



Red Letter City
“Two Trees”
August 14, 2016
Courage Church, Detroit, MI

Today we have come to one of the hardest teachings of Jesus.

I don't know very many people who like this one. Because it is so hard to explain... because what Jesus does, is he essentially says something, that if you don't understand what he was saying... it will cause all sorts of anxiety in you.

Because what he does is he describes the church. He describes the pentecostals... He describes us. They say “Lord, didn't we do mighty works in your name!” He describes the people who are prophesying, and casting out demons... He is describing the ones who saw Jesus move in amazing ways in their communities and even at their hands...

and yet on judgment day Jesus will say to them: “depart from me, I never knew you.”

and if that doesn't cause some unrest, when you first read it... then nothing will.

Its just one of those verses. You wish it weren't there, or at least that you could understand it more clearly so you don't fall into the same trap that Jesus describes...

Because nobody wants to spend their whole lives doing what they think is the right thing, only to find out that the whole time they were doing the wrong thing.

So lets so if we can bring a little more clarity to the whole thing today.

And for the first time this entire series, I am actually going to combine two sections that our bibles break up into two. And you will see why in a minute.

Matthew 7:15-23

A tree and its fruit

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? So, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the diseased tree bears bad fruit. A healthy tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a diseased tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus you will recognize them by their fruits.

I Never Knew You

“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

Let’s Pray.

One pastor tells this story of when he was growing up in the church, and he went to *his pastor* with this passage and he said to him “How do I know that this is not me? Because the passage totally describes me!”

the passage totally describes everything that was going on in their church... there was prophesy. There were demons being cast out...

and the pastor told him, “oh don’t worry, you have Jesus. You don’t have to worry about that...”

and this guy was like “with all do respect... that answer doesn’t make me feel any better... because Jesus says that the people he is talking about think the same thing... they think they have Jesus.”

But the pastor couldn’t give him a better answer than that.

Its just one of those verses.

And here is the part that throws me off the most... at least it did before I really studied it.

Jesus first says that people will come at us and they will seem to be good... but then he compares it to two trees. One that bears good fruit, and one that bears bad fruit. And you will recognize the people who are genuine and the ones who are not, by their fruit.

But then he goes on to say “many will say to me LORD LORD!”

which, in those days, that was how you emphasized something. You said it twice. These people were really into Jesus. It is like when Jesus says “truly truly I say unto you...” now, that may seem like overkill to us... why repeat it? But it was how they emphasized things. There was no word for “very” so they wouldn’t say “very truly I say unto you.” It was an emphasis. They were really emphasizing how much the Lord meant to them.

They loved Jesus.

and it says that they did all of these amazing things... prophecy, casting out of demons, mighty works...

to me... that sounds like what I would consider “fruit.”

So if you can’t recognize the false prophets by the people they heal, or the people they help, or the prophecies that come to pass... Or the good things they do in our world...

how can anyone know?

I showed you this when we studied the fruit of the spirit. But I am going to show you it again because it is the best visual there is of it that I have found:

Jeremiah 17:5-8 talks about two trees as well, and the Hebrew words behind what it says in this verse are fascinating:

Thus says the Lord: “**Cursed** is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a **shrub** in the desert, and shall not see any good come. He shall dwell in the parched places of the wilderness, in an uninhabited salt land. “Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to bear fruit.”

Notice first: the second tree. Or the second man. Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord... for he is like a tree planted by water... and even when there is a drought he is not anxious because this tree always bears fruit. He is never worried “is it going to rain... is it going to be a bad year?”

It is obvious just by reading it in English which tree you want to be... you want to be the second tree. You want to be the man who trusts in the Lord, and who always, in every season, bears fruit.

But the first tree is the one that we need to focus on, and you will see why in a moment.

And before we do that, I want you to think about what Jesus says.

He says there are two trees. And BOTH of these trees *bear fruit*. It is not like one tree bears fruit all the time, and the other is shriveled and dying and there is nothing on it.

But one of the trees bears fruit that is *bad*, and the other bears good fruit.

Because in life, it is very easy to distinguish between things that look totally different. If one tree bears fruit, and the other tree bears no fruit... then it would be obvious as to which tree you would eat from.

You would eat from the tree that has the fruit.

But the problem is, Jesus is saying, “both trees have fruit.” but you will know the ones who are really from me, and the ones who are false prophets... by what that fruit is.

Now, the bad tree that Jesus talks about in Matthew 7.. the word bad is the word “*sapros*” and it means “corrupted, or poisoned.”

And that is where Jeremiah comes in.

Because Jeremiah starts by saying that there is a cursed man... who is like a shrub in the desert... and notice, the shrub grows in the desert, but no good comes from it.

Now, even though most bibles translate this word as “shrub” or “bush” - but in very generic ways, the Hebrew word there is “ar’ar.”

An “ar’ar” tree is a very *specific* type of juniper tree, that grows where Sodom once stood before God brought judgment on the entire thing. So the tree is now known as “the apple of Sodom” tree, and this is the deal with the “ar’ar” tree:

It looks beautiful. It has bright fruit that grow on its thorny branches, and the fruit look incredibly appetizing.

It looks delicious.

But it is not delicious. When you bite into the fruit, you will find that it is hallow, and dry, and void of all juice, and can even be *poisonous*.

So to Jeremiah, the problem with this first tree was what was inside.

It appeared to be a healthy tree growing in the middle of the desert... a healthy tree growing in the middle of the drought... but for someone passing through, dying for something refreshing to eat or drink, it would have at first appeared to have been a beacon of hope... it would have been a lighthouse.

but it would have been a nasty, bitter disappointment.

So you know these false prophets by their fruit...

NOT by their lack of fruit. Because both trees bear fruit.

So how does one determine if the fruit is good or bad?

Lets go back to the very first thing we read...

“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are **ravenous** wolves. You will recognize them by their fruits.”

sometimes we translate the word ravenous as ferocious, which gives us an image of something that is extremely scary and could man handle you. But note here, that Jesus tells us to beware of these people because he believes that we have the ability to discern this. It is not like we will find ourselves in a pit with one of these wolves and it will just shred us to pieces. I don’t think that is what Jesus is saying...

Notice this... the English translators did something funny with this one.

“Ravenous” is the word “*harpax*” and the same exact word appears 5 times in the New Testament, and only ONE of those times (this time) is it translated as “ravening” or “ravenous” - every other time in the New Testament that this word is used, this is what it means:

an extortioner or blackmailer.

And you may say to me... so what? what does that even mean?

Jesus ends the sermon on the mount by giving us three contrasting images... images that seem very scary and seem to make it hard to know if we are on the wrong side of the road... if we are entering the wrong gate, if we are building our house on the wrong foundation, and if we are eating fruit from the wrong tree...

But Jesus, for the ENTIRE SERMON, has been contrasting two types of people.

People who are religious.
and people who are broken.

So here is a bit of a recap of the whole series...

Jesus begins with the beatitudes:

Blessed are the: poor, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemakers, those who are persecuted.

Blessed are the ones who know that they are broken, enough to know not only how desperately they need Jesus, but also that they know that they are not any better than anyone else.

So these things in their lives just naturally happen.

Of course you will be merciful if you know that you were shown more mercy than you could ever show someone else. Of course you will be a peace maker.

Then he goes on to salt and light and the law, in which he says something incredible... he says that your righteousness needs to EXCEED that of the scribes and Pharisees, or else you will never even see the Kingdom of heaven. Which, to most people would have seemed like an impossible task because the scribes and the Pharisees were the religious examples of their day. All eyes were always on what those guys did.

and then he gets into the really deep stuff, which explains what he means by that...

He says “you’ve heard it said don’t murder...”

“But I say if you are angry, you are guilty of murder.
you heard not to commit adultery... well if you lust you are guilty.”

See, in that day, the Pharisees and religious leaders believed that it was okay to look, as long as you don’t touch. It was okay to want to do something, as long as you don’t actually do it. Iniquity... the things in your mind, that was permitted. But transgression.. the outward action that a person takes on their thoughts... that was always FORBIDDEN.

So they lived this life, that on the surface seemed religious and noble, and then held it over everyone else that they followed the law perfectly... but the problem is, they followed the letter of the law but they did it for all the wrong reasons. That is WHY Jesus gives the message that he gives... He comes saying “you can follow the whole thing perfectly... and still miss it!”

And so Jesus introduces us to the Spirit of law.

The Spirit of the law asks the question: What is driving you?

The Pharisees didn’t commit adultery because they were driven by the fact that if they don’t commit adultery, then they could stand and say that they had remained pure. They did it to have leverage with people, and to maintain their position: Yes, they followed the law.

But they were full of lust. That is why they asked so many questions about divorce... because they wanted to get divorced and go marry the women that they were lusting after, and still keep their power.

and still feel justified.

They did all the things that in public that was required, in order for them to maintain their public post.

It was leverage. It was “*harpax*” - it was something that they had, that they could hold over someone else. “we live perfectly, so you need to listen to us, and do whatever we say.”

A few verses later Jesus goes into works of righteousness. and he says, don't be like the Pharisees, who are hypocrites... the literal is “stage actors” - don't be like the stage actors, who pray so that they will be seen, and fast so that they will be seen, and give money so that man will see them and praise them... Jesus puts it this way “sound no trumpet in the synagogues and in the streets”... which was referring to the way that they would give... there were these brass receptacles for giving your offering and it was small on the top and large on the bottom and when a person would “sound a trumpet” what they would do is they would take their coins and they would SMASH the coins into the receptacle, and it would make a huge echoing sound...

and everyone would look at them and know exactly who it was that just gave so generously.

Jesus said “DON'T BE LIKE THEM!”

Why? At least they were giving, right? It would seem they are doing more than most everyone else.

But what they are doing, is they are doing things that make them look “holy.” If they give, and everyone knows that they give... they have leverage.

That is why Jesus says “when you give, don't let your left hand know what your right hand is doing.” -

are you giving to be generous?

Because there is a need?

Because God has pressed upon your heart to do something radical?

Or are you giving so that people will see you give, and you will have gained some sort of influence in their life...

one is gracious, genuine, and loving.
the other is a low key form of extortion. "*harpax*"

When you pray, do you set out to make it obvious how "Holy" and how "religious" you are? So that others will see you, and will go to you if they have a spiritual need?

One way gives you a step up. A bit of leverage over someone else.

"*harpax*"

Then Jesus gets into the issue of control. If you are the type of person who has to be in control all of the time, and you use judgments toward other people to get them to do what you want them to do... what is that?

its a form of extortion. Of blackmail. Of "*harpax*"

If you hold someones past of them... its "*harpax*"

And its not the way you get things from people. Jesus says the way is clear... you ask, seek, and knock.

See, I think that most of the time, we read things like "they come to us as sheep but inwardly they are ravenous wolves" and we automatically think crazy heresy... something that eventually leads us into saying things like "Jesus wasn't actually a man... or hell isn't actually a real place... or there was no resurrection... or God didn't create the earth... or Jesus had 12 wives..."

and we think that the sheep analogy means that the message at first will be good and biblical and it will slowly turn into something different, that is deceiving. Now, obviously that would be a false prophet too, and that does happen... and we have to beware of that...

But the false prophets that Jesus is talking about in this passage are the Pharisees, and the *religion* that they have infected the church with while wrapped in something that seems good. While wrapped in generosity, and prayer, and fasting, and NOT DOING all sorts of things that we all know are bad.

While wrapped in sheep's clothing.

It looked good. But Jesus said its evil. Inside, it is empty.

and there is a clear as day way to spot these false prophets:

Jesus is saying “look out for the people who ultimately are only about themselves.”

About what they can get from you...

and about what *they can do* to get to God.

Because they will use you. And if you are weak, they will rub off on you... and you will get that same mentality. and if you are weak in another way, then they could push you away from Christianity all together...

because the reality is that a good portion of the church looks an awful lot like this. Self help, self seeking... how do I get to the top?

Look at how spiritual I am!

Look at how long I fasted!

Look at how much I gave!

But that type of religion will always keep you on a leash... comparing yourself to others...

“they fasted for 40 days, I only fasted for 3”

you will compare yourself to others, and there will always be someone has done more than you. And if salvation were found in the margin between

what you did and what someone else did, then the person who did more than you would always have an upper hand on you. “*harpax*”

Your life will not be weighed in comparison to your friends... the only thing that will have any influence on that day is Jesus, and whether or not you know Him.

Think of the last thing Jesus says about the two trees:

“Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

And we talked about this concept last week. It is the idea of God getting rid of the the bad stuff in our lives so that we can create space for what is necessary if there is going to be growth. Jesus says the same thing in John 15 but he gets much more detailed about the process. He says that he is the vine, we are the branches, and His Father is the vinedresser... the branches that don't bear fruit are thrown into the fire to make room for something healthy, that will bear fruit, to grow... and the branches that do bear fruit He prunes so that more healthy fruit can spring forth.

This entire passage leads up to this place where Jesus shows us what a pruned life looks like, and it is amazing. You are being pruned to live a life full of love for other people, so much so that you are even willing to lay down your life for someone else if it came down to it. (John 15:12-13)

but before he gets into why you are being pruned, he says this in John 15:3, and if we miss this verse, it can be easy to miss the whole reason we are being pruned -

“**Already** you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.”

The pruning is *not* salvation.

Remember... people who are in Jesus... you need *not* walk through your life wondering if you will do something that will nullify the grace that you have found in Jesus. That is the most paranoid way a person could

possibly live... and that type of paranoia will never truly win anyone to Jesus.

and the only way that you would ever get in your mind *to* live that way, is if you didn't come to Jesus broken in the first place. The only way to think that you will lose your salvation because of a mistake that you made, is if you first thought that you have earned your salvation by something you did.

If you come to Jesus broken, and what I mean by that is: You come to Jesus knowing that you, in your own life, are a mess that you know you on your own can never clean up... if you come to Him like *that*... he will meet you in the middle of all of those pieces and he will start a new work in your life...

and as time goes by you will go through some pruning. But the pruning is what happens on the other side of entering the gate. It is *not* how you enter.

Jesus is not pruning you to get you into Heaven. Jesus died to get you into Heaven. Jesus is pruning you to turn you into a Kingdom person here in this world.

That is the gospel. That is the whole thing. There is nothing more to the gospel than this: I deserve death. Jesus died in my place. Now I get life, and Jesus is making me into the type of life that leads others into that same story.

That is the gospel. And going to Jesus, knowing that without him you are lost, is the only answer.

Do you want to know what the problem is with the people who cried "Lord, Lord?" - the people who thought they were in...

because I have wrestled with this verse probably more than any other verse in the entire bible.

On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in

your name?’ And then will I declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.’

Do you see the problem?

Jesus tells all of these people to go away. He says it is over. On that day... which is a reference to judgment day, the final judgment... these people who thought that they were in, are out. And they are people who sound an awful lot like us.

So most people read it like the pastor I referenced at the beginning... and they say things like “How do I know that that is not me?”

Now... I will tell you the problem. I will tell you how you can tell. Its right there. It is so clear. I can’t believe that I read it as many times as I did and never caught it. But I finally caught it.

You don’t even have to go to the original language to see what the problem is. Its so clear.

Here it is:

did. **we**. not.

Every single person who Jesus will say to on that day “I never knew you” were all people who were trying to get to Jesus by something that they did.

Religion, in the sense that you are legalistically working for something that you think sets you apart, is the only illusion that will leave many people who thought they were in, saying “Lord, Lord!”

Did. We. Not.

Because the gospel never took ahold of their lives. They were never broken. They were never poor in Spirit. They missed the first part of the sermon.

and so here Jesus says something incredible... he says “I **never** knew you!”

He doesn't say "I used to know you." He doesn't say "You fell away!"

He said "I never knew you!" Because everything in your life was always about *you*, doing whatever it is that you could do to make sure that you have a future.

and everything about the gospel is about broken people coming to Jesus and accepting the fact that on your own merit, you are totally screwed. There is no hope. There is no future. You will never be good enough.

Look again at the first part of that passage in Jeremiah.

"Cursed is the man who trusts in man and makes flesh his strength, whose heart turns away from the Lord. He is like a **shrub** in the desert, and shall not see any good come."

the Hebrew word that Jeremiah used that we translate as cursed is the word "arur". Its almost the exact same word as the tree, One is spelled a-r-u-r, and the other is spelled a-r-'-a-r.

Ar'ar is a juniper tree that bears hollow, empty, disgusting and poisonous fruit.

Ar'ur means "to bind with a curse, to lay or be under a curse."

But its not God who is cursing you. This is not Jesus saying "get away from me, because I am mad at you... because I died for you and then you still stole that pencil after you accepted me."

no. its not about that.

Read Jeremiah closely. You are cursed when *you* rely on your own strength. You curse yourself!

You curse yourself when you rely on the prophecies that you have spoken that have come to pass... you curse yourself when you rely on the fact that you have, in the past, seen demons come out of men... you curse yourself

when you rely on the mighty works that you have done even if you did them in the Lord's name.

Because ultimately, even your love for Jesus was about you, and the things that you were able to do, to make yourself feel close to God. You had an enthusiastic relationship. a Lord! Lord! relationship. But you never took the bottom position.

You were never poor in Spirit.
You never entered through the narrow gate.

You always were trying to work your way to the gate when the whole time Jesus was saying "in me, you enter first."

This is what is so crazy to me about Jesus... and how everything he taught was so upside down that even today most Christians have a hard time with it.

see, even today, we have all of these people out there claiming to serve Jesus... claiming to follow him... but everything they do is an emphasis on things that are not Jesus. They emphasis sin... they emphasis the condition, and spend little to no time talking about the cure.

or they go the other way, and they emphasis works.

We build these empires around the things that we do, and the things that we accomplish... and the things that we build... we build huge churches... religious institutions... christian colleges... non profit organizations...

but at the core of everything we do, we still have this idea buried in the back of our minds, that *because* we are building these things, and doing these things, Jesus will somehow approve of us.

like God will somehow acknowledge, "man, you did mighty works in my name... come in!"

Because we don't understand the type of perfection that God requires. It is utterly unattainable. Building a Christian empire falls incredibly short of the perfection that God requires. Everything we do, does.

and if you think that in this life you can do something that will earn you a spot with Jesus, you are so wrong.

The reason that Jesus was able to die for our sins is because he lived an utterly spotless, blameless, perfect life.

and he said "I will be your substitute" and if you accept that, then you are in! But it is when you start saying "didn't we do this? Didn't we do that?" that suddenly it becomes clear that you always thought that there was something you could do to get to Jesus.

That is religion. That was the false teaching of the Pharisees.

Jesus did not spend the majority of his time condemning sin. He did condemn sin. He did say to repent. But he dealt with sin with his own blood. When it came to condemning things... the thing that Jesus spent the majority of his time condemning was religion, and here is why:

Because what had become of religion in those days, and in our day today, is a total distortion of what it was meant to be. Lets go back all the way to the very first image people would have ever had about religion.

In ancient Hebrew, so even before Jesus (which just shows how amazing and prophetic Hebrew history really is) - the word "religion" was made up of two Hebrew letters... the letter "tav" and the letter "dalet" and in paleo Hebrew, which was the oldest written form of the language and was written in pictures...

the letter tav is a picture of a cross, and the letter "dalet" is a picture of a "door or an entrance"

so what the Hebrew word picture says is that religion is "the entrance... or the door to the cross."

Hear this: Religion, as it should be... should be the outpouring of your life...

it is NOT the thing that saves you... but IT IS the thing that shows other people Jesus, through you. Think about what James says... pure and UNDEFILED religion is this: taking care of orphans and taking care of widows in their affliction, and keeping your unstained from the world.”

what does that mean?

When you take care of widows and orphans, you are doing something radical. Something that when other people look at you, they will say “that person is doing something different. There is something different about them. They don’t spend all their money on themselves, they spend it on others... they don’t use all their time for themselves, doing whatever they want... they give their time to others... they take care of people...”

what is different?

It is the doorway to the cross. It is the way that others will begin to see Jesus by the way that he has taken hold of your life.

If you keep yourself unstained before the world... will that save you?

No! of course not!

But it will show other people that you are different. It will open the door for someone else to come to the cross of Jesus.

your religion was never meant to save you, it was meant to be the door that leads to others getting saved. It was meant to show other people how good Jesus is.

but those who relied on it to save them, Jesus will say: I never knew you.

That is why the only time in the whole bible, at least that I know of, where it actually defines what it means to know God, says this... and it is Jeremiah 22:16 (NASB):

“He pled the cause of the afflicted and needy; Then it was well. Is not that what it means to know Me?” Declares the Lord.

See, only a person who is willing to be last, would pick up someone else’s cross. Only a person who is willing to be last would make the cry of his heart be about someone other than himself. Only a person who is willing to be last, would lay down his life for his friends.

That is why this verse in Jeremiah is a good litmus test for if someone has changed.

Can you plead the cause of the afflicted and still not know God? Yes. Salvation doesn’t come by works. But you won’t find the grace of God sitting on your high horse, because you will be so distracted looking down on everyone.

And that is what the Pharisees did.

And so yes, Jesus had no problem looking at these religious leaders and saying to them “on that day many will say to Lord Lord! Did we not.

Did we not.

And he will say to them: YOU NEVER KNEW ME.

Because you never came broken. And because of it, your whole life was this weird, distorted religion that was ultimately about you and it never drew anybody to the cross.

Look at what Jesus says to the Pharisees in Matthew 23:13 -

“woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For **you shut the kingdom of heaven in people’s faces.** For you neither enter yourselves nor allow those who would enter to go in.”

Religion, what is supposed to be the thing that opens the door to Jesus... and the religious representatives were shutting that door on people.

and that was why he was so hard on the religious leaders. That's why the sermon on the mount says what it says. Because they were the ones who were supposed to be ushering in the Kingdom of heaven and instead they were slamming the door to the kingdom in people's faces. They were leading people astray by their works based religion. They were doing the things that looked like religion but they were doing it for their own selfish ambitions.

and it is not that religion was meant to be bad, but it had become corrupt, and self centered. And it pointed to the wrong place.

They were leading by a bad example, and making other people think... "If I just do this... then I will be ok."

They did great things. But when you rely on the great things that you do to save you, then the reality is... you never had it in the first place.

and that was why Jesus was so hard on these people. Because true religion keeps yourself unstained from the world..

and these folks were STAINING Jesus for everyone else. Because they never came to him broken... they lived their whole lives thinking that the gate was at the end...

But Jesus says no... in me... you enter first. and then your life gets pruned. It gets refined. It gets made more and more in my image so that you can be a part of showing other people to Jesus.

But it starts by entering the narrow gate.

Jesus puts it this way, it's the first thing he says in the sermon on the mount...

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."

If you come to Jesus that way... poor in spirit. Knowing that you don't even have a chance of seeing the Kingdom of Heaven if by your own merit...

if you come to Him that way... then you don't have to worry. You are in.

You will never have to say to Jesus "didn't we do these things..."

Because you know that on your own merit, you are lost.

and instead... on that day... you will say "Thank you for the cross."

That met me in my mess. When I was at my lowest. When I was broken.

The gospel is so beautiful. Because its for everyone who is broken.

And that is how you recognize fruit. Does it point to people? Or does it point to Jesus? Does it teach that there is something that you can do? Or does it teach that Jesus did it all? Is the heart of it all about prophecy? About healing? About works? About tongues?

Or is it about Jesus?

Because he is the only way. He is the narrow gate. He is the only foundation to build your house on that will not get destroyed by the wind and rain.

Jesus says this in John 14:6 - and its another one of those verses... if you can just hear this... then you have heard everything:

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."