

3-22-26 He Loves Me - The Prize

Overview

This sermon, “He Loves Me – The Prize,” draws from **2 Peter 1:5-8** to challenge listeners to redefine success (“the win” or “prize”) in every area of life—marriage, family, career, and especially our walk with God. Using the pastor’s family Grand Canyon trip as an extended analogy, it shows that knowing the true prize makes the hard process bearable and productive. The central truth: **Jesus Himself** (not heaven, healing, blessings, or outcomes) is the only prize worth pursuing; everything else flows from Him.

Main Points

1. **Your why makes your what makes sense** The purpose (prize) clarifies and sustains every action. Examples: family vacation memories > sightseeing; marriage arguments resolved constructively when the goal is “grow closer”; kids’ activities focused on their joy rather than parental vicarious living; Martha (task-focused) vs. Mary (Jesus-focused) in Luke 10:38-42.
2. **Your motivation is driven by the prize** What you fix your eyes on fuels perseverance. Personal weight-loss story; stark contrast between Peter (who saw Jesus as Lord and repented) and Judas (who saw Jesus transactionally and despaired). Scriptures: Matthew 7:7-8 and Jeremiah 29:13.
3. **The prize is what always has your heart** “Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also” (Matthew 6:21). In marriage, the spouse is the prize; in faith, **Jesus alone** is the prize (Philippians 3:7-12). All other blessings are byproducts when He is first.

Reflection Questions

1. What do I currently view as the “prize” or win in my marriage, family, career, and relationship with Jesus?
2. In my daily walk with Christ, am I more like Martha (focused on the “what”) or Mary (focused on the “why”)?
3. Is my motivation with God based on what He can do for me or simply on who He is?
4. According to Matthew 6:21, what currently has my heart the most?
5. How has misunderstanding the prize affected my endurance in faith or relationships?

Application

- Identify and consciously redefine the prize in every life area, making Jesus the ultimate treasure.
- When facing conflict, temptation, or hardship, pause and ask, “What is the why that makes this what worthwhile?”
- Prioritize Jesus daily—make Him first in time, devotion, and decisions (Hebrews 12:1-2).
- Regularly check your heart; confess any idols or transactional mindsets and realign so Jesus alone is the prize.

Group Discussion Prompts

1. Share a time when clearly knowing your “why” helped you endure a difficult “what.” How does that apply to faith?
2. How do we sometimes slip into a Judas-style (transactional) or Martha-style (task-focused) relationship with Jesus?

3. If we truly saw our spouse (or Jesus) as the prize, how would our conflicts, temptations, and priorities change?
4. What is one practical step each of us can take this week to keep Jesus as our true prize?