

“Our Faithful Judge, Our Only King”
1 Sam 8:1-9

- Introduction

- Some of you know me, others of you don't, so I figured now is about a good a time as any to do a short introduction. I'm John Lugo, and my wife, Christina, and I moved out to the California area from Oklahoma a little over two and half years ago with our then one month old daughter. We found Mercyhill after some intense church hunting and felt like this is where the Lord was calling us to be. And even though we had a brief hiatus after our move up the peninsula, we're back now, and back for good. Praise God that we came to our senses.

- And I really am overjoyed to be standing here in front of all you today preaching for the first time. I'm honored and humbled that I would be trusted with such a responsibility. I pray that the Lord will minister a good word to each of you today, because I know this text has ministered to my heart tremendously over the years, but especially the last couple of weeks. So without further adieu, let's see what the Lord has in store for us today. If you have your bibles with you, or you cool kids with your electronic devices, please flip open to first Samuel chapter 8. If you don't have a Bible, we have young strapping men here that are ready to deliver one to you. Also, if you don't own a bible, we encourage you to go ahead and take this one as our gift to you. Page number in MH bibles? G, E, L, N, D, J, J, R, 1S

The Text

When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. ² The name of his firstborn son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. ³ Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice.

⁴ Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah ⁵ and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." ⁶ But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the Lord. ⁷ And the Lord said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. ⁸ According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you. ⁹ Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them." (1 Sam 8:1-9)

~Pray Dude~

I'd like to start our time off this morning by asking a question that probably isn't commonly asked: what causes us to shrug at the cross of Christ? So, when we consider all the implications of the cross: the sacrifice that Jesus made on our behalf, the utter rejection of the Father to the son, the entirety of our debt paid for, a debt that we could never, ever repay. I mean, the kind of thing that should make us fall on flat on our faces and make us weep with joy that we've been saved and redeemed. What causes us to shove that glorious truth aside and seek after something else? We've all heard the old adage that the grass is greener on the other side. Right? And I'd venture to guess that we've all experienced chasing after that greener grass at some point in our lifetime. It could have been seeking that better job, or what we thought was a better job only to find out that the same quirky manager or weird co worker was still there...they just went by a different name. Or what about a nicer car? But then we find out that the same electrical issues or high cost to maintain this nice new ride wasn't much different than that old reliable clunker that we just traded in. Or maybe it's even the place where we live. Right? Maybe, just maybe, if I get that bigger home, or that ideal spot to live, or that super sweet, retro eighties carpet because it's ironic and I'm a super cool hipster, then things will start to look up for me.

This is going to take some internal honesty with yourself, so I would ask you, do some personal reflection here as we walk through our text today. Because in some way, we all chase, we all pursue, we all place this high value and priority on something that is currently beyond our reach, and put it on the thrones of our lives. We may even go as far as demanding that we obtain that job, or that car, or that home. But what ultimately happens if we should be so blessed to receive these gifts? Are we satisfied when we've made it over to the greener grass? Or is there yet another patch of grass that looks all the greener, just a little bit further away? Now look, none of these things are inherently bad: we all need a job to provide for ourselves and our families, we all need a place to live, and we all need a means by which to commute. So I know we can look at these three examples I just gave and give mature, sound, biblical answers to how to address any one of these situations. But if we're real honest with ourselves, we can identify that patch of green grass that we've chased after, that we've pursued, that we've demanded from God, and that we've said is more important than what God would have us to do with our time, our finances, or emotions.

So I'll ask it again: what cause you, me, all of us here today, to shrug at the cross of Christ?

How Did we Get Here?

- It just so happens that we have a text here that deals with this very idea. And we will see this idea unfold before our eyes as we see Israel's demands to Samuel and their response to Samuel's warning.
- Before we jump in with both feet with unpacking these first nine verses, let's take a moment to reflect on the big events that led us to this moment. For me it helps to ask the question "how did we even get here?" When flying into a seemingly random part of the bible, it helps if we have some context around the previous events that have occurred so we can put a flashlight on things that we would sometimes miss. So, how did we get here in first Samuel chapter 8?
 - For those of you who aren't as familiar with the story of first Samuel, we're introduced to several big characters at the very beginning: on the one side we have Elkanah who's part of the tribe of Israel, a Levite to be exact, and he has two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. The key thing to know here is that Hannah was barren and likely Elkanah's first wife, while Peninnah bore many children for Elkanah and gave him an heir.
 - As we continue reading we also see that there was some strife between Hannah and Peninnah. Since Hannah couldn't have any children, Peninnah would provoke Hannah, so much so that scripture identifies her as Hannah's rival.

- So that's Elkanah, Hannah, and Peninnah. We have that picture, let's put park them on the side for right now. Then we have Eli and his two sons Hophni and Phinehas. All three of them were judges living in Shiloh, which was about 20 miles north of Jerusalem, and these three judges would be available for anyone that would come to worship the Lord and give sacrifices. Shiloh is important for all kinds of reasons, but we won't get in to those right now. Safe it to say, that we have three pretty important figures, Eli, a judge, and his two sons, Hophni and Phinehas, also judges, and their post is Shiloh.
- The essentials for us to know in first Samuel are:
 - After years of being barren, God answers a prayer from Hannah and blesses Elkanah and her with a son, Samuel. But with her prayer to God Hannah also made a vow that, after Samuel was weaned, she would turn Samuel over to Eli's care to serve the Lord all the days of his life. And she fulfills this vow with joy.
- So Samuel immediately stands out as a pretty important character in the story. Born from a barren woman, committed to the Lord from before birth, and handed over to Eli the judge once he was weaned.
- There's some additional backstory around Eli and his two [worthless] sons that I'll quickly run through as well and then we'll land on our text for the morning.
- In chapter 2 Eli's sons are called worthless men and Eli is called to rebuke them regarding their heretical acts. God sees the rebuke as too light, so he rejects Eli's household by telling Eli that his two sons will die on the same day, and he will raise up a faithful judge.
 - And so we see a series of events happen in quick succession where: the Lord calls Samuel as a prophet, priest, and judge, Eli's sons are killed in battle with the Philistines, and Eli dies when the news of his dead sons reaches him. And to add insult to injury, the ark of the covenant, the visible sign of the presence and power of God, was taken by the Philistines during battle because of Israel's foolishness. The ark is eventually returned to Israel by God inflicted plagues on the Philistines.
- This is when Samuel comes back onto the scene, calling for Israel to repent for worshipping other gods. As the judge over Israel, Samuel mediates on behalf of the nation of Israel and God, and God honors Samuel's call by defeating the Philistines and providing peace to Israel for the remaining years of his judgeship.
- So now we arrive at our text in first Samuel 8. You could say that it's been a pretty eventful seven chapters, and, if you're like me, you would hope that things remain calm and Israel will wait on the Lord, especially after just seeing the strength and might that He exercised over the Philistines.
- But let's look at the next chain of events. I'm going to break today's verses down into three chunks:
 - **Verses 1-3 - God's supremacy over the Judges**
 - **Verses 4-6 - Israel's rejection of God's Anointed**

- **Verse 7-9 - Israel's rejection of God & God's redemptive reign over his people**

Verses 1-3 - God's supremacy over the Judges

We see out of the gate in verse one that

"¹When Samuel became old, he made his sons judges over Israel. ²The name of his first born son was Joel, and the name of his second, Abijah; they were judges in Beersheba. ³Yet his sons did not walk in his ways but turned aside after gain. They took bribes and perverted justice."

Now, I realize that my opening summary was just that, a summary. But believe me when I tell you that the bulk of Samuel's life and ministry is passed over until we arrive here in chapter 8 and read that he's well over the hill, and perhaps considering how he's going to pass the torch of responsibility with his judgeship. And who better than his sons? They've witnessed the life of Samuel up close and first hand. They've likely been part of Samuel's ministry, seeing him set a great example of being a man of God, faithfully sharing God's word with Israel, and interceding for the people. And even the esteem given to Samuel - he is the first judge in the Bible who was granted truly national status—eleven times in the Hebrew Bible Samuel is noted as leading all Israel or at least being influential throughout all Israel. No other scripture suggest that any of the judges prior to Samuel ministered to all Israel. And so we see Samuel, this well respected judge, attempting to setup a hereditary judgeship with his two sons. The difficulty comes in with whether God raised up that judge or not. You heard me right, it doesn't have to with qualifications, or experience, the tribe you came from, nothing. The only qualification for a judgeship was whether or not God raised up that judge. We see this laid out in two parts of scripture:

Deuteronomy 16:18 that **"You shall appoint judges and officers in all your towns that the Lord your God is giving you, according to your tribes, and they shall judge the people with righteous judgement."**

And in

Judges 2:16 that the **"Lord raised up judges, who saved them (Israel) out of the hand of those who plundered them."**

So it would seem strange for anyone in Israel, including Samuel, to attempt to setup a hereditary judgeship. But it turns out he wasn't the first one. As a matter of fact, Eli, the judge that was also kind of like Samuel's foster father, appointed his two sons as judges. We read more about Eli's two sons in chapters two and four where they are called out for their worthlessness, condemned by God (2:25b), and eventually put to death in chapter 4 verse 11. All the while Samuel is has a front row seat to everything going on: the egregious actions by

Eli's sons, the prophecy from God to Eli and his family, and ultimately the death of Eli's family and Eli himself. You would think that this would be a memory that sticks in the mind of Samuel for a long time.

So it's easy for us to say "Come on Samuel! Is your memory that bad? You just saw this with Eli. He appointed his two sons as judges, not God, and what happened? Do you want a similar fate for your sons?" But let's not move too quick to judgement here. We have to revisit the question that we started off with: what causes us, in this case, Samuel, to shrug at the cross of Christ? I suppose in this case Christ hasn't come on the scene yet, but the question stands: what causes Samuel to disobey a directive from God with appointing judges? Does he think that he can find a better candidate? Is he concerned about Israel's fate after he dies? Well, these questions are already pretty leading, but safe it to say that anything I share would be total conjecture and possibly even a reach, but we do know a few things:

Moses was a Levite, a prophet, and he did some pretty important stuff. Eli was a Levite, and he served Israel well apart from how he handled the rebuke of his sons. Samuel was a Levite, and probably known as the most faithful earthly judge that Israel witnessed. With such a rich history in the Levite tribe, perhaps Samuel was trying to keep the judgeship here? Again, my own assumption, but one possibility.

But, even with all the right accolades, and the right intentions, scripture shows us that judgeship, much like kingship, can only be rightly given by God because it has to be a posture of the heart. Are you seeking the post because you looking to fulfill God's purpose, or your own? You see, let's run with one idea where, maybe, but just maybe, Samuel was concerned about the fate of Israel after his death, so he wanted to ensure that judges were put in place. That's a pretty noble cause, isn't it? Nothing wrong with, "I want to protect my people from persecution, loss of land, succession, on and on." But, inherently, isn't this seizing the idol of control? Perhaps thinking, "I see the landscape better than the one who created it, let me act without first consulting God."

One theologian who has done quite a bit of writing on idols of the heart says this, **"I'm increasingly persuaded that there are only two ways of living: 1) trusting God and living in submission to his will and his rule, or 2) trying to be God. There's little in between. As sinners we seem to be better at the latter than we are at the former!"**

Think about that: we are either trusting God and submitting to His will and rule, or we are trying to be God. And what we see with Samuel's sons is they are going the direction of the latter. They are given judgeship by Samuel, not God, over a place called Beersheba, which was on the southwestern most end of the nation of the Israel. It wasn't part of Samuel's normal visitation circuit, meaning that it was too far for him to travel and judge over. The city was also in transition from being a temporary to a permanent settlement, with a relatively small population of just a few hundred people, tops. To put in perspective, when Samuel's sons arrived, some of the first houses were just being built.

So Samuel appoints his sons as judges over a small area that's young and impressionable, he can't provide a lot of oversight due to distance, and he doesn't have many means by which to obtain regular updates. And the first bit of word Samuel's hears back is that his sons are going wayward. And, actually, the acts that his sons were committing were in direct contradiction to **Deuteronomy 16:19** where God says to the Judges

“You shall not pervert justice. You shall not show partiality, and you shall not accept a bribe, for a bribe blinds the eyes of the wise and subverts the cause of the righteous.”

And these were the exact things that Samuel's sons did: they perverted justice and accepted bribes. Their idolatry was out of control, and they neglected all the teachings of their father. But above all else, even apart from their sin which would bar them from maintaining the judgeship, they were not raised up by God. You see, in all of God's wisdom, he knew the temptations of the human heart. So he issued laws and warnings to his people, especially his leaders, to remain on guard with what the world would tempt them with. Now that is a true and faithful judge. A faithful judge that would show us the pathway to peace, contentment, and steadfastness, all within his holy word. Not leaving the close hand issues open for discussion, but rather drawing a line in the sand with what the world would say is okay in stark contrast with what God calls us to. Like we said earlier, we're either trusting God and submitting to his will and rule, or we are trying to be God.

Getting back to our narrative, barring any sort of intervention from the Lord, Samuel would be the final judge unless another one was appointed. So what's Israel's response to Samuel being that he shows no signs of stepping down from being judge, and the bad news of his sons has yet to reach him? For that, we move on to verses 4-6.

Verses 4-6 - Israel's rejection of God's Anointed

“Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah ⁵and said to him, “Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations.” ⁶But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, “Give us a king to judge us.” And Samuel prayed to the Lord.”

So now we land at this crossroads in scripture, and it's a pretty significant crossroads: God has given Israel judges for over four hundred years, with Samuel currently holding the office of Judge. But the elders, the leaders of Israel, the people that make decisions on behalf of the twelve tribes, are demanding a king to rule over their nation, so they can be just like the other nations. Whoa! I mean, just to be clear, God intentionally set Israel, His people, apart from all the other nations so they wouldn't succumb to the ways of the world. And here they are, pointing to the bordering nations and saying “we want to be like them. Give us a king!”

So what's the deal with Israel's desire to look like the other nations and rejection of Samuel? In order to understand this demand from Israel, we have to paint a picture of how Israel has responded to God and judges over time and try to get inside the heads of these leaders.

Prior to Samuel, there have been thirteen judges that have ruled over different nations within Israel with some judges ruling concurrently over the course of those four hundred plus years. The main purpose of the judges was to dispense God's justice and merciful faithfulness to his people, usually by military deliverance. Because God raised up the judges, there would be spans of time where the post was empty, and this would usually be the time the people of Israel would rebel against God, Yahweh, and pursue other pagan gods, little 'g' gods. God, Yahweh, would punish Israel for their sin, Israel would repent, God would assign another Judge, rinse, repeat. So when the judge was in place, things were good, Israel is well defended and the prosper, so let's praise God. When the judge was absent, however, Israel would turn their back on the Lord and follow the passions of their heart. That's the historical part of judgeship: appointed by God, sometimes there were time gaps from one judge to another, and the nation would only take military action as God ordained. Now let's see if we can inside these elders' heads.

Fast forward to the present. Even though Israel has experienced peace for decades with Samuel as judge, they don't want another large span of time to pass where God waits to appoint another judge; understandably so, and there's likely anxiety going on in the elders' heads. Also, the apparently imminent return to the dismal pattern of failed judgeships, which Israel had seen in Eli's sons and past Judges, would not be tolerated by the people; to me I sense some uncertainty and lack of trust there with the elders. But the lionshare of what we're looking at here likely has to do with a yearning desire to match the kingship that the rest of the surrounding nations have. Israel observed many of the bordering kings around their land, and what they witnessed was:

- Kings generally had nearly limitless power and authority
 - No longer are kings just overseeing a region or a tribe like most judges, but now their authority spans the entire nation
- Kings claimed divine support for their rule from their god
 - Meaning kings would typically point to god as justification for a decision made on behalf of their nation state, regardless if they conferred with their god; Judges waited for God and would only take the actions He regarded as good
- Kings were military leaders
 - Which means a standing army was created, and the nation's infrastructure was built up to protect or deliver their people from oppression, as well as to acquire new lands; Judges did not command a standing army, but rather only assembled armies as directed by God

So let's take a look at verse five and bundle the two scenarios together: Samuel is old with his sons not being fit for the role, along with the growing trend, fad, whatever you want to call it, of King nation states all around you. And so the chant catches on: Give us a king! This way they're never without an earthly leader again. This way they can take more control of their destiny. And to take it a step further, these elders would have been knowledgeable about Jewish law and probably would've cited Deuteronomy 17:14-17, where it says:

¹⁴“When you come to the land that the Lord your God is giving you, and you possess it and dwell in it and then say, ‘I will set a king over me, like all the nations that are around me,’ ¹⁵ you may indeed set a king over you whom the Lord your God will choose. One from among your brothers you shall set as king over you. You may not put a foreigner over you, who is not your brother. ¹⁶ Only he must not acquire many horses for himself or cause the people to return to Egypt in order to acquire many horses, since the Lord has said to you, ‘You shall never return that way again.’ ¹⁷ And he shall not acquire many wives for himself, lest his heart turn away, nor shall he acquire for himself excessive silver and gold.”

So what's the problem? This text looks like God planned for there to be a King, and even encouraged it. Why does it seem like verses 5 and 6 are so combative? Well, like we mentioned before, it has to do in part that God knows the heart of his people, and he knows that the king they have in mind won't fit the description described in verses 16 and 17. Inevitably, we see the

king we choose for ourselves looks good, but ends up being the exact opposite of what God expects.

Now imagine being in Samuel's shoes: you're the anointed one, the only judge to serve the entire nation of Israel, and you're still actively traveling to perform your God-ordained, literally, God-ordained, duties. And the leadership around you has unanimously decided that you are no longer fit for this role. Most people's natural inclination is to take something like this personally. Right? I mean who wouldn't have some choice words for such...heathens? But instead we see a different response from Samuel, one where, before saying another word to the elders, he goes wisely to the Lord in prayer. Prayer! Samuel is able to hear the elders' grievances, some extremely personal, remain totally in tune with the Lord, and respond in an extraordinarily holy manner.

Now, to set the record straight, Samuel is not at all pleased with the elders' proposal. Literally, the text tells us that this is "evil in the sight of Samuel." Simply put, Samuel knows that their request is wrong, that it is sinful, and he's more than likely fuming at the moment. But he sees the next layer underneath their request, the idolatry that exists: Israel is favoring the seen over the unseen. They are favoring immediate gratification over patient endurance. They are favoring security with a hereditary earthly king over an infallible, heavenly king.

Can you see yourself in this part of the story? We, here today, are also being tempted to prefer the things we can see, smell, touch, as opposed to the invisible help of the unseen God. To make it a little more real for us, how many of us would feel safer with our bank balance being in the green than with God's promises! How many of us live as if other men or women are more worthy recipients of our love and of our trust than God! You see, this part of the story is truly a mirror, it's not solely descriptive as we would like to think. The rash demands that Israel makes, their curt words for a faithful judge, the blindness to their offense to God, their impatience, their worry, their finger pointing, their desire for approval, all of it, is the common denominator that demonstrates how sick the human heart truly is. And we should humbly align closely to all of it. Really, we're not that different than Israel. The time period is different, but the temptations are all the same: what's the 'King' that you're demanding from God? How far will you go to get it?

And unfortunately, our story in first Samuel 8 only gets worse before it gets better, but rest assured, it does get better. Look with me at verses 7 through 9.

Verses 7-9 - Israel's rejection of God, God's pursuit of His People

“⁷And the Lord said to Samuel, “Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. ⁸According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you. ⁹ Now then, obey their voice; only you shall solemnly warn them and show them the ways of the king who shall reign over them.”

We left off with Samuel praying and waiting for the Lord to weigh in before taking any actions on the matter. And we see the Lord's give three directives: (1) heed the people's request, but (2) “warn them solemnly”, and (3) inform them of the consequences associated with their demand. If I were reading this for the first time, I would be shocked that God essentially bowed to man's will! Here we are with Samuel, God's anointed, getting stung by the elders' rejection, but the source of their rejection didn't have anything to do with Samuel and his sons. Instead, the elders' rejection lay in their troubled relationship with God; Israel had rejected the Lord as their king. Think about how many times this is true in our daily lives where we witness rejection amongst people or are even on the receiving end of that rejection: how many times is the problem truly horizontal, right in front of you, instead of vertical, with God? And this something that we in technicolor in verse 7.

God is clear: Samuel is a chosen vessel of grace, and by the people of Israel rejecting Samuel, they have actually rejected the Great I Am. By making their demand for a king to Samuel, the Israelite leaders are implying that God has been less than successful in bringing victory and that somehow an earthly king will do a better job. But the fact of the matter is that God raised up each of those military leaders, including the Judges. God was the one who threw the opposing armies into confusion, God was the invisible king that led the armies out to battle, and God ultimately brought the victories to His people. The blindness of Israel causes them only to believe that a king with a trained standing army at his command will level the playing field and enable them to successfully defend their land. But when we flatten out all the rhetoric, Israel believes their problem is a political problem and consequently opt for a political solution. God points out that this is far from a political problem, but rather a spiritual problem that has gone on for centuries where Israel rejects God's rule over and over again. God is painfully aware that even with the warnings against kingship, Israel will not relent, and this political solution will only leave Israel longing for that greener grass.

Let's look at one more thing in the text and then we'll wrap things up.

I want to look at how God used the people's rejection as a means by which to still pursue them. We see above that God recalls that this rejection isn't new: "from the day I brought them out of Egypt even to this day." It was in Israel's nature to go against God's way and find their own way. And yet, there He is. Right next to Samuel, right next to His people. God has seen the unbelief of His people over the course of centuries, he has heard the groaning from Israel, he has experienced being shoved aside again and again, only to come right back to this very spot where He is working out his plan; He is not thwarted, even by human failure. "Obey their voices" is His command; a bold statement delivered to an obstinate people. Even though Israel rejects God, His grace triumphs in the face of our rejection by Him bringing us into His kingdom. And even more, He brings them a king after His own heart. At the cross our rejection of Him and the triumph of grace are brought into one. Our rejection of Him as King becomes the means of His bringing us into the kingdom. What a Savior! What a Lord! We refuse His care but He knows how badly we need it! It is in the person of Jesus Christ, then, that the images of human and divine kingship are finally and uniquely merged.

Beautiful, absolutely beautiful.

We won't read them today, but in verses 10-18 Samuel issues his warning against kings. And in those verses, I see the word "take" written over and over again. The king will take your sons, he will take daughters, he will take a tenth of your grain. Six times the word 'take' is written here. And unfortunately he did. This earthly king, Saul, did not fulfill many of the hopes that the Lord set out for Israel's kings. And while many promises are fulfilled in king David, true fulfillment of every promise comes at the cross of King Jesus, the Son of David. You see, on the cross, Jesus took, and took, and took. But not like the warning from God we read about in first Samuel. Quite the opposite. Jesus took our sins, he took our shame, he took our debt, he took everything! Not a single bit of our stain was left - we were left looking white as snow. He took every last bit of our ugliness, so that we could become righteous and have full access to our heavenly Father.

And because of that sacrifice on the cross, there is a glorious promise that is now extended to us. A promise was previously reserved only for the nation of Israel. We find that promise in **1 Peter 2:9-10**.

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. ¹⁰ Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Today can be summed up in one of two approaches, and two scriptures that clearly depict it. The first is **Jeremiah 2:13-14**:

**¹²Be appalled, O heavens, at this;
be shocked, be utterly desolate,
declares the Lord,
¹³for my people have committed two evils:
they have forsaken me,
the fountain of living waters,
and hewed out cisterns for themselves,
broken cisterns that can hold no water.**

Here we can continue to go the route of Israel. We can dig a hole in the ground without any hope of sustaining physical life and spiritual life, or can look towards **John 7:37-38**.

“³⁷On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, ‘Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.’”

If you haven't come to the cross of King Jesus, I would bid you to come. He wants to hear from you, he wants to take away your worries and anxiety and replace it with hope and peace.

So I would ask you one more time: what is that causes you to shrug at the cross of Christ? Because for me, I'm in awe at the grace, the wonder, and the majesty that radiates from that rugged cross. I pray that each of us here would run to it.

Let's pray.

