

# May 15, 2016

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Date: 15 May 2016

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[ 0 : 00 ] We are glad to have you here at church this morning.

The opportunities for ministry on the clipboards are two. One is for Seneca Street dinners to help out with that. And if you want to either participate or provide food, there's a place for that on the clipboard.

And the other is for our church retreat, which I know that's off in the fall, but they try to make reservations around this time of year. So an opportunity to get together with people from your church and get away from it all for a couple of days.

I also wanted to mention that after church today, those who are interested in helping with hospitality, there's going to be a gathering, a chat. I have no idea where, but it's in your little good news, so you can look at that.

And after church later on today at 1 o'clock, there's going to be a meeting about mission and outreach. I also don't know where that's going to be, so you can look at your little good news for that as well.

[ 1 : 08 ] The car wash that was scheduled for today has been canceled because of snow. Just want to see if you're listening or not, you know. Now, we've postponed it to June 4th, and so we do hope you can support our kids in that and their efforts to raise money for their mission trips.

Shall we take a moment and turn our hearts and center our lives on God? Dear God, we just pray your Holy Spirit would descend upon us today, that you'd fill this place with your presence, with your holy whisper, that you'd lift us up and inspire us and touch us and help us to experience the wonder of God in this place.

For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. If you're able, I'm going to invite you to stand as we're going to sing together, O Worship the King. O Worship the King, our glorious above, O gratefully sing God's power and God's love, Our shield and defender, the ancient of days, Pavilioned in splendor and girded with praise.

O tell of God's might, O sing of God's grace, Whose grove is the light, whose cannot be space, Whose chariots of wrath, whose chariots of wrath, The deep thunder clouds form, And dark is God's path on the wings of the storm.

Thy bountiful care, what tongue can recite, It breathes in the air, it shines in the light, It streams from the hills, it descends to the plain, And sweetly distills in the dew and the rain.

[ 3 : 19 ] Frail children of dust, and feeble as frail, In thee do we trust, nor bind thee to veil.

Thy mercy now tender, how firm to the end, Our maker, defender, redeemer, and friend.

The Lord be with you. All with you. Take a moment, if you will, and greet your neighbor with the peace of the Spirit. If any kids want to come up and join me, They're welcome to come on up.

Any kids who want to come on down, Are welcome to join me. Good morning, how are you guys doing?

That's good. I'm going to teach you a word you probably don't know. Have you ever heard the word Pentecost? Pentecost. That's the day that the church was born.

- [ 4 : 44 ] So today is the birthday of the church. How about that? Isn't that cool? Yeah, so we can sing happy birthday to the church, right? Happy birthday to you. Happy birthday to you.
- Happy birthday, dear church. Happy birthday. Do you know who these are? Do you have any idea who these people might be? You want to guess? No, but that's a nice idea.
- They're my mother and father. That's who they are. Yeah. Some of you have parents, right? Some of you live with your grandparents or with somebody else. That's just kind of the way it is. Do you live in a house where people make rules for you?
- Yeah. Do you like rules? Not really. No, not too many people do. Did you know that as you get older, the rules change? Yeah, they do.
- So they change the rules. So you're going to have a rule that you can stay up to a certain time and then you'll get older and they'll say you can stay up later. Did you know that? Eventually, parents won't make your rules anymore.
- [ 5 : 46 ] Did you know that? You're going to have to make the rules for yourself. That's pretty wild, isn't it? Sometimes the rules change. But the rule makers usually stay the same. All right?
- And that's the same thing for us as Christians. God sometimes actually changes things. But God stays the same all the time. And if we get to know him, we'll know what his rules are. We know what he wants us to do with our lives.
- Just like you get to know your parents and you know what they like and what they don't like, right? Sometimes they don't even have to look at you and then know that they know that you did something wrong. How do they do that?
- It's like freaky, isn't it? Yeah. So we turn to our parents for our rules about our lives and we turn to God about rules for living. So do your parents. Did you know that? They have rules too.
- I know. You might not think it. They have more rules than you do. Scary, isn't it? What are you thankful for this morning? Want to share something? Raise your hand. My brother.
- [ 6 : 44 ] My parents. My mom and daddy. My brother and sister. Friends and family. My mom and dad.
- My cousins. Friends and family. The farm. My family. Yes. That's great.
- Lord, we thank you for all the great blessings you give to us. Our parents. Our families. Our friends. Our relatives. Our farms. The things that make our life wonderful. Bless us, Lord, to be a blessing for you and others.
- In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Okay, you guys can all go out to church school. The kids are all welcome to go out to church school now if they'd like to. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Good morning. Good morning. Isn't it a blessing to be in the house of the Lord with all the warmth of our brothers and sisters in Christ?
- [ 7 : 54 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. It doesn't matter what it's doing outside. It matters what's going on in here right now where we're here to meet with the Lord so we can go out and be warm in the midst of the cold.
- Let's continue in our worship and our praise as we bring our gifts, tithes, and offerings before the Lord. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.
- I dare not trust the sweetest grain, but wholly trust in Jesus' name.
- My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' love and righteousness.
- I dare not trust the sweetest grain, but wholly trust in Jesus' name.

- [ 9 : 16 ] Christ alone, cornerstone, weak made strong in the Savior's love.  
Through the storm, He is Lord, Lord of all.  
When darkness seems to hide His face, I rest on His unchanging grace.  
In every high that storm began, my anchor holds within the veil.  
My anchor holds within the veil. Christ alone, cornerstone, weak made strong in the Savior's love.
- [ 10 : 24 ] Through the storm, He is Lord, Lord of all.  
Christ alone, cornerstone, weak made strong in the Savior's love.  
Through the storm, He is Lord, Lord of all. Christ alone, King of all.  
When He shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in Him be found.  
Dressed in His righteousness alone, O may I then in Him be found. Dressed in His righteousness alone, O may I then in Him be found. Dressed in His righteousness alone, O may I then in Him be found. All this to stand before the throne. Christ alone, cornerstone, weak made strong in the Savior's love.
- [ 11 : 36 ] Through the storm, He is Lord, Christ alone, cornerstone, weak made strong in the Savior's love.  
Through the storm, He is Lord, Lord of all.  
Lord of all. Lord of all.  
Lord of all. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Praise God, love me, all blessings come.  
Praise Him, all which you fear below. Praise Him above all the heavenly host.
- [ 12 : 52 ] Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.  
Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise for this day and for the opportunity to gather, to be in your presence, to worship you in spirit and in truth.  
We thank you for the opportunity to give to you of the gifts that you have given to us. We offer them up to you now and ask that you would bless them and give us wisdom to know how to best use them for the furtherance of your kingdom.  
We do desire to see many come to faith in Jesus Christ. It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Please be seated.  
We have some folks with some health concerns that we want to lift up in prayer this morning.
- [ 13 : 58 ] Stephanie Jumper, who is eight months pregnant, is in the hospital with kidney stones. So we want to keep her in our prayers for healing and for her comfort and relief of the pain that that must be causing her.  
Jim Gondek is going to be seeing a neurologist for issues with his eye and we want to pray for healing for him as well. And Sandy Fole, who is a woman involved with the Lakeview Animal Sanctuary, which our church has an outreach ministry and is involved with that.  
She fell and broke her femur. And that's always a very, very bad and dangerous break. So we want to keep her in our prayers as well. I know Pastor Sherry and I also covet your prayers.  
This is the last week of the semester and we are just totally swamped. So please keep us in prayer during the week as things go on. And I know that you have concerns in your heart as well.

And we will lift all of them up to the Lord now. He knows what we need before we even ask. Amen? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[ 15 : 08 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Heavenly Father, what a blessing it is to come into your presence.

You who are the great God of all creation. It is such a blessing that you call us your friends.

It is such a blessing that you don't leave us out here just floundering around and trying to handle our lives for ourselves. We thank you that we have your spirit. That you pour out your spirit into us so that we can know your will and perform it.

So that we can be strengthened to do it. Not by our own strength or our own wisdom, but by yours. Lord God, we are so grateful.

Lord, we are so grateful. And you allow us to come before you. And you allow us to lift up those requests that we have, those needs that we have.

[ 16 : 23 ] And we ask, Lord, according to your word and according to your will, we ask for healing for all of these folks who are in need.

Lord, you know the names that we have spoken, but you also know the names on our hearts. Lord, we lift them up to you now. Lord, we pray that you touch them and make them whole from the tops of their heads to the soles of their feet, Lord.

In their spirits, in their souls, and in their bodies, touch them and be with them. Give wisdom and compassion to their caregivers, Lord.

Whoever they may be. Lord, we lift up those who are grieving losses. Sometimes it seems as though, even when a lot of time has passed, we still miss those people who have been so dear to us in this life.

Lord, we pray that you keep in the front of our focus the hope of eternal life that we have in you.

[ 17 : 40 ] We pray for comfort. Lord God, we lift up all of those folks who do not know you.

All of those situations in our lives that we will confront in coming days that we cannot handle on our own. We pray that your spirit work in us and through us.

We pray that you quicken our minds and our hearts to know what's required of us. Those things that come from you, not out of our own ideas.

We pray that you would give us words of wisdom for people. That they might come to know you. We pray that you would give us words and actions that help and show your love and your grace.

We pray that you would give us all that we need to draw people to you. Lord God, we lift up now also all of the United Methodist delegates to our General Conference, which is ongoing for the next few days.

[ 19 : 00 ] We just ask in Jesus' name that you continue to touch them. Continue to lead them according to your spirit. We pray that your will would be done among that body of delegates that speaks for the United Methodist Church, that makes policy for the United Methodist Church.

We pray in Jesus' name, Lord God, that they would know your perfect will and that they would have the boldness to speak up and support it.

That we would be your people, that we would be your people, that we would continue to be as a church the blessing that you have called us to be.

Lord, we pray that as we hear your word and hear the message that Pastor Tom is going to bring, that you would give us eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts and minds to understand and to receive all you have for us.

Change our hearts, Lord. Help us to know how to walk more closely with you. Bless Pastor Tom and amount him to deliver the message as he should.

[ 20 : 25 ] And Lord God, make all of our worship to be a blessing to you. That is why we came here. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Good morning.

Our scripture reading this morning is from the book of Acts, chapter 10, verses 9 through 23. About noon the following day, as they were on their journey and approaching a city, Peter went up on the roof to pray.

He became hungry and he wanted something to eat, and while the meal was being prepared, he fell into a trance. He saw heaven open and something like a large sheet being led down to earth by its four corners.

[ 21 : 51 ] It contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles and birds. Then a voice told him, Get up, Peter, kill and eat. Surely not, Lord, Peter replied. I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.

The voice spoke to him a second time. Do not call anything impure that God has made clean. This happened three times, and immediately the sheet was taken back to heaven.

While Peter was wondering about the meaning of the vision, the men sent by Cornelius found out where Simon's house was and stopped at the gate. They called out, asking of Simon, who was known as Peter, was staying there.

While Peter was still thinking about the vision, the spirit said to him, Simon, three men are looking for you. So get up and go downstairs. Do not hesitate to go with them, for I have sent them.

Peter went down and said to the men, I'm the one you're looking for. Why have you come? The men replied, We have come from Cornelius the centurion. He is a righteous and God-fearing man who is respected by all the Jewish people.

[ 23 : 06 ] A holy angel told him to ask you to come to his house so that he could hear what you have to say. Then Peter invited the men into the house to be his guests.

The next day, Peter started out with them, and some of the believers for Joppa went along. This is the word of the Lord. Thank you, God. I had a hammer, I had a hammer in the morning, I had a hammer in the evening, all over this land.

I had a hammer on danger, I had a hammer on a warning, I had a hammer on love between my brothers and sisters, all over this land.

I had a hammer on a bell, I had a ring in the morning, I had a ring in the evening, all over this land.

I had a ring out danger, I had a ring out a warning, I had a ring out a warning. The first time I ever saw people do that with cell phones was at a Peter, Paul, and Mary concert down at Chautauqua Institute.

[ 24 : 18 ] We happened to be down there for the week, and this concert came on, and there were Peter, Paul, and Mary. Blast from the past! Back in the 1960s, when everything had to change.

When we said nobody over 30 should be trusted. Ouch! When we questioned everything. And on one street corner were people saying that we needed to have love and peace, and on the other street corner were people with rocks and starting fires.

It was tumultuous time. What's right? What's wrong? What's wrong? Today is the day of Pentecost. It's a tumultuous time in the life of the church when God turned things upside down.

In the book of Acts, Peter preached that day, and he said, In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy.

Your young men will see visions. Your old men will dream dreams. Even my servants, both men and women. I will pour out my spirit in those days, and they will prophesy.

[ 25 : 26 ] Turning things upside down. Changing the way we think things are supposed to be. Are we ready for that in our lives?

Smelly, ugly, poorly dressed people who use offensive language but love Jesus. Can I love them too? Who? Drug dealers and foreigners and convicts and beggars and sinners who love Jesus.

Do we love them? Republicans and Democrats, conservatives and liberals, people that listen to Fox News or NPR. Can we go up to the table of communion with them together?

Now I know I'm pushing now. When I preach sermons, sometimes people think I'm endorsing some political position. I have never endorsed a candidate since I've been a pastor.

So don't look for it. Sometimes I say this. Sometimes I say that. What I try to say is what God wants us to hear. But Mary, on the other hand, from Peter, Paul and Mary, was a Democrat.

[ 26 : 33 ] No question about it. She knew exactly who she was and what she thought. And she was talking at this concert. She said she needed a bone marrow transplant because she was suffering from cancer and she was going to die.

So she got a match from a perfect stranger who was willing to make this donation, which is quite a task. It's a difficult thing to go through that. But they won't tell you, according to their rules, who the donor is for a year.

And she was very disturbed by this. She said, I don't know what to think. I wondered, was she long, blonde hair like me or did she have curly black hair?

You know, was she old? Was she young? Was she a he? And she thought, oh my gosh, what if she's a Republican?

What's that going to do to my DNA, to my whole world? So a year later, she actually got the name. And oddly enough, the woman who made the donation to Mary was a woman named Mary.

[ 27 : 36 ] And she called her on the phone and she was talking to her. And she said, yes, Mary, actually, I have dark curly hair and I am a Republican. So do we so much believe in our political convictions that we wouldn't take a transplant that would save our lives from somebody on the other party?

Come on, really? How strong do we believe? What do we believe? And how do we know the truth? And what happens when God pushes us to hear the truth we don't want to hear?

Something contrary to what we desire. Peter was hungry. He was up on a roof. And a sheet was let down from heaven. And all sorts of animals were on it.

And the voice from heaven said, Peter, take and eat. He's like, no way. There's food on there that's not kosher. I'm not eating that stuff.

Now, here's the thing, you know. We understand that from Peter's perspective. But it says all the creatures from the whole earth were on that sheet. So there were aardvarks and rattlesnakes and skunks.

[ 28 : 45 ] And you're supposed to eat those, too. What would you do if you saw that sheet? I'd be like, really? I'm not eating that stuff. Tell me you don't do that sometimes at a restaurant. I don't know what that slop is, but I'm not eating it.

We have a tendency to believe that the things that comfort us, the things that make us happy, the things that make us feel good physically or emotionally, are really the goal of life. We will determine truth sometimes based on what makes us feel good.

We're like the people Paul talks about in Philippians when he says, For as I've told you before and now tell you again, even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Their destruction, their destiny is destruction. Their God is their stomach and their glories and their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. What if God wants us to do something that's uncomfortable, that doesn't feel right, that won't make us happy?

Sometimes God challenges us with things that aren't easy. Sometimes God challenges us with the truth that goes against what we were always taught. I grew up in a very formal church.

[ 29 : 54 ] Some of you ladies who are a little older remember the white gloves and the veils? We all wore suit jackets, even kids. The thing was quiet and solid.

We sang to organ music. We had a wonderful choir. Somewhere when I became a teenager, I met Jesus Freaks, and they wanted to play music to God using a guitar.

Can you imagine somebody who wants to play a guitar and sing songs to God in church? Really now? That's just not going to happen. What if the stuff we were raised with changes?

I read my grandson's homework, and it just messes with me. Everything I learned in history is not true anymore. The crusades were good. No, they're not. What? They get this thing called Manifest Destiny.

Maybe some of you don't remember this. That was where it said that we as Americans were going to spread the ideals and the values of Americans to the whole world to make the world better off. Now they teach the kids that that's wrong.

[ 31 : 00 ] That was good. I'm so confused. If you young people wonder why us people our age look at you sometimes like the dog, it's because everything's so different.

We don't get it. They've changed it all. Peter was a good Jewish boy. And there were certain things that you were supposed to do and certain things you weren't supposed to do.

And one of the things is you weren't supposed to let somebody who wasn't a Jew enter into your house. It would defile your house. These men that were coming to see Peter were from Cornelius.

Now, a little back story. Cornelius was a centurion. Centurions were Roman soldiers that were in charge of a hundred soldiers. That's pretty powerful back in that day. It's fairly powerful today, but in that day it was very powerful.

And he had heard a voice from an angel from God telling him to go, to send some men actually, to go and find Peter. He actually said to go and find Simon.

[ 31 : 57 ] We call him Peter, but that's actually his nickname. It means Rocky. And just in case you ever wondered, every time you see Peter, we should play that music, right? So he sent these guys to see Peter, but they stopped at the gate because they understood that the customs didn't allow them to go into a Jewish person's home.

They had a call from the street. Like when I was engaged to my wife and had to pick her up in the street, but that's a different story. What if the customs change?

What if the things we always thought were right are all of a sudden different? What if God could speak to a Roman centurion?

That to the Jewish people would be unimaginable. The Romans are the bad people. They're the people who conquered their country. They're the people who killed Jesus. These are bad people. And this is a centurion.

He's an officer. He must be especially bad. How could God talk to this man? It doesn't work with their traditions. But their ideas alive.

[ 33 : 06 ] Here's the hardest truth. This actually made me rewrite my sermon Saturday morning, believe it or not. What if the truth we hear from God changes the rules? You know, and not even little things like growing up, not being able to eat fish on Fridays, and then all of a sudden you can eat it, right?

But bigger things. Things that seem more important to us. Things have changed. Things are different.

And the things that we always thought were right, now somebody's telling us they're wrong. And the things we always thought were wrong, some people are trying to tell us they're right. How do we know? How do we know when we are hearing the voice of God and when we're just making stuff up in our head?

Peter sees this as a test. I will never do this, he says to God. Can't you imagine saying that to God? If God asks you to do something that you consider to be immoral and wrong, I will never do this.

You're testing me. What do you think? This was the voice of the devil, maybe. I don't know. God says, don't call something impure that I've made holy.

[ 34 : 20 ] So as I was writing this, I came across this, and I wanted to say to you, as I was preaching about how we can know the truth, that the Holy Spirit will never disagree with the Scriptures. That's what happened.

It said in Peter's holy scripture, they're not supposed to eat bacon, which I find to be a tragedy.

And now, not just because Peter's hungry, because God's going to change the rules. The Holy Spirit is disagreeing with the Word of God.

The Word of God is disagreeing with the Word of God. Do you hear how that makes the whole thing tremble? How do we know? How do we know if God can change it?

Somebody said to me after I preached a sermon earlier, they said, well, that's because it's the New Testament. How do we know God's not writing a Third Testament? How do we know? They didn't think so.

[ 35 : 29 ] And Peter's told what your Scriptures say, I'm changing it. How do we know the truth? And how do we know that the voice we're listening to is the Holy Spirit, and not just our belly saying, boy, that smells good.

I'm going to have a ham sandwich. How do we know? First of all, do you know the voice of God? Do you know the difference between when God speaks to you and when it's just thoughts in your mind or an idea that popped into your head?

Do you know God? Do you know Jesus? Like Peter knew Jesus. Peter wasn't just an ordinary guy. Peter spent three years walking, talking, living, learning, and being with Jesus.

Every day, every hour. How many of us have spent three days with Jesus? Three years!

Qualifies Him in a way most of us couldn't even imagine. I spent four years going to seminary, but I didn't spend every day and every minute doing that. Peter prayed every day. Peter knew these.

[ 36 : 39 ] I bet you he could have quoted the scriptures word for word. So before you go changing God's rules, you better be like Peter. You follow? You better make sure that you know what you're talking about.



The other day, someone asked me where that passage was that we just read from Acts, and I told them. They looked at me with surprise that I knew the answer. I read the book, but I'm not like Peter.

I haven't spent three years alone with Jesus. And do you spend any time alone, period, at all with God? You know, it says that Peter went up on the roof to hear Jesus, to find a quiet place to pray.

We need a quiet place. Because we become a world filled with clutter and noise. Constant noise. My grandson was watching something on the computer, some kind of TV show, he said it was.

And the TV was on. I said, well, which are you watching? He said, both. I'm like, what? Right? I've been told that for those of you who are under 30, you would listen to me better if I had a video playing in the background while I was speaking.

[ 37 : 52 ] You would be able to focus on me better if there was something else you could have your eyes looking at. Because we have gotten so accustomed to noise and clutter and sound.

Do we ever really get away with just God and us? So that we don't hear the wrong voice, but we hear God's voice. And I guess this is one of the most important pieces of this passage.

The truth that God speaks to us is not typically what we want to hear. God doesn't waste his time.

God doesn't waste the time of angels to send you a message that says that what you already believe and what you already want to do, he says it's okay. Why would he do that?

If you already believe it's true and you already want to do it, you're going to do it. You don't need God to reinforce that. God sends us messages. When God speaks to us, it's typically in some way that confronts things in our lives that are just not right.

[ 39 : 01 ] God was confronting Peter with something that was a real struggle. And it wasn't just the food thing. That was, once he ate bacon, life was going to be different for him.

He didn't have a different opinion about those food laws. But it's this idea that these Romans, these pagans, these non-Jewish people are people we're supposed to spend time with.

Because right after the vision ends, that's when these guys from Cornelius show up. That's not coincidence. That's God incidents. That's God's timing. And the voice from heaven says to go with them, which you might not think means anything.

Peter, Peter just saw Jesus die at the hands of these people. A Roman centurion at the foot of the cross, overseeing the death of Jesus.

He has no idea what this is going to mean. This is not an easy thing to say, go with these guys. He might be going to his own death. God didn't ask him to do something that was easy.

[ 40 : 10 ] He asked him to do something that was hard. Do you think that Noah, when he was 600 years old, wanted to build a boat? And then watch the people around him drown? Do you think that Jeremiah, who was a great prophet, who was told by God to go out into the city of Jerusalem and tell everybody that the city was going to be destroyed and every other pastor was preaching the wrong thing and only he got the right message from God?

Do you think he wanted to do that? Do you think that that made him popular? They threw him down a well and tried to drown him. He didn't want to do that. How about Jonah? You ever read about Jonah?

Jonah was told by God to go to a city called Nineveh, which was not a Jewish city, and preach to them that God was going to destroy the place. It was going to be wiped out in about three or four days, and Jonah said, I'm not going there.

No way. Because you know what? This is just a fool's mission. I'm going to Spain. That's when he ended up getting in the storm, getting swallowed by a fish, and it spit up in a fish vomit, and finally in a puddle of fish vomit, he says, okay, I'll go to Nineveh.

You think he wanted to go? He didn't want to go. No. But if God called him to do something that was outside of what was comfortable, I'm going to tell you right now, if you hear from the voice of God, it's not likely going to be to confirm what you already want.

[ 41 : 38 ] It's probably going to be the challenge. Something in your life that's not going in the right direction. Jonah. Jonah said this.

When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened. So Jonah goes down and tells this whole city, they're going to be destroyed in three days, and God changed his mind.

God changed his mind. God decided to do something different. In other versions, it said God repented of what he was going to do.

That messes with me. See, I grew up with God is unchanging. God is always the same. God is a rock. God never is different from day to day.

And here it says God changes his mind. What does that mean? What does it mean that God changes his mind? What does that do to our world? Do you feel the foundations trembling again? Because God does change things.

[ 42 : 49 ] Things that we don't expect. Don't call anything impure that I have made holy. God is extending grace where we don't expect it. It doesn't make us happy.

Because it's not what we expect. You would think that Jonah would be going around saying, man, I am the greatest evangelist ever. I preached a sermon and 200,000 people came to God.

Nobody has ever brought, you could hear them in heaven. Nobody, not Billy Graham or anyone else, has ever brought 200,000 people to God in one sermon. I said, this is what he said.

Jonah thought this was very wrong of God. And he became angry. And he prayed to the Lord. Isn't this what I said, Lord, when I was still at home? That's why I tried to forestall by fleeing to Spain.

I knew you were gracious and compassionate, God's known, angry, abiding in love, a God who relaps from sin and calamity. And now I look like a fool. And it's your fault, God.

[ 43 : 53 ] You see, God is not concerned about you as much as he's concerned about grace.

He's going to make things happen that mess with our way of thinking. God spoke to Cornelius. He's a Roman centurion.

God spoke to a man that they couldn't even conceive of possibly being the kind of guy that God would speak to. God spoke to the people of Nineveh. God spoke to people no one ever dreamed of in the Bible.

And those people are calling out, standing at the gate, calling out to those of us who live within the covenant of grace, hoping that we'll answer.

And they don't always look like the people we think they're going to look like. Here's one of the groups, one of our members works with.

[ 44 : 57 ] Hi, my name's Sam Fritz.

I've been coming to Pendleton for about two years now. I'm a teacher in Buffalo Public Schools, but I had to get there in an interesting way. I'd been a pastor for 15 years prior to that.

And the time came where I had a chance to decide whether I wanted to stay in the community that God had called me to or stay in the job that God had called me to. And after thinking about it and praying about it for a long time, we chose to stay in the community.

I had a wonderful opportunity to become a teacher. I work with some of the best kids in the world, fantastic kids. And these kids come with some real challenges in their lives.

They're refugees. Many of them have come from war-torn countries, and they come having missed years of school. So on top of all the school that they've missed, they're also trying to learn English, and the kids have great needs.

[ 46 : 09 ] It's been such a joy and such a pleasure over these last 15 years of teaching to watch kids grow and to become confident. And they're always so positive, thankful for the opportunity.

I remember the time a kid said to me, Mr. Fritz, why can't we have school on Saturday, too? You don't hear that from a lot of kids. But from these refugee kids, they see it as such an opportunity. I can think of students of mine who I've taught over a two-year span who came in hardly able to speak a word of English.

And at the end of two years, seeing them becoming confident and engaging in conversation and really just being a great part of the community, seeing that difference that you can make in a person's life. It's life-changing to be an agent of change.

It's wonderful to have that partnership. I really want to just encourage anybody who has the opportunity to serve our new Americans, new people coming into our community.

They've been through so much. They need our help. And we can make a difference in their lives. God calls us to love people that it isn't easy to love.

[ 47 : 16 ] I do understand the argument that we want to keep our communities safe. I do understand the concern about our culture and our world. I get all that. They're people.

They're people. Made in God's image. They might speak a different language or come from a different place. They might even come from a place we're afraid of. I don't know if I should say this anymore. You know, I'm the grandson of an illegal alien.

My grandfather jumped the ship in New York Harbor and swam the shore. And he said, oh, that's okay because you look like us. Yeah, well, he was from Germany. Between World War I and World War II, he built U-boats for the Germans.

Think about it. Think about it. What they thought of him. What they thought of him. What do we think of people? It's hard because this gets at who we are and what we think.

And not everybody's good and not everybody's safe. Yeah, but your grandfather became a citizen. Well, of course he did. And all these people want to, too.

[ 48 : 22 ] You do know that, right? They would love to be you. They would love to be accepted by you, welcomed by you, personally received by you.

When you get to know them, you find out they're people. Maybe they like six days a week school. That's a little weird, but they're people. God said, take and eat.

And it wasn't about food. These things were from the four corners of the earth and it was all about people. God is calling them to be indiscriminate in their love. Indiscriminate, radical love to extend grace to the four corners of the earth, to all of God's creation, all the people that walk the face of the earth, all that were made in the image of God, the ones we like, the ones we don't, the ones we're comfortable around, the ones we find make our skin crawl.

Because God calls us to. I was in a gathering down in Florida. It was a seminar. And this guy got up to speak and he said, I'm a murderer. I was like, what?

I was waiting for the theological explanation of that, right? Well, you know, we all, if we eat too much, we eat not. He says, no, I went to prison because I murdered someone. I took their life.

[ 49 : 44 ] Sat up in my chair. What? What are you doing up there? You're a bum. You're a criminal. You shouldn't be. Get off the stage. Right? This is what goes through your mind.

Have you ever heard about a guy named Paul? He wrote like about 12 books in this Bible. If you'll recall two weeks ago, we found out he was a murderer. And he killed Christians because they were Christians.

And we call his stuff scripture. Because who better to teach us about grace than those who have received grace and understand it better than some of us do.

This stuff's hard. And the book of Isaiah talks about what it will be like for Jesus at that end time. And it says, And it says, The spirit of the Lord will rest on him.

The spirit of wisdom and understanding. The spirit of counsel and of might. The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. And he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes.

[ 50 : 45 ] Or decide by what he hears with his ears. But with righteousness, he will judge the needy. With justice, he will give decisions to the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth.

With the breath of his lips, he will slay the wicked. If righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness a sash around his waist. You like that last part? Yeah, get those wicked people. Jesus.

Who are they? I got a hammer. And I got a bell. And I got a song to sing. All over this land.

It's the hammer of justice. It's the bell of freedom. It's a song about love between my brothers and my sisters.

That's so easy. Of course I love my family. Of course I love my friends. Of course I love the people like me. Of course I love the people that are good to me.

[ 51 : 45 ] Of course I like the people who follow the rules. Of course I like all of them. God calls us to love our enemy and pray for those who persecute us. Pray for and love those who are like the centurion standing outside the covenant of grace.

Isaiah continues about that scene and he says this. The wolf will lie down with the lamb. Not the lion by the way. Somebody made that up. The leopard will lie down with the goat.

The calf and the lion and the yearling together. And a little child will lead them. And the cow will feed with the bear. And the young will lie down together. And the lion will eat straw like the ox.

And a little child will play with his steak and won't get hurt. They'll neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain. For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.

You see, we tried to set it up as best we could. You know, the person setting it up said we don't have a wolf. Or even a lion. I said, well, we got a tiger. That'll do.

[ 52 : 52 ] It's the same point, right? Tigers and sheep don't sleep together. Cows don't go play with bears. Bears. The whole point of that scene is not just about the animals, which I believe will be in eternity.

But it's about us. The people that don't belong together will be together. The folks that we wouldn't imagine ever sharing a meal together will sit down at that heavenly table together.

The wolf. The lamb. The republican. The democrat. The people of different skin colors. The rich and the poor. The Russians and the Americans.

The smelly and the sweet. The criminals and the cops. The sinners. The sinners. The sinners. The sinners. The sinners. The sinners. And the saints. The voice told Peter, go with these people you're uncomfortable with and you don't even feel safe around.

And Peter not only decided to go with them. He welcomed them in the house. Talk about radical hospitality.

[ 54 : 01 ] He invited them in the house. You want to know even further step? It wasn't even his house. And he invited them to come in and have dinner with him.

Wow. But you see, one step further on this, when we look at this story, we think, isn't it amazing that what God is trying to tell us is that Peter should accept the Romans?

Now let's look at the other side of the coin. Who was Jesus? He was a revolutionary executed with capital punishment for starting an insurrection.

The Roman centurion is charged to keep the laws of the land to make sure people keep the peace and don't do anything wrong. And the voice of God just told him to send his men to the leader of Jesus' outlaw gang, Peter, and tell him to come be with him.

Well, this is like some copy and told, go get the head of the Lacoste and Oscar to come and, you know, have dinner with you.

[ 55 : 15 ] Become brothers and sisters together. See, we really think when we read this story, this is how messed up we are. We think this story is about us being more accepting of other people.

Have you ever thought that maybe it's about getting other people to think you're okay? That maybe it's about getting other people to think that they should welcome you into their world?

Put up with you? You? And me? When I was a teenager, I was a poor-eyed, geeky, lanky teenager. I wasn't popular. In fact, the popular kids sort of set me aside most of the time.

I didn't have a lot of friends. I found that people who ran with gangs, street gangs, would take in anybody. Isn't that interesting? They'll accept anybody.

So I started running with them for a while, doing things that were wrong, hurting people, breaking laws. But I did it because, well, at least I had friends.

[ 56 : 31 ] It wasn't the right thing to do. And I'd go to church on Sunday morning with my family, and one day my youth pastor came up and put the Vulcan death grip on the back of my neck.

You know, I can tell you, I could take a teenage boy and reduce him to his knees with his Vulcan death grip. I'm not allowed to do that anymore, of course, because that's, you know, immoral and everything else. But he did this to me and basically said I was going on this church retreat, so I went on the church retreat because he made me go on the church retreat, and I fell in love with Jesus.

And oddly enough, there were a few people there as rough and goofy and messed up and out of position as I was that welcomed me into their little circle.

And if it wasn't for that, I wouldn't be your pastor. I'd probably be in jail. Or worse. We think all these stories are about somehow us good people making room in our lives for all those messed up people on the outside.

Well, maybe it's just a story about us messed up people, understanding that some of those people out there need to find a way for their heart to love us.

[ 57 : 46 ] If we'd stop being so, well, you know what I mean. After all, Jesus loved us. You, me, as improbable as that sounds.

Pentecost is the day that God turned the church upside down. And that passage from the book of Luke, or book of Acts, rather, chapter 2 says, In the last days, which are any of the days after Christ, today are the last days, I'll pour out my spirit on everybody.

God isn't just talking to pastors. God isn't just talking to the good people. God's talking to everybody. Children. Children will tell their parents the truth of God.

I can't believe it. I've seen it. I've seen it. Young men will be wise beyond their years because they'll have the wisdom of God. And old men will be able to dream.

I know. Old men can't dream. We don't have any years left to dream. No! We have all of eternity. We can dream. We can believe things are still possible in our world and in our lives because of the Spirit of God.

[ 58 : 49 ] Even on servants. Poor, poor people. People who don't have a lot of education or a lot of money or a lot of standing in the community. God is going to have them preach to us.

Even women, if you can imagine, will be allowed to preach and tell the word of God. Because God is opening up the world and saying, open up your heart to radical, indiscriminate love.

Will we hear His voice? Will we hear Him when He speaks? Will He tell us the truth? Will we hear Him when He speaks? Will He tell us the truth? Will He tell us the truth? I'm finding myself at lost words And finally it's okay The last thing I need is to be heard But to hear what you would say Word of God speak

Would you pour down like rain Washing my eyes to see Your majesty Be still and know That you're in this place Please let me stay at last In your holiness Word of God speak I'm finding myself in the midst of you Beyond the music Beyond the noise All that I need Is to be with you And in the water To hear your voice

Word of God speak Would you pour down like rain Washing my eyes to see Washing my eyes to see Your majesty Be still and know That you're in this place Please let me stay at last In your holiness Word of God speak Would you pour down like rain Washing my eyes to see Your majesty Your majesty Be still and know Your majesty Be still and know You're in this place Please let me stay at last In your holiness Word of God speak

[ 62 : 28 ] Word of God speak Play On My Knees In Worsion Giving all I am to seek your face Lord, all I am is yours I'm all I find, this in your hands God of mercy, humble, I bow down

Your presence and your hope I called, you answered And you came to my rescue And I want to be where you are My whole life I am placed in your hands God of mercy, humble, I bow down Your presence and your hope

I call, you answered And you came to my rescue And I want to be where you are My life, be lifted high in my world Be lifted high in my world I'm lifted high in my world I'm lifted high in my world I'm lifted high in my world I'm lifted high in my world You rise up in my world And you came to my rescue

To my rescue And I want to be where you are I want to be where you are I want to be where you are It's a song, the redeemed Rise from the African way It's a song, the forgiven From how the heavens are raised The song of ancient believers Filled with God's holy fire It's every time, every tongue

And every nation Love's song born of a grateful one It's all God's children Singin' glory, glory Hallelujah, He reigns He reigns It's all God's children Singin' glory, glory Hallelujah, He reigns He reigns Let Him rise above the four wings Come in, He have me sound The phases that come from a thousand people The faithful gathered underground Of all the songs From the dawn of creation Some were meant to persist Of all the bells From a thousand steeples None brings to repentance

- [ 67 : 45 ] It's all God's children Singin' glory, glory Hallelujah, He reigns He reigns It's all God's children Singin' glory, glory Hallelujah, He reigns He reigns And all the powers of darkness Tremble at what they just heard Cause all the powers of darkness Can't drown out a single word His son was born When all God's children Singin' glory, glory Hallelujah, He reigns He reigns When all God's children Singin' glory, glory Hallelujah, He reigns He reigns He reigns Then all children Singin' glory, glory Hallelujah, He reigns
- He reigns And all children Oh, God, children, sing of glory, glory. Hallelujah, He reigns.
- He reigns. And all the powers of darkness tremble at what they just said. Because all the powers of darkness can't turn out a single word.
- Please be seated. God is speaking.
- God is speaking. God's Holy Spirit is pouring into the lives of people everywhere. All over the world.
- [ 69 : 48 ] People of God. God, we need to open up our hearts and our souls and our lives to hear the voice of God speaking to us. Amen? Amen. It's something we don't want to hear, which usually it is.
- Usually it is. So let's turn to the God. Our God. The God of the universe. Dear God in heaven. Be with us.
- Pour your Holy Spirit into even us. Change us, Lord. Change us, Lord. Change us, Lord. Help us to repent. Help us to repent.
- We have sinned. We have sinned. We do things wrong. We do things wrong. But you already know that. Forgive us, Lord. Forgive us, Lord.
- Forgive us, Lord. Open up our hearts. To love everyone. Open up the hearts of the world. To love even us.
- [ 70 : 47 ] That God's spirit might break out. And that the tiger might lay down with the land. In Jesus' holy name.
- Amen. Messed with you, didn't I? I think there'll be tigers there. I believe it. God is doing something new. God is doing something amazingly new in this world.
- It's not a question of if God's doing it. It's a question of whether we're going to be a part of it. God has decided to do something radical. And love us.
- In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. We can choose to be a part of it. We can choose to answer the call, respond with yes to the invitation to the table this morning.
- [ 72 : 00 ] God loves us so much. God invited us to come in to supper with him to receive all that God has for us it isn't just receiving bread and grape juice when we come to receive from God we receive everything we need from God to be the people God has called us to be everyone is welcome at the table this morning 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 so come and worship him come and receive from him you're invited the Lord be with you lift up your hearts let us give thanks to the Lord our God it is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you Father Almighty creator of heaven and earth in the beginning your spirit moved over the face of the waters 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 your spirit came upon prophets and teachers anointing them to speak your word and so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join there in ending 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 at his baptism in the Jordan your spirit descended upon him and declared him your beloved son with your spirit upon him he turned away the temptations of sin 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 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 when the Lord Jesus ascended he promised to be with us always baptizing us with the Holy Spirit and with fire as on the day of Pentecost on the night in which he gave himself up for us he took bread and he gave thanks to you broke the bread and gave it to his disciples saying 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 and he gave thanks to you and then he gave it to his disciples and he said drink from this all of you this is the cup of my blood the blood of the new covenant poured out just for you for many for the forgiveness of sin do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me on the day you raised him from the dead he was recognized by his disciples in the breaking of the bread and in the power of your Holy Spirit your church has continued in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup 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 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 and empowered by the gifts of the Spirit 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 be feasted at his heavenly banquet through your Son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit and your Holy Church all honor and glory is yours almighty God now and forever Amen Shall we pray 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 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 bill God is the kingdom Lord God for him he him he jack for him Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 79 : 09 ] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[ 83 : 11 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. I invite you to stand as we're going to sing together a song called The Summits.

The Summits The Summits Will you let me answer prayer in you, you in me?

Will you let the blind in see if I will call your name? Will you set the pills free and let me come the same?



Will you kiss the lab for clean and the sum just is unseen? Will you let me know what I mean?

[ 85 : 33 ] Will you let me know what I mean? Will you let me know what I mean? Will you let me know what I mean? I had another verse. The band pointed out I had extra verses and took things out of the songs too while you were singing.

Some of you knew that. Oh well. You know, I mean really. You haven't figured it out yet? That church I grew up in that's so formal and it's got everything. We don't do that, okay? We don't do that here.

God wants to love us. Imperfect as we are. And God wants others to love us. And the best way to do that is to go out and be loving.

God's kingdom come on earth as it is in heaven. Where the tiger lies down with the lamb. Where the cows play with bears.

And where people like you and me get along with people we never would've dreamed of. May the Lord bless you. May the Lord be with you. May the God Lord give you his peace now and always. Amen.

[ 86 : 39 ] Amen.