

The Blessed Life

Knowing God, Walking in His Ways, and Cultivating What He Has Entrusted to Us

Pastor Jason Epperson

Monday, August 10, 2026

Program Summary

In this Monday edition of Mark & Friends, Pastor Jason Epperson continues the summer journey through the Psalms with Psalm 128 and asks what it truly means to live a blessed life. Biblical blessing is found in knowing the Lord, standing in awe of Him, trusting His wisdom, and walking in His ways. Through memorable illustrations about family, an amusement park, work, marriage, and olive trees, Pastor Jason shows how God's design brings flourishing to the people and places entrusted to us. Ultimately, every blessing points to Jesus, who forgives sin, conquers death, and dwells within His people.

Key Takeaways

- Psalm 128 describes blessing as something that ultimately comes from God and is available to everyone who fears the Lord and walks in His ways.
- Fearing the Lord means recognizing who God is and who we are: He is Creator and King, and we live under His loving authority.
- Trust grows as we know God's character: He is creative, patient, generous, gracious, protective, orderly, loving, satisfying, and faithful.
- God's commands are the Creator's wise directions for enjoying His good gifts in the right way and at the right time.
- Work is part of God's good creation and carries dignity even though sin has introduced toil, frustration, and difficult relationships.
- Marriage flourishes as husbands and wives love, serve, and care for one another with Jesus at the center.
- Children are pictured as olive shoots: nurturing people requires preparing the soil, protecting growth, providing what is needed, and patiently waiting for fruit.
- We cannot lead our families or those we influence to spiritual places we are unwilling to go ourselves.
- Even neutral distractions can stunt growth when they consume attention that belongs to God, family, and calling.

- The greatest blessing from Jerusalem is Jesus: His life, sacrifice, resurrection, forgiveness, victory over death, and the gift of His Spirit.

Scripture References

- Psalm 128:1-6
- Genesis 1:26-31
- Genesis 3:1-21
- Philippians 2:5-11
- Galatians 5:22-23
- John 6:35
- John 4:13-14
- John 8:12
- Ephesians 5:21-33
- John 15:1-8

Quote of the Day

“The blessed life is found in knowing God, trusting Him, and faithfully cultivating the people and places He has entrusted to us.”

Broadcast Notes

Pastor Jason places Psalm 128 among the Songs of Ascent sung by families traveling to Jerusalem for Israel's major feasts. A recent family vacation leads him to reflect on the past and future while recognizing that the only moment he can faithfully steward is the present. He unpacks the words blessed and fear, explaining that fulfillment is found in God and reverence grows from knowing His character. His amusement-park illustration makes the point memorable: the Creator knows how His world works, and ignoring His instructions can bring consequences to us and others. The second half applies Psalm 128 to work, marriage, and children. Olive shoots become a picture of patient spiritual formation: prepare the soil, protect young growth, provide light and water, and wait faithfully for fruit. Pastor Jason closes by showing that the blessing coming from Zion ultimately points to Jesus.

♥■ Practical Applications

- Begin each morning by asking, “God, what would it look like to fear You and walk in Your ways today?”
- Make a short list of God's attributes from this message and use it as a reminder of why He is trustworthy.

- Identify one good gift you may be enjoying with poor timing, misplaced priority, or outside God's design.
- Approach your work as a God-given place of dignity and service rather than merely a source of frustration or income.
- If married, ask how you can actively seek your spouse's spiritual, emotional, and practical good this week.
- Choose one relationship in which you are responsible for nurturing growth and ask whether the soil around that person is healthy.
- Identify one distraction that is not necessarily sinful but is consuming attention needed by God, family, or calling.
- Be patient with spiritual growth in children, students, grandchildren, or younger believers; olive trees do not produce fruit overnight.
- Before trying to change the wider world, cultivate faithfulness in the home, church, workplace, and community God has entrusted to you.
- Thank Jesus specifically for forgiveness, resurrection life, victory over death, and the indwelling presence of His Spirit.

Today's Challenge

For the next seven days, practice Pastor Jason's strategy: connect to God and cultivate your soil. Each morning spend a few minutes in Scripture and prayer, surrender one personal desire to Jesus, and identify one person or responsibility God has placed directly in front of you. At the end of the week, look for evidence of God's fruit growing in that soil.

Closing Prayer

Father, You are the Creator, and You know what brings true life and flourishing. Teach us to fear You with reverence, trust Your character, and walk in Your ways. Bless the work of our hands, strengthen marriages and families, and help us patiently nurture the people You have entrusted to us. Show us the distractions that stunt spiritual growth. Above all, thank You for Jesus—for His cross, resurrection, forgiveness, victory over death, and Spirit living within us. Help us connect with You each morning and cultivate our soil faithfully. In Jesus' name, Amen.

About Today's Speaker

Pastor Jason Epperson

Pastor at CU Church

Pastor Jason Epperson serves at CU Church and regularly teaches God's Word with a conversational style, memorable illustrations, and practical application. In this message from CU Church's summer journey through the Psalms, he opens Psalm 128 to explore biblical blessing, reverence for God, meaningful work, marriage, family, spiritual formation, and the way every true blessing ultimately points to Jesus.

Proofread Broadcast Transcript

Mark & Friends Welcome Song

*We're glad you're here, we're glad you're here,
Fellowship is sweeter, knowing you're near.
It's so good to see you, we hope that it's clear,
Everyone loves you, we're glad you're here.*

We're glad you're here. We're glad you're here. Fellowship is sweeter, knowing you're near.

It's so good to see you. We hope that it's clear. Everyone loves you.

We're glad you're here. Reading from Psalm 128, verse 1. Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways. Psalm 128, verse 1. Oh, magnify the Lord with me.

Let us exalt His name together. It's Monday, August 10th, 2026. Welcome to the Monday edition of Mark & Friends.

Today, Pastor Jason Epperson of CU Church takes us into Psalm 128 and asks a wonderfully important question. What does it really mean to live a blessed life? Here's Pastor Jason to open up God's word with us. So today we're in Psalm 128.

This is one of the songs in the Bible that's called a Song of Ascent. You've probably heard about it the last couple of weeks. A Song of Ascent is the songs that a family, a group of people would sing on their way to Jerusalem for the feasts and the festivals.

So the Feast of Tabernacles in the fall, the Passover in the spring, or Pentecost in the late spring. Three times a year, at least, they would come into Jerusalem. And as they journeyed on their way, this was the songs that they sang.

Does that make sense? It's like they didn't have Apple CarPlay. They sang songs versus listened to songs. And these were the songs that they sang.

And so, I don't know about you, but I just got back. I was gone for the last five days. When I was with my family on vacation, I thought about this song because I knew what I was going to preach.

It's like, when you're with your family, and it's like my whole family was there. And the older my kids get, the more I recognize that doesn't happen very often. It doesn't happen when we're all together.

And I also thought about this. There's going to come a day when there's going to be other people that they want to join my family. And then it'll change even more.

But the reality is, so I was kind of looking back. It was like, as you get older, kids, when you're with your family, they reflect on the things of past. Past vacations, past things.

And I also was thinking about the future. But then I got kind of convicted because this song was like, but the only thing that really I can control is the what? The moment that I'm in. This song is a song that they sung.

It was on their playlist. Are you with me? And as they're walking into Jerusalem, they were singing this song. And this is how the song goes.

It says, Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in His ways. The first word I want to talk about is blessed. This word blessed is literally only you can receive from God.

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, and He created you in His image, it's like you were blessed by God because the imprint of God was on you. When sin came into the picture, God's hand was removed. He still loved you.

That's what Jesus did to come bring that back. But the reality is, we became addicts in a moment. We became worshipers in a moment.

And you've spent your life, and I spend my life, trying to figure out what's going to bring the happiness, the joy, the fulfillment, right? And so what Jesus is saying here is, blessed is the one who fears the Lord and walks in His ways. If you want fulfillment, if you want wholeness, the word in Scripture is like happiness. If you want to find that in your life, it's found in God.

So that blessing there is when you think to yourself in the morning when you wake up is, was this what I was created for? You're driving to work. Whatever it is, is there more to life than this? That's the blessing. And the answer is yes, you are.

So it says, blessed is everyone. Who's everyone? It's everyone. Don't miss that.

Like how did we not like, blessed is just the Jewish people? No. Everyone is welcome. Like even this was written hundreds of years before Jesus, and it was all about everyone.

It wasn't about one group of people. Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord. This word fear right here is not, blessed are the people that sit underneath the covers and suck their thumb and are scared.

That's not what it's saying. This word fear here, I want you to say, Jesus was the perfect man that walked the earth. This is how he feared the Lord.

In Philippians chapter 2, you can read another time, it says that he is literally the creator. Like he is the image of God. But he humbled himself and became a dude.

God is here. Men and women are here. God is here.

Men and women are here. Then he became a servant. Then he became a sacrifice.

Then he became a curse for you and I. But you and I, the way we fear the Lord, is recognizing the status and the position that we are in. We are under him because he is God and we are not. We're awestruck by him.

So it says, this fear. So Jesus feared the Lord. He also loved the Lord.

And he also obeyed the Lord. And that's what it says. Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord.

Why is it hard for us to fear the Lord? Fellas, what do you think? Why is it hard? You know why it's hard? Because we don't know the Lord. Like really. The reason it's hard for us not to obey him is because you don't, like let's just be honest, like you don't have to look at me right now.

You can look down. But the reason we don't trust the Lord with the way we live our life is we kind of think, okay, I want you to take care of my salvation. But I think my way is going to be more fun.

Adam and Eve are in a garden. And Satan says, I know you know he created it. But this fruit here makes it more fun.

This passage, I'm going to read it again. Why don't we trust the Lord? We don't trust the Lord because we don't know the Lord. Let me just tell you who he is.

Can I take just 5, 10, 25 minutes and 45 seconds to do that? Let me tell you who the Lord is. Who the Lord is is this. He is creator.

Like he created the heavens and the earth. Like when he snapped, the stars went in the sky. It really says his spoken word created the world.

So think about this. The word that came out of his mouth is the expression of God. So on the lips of a creator was a savior.

That's nice. Like that's who he is. Like he is the creator.

Do you know what else you find about the creator? Is he is creative. Like this last week, we're standing on this dock. And we're standing on this dock.

And there's all these carp and these fish in there. And one of my kids grabs a cheese curd off my plate, which made me a little angry. And they take this cheese curd and they put their hand in the water.

And these carp, these sucker fish are like sucking these cheese curds off. It's like that's a \$7 snack for a carp. But these kids are feeding it.

And by the way, cheese curds are bad for fish. They're great for dudes. No, that's not true.

But when I'm watching this, I'm literally thinking to myself, how creative is God that he made a fish to look like that? And then all of a sudden, this like gar came swimming by. And this gar is like a freaking swordfish with alligator teeth. I mean, it's just crazy looking.

And Zeke looks at me. He's like, that's in the water? I was like, yeah. He's like, I'm not getting in that water.

But are you with me? Like in creation, or you're sitting on a deck and you see a bald eagle. Or it's a butterfly. It's a bug.

It's a sunset. It's a sunrise. The Lord is creative.

Do you know what else he is? He's patient. When sin came into the very picture. Let's just talk about the beginning.

Sin came into the picture. Screwed it all up. When sin came in, what was the first thing God did? He gave them the opportunity to say they're sorry.

And then as soon as they recognize, sin comes into the world. Pain comes into the world. Like they never had an anxious thought.

Then all of a sudden, they were anxious and they knew they were naked. You know what he does in their anxiety? He literally sacrifices another animal that he loves to calm their hearts because of their anxiety. He is generous.

He is gracious. He tells them in that moment, guess what? I'm going to fix it. I'm going to come into this world.

I'm going to come into this world and I'm going to make it right. All throughout the Old Testament, what do you see? You see a God that's a strong tower. You see a protector.

You see a provider. You see generosity. You see beauty.

You see order. Like in a disorderly world, he is order. He is the plumb line in life.

When everything is chaos around us and we don't know what to believe, he is what we can believe. He is graciousness. He is love.

He is joy. He is peace. He is patience.

He is kindness. He is goodness. He is gentleness.

He is self-control. He's a fire, y'all. He's a consuming fire.

And what that consuming fire eats up is the sin in this world. And it leaves us refined and it leaves us his children. And so listen to me, let the consuming fire eat away the brokenness of humanity.

What else is he? He is my satisfaction. He's what satisfies. He is the bread when I need food.

He is the living water when I need a drink. He is light when I'm in darkness. Now if that is who he is, is he easier to trust? He is all-knowing and he has a plan.

Blessed is everyone who fears the Lord, who walks in his ways. I've told this illustration before. I'm going to tell you it again.

If you're here, I've told it at least two times in the last nine years. If you're here for nine more, you're going to hear it at least two more times. Because it's the best illustration I have on talking about walking in the way of the Lord.

And so it goes like this. It's like just imagine that God created an amusement park. And the creator creates this amusement park.

He creates this amusement park. It's the greatest amusement park you've ever even heard about. It's got better shows than any other park.

It's got better rides. It's the greatest food, the greatest ride. It's like literally it's heaven on earth.

Like he creates it perfectly. And then you're coming in and everyone's invited to the amusement park. And you walk in the amusement park.

And they hand you this map. They hand you this book. And they say, here is all the different people that have walked through this amusement park.

Here's the lessons you can learn. Here's the dumb things they did. Here's the good things they did.

If you listen to this, you'll have the greatest experience at this park. And by the way, the creator on time is going to talk to you. And you're going to hear his voice.

And you have a choice whether you're going to listen or not. But you're going to hear from him as he's going to talk through the loudspeaker. Everyone's going to hear his voice at different times.

The question is, will you listen for his voice? But the reality is, I'm going to get... Because see, the creator is most glorified. He's the most excited. He's the most happy when you're satisfied with the park.

And so we go to the park. And we go rolling into the park. And as we go rolling into the park, and we walk into this park.

As we walk in, it's crazy awesome. And we're looking at this map. And the family's going as we're walking in.

My wife is there. My kids are there. We're going in.

And Lacey's the one that holds this map. And she's like, well, it says here that this person did this. And it was really awesome.

Let's try that. And so we're doing all these rides. And then it's like 1130.

And my son, Beau, and I look at each other. It's feeding time. And I'm like, Beau, are you hungry? He's like, I'm hungry.

And Lacey's like, well, hey, if you want to do this ride called the Silly Silo, we have to do that before we eat. And I was like, no, let's just eat and then do the Silly Silo. And she's like, no, it says here you shouldn't eat before the Silly Silo.

And I'm like, that book is so old. Like, this book is not relevant right now. Like, that book don't know the 2026 version of man.

Beau, you with me? Dad, let's eat. My other kid's like, no, we're not going to eat. We're going to listen to this.

Like, OK, let's go. So me and Beau walk over. And we get a chili dog, a corn dog, a couple of double cheeseburgers, cheese curds, fries, and a Diet Coke because I'm watching it.

That is my favorite thing in the world. You pull up to McDonald's. I'll take two double cheeseburgers.

Can I get some Big Mac sauce on that? Large fry, Diet Coke. I don't want to drink my calories. We are crazy people.

I mean, think about that. Anyway, sorry. I'm just laughing at me here.

I'm the only one that does that, I promise. And so then we eat all of our food. And we're chewing it up.

And we're eating it. And we're wiping the food off our plate. And everyone else is sitting there.

And Zeke's like, Mom, I'm really hungry. She's like, son, just trust me, Dad. He's making a bad choice right now.

And so then we walk over. And we get on the silly silo. And I'm like, yeah, silly silo.

And we get in there. And all of a sudden, it starts spinning. You're like against this wall.

And it's spinning like crazy. And all of a sudden, the floor drops out. And you're 10 feet in the air.

And it's spinning like nine, like this. And all of a sudden, Zeke's like, this is awesome. And Lacey's like, awesome.

Kate's like, awesome. Abe's like, awesome. And me and Bo are like, ooh.

And all of a sudden, it just comes out. And I throw up. And Bo throws up.

And it gets on us mostly. But it also gets on my kids. It gets on other people on the ride.

And then the ride stops. And I am mad. And I look at the creator.

And I say, why in the world would you create a ride like this? Why in the world would you let this happen to me if this amusement park is so great? And then someone else on the ride, who didn't eat the chili dog, says, man, this creator's garbage. Why would I get vomit on me if I didn't even do anything wrong? And Lacey's like, hey, Jason, babe, it says right here, there's a place over here you can get cleaned up. There's a place over here that you can wash yourself and be clean.

And then the creator goes like, hey, Jason, that was not the best choice, but it's okay. Like, just take a deep breath. You don't know me.

Why would you do that to me? Why would bad things happen? I'm just trying to have a good time. Like, why would it feel so right to eat that corn dog and I'm not supposed to? And then God's like, I'm not saying you can't have the corn dog, bro. I'm saying you shouldn't have the corn dog before you ride the Silly Silo.

Hey, family, I'm not saying. There's so many good and perfect gifts and beautiful things that God has given you and me to enjoy in this world. But if you don't think that timing matters, it does.

Do we believe the creator of this world knows best? Then it gives us a description of what it is like when we walk in his ways. Are you ready? It says this, you shall eat the fruit of the labor of your hands. You shall be blessed and it shall be well with you.

So in your work, you'll be blessed by your work. And you might think, you've never had my job. And I just wanna speak real quick to labor, to work.

Here's the deal is, God created work. It was part of creation. The reason work is so hard is because there's people at our workplace puking on chili dogs all over us.

Okay? The reason work is hard is because we work with people. The other reason work is hard is because there's weeds, there's toil, there's things that don't go quite right. But that doesn't mean we should stop working because we were created to work.

In heaven, we will work. But the difference is, the work will only be blessed. There'll be no pain, there'll be no sorrow.

There'll be like, the work we have there, there won't be people puking chili dogs on us. The work will be perfect there. But hear me say, in culture today, if you don't think you should work, what is happening to you is you're losing the dignity of what you're created to do.

When you just want someone to give you what you want and not work for it, literally, Satan has deceived you into not walking with the dignity that God created you to walk in. You shall be blessed and it shall be well with you. What is the fruit that we find in work? Well, his fruit is love, is joy, is peace, is patience.

The why behind what we do is him. It goes on and says these words. Another description.

This description is of your home. And if you're thinking, well, I'm single, hear me say this. In this time in history, you would have married and almost every man and woman at some point would have been married in this time.

What does Jesus tell us about singleness? It's actually awesome. It's actually like preferred. Like, this is a great thing to be single.

So if you're single, don't think you have to get married. That's not what the Bible teaches. But in this passage, it's written to a family unit, husband, wife, and children.

But it's still practical for us today. And this is what it says. So husbands, wives, listen up.

It says, your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house. So if I am loving and serving and caring and being generous, if I'm treating my wife the way Christ treated me, which is what? Always looking out for her best interests, being patient, being kind, being loving, walking in mutual submission to who? To Jesus. Marriage is a picture.

Literally, it's a picture of the Trinity. And it says this. Your wife will be like a fruitful vine within your house.

Literally, this vine is described in three different ways in Scripture. One is it's a spiritual blessing. One is a physical blessing.

And one is an emotional blessing. So husbands and wives, if you love each other the way you're supposed to, emotionally, physically, and spiritually, you'll be awesome. What does almost every marriage struggle with? One, two, or three of all those things.

Why? Because we want to eat chili dogs. Because we want what we want. And we think it's the other person's job to give it to us.

You know what else vines do? My wife and I were talking about this this morning around the table really early. And she's like, you know, vines are also like, when vines on this, we have this garage outside, and the vines like dig into the wall. Like they root themselves as they grow.

And so vines are rooted, but they also pull things in. And if there's not a better description for my wife, I never know where she's going to go now. But she is rooted.

You know what else is going to happen? There's going to be people at my table I've never met before all the time. She's going to pull people in. And what's my job? It's a lover like crazy.

Then it talks about children. Your children will be like olive shoots around the table. I'm going to talk about this for probably seven to ten minutes.

That might be a long time, but I just need to talk. Whether it's your kids, whether it's your grandkids, whether it's nieces and nephews, whether it's kids in a classroom, let's just talk about it for a second. Olive trees are described as children.

And olive trees we don't know a lot about. We know about oaks. We know about willows.

We know about pine. We know about the stuff we've got. We know corn now.

Listen, we know corn. But olive trees are different. It takes 12 months of nurturing the soil before an olive tree comes up.

So the first thing you need to know about parenting or about loving people is this. Twelve months before you see anything, any growth at all, should be spent in nurturing the soil that you're walking in. Hear me say this right now.

You will never lead, love, and grow your family to a place that you are unwilling to go. It just don't happen. Most of our lives, what do we spend our time doing? We just try to get more of the things that don't satisfy us for our kids because we think more of it's going to work.

That is like sign me up for the loony bin because that's what that is. Oh, this isn't working for me, but if I had more of it, it would work. What? I'm guilty.

So the first thing we have to do in your life and in my life is just nurture the soil that we're in. What's that mean? Loving like crazy. What that means is waking up in the morning and I fear the Lord enough to say, God, I know you know better.

I want to die to Jason so you can live. And in that process, my family is blessed. I am blessed.

The next thing we see, so we prepare the soil. The next thing is we protect, we protect the plant when it comes up. When a baby tree comes up in your yard, even in Champaign County, you got a baby tree in your yard, you live out, you live anywhere in Champaign County, you got a baby tree, you better put something around that tree because critters are going to come on your property and do what? Try to destroy that tree.

In my house, it's like deer. Deer are going to come on that property, try to eat that tree. And so if I don't put something around it, there is things in the outside world.

There is things in this world that Satan has put here to distract you from your primary purpose. And they might not even be sin, but you're going to let them into your house and they're going to stunt the growth of your trees. They're going to stunt the growth of your kids.

They're going to stunt the growth of your marriage. You know how most of the time it is? Come on now. Like it's crazy to me that I allow something from the outside.

Like would I ever allow my kids to be mentored by the thing? Or let's not pick on our kids. Let's just look at us. Imagine if your whole purpose in life was to take care of those trees, ladies.

That's your whole purpose in life, is to take care of these trees. The main purpose you have is to take care of those trees. You sleep by those trees.

You water those trees. They're in full sunlight. He is the light of the world.

He is living water. And you're out there by those trees. And all of a sudden, there's these critters that are coming up.

And every time you see these critters come up and they're eating your trees, like they're eating the fruit. Like literally, this is how you're going to sustain. Like this is the purpose of your life, is to love God, love people.

And the covenant you have is with God and with your family. These trees is your covenant. And you're going to spend your time doing this.

I can't believe she said that. Oh, they liked it. Oh, I got 134 likes on that.

Can you believe that we signed that recruit? Can you believe? Look at what they're doing. And while that's happening, your family is getting chewed up. I'm just talking about me now.

But what are the things in my life that I'm letting into my world that slow the growth of the people around me? Not sin, just distractive behavior. You know, the next thing that happens is we provide. We provide full sunlight, full water.

Then after this, it tells us that an olive tree, it takes 5 to 10 years. Parent, here's the encouraging part. Teachers, here's the encouraging part.

It takes 5 to 10 years for an olive tree to produce fruit. Are you right? It takes 5 to 10 years before they have any fruit at all. And they don't really start bearing fruit.

An olive tree doesn't really start doing it until 30 to 70 years. But man, that would be like my greatest. I can't tell you how excited I am someday.

My prayer is to see the fruit, God's fruit come from the trees he's put around me. Behold, thus shall the man be blessed who fears the Lord. Do you trust God? The Lord bless you from Zion.

May you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. This Zion is where the Lord is at. Like it says, I'm going to get it.

It says the Lord bless you for like there's a blessing coming from Jerusalem. There's a blessing coming from Jerusalem. There's a blessing coming from Jerusalem.

And it says this. All the days of my life, may you see your children's children. Peace be upon you of Israel.

Like that's the song they're singing. Can you imagine singing that song in 33 AD when they're coming into the city? And off in the distance you hear, Hosanna, Hosanna. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Like why is there a blessing out of Jerusalem? Is Jerusalem that great a place? No, listen, like the blessing of Jerusalem was wrapped in swaddling clothes and he was lying in a manger. The blessing of Jerusalem walked on this earth, a perfect man on a broken earth. And he walked this earth and he loved and he served.

The blessing of Israel was the healing that he gave to you. The blessing of Israel was the forgiveness that he gave you. The blessing of Israel was the fact that he taught us, that he loved us, that he served us.

The blessing of Israel was he took your sin and my sin and he wore it on a cross. By the way, I need that. And then he died on that cross and he conquered death.

He literally kicked death in the mouth and then he rose from the dead. And in that moment what happened is death was conquered, sin was conquered. I don't know about you, but that's a pretty sweet blessing coming out

of Israel.

And then what happens is you fast forward, then God does something even cooler. He sends himself to live inside of you. Where did that happen? It happened in Israel.

The blessing of Israel is not only your sins are forgiven, death has been conquered and now God dwells within us. And now you have a choice every single morning just like I do. I can wake up and say, I want to die so he can live.

And if I do that, the fruit of what God does around me is like, whoa. Or, or I can eat chili dogs. Because it's just how I feel.

Does that make sense? My opportunity in this world is to connect to God every single morning and take care of the soil that I've been planted in so that I can be blessed, my family can be blessed, this church can be blessed, this city can be blessed. See, I actually have no ability to change what's happening in the world outside of asking God to change it. The last time any president's ever called me and said, Hey Jason, I'm looking for a little advice.

Never happened. He doesn't look at my social media page either. And me changing the minds or popping off at someone else about it actually doesn't help.

But you know what does help? Here's the strategy, you ready for it? Connecting to God and cultivating my soil. And when we do that, we've watched it. A city around us now is starting to change.

Listening friend, be God's change agent. Thank you for joining us for today's Mark & Friends as Pastor Jason Epperson reminded us that the blessed life is found in knowing God, trusting him, and faithfully cultivating the people and places he has entrusted to us. And ultimately, every blessing points us to Jesus.

Continue learning under the Mark & Friends tab at greatnewsradio.org or wluj.org where today's broadcast and additional resources are waiting for you. Thanks for listening. Thanks for being a part of our radio listening family.

This is Mark Burns with the Ministry of Great News Media. God bless you and have a great day and night.