



SERMON NOTES

How's It

GROWING

WITH YOU?

Do you ever go back and evaluate your day? Some things go well and some things not as you planned, but all in all you made it through the day, and you are ready to see what a new day holds for you. Our faith life is the same way. We need to examine and evaluate our faith life and how things are going. One of the biggest questions that we have as pastors and that you might have for yourself is are you growing? Are you growing in your faith walk? Are you growing in your understanding of your personal faith? When we look at our life and we evaluate what our faith walk looks like, sometimes we are surprised by what we see.

A few years ago, a group of very dedicated St. Mark people got together and we looked at just this. How does a person know if they are growing, and how do we as a church know if we are helping people to grow? To answer these questions, we developed more...you guessed it... questions! Five questions to be exact. By answering these questions in an honest and open way, we can better understand how our faith walk is growing. These questions are:

What am I noticing?
What is Jesus saying to me?
Which way am I headed?
What am I celebrating?
Who am I walking with?

Over the next six weeks, we are going to talk about these five questions. As we better understand these questions, we can better understand where we are in our personal faith walk, and we might even see areas in which we still have room to grow. Understanding where we are in our own faith walk is important. We are called to make disciples for Jesus, but if we don't know where we are in our own walk, that could be really difficult.

I have created this sermon notebook just for you! Throughout the pages of this book, you will find a few hopefully helpful items. I have included scripture that we will be discussing in each sermon and each question. There are questions that you can answer yourself or talk about with your friends, family, or co-workers. This is a great way to keep the conversation going after you leave church. You will also find plenty of room to take notes. Write your thoughts, your ideas, what you see as your areas to grow, and keep moving forward.

I pray that over the next six weeks our time together will be a time of growth and self-reflection. We have opportunities every day to intentionally live out our faith, and I pray that during this series, we will all find ways to do just that. I am excited that you are here, and I am excited that we are on this journey together!

Pastor Robby



***What Am
I Noticing?***

WHAT AM I NOTICING?

Do you see the people around you? I mean, I know you probably see people, but do you really see them? Can you tell when something is wrong? Can you tell when something is on their mind?

Do you notice God working in your life? Do you see what He has done for you and those in your family? The greatest tragedy of anyone's life is that God is standing in front of them and they not realize it.

Jesus says time and time again in His ministry, "The one who has ears to hear, listen!". When we notice God working in our life, and when we notice those around us, it changes who we are and how we see the world. We can love better, we can care for others more, we can change the world...because we see the world.

Scripture: Luke 19: 41 - 44 (Voice)

⁴¹ When Jerusalem came into view, He looked intently at the city and began to weep.

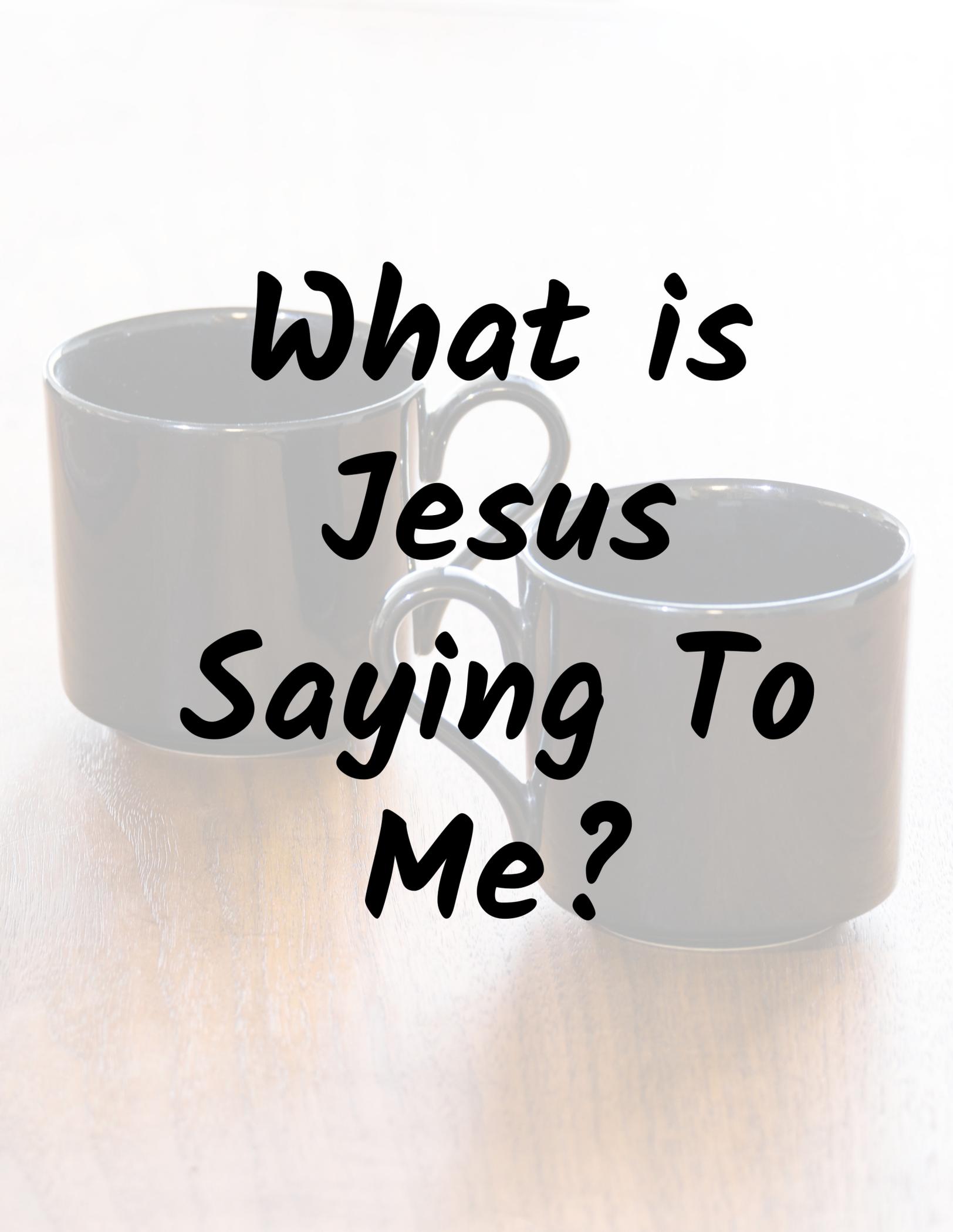
Jesus: ⁴² How I wish you knew today what would bring peace! But you can't see. ⁴³ Days will come when your enemies will build up a siege ramp, and you will be surrounded and contained on every side. ⁴⁴ Your enemies will smash you into rubble and not leave one stone standing on another, and they will cut your children down too, because you did not recognize the day when God's Anointed One visited you.

Questions To Keep The Conversation Going

1. What have you noticed recently that caught your attention? Did you stop to reflect on it?
2. What is a situation that you wish you would have seen better?
3. Looking back on your life up to this point, what is a situation that you now see was God working in your life, that you did not notice at the time?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I know that I do not always see you. I do not always see those around me. Lord, I pray that you help me to see you each and every day, and I pray that you help me to see those around me. Help me, Lord, to see this world and see where you are leading me in this world. I pray this in your Holy and Precious Name. Amen.

The image features two white ceramic mugs with handles, positioned on a light-colored wooden surface. The mugs are slightly out of focus, with the one in the foreground being more prominent. Overlaid on the mugs is the text "What is Jesus Saying To Me?" in a large, bold, black, handwritten-style font. The text is arranged in four lines: "What is" on the first line, "Jesus" on the second, "Saying To" on the third, and "Me?" on the fourth.

**What is
Jesus
Saying To
Me?**

WHAT IS JESUS SAYING TO ME?

Drinking coffee is one of my favorite things to do. Going to a coffee shop and having a conversation with a friend is even better. What we talk about is really dependent on what is happening in life. Many times, the conversations go to how things have been going in life and some areas that we wish would improve. More times than not, there is encouragement and words of assurance. I have often wondered what Jesus would say to me if He and I sat down for a cup of coffee. What would be His words of encouragement? What all would we discuss?

The two key questions in the life of a follower of Jesus are “What is Jesus saying to me?” and its twin “What am I doing about it?” I can only imagine that He would tell me part of the plan and what’s next for me in my life. I sure hope I am open enough to hear what He says.

Scripture: Matthew 7:24 - 27 (NRSV)

²⁴ “Everyone, then, who hears these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. ²⁵ The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house, but it did not fall because it had been founded on rock. ²⁶ And everyone who hears these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a foolish man who built his house on sand. ²⁷ The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its fall!”

Questions To Keep The Conversation Going

1. If you sat down for coffee with Jesus, what would be the first question you would ask Him?
2. What is the one question you would be afraid Jesus would ask you over coffee?
3. What has Jesus asked you to do recently for yourself or others? Have you done it?
4. What would you hope to hear Jesus say to you while having a conversation?
5. What do you do with the words you hear in the sermon each Sunday?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I know you are talking to me. Help me to be a better listener. Help me to hear what you are saying. I pray this in your Holy and Precious Name. Amen.

Conversation Responses and Sermon Notes

A series of horizontal dotted lines for writing.



**Which
Way Am I
Headed?**

WHICH WAY AM I HEADED?

Going on a roadtrip is one of my favorite things to do. I love driving and heading out on the open road. The problem is, I don't always know where we are going. I have an idea in my head that I know more than the GPS does, and before I realize it, we are lost in some small town 40 miles out of the way from where we are supposed to be going. I never realize which way I am headed until it's too late.

Life can be like this, too. We think we know where we are headed, but we never stop to check with the One that is guiding our path down the road. We think we know exactly where we are headed, and the whole time God has another location in mind. When we realize which way we are headed in life and where we are being called, it makes the road much easier to navigate.

Scripture: John 14: 1 - 6 (Voice)

Jesus: Don't get lost in despair; believe in God, and keep on believing in Me. ² My Father's home is designed to accommodate all of you. If there were not room for everyone, I would have told you that. I am going to make arrangements for your arrival. ³ I will be there to greet you personally and welcome you home, where we will be together. ⁴ You know where I am going and how to get there.

Thomas: ⁵ Lord, we don't know where You are going, so how can we know the path?

Jesus: ⁶ I am the path, the truth, and the energy of life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

Questions To Keep The Conversation Going

1. What is one road trip that you have been on that you will never forget, and why?
2. When I see someone in distress or need, do I tend to walk toward or away from him or her?
3. What steps are you taking to make sure you are walking with God and not away from Him?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, I am lost in this world without you. I pray that you will guide me in everything that I do. I pray this in your Holy and Precious Name. Amen.



***What Am I
Celebrating?***

WHAT AM I CELEBRATING?

I love a party! Sometimes I love it just for the cake, and sometimes because it means we are celebrating something amazing that someone has done. So often in life, we get lost and forget to celebrate life. We get overwhelmed and never see the good in a day, because it's clouded by the bad, but what would happen in our life if we celebrated something every day.

Scripture: Acts 16: 25 - 31 (NIV)

²⁵ About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶ Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose. ²⁷ The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸ But Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself! We are all here!"

²⁹ The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰ He then brought them out and asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"

³¹ They replied, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household."

Questions To Keep The Conversation Going

1. What is your favorite part about a celebration?
2. What change in your life or someone else's have you noticed and celebrated with them (or God)?
3. Have you celebrated what God is doing in your life? Have you done this daily?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, help me to celebrate you and the things you are doing in my life, each and every day. I pray this in your Holy and Precious Name. Amen.

A photograph of two women walking away from the camera on a paved path. The woman on the left has long, curly hair and is wearing a white t-shirt and dark pants. The woman on the right has her hair in a bun and is wearing a white t-shirt and blue shorts. They are walking on a paved path that runs alongside a vineyard. In the background, there are several white wind turbines on a hill under a clear sky. The text "Who Am I Walking With?" is overlaid in a large, black, handwritten-style font across the center of the image.

**Who Am I
Walking
With?**

WHO AM I WALKING WITH?

Going on a journey is always made better when there are others with us. Having others there with us means that we have someone to help us if we get lost, if we aren't sure what to do next, or if we just need the comfort of another person by our side.

One of the greatest joys in life is walking through life with other people. We are designed to be in relationship together. Jesus reminds us repeatedly that we are called to help others and guide others. We also need those people that help to guide us through life. When we walk together, we grow stronger in everything we do.

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (ESV)

⁹ Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. ¹⁰ For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up! ¹¹ Again, if two lie together, they keep warm, but how can one keep warm alone? ¹² And though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him— a threefold cord is not quickly broken.

Questions To Keep The Conversation Going

1. Who is the person or group of people that is helping you walk through life?
2. Is there someone you know that you are feeling led to walk with in their faith journey?
3. What would it look like for you to “Embrace true humility,” notice those around you, and “extend love to others?”
4. Does your walk look different when you are on it with others instead of by yourself?

Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank you for all the people you put in my life. Help me to walk with them in a way that shows the same love that You show me in my daily walk. Lord, I pray that I can be humble, that I can see others' view points, and that I can walk with them no matter the valley we are in. I pray this in your Holy and Precious Name. Amen.

