

August 23, 2015

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Date: 23 August 2015

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] Hey, good morning everybody. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. We're going to test your voices because you're going to be the instrument and the voices this morning.

So if any of the kids want to join us, they can come on up. Ready? This is the day 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 Very good.

Welcome to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. I'm Scott Dabb. If you are new to our church, please pick up a gift at the connection site in the back of the sanctuary after worship. And please fill out your friendship card to get on the mailing list, sign up for activities, and for prayers and concerns or notes for the staff.

Enjoy the service. A couple quick notes. First of all, the office will be closed Monday because they're cleaning the floors, waxing them. So if you're wondering why there's things in strange places, that's why. Also, if you like to order the DVDs and CDs of the service for one reason or another, they won't be available for a couple of weeks.

So just so that you know that, I think that they're still being recorded. They just won't be available because the fellow who prints them off for us is going to be a god for a couple of weeks. So they'll be available back in September again.

[1 : 45] Shall we turn our hearts to the Lord in prayer? Dear God in heaven, we do thank you for the many blessings you give to us. And we pray that you just descend into this place to touch us, to give us your strength, your peace, your wonder, and your joy as we worship you, Lord.

For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. This morning I'm going to invite you to stand if you're able as we're going to sing together Amazing Grace. Amazing Grace.

How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me I once was lost But now I'm found Was blind But now I see T'was grace That thought My heart To fear And grace My fears Relieved

How precious Did That grace The grace Appeal The hour At first Believed Through many Dangerous Toils And Scares grace ■ I have Already Than Still Grace will lead me home

When we've been there Ten thousand years Bright shining as the sun We've no less days To sing God's praise Than when we first begun The Lord be with you.

[5 : 29] Take a moment, if you will, and greet your neighbor with the peace of the Spirit. I'd like to invite the children to come on down if they'd like to come up and join me.

I think there's one key thing. Good morning, guys.

Any other kids want to come up? They're welcome to join us. I brought some toys. You guys have toys? They have some things like this or some other kind of toys and things? I don't have a lot of toys, but I have some toys, right?

You've got over a thousand toys? Maybe over a million? You've got a lot of toys at your house? Toyland. You guys got lots of toys.

You know, the interesting thing is that I'm sure you believe that your toys belong to you. Don't you? You know, like even if you have a brother or sister or something, you think, well, these are my toys and these are their toys.

[6 : 47] Or if a friend comes over, you say, well, these are my toys. But you know what? They're not your toys. Did you know that? They don't belong to you. You know who they belong to?

No. They don't belong. Well, you know, everything belongs to Jesus and God. It's a good answer for everything. But you know what? The answer is they belong to your parents. Everything you own belongs to your parents.

Did you know that? They can come and take everything you own and they can sell it if they want to. Did you know that? Yeah. I know that really kind of bugs you. But until you're about 18, everything you own belongs to them.

And I know that's sort of scary, actually, when you think about it, isn't it? Yeah. So even if they give it to you and say, this is yours, it still belongs to them. Wow. Wow. That's like blows your mind, doesn't it?

Yeah. Probably blows their minds, too. Maybe they didn't know that. Yeah, that's what the law says. Because that's how it works. You know, because they give you everything. They give you food. They give you clothes. They give you a place to live. They take care of you.

[7 : 47] So they own everything. That's kind of how it is. And everything in life belongs to, you guys said it earlier, who? God, right? Yeah. Because God made everything. So we need to remember that everything we're using, everything we have, everything in life is borrowed.

So when we borrow something from somebody, what we should say to them is, thank you, right? And we need to thank our parents. We need to thank God, too. All right? What are you guys thankful for this morning?

You want to share something? Raise your hand. My cat. My mom and dad. My birthday. My mom and dad.

Anybody else? Okay. Lord, we do thank you for the many blessings you give to us. Help us to always be thankful for all that you do and all that you give. We're in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Okay, you guys can go out to church school if you'd like to. Good morning.

[8 : 49] It is good to be back. I think it's been three Sundays that I've not been here, and I walked in this morning and I said, wait a minute, how do you do worship here? What do I need to get?

Yeah. But it's been a wonderful time away at Niagara Falls with taking care of things for Pastor Jean while she was away and then being away last week. What a blessing to have times of just being able to take a breath and refreshing, and that is what our worship service is, too.

Amen? Our worship is a time to gather together and just take a breath and remember who God is and that God is the one who's in control in our lives. And if we just surrender and hand everything over to God, and as an act of worship, according to the leading of the Holy Spirit, we're going to bring our gifts, tithes, and offerings before the Lord now, offering up of ourselves to Him.

Amen. It's not easy Trying to understand How the world can be so cold Stealing the souls of a man Cloudy skies Rain down Unbroken dreams Get to do Fear and doubt Sometimes it's hard But you've got to believe There's a better place Where our Father waits

And every tear He'll hide away The darkness will be gone The weak shall be strong Hold on to the rain There will come a day Never come Wars are raging Lives are shattered Innocence is lost And hope Are scattered The old are forgotten The children are forsaken In this world we're living in Is there anything Sacred Sacred There will come a day Let them fall away

[11 : 43] And every tear He'll hide away The darkness will be gone The weak shall be strong Hold on to your pain There will come a day There will come a day There will come a day There will come a day There will come a day The sun will reach out Down those broken streets And the voices of earth And the angels will sing Every knee will bow

Sin will have no trace In the glory Of His amazing grace Every knee will bow Sin will have no trace In the glory Of His amazing grace There will come a day There will come a day There will come a day There will come a day Oh, there will come a day There is coming a day Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Amen. Please be seated. Thank you.

[15 : 10] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. very special and wonderful things. And for those, for the ability to do those things, for the opportunities and resources to do those things, we do give thanks and praise to God.

And there are also those concerns that are on our hearts. I know there are many who are in our congregation who are in the process of going through healings of many kinds, and we want to keep them all lifted up.

There are those who have had losses in their lives of various kinds, and we want to lift those folks up as well. So let's take all of our joys and all of our concerns to the Lord in prayer.

Our gracious Heavenly Father, how awesome it is to come into your presence and said, just know and feel and sense that you are with us, and that you want us to bring our concerns before you.

[16 : 43] You are the God who rejoices with us when we rejoice, and who cries with us when we cry, who feels all of our pain and all of our suffering and desires to be with us in the midst of it and deliver us out.

Lord God, we lift up before you now all of the people who are in need of healing of all kinds. touch them, Lord, that they would be whole from the top of their heads to the soles of their feet and their spirits, their souls and their bodies.

Be with those, Lord, who are grieving losses, the loss of loved ones, loss of relationships, loss of employment, Lord.

There are all kinds of losses we endure. And pray that by your Holy Spirit, each one would be comforted, that each would be drawn into your presence, Lord.

Father, we give you thanks and praise for the opportunity to hear from you as well as just being in your presence and being with you, to hear and to grow, to be nurtured in our faith.

[18 : 15] We pray right now, Lord, for the word that we're about to hear, that it would wash over us and strengthen us. We pray, Lord God, that you would teach us to pray, to go deeper with you, to understand even more of you than we know now, to understand more deeply how much you love us and how that love needs to go out through us to all the world.

And pray for Christians everywhere, Lord, that they would be touched by your love and that love would emanate out of them too. that whoever sees anyone who is called by the name Christian would see Jesus and know your great love and grace and mercy.

Be with us, Lord, as we're here worshipping. Be with us as we go out into the world and touch others for you. And we pray that you would bless Pastor Tom this morning with the message that you've given to him for us.

Let it be a blessing to him and a blessing to us. May all of our worship be a blessing to you that we carry with us and pour out into the lives of others throughout this whole week.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen. Good morning.

[20 : 11] Good morning. Today's scripture reading is from Matthew chapter 21 verses 33 through 41. Listen to another parable.

There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey.

When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit. The tenants seized the servants. They beat one, killed another, and stoned a third.

Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way. Last of all, he sent his son to them. They will respect my son, he said.

But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, This is the heir. Come. Let's kill him and take his inheritance. So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.

[21 : 09] Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants? He will bring those wretches to a wretched end, they replied, and he will rent the vineyard to other tenants who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Pastor Lisa was talking about vacations.

We are in the midst of vacation season, and so Sue, our organist, is still on vacation, and Katie's gone off to school. So you get me playing the guitar a little bit more this morning.

Somebody wants to volunteer right now. How many of you know who Friedrich Drumpf was? Anybody here know who Friedrich Drumpf was? Friedrich Drumpf came to this country back in the 1800s when he was 16 years old from Germany.

He worked as a barber for six years in New York City until he heard about the Klondike Gold Rush, and so he went out there and he established a restaurant, which they say was probably a brothel on the side, but basically built this fancy restaurant where he made quite a bit of money off of the gold rush.

[22 : 25] The truth is, a lot of the miners weren't the ones that made the big money. It was the merchants who were selling to the miners. And he built all this great empire out there until he realized that the gold rush was coming to an end and he sold out just before it collapsed.

He took his money, went to Germany, found himself a wife, moved to New York City and settled in to live there for the rest of his life. He died at the age of 49, a fairly wealthy man, especially in that day and age, and his son Fred took over his business and started building houses around New York City.

He was 15 years old when his father died. He worked hard. He built houses for average people, but in the process, he ended up dying with an estate of \$250 million.

Quite an accomplishment. None of you know who Friedrich Trump was or Fred Trump. Well, that's probably because they changed the name and you would know his grandson, Donald Trump, who...

Well, they... Drumpf Trump, you know, you figure it out, right? See, the thing is Donald has built upon the legacy he was left, but he was not left with a small legacy.

[23 : 39] It's not like Donald came into the world poor. He came in with the estate of his grandfather and an even greater estate from his father and built upon that. God has done the same thing for us.

He gives us everything we need to make our lives happen, but we think we've done it. God's actually done all the heavy lifting. All he wants us to do is take care of what he gave us and built upon it.

The story here is of a man that Jesus is talking about in the parable who built a vineyard, grew the vines, and it takes a lot of years to get the vines to produce, built a house, built the walls around it to keep the animals from hitting, got it just to the right point that all it needed was people to take care of it, and it says he rented it out to some farmers and then went to work somewhere else.

And of course, in this passage, God is the one who built it and gave it to the tenants. The people are supposed to take care of it, all that he's built up. Because you see, everything in the world is God's.

Sometimes we somehow forget that. God made the heavens, God made the earth, God made everything we have. Psalm 24 says it this way. The earth is the Lord's and everything in it, the world and all who live in it.

[25 : 07] He founded it upon the seas, established it upon the water. Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart does not lift up his soul to an idol or swear by what is false.

Those who follow God, those who think that God is the one who's in charge, not those who think it's something else or someone else that makes it happen. Do we live as if we really trust in God more than anything else?

In this sermon series, we're actually doing a series to prepare us for the fall where we're going to talk about God's miracle power, how God can make our lives much better. But to do it, we need to prepare our lives in such a way that we're living into it.

You may not be Donald Trump. I don't think any of you inherited \$250 million. You can let me know if you have. It's a good amount of money. But we are the most blessed people that have ever lived on the face of the earth.

Kings and queens of 200 or 300 years ago would marvel at how we live. In fact, people just a few years ago that were wealthy don't have half the comforts we assume are normal.

[26 : 23] We live a blessed life. We didn't build it. We inherited it. It's a gift from previous generations and it's a gift from God and God gives it to us to take care of.

And yet somehow, we've decided it's about us, what we can consume, what we can accomplish, what we can accumulate. I don't know when life turned into what we can get rather than what we can give.

For generations, the world saw life as being something we did to give to the people that came after us and now we have so many people that are living as if it's all about who they are.

See, what we give demonstrates who we are and what we give to God demonstrates what we think about Him. It says that He went away and that He sent servants to collect, anybody remember what?

The rent. The rent. Simply the rent. That's all. All He wanted was the rent. What's the rent? Well, it's a vineyard.

[27 : 37] So it would be fruits of the vine, right? Fruits of the vineyard, a portion of the harvest. What's the rent between us and God? In Galatians, we talk about the fruit of the Spirit.

Maybe you can remember them by heart. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness. Oh, that was pretty good. Let's see if you check that. God gives us the fruits of the Spirit that we might give those out to all those around us.

That's one of the things that's the fruits. Another thing, the fruit is, obviously, it's seeds. Seeds planted to create more fruit, more vines. In our faith, it would be to create more people coming to Christ.

What do we do with our lives to bring others closer to Jesus in our family, in our friendships, in our relationships, at work, wherever it might be? Now, those are two of the rents.

The third thing God asked from us is He asked us to give back a little bit of what He gave to us. In Proverbs chapter 3, He says it this way, Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops, and your barns will be filled to overflowing, your vats will brim over with new wine.

[28 : 56] Sometimes we refer to, in the Bible, what they talk about is tithing, giving 10% of what we earn to God's use, whether it be at the church or helping people somewhere.

It's what we give to demonstrate that even our wealth, even our money isn't more important than God. That the most important thing in our lives truly is God.

It's our rent. Now, I know, when I was talking about the fruits of the Spirit, you were with me. That's fine. I'll do that stuff. Even when I was talking about sharing the faith with other people, you're kind of like, oh, maybe I could do that once in a while.

But when I started talking about money, some of you went, I don't like this sermon. I don't want to go here, Pastor. Don't talk to me about my money. You're just trying to get into my wallet.

I'm not trying to get into anything. I really am not. Give your money somewhere else that will make you feel happier about the sermon. We already took up the collection. All right?

[29 : 54] Our offering to God. I'm talking about our relationship with God. how do we demonstrate that we really trust and believe in God? What we give of what we treasure demonstrates what matters to us.

Jesus himself said, where your treasure is, your heart will be also. See, miracle living comes with a God-centered life, not a self-centered life.

And yet, we're living in a culture that's designed for us to be focused only on us. We don't even have a sense of focus so much on family anymore.

Family abandons family because there's something better for me. Because it's about me and what I want. We expect blessing when we live for wrath.

we expect blessing from God, but we live for God's wrath. Historically, the tenants in this story have been thought to be the Jewish people, the Jewish leaders, particularly, of the faith, who had been entrusted with God's word and God's message to bring faith and hope and possibilities to the people of the world and instead thought it was all about them and weren't willing to share it with the world.

[31 : 18] And so people have said that's really what the problem is. And when Jesus told the story, it says in verse 40 and 41, they knew he was talking about them.

They knew he was talking about them. They're afraid to do anything because of the people. And he says, what would you do?

What would you do if this were you? So let's work it out here. I watched a show the other day called First Time Flippers. I thought it was interesting.

These are people who believe they can make a lot of money by buying a beat up old house and fixing it up and selling it. They've got these grand ideas. They're going to buy the house for like \$50,000, put in \$30,000 and make \$80,000.

That's typically what it sounds like. Most of them don't have a clue what they're doing. They not only do things that are not very smart, they do things that are not very safe.

[32 : 16] They're not very smart. And they get themselves stuck. They get themselves into all kinds of problems and they end up not doing very well. But let's just assume you know what you're doing. And you put your life savings into fixing up some apartments.

And you make them perfect. I mean, safe, modern, efficient, the kind of place you would want to live because you know that other people are going to raise their families in these places. And you do the best to work out the numbers so that you can charge the lowest rent imaginable.

So these are beautiful, perfect apartments and you're renting them all out for \$800 a month. And you send over a guy as you're going off to start a new project to collect the rent and the people give him 20 bucks and say, you should be happy with that.

what would you do? What would you do? Would you keep them? Would you say, oh, well, they're nice people? Would you say, well, that's reasonable?

See, the problem is we're sowing to wrath and expecting blessings. We want to know why doesn't God bless us? Because we sow to wrath. Because we are living a life designed to get God angry at us expecting God to bless us.

[33 : 29] Not really, seriously. Does that make sense? See, the problem is people resent God. They resent his expectations. In this story, it says they figured that if they got rid of the servants, they could take over.

Take over the world. Take over from God. They could be God. We don't need God. What do we need God for? He's sort of out there anyways. We haven't seen him in a while.

He's been gone for some time now. We can do whatever we want to do. If we just get rid of the servants, we won't even have to listen to this stuff. If we could just quiet down the pastor or get him to say what we want, then we wouldn't even have to think about this at church.

Timothy talks about this, is what he says. A time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, have gathered around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

See, I know what you want me to say. You want me to say, do whatever you want, live the life you like, have fun, do anything that strikes your fancy, and God will bless you anyways. But that's a lie.

[34 : 39] That's not true. They didn't want to hear it. In fact, they got so angry, they decided that what they should do is they should shut Jesus up permanently.

This is what it says. A little further in this chapter we just read. When the chief priests and Pharisees heard Jesus' parables, they knew he was talking about them. They looked for a way to arrest him, but they were afraid of the crowd.

Because the people thought he was a prophet. He seemed to say something about God. We don't want to give God a share of anything for what he's given to us.

So we want it to end well. This story ends badly. I don't know if you noticed that. He sent the servants, and they beat up the first servant.

He sent another servant, and they killed him. So he says, I'll send my son. Surely they'll respect him. And of course, we're out in the audience going, don't send the son! Don't send the son! Right? You know, right? Is that what we're saying?

[35 : 39] When you heard that passage, you're like, don't send the son! We know what they'll do to him! And they did. And they killed him too.

And he says to the people right there in front of him, what do you expect to happen? Blessings? To pour out from this guy? He's going to come and throw you a party?

And have a great time with you? It ends badly. And yet these people think, they really think they're going to get blessed. Imagine if you had a vineyard and you did nothing to take care of it.

You didn't bother with it or anything else. After a few years, it would be useless. I had a vine like that growing in my backyard. It was a huge vine.

It went everywhere, all through the yard. It was in every tree, every bush, everywhere. It had a trunk. The trunk was literally this big around. They had to use a chainsaw to cut it. You know how many grapes it produced?

[36 : 39] Zero. At least I never found any. And yet somehow, we expect that if we do these kind of things with God's kingdom, he's going to bless us.

You know, God is the master vineyard. In John chapter 15, Jesus talks about the vine. He says, I'm the true vine. My father is the gardener.

He cuts off every branch of me that bears no fruit. He cuts it off. While every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes so there will be even more fruitful. You're already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.

Remain in me and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself. It must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. The problem is, we can be forgiven by God.

We can be blessed by God. But then if we turn ourselves away from God and we don't remain in him, we're no good. We will be cut off. Fascinating.

[37 : 41] Children who don't listen to their parents don't understand why they got punished. It's not fair. People who drive drunk can't understand why they got a DWI and their license taken away.

The guy who doesn't listen to his boss doesn't understand why he lost his job. And people who cheat on their spouses don't know why their marriage ended. Hello! If you live towards wrath, you will receive wrath, not blessings.

So far you don't like this sermon, do you? And the parable ends here. So I could sit down right now and I'd be ending where Jesus ended.

That's a good price. See, the truth is planting a vineyard is tough work. And it takes skill. And God is the master.

Master. Vineyard owner. I don't know what you call that. Vineyard owner. And he cuts off the branches that won't bear fruit, but he prunes the ones that do.

[38 : 49] Did you notice that? Everybody gets cut. Everybody gets cut. We're either cut off or we're cut to the heart and convicted.

It's a good thing. If not, we don't bear fruit. I found out a little bit about pruning vines. I watched the video. Watch this. Because what we do in the vineyard here at the beginning of the year has huge ramifications on the quality of the wine that we're making.

What I want to start off first with is really defining what the parts of the grapevine are going to be and what we've got. We've got the trunk and then we've got the cordon and there's really more of the arms and there's on this system there are two arms because it's a dual cordon trellis system.

Coming out of the cordon then are the spurs and then from the spurs we have the canes and that's where the grapes come off is on the canes each year.

And so what we're doing now is grapes only come off of second year wood we call it. So we have to prune back last year's wood so we can get new grapes on this right now.

[39 : 59] So what we're looking for off of each spur is to prune down to one cane and on each cane we prune to two buds. Each bud will then grow into a cane itself and each cane then has two clusters.

Alright so here's the spur and so from last year this is last year's wood or the year before last and then when we prune we wound up getting one cane coming off of here which was originally was a bud and then this one here.

So this year we want to go down to one cane we prune there and there's one bud at the base and one bud here and we prune here and then this bud will turn out to be a brand new cane for this year and one will come off here at the base and come on up and each cane will produce two clusters of grapes.

How many of you knew that only second year growth on a vine produced grapes? I didn't know that. Did you see how much they cut off? You know?

I mean most of the branches are like gone there's just a little stub left. Like seriously man? You like cut most of it away! Now some of you might say well why am I preaching this sermon now?

[41 : 16] I should be preaching it to those people that don't believe in God in the fall when there's more people here. Those people who aren't showing up. Because I'm not worried about them. I am worried about them.

But it's not the point of this sermon. Jesus wasn't talking to the people who didn't have God. He was talking to the people who thought they had God who believed in God but weren't going where they needed to go.

The people that were either going to be pruned or cut off. You're summer Christians. God bless you for being here on a warm beautiful August day. But this is the time for us to decide we're going to be the ones that remain when we're pruned.

Not the branch cut off because you notice they were part of the vine too. People don't like me to say that we might be able to lose our salvation but the scripture sure suggests it. That we might find ourselves falling so far away from God because of our selfishness that we lose even what we have.

So I'm doing it because I'm worried about you. You see it doesn't have to end this way. It doesn't have to end this way. Love your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength.

[42 : 28] Not with a little bit of it. And yet God only asked for a little rent back, right? He didn't come back and say give me the whole mess back. He said just give me a little rent, just a piece. You can keep the rest and live off it and have joy and blessings.

Just give me a little piece. God wants us to confess, to recognize our brokenness, to be contrite, actually really regret what we've done wrong and repent, which means to live differently.

I keep doing the same thing, expecting that God should love us for living towards wrath. He told this parable and it got them angry.

I imagine some of you don't like the sermon. But he didn't do it to hurt them. He did it to help them. Pruning cuts. But it helps to make us what we're supposed to be.

How many of you consider yourselves a Christian? That's good because you're in a church. Christians follow, it's in the Word, it's not hard.

[43 : 41] This was an easy one. Christ. They follow Christ, which means that they do what Christ would want them to do with their lives. All God is saying is do what's expected.

The tenants in the story were the Jewish leaders. The tenants now are you and me. God has entrusted to us this vine, this wonderful thing that he's given to us where we can bless the world with what we call the faith, the church.

And yet I've got to tell you, most people think the church exists to take care of them. We spend most of our money taking care of you or me. Yeah, a lot of pastors think the church exists to take care of them too.

We've gotten into this thing where we think it's about us. And God is saying, where's the rent? Where are you doing something to help the rest of the world? Why do you think we keep trying to find other places to give money away?

Why do you think we keep trying to throw money out there to tell people about Jesus? When we do that, we pay the rent. John chapter 15 again.

[44 : 53] In verse 6 it says, if anyone does not remain in me, they're like a branch that's thrown away and withered. Such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire, and burned. I don't want to be in the fire. Thank God I don't make those decisions.

But we can live the way we need to. Where's the fruit of what we've been given? Do we care? Or do we resent the very God that gave it to us?

There was a woman in the mall. She had had a really rough day. You know, one of those days where you're just frustrated by everything that's going on. So she decided it was a good day to treat herself to some cookies.

You know those cookie stores that they tease you with in the malls. So she went to the cookie store and she bought herself a little bag of cookies and a cup of coffee and she sat down with her book at a table to read.

And a fellow sat down across from her and she kind of, you know, gave him the nod and then that was it. Well, she read a little bit and then after a couple moments she reached for a cookie from the bag and the guy had his hand in the bag.

[45 : 58] He's taking out a cookie. And he looks at her and he smiles. You know? When she reaches for the cookie and she's like, seriously dude?

Really? But you know, it's been a rough day. I don't need to get a bite in the mall with some guy I don't even know, right? So she goes back reading her book. It's only a cookie. She reads a little more and she reaches up for another cookie and the guy's got his hand in the bag again.

Can you imagine this? Takes out another cookie. Smiles at her and she takes a cookie. So now she's getting steamed. So she says, there's one cookie left.

I'm getting that cookie. So she goes to reach for the cookie and doesn't the guy get it first? And he breaks it in half and smiles to her and gives her half the cookie.

And then he takes and gets up and walks away. And she's like, this thing? She takes her book, she picks it up, she goes to put it in her purse and there's the bag of cookies she bought.

[47 : 04] But they're my cookies, God!

God is only asking us to bear fruit of what he's already given to us. This is what he promises at the end of that part in chapter 15 of John.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish. It'll be given to you. Whatever you want, I'll give it to you. This is my Father's glory that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

You live the way God wants you to live and he will give you whatever you ask for. People want miracle blessings. They can occur, but they occur because we live our lives centered on God, not because we live our lives centered on us.

See, here's what we've done today. We've decided God is just a story we make out to make us feel better. And we mold him and we shape him into whatever we want our God to do and be and say.

- [48 : 23] And we treat him with the same respect we would anything else we make. Because we think he deserves whatever we decide to give to our creation.
- But we didn't make God. He made us. We didn't form God. He formed us. We didn't give to God.
- He gave to us. He gave to us. And even though he's willing to come and give everything to us, we sometimes hold it back because that's not the God we want.
- We want the one we can make God. And we live without the blessings. We're not a God created by human hands.
- We're not a God dependent on any moral land. We're not a God in need of anything we can hear by your plan.
- [49 : 49] That's just the way it is. we're not a God created by human hands.
- We're not a God dependent on any moral land. We're not a God in need of anything we can hear by your plan.
- That's just the way it is. You are God alone from before time began.
- You are on your throne. You are God alone. And right now in the good times and then you are on your throne.
- You are God alone. You're the only God whose power none can contend.
- [50 : 56] You're the only God whose name and praise for ever. You're the only God who's worthy for everything we can hear.
- You are God and that's just the way it is. You are God alone from before time began.
- You are on your throne. You are God alone. And right now in the good times and bad you are on your throne.
- You are God alone. You're unchangeable You're unchangeable You're unstoppable That's what you are You're unchangeable You're unchangeable You're unchangeable You're unstoppable You're unstoppable That's what you are You are God alone You're unchangeable You're unchangeable You're unstoppable You're unstoppable That's what you are
- You are unchangeable You are unchangeable You are unchangeable The highest of heights just to the depths of the sea Creations revealing your majesty From the colors of love to the fragrance of spring Every creature unique in the song that it sings All its flaming indescribable, uncontainable You place the stars in the sky and you know they're flying
- [53 : 45] You are amazing, God All-powerful, untamable Our strength we bow to our knees as we comfortably lay You are amazing, God Who has told every lightning bolt where it should go Only heaven leaves four ounces laid in this song Who imagined the sun and gifts us to reside And conceals are too great, our circle is all kind Time will have a indescribable, uncontainable You place the stars in the sky and you know they're flying
- You are amazing, God All-powerful, untamable Our strength we bow to our knees as we comfortably lay You are amazing, God You are amazing, God You are amazing, God You are amazing, God My heart You are amazing, God All-powerful, untamable Our strength we bow to our knees as we comfortably lay You are amazing, God You are amazing, God You are amazing, God Splendor of the King
- Clothed in majesty That all the earth rejoice All the earth rejoice He wraps himself in light And darkness dies still high And trembles at His voice Trembles at His voice Our praise is our God Sing with me Our praise is our God And all will see our praise Our praise is our God Age to age He spends And time is in His hands Beginning and the end Beginning and the end

But God hath breathed in one Of the Spirit's Son The Lion and the Lamb The Lion and the Lamb Our praise is our God Sing with me Our praise is our God And all will sing our praise Our praise is our God Name above all names You are worthy of all praise And my heart will sing How great is our God How great is our God

Sing with me How great is our God How great is our God How great How great How great How great is our God How great is our God Please be seated You know we read that story And we want to say Don't send the Son You think God didn't know What was going to happen He knew what was going to happen And He did it anyways Our problem is We just get it all focused on us I'll tell you If somebody hurts you Or offends you And you're quick Real quick They ought to get it You know what the problem With every sermon is Every time I preach a sermon

[59 : 02] I'm preaching it to me You're just listening in Because I know how much I've messed up And not done what I'm supposed to be And when somebody Really does something To disappoint me I'm like And then I think about things Like one time I was cutting a limb Forty feet in the air With a chainsaw And I was cutting a limb That I was leaning against Real smart right The chain saw Got stuck And I'm like Up forty feet in the air I'm like What am I going to do What do I do I don't even know what to do I am so messed up I don't know what to do So I yell Daddy And my dad Comes from the porch And he looks at me Climbs up the door Right on the roof Of the cottage Across the peak of the roof He was eighty years old And got me fixed Man oh man I thought I'm not going to cut on a branch

That I'm leaning against again Could have killed him I could have killed him Boy oh boy That makes all the mistakes I have done to me Look kind of small You know That's what it is With God He went out of his way When he didn't have to He could have sent the angels Armies of angels And said I'll take out those farmers I'll take out those Ungrateful burns Instead he sent the son He said look Let's just start over Okay How about If I just say We're going to forget What you've done Forget the rent You didn't pay Forget the fact You killed the people Forget the fact You killed my own son Let's just start over Okay Let's get it right This time So why don't we start You're God in heaven I have sinned I do the wrong things

I get focused on me And mine And all my concerns And I forget who you are All you can do All you have done Forgive me Lord Get my life on track Not just so I can have The miracles So I can honor you And be fruitful In Jesus name we pray Amen Good thing God is God Not me And not you Because we probably Would have whacked Those people And those people Is us And he said no I think I can find A place to forgive you Don't do it again But I can forgive you In the name of Jesus Christ

Your sins are forgiven In the name of Jesus Christ Your sins are forgiven Glory to God Amen Glory to you Glory to me Glory to you I'm close to you Never let me go I lay it all down To hear you say that I'm old You are my desire

No one else will do Cause nothing else can take the place To feel the warmth of your embrace Build your mind away Bring it back to you You're all I want You're all I've ever needed You're all I want Help me know you are here

[64 : 10] You're all I want You're all I want You're all I want Help me know you are here Aren't you glad he sent a son?

Aren't you glad the son was sent? So we can draw close Draw close to God We draw close to God in the sacrament Of holy communion where we remember That Jesus died Shed his blood So that we can be close To the God we love Everyone is welcome to come to the table If you love God Earnestly repent of your sin And seek to live in peace As a disciple of Jesus Christ You are welcome at the table this morning Doesn't matter if it's your first time here If you've been coming here all your life If you want to connect with God In Jesus Christ You are welcome at the table this morning The Lord be with you Lift up your heart

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 And on the night in which he gave himself up for us He took bread and he gave thanks to you He broke the bread And gave it to his disciples Saying, take, eat This is my body Which is given for you Do this in remembrance of me And when the supper was over

[68 : 57] 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 Shall we pray together With the
confidence Children of God The prayer Jesus taught us 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

[illegible]

[75 : 43] If you're able to stand, I'm going to invite you to join with us as we sing together. Be thou my vision.

Be thou my vision.

Be thou my wisdom and thou my true word. I am ever with thee and thou with me, Lord.

Thou and thou only burst in my heart. Great God of heaven, my treasure thou art.

We all make mistakes. The mark of somebody who's doing what's right is not somebody who never messes up. It's somebody that learns from their mistakes.

[77 : 21] So we have people to cover for us like Jesus. And good friends and even band members who realize Pastor Tom didn't take his capo off and I was playing in the wrong key.

And they covered for me anyways. Thank you guys. It wasn't their mistake, it was mine. Made it look like theirs. You see how that works? God does that for us.

And he's glad to do it for us. If we can learn and grow and change. It's not just confessing and being forgiven. It's repenting and turning around.

And doing something different. Go in God. Be a blessing for God. And be blessed by God. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.