

Onesimus

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Date: 09 February 2020

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[0 : 0 0] We do welcome you to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church this morning and I'd like to invite you to sing along with us for our call to worship this is the day that the Lord has made this is the day this is the day that the Lord has made that the Lord has made let us rejoice let us rejoice and be glad in it and be glad in it this is the day that the Lord has made let us rejoice and be glad in it this is the day this is the day that the Lord has made let us pray holy God we come to you today to offer worship and praise to you we pray that you will receive this worship as a blessing and that you will fill us with your Holy Spirit reveal to us your love cover us by your grace in Jesus's name amen

I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together and can it be that I need that I should care see thank you very thank you very much as you sing together and hi there's the day, back to you hymn uh And can it be that I should gain An interest in the Savior's blood?

Died He for me, who caused His pain? For me, who Him to death pursued?

Amazing love, how can it be That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

Amazing love, how can it be That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

[2 : 4 1] He at His Father's throne above So free, so infinite His grace And He Himself above our love And bled for Adam's helpless grace Tis mercy, all immense and free For all my God, it found out me Tis mercy, all immense and free For all my God, it found out me No condemnation now I dread Jesus and all in Him is mine

All I can hear, my living hand And hold in righteousness divine Bold I approach the eternal throne And claim a crown through Christ my own Bold I approach the eternal throne And claim a crown through Christ my own The Lord be with you And also with you Please stay standing as the Boy Scouts come in And claim a crown through Christ my own

And claim a crown through Christ my own I am my honor I will do my best To do my duty God in my country Who obey the Scout laws To all hold the deep blood at all times I keep myself distinctly strong Mentally awake and morally straight Scouts trustworthy Loyal, helpable, friendly, herbeous, kind Obeid, cheerful, clear, clean, and reverend.

Good morning, everyone.

Good morning. Thank you to the Boy Scouts. They're awesome. We have clipboards going around for Shrove Tuesday.

[6 : 5 8] Thank you, Nancy. There's a Shrove Tuesday dinner coming up, and all the proceeds from this will go towards putting on our family Easter celebration.

Also, quickly, catch the spirit. Our discipleship training weekend for anyone who would like to join us is March 7th. If you have any questions, you can ask Pastor Lisa. She's not here today.

Myself or Linda Weatherall, we're all part of the team for that. And I would like to invite Jack up. Thankful moment. Well, there you are for the Boy Scouts.

Good morning. Good morning. Oh, that's cool. Hi, my name is Jack Platney. I've been active in scouting since I was a Tiger Cub in first grade, and I've also been attending church here for my entire life.

And I just want to take a moment of your time to express how thankful I am for Boy Scouts. It's played a huge role in my life, especially when I was a younger kid. It helped me make friends. Now that I'm growing up, it helped me get huge experiences that changed who I am today.

[8 : 10] So, for example, Seabayside Adventure Camp was really cool. Key West, Florida. I got to stay in an abandoned island for a day. That was really fun. More importantly, though, as I approach the end of my road, I feel that the adults in the troop don't get enough credit.

That's due to them either. The tagline for our troop is that we're boy-led, and that's very true. We, as scouts, we take a lot of leadership in what we do.

But I think due to this slogan, we forget how important that the adults are to our troop. And it doesn't have to be for the biggest of things, like, for example, driving us everywhere. But, for example, I'll never wake up in the morning again without the song Rise and Shine running through my head, thanks to Mr. Gualiano.

I think another person that deserves a lot of thanks is Mr. Kufchick, who organizes the community service, which is arguably my favorite part of scouts. And that ties into the church here because we do a lot of Easter egg hunts.

We do fish fries. It's a lot of fun and helped us give back to the community. And that's where my final thank you comes in, which is to the church itself, because if they didn't let us use their facilities every Thursday night, we'd have no way to meet.

[9 : 14] We'd have no way to give back to the community. So, overall, I'd like to thank everybody that's helped me in my scouting road, and thank you for Pendleton Center for housing the troop. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. You do for the community, for your leadership.

If anyone is or has been a Boy Scout, stand up. Thank you. Thank you. What else are we thankful for this morning?

Yes. My new baby granddaughter. Woo, new baby granddaughter. How exciting. Yes. My dad fell in love with him last week.

Oh. And he had a little refugee. But he snapped out most of it. And he doesn't want me to know. But I want to take a prayer.

And ironically, he kept a little green card. Praise God. Those little green cards always come at the most apropos time, don't they?

[10 : 27] You're going through something, and you get one of those cards in the mail saying, your church family is praying for you. It's so awesome. It's such a blessing. Anything else we're thankful for?

Yes. I'm thankful for heat. She's thankful for heat. She is. Yes, we're at our house. We're out of heat. Oh. I'm thankful for heat.

Praise God. Woo. Yes. I just want to say, Connie's recovery is just doing better every day. Keep praying for her.

And for me. Amen. Yes. Baby should be coming by Friday. Woo-hoo. Another baby by Friday.

How exciting. Anything else we're thankful for this morning? As we are thankful. Oh, Kelly. I just want to be thankful for Megan and for Sue, our instrumentalists that are coming to wire there.

[11 : 28] Wonderful to give up their talent. Amen. Love music. All right. As we are thankful for so many things this morning, let's return to the Lord our gifts, tithes, and offerings.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
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Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. When I am down and all my stress are heavy, When troubles come and my heart burn in me, And I am still and wait here in the silence, Until you come and sit a while with me.

[13 : 05] You raise me up so I can stand on mountains, You raise me up to walk on stormy seas, I am strong when I am on your shoulders, You raise me up to more than I can be.

There is no life, no life without its hunger, Each mess that's right, it's all in love with me.

But when you come and I am filled with wonder, Sometimes I think I've lived eternity, You raise me up so I can stand on mountains, You raise me up to walk on stormy seas, I am strong when I am on your shoulders, You raise me up to more than I can be.

You raise me up to more than I can be. You raise me up so I can stand on mountains, You raise me up to walk on stormy seas, You raise me up to walk on stormy seas, You raise me up to walk on stormy seas, You raise me up to more than I can be.

You raise me higher Thank you.

[16 : 05] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. you are mighty. You are sovereign. You're with us. We come to you this morning with so many things on our hearts, people in need of healing, people who are mourning and grieving.

We lift them all up to you, Heavenly Father. Where healing is needed, whether physical, emotional, spiritual, Lord, reach out your mighty hand.

[17 : 39] Bring that healing. We pray for all those suffering through this awful flu season, whether it's the coronavirus or the flu that's going around, Lord.

Reach out your mighty hand again. Help us, the officials, the doctors, to get this under control.

Give them the wisdom, the minds, to help take care of this. And, Lord, we lift up all those who are grieving or mourning, whether it's a recent loss or a distant loss.

Let those grieving feel your loving arms around them. Let them know. Help them feel your presence with them, that no matter what they're going through, you're there.

You're with them. And, Lord, hear our hearts as we lift up in silent prayer the things that we haven't mentioned this morning. Amen. Amen. Lord, we pray for our leaders.

[19 : 03] We lift up our church. Be with us, Lord. Guide this country, guide this church, the local church, the church global, to where you want us and need us to be.

We pray that you fill each of us with your light so that as we go out into this world, this dark world, we can be your light. let us shine for you.

And, Lord, this morning we ask a special blessing upon Pastor Sherry as she brings the message that you've laid on her heart for us. Open each of our hearts, fill each of us with your spirit so that we hear just what we need to hear this morning so we can take that out and use it to be your light.

We ask all this in the precious name of Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen. And now let's hear from the word of the Lord.

Amen. Good morning.

[20 : 49] Today's scripture reading is from Philemon, chapter 1, verses 8 through 17. Therefore, although in Christ, I could be bold and order you to do what you ought to do, yet I prefer to appeal to you on the basis of love.

It is as none other than Paul, an old man and now also a prisoner of Christ Jesus, that I appeal to you for my son, Onesimus, who became my son while I was in chains.

Formerly he was useless to you, but now he has become useful to both you and to me. I am sending him, who is my very heart, back to you. I would have liked to keep him with me so that he could take over your place in helping me while I am in chains for the gospel.

But I did not want to do anything without your consent so that any favor you do would not seem forced but would be involuntary. Perhaps the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever, no longer as a slave, but better than a slave, as a dear brother.

He is very dear to me, but even dearer to you, both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord. So if you consider me a partner, welcome him as you would welcome me. This is the word of the Lord.

[22 : 04] Thanks be to God. Good morning, everyone. Good morning. I hope it's a good morning. I pray it's a good morning.

You know, I don't know about all of you, but I've been experiencing lately that there's a lot of people who would say, what's good about it? What's good about it?

It's like in the air lately. You know, you run into it at the grocery store or wherever. It's like, there's just frustration and negativity and just all over the place.

I was looking on Facebook and people are saying, it's got to be a full moon. People are just acting out in ways that are just not okay. And everybody just seems agitated, agitated.

And I even have experienced this within myself a few times. I'm like, oh, what's going on? And in the meantime, I'm also saying, oh, Calgon, take me away. Oh, do you ever feel like that?

[22 : 58] Where you just get to a point where you just want to run away. You just want to escape. It's like, I just need to just tune out, go away. You know, for my kids, they know the term horizontal because that's the way I tune out.

It's like, mom's going horizontal now. I'm going to binge watch some Netflix. I'm going to play some Spider Solitaire. I'm just going to, boop. I'm escaping in my own way. I'm running away in my own way.

The other day, I was calling some people who had been missing from church just to make sure that they were okay. You know, just checking in on folks. And for some, you know, they're really going through some hard things. And I talked with them and I prayed with them.

And for others, they're like, yeah, we're okay. We're in Florida. And I was like, and you didn't take me with you? What? They're in Florida.

They're great. Oh, I mean, sometimes things in life just get so messy and awful. And you just, whatever's going on, it's like it feeds on each other, the negativity.

[23 : 56] And we just want to run away. Situations happen. Circumstances happen. And this story is about a man named Onesimus. And tradition has it that he ran away.

You see, he was a slave. A slave in Philemon's house. And the early church writers wrote that he ran away. And we learned that he was actually born a slave.

And he was named Onesimus. And that name would have been given to him by his slave master, Philemon. And Onesimus means something. It means useful.

Useful. I just felt, when I learned that, I just felt that was so demeaning, so degrading. Imagine this small baby born into slavery and giving him the name, the label, useful.

As in they're a utilitarian person for their benefit. Can you imagine starting off your life that way? Already bound before you even get started.

[25 : 04] Already labeled before you get started. And I can imagine his entire life, he was spent having this label on him where he would be judged by that. Oh yeah, you're named useful.

Are you living up to that? You're not useful now. What, can you imagine how that label made him feel his entire life?

His whole life judged by a label. And whether or not he was living into that name, useful, useless, whatever. Sticks and stones may break our bones, but names will never hurt us.

And I disagree. I disagree. I believe names do hurt us. I believe that what we say to and about each other does harm.

It does harm. In fact, sometimes it harms even more than anything we could do to each other physically. And we are doing this in society like crazy. The name calling is insane.

[26 : 02] What are we doing? It doesn't matter which political party we're in. The name calling, the labeling, the division is happening. And it is not okay. It is definitely not Christian.

It is not okay. But it's not even happening just in society, in the politics. It's happening everywhere. I mean, we hear about it, you know, when we talk to kids and on the playground, you know, and they call me such and such.

But it happens in workplaces. It happens in families. We talk to kids and they say, well, my parents call me this.

My sister calls me this. My brother calls me this. I've been told I'm this. And the names we call people, the labels we place on people do cause harm.

I've seen it. I've experienced it. I mean, most of us have experienced it. Most of us can recall and say, I remember when they used to call me whatever.

[27 : 04] I remember when they used to say this about me. I remember when. And we do this to people sometimes.

And we say, oh, we're just teasing. We're just teasing. It's no big deal. It's not. Just no big deal. If you're teasing at the expense of someone else, it is a big deal.

We don't tease someone by putting them down. We as Christians are called to lift people up. I'm sorry for getting so heavy so early. But it's an important message.

It really is. You know, people who have these labels placed on them and these names placed upon them, they begin to live into that. They begin to live into that lie.

They begin to live into that label. You know, you start saying to your kid, well, you're not very smart. Or you're the black sheep of the family. Or anything like that. You're going to find they're going to start living into that sort of thing.

[28 : 04] So sometimes the messages inform our behavior in the moment. And sometimes, you know, you can hold on to that and it can inform your behavior all the way into adulthood, all the way later.

Instead, we as Christians are called to be giving positive messages. Uplifting, encouraging, supportive. You know, today is Boy Scout Sunday.

And Boy Scouts, awesome job. Honestly, the Boy Scout community, they got together and they said, what kind of positive message can we say about our boys? How do we want them to feel?

And you know what they said? We want them to feel this way. They are. You boys are. You are trustworthy. You are loyal. You are helpful. You are friendly. You are courteous. You are kind. You are obedient. You are cheerful. You are thrifty. You are brave. You are clean. And you are reverent. Those are the messages that we want to give people.

[29 : 02] Those are the good things that we want to say to and about other people. Those are the things that we want to be having out there in the world, which will take away a lot of this negative.

Ugh! It's out there. It's a positive thing that we give to people. But not everyone experiences positive encouragement for support into growing into something beautiful, something wonderful, the thing that God has called us all to be.

Onesimus is not in a positive place right from the beginning. Paul acknowledges this. He said, formally, he was useless to you.

He used to be useless. Well, how would he know that? Two things come to mind. Either Philemon told him that, which may be horrible, actually telling somebody that this person is useless, or Onesimus himself said, I am useless.

Everyone says, I'm useless. Either way, it's just as horrendous. How did Paul come to that conclusion? He states it straight out there.

[30 : 15] This person believes that. So now, not only has he been living into useless, living into, I'm a slave.

I have no freedom. But now, he's a thief. Paul, in the next verse on, says, you know, if there's been any wrong that's been happened, or he owes you anything, charge it to me.

Because most people believe that on the way out, when Philemon was, or I'm sorry, when Onesimus was taking off, that he helped himself do some things for the journey.

He did some damage. He did some things wrong. So now he's useless. He's a slave. He's a thief. He's a fugitive. He's a fugitive. So we ask ourselves, well, why did Onesimus run away?

I mean, was he searching for Paul, seeking help in the situation, knowing that Paul was a friend of Philemon? Or had Philemon or someone in his household been abusing him?

[31 : 21] I don't know. The fact that he carries around the title of useless is abusive enough, in my opinion. I mean, this was more than running away from frustration.

This is more than just needing a Calgon moment. This is a huge penalty for running away. So it must have been something pretty bad. And the troubling part is that Philemon, the owner, was a Christian.

A Christian. He was a friend of Paul, who got converted by Paul. He was a Christian, and he was even the leader of the church in his house.

So he was the leader. And he had slaves. Now, at that time, slaves were the norm. It was the cultural norm.

It was an economic thing. And so we have to be careful when we're looking back on it to not put our own perception on it. Because, obviously, slavery is bad, and it's always been bad, right?

[32 : 32] But I don't know if you've watched some of these movies and shows from even just a couple decades ago, and we look at it and say, good grief. Why did we ever think that was okay? You know, we're growing.

We're changing. We're expanding. We're transforming as a culture, hopefully, and learning more and more about the way people should be treated. And at that time, slavery itself was an economic thing.

But my concern is for the fact that he may have been mistreated in some way, that his circumstance fed to him who he was.

And Paul addresses this. Paul addresses this with stating about God's love. Because Paul's way of handling this is to say, okay, so Philemon, you know, I could command you, just be nice.

You never try that with a kid, just go be nice. It's like, he said, I could just go do that. But let me just tell you. Let me just tell you. God loves you.

[33 : 39] So I'm going to talk to you out of God's love and have a revelation of the Holy Spirit that provides sanctification and awareness of what needs to change the movement of the Holy Spirit that opens hearts to the truth, transforms hearts, and transforms relationships and shifts in circumstances, one heart at a time, changing the world, teaching them a new song of life.

So we have this word search going on. And we're going to put it up here, though, but don't get too distracted. But the word search is just a bundle of letters for whenever it comes up.

When it comes up, it's a bundle of letters. And the thing is, that's the way the world works a lot of times. It looks that way. It's like there's a whole just bunch of, it just seems like a mess. I can't make any sense of it.

What's going on? And God says, I want you to get some 20-20 vision because in the midst of all of this, there's something pretty amazing going on. I'm working.

I'm working now. And sometimes there's difficulty. Sometimes it's messy, but I am here and I am working. So Onesimus connected with Paul when Paul was in prison and Onesimus accepted Christ and he became transformed.

[34 : 57] And then he became so transformed, he actually began helping Paul in spreading the gospel. But then you say, now what? Now what? The law says that he had to be sent back.

He had to be sent back. In spite of Paul wanting him to stay, in spite of him being a changed man, he had to go back. Can you imagine how nervous he must have been about returning?

I mean, what would happen? What would be the penalty? The penalty, if you can remember, Jesus died on the cross between two thieves. Going back meant that he was under whatever penalty the slave owner wanted for him.

He could be branded. He could be tortured. He could be crucified. He had no idea what he was walking into. And so he's going back. You know, what are we going to get? Are we going to get penalty? Or are we going to get grace?

Grace. We need a whole lot more grace in our world. We need a whole lot more grace in our lives. We need a whole lot more grace with each other. You know, grace is something we're looking for.

[36 : 11] You know, grace is looking for... I was driving down the road the other day, and I was literally praying. Now, don't worry. I pray with my eyes open when I'm driving. Okay? But I'm driving down the road, and I'm praying, and something happened.

I'm praying about, Lord, I need some sort of illustration about how someone's going to need grace. And, you see, the night before, I had worked really late, and the next morning...

And I didn't stop at the gas station like I was supposed to because it was really late. And so the next morning, I'm up, and I'm going down, and instead of turning on Mapleton like I should have, I went straight downtown line, and as soon as I went past the stop sign as I'm going, all of a sudden, this big light comes on, and the ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, you're out of gas comes on.

And I've got the whole thing in my brain going with my father's words of, you should never let your gas station go that low because, you know, it's going, going, going, never... And so I'm beating myself up.

I have not had a speeding ticket in decades. Decades. In fact, it was... The last speeding ticket I got was so traumatic for me that Pastor Tom even mentioned it in one of his sermons a few months ago.

Pre-cell phone. I'm alone with two babies in back who are both screaming. And I was going faster than whatever it was because I didn't see a sign. And sure enough, I got stopped.

[38 : 30] And I said, I'm so sorry. You know, I just... Look, my dashboard. It was still at that time going ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding, ding. And I'm still going, I need gas. I need gas. And, um...

No, Grace. I'm looking at the ticket and it says... And you're going to have to go to court. To face the judge. Okay. So, a little prayer. Because I'm gonna have to do that, because I did something wrong, right?

All right. I did something wrong. Speeding is not okay. It was speeding. I'm going to have to go. I'm going to have to face a judge. And I might have to pay a penalty. And I'm going to hope for some grace.

The times when people went out of their way and offered grace. Times when you needed forgiveness when you didn't deserve it. Onesimus is now going back and he needs grace.

Beautiful. Paul becomes his advocate. I suspect if Paul wasn't in prison, he would have actually gone with him. But instead, Paul writes this letter.

[40 : 30] Can anybody find that word up there? Well, first we're going to go to the first one. Grace. Anybody find that one? Yeah. Now we're going to do advocate. Anybody see advocate up there? Does anybody see it?

Where? Okay. Somebody said they saw it. Brought up advocate. Woo. There it is. Advocate. So to advocate means to be there for somebody. And do something on their behalf.

And so Paul was his advocate. And you know, this is a calling for all of us. We need to become advocates for one another. You know, when things happen, there is such a tendency to want to jump into the drama.

Jump into the gossip. Jump into the negativity. You know, instead, let's start a new practice. Somebody comes to you with something negative about somebody else and say instead, You know, I know them.

And I know their character. And I'm certain there must have been a misunderstanding. And if not, I'm sure they would not intentionally do you harm. But you know, people do make mistakes.

[41 : 35] So I think you should just go talk to them directly and make peace. Wow. What a world change that would be.

Can you imagine? So if somebody comes to you and says, And they did. Let's tear them down. Tear them down. Tear them down. And instead, you stop it right there. Don't let them get that far.

And say, Let me tell you, I know this person. I know them. They would not have done this intentionally. There must be a misunderstanding.

Go talk to them. Make peace with your brother. Make peace with your sister. Be graceful with one another. If we had more grace and love and the seeking of peace with one another, this world would be a much better place.

We want to lift people up, not push people down. And if someone does something wrong, we want to go before. We want to go before and support and encourage and be there for people.

[42 : 36] In the smoothing out of the peace. We're supposed to be peacemakers, right? And so we have reminders of the fact that we all have sinned, that we all need grace, that we all seek forgiveness.

And so we become an advocate for other people, just like Jesus is an advocate for us. Because we are all sinners. We have all sinned.

We all need to have an advocate. And so I'd like to have you pray a prayer of confession along with me. Lord, I have sinned. I've not always done the right thing.

I've not always been encouraging. I've not always been supportive. I've not always been supportive. I've not always been supportive. I've not always been loving. I've not always shown grace.

I've not always shown grace. Forgive me, Lord. Forgive me, Lord. With Jesus as my advocate. With Jesus as my advocate. Fill me with your grace. Fill me with your grace.

[43 : 39] Amen. So hear the good news. Christ died for us, even while we were sinners. And this proves God's love for you and for me. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Glory to God. Amen. You see, this sermon series is about Vision 2020. To see as God sees. And God sees us as redeemed. God sees us as grace-filled.

And in the name of Jesus Christ, we give glory to God. Because of the identity we receive in that. Grace gives a new vision.

A new vision. And Paul's letter was written to Philemon and to the entire church there. And it was saying, I want you to re-identify. And look at things this way instead.

This is not a command. But this is a reminder of the spirit. Of God's love. Vision 2020. God is at work. Can you see God?

[44 : 45] Yeah. Here's what Paul said. See if you can see God in this, Philemon. I know he ran away. I know he did wrong. I know he's a thief. I know he's a slave. I know this. I know this.

But perhaps, perhaps, the reason he was separated from you for a little while was that you might have him back forever. He said, No longer as a slave, but better than a slave.

As a dear brother. He is very dear to me, but even dearer to you. Both as a fellow man and as a brother in the Lord.

As a brother in the Lord. And what did he ask him to do? He asked him to welcome him. He said, welcome him as you would welcome me.

Does anybody find the word welcome anywhere there? You found it? There you go. Welcome. Welcome. Welcome. That means open arms, outstretched, accepting, inviting.

[45 : 44] Welcome. You are welcome. He's saying, welcome this person that you used to call useless. Welcome this person as one of your own. As a beloved brother in Christ.

Welcome him. And so what happened? What happened was transformation. Where's that one? You got it?

Transformation straight across the top. Transformation. Transformation all the way around. Transformation all over the place. So we have in Colossians 4, 9, it says, Onesimus, our faithful and dear brother, who is one of you.

So was he accepted? I believe so. I believe so. Because that would have been written to that same church that Philemon was the leader of. Dear brother, faithful, one of you.

And Paul writes, formally, he was useless to you. But now he has become useful. He is transformed, living into who God made him to be.

[46 : 53] Useful both to you and to me. Not for our individual gain, but for the kingdom. No longer bound by the labels. No longer a victim, but redeemed child of God.

So it doesn't matter. This message is that it doesn't matter what you've been through. It doesn't matter your circumstances. It doesn't matter the labels that anybody puts on you. It doesn't matter how you've been divided.

It doesn't matter if you are Gentile or Jew, slave or free, woman or man, boss or employee, young or old. It doesn't matter your ethnicity, your education, your wealth.

It does not matter. Through Christ and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, we can cast off all of that. All of that. All of that. All of that.

Because our worth, our value comes not from the outward label that other people have put on us or that sometimes we've even put on ourselves. It does not come from that, but from the love of God.

[47 : 52] Who we are in Christ. Our Christian identity. Beloved child of God. And so we need to live into that. Live into who God says we are.

So that we too can become useful in the kingdom. Filled with God's grace through the blood of Jesus Christ. Useful no longer for anyone else's purpose or gain, but useful for God's glory.

And so what happened? Onesimus succeeded Timothy as something. And there's another word up there. You see it? Bishop. You think he was transformed?

Yeah. Holy cow. He not only went back and was accepted as a brother in Christ. Completely welcomed into the community of faith as a faithful person.

But he went on to work with Paul. And he went on and succeeded Timothy in Ephesus as the bishop. Wow. Talk about living into a major calling.

- [48 : 54] Talk about living into transformational grace. My goodness. And there are some Christian traditions. They even have Onesimus Day. St. Onesimus.
- Which is next Saturday. So go have a feast for Onesimus. That's what they do. It's a feast just to celebrate this because it's pretty amazing. Onesimus was accepted.
- He accepted Christ. And he began a new life. Living into a new purpose. Living a new song. Philemon was also transformed. A Christ follower. Loved.
- And he shared love. And he accepted Onesimus with grace. And the church that also heard this letter. That now included not only Philemon but Onesimus.
- Transformed relationship. Open to grace and acceptance of others. No matter who they are or what they had done. They were welcomed and loved as a child of God. And so we celebrate because we too are welcomed.
- [49 : 54] Accepted by grace. And loved as a child of God through Jesus Christ. And we sing a new song. Putting off the old labels. The old life. We are free.
- And living into the love that God gives by grace. Because we are who God says we are. We are who God says we are.
- Loved. Accepted. Free. Victorious. Powerful. We are who God says we are. Amen. Let us stand and sing and rejoice in that.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen.
- [51 : 06] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Indeed, I'm a child of God, yes I am.
- Free at last, he has ransomed me, his race runs deep. While I was a slave to sin, Jesus died for me.
- Yes, he died for me, who the Son sets free. Oh, it's free indeed.
- I'm a child of God, yes I am. In my last house, there's a place for thee.
- I'm a child of God, yes I am. I am chosen, not forsaken.
- [52 : 15] I am who you say I am. You are for me, not against me. I am who you say I am.
- I am chosen, not forsaken. I am who you say I am. You are for me, not against me.
- I am who you say I am. I am who you say I am. I am who you say I am. The Son sets free.
- Oh, it's free indeed. I am a child of God, yes I am.
- In my Father's house, there's a place for me. I am a child of God, yes I am.
- [53 : 15] In my Father's house, there's a place for me. I'm a child of God. Yes, I am.
- You are loved. You are accepted. You are welcomed. You are victorious. You are powerful. You are a child of God.
- And it's time that we lift one another up in that promise. We live into that promise. We are who God says we are. I am who you say I am. I am who you say I am.
- God is faithful. God is faithful to give grace always, forever. God is faithful with an outstretched hand and a mighty heart for the life that's reborn in Him.
- Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King. His love endures forever.
- [54 : 46] For He is good. He is above all things. His love endures forever. Sing praise, sing praise With a mighty hand and an outstretched star His love endures forever For the life that's been reborn His love endures forever Sing praise, sing praise Sing praise, sing praise Forever God is faithful Forever God is strong Forever God is with us Forever, forever From the rising to the setting sun

His love endures forever For the grace of God He will carry on His love endures forever
Sing praise, sing praise Sing praise, sing praise Forever God is faithful Forever God is
strong Forever God is with us Forever Forever Forever Forever God is faithful Forever
God is strong Forever God is with us Forever Forever Forever And that is something to
celebrate, amen?

Amen. And so one of the wonderful things about the United Methodist Church is that the
table of grace is open to everyone.

Welcomed, accepted, accepted, invited, you want to seek Jesus, you are welcome to be
with us here and to celebrate the table of grace.

And so with all of us together as the body of Christ preparing to receive that grace, let's
greet one another with the peace of the Holy Spirit. All right, nice job.

[57 : 28] I like it. I like it. That was good. What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What?
What? What? What? What?

What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What?

What? What? What? What? What? What?

What? What? What? What? What? What? What? What? How is it? What? What? One bread,
one body, one Lord of all One cup of blessing which we bless And we, though many,
throughout the earth We are one body in this one Lord Gentile or Jew, servant or free

Woman or man no more One bread, one body, one Lord of all One cup of blessing which
we bless And we, though many, throughout the earth We are one body in this one Lord
Amen The Lord be with you Lift up your hearts Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

[60 : 21] It is right and a good and joyful thing Always and everywhere to give thanks to you Father
Almighty, creator of heaven and earth You formed us in your image And breathed into us
the breath of life When we turned away and our love failed Your love remained steadfast
You delivered us from captivity Made covenant to be our sovereign God And spoke to us
through your prophets And so with your people on earth And all the company of heaven
We praise your name and join their unending hymn Holy, holy, holy Lord God of power
and might Heaven and earth are full of your glory Hosanna in the highest Blessed is he
who comes in the name of the Lord Hosanna in the highest Holy are you and blessed is
your Son, Jesus Christ Your Spirit anointed him To preach good news to the poor To
proclaim release to the captives And recovering of sight to the blind

To set at liberty those who are oppressed And to announce that the time had come When
you would save your people He healed the sick Fed the hungry And ate with sinners By
the baptism of his suffering, death And resurrection You gave birth to your church
Delivered us from slavery to sin and death And made with us a new covenant By water
and the Spirit On the night in which he gave himself up for us He took the bread He gave
thanks to you He broke the bread And gave it to his disciples And said, take and eat This
is my body Which is given for you Do this In remembrance of me And when the supper
was over He took the cup He gave thanks to you He said, this is my blood The blood of
the new covenant

Poured out for you Poured out for many For the forgiveness of sins Drink of this Often
Remembering me And so In remembrance of these Your mighty acts in Jesus Christ We
offer ourselves In praise and thanksgiving As a holy and living sacrifice In union with
Christ's offering for us As we proclaim the mystery of faith Christ has died Christ is risen
Christ will come again Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here And on these gifts of
bread and wine And on these gifts of bread and wine Make them be for us The body and
blood of Christ That we may be for the world The body of Christ Redeemed by his blood
By your spirit Make us one with Christ One with each other And one in ministry to all the
world

Until Christ comes in final victory And we feast at his heavenly banquet Through your son Jesus Christ With the Holy Spirit In your holy church All honor and glory is yours Almighty Father Now and forever Amen And now let us pray the prayer That Jesus taught us Saying Our Father Who art in heaven Hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come Thy will be done On earth as it is in heaven Give us this day Our daily bread And forgive us our trespasses As we forgive those Who trespass against us And lead us not into temptation But deliver us from evil For thine is the kingdom And the power And the glory Forever and ever Amen Will those who are serving Please come forward Amen Amen Amen Amen

Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen

[65 : 39] Amen Amen Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[68 : 39] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[71 : 09] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[74 : 13] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.