

Love With Your Heart

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Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] Hi church family. It's really good to be with you this Sunday morning. I'm glad to be able to kind of say hi in person. I'm Nancy Himes. And I'm John Himes. And we're part of the praise band and part of the gathering band here at PCUMC.

You're going to hear a song that my husband and I worked on with the help of our bassist Tom Crosby in a few minutes. And just wanted to give you a little bit of background about the song.

As this whole crisis started and we were in a position where we needed to be separated physically, the church's emphasis was on helping people remain connected emotionally.

And in the morning during my devotions and prayer, I was inspired to start thinking about what would my prayer to God be in this time for myself and for everyone else.

And what overwhelmingly came out of this was based on two scriptures that you'll see at the beginning and the end of the video. But also some of the inspiration came from people that were probably going through an amazingly difficult time that were able to share some of the silver linings that they were seeing come out of the situation.

[1 : 15] And the prayer in and of itself was basically to give me eyes to see God, to give me ears to hear what he has to say, and to give me a heart to do what he's calling me to do.

And I hope that could maybe be a prayer for you. So the name of our song is Silver Linings. And this guy right here was a huge part of helping me pull it off, not only as the drummer, but my sound engineer.

And anything to add there, hon? I just moved a lot of stuff. I just hope everybody's very, everyone's safe and healthy as we start to work our way back to a little bit of normalcy. So please, please be safe.

And I hope everyone is doing well. And I hope everyone can find their own silver linings. Good to be with you guys. Good to be with you guys.

The rainbows from the rain. Give us ears to hear your promise. That you work all things for good. Help us be your hands and feet on earth.

[2 : 43] And do the things we should. Silver linings all around. They are where our hope is found.

Silver linings where darkness stood. You are working all things for good. You are working all things for good. So I look for the linings.

The silver and the clouds. I'll be somebody's rainbow. God's feet on the ground. God's feet on the ground. The night are times that shape us to be more like the Lord.

We're called to be servants to bless the whole world. When we lose sight of your goodness.

Draw us back with songs of praise. As we sing the words of truth and hope. It's our voices we will raise. Help us keep our hearts from closing. Focus on the light that shines.

[3 : 56] Be your helpers with compassion. Be the branches to your vine. Silver linings all around.

They are where our hope is found. Silver linings where darkness stood. You are working all things for good.

So I look for the linings. The silver and the clouds. I'll be somebody's rainbow. God's feet on the ground.

Hard times that shape us to be more like the Lord. We're called to be servants to bless the whole world. Silver linings all around.

They are where our hope is found. Silver linings where darkness stood.

[5 : 02] You are working all things for good. Yes, you are working all things for good.

Good morning, everybody.

Welcome to worship at Pendleton Center and First United Methodist Church in Niagara Falls. Wonderful to have you here for worship. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day that the Lord has made. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

[6 : 07] This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day. This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us pray.

Eternal God, holy and mighty, we thank you for your presence among us. Fill us with your peace, your grace, your love, and your glory. Reveal to us your will and sanctify us by your spirit as we worship you in the name of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.

Now I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together, Jesus United by Thy Grace. Jesus United by Thy Grace.

Jesus United by Thy Grace. And each to each endeared. With confidence we sing Thy grace, and know our prayer is heard.

[7 : 28] Help us to help each other, Lord, each other's cross to bear. Let all their friendly aid afford, and feel each other's care.

Touched by the lodestone of Thy love, let all our hearts agree. And ever toward each other move, and ever move toward thee.

The Lord be with you. And also with you. Please be seated. We do welcome you to worship with us today, and we are so thankful and grateful that you're here with us. We ask that everyone take a moment and please fill out your friendship card.

There's a link there for you to fill it out. We just need your name, but if we don't have your information, fill out your contact information so we can get connected. There's also on the friendship card an opportunity to place any of your prayer concerns so that we can pray over those concerns.

And also a place for you to proclaim a blessing, a time to rejoice. This is what God is doing in our lives, and we want to rejoice along with you. So we ask everyone, please take a moment, fill out the friendship card.

[8 : 48] We'd also want to invite you to continue in discipleship, in discipleship and in community. And one of the ways that we can do that is through Facebook. We have a Facebook group called Peace UMC Fellowship Group, and we invite everyone to join into that.

And that has evening music and devotions and prayers, and it's a wonderful time of community. And with that, we're also asking for people to consider serving in that ministry.

We're asking for people to write blogs or maybe do a devotion or lead some prayers, or maybe they could be a facilitator, a moderator, or a greeter online. There's so much that you can get involved in.

And if you're interested in getting involved in that, let Lori Jaigow know about that. Also, we have the opportunity to create some small groups for discipleship, so that, you know, the community on Facebook is a larger group.

We want to have some small groups where we can actually see each other and have conversations with one another about scripture and our faith life. So we invite all of you to consider and prayerfully consider joining a small group.

[9 : 54] And if you're interested in that, let the office know. We also, in worship, have opportunities to give. One of the things about our relationship with God is we recognize that God is God, and God is richly blessed each and every one of us.

And so we give back with gratitude and thankfulness and praise. And we want to make sure that we have an opportunity to do that. And so in our worship service, we have a time of offering where we give back.

And so we give back with sincere hearts in praise of God for all that God has done for all of us. And so this morning we'll be hearing an offertory piece by Susan Wissejowicz.

The Lord does not let the triggered motorbanks and wide beat. And so the flesh cannot be talked to a man in effect, We have really not been included in the■, The words thatützitzit can be viewed, The words the same nota sa Ataino ■■ has found sola by mine, But we can end the vs. raibh &naita; clay The blood championship has found the That so my soul shall be revealed, And so the soul shall be ready for all that indeed.

The soul shall be revealed, The always way that sound of knowing the profession in an artiste must be revealed, Thank you.

[11 : 33] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[14 : 03] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

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

Thank you. and I who get to be privileged to be among you soon will follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit and look for God's path along the way. Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.

Let us rejoice and give thanks. Amen. Amen.

[16 : 40] The Gospel of Mark. It's a story about little children and it says people were bringing little children to Jesus because they wanted him to touch them and show how much he loved them.

But the disciples that were with Jesus, do you know what they said? They said, no kids allowed. Did you ever have anybody say no kids allowed to you? I remember when I was a little girl, there were times when my mom and dad maybe were having people over for a party or something like that.

And they would let us say hello. We could stay up that long. But once all the guests got there, we had to go right off to bed because it was a party for grownups and there were no kids allowed.

I don't know if that's ever happened to you. And I guess there are times that sometimes things are for kids and sometimes things are for grownups. But this time, when the disciples were saying no kids allowed to the children that the people were bringing to see Jesus, Jesus said, let the little children come to me.

Do not hinder them for the kingdom of God belongs to people who are like children. Isn't that amazing?

[18 : 03] Jesus welcomes everybody. With Jesus, there isn't a time for grownups and a time for kids. There's just time for everybody.

That shows God's love for us. What are you thankful for? I'm thankful that Jesus invites me and you to come and be with him, to come and sit on his lap.

Did you see this picture? This is a picture that shows Jesus with the little children. It's a very nice picture that's down in our junior church in the ark. Well, can you tell anybody in your house what you're thankful for?

I think I'm thankful for my family. I'm thankful for my mom and my dad, all my sisters, for all of my children, all the people in my family.

But you know what other family I'm thankful for? I'm thankful for my church family, too. That's all of the people in the church that love Jesus and that work together to do things to show Jesus how much we love him.

[19 : 14] Can you tell the people in your house right now something you're thankful for? And grownups, you can do that, too. Tell your children what you're thankful for. Even if you're by yourself, you can tell Jesus what you're thankful for.

Go ahead. Take a moment and tell them what you're thankful for today. Wow. I hear some people who are thankful for their pets.

I hear some children who are thankful for the good food on their tables. I hear some people who are thankful that they have people who love them very much. Wow. You have wonderful things to be thankful for, don't you?

I'm so excited to hear about that because the Bible tells us to always give thanks. In Psalm 107, and I'll bet some of you remember this verse, the Bible says, Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

His love endures forever. That's Psalm 107, verse 1. I have a picture that shows what I'm thankful for.

[20 : 21] See, and it says, Thank you, Jesus. And there's a cross that looks like the cross that we have in the church. And there are people who look kind of like a family.

I want my picture to show that I am thankful for my family. Like I said, my mom and dad and my children and my husband and all those folks. But I'm also thankful for you, my church family.

Maybe today when church is over, you could draw a picture. And maybe you could write on it, Thank you, Jesus. Or maybe the words, Give thanks.

And you could draw on your picture, pictures of things that you're thankful for. I think that would be a neat thing to either put on the refrigerator or maybe hang in your window so that they can see, people can see all of the things that we're thankful for and that we thank God for them.

So I'm thinking, let's pray. I want to be praying. And let you pray with me. Because we want to tell God how thankful we are. Ready? Dear God, thank you for sending Jesus to save us from our sins.

[21 : 38] Thank you for the Holy Spirit who always reminds us how much you love us.

Help us to remember to be thankful for your love every day. Amen.

Amen. And we want to be thankful for God's love. You know why. Ready? Make a heart. Make a heart with your hands. You've got it. Here we go. When God's love is in my heart, I can love everybody.

That's it. That's terrific. And we're going to be singing that song, Thankful, right now. Because I know how thankful you are. And I know you want to be more thankful. I also want you to do something else.

In a little while, I'm going to be leading prayer with all of the people who are watching church today. And I want you to look when I'm leading prayer.

[22 : 44] There's another painting in that prayer room that has a picture of Jesus with little children. When we get to the prayer time, I want you to look for it and let your folks know when you see it, okay?

I'm thankful for you. I'm thankful that Jesus loves you very much. And you can tell someone that too. Say, Jesus loves you very much. That's right. Jesus does love us very much.

Now let's sing about being thankful. Don't forget to look for the picture later. Bye-bye now. Bye-bye now.

Bye-bye now.

Bye-bye now. Bye-bye now.

[24 : 43] Bye-bye now. Bye-bye now.

I want to be grateful. I want to be. I want to be. I want to be. I want to be. I want to be. I want to be.

I want to be. And as we move toward our prayer time, I want to remind you that you can fill out a friendship card online.

With it, you can tell us what you need us to know. Give notes to the staff. Let us know your blessings. We're always happy to hear your blessings. And you can communicate your prayer requests to us.

So go to PendletonChurch.org and click on that button that is for the online friendship card. Today we're going to be moving on with our ongoing prayer vigil.

[25 : 53] And this week's prompt comes from our prayer team member, Jan Hodge. She asked if we would look at Proverbs 3, verses 5 and 6.

Jan writes, As we pray, we'll continue to pray for all of these changes.

God leads. God will direct us in all of these things. So as we pray, we'll continue to pray for all of these changes. And we had been asking, last week we had a specific request from Pastor Kathy about her transition to come into the church.

And Pastor Scott Johnson has written, I would ask that the people pray that we are able to connect meaningfully and quickly to build our relationships as we begin serving together.

Also, pray that God will make clear the ways God is calling us to be the voice, hands, and heart of Christ in responding to the challenges facing our region and our world.

[27 : 41] Those are some good prayer prompts for us for this week. And we do want to make sure that we set aside time each day to pray as God leads us, to pray as our brothers and sisters in Christ ask for help.

We have in our church a couple of concerns. Recovering from surgery are Dave Wagner and Kyle Thornton. And I know that you have many concerns on your heart as well.

So with all of these concerns, let's turn to our Lord in prayer. Gracious Heavenly Father, we come before you knowing that you already know everything we need.

You know our hearts better than we know them ourselves. Yet, you invite us to come into your presence. To pray for those concerns that are on our hearts.

To know that you hear us and answer us. And so, Lord, we do come before you and ask that you will keep your hand of protection on all of those who are your people, Lord God.

[29 : 09] Those you have created, those who know you and those who do not. We pray for those who do know you, Lord God, that by your grace you continue to draw each of us deeper into the wisdom and knowledge of you.

That the eyes of our understanding, being enlightened, we may continue moving forward in our knowledge of all that you have called us to. And help us to walk with you as you have called us to walk.

We pray for those, Lord God, who do not know you. Even though they are dearly, dearly loved by you, we ask that by your grace you continue to draw them toward yourself.

Reveal yourself to them, Lord God. Let the scales fall from their eyes and let them look and see who you are in all your grace and love and mercy and majesty.

Let them be drawn to you and be saved. Lord, equip your church so that we may indeed move forth into this world and show people who you are by our actions, with our words, as we demonstrate hearts of love and care for all people.

[30 : 40] We ask in Jesus' name, Lord God, right now, help us to be your people so that we may help in all kinds of ways as you call us.

We pray in Jesus' name, Lord, for the transition in the church. We pray that you would continue to guide and equip Pastor Kathy and Pastor Scott as they prepare to come here.

Give each of the people, Lord, the staff and the lay people and the folks who are volunteering and the folks who come to hear the word and do all of the things that make Pendleton Center and Niagara Falls First churches so amazing and wonderful.

Just give each of them, Lord God, hearts of love for their new pastors. Help them, Lord God, to be able to reach out, to help one another and to help in this transition.

We pray also right now, Lord God, in Jesus' name for Pastor Tom and Pastor Jackie as they are entering into that time of retirement. We know Pastor Jackie has been retired for a bit, Lord, but this is new for Pastor Tom and we just pray in Jesus' name that you help him.

[32 : 10] Help him to have peace in his heart and a joy in his spirit about this new chapter that you have called him into, Lord. Help him to serve his family well and anyone, Lord, that you bring into his path.

I pray also asking in Jesus' name for the transition that you're calling me to. I just ask for a moment, Lord, when you can just hear that I need help too.

I pray in Jesus' name, Lord God, now for all of those who are sick and infirm. I pray in Jesus' name for all of your healing power to be poured out, for you to touch each and every one who is needing a healing touch from you in their spirits, their souls, and their bodies, Lord.

Make them whole as you know that they need to be made whole. Give wisdom to their doctors, to their nurses, to all of those who are caring for them. We pray, Lord, for those who are grieving losses of all kinds, asking for your peace and comfort.

Draw near to them by your spirit. Let them know that you hold them in the palm of your hand and give them all they need to continue on in you.

[33 : 34] We pray, Lord God, in Jesus' name for an end to all of the sickness being caused by this COVID virus. We speak to COVID-19 and say, curse you to your roots in Jesus' name.

And we say, in Jesus' name, be gone from us. We pray in Jesus' name for speedy healing for those who are infected, for protection for those who are not, and for a swift end to this time.

We pray for those who are lonely, Lord God, and ask that you would comfort them, send them friends, send them help. Pray in Jesus' name for people who are suffering from all other kinds of diseases and troubles.

Just let it be gone. Bring your peace, Lord. Bring your peace. And Lord God, we ask in Jesus' name that you will bring justice into this world.

Lord, you are a God of justice. You are the only one who can justly judge anything. And we pray in Jesus' name that you give your people hearts of love that reach out in just ways to one another.

[35 : 05] That we would see the troubles of this world, how people have been treated unjustly, and we ask in Jesus' name for you to show us how we should pray, how we should respond, how we should act in the midst of all of these troubles.

We pray for your love, the love of God to be shed abroad in all of our hearts, and that it would not return to us empty, but that it would be filled, that we would be filled with your love, and that we could be vessels that help others to see how to be filled with your love too.

We pray for mercy, Lord God, for all of us as we have all caused hurt to someone at some point in time.

we pray for your mercy, for those who are hurting us now. We pray for ourselves and ask for your help.

Now, Lord, as we look into your word, as we continue songs of praise and we continue hearing your word spoken, we continue in prayer, we just ask in Jesus' name, Lord God, that you would wash over us with your presence, wash over us with the word as it's spoken, wash over us as we sing songs of praise.

[36 : 49] Remake us, Lord. Transform us, Lord, into your likeness. We desire to be more like Jesus in every way. So bless our worship, Lord God, and help us to be a blessing to you.

Bless Pastor Tom as he brings the message and let it bless us as well. And now we pray as Jesus has taught us for ourselves, for our families, for our church, for our community, for our world.

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.

[38 : 10] 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. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Good morning.

Today's reading is from Ecclesiastes, chapter 4, verses 4 through 12. And I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person's envy of another.

This too is meaningless, a chasing after the wind. Fools fold their hands and ruin themselves. Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and chasing after the wind.

[39 : 33] Again I saw something meaningless under the sun. There was a man all alone. He had neither son nor brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

For whom am I toiling, he asked. And why am I depriving myself of enjoyment? This too is meaningless, a miserable business. Two are better than one because they have good return for their labor.

If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.

But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken. This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God. People ask me, what are you going to do when you retire? Well, I thought I'm going to work on the house. I'm going to work on my family.

[40 : 34] I'm going to work on friendships. All those things I didn't have time for. Out at the lake, I need to fix my porch. I need to gut my kitchen. I need to put a vapor barrier underneath the cottage.

Finish off closets and guest rooms. And oh, there's so much work. And work can bring joy. Or work can feel like miserable toil.

Verse 4 said, I saw all the toil and all the achievement spring from one person's envy of another. This too is meaningless. A chasing after the wind.

How much of the work we do is caused by what other people think of us? It could be people we love and care about or people we don't even know. It's kind of meaningless to worry about what strangers think.

I understand worrying about what God thinks, about what our friends, our family think. There's going to be people in your life that five years from now, 20 years from now, are going to be essential to your life.

[41 : 37] But then there's going to be people that are just going to pass through your life. And you'll never see again. Why do we spend so much time worrying about them? And yet we do. In verse 6, it talks about tranquility.

Better one handful with tranquility than two handfuls with toil and a chasing after the wind. Tranquility comes when we're content, when we're comfortable with what we have, or probably just as important, probably more important, who we have in our lives.

During this sermon series, we're going to talk about loving the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. How do we love God and fulfill that greatest commandment?

How do we love God with all our heart? Verse 8, it says, There was a man who was all alone. He didn't have a son or a brother. There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content from all his wealth.

For whom am I toiling? He asked. And why am I depriving myself enjoyment? This, too, is meaningless. A miserable business.

[43 : 00] It's not good to be alone. It says that right in the beginning of the Bible in Genesis. It's not good for people to be alone. What we do, and who we are, in many ways, is wrapped up in loving God with all our heart and doing likewise with other people.

Remember the second command? And love your neighbor as yourself. How do we love God? God is wrapped up in how we love our neighbor, how we treat the people around us.

I like it when people go by our house and say, Oh, we love your house. It's so beautiful. Makes me happy. But that's only a house.

There's a difference between a house and a home. There's a difference between a structure we work on, maybe that others might admire, and a home we create so people can enjoy and live and love there.

And the same thing happens in this passage. He says, I saw that all toil and all achievement spring from one person's envy of another person.

- [44 : 15] When we live in envy, we live in brokenness. In verse 9, it says, Two are better than one because they have a good return from their labor. It's good that we have someone in our lives, a partner.

The Bible refers to it as a helpmate. A helpmate. We have a lot of things going on right now in our world. We have a lot of people who are feeling brokenness and pain and hurt.

We see it in the nightly news. We see it in the relationships with one another when we talk about all this protest and riots.

The protests are designed to give our concern for what we think is wrong. Riots are designed to hurt somebody that we feel has something we don't think they deserve.

One is based in trying to make a better partnership. And the other is based in envy and brokenness.

- [45 : 27] I know that there's a lot of difficulty. And I also know that most people don't wake up in the morning and say they're going to do something bad. No one says it's all right for me to go this morning and kneel on somebody's neck and kill them.

But it happened. I'm sure that police officer in Buffalo who pushed that 75-year-old man didn't wake up in the morning and say, I'm going to get some old person today.

But it happened. Brokenness is a part of our lives. And loving one another is figuring out a way to break through the brokenness.

The brokenness that either we cause intentionally or the brokenness that we cause unintentionally. Genesis chapter 2 verse 18 said that God saw that people were alone and said, I will make a suitable helpmate for them.

A suitable helpmate. A partner for their life. Someone to walk beside them so that they're stronger and healthier. In verse 10 it says, Two are better, this is verse 9, it says, Two are better than one because they have a good return for their labor.

- [46 : 55] If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Life has its struggles.

I think what troubled us the most about seeing that elderly man laying on the pavement was that no one right away went to help them up.

I know. I saw the one police officer started to. But he was pulled back. He was told, No, that's not your job. There's an EMT coming. They'll take care of that.

It's hard. It's hard. When I was a young pastor, I was told, If you want to be the pastor of a large church, you have to learn that your job is to be a general, which means that your job is to lead the troops and not worry about the people that are broken along the way.

That's for the medics to take care of. I'm sure that that's what those police officers were thinking that day. There's someone coming to take care of that. But it's hard when somebody's left alone.

- [47 : 59] And it feels like there's no one to help them up. Sometimes life is a struggle. But it says in verse 12, The one may be overpowered.

Two can defend themselves. And a cord of three strands is not quickly broken. Standing together makes us stronger. But we need to start with love.

We need to start with looking for the best motives and the best intentions and the best possibilities in each other instead of seeing each other with suspicion.

Instead of seeing the other person as somehow being someone who's likely to hurt you. And that's hard. Because we were raised to be suspicious.

Don't talk to strangers. Be careful around those people. If you hang with bad apples, you're going to be one. We were told to learn how to discriminate in our culture and look for people that might be harmful to us.

[49 : 05] So we start with suspicion. We're caught in a trap. I can't walk out Because I love you too much, baby Why can't you see What you're doing to me When you don't believe a word I'm saying We can't go on together With suspicious minds We need to learn How to see the best in each other How to love first You know Jesus even said Love your enemy And pray for those who persecute you So we need to find a way Through the brokenness In verse 8 It says to us A man was all alone Had no one to work with We work with each other

And we tend to do it for each other But when we work separately And for our own designs Envy builds up and tears us down As compared to appreciation Which builds us up I remember years ago My wife and I In the early spring We would work like crazy And really The only reason we were doing it Is because my parents Were going to come up from the south And we could say See what we did And they said Good job Appreciation Seeing the best in people Looking Looking for what's right about people Before we Start looking for what's broken If you have a person In your life That you have a problem with If you start out With something good And then tell the criticism And then end with something good They call it the sandwich approach

Usually you'll have people Listen to you more But when we start out On the attack And on the assault That's not starting with love That's not loving our neighbor As ourselves That's not treating each other The way we'd want to be treated And remember how we treat The people made in God's images The way we treat God So it's not really even loving God In verse 7 Solomon who wrote this book Says Again I saw something meaningless Under the sun You know The entire book of Ecclesiastes He keeps saying Everything's meaningless Work and toil are meaningless Going out and having fun Is meaningless All our efforts Everything we learn Is meaningless In the end He points to a lot Of meaningless things So as we read The book of Ecclesiastes We're looking for something Where Solomon Will give us some hope Some possibility And he gives it to us In chapter 3 In chapter 3 Verse 12 We read A gift from God

There's a difference Between a job And a vocation I've worked both A job is what we do Because we get money And that's the only reason We do it And if somebody Stopped giving us money We'd stop doing the job And in fact If we had enough money We'd stop doing the job Probably a lot of you Have worked that Maybe some of you Are still in that situation A vocation Is something that Touches our soul Touches our heart It's what God Created us to be And there's a difference Because if we find Our vocation Then we find something Where we can enjoy Enjoy the work Of our hands Enjoy what we do Have a good meal Have something to drink I went out And ate on a patio Yesterday It was new It was great I enjoyed it It's amazing How much we've missed The idea of just being Able to sit And have a normal meal Eat and drink And enjoy the work you do Because you spend A lot of time In your work In verse 9

It talks about synergy It says that Two are better than one Because they get A good return For their labor Partly because They get appreciation Which we talked about earlier But also because There's a synergy One plus one Equals three Sometimes when we Work together We can accomplish Far more than we Can accomplish By working two people Separate Because we take The gifts of one person And we multiply Our efforts When I used to work With my father Or even my brother-in-law At the cottage I'm left-handed So I would I would hammer Along a ladder Like this And I'd get to A certain point Where I'd hand the hammer To my father Who would then take it And keep going If I had to do it myself I would have to Keep down And go up the ladder And climb the ladder And it would have Taken me twice as long Because I couldn't Reach what he could reach I couldn't do What he could do We were made For each other We were made To complete each other

[54 : 35] If either of them Falls down One can help The other up But pity anyone Who falls And has no one To help them up We need helpmates And we need to be Helpmates To people of this world And not just the people That we know Or we live with But everyone in this world The reason why We're upset about These scenes That we see In our nightly news Is because When we see someone Who is helpless And falling down We want someone To help them up That's all Now that doesn't mean That therefore We should get so angry That we go ahead And destroy somebody else Synergy is not Based on Destruction Destruction But we have a lot Of people Who are feeling Right now As if Things around them Are not working Highest unemployment I've ever seen In my life And I saw High unemployment In the 1970s

Especially amongst Young people Young people Who were just Getting their life started Just starting to feel Like maybe they had A future And a possibility And somebody pulled it out From under them People at the lowest Levels of our culture People who are At the poorest point In life Who don't have jobs Where they can work From home Who can't work safely And either they are In a situation Where they have to go out And work in some Dangerous place Or they're told You can't work at all Of course They're feeling angry They're feeling upset And they're feeling envy For those who are comfortable And I understand that But part of the problem is Is we're caught In that trap Suspicious minds A lie That the culture tells us That if we could get A fancy house If we could get Enough money Then we would be successful But no amount of money No nice house Nothing like that

Gives us contentment The purpose of life The purpose of life Goes beyond that It has so much more to do With the people in our world And of course God I see why Solomon Can say that life feels Like you're chasing After the wind Like it's meaningless Like it has no purpose Envy Envy Even the man in verse 8 Who had so much And was wealthy But was alone Just one That's what the word Alone means Right All you have is one Alone One is the loneliest number To be alone It causes people to feel That somehow they're broken And so While yes We need to figure out Ways that we can work Towards equity

And yes We need to look for ways In which we can take People who are Who are feeling Oppressed or hopeless And helpless And try to help them out And lift them up We also Need to embrace One another Because that Is going to lead To a lot more Value And meaning And purpose And contentment Than any accomplishment We might have Verse 4 It says This is Meaningless A chasing After The wind A vapor An empty air That's what meaningless That's what the original word meant A vapor An empty air In verse 11 It says If two lie down together They'll keep warm But how can one keep warm Alone We know what that means But have you ever thought about it We give off heat We all do In the church here

We have to have air conditioners When we get too many people in here Because it gets too hot Not from the sun From each other Because we generate 98 degree temperatures Think about that On a 70 degree day We love it It's comfortable But when it gets up to 98 None of us are happy That's how much heat We all produce But what happens If we produce that by ourselves It just goes into the air It's meaningless It has no value No purpose But if we generate it With each other We can warm each other And warm each other's souls And each other's heart Because loving our neighbor Is as Jesus taught us Is about being sacrificial It says in the writings of Paul Consider Consider other people To be more important Than yourself Jesus was sacrificial In his love He gave of himself And taught us To do the same Remember King David King David had a friend His name was Jonathan Jonathan was the crown prince

[59 : 41] Of Israel He was King Saul's son He was designed And designated To inherit the throne Of the whole country David in the meantime Had been anointed By the prophet To become king Over Israel Jonathan and David Were friends David didn't want Jonathan's throne And Jonathan didn't care If David got his Hear that Jonathan didn't care If his friend Got the throne That was his By right How many of us Could live that way?

I don't care Doesn't matter What I have is yours And what you have is mine My wife and I Have that relationship I don't own something She doesn't own She doesn't own something I don't own We share it together Do we do that with People around us?

Do we do that with Our closest friends? Do we do that with Our family? Or do we say It's mine It's mine And we build On envy Instead of appreciation And love What would happen If we loved first?

Loved first Solomon Points to many Meaningless things And then he tells us What's meaningful Remember that From chapter 3 I know that There is nothing Better for people Than to be happy And do good While they live That each of them May eat and drink And find satisfaction In all their toil This is a gift of God But he goes on He says I know that Everything God does Will endure forever Nothing can be added to it And nothing taken from it God does it So that people Will fear him Now We struggle with that Word fear Don't we?

We struggle With that word fear And I understand it We don't like To be afraid Why do certain people Make us feel fear? Why are there Certain people Whether it be The uniform they wear Whether it be The way they dress Maybe the way they talk Or where they come from The color of their skin Why do we feel fear?

[62 : 00] But that word In that passage Doesn't mean the fear We're thinking of What it really means Is it means respect Or to hold God God in awe God is awesome God is amazing So the people Will think that God is awesome God is amazing God is amazing God is amazing God is amazing God is amazing And yet God So loved the world That he gave his only son Sacrificed him For us Who are broken We don't mean To be a lot of times Just like All these people Who didn't mean To do wrong Even the people Who are rioting I'm sure If they were standing In front of the shop owners Of the people Who put their life work Into this little business And realizing They were destroying A life They probably Wouldn't have done it

We don't mean To do these broken things We don't mean To push someone But we do Because We're broken But God Gives us the answer To how We can be Repaired The purpose of life Is to love God Connect Deeply With God I was watching Television the other day And it was interesting Because a Lieutenant governor I think it was from Texas And I'm not sure Was down there And he's literally Preaching a sermon He's saying The whole problem With all of this Is that people Don't have God In their hearts If they got the love Of God In their hearts We wouldn't have Half these problems I think that's True I think that's true In this passage In verse 4 And I never really Saw it this way Before Until I looked Closer at the At the actual Meaning of the words

It says This too Is meaningless A chasing After the wind What the original Words say Is that This too Is vacuous It's a vapor Chasing after The ruha Of God Some of you Have heard me Use that word Before The ruha Of God Now the word Ruha In Hebrew Means The wind But it can also Mean the spirit Or the breath Chasing after The spirit Of God Chasing after The breath Of God Wow That means Something different Doesn't it That everything We do In life Everything We envy About each other Everything We think We're striving For that matters So much Doesn't mean Anything Compared to If we can Catch The breath Of God The spirit The Holy Spirit The power Of God Everything else Is empty Air

Compared To the breath Of life Of God The purpose Of life Is connecting To God That amazing Awesome God On a deeper Level Imagine How deep We could go If we would Love God With all our Heart Heart When we talk In our church About loving God With our Heart Soul Mind And strength We say Our heart To love God With all Our heart Means To love God With our Relationships With other People What if All our Heart Was based On love What if We began With love In our heart What if We began With the Spirit Of God To A God speeches and that's what people call them and that's what they call him but his actual title was the reverend dr martin luther king jr because he wasn't giving speeches he was giving sermons he wasn't bringing people to a political point he was bringing people to the power of the living god and that's why he preached we are not going to be violent with one another we're going to show love i heard one of the police officers say we don't have a problem with the protest when the preachers are here so long as the preachers are here there's no violence it only starts when the preachers leave fascinating even people that aren't feeling that connection to god see god is awesome psalm 68 says to us god is a father to the fatherless a defender of widows that's god in his holy dwelling god sets the lonely and families he leads out the prisoners with singing but the rebellious live in a sun-scorched land god wants us to be a part of a family a family that's the purpose of the reason we have friendships why we have families why we have a church it's so that we can belong to someone somewhere i had a friend who's been living in the south who came up north and they were walking by our porch i was sitting on the front porch and they said hello to me they said we need to get together we'll socially distance they suggested their their uh little porch of course their little porch is only about two feet two three feet wide i said how about ours it's 10 12 feet wide you can sit in that chair and be socially distanced from me we want to get together we want to be with friends because that's what's going to make my house a home if all it is is a grand palace i've made for other people to walk by and go wow it's so amazing i've accomplished nothing just vacuous vapor but if we make it a place of love then we've accomplished everything and that's true with our homes with our families with our friends with our neighbors with the people we don't even know we don't know with our church i've had other people stop by to talk to me i don't know who they are people just want to talk to me because i'm sitting on the front porch evidently when i sit on the front porch i'm telling everybody my heart is open i'm here to talk to you and visit with you if i want to get something done i got to go somewhere else because this is a place i come to be with other people and it's true it's true it's good to have family it's good to have a tribe it's good to have a church

a home away from home and i miss all of you i really do i don't like preaching to a camera i'm not enjoying this i said to someone earlier today i said you know for 35 years i preached to real people and now i'm preaching to a camera i this is the way i want things to be but it's the way it is it's not the worship i miss because we are worshipping i miss gathering at the table with you but what i really miss is i miss the people i really do i miss seeing you i miss talking to you i miss that we would touch hands we'd say a few words we'd smile at each other and somehow that little moment we'd share together i don't know about you but for me it transformed my day and invariably i'd leave this place with a smile on my face and even more a smile on my heart but i was reading an article about a fellow in the newspaper who actually traveled from here to west virginia because he wanted to go to church and he said he had to wait outside he had to he had to register to go to church the day before and so when he got to the church his name had to be on the list or he couldn't come in and then they had to wear a mask they couldn't sing they couldn't do all the things that everybody does you can't talk to anybody you can't hug anybody there's no shaking hands and you got to wait your turn going out now i just want you to picture that that you're standing out in front of the church waiting your turn to come into the church and you hear somebody you know as a friend and love and care about and i've gone to church with for years and and they're they're one or two six foot spaces behind you and you hear somebody say to him i'm sorry but we're full you can't come in we've reached our quota you'll have to try again next week that's not church people wonder why haven't we just opened up the doors because you want us to be back to what we were and right now because we love each other and we don't want to endanger each other we're not comfortable doing that i'm not comfortable with putting 300 people in this room and finding out that one of them really was sick and infected 30 or 40 people and somebody we love dies and i don't think anybody would come here intentionally to do that but if you haven't picked it up yet there's a lot of things we do wrong and we don't do it intentionally so we have to act first with love everything else is a meaningless vapor it's pentecost it's a time of year when we focus on the holy spirit of god the power of the church is not that we always agree we don't i can tell you right now i've heard people say that at their dinner table they have one person arguing this way and the other purple purpose person arguing that way we don't even agree in our families i know we don't all agree i know especially when we start to see brokenness and pain and hurt and struggle like we're seeing right now and and we're seeing people's lives crushed and falling apart i know it's hard to agree the power in this church has not been that we always agree not that we're a uniform one body that all thinks exactly the same there's only one thing we feel the same about and that is we deeply want to breathe the holy spirit of god let god come into our hearts and into our lives and when we love the god in our hearts and see it in each other then all this meaningless stuff becomes a vapor that disappears

[73 : 09] and we can learn to love each other in spite of each other in spite of our failings in spite of who we are because we let god come into our lives and change us god is welcome here just meaning this building he's welcome here and when god is welcome here then the god in you and the god in me will always agree love your neighbor as yourself and in doing so you will love god and experience the ruha the holy spirit the fire of god of god There's nothing worth more that will ever come close

Nothing can compare, you're our living hope Your presence, Lord I've tasted and seen of the sweetest of love When my heart becomes free and my shame is unknown In your presence, Lord Holy Spirit, you are welcome here Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere Your glory, God, is what our hearts long for

To be overcome by your presence, Lord Your presence, Lord There's nothing worth more that will ever come close No thing can compare, you're our living hope Your presence, Lord I've tasted and seen of the sweetest of love When my heart becomes free and my shame is unknown

In your presence, Lord Holy Spirit, you are welcome here Come flood this place and fill the atmosphere Your glory, God, is what our hearts long for To be overcome by your presence, Lord Your presence, Lord Let us become more aware of your presence Let us experience the glory of your goodness Let us become more aware of your presence Let us experience the glory of your goodness

Let us become more aware of your presence Let us experience the glory of your goodness Let us become more aware of your presence Let us experience the glory of your goodness Let us hear the meaning, Lord Let us come more aware of your quells of your presence Let us hear the glory of your Jesus Let us hear the Review of Jesus The vital presence known

[79 : 01] Jesus, you know my heart Father, my peace and my life Spirit, the joy of my soul you are Jesus, do you not compare Father, my rest in your hand Spirit, the hope of my heart you are The heavens declare you are God And the mountains rejoice The oceans, my hallelujah As we worship you, Lord For this is our song of love Jesus, you saved my soul I'll thank you forevermore Jesus, the love of my life you are The heavens declare you are God And the mountains rejoice The oceans, my hallelujah As we worship you, Lord This is our song of love Jesus, I am in awe of the love that you have shown Jesus, how precious you are to me To me, to me The heavens declare you are God And the mountains rejoice

The oceans, my hallelujah As we worship you, Lord For this is our song of love The Lord be with you Lift up your hearts Lift up your hearts Let us give thanks to the Lord our God It is right It's a good thing Always and everywhere to give thanks to God Even in the midst of struggles like we're having now There are times when it feels as if we have too much brokenness Where we just want to run away and hide somewhere And I assume that that's how we feel right now Many of us But the truth is God calls us to step in to the brokenness

Step into the gap And be a voice That tries to be part of the solution We do that by loving with all of our heart When we talk about loving God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength Our heart love is when we love each other What we do for the people around us So look around you Maybe what you can do is something very local Maybe you can mow a neighbor's lawn Or maybe you can write a note to someone Maybe you can make a phone call Or maybe you can be involved in a much deeper and much greater way And you can be a leading voice that will bring change Renewal and strength God calls us To be the people who step in to the brokenness Step into the gap To bring healing Because we, of all people Lead with love We lead with love We look for the best in others

So that we can try to lift that up And make that what we're going to be And what we're going to do Unfortunately Even people who lead with love Will often fail In my sermon I said I haven't had time for my family Who sits down and says I don't want to take time with my family Well, of course I've taken time with my family But I want to spend more There's places in our lives where we look and we say I failed to be the person I intended to be I failed to be the person God called me to be And the good news is this That God accepts us even in our brokenness And he calls us to accept each other Even when we fail And we fail So let's take our brokenness before God In a prayer of confession, shall we?

[84 : 09] Dear God in heaven I have sinned Sometimes by what I do on purpose And sometimes because I failed to do what's right Without even realizing it Forgive me, Lord Transform me Transform me Open my mind And open my heart To love To love others As you have loved me Bless us, Lord Help us to turn away from sin Change our lives In Jesus name we pray Amen Jesus said If that we earnestly repent And desire to change and do what's right And if we confess that we're broken and need his grace That he will forgive us

Which means today he has taken you and made you perfect again Wherever you failed Wherever you didn't live up to what the expectation was That maybe even you had for yourself God says It's okay You're perfect again It's time to start our lives Living into the love that God wants us to live for one another And to begin by allowing God to love ourselves So that we can love others In the name of Jesus Christ your sins are forgiven Glory to God Amen Glory to God Amen And now Lord pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here Pour it into our hearts and transform us and change us Help us to experience your Holy Spirit and the power The breath of God the Ruha Help us to be a transforming change For this world around us Help us to be a blessing Lord

That we might be the strength of God For the world That we might be the hands the feet The actions of the living God In this struggling world That we might bring peace and hope And grace and especially love That we might bring you To the world Be with us this day and always as we offer our prayers In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit Amen And now as Jesus taught his disciples to pray Let us join together in saying Our Father who art in heaven Hallowed be thy name Thy kingdom come Thy will be done On earth as it is in heaven Give us this day our daily bread And forgive us our trespasses As we forgive those who trespass against us And lead us not into temptation But deliver us from evil For thine is the kingdom And the power And the glory forever and ever

Amen Blessed be the time that binds Our hearts in Christian love The fellowship of kindred minds Is like to that above Before our Father's throne Before our Father's throne We pour our ardent prayers Our fears, our hopes, our aims, our won Our comforts and our cares

We share each other's woes Our mutual burdens bear And often more each other blows A sympathizing tear When we asunder part When we asunder part It gives us inward pain But we shall still be joined in heart And hope to meet again Some people think the mark of Christianity is that people somehow live a perfect life The mark of Christianity is that we know we're not perfect We know we fail And we know that the only way we can be made perfect is through the grace of Jesus Christ

[89 : 22] God has made you perfect today To give you an opportunity not to go out and be broken again Not to go out and cause harm or pain But to go out and transform the world by loving first Loving first When we asunder apart It gives us inward pain But we'll still be joined in heart And we'll see each other again How true those words are now But they're true because we love each other And if we can love each other as a community of God In this church We can love the whole community around us With the love of God May God go with you May he send you his grace, his wonder, and his love to go before you That you might break through the brokenness And bring peace and hope And especially love Go in Jesus name Amen Heaven As much was right God Man I'm not sure I'm quite sure This one was Luke a Soviet verse

I thought it was himself He believed ■b adversely Gods It is really interesting Thank you.