promises. And she gets a little, like, thread ring. And he goes, I've got to go prepare a place for you. I want to be a good husband.

[13 : 42] And so he goes. And days turn into weeks, turn into months. And sometimes her heart is like, is it real? Will it happen? When will I see my man again? And lo and behold, after a few months, once again, the king's chariots come down the road.

And she gets ready to bury her head again in the cornfields. And this time the chariot stops. And her heart stops. But she dares not look. And she hears the footsteps coming.

And eventually she has to look. And she looks up. And it is the king. But it's also her friend, her fiancé, and her lover-to-be.

And it's almost such a beautiful story of the God story of how he comes to us. So there's this hidden God.

Second question, why did Jesus ignore her, this little lady, when she found him? Well, look at how she comes to him. Now, he's in a house.

[14 : 50] He thinks he's alone. His disciples are clearly there. I don't know if she knocks or she just starts crying out. But this is what she says. Have mercy on me, O Lord, son of David.

My daughter is severely oppressed by a demon. Now, it gets quite intense. Because I don't know if one of the disciples answered the door.

Let me just imagine this. You're a door-to-door salesman. And you knock. And they open the door. And you throw out your pitch. You know, you're, hey, nice neighborhood.

How long have you lived here? And the person just goes. That was weird. I mean, this starts becoming pathetic.

The disciples even are like, after a while. And I'm filling in some of the blanks. But I don't think I'm taking license here. After a while, the disciples are going, I don't think she's going to go away.

[15 : 53] Like, she's standing on the front porch. And she's crying now. And this is getting weird. It actually says they begged. The disciples begged Jesus to deal with this situation.

So, he finally goes to the door. He opens it. And he says this. He says, I was sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

Okay. I mean, tender Jesus, meek and mild, you know. Like, what happened to him? This is where she falls on the ground.

And she just says, help me. More vulnerable than that you can't get.

So, he basically says again what he said earlier. But I think with greater tenderness, and you can hear it in the words, it is not right to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs.

[17:04] He's talking about Israel. She's a Gentile. She's not a Jew. Mark says she's a Syrophenician. Some theologians say she was Greek. She's clearly not a Jew.

But Jesus brings up this whole bread with dogs thing. And this is her answer. I mean, it's so beautiful. Lord, even the dogs get the crumbs that fall from the master's table.

I mean, she's dropped her pose, right? You know, the interesting thing is if you read in Luke 6, you'll see that people from Tyre and Sidon had come to watch Jesus' miracles early in his ministry.

And they saw him cast out demons and heal. So, she knew the deal. She knew who he was. But this is the problem. She came thinking, if I have the right words, the right prayers, the right approach, I'm going to get what I need.

And it's my little girl. And I'll do anything for her. I'm desperate. But my little girl is demon-possessed. I think the answer to the question, why did Jesus ignore her when she finally found him, was this.

[18:18] God will not enter into a trans-actual relationship with anybody. God will not enter into a give-and-take relationship with anybody.

That's not how the gospel works. That's how religion works. You give this, God will give you that. You be good, good things happen to you. You do bad things, bad things will happen to you. When you do good things and bad things happen to you, well, then everything explodes anyway. And there goes religion. And the Bible tells us no one's good. Why is God being good to us then? That doesn't work.

Those calculations don't work. And I want to get to the third question quick. Why does Jesus and Paul call some people dogs? Now, back in the day, the Jews would often, there was prejudice.

[19:26] There was extreme racism between Jews and Gentiles. And it went both ways. They called each other dogs. But I think it's not racism here. Jesus is not being racist and neither is Paul.

Because going to the Philippian text now, this is the part of the letter that Paul wrote. So we've read the story about Jesus and this woman with her little child. Now we've got the letter.

Paul writes and he says, look out for the dogs. Look out for the evil doers. Look out for those who mutilate the flesh.

Who he's talking to are not Gentiles. He's talking to the religious leaders in the town. He's talking about the Pharisees. And Paul is calling them dogs.

Now, it's very interesting because in the Greek, when Paul's writing this, he actually rhymes it. He makes it rhyme.

[20:22] So the word for dog is kunas. The word for evil worker is kakos. And the word for mutilation is ketatomen.

So he goes, look out for the kunas. Kakos. Ketatomen. He's coming over pretty strong.

I mean, I can just imagine Paul just putting his peak on backwards and he starts rapping. It's like, I mean, that's just my wild imagination. I'm sorry. But he's getting really offensive.

So we see this in Paul and we see this in Jesus. This absolute like dog poop in the brownie. Just this like, oh man.

I'm not going there. I'm not going there. Jesus plus something equals nothing. This is where we're going.

[21:27] And this is the kicker here. Paul's not just throwing stones at religious people. He goes on to say this. He says, I was like the number one religious guy.

I've played that game and I was the world champion. He said, circumcised on the eighth day. He starts rolling out his resume. Circumcised on the eighth day.

My credentials. Tribe of Benjamin. Hebrew of Hebrews. As of the law of Pharisee. As of zeal persecuting the church. As of righteousness. The law blameless.

I mean, I was the poster boy. And he rolls out his pedigree. And Paul says, I count it as dung. He literally, in some translations, uses that. I count all things. All of that is not just my past. It's baggage that I have to drop.

[22 : 39] It's dung. It is absolutely useless. It's the poop in the brownies. It's just, there's a whole new batch. I've got to start from scratch. Whole new batch is what he's saying here.

So I'm asking you, what's on your resume? What's in your wallet? Like, I'm getting clever now. You know, the gospel is just making me happy. I'm starting to get a little drunk now, you know. So, what's your pedigree?

Maybe it's, I've always tried to be true to myself. Maybe your pedigree is, I've always been honest and hardworking.

What you see is what you get. Maybe it's, I'm patriotic. I'm decent. I'm a decent American. Maybe what's on your resume is, I've always tried to treat people the way I've wanted to be treated.

[23 : 43] And no one's ever gotten what they didn't deserve from me. They just obviously don't deserve much. Or, I've actually attended church my whole life.

My whole life. I've served. I've been a deacon. I've helped the children. I've done almost everything except be the pastor. Or, you know, I'm the good parent.

And whatever your resume is. You see, and this is where I'm going to land it. It's not just it's worth nothing.

It's not just that our righteousness is absolutely worth nothing. And it's even done. You know, it's just, it's baggage. You know, it's just it's worth it.

As long as we hold on to that in our approach to God, we never really get God. Because Paul finishes the passage I read with verse 8 to 9.

[24 : 50] He says this, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of Christ. You know, there isn't this, you know, Jesus isn't giving us this sort of stoic message.

If you want to get to me, you've got to get rid of everything else. I'm like Mount Everest, you know. If you want to climb me, it's just the brave, the few, and the strong, you know.

Only 3% of you will make it. And you'll get up there virtually naked and hungry and, you know, that's not his message either.

His message is for the surpassing worth of knowing Jesus. It's a beauty thing.

It's a beauty thing. It's that love and that beauty that makes you restrict yourself severely. So, I mean, if I came to Liesel and pretend we were just dating and that, and I was like, baby, I want you to be my woman.

[26 : 12] I want you to marry me. And I am so in love with you. And love is so bubbling in my heart that I've actually arranged a date with a different woman every night this week because I just feel in love.

I mean, I'm literally, I'm asking every woman in the street just to go out on a date with me because you filled my heart with love. Never felt like this before.

Would she say, baby, that's the real thing I'm in? No, real love is like no other woman.

I severely restrict myself because of the beauty that has captured me. And this is what Paul's talking about. Let me throw it at a different angle because some of you may be a bit sour with love. You drop your kid off at the preschool and you go to work and you hear there's a fire at the preschool. And you get in your car and you rush back to the school.

[27 : 31] And there's one little face in your mind. And there's one name you're calling and screaming as you jump out of that car. And until you see that face and you hear that little voice respond to the calling of that name, you are crazy, man.

It's not that you don't love the other children. It's not that you want someone else to die. You don't want anyone to die. But there's just one face you're looking for. That's the kind of love I'm talking about.

That's the thing. And you see, this little woman, the highest and the best she could have dreamt was that her little girl gets healed. And she'll do anything to get it.

And she got so much more. She got Jesus. She got Jesus. She got him. And that's what I want to put out to you today.

The worship team can get ready to come up. I've got a little more. I'm just going to shut it here. Because I really sense that some of us have been crying out to God.

[28 : 54] And this isn't a new approach. This is not a new way of doing things. This is not a... Maybe new for you, but it's not a lick and a trick.

I'm just inviting you to come exactly as you are. No resume.

No resume. And if anything, like Paul. Here it is, Lord, but it's worth nothing. It's worth nothing. Wash it away. Wash it away.

And Jesus, I want you. I have a lot of needs in my life. I have sick children. I've got sick relationships. I'm dying. I'm depressed.

But I want you. I want you. I want you. I want you. And we're going to come to the table. And in a sense, this is what this table means.

[29 : 50] It's not just, hey, Lord, thanks for the help. I really needed a bump. I mean, this is not what we're saying, friends.

We're coming like this little woman and just falling and going, help me. These are the crumbs like they're from your table.

This is it for me. I don't have other options. I don't have other options. This is the very kernel, the heart of Christianity.

This is the heart of the Jesus walk. It is so beautiful that kids get it and wise men stumble. And I want to invite you to come.

And I believe Jesus wants to touch your children. He wants to heal you, your heart, your relationships. And he wants to capture you with beauty today.

[30 : 48] That will cause you to severely restrict yourself for the sake of that beauty because it's the treasure of great, the pearl of great price for you.

Amen.