

January 24, 2016

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Date: 24 January 2016

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

- [0 : 00] This is the day that the Lord has made.
We will rejoice and be glad in that. This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in that. This is the day that the Lord has made.
Let us rejoice and be glad in that. This is the day. This is the day that the Lord has made.
Good morning. Welcome to our church. We have a gift for our visitors at the Connection site. Please fill out your friendship card for any prayers or concern, or just so we can get to know you.
- [1 : 22] It's fun to be part of the welcoming committee here at Edmonton Center. We are glad to have you here in church this morning. There's two quick announcements I want to share.
Next week during our Saturday night service at 5 o'clock, we're going to be consecrating our CLMs, our certified lay ministers. We've got a number of new ones. So I call that to your attention in case you'd like to be part of that, or you're a CLM.
You should kind of, if you're being consecrated. Also, I wanted to mention to you that two weeks from this Saturday, or a week from this Saturday, whatever that is, Boy Scouts are having their Italian night.
So find a Boy Scout, and they probably could find you a ticket, because they do run out. Let's take a moment and turn our hearts to the Lord in prayer, shall we? Dear God, we thank you for the blessing of being here, and we pray now that your Holy Spirit would come to settle us, to calm us, to take away all the distractions of life, and help us to just focus on you and the grace you want to impart on us.
Bless us today with your presence. For it's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. I'd like to invite you to stand if you're able, as we're going to sing together, And Can It Be. And Can It Be.
- [2 : 55] That I should gain an interest in the slainful blood, Dying for me, who caused his pain, for me, who lived to death pursued.
Amazing love, how can it be that love, like a one-star life for me?
Amazing love, how can it be that the mind thought to have died for me?
He left his father's throne above, so free, so infinite his strength.
And feed himself of all my blood, and bled for Adam's helpless race.
- [4 : 05] Tis mercy on him, and sent free, for all my God, he found out me.
Tis mercy on him, and sent free, for all my God, he found out me.
Long my imprisoned spirit lay, as bound in sin and nature's night.
Dying I debuts the quickening grave, I woke the dungeon plain with life.
My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose and poured and followed me.
- [5 : 09] My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose and poured and followed me.

My chains fell off, my heart was free, I rose and poured and followed me. My chains fell off, my chains fell off, my chains fell off, my chains fell off, my chains fell off, my chains fell off.

I cry, I blow my Hofnau. I:■ You give my of my love by God, I hope some of His life's 124-6y last as the euchro-6y last as the Lord william remember heart. And bop the■ of suffering and thunder william suffer, I love him.

Back to And gain a micronutrients need who fear. from and playing the crowd to Christ my own.

The Lord be with you. And I with you. 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 up and join me now.

[6 : 35] If any of the kids want to come on up. I'm going to tell you.

Any other kids want to come on up? You know what this is? It's a dog leash. You ever walk a dog on a dog leash? Yeah.

I used to walk my dogs on a dog leash all the time. You know why? Because if I didn't have them on a leash, they would run away, get lost. They would run out in the street and get hit by a car.

You have an invisible fence? I have one of those too. Yeah. It's cool. It keeps the dog in the yard. Yes? They keep the dog in the house. Do they?

And you keep your dog in the house? You know why we do all that? It's not to be mean. It's to keep them safe, right? We don't want our dogs to get hurt or any of our pets. But you know what?

[7 : 34] Your parents have rules for you too. Have you ever heard of rules? You know what rules are for? Rules are not to make you miserable or hurt you. They're to keep you safe. As you get older, the rules change because you get bigger and able to take care of rules.

But some rules are forever. You know God has rules? Rules even your parents are supposed to follow. How about that? Yeah. And God didn't give us those rules because it's mean.

He gave us those rules because He loves us and wants to keep us safe. Okay? What are you guys thankful for this morning? Raise your hand if you want to share something. My family. Friends and family. Friends and family.

Friends and family. My friends and family and Catherine. My friends and family and my sister. Friends and family.

Friends and family. Friends and family. Friends and family. My mom and dad. my mom alright okay thank you everybody Lord we thank you for our families our pets, our friends all the wonderful things you give to us bless us, keep us safe keep us in love with you in Jesus name we pray, amen all the kids except the frogs can go out to church school now frogs stay right here with me the kids can go out to church school we're going to invite Pastor Mark to come up and share with us about community missions good morning thank you so much for having us out again you have been a great supporter of community missions and just thank you for having us out and doing this offering again so I just wanted to give you a quick update about us first just to remind some of you who may not know community missions we're located on Buffalo Avenue in Niagara Falls we are an agency that provides crisis services like a homeless shelter food pantry, soup kitchen, a parole re-entry program and a lot of other crisis services we also have a wide range of mental health services for youth and adults residential programs and programs that are community based for people to learn skills they need to succeed and we also provide faith services across the entire agency things like chapel worship and bible study fellowship groups different opportunities for people to engage in developing their faith if they choose to do so just real quick here are just some of the numbers our crisis housing is up with our parole ranching program over last year 11% closed closet visits are way up and we also have our food pantry just a real quick note about that in Niagara County there's like a huge increase in need for food support for folks we're up 24% in our food pantry 11% overall for meals and it's not just us that's all of the pantries in the area just so anything you can do with that this is the part I really wanted to share with you today because it's another part of our big success we've been able to really increase the number of opportunities for people to engage in their faith over this past year we've been able to add in so many different things that people can choose to do so it's gone up a lot we've done a lot of work at that and also just the number of people seeking pastoral care or having spiritual needs coming to me with that has been up a lot this past year back in December we usually average around 15 or so people a month that have a significant need where I'll engage with them heavily this past December I had 77 people at least that's as many as I was able to keep track of people and families that came needing some kind of significant spiritual support it was like really spiritually exhausting month but really glad to do the work

[11 : 34] I just want to share one story about that with you what your support helps us do there's a young family with two kids they've been doing okay they had jobs they had an apartment things are going alright then one of them got laid off a little bit later the other one lost their job a little bit later they're evicted and they ended up coming to community missions we were able to help them we were able to give them the immediate needs help them find an apartment get connected with food support point them to job training opportunities to have more stable employment and all that we could do all that and that's great but there was something more that they needed and I ended up talking with this young couple a lot they weren't just trying to understand why this happened they were trying to find out how to manage it how to just understand it and one of the things that we were able to learn together was that it was I believe that God's love for them that brought them to the mission and they could learn that God loves them enough to provide for their needs but also that God loved them enough to let them be able to find the strength to go through it so this was a young couple who had a spiritual awakening that was able to understand that there's more beyond themselves that they are able to rely on God's love and support and that's something they could only get because the mission was there because of your support because I was able to be there in the right place at the right time just to let them know that not just people care but that more importantly God cares for them and makes all that happen so the support that you give us the way you bring out volunteers to the mission and are involved in so many of our activities it makes a huge difference we've been able to make great strides over this past year because of your support and so many other people's support so I just want to thank you for that and I personally want to thank you for as exhausting as December was this year

I thank you for your support allowing me the opportunity to share God's love with people let them know that God cares and that God empowers people and it's just a great gift to me the support that you've given and to the mission and especially to those who serve so thank you so much for that and I hope you have a great rest of the service you have a lot going on man we do thank you Pastor Mark there is an envelope in your bulletin if you'd like to give an extra gift to the mission offering to help with community mission we're going to enjoy now our frogs are going to sing for us somebody believes in me somebody is watching, watching and taking good care of me somebody believes in me somebody believes in me somebody believes in me like the little lot lamb left the old house down the shepherds came and found me up and he brought her back to safety cause he loved her, come on he brought her back to safety cause he loved her, come on somebody believes in me somebody believes in me somebody believes in me somebody believes in me somebody claims, watching me and taking good care of me somebody believes in me somebody believes in meê través de mí somebody believes in you

Like a rich man's son, born a royal bride, death was sick in bed.

Jesus spoke the word in heaven because he loved him so much. He spoke the word in heaven because he loved him so much. Somebody believes in him.

Somebody's watching him. Somebody's watching him. And he could compare me. Somebody believes in me.

[15 : 53] Now I know my heart's special to my God. Jesus came and found me out.

And he died and goes again because he loved him so much. He died and goes again because he loved him so much.

Somebody believes in me. Somebody's watching, watching. And he could compare me.

Somebody's watching. Somebody's watching. And he could compare me. Somebody's watching.

Somebody's looking. Somebody loves me.

[16 : 55] Somebody loves me. Somebody loves me. Somebody loves me. I'd like to invite all of those involved at the youth ministry to go up under the choir loft right now.

That song is honestly perfect. It's somebody that believes in us. God believes in each and every one of us. And this church believes in our children and our youth. And the great encouragement and support that you give all of them throughout the generations is just incredible.

Come on up, guys. Maddie, you first. Come on up. We have a few youth that want to share with you this morning.

I had the time of my life on the youth retreat.

There were fun activities such as rooming with some of my best friends, being part of the super spirit power team, an awesome scavenger hunt, and probably one of the best things we did was watch a really funny talent show.

[18 : 25] Now, I've been going to this church since I did preschool here, but I have never had as much fun as I did last weekend. Even though all that stuff was great, my favorite part was the things I learned about God.

All my life, I have always known I'm supposed to pray, but I've never thought about what I'm saying to God or what he is looking for in a prayer. I typically get nervous when I am asked if I want to pray in hot chocolate with God or youth group because I'm afraid of messing up or doing it wrong.

But now I know that whatever I say, God won't hold it against me. I was particularly interested in learning and hearing stories about the power of prayer. I did know that the prayer was very powerful, but I have never experienced it myself.

Over the retreat, I learned that God is answering all of my prayers and always doing what's best for me because he loves and cares for me. This is very important for everyone to remember, especially when things are not going your way. And if you're like me, things go wrong pretty often.

I wouldn't even know this if I hadn't considered turning my life to God and making the amazing and correct decision to go on the 2016 Winter Youth Retreat. During the Youth Retreat, we learned about prayer.

[19 : 34] I always thought that if you pray with sophisticated words, God will hear you. Ms. Putney showed me that you don't have to have the best words. You just have to say it from your heart. Ms. Putney talks to me like a daughter and how I know that God and Ms. Putney love me as much as my dad loves me.

Over the weekend, I saw God and so did Ms. Putney. The Lord gave me a message about Ms. Putney. Now I feel she's my mom. Thank you. Thank you. I am very thankful for this church and my opportunity I had to go on this retreat.

Not only did I have the chance to connect with God, but all the friends. The theme of this retreat was prayer. We talked about how when people talk, how about when people think of praying, most people think they have to say the perfect things.

People think they have to use fancy words, perfect speech, or even quote the Bible. Honestly, though, God doesn't care how you say it. He just wants to know you're making the effort to talk to Him. This weekend, my friends and I learned about the purpose, the pursuit, and the power of prayer.

We were split into different tribes and various challenges to complete throughout the weekend, like a scavenger hunt where we had to build a sculpture of what we thought about when we thought of prayer. I think I can speak for most of the people at this retreat.

[20 : 58] It was awesome. As was just said by all of us, the retreat was an amazing experience.

Every year I look forward to this opportunity to spend a weekend with my church friends. What I find most important is that we're all able to strengthen our connection with God. A group of my friends and I, with some adult leaders, squeezed together in one of the cabins to talk about the Lord's Prayer.

We learned that it's important to put meaning behind what we're saying, and the Lord's Prayer has a lot of big phrases that we didn't actually understand. So we decided to take each line, find out the meaning of it, and break it down on a whole new level.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

[22 : 49] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. tithes and offerings to the Lord. Everyone needs compassion, love that's never failing.

Let mercy fall on me. Everyone needs forgiveness, the kindness of a Savior, the hope of nations.

Savior, he can look at mountains, my God is mighty to save, he is mighty to save.

Forever after of salvation, he rose and conquered the grave, Jesus conquered the grave.

[24 : 39] Take me as you practice, all my fears and failures, fill my life again.

We get my life to follow, everything I believe in, now I surrender. Savior, he can look at mountains, my God is mighty to save, he is mighty to save.

Forever after of salvation, the rose and conquered the grave, Jesus conquered the grave.

Shine a light and let the whole world see, we're singing, let glory, the other is our King.
Shine a light and let the whole world see, we're singing, let glory, the other is our King.

Savior, he can look at mountains, my God is mighty to save, he is mighty to save.

[26 : 03] Forever after of salvation, he rose and conquered the grave, Jesus conquered the grave.

Savior, he is mighty to save, he is mighty to save. He is mighty to save.

Forever after of salvation, the rose and conquered the grave, Jesus conquered the grave.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[27 : 39] And ask that you would bless them, multiply them, and give us wisdom to know how to best use them for the furtherance of your kingdom. Bless especially, Lord God, the youth of this church as they minister and as they grow in their faith and in their grace and offer their gifts up to you.

And bless the work of community missions. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Well, be seated if you're able. Have you been blessed yet?

Oh, come on. Where are you people? Have you been blessed yet? Amen. What a wonderful thing to see all of our youth get so excited about God.

You know, I think that if some of us were half as excited, half as excited as some of these youth are right now, what a blessing we would be to the world. Amen?

Yeah, let's try and catch this fire that's been started by our youth. What a blessing. You guys are awesome. We do have some concerns along with all of our joys, some concerns and things to bring up before the Lord.

[28 : 42] One, Pastor Nicole Henderson-Johns is going up for her final interview for ordination. Praise God. So this is a long time coming, and she's worked hard for it.

We just ask that God would bless her and that you continue to keep her in your prayers. It's a final interview, but it's part of the process, and she needs to be right there.

We do have some folks who are having some health concerns of various kinds. We'll go through those real quick. Claire Bolslaw, who had taken a fall, is in rehab. I talked with her last week, and she's in good spirits, but need your prayers.

Teresa Greer's brother, Tim, is having some serious health concerns, as well as Tim Zook, who's just having some health concerns, too. Logan Matrowski broke his arm.

We want to keep him in our prayers. Kelly Putney took a bad spill at the youth retreat and has a concussion, and we want to just keep her in our prayers for a full recovery as far as that goes.

[29 : 42] Roy Leonard, who usually comes on Saturday nights, has taken a bad fall, too, and he's injured his ankle, broken it in kind of a really bad way. And Roy is in need of our prayers.

He's going to be out of commission for some time, so keep him in your prayers. Elizabeth Geary, who is a little baby, Heather Geary's daughter from the first service, is having a bad bout with tonsillitis and ear infections and all kinds of stuff that's over and over again.

Sometimes those little ones, they just get it over and over, and we need to keep them all in our prayers. We know that you all have concerns for family members, friends, and for our world, as well as the joys of all God's blessing.

Let's turn to the Lord in prayer and hear from God. Heavenly Father, what a blessing it is to be able to come to you.

You know our needs before we even ask, and yet you call us to join with you. You are the one who made us. You know that we need to release these things.

[30 : 58] We can't keep them all bottled up in ourselves and just dwell on them. But when we release them to you, we are relieved of the burden because you take it from us, and we know that we can trust you to answer, to heal, to deliver.

Father, we pray in Jesus' name right now for all of those who are sick and infirm. We pray that you touch them with your healing power.

We lift up those who are grieving losses of all kinds. We pray that you send comfort by your Spirit. Make each of us, Lord, as we encounter folks, to be a blessing.

Give us words. Give us a kind look, a gentle touch that we can share. So that folks know that it's you.

Be with us, Lord, as we reach out to our community and to the wider world.

[32 : 17] Help us to be your hands and feet. Help us to be the voice of truth in all kinds of situations for all kinds of people. Cleanse us and transform us, Lord, so that we can let that light shine brightly through us.

That when people encounter us, they would know that you are with us and that you want to be with them too.

Now, Lord, we lift up all of those things in our hearts that haven't been spoken, but that we have to lift up so that you can take them from us.

Amen. Amen. Thank you, Lord, for the promise of hearing and answering our prayers.

We trust you, and we trust that all will be well according to your will. Now, Lord, as we hear your word and hear the message that Pastor Tom has prepared for us, we just ask in Jesus' name that you would give us eyes to see and hearts to understand, ears to hear.

[33 : 53] Give us the ability to receive what you have for us this day. Let it be a blessing, Lord God, a blessing to each and every one of us.

And, Lord, let us not forget that our purpose in gathering to worship is to glorify you. Make all our worship to be a blessing to you.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen. Un■no and■el.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Good morning. Today's reading is from Deuteronomy chapter 5, verses 1 through 3 and 7 through 22.

[35 : 19] Moses summoned all Israel and said, Hear, Israel, the decrees and laws I declare in your hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us at Horeb.

It was not with our ancestors that the Lord made this covenant, but with us, with all of us who are alive here today. You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath it or in the waters below.

You shall not bow down to them or worship them. For I, the Lord of your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

You shall not misuse the name of the Lord your God, for the Lord will not hold anyone guiltless who misuses his name. Observe the Sabbath day by keeping it holy, as the Lord your God has commanded you.

Six days you shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God. On it you shall not do any work, neither you nor your son or your daughter, nor your male or female servant, nor your ox, your donkey, or any of your animals, nor any foreigner residing in your towns, so that your male and female servants may rest as you do.

[36 : 37] Remember that you were slaves in Egypt, and that the Lord your God brought you out of there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm. Therefore the Lord your God has commanded you observe the Sabbath day. Honor your father and mother as the Lord your God has commanded you, so that you may live long, and that it may go well with you in the land the Lord your God is giving you.

You shall not murder. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

You shall not set your desire on your neighbor's house or land, his male or female servant, his ox or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. These are the commandments the Lord proclaimed in a loud voice to your whole assembly there on the mountain from out of the fire, the cloud in the deep darkness, and he added nothing more.

Then he wrote them on two stone tablets and gave them to me. This is the word of the Lord. Thank you, Christy. Starting on Christmas Eve, we started talking about how our community, our nation, our people, in some regards, many parts of our world, are starting to forget God, lose the whole idea of God.

So we're examining the period when this happened before, back when the Israelites went down into Egypt, and they went with blessings and lived in the land of Goshen in a great and blessed way.

[38 : 03] But over a period of about 400 years, they began to forget God, forget who he was. 400 years later, they found themselves in slavery, in a miserable life, and they called out to God, and God rescued them, took them through the Red Sea, and brought them out to the desert, where they had to relearn, what does it mean to be a people of God?

And so we're turning to that desert to learn what we can for how we can remember God before God throws us out in a desert as a people. Although we're also talking about the desert we sort of live in this time of year as we go along.

In the desert, you need simple rules. You can't have, like, law offices with huge walls of books, like our country, with thousands of laws.

You just can't do it. You can't have a whole judicial system. You can't have jails and prisons. You can't have huge police forces. You need simple, basic rules where we honor God, and we learn how to live with each other.

And so God gave them simple rules. We don't even like that word, do we? Rules? Rules? I don't like the rules. I don't have to listen to rules. I'll do whatever I want to do. I'm an American.

[39 : 17] I live free and life. I can do anything I want. If you don't like it, ah, well, never mind. We actually celebrate people who break the rules.

Oh, they're cool, right? But we need rules. We need rules to live by. This book, Deuteronomy, is an overlooked book.

It's the fifth book out of the first five, which are the Torah, the law of God. And we tend to turn to it. Sister book, Exodus, just has more adventure, more story. This is just a bunch of rules.

We don't even pay much attention. Rules are hard sometimes, but we need rules to live by. And when we're driving down the road in the winter, we especially need rules that'll keep us alive.

A winter's day In a deep and dark December I am alone Gazing from my window To the streets below On a freshly fallen silent shroud of snow Hey folks, it's me again, Bob Sled.

[40 : 31] Well, it finally arrived, the drifting, blowing snow of winter. And hopefully all you drivers out there have good tires on your vehicle. It's important and it gives you traction. But every year, it's the same thing.

Winter hits, people aren't noticing the change. And because of it, we have to witness many people who seem to have forgotten how to drive. I see them speeding along and I back away because I know where they could be headed.

Sure enough, I see them. They start slipping and sliding all over the place. Sometimes they even get to the point where the car they're driving starts swooshing around. I'm thinking to myself, steer into it as I pray that no one gets hurt.

There can often be a fender bender or someone landing in a ditch or even worse. Common sense, along with following the rules of the road, help keep everyone safe on our roads. Now in case you're one of those crazy folks zooming by, those speed demons out there slipping and sliding all over the place, let me just pass out some wisdom for you that I've learned over the years.

Obviously, we should all be following the usual rules of the road, but there are winter rules that we need to follow as well. Let's start with the basics. You know the sign that says the speed limit, the one that we all ignore?

[41 : 39] Well, just because it says the speed limit is 55 doesn't mean it's safe to do so in the winter. There's a lot of snow on the road. Slow down. But even if you seem to be navigating okay on the snow, here's the kicker.

Everything seems to be okay, but it's not. There may not even be any snow on the road, and yet in the winter, it can still be slippery. You could be going along on the black pavement when unbeknownst to you, lurking and hiding on the road is black ice.

You've got to test the roads. Check to make sure they're safe and not slippery. Watch out for one another out there. Give a wide berth to one another when going down the road. Follow the basic rules of the road. And most of all, slow down.

Let's all be safe together on the roads, okay? Just one more safety tip from this guy. Bob Slett. Thanks, Bob.

You know, we had a long, long summer. We had a long winter last year, but then it was this long summer. It lasted like into December. Did you notice that? I mean, we really didn't even have winter until we got into January.

[42 : 46] Poor collision shops were thinking they were going to go broke and then all of a sudden that day hit. The day they love. The first day, real snow falls down and everybody forgets how to drive in the winter. Even though we've done it before, we forget how to do it.

What are the rules again? What am I supposed to do when the car goes like this? The same way we're forgetting God. And God has rules and ways for us to live.

Moses called the people together. He says, Hear, O Israel, the decrees and laws I declare to you in the hearing today. Learn them and be sure to follow them. God has made an agreement with you, He said.

You keep the laws and I'll be your God forever. We need someone to call people back, back remembering God. Romans says to us, Romans says to us, Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

But how then can they call on one they've not believed in? And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone to share? How beautiful are the feet of those who bring the good news of God.

[44 : 02] We have people who haven't heard about God. We have children who have never heard the story of Jesus because no one is sharing it anymore.

A time like this happened in the nation of Israel. They had a series of evil kings. And they went from a time when they were blessed under David and Solomon to a time when they just started falling further and further away from God.

And they had forgotten most things about God until a king by the name of Josiah was born. Josiah loved the Lord and tried to follow his ways but he didn't know the ways of God very well.

He did what he could figure out. He saw that there was a temple dedicated to God so he started working on trying to rebuild the temple and he sent the workers in and as they were reconstructing the temple they found a book.

We believe it's actually this book of Deuteronomy they found. And they opened up the book and they went oh this isn't good. Whoa! Didn't know that either.

[45 : 06] So they took the book into the king and they said King Josiah we found this book in the temple of the Lord and it says that they started reading the book in front of the king. And the king got up poured his clothes he wept because he realized that not only didn't the nation follow the laws of God he didn't even know what they were they had lost memory of God.

And we're losing memory of God. We read these commandments of God not suggestions but commandments things that God tells us we have to do.

But do we? You know in our culture people think they're okay. I'm okay. I'm a good person. I'm not bad. People have forgotten God.

People who don't know the laws of God might find out that really and truthfully most of us are bad. There's two laws in here believe it or not ten laws two laws that are illegal in the United States of America.

The other ten you are absolutely legally and protected to break according to the Constitution of the United States of America. Isn't that interesting? Our law supports the breaking of God's commandments except for two.

[46 : 31] The first few are about honoring God. Have no other God before you. Don't make any idols. Don't bow down to things that are made and created by God. You were created in the image of God. Why would you bow down to something that's less than you are?

And yet we do. We bow down to paper that we call money. We bow down to fame or power. We bow down to the grades that we get in school.

We bow down to popularity. We bow down to America's idol. We bow down to our family. We bow down to our government. We bow down to our work. We put a lot of stuff before God.

God. We bow down. We bow down. We bow down. We bow down. Don't make anything that dishonors God.

God. God. God. Remember God. Respect God. Keep Him in your life. Seven days you work.

[47 : 34] But can you take one piece of it for God? How about a whole day out of the seven take one? How about two hours a week?

We should be having a daily walk with God and yet we don't have time for God. I have to be careful because you're all here today and I'm very pleased with that. But I know what happens.

Sunny weather. Beautiful day. Well, you know. See, crummy weather it's like oh, there's something else to do. Maybe we should go to church today. One day.

That's all he's saying. Give some time for God. Honor the way you talk about Him. The way you speak about Him. And that's not just the words which we should use, right?

But it's the way in which we use God. When we disrespect God's name it's by using it in somewhere where we think it's there for our purpose.

[48 : 30] We'll hold God up and say He's supporting our political views. We'll hold God up to say He's supporting what we want for ourselves. We'll say God supports my grief.

We'll say God wants to give me for me. misusing the name of the Lord is much worse than just words.

It's when we think God is there to benefit us. These are rules that honor God. But you know a lot of the rules that God gave were just to help us.

we have rules in our lives that help us. When I was young I learned to drive by going to Driver's Ed. Good program. If you have the opportunity and you're young go to Driver's Ed.

It'll teach you a lot. My mother taught me a lot about driving. She was particularly helpful on that parallel parking you know when you're supposed to turn the car into another car and believe it won't hit it.

[49 : 28] But my father taught me the winter rules. And I don't mean the normal ones like make sure your tires are good tires are slow down which Bob Sled gave us which are very good rules.

He told me ones I never heard anywhere before like when you pull up to make a left hand turn in the winter never turn your wheels until you're actually ready to go. Because if somebody comes up and hits you from behind and your wheels are straight you'll go where nobody is.

But if your wheels are already turned to the left and they hit you from behind you go right into the traffic. That's smart. He said you know there's going to be a time when you're going to lose control of your car.

He says you know there's ways you can avoid it but it'll happen because that's the way winter is and you're going to start to feel that the car is a bit out of control. The key is not to worry about the car being out of control but don't you be out of control.

He says what happens is you just start looking because if you're going to go off the road make sure when you go off the road tree or a telephone pole hey that's good stuff.

[50 : 32] Some of the things in the rules that we talk about are really just designed to help us and God gave us rules so that we would have a good life with other people so that we would honor the people made in God's image the people we say we love.

Honor your mother and father so that you can live a long time it says in the land that God has given to you. Do you know why? Because if you're a disgrace and an embarrassment to your parents you should move away.

You follow? You shouldn't be living in such a way that you make your parents always embarrassed about you. That's ridiculous. You should live so that everything you say and do your grandma would be proud of.

Right? So that you could tell grandma everything you do that grandma would say do it good. If not you're an embarrassment you've got to move on. It says you shouldn't steal or kill.

Those are the two by the way that are most of the time illegal in our country. Not always. It depends on how you do the stealing. Just ask some people they know how that's why they have so much more money than you.

[51 : 47] It's how you do the murdering and the killing. Because we do some of that too as a society. But for the most part we would agree that it's wrong to steal and wrong to kill. But Jesus takes it another step further in the book of Matthew in chapter 5 he says if you get angry with a person it's the same as killing them.

You've destroyed who they are. You've ripped them down to nothingness. If you have somebody who is in need and they ask you for something and you don't give it out of your abundance that you don't need you're stealing from them he says.

Jesus makes it even harder than what we would expect. And if you look at a man or a woman with lust in your eyes it's the same as committing adultery he says oh my gosh.

But that's because we shouldn't do it. Why would we think that it's okay to steal? Why would we think it's okay to kill? And usually it's people we know.

Why would we think it's okay to break the bounds with someone we say we love? Why would we think that it's okay to hurt people and live in such a way that they can't count on us?

[53 : 06] we bear false witness we don't support our friends we're not there when somebody's in trouble because we don't want to take the heat so we let them go down instead.

Why would we do that if we say we love people and yet we do? We've even come to the point where we've so forgotten God that we say why even get married? It just gets in the way it's just rules and laws we're just going to complicate our lives and by the way it's a hassle and we might lose our money in the end and of course we all know money is really in many ways the thing that drives our world.

Talk about a false God first Timothy says to us the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. Some people eager for money have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.

And that brings us to the last one. I could do a sermon on all of these you know that and I have. The last one we've built our world around. Thou shalt not covet which means to envy or desire something that doesn't belong to you.

Not your neighbor's husband or wife or not their kids or not their grades or not their success at work or not their job or not their money or not their house or not their toys.

[54 : 27] My precious. We're not supposed to live in an unreasonable desire about anything. We have so much that people wandering through the desert can't carry all this stuff.

Could you imagine if you had to carry all your stuff with you every single day wherever you went? You would be paring down tons of stuff you don't need.

But we have built our entire world and economy around creating in you a desire for stuff you don't need. Success that wasn't meant for you.

A job that wasn't designed for you. A family that wasn't given to you. A grade that wasn't intended for you. A life that somebody else has and we believe that if we don't have it somehow we fail because we don't live for what God has already decided to bless in our lives.

so we're the most blessed population that has ever lived on the face of the earth and we're miserable. Solomon in all his wealth and glory couldn't even imagine living like one of us and all we do is complain about what we don't have.

[55 : 51] God gave us ten commandments would we rip our clothing if we really examined them? Do we really care?

Would we change our behaviors? We are so losing God in our lives. We've lost his commands.

We've lost his ideas. We've lost his story. And by the way that's what unifies a nation. nowhere in history has there been a time where a nation gives up its God and doesn't see curses occur.

And yet we give up our God for so many useless things. It used to be his story we learned and now we don't even learn history. We don't care.

winter's dead in a deep and dark December I am alone hiding in my room.

[56 : 50] I'm safe within my womb. I touch no one and no one touches me. I am a rock. I am an island and a rock feels no pain and an island never cries.

inside we're weeping. We're hurting because we've lost so much. We even have a name for it.

We call it postmodernism. You have your truth. You have yours. I have mine. You have your beliefs. Your idea. You make up your God. I make up mine. There's no really ultimate truth.

Whatever you want to do is okay. Just don't interfere with my rights to do whatever I want to do. Everybody should be free to believe any dang thing they want to and it doesn't make any difference anyways.

So people do all kinds of crazy things and they think it's right. I was in court one time. I won't tell you why. And I'm listening to the people tell their stories.

[57 : 52] Actually, it's fun just to go and listen. You know, sit in the room. And there's this kid. I'm going to say, I don't know for sure, maybe 12, 13 years old at the most. And he's standing before the judge with his mother.

And the judge looks at him and says, there was a police officer that had his radar out for the road and he clocked you on the snowmobile going 83 miles an hour. He turns to the mother and he says, don't you think that's a little bit fast to be going on a snowmobile?

And she said, not really, your honor. That seems reasonable to me. I'm going, ahhh. Not only is it not reasonable, but that's not what you tell the judge.

If you're ever doing that with your kids, you say, absolutely, it's unreasonable and he's going to be crowded from that snowmobile for two years and they would have just walked out of there. Instead, the judge just threw the book at both of them.

Why? Because we have no standard. We have nothing that says it's right or wrong. It doesn't matter if it's safe, it's good. We don't care. We don't care.

[59 : 03] When I first started as a pastor, most of the sermons that were preached in church were about guilt, designed to make people feel guilty, guilty, guilty, guilty. So I decided back then as a young pastor, I was going to preach about the love of God, the grace of God, how God really cares for you and loves you.

And usually I preach about that. But here's the problem. Some people think that means that they've got sort of a get out of hell free car. That it really doesn't matter what they do, they can do anything they want to, and it won't make any difference.

And the problem is we're putting our entire culture, our lives, our children's lives, our grandchildren's lives, our neighbors' and friends' lives in danger of hell. And while I'd love to preach to heaven the love of God into you, I'll scare the hell out of you if that's what I need to do to get you where you need to go.

Romans chapter 2 says, God will repay each person according to what they have done. To those who by persistence and doing good seek glory, honor, and immortality, he will give eternal life.

But for those who are self-seeking, reject the truth, and follow evil, there will be wrath and anger. there are consequences to our actions.

[60 : 23] It doesn't work that we can just say it doesn't matter what we do. I read in the paper the other day a young girl who was also standing in front of a judge.

She had been in a traffic accident, evidently, and she killed a woman. And the husband of this woman said, you know, I worked for 40, 50 years of my life so I could have a few years of joy with my wife and you took it away from me.

The young girl said, if I could take back that decision of how I got behind that wheel and if I could do what I know now and not have driven that night, I would never have done it.

We think that it doesn't matter what we do, but it does. There's consequences, consequences that affect our lives now, consequences that affect our lives for eternity. Doing wrong is not, okay.

God made an agreement. You keep his laws, all of them, and you can claim heaven. So if you've never broken any of God's laws, right now you can say to God, you've got to give me eternal life, and he'll say yes.

[61 : 30] Anybody out there think you've really kept every law of God? I know I haven't. The Bible says we've all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, so the only way we can find eternal life is through grace.

God offers provenient grace. In verse 6 of this passage it says God saved them before they had done anything right. He blessed them, he offered grace before they even deserved it.

The grace that goes before is what we would call that. It's like the new snow. Something about people who don't live in this part of the country that they've never experienced is the absolute glory when you look out your window right after a storm.

Isn't it incredible? I mean, it's white everywhere. The slush and mess and nonsense of the road is covered in white. The trees all barren and brown are covered in icicles and white snow.

The dirty mud in the backyard and that stuff your dog does disappears. And the world is perfect and beautiful.

[62 : 38] is that not glorious? Amen? Can you imagine never having seen that in your life? What a loss that would be. That's what pervenient grace is like.

It covers over all the brokenness. One shot, first time, God says, I will forgive you right off the bat to see what you do. It's like the grace we've been given from the past.

Our parents gave us churches. Our parents gave us the Bible. our forebearers gave us all that we needed. But in this passage, Moses says, we've got to make a covenant agreement right now today.

God has no grandchildren. We can't expect that just because our parents took care of it in the past, or just because somebody else did it somewhere else, that somehow we're covered.

covered. Because that covering has to be followed up by something much more than that. In the book of John, Jesus said it this way, Jesus found a man in the temple and said to him, see you are well again, stop sinning, or something worse may happen to you.

[63 : 52] We need grace, but more than just a quick covering grace. We need grace with the repentance that changes us. repentance needs to turn around, to change, to follow the rules, to stop sinning so something worse doesn't happen to us.

We don't need grace so we can go and sin more. We need grace so we'll stop. You know, God gave ten commandments. You can't even cover all the rules in this country.

That's why we have lawyers, just to help us understand what they are. God gave us ten. We can't handle it. God said in verse 9, I'm a jealous God.

He's jealous. He doesn't want to share you with evil. He doesn't want to share you with false gods. He doesn't want to share you with hopeless things that will not last and will not gain you eternal life. God is a jealous God.

He doesn't even want to share you with false religion. Religion, you know, sometimes is just like that white snow over the black ice. It'd be better off not to even have it there. It hides what's really dangerous underneath.

[64 : 58] It doesn't really fix anything. It's cheap grace. God wants us to have a grace that impacts our lives so that when we fail, we weep and we change and we transform and we listen to the laws of God.

In the mid-1970s, I went to school in Rochester. I borrowed my father's car to get that. Now, my father had tanks. That's what he bought because we had five teenagers, you know.

So we had one of those station wagons. You've seen them in the TV shows, right? They're like about massive things, right? I'm driving down the 490 in the winter and all of a sudden, whoosh, whoosh, back and forth and back and forth.

This went on for about a half hour. Well, actually, it felt like a half hour. It's probably 30 seconds, you know. But I'm back and forth and back and forth and go, oh my gosh, what do I do? And then I thought, Dad said, don't panic.

It's okay. Just look around for a place to go off the road where you won't hit a tree. And there's one, whoosh, right into the snow bank, off the road. We flew, poosh, and landed in the snow, safely.

[66 : 18] No airbags going off or we didn't have them back then. Got out of the car, dropped through the snow. No cell phones back then. You know, you went to the road, hitched to the closest gas station where I call up my dad, dad, my dad, the car is off the road on the 490.

Kind of. So he calls a tow truck guy and pulls the, I had to walk back to the car, he calls a tow truck driver to get the car up on the road, which then I drove back home.

Got home, my dad said, you're okay? I said, yeah, I'm okay. And he went out to look at the car, you know, like dads do. Alright. Came back in, and I knew I had to go to school the next day in Rochester.

I went to bed, I got up in the morning, thinking, how am I going to get to Rochester? And my dad tossed me the keys and said, be safe. Because I didn't mess up?

God knows we're going to mess up. God knows we're going to make mistakes. But are we at least trying to follow the rules that God gave us? Are we trying to do the safest, the best thing we can?

[67 : 36] Are we trying to live a life that keeps God in our world? in verse 9, it's a kind of tough one.

It says that God punishes the sins of the parents to the third and fourth generations of those who hate him. It's the truth, by the way. If you live a sinful life, the little eyes are watching.

They will go by whatever you give them as an example. If you do something consistently wrong, they will believe that that's the way they should live. And even if it's evil, they will do it.

And even if you tell them not to do it, they will do it because you do it. And what you do wrong will be visited to the next and the next and the next generation that will be handed down as the ways of your family.

Josiah had that handed to him, but he turned back to God. He repented. And the beauty of this passage, verse 10, it says, but he shows love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments.

[68 : 48] God can break the curse. God can change the trajectory of our lives, of our nation, of our people, of our families. God can change our eternal destiny.

But not with a false grace. Not with one that just is a pretend cover over a few words said on a Sunday morning, but one that permeates our whole life and changes us so that we become the people we were meant to be.

Changed. Transformed. Never the same again. I will never be the same again.

I will never be the same again. I will walk the path, I'll run the race, and I will never be the same again.

All I find, so I will never be the same again. Oh, I find the waters again and again.

[70 : 16] Swing away the darkness, burn away the shame, and let a flavor to glorify your name.

There are highlights, the deeper seas, Whatever you need to do, Lord, do it in me. The glory of God fills my life and I will never be the slave again.

Fall like fire, song like rain, flow like my waters again and again.

Sweep away the darkness, burn away the church, and let us labor to glorify your name.

I will never be the same again. I can never return, I'll close the door.

[71 : 38] I will walk the path around the race and I will never be the same again.

And I will never be the same again. I will never be the same again.

Amazing praise, how sweet the sound.

Amazing praise, how sweet the sound.

I will never be the same again. I once was lost, but now I'm found.

[72 : 46] Was blind, but now I see. I once raised my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.

How precious did that grace appear, the hour I first believed.

mucha' great glory giacji wrevunkatho borg ■■■■ at ■■■■ I■■■■ Christ, how sweet the sound. Jeffsdon, ■■■■■■■■■■ p. Some team of adelante, I was blind.

I■■■ of joy!CPorty amiscrite. When I KonINGS Jaguar GUZIN, She was blind, I wo■■■■■emptive children. And give up amazing grace The Lord has promised good to me His word my hope says good He will my shield and portion be As long as life endures My chains are gone, I'm bent and free My God, my Savior, has ransomed me And like a blood, His mercy reigns

Unending love, amazing grace I've changed our love, I've been set free My God, my Savior, has ransomed me And like a blood, His mercy reigns Unending love, amazing grace The earth shall soon dissolve like snow The sun for red to shine But God who called me here below Will be forever mine

[75 : 37] Will be forever mine You are forever mine Please be seated It is an amazing grace That pulls away all the brokenness And sin in our lives And God offers that to you He will give that to you freely But it's not cheap grace We come and confess our sins Which is essential to recognize our need for God But then God expects us also to repent Which means to change our direction To live differently To live differently Not that we'll be perfect But that we're not going to be living for what's broken We're going to be living for what's God's Will you pray with me?

Dear God in heaven I have sinned I've broken your laws I've done things wrong You know what they are, Lord Listen, Lord As I share from my heart To yours And now dear God, forgive me Change me Turn me around Help me to remember you Every day Every hour So that I might be different I might be different I might be yours And live in such a way That the children that come after me Will know God

In Jesus name we pray Amen In the name of Jesus Christ Your sins are forgiven In the name of Jesus Christ For our sins are forgiven In the name of Jesus Christ For our sins are forgiven Glory to God Amen I go and sin no more Purify my heart When may be as gold And pray for my sins And pray for my sins And pray for my sins In the name of Jesus Christ And pray for my sins Purify my heart When may be as gold And precious silver Purify my heart Let me be as gold And precious silver Purify my heart Let me be as gold Pure and gold Purify my heart Let me be as gold Pure and gold Purify my heart Let me be as gold Purify my heart Let me be as gold And precious silver Purify my heart Let me be as gold Let me be as gold Pure and gold

Refine his life My heart's one desire is to be holy.

Set apart for you, Lord. I choose to be holy. Set apart for you, my master.

[79 : 11] Ready to do your way. Purify my heart.

Cleanse me from within. And make me holy. Purify my heart.

Cleanse me from my sin. Deep within. Revive my aside.

My heart's one desire is to be holy. Set apart for you, Lord.

I choose to be holy. Set apart for you, my master.

[80 : 16] Ready to do your will. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. God loves us so much. God sent his son to take our sin.

To take our shame. to make a way for us to become holy. Come to the table this morning. Come and receive all that God has for you.

God wants to bless you. God wants you to receive him afresh this day. If you love God, repent of your sin, and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ, you are welcome at the table this morning.

Whether you've been coming to church all your life, or it's the first time you ever came, if you want to seek God, you are welcome at the table to receive all God has for you.

[81 : 22] So come, the Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. Thanks and praise and glory and honor are rightly yours, our Lord and God, for you alone are worthy.

In time beyond our dreaming, you brought forth life out of darkness. And in the love of Christ your Son, you set man and woman at the heart of your creation.

You loved the world so much that you sent your only Son to bring us life eternal. Dying, he destroyed our death. Alleluia. Rising, he restored our life.

Alleluia. And so we praise you with the faith of every time and place, joining with the choirs of angels and the whole congregation in their eternal hymn.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

[82 : 31] Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. We thank you that you called a covenant people to be a light to the nations. Through Moses, you taught us to love your law.

And in the prophets, you cried out for justice. In the fullness of your mercy, you became one with us in Christ Jesus, who gave himself up for us on the cross.

You made us alive together with him, that we may rejoice in his presence and share his peace always. 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. He gave it to his disciples saying, Take, eat. This is my body, which is given for you.

[83 : 40] He said, drink from this, all of you. This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me.

Christ has died. Christ has 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.

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 the prayer Jesus taught us?

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.

Even if this is your first time in church here, you're welcome to come. It doesn't matter your age, it doesn't matter what you've done, or what you've been, or what you are. It's simply what you seek. If you seek Christ, come and join us at the table, at the rail for prayers for healing, or the light of healing.

[86 : 38] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Judy Muhlandese. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. I want to see you. I want to see you.

To see you high and lifted up, shining in the light of your glory. Your hands, your power, and love let's me sing, Holy, Holy, Holy.

[87 : 46] I want to see you. Open the eyes of my heart, open the eyes of my heart I want to see you.

I want to see you, to see you higher than today I'm Shining in the light of new morning Oh,
how can you come in love as we sing Holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy
Holy, holy, holy I want to see you Holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy Holy, holy, holy

I want to see you When I ask you Feel your window You wanna ■■ to the meeting met
you Nay can you Sama?

Yay Hi I'm Jame I really loved you Thank you I really enjoyed your work Thank you.

Thank you.

[90 : 39] Thank you.

I'd like to invite y'all to stand if you're able as we sing together, Since Jesus came into our heart. Thank you. Thank you.

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

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

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

[92 : 46] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you, Jesus, and enter is my heart.

Well, it took us a little longer today, but we had church. Amen? Now, the key is not to have church today, but to have church every day and take God with you. And make this your life. Make this your strength. Make this your power so that you carry God throughout your life and into eternity.

And carry it to the next generation and the generation and the generation after that. May the Lord bless you, be with you, keep you, and strengthen you this day and always. Go in his peace and drive care. Amen.