

Tenderness and Toughness

Blessings friends, Pastor Nick, I just wanted to jump on here and give you a brief word on how to recognize — an undeniable way to recognize — those that legitimately have entrusted themselves to Jesus. There'll be two things that will always be evidence of a genuine believer. Number one is their tenderness to Jesus, His message, and His work. There's a sensitivity to the person who hears the message of the good news of the Lord Jesus Christ, they welcome it when God is at work. And they received the message as it is the word of God, which is a supernatural work that only God can do, as we find in First Thessalonians is brought to light they received the word as it was, because of how the word was revealed to them. That is, God was involved in it with power. And it was a word revealed, not just to them, but within them, and therefore their heart is humble. Their spirit is meek and teachable. And they are sensitive, they welcome the word with no restrictions. That's what we see, on the day of Pentecost when Peter preached that message, and they welcomed the word of the gospel. And that is the distinguishing work of God. That's what faith looks like. It's moved. That's what a sensitive heart is. Noah, for example, Enoch, who walked with God, to walk with God, you go with God, he went with him to walk with Him. And Noah was affected by the word, the warning, the word that came to him and it moved him, there is always always always going to be that tenderness to the message like King Josiah, when he received the word, his heart was tender before God sensitive before God, when Zacchaeus heard Jesus call him out of the tree, there was a sensitivity. It was its faith. That's what faith is, it's sensitive to grace. And when it hears that message, it's moved by it, it's tender to it, it's sensitive to it, it's affected by it. And you're going to find that the second undeniable dynamic that you will see is not just a tenderness to Jesus, but a toughness for Jesus. It is gonna manifest that they are able, because of who's in them, who's working with them, who's revealed Himself, in them and to them and going to work through them. There is a persevering strength, they endure. They endure the troubles because a faith that is not able to stand the test is a faith that is not worth trusting and redeeming faith is in Jesus and that faith endures. And that's why we see in the book of Revelation for an example, and throughout the scriptures, it says here in is the faith and the patience, the perseverance, the toughness, the strength, the endurance of the saints, they will endure under heavy persecution, under light troubles and afflictions, because God is what as Paul says, in Second Corinthians four, he's putting them in things they are delivered the death so that the life of Christ can be manifested out of their mortal flesh. So they love Jesus and His people and His message. They LISTEN to His voice. They are looking for his promised return. They live waiting, looking, working, resting, working, resting, their soul is at rest, while they work in the labor. They give their lives not only to Jesus, but they give their lives to Jesus and his message, according to Mark 8:34-38, and they're also leading other people to Jesus. That is the evidence somebody that who loves him not only loves him but likes him enough to listen to him to look for him and lead other people to him, and when they are faced with troubles, they're not going to be flawless through it. They're not going to be flawless in the trials

that come their way. There are going to be times when there is some timidity But God didn't give us a spirit of fear. He's given us power, love, and a sound mind. And the saints will endure; the sheep will follow his voice. And those that have been born of God love those who are born of God, because of what God's done in them. And they believe the witness of the Spirit that convicted them of their unbelief in Jesus, they believe the waters of baptism, when the Spirit came upon, Jesus said, This is My beloved Son, whom I am well pleased. And they believe the testimony of the blood. What does all that say? That every aspect of the life of the unbeliever is tainted with sin, but Jesus came to die for sinners. And when we entrust ourselves to Him, because we've received the witness the testimony of God, our testimony, lines up with his because we've been made sensitive and tender to the message of the cross, the good news of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and there is a persevering toughness. So look for that. You're looking for tenderness and toughness, tenderness and toughness that is produced by the grace of God through faith, that God lives in that person through the Lord Jesus Christ. And when you see it, you can celebrate it, because that's somebody who loves Jesus, they love the people of God. They love the Word of God, they love the ways of God, and they are in the fight of faith. They also are listening to the Shepherd and follow his lead. No, they don't do it perfectly. That's why they've entrusted themselves to him who did and they are looking, grace, the agenda of grace, is teaching us to say no to us, they yes to Jesus, and look for the blessed hope and glorious appearance of our great God and Savior. And they are tender and tough, and they keep leading people to him. That doesn't mean they're going to leave 1000s That doesn't mean they are going to lead hundreds, they may not lead that many to him, but the way they live the way they look the way that they love, they are bold in their love, they are bold in their light, they're bold in their life, to stand upon the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, because it is their answer, because He's God's only solution for them. In this life, you're dealing with sheep, you're dealing with a servant, you're dealing with a new creature in Christ Jesus, and anything short of that tenderness to the message, and the toughness in the work of the mission. You know, you are working with somebody that has not met Jesus yet, and they're putting their confidence in their faith. They're putting their confidence in their praying, and they put confidence in their prayers. They put confidence in their decisions, they put confidence in what other people have told them. But they have still fallen short of believing a deliverer who came to set them free, to follow him tenderly and toughly, in this world. So they will be tender to Jesus, and tough for Jesus, in this world, because that is the work of redeeming grace. He came to free us from the hand of all our enemies that we might serve Him, in holiness and righteousness without fear, all the days of our life. And that kind of love my friend compels a brother or sister to lay their life down for him who died and rose for them. So keep looking for that's what you want to see. You don't see it. You know, you have somebody who doesn't love Jesus that is still condemned, anathema, and you will know how to pray for him that God would open their understanding that they would see God in Christ and turn in faith to him. So Blessings, Blessings, Blessings, keep preaching. Keep walking, keep loving, and love boldly and live boldly for our great Redeemer.