

Easter Slide

Good Friday Prayer 7 am-5 pm

Luke Series Slide

Washington Redskins/Commanders most recent 25 year history of not only losing...but being the worst team in the NFL to coach or play for.

Sewage pipe leaking.

Terrible Locker room facilities.

Coaches have to pay for coffee.

Then scandals of personal and financial abuse - some that were investigated by the Federal government.

And if you were a fan- like me- for over 35 years- you had seen just how far this team had fallen.

They used to be one of the premier franchises in sports.

Behind all of this was a self-centered owner who had set up this toxic environment and culture- that over 24 years- seemed to seep even into the crumbling walls of the locker rooms.

Until it all began to change in April 2023.

A man named Josh Harris bought the team. He was a longtime fan- grew up in the DC area watching the team win SuperBowls and compete in the playoffs year after year.

He immediately made some small changes- but by-in-large he let the current coaches and players stay put for the 2023 season. Then...he changed everything.

He started with a new GM...then a new coach...then he started cutting players- and signing others. But he didn't go after the hot young talent...he went after veteran players who had proven to be good teammates and to set the tone for the locker room.

The Coach they hired was a well-liked coach who players wanted to play for.

The team had a mantra through their offseason workouts and training camps that came from their coach- Dan Quinn who said, "There is nothing I enjoy more than doing hard [stuff] with good people, and these guys here- they're some good people."

"Hard Stuff with Good People."

Though, “Stuff” may have not been the EXACT wording.

In April last year- they drafted a QB- Jayden Daniels- who had one of the greatest offensive rookie seasons in the history of the sport. You may have gotten home from our Smokin’ Roastin’ Toastin’ Fall Festival in time to see the incredible 65 yard hail mary TD pass with no time on the clock that beat the Chicago Bears.

I got a Charlie Horse when I jumped up out of my chair on a Sunday afternoon late in the season when he threw his 5th TD pass to beat the Philadelphia Eagles at the end of the game. And so many more memories- for a long time Super fan— that for so long had painfully watched their descent into NFL HADES- this was truly a special year filled with moments watching with my family I’ll remember for the rest of my life.

Before last season- the professional sports prognosticators predicted the win total for the Washington Commanders to be less than 7 wins.

They won 12 games. Then they won 2 playoff games- on the road- and made it to the NFC Championship game for the first time since I was 13 years old.

Zach Ertz- one of those veterans that help to set the tone for the team...who is nearing the end of his NFL career...signed on to play again this upcoming season. This is what he said about the team.

“Its just different. It really feels like a family. That cliché gets thrown around so much in our profession, but I would say this [team] really does feel like a family because people really do care about other people’s success.”- Zach Ertz, Washington Commanders Tight End

Title Slide “The Culture of God: How to Do Hard Stuff with Good People”- Luke 6:20-49

There is a phrase in the Bible that Jesus uses often. the Kingdom of God.

Kingdom means reign. What would the broken world be like under the reign of King that completely changes its culture.

That’s why- for today- I’m going to call it the “Culture” of God. Because for those familiar with the Bible- sometimes phrases like “Kingdom of God” just get lost and sort of become background spiritual code for heaven.

But thats not exactly what the KoG is.

Just like toxic self-centered leadership can ruin a team, community, and family— So self-sacrificing leadership that makes strangers into brothers and sisters can remake it.

So what is life like in a community among a people when Jesus is the new owner, GM, and Coach? That's the Kingdom of God.

And yes- its happening later- but its breaking into the world right now- which means we get to enjoy doing hard stuff with good people. And it really does feel like family because in the Culture of God- everyone really does care about other people's success.

Luke 6:20-26

20 Then looking up at his disciples, he said:

Blessed are you who are poor,

because the kingdom of God is yours.

21 Blessed are you who are hungry now,

because you will be filled.

Blessed are you who weep now,

because you will laugh.

22 Blessed are you when people hate you,

when they exclude you, insult you,

and slander your name as evil

because of the Son of Man.

23 "Rejoice in that day and leap for joy. Take note — your reward is great in heaven, for this is the way their ancestors used to treat the prophets.

24 But woe to you who are rich,

for you have received your comfort.

25 Woe to you who are now full,

for you will be hungry.

Woe to you who are now laughing,

for you will mourn and weep.

26 Woe to you

when all people speak well of you,

for this is the way their ancestors

used to treat the false prophets.

v 35-36

But love your enemies, do what is good, and lend, expecting nothing in return. Then your reward will be great, and you will be children of the Most High. For he is gracious to the ungrateful and evil. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father also is merciful.

v 37-40

37 “Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38 Give, and it will be given to you; a good measure — pressed down, shaken together, and running over — will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.” 39 He also told them a parable: “Can the blind guide the blind? Won’t they both fall into a pit? 40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher.

v43-45

43 “A good tree doesn’t produce bad fruit; on the other hand, a bad tree doesn’t produce good fruit. 44 For each tree is known by its own fruit. Figs aren’t gathered from thornbushes, or grapes picked from a bramble bush. 45 A good person produces good out of the good stored up in his heart. An evil person produces evil out of the evil stored up in his heart, for his mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart.

Transition:

In this text today- Jesus compares and contrasts a culture where he is king vs. one where he is not.

First he compares and contrast these 2 cultures...then he specifically describes what a Healthy Culture where Jesus is the Owner, GM and Coach looks like ...and there’s a couple of little nuggets in here about HOW we become that.

Because it is no doubt- HARD STUFF with GOOD PEOPLE...

1) The Culture of God endures Hard Stuff for long term flourishing.

Dan Snyder always trying to make a big splash. He wouldn't build a culture...he tried to buy a championship. Expensive free agents...at the end of their career.

It takes patience. You can't always WIN NOW.

v 20

Poor in Spirit (In Matthew)- Not just for for poor sake. But remember he's writing to a rich man. And a lot of Luke focuses on the spiritual danger of money.

You aren't automatically righteous if you're poor or evil if you're rich.

Remember- He's offering a choice to Theophilus.

But he is saying over and over- Money can fool you and get you into big trouble- and one of the reasons is because it offers you this idea that you can have it all right now. No waiting. Every good thing can be bought.

So you become self-sufficient. You don't need other people, except to get at their money...and you don't need God to provide- because money gives you the illusion that you can take care of yourself.

Grace and Grit Slide

Spiritual Poverty met with God's grace
Spiritual Wealth that endures difficulty- does HARD STUFF as a sacrifice to God...and act of worship.

v 21-22

People who have not put their hope in material comfort or scoffing-
The weeping is recognizing their own sinfulness and brokenness.

Poverty- injustice in the world.

God will set it right.

This is a hope giving passage

v 23

Go to the past (the prophets- we know they were right, even though everyone wanted to kill them because they had hard things to say)

and to the future (When God brings justice) and bring that rejoicing into the present.

v 24-26

Rich, well fed, laugh, Everyone speaks well.

Priority is power- wealth give power

Material comfort (well fed)

Laugh (success)- you look down on other people Gloating

Recognition or Celebrity- These are all platform things

The Woes- You shortcut the deeper, richer inward work.

Woe is me

How terrible it is for you.

The deeper, richer inward stuff...you'll never get

This is our societal ill. Get famous NOW. Build a platform. Feed yourself.

Its consumer. Its now. Its spiritual middle class.

And it ends up empty.

Its like Washington signing Albert Haynesworth to a \$100 million contract in 2009.

They are all shortcuts.

And he says this is the way they treated the FALSE prophets- WE love you NOW...but later turned out to be wrong.

v 47-49

Hearing Jesus and acting on his words is like

Takes time to build a foundation- but its not very exciting.

Much better just to do the thing that gets people going.

But that kind of life...that kind of culture crumbles when the storm hits.

2) The Culture of God is Good People generously overflowing for others' success.

When Josh Harris bought the Commanders. He knew he had to do more than sign a few star players. He had to start at the root. And he was trusting that eventually if the roots of his organization were good, the culture would change...and the wins would eventually come.

v 43-45

Tree with Fruit-

The nature of the tree (Fig or thorn)- the nourishment of the tree (What is stored up).
What you are...and what your roots are in.

And it overflows all the way to the fruit... to what is produced.

So what is produced from the culture of God-

When Jesus is ruling the life of a community?

the OVERFLOW- other peoples success.

Fruit is not for the tree- its for the enironment- the ecosystem. The culture
Even at short term loss of the person who loves them.

Cultivate

v 27-30

People who don't "deserve" your love, your forgiveness, your care.

People who take your coat...offer your shirt.

Think of it this way-

THINK AS AN ADVOCATE instead of an ACCUSER

Devil is Accuser, Jesus and the Holy Spirit described as an advocate.

Defense attorney- even if he knows your guilty- he's figuring a way to think about you
in the best way and get you the best deal.

v 37-38

Forgive and be forgiven. Do not condemn and so you won't. Judge not and you won't
be judged.

Jesus was using a farming analogy, because most of these people were familiar with farming. It was supposed to be a little humorous. In those days, the way harvesters got paid was at the end of the week they could take home a basketful of wheat. They carried these big baskets from the field to the barn, and normally, because the wheat was so heavy, you would only load it up half or 2/3 full before bringing it in. But for that last basket, the one you got to keep, guess what they did? They would press it down, shake it so it settled, and fill it up to the brim so that it was running over.

In other words- think about the way you treat yourself...and do that with what you give away

v 41-42

In a relationship- treat others like you always have the bigger sin.
IN order to serve them- to remove whats clouding their vision.

Isn't there a big difference when you set a culture of confessing sin rather than pointing it out?

v 31

Summarized by "the Golden Rule"

But that doesn't make the culture of God unique. Anybody is happy to treat somebody with love and respect in order to get it back...

v 35-36

Golden Rule- Nay- The Platinum Rule

THE PLATINUM RULE- Do unto others as Jesus has done for you

There are no Good People without Jesus- and there is no hope in hard stuff without what he did.

You are the ungrateful and evil. You can't participate in Hard Stuff with GOOD PEOPLE Because I'm not GOOD PEOPLE.

Gospel- Mercy of the Father

Children of the most high. ADOPTION.