

# February 21, 2016

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Date: 21 February 2016

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you.

Let us rejoice when we have Him. This is the day that the Lord has been.

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We are the Fish Fry Ordered Inters. A welcome gift is available for new visitors and can be picked up at the connection site in the back of the sanctuary following worship.

Fill out your friendship card to get on our mailing list, sign up for activities, list any prayers or concerns, and any notes for the staff. Welcome to our church.

[ 1 : 20 ] We are glad to have the Gary Church this morning. And one of our opportunities for ministry on our clipboard is to help with the Fish Fry's. We serve 690 dinners on Friday.

We eat more or less food. About four or less than six. So you can imagine how hard you're all hustling. We're kind of short-stamped. So if you can help out, we're lovely. We have to come down to join us.

And if not, come join us and eat good dinner. Speaking of dinners, our second opportunity for ministry on the clipboard is to help with our Synecum Street dinners down in Buffalo. And if you can participate or help with that, we'll appreciate it.

I also want to mention that there's a meeting for certified lay ministers at 1 o'clock this afternoon in the back of the sanctuary. And other than that, let's turn our hearts to the Lord's church.

I'll let you. Dear God in heaven, we pray your blessings upon us that you will touch us and be with us, and that you will help us to experience the living God in this place. Be our strength, be our glory, be our presence, be our worship.

[ 2 : 21 ] That's the great Jesus. Amen. We're going to invite you, if you're able, to stand as we're going to sit together. We're joyful, joyful, as we adore you. Amen.

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

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Let us bring up the joy of women, O children of every dress.

Mama, Father, Christ our children, All who live in love are blind. Teach us how to love each other, Lift us to the joy divine.

[ 4 : 49 ] For the world waiting for us, Rich the morning sun at the end, All divine is raining for us, Fighting all within His land.

Never singing, march the upward, Givers in the mistrust cry, Joyful music please us, The wind in the triumphs of our life.

Lord be with you. Also with you. Take a moment, and we'll greet your neighbor with peace. Good to see you. Thank you.

Okay. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

[ 6 : 22 ] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Lord, we thank you for all the great blessings you give to us. And we pray that you would just keep giving us blessings and help us to share when we get great blessings from you.

We have a place to don't have this one. It's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You guys can all go out to church. All the kids are welcome to go out to church at this time. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. This morning in your bulletin you'll find a mission moment in my hand below.

[ 8 : 28 ] This is more of something that we call the Joshua Connection, which the Joshua Connection is our ministry to help people in this community. We do it through what we call our Inside Out group, which they take extra things that they don't need, like an old washing machine or whatever, and find a place where they can use that.

Or we do it through the dinners that we put on in Niagara Falls, or through any other number of different ways in which we try to help the people of our community as a church. And we also are doing this with the hope that we're also going to connect other churches into making this happen.

So when you give these gifts, you give these gifts to your neighbors and your community this morning. This morning I want to say that I'm thankful for the FaceRide people who came and shared those 690 dinners.

I've got to tell you, we were hustling because we had all those thunders in the first two hours. So we were working overtime, and you know, people do a lot to help out around here. In all sorts of ways, people go above and beyond.

And the ways in which they help us, I just do thanks. So as we're thanking God for all the blessings he gives to us, as we turn our thanksgiving with our morning tides and our... And we'll break the day, as I'm waking and pray.

[ 9 : 55 ] I can feel that God is near. If all I know God is near.

If all I know God is true, I will never need to hear. Though I may not understand all the things that God has planned, in my heart I know I am not alone.

God will give me strength to carry on. Though I never know what the future may hold, what triumphs I may face, when it meets my eyes, I know that I will give the promise of God's grace.

When there's sadness in my heart, and my life seems torn apart, I will find a way to rejoice each day.

God will give me hope to carry on. When the storms of life surround you, you will feel the times around you, bringing comfort where there's sorrow, giving hope to grace to God's hope.

[ 12 : 06 ] And the great, the great, as you may never pray, always know that God is near.

And in all you do, and in all the truth, you will never be to hear. There is more than that you will, be a chance to love and give.

If you always start, with a joyful heart, God will give you strength, God will give you hope.

God will give you strength, to carry on.

U które cunt, A Wong the room of blessings come.

[ 13 : 32 ] Praise Him, all creatures dearly known. Praise Him, all of the heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen. Now, dear God, receive these our gifts.

Use them for the work of the kingdom that you set out for us to do. Bless the givers of the Lord. Give them great showers of blessing today. For it's in Jesus' name. Please be seated.

We have a number of things listed on our list here of people. I don't want to miss any of these, so I'm going to go ahead and read them. Anna Kate Anderson is having multiple health issues.

We want to keep her in our prayers. Kathy Dill has pneumonia. Norm Kimberly has health concerns going on. Corey Martinucci fell and hurt himself in battle, so we want to pray for Corey to be healed.

[ 14 : 38 ] That was actually here at church. Sarah Henniches fell and broke a shoulder. Bob Wall has had surgery on his hand. As has Ron Elman, they're both healing.

I had two or three more walking around the cage this morning, so it's like an outbreak, I guess. We want to be in prayer for Renee Biter, whose dad is in the hospital. Linda Morris is going for cancer treatments.

And Pastor Lisa, who you will notice, is not with us this morning, because she came in at the 815 service. And I said, really, we have no reason to be here, Pastor Lisa.

Go home. So she gets. So I set her on her way. You know, I've always said there's only one thing that's an occupational destruction for a pastor.

Take away our voice, and we're done. We're out of work. That's basically it. So, he said, anyway. Let's turn our souls and our hearts to the Lord. I know we have a million years to lift up.

[ 15 : 37 ] So let's share with her. Dear God in heaven, you have blessed us in so many ways. And we gather here, Lord, to thank you and praise you for all the wonders of you in our lives.

We also, Lord, lift up our concerns. People who are struggling with illnesses and sicknesses and wanting to get treatments. People who are feeling with broken limbs and broken hands and needs for healing.

People who are just hurting in their hearts. Wrestling with issues in their relationships. Dagwires and frustrations for trying to work with your life.

People who are facing uncertainty and worries. Lord, there's so many things that have run through our hearts to come here.

And we've brought things we want to share with our heavenly daddy. You know what's in our heart, Lord, that we need to share. So listen, Lord, as we take a moment to offer up our grace.

[ 16 : 44 ] Now, dear God, pour out showers of blessings.

Let your Holy Spirit so fill our hearts that it crowds out all these worries, all these troubles and anxieties. Fill us up, Lord, with you. With your presence, with your strength, with your wisdom.

Let the scriptures speak to us words from long ago. Guide our lives today. Be our strength, Lord. Help us to meet you and touch you.

And receive your Holy Presence in this place as we come in songs. We're in prayers. We're in faithful. We're in faithful. We're in common. We're in faithful. We're in faithful. Bless us because we're coming out of it.

We pray, Lord, that you're going to be upon us now, this morning. In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. Shall we listen to the word of God?

[ 17 : 54 ] Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Good morning. Amen. Amen. Amen. Our scripture reading today is taken from the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 14, verses 22 to 29.

Hear these words of the Lord. Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year. Eat the tithe of your grain, new wine and olive oil, and the firstborn of your birds and flocks, in the presence of the Lord your God, at the place he receives as a dwelling in his name, so that you may learn to revere the Lord your God always.

But if that place is too distant, and you have been blessed by the Lord your God, and cannot carry your tithe, because the place where the Lord will choose to put his name is so far away, then exchange your tithe for silver, and take the silver with you, and go to the place the Lord your God will choose.

[ 19 : 27 ] Use the silver to buy whatever you like, cattle, sheep, wine, or other fermented drink, drink, or anything you wish. Then you and your household shall eat there in the presence of the Lord your God, and rejoice.

And do not neglect the Levites living in your towns, for they have no allotment or inheritance of their own. At the end of every three years, bring all the tithes of that year's produce, and store it in your towns, so that the Levites, who have no allotment or inheritance of their own, and the foreigners, the fatherless, and the widows, who live in your towns, may come and eat and be satisfied, and so that the Lord your God may bless you with all the work of your hands.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Lori. Life's not fair. They haven't figured it out yet.

Life specifically isn't fair. Some people are attractive, some people are not. Some people are tall, some are short. Some people have two parents, some people have one, some people have four, some have none.

Some have extra money, some don't have none. Some people work hard, some people don't. Some people have a snowblower, some people have a block, some people only have a shovel.

[ 20 : 54 ] Some people have the pipes break in their church, and the water is pouring out and ruins the preschool way, and have to hang drywall at 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

That would be me. Some people don't. Pipes not. Pipes. God puts together a simple formula in his Bible for how to deal in a proper way, in a simple way, with this inequity.

He says people who work hard and end up with great blessings should be able to keep the majority of what they have learned for themselves, but they should set aside a small portion, and what he suggests is what he calls a tithe, which is 10% for the work of God and the health of the world.

We have a struggle going on in our culture at that. A struggle between a concern for the community and the rights of the individual. Apple is resisting a lawsuit from the United States government.

Apple says people have a right of privacy and shouldn't have to worry about the government getting into their business. The government says sometimes the rights of the individual should not take precedence over the whole community, and we need the ability to get into these private things in case there's acts of violence.

[ 22 : 18 ] We have people arguing that some people have unfairly not received enough wealth of this culture, and others have more than they could possibly need, and we have another group of people who are arguing people who work very hard to receive what they have and shouldn't have people who don't want to do anything take it away.

The problem is we don't have an argument between right and wrong. We have an argument between right and right and wrong and wrong. Do you follow? There's right on both sides, and there's wrong on both sides.

If you are living in the desert as these people were, you have to learn how to rely on each other. It's necessary. If you don't have the ability to rely on each other, you're never going to possibly make it through the desert.

On the other hand, we want to encourage somewhere along the line for people to do more and be successful, and so we want to encourage them to do it in hard work and things like that.

So God would gather something called tithe, which I haven't talked about this morning, and I know people don't like it when the church talks about money. Some people think all the church ever does is talk about money or ask for money.

[ 23 : 26 ] Truth of the matter is you've never heard me ask for money for its church from this public. I never have. I don't intend to ever need to. That would make God into a beggar.

The only time I've ever asked for money is for people outside of our church, for missions around here. When we do a mission moment, you take a choice which ones you'll support. It's to help people outside the church, not this church.

But it is right to talk about it so that we can understand what's right, and don't worry, I'm not trying to convince you of something because the offering's already been taken. God asks for a tithe, which is 10%, which to some people sounds like a lot of money and a lot of what we have.

But it is. On the other hand, the government asks for 40%, so think of it in that respect. The tithe has three words. To prove our love for God, to provide for the needs of the poor, and to provide for the kingdom work of God in this world.

We give our gifts to God for God's kingdom work. In our world, we don't think anything of paying people to excel at athletics, or paying people to excel at music, or at arts, or at sports, or science, or business.

[ 24 : 40 ] And what this says is the people who do the work of God should be compensated. In this case, they refer to them as the Levites, which was one of the tribes of Israel that God said were not allowed to own the land, were not allowed to have an inheritance.

They simply work for God, and the people should take care of God. I'm a legal. In case you didn't know. I don't build up some inheritance in all this work I do.

I don't own the church, so you know that. I don't own any of this. I don't even have a part in it. I work on it for God. And I rely on the people of this congregation to provide me with enough of an income so that I don't have to go work somewhere else.

I don't really get paid to work here. I get paid so long to work somewhere else. Except hanging pride at all. Which is what happened at 9 a.m. on Monday morning in the police. It's not that I'm not without other skills, or I couldn't earn an income somewhere else.

But God has called me to set my life apart, as other people do as well, to do the work of God. And so those who earn an income in another way, and I'm the one of you, so I know what that's like, give something to support the work of God.

[ 25 : 50 ] It's as simple as that. And then the church in turn provides for the people. In here it talks about everybody getting together for a big meal. Whether you do it or not, the Bible often says we should get together and eat together.

Eating together is built a hoop because it draws us together like family. Family are the people that share meals together. We're a family. When we eat together, we smile and we're happy and we like each other.

So we should have dinners in churches and we should eat together. But the church provides for a whole lot of things besides that. The church provides worship services.

It provides things for our children, for our teenagers. It provides a building for us to have various activities of it. The church provides for the community and some of the needs of the people around us.

The church provides counseling. The church is there for funerals, for weddings, all sorts of different things. You know that if you come to any church for any length of time. So what you give goes back to you in much part.

[ 26 : 50 ] That's how it works. We give to the church and the church gives back to us in some way or another. Now, it doesn't come back in the same way as it's received.

Because the church does say that those who have a lot should be able to give more than those who have a little. And that's why it gives a percentage that those who have more can give more.

And those who have less, give less. We give people benefit. It's not necessarily equal giving. But God expects us to do this. So that we can share with one another the things of God and the work of God.

And the things that we need to nurture our faith life and community life. And our children growing up. And our elderly being cared for. And our troubled community council. The church also provides for the opportunity of bringing the goodness of Jesus Christ to the rest of the world.

God has blessed us with his saving grace. Amen. And so if God gives us this wonderful blessing of his peace and his eternal life. And the forgiveness of our sins. And all these great things that can change and transform our very lives.

[ 27 : 57 ] Well, we need to be able to have the ability to go out and share that with the rest of the world. And the church provides for that as well. Bringing the salvation of God to the world. That can change the world and take away about his brokenness.

So what the church does with our tithe at first is it provides for the kingdom work of God. But the tithe is also for the poor. Matthew chapter 25 talks about the sheep and the goats.

And Jesus says, what you've done for the least of these you've done for me. And what you don't do for the least of these you don't do for me. And Jesus is talking about us. He's saying we are supposed to provide for the poor.

Throughout the scripture, as God says, we're supposed to help those who are struggling, those who are poor, those who are need, those who just simply need a friend. If the sky above you should turn dark and full of clouds And that old north wind should begin the blow Keep your head together And call my name out loud now Soon I'll be knocking upon your door That's right.

If you need a hand, I'm there for you. Now hey, it's me again, Bob Sled. Ready to go knocking at your door? Get it? Knocking at your door? With some lessons learned from going through some fierce winters here in Buffalo, New York.

[ 29 : 40 ] We've gotten a lot of snow over the past few days. Treacherous driving, driveways needing to be cleared, slippery walkways. And yet, we get through it. How, you might ask? We get through it together.

Some of you who aren't from around here might think I'm talking about having little kumbaya moments and not understanding the significance and importance of what I'm talking about. Going through the perils of winter not only makes us stronger, but it also makes us aware of people who may need some help.

Now if you live in western New York, then you know that one of the greatest lessons we learn from going through winter here is to look out for one another. We even have a nickname here, the City of Good Neighbors, because it's been ingrained in us from the start to look around and see who may need some help.

Someone with a snow blower or some strong young folks with shovels are seen clearing the driveways and walkways for those who can't get around so well anymore. Someone goes off the road and lands in a snowbank or ditch.

We don't leave them there to handle it alone. People driving by stop, and neighbors come out too, and we all work together. Come on guys, push. Push, we're so close. We're right there. Push, push, push, and, and we're there, and the car is free!

[ 30 : 50 ] Now, the whole point in this is just to get the vehicle back on the road. In western New York, we're strong because we know we can depend on each other. Checking on neighbors when the power's out, sharing our generators, and sharing whatever help we can give to those around us, because we're all in this thing together.

Going through winters reminds us not to be selfish, and instead, we each do our part. It's a great lesson that makes a difference in who we are. We are the city of good neighbors. So be a good neighbor, and be a friend to someone in need.

You just call out my name, and you know wherever I am, I'll come running, oh yeah, babe, to see you again.

Winter, spring, summer, or fall. Now all you've got to do is call, and I'll be there, yeah, yeah, yeah.

You've got a friend. We have to call to help each other.

[ 32 : 09 ] You know, as a church, we've got generators in the garage, and you're powerful as hell, but it's a call. If you see somebody by the side of the road, you're going to help them out. God in this passage says, we need to help the people who are poor.

You see, the way the sacrificial system worked back then is, the people who were wealthy brought a lot. They brought a cow. They brought land. They brought food, big food to eat.

And the people who were poor brought what little they had, and then they had a cute fire. When I was young, and starting out in life, my wife and I could afford, we'd have frat neck, rummage, cheese, or spaghetti, or something like that, during the week.

And then on the weekend, we'd go to Mount Dad and get real dinner. I think some of you remember that. Well, this is what it was like back then. They knew that poor people couldn't afford to eat right, so God set up a system where the sacrifices were brought into the temple.

They had a huge barbecue, and rich and poor all came together. And all were fed with a good, nutritious meal. It's kind of like what we do up in Niagara Falls with our dinners there.

[ 33 : 16 ] That's not a soup kitchen, you know. Anybody can come and eat there. We have people there that are perfectly well off financially. We have people that are best to eat there. And you can't tell sometimes which are which.

In a typical soup kitchen, people with money are on one side of the table and the poor people are on the other. I'm not. You have no idea who's who. Because we just get together as a family and eat together.

Because that's what we're supposed to do. To treat everybody as children of God. They are. In this passage, in verse 28 to 29, it says that two-thirds of the income of the church is to go towards taking care of the church, but one-third is supposed to go towards taking care of the poor.

The widower, the orphan, the foreigners in your land, the people who don't have the ability to take care of themselves, we're supposed to take care of the responsible to do that.

And in fact, I don't know if you're aware of it, that's the basis for why the IRS gives churches a tax exemption. It has nothing to do with religion. You can be as religious as you want, you don't have any right to a tax exemption.

[ 34 : 21 ] The reason the government makes churches tax exemptions is because we do things for the community that if we stop doing them, then the government would have to do. And if we're not doing anything for people that are poor and in need and helping folks in the community, then they should take our tax exemption as well.

That's just the way it should be. Because it's about helping people. It's what God calls us to do as a church. It's supposed to help the struggle. What we're doing for each of these matters.

God calls us to be people with a heart and with compassion. The other day, I was crying out my new four-wheel drive vehicle. I've never had one, so I figured, you know, now I can go through any snow anywhere.

Right? So I had to turn around in the road and I saw there was about a foot of snow in the shoulder and I thought, oh, that's nuts. I got a four-wheel drive vehicle. So I spun the vehicle around and it basically got stuck.

Woo! Woo! I was really embarrassing to be stuck in a four-wheel drive vehicle, I gotta tell you. So I'm rocking it back and forth and back. There's traffic coming down the road.

[ 35 : 30 ] Now, you know, none of them stopped to help me or push me out. But not only that, they wouldn't even stop so that if I did get traction, I would pull out and run into them. I want to get out of the car and say, what's the matter with you people?

Huh? But that's not the way it usually works. I don't know if you've noticed, but typically, you get stuck. If you're stuck for any length of time, people just appear from somewhere.

How many of you have ever been stuck on the side of the road where people just appear and push you out? And oftentimes, they disappear before you can even say, thank you, they're gone, they're off. This angel's working in this house.

How many of you are going to those people pushing somebody off? You see, because it all goes around. It all goes around. We do things to help others and it gets paid forward again and again.

And God calls us as a church to be those kind of people. People who are friends. People who are there to help one another when they can't help themselves.

[ 36 : 32 ] When we were young, we weren't very well. We could not afford to go out ever. My wife and I didn't go out to dinner ever. Except when my parents would take us out on Friday nights for a fish fry.

Okay? Now back in the day, a fish fry was like, what, \$2.30? Something like that. Right? Remember that? And you got a beer for \$0.50. It was in a glass about this big. But, you know, you could get a beer for a half a bottle and a fish fry for \$2.30.

We'd go to Russell's and get, you know, fancy steaks. We just got a basic meal. But this was incredible for us because we never got to go out after. So we appreciated that.

And I thanked my dad and he'd say, don't worry about it, dummy. One of these days you'll have money and then you'll pay me back. You'll be paying the bill. What goes around, it comes around.

If we have a sharing and a giving heart as people and as a church, it will come back to us. It's part of what we do. So we give our gifts to the church for God's work and for the kingdom of this world and to help the poor and because of what God wants.

[ 37 : 41 ] In Deuteronomy chapter 10, it says, And now Israel, what does the Lord God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God and what obedience him to love him and to serve the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.

I know it doesn't say that there, but we know that there. And the second is like it. It's to love your neighbor as yourself. Which means if we're supposed to actually go out and do loving actions for people, love somebody's driveway just because you can't.

You've got to send the Lord to an extra sidewalk or two. Someday somebody will do it for you. That's how it works with the church and the people of God.

And I think most of all, the gifts we give to God, the tithes we offer to God, is to prove our love for God. It says in this passage that we do this so that people will learn to revere God.

The time that you see is enough that it's a real sacrifice, but not so much that it takes away our ability to live. Ten percent is enough that we go, oh, I know that's that being God, but not so much that we go, how am I going to survive without it?

[ 38 : 54 ] God developed this intentionally so that we prove that God's more important than anything, including even our money. Now, in the original days, as it talks about here, people were bringing produce of their efforts, you know?

It was an agricultural society, so they brought basically produce. I know a little bit about this, because when I worked out in Wyoming County, they only paid me a tiny little sale and I made \$75 a week as a pastor, and they would supplement it with food.

So I had one guy who would bring me grocery bags full of prime cuts of beef. Sweet, right? You know what? Now he asked why it's so great place. Do you have any idea how much it's cost the store?

He says, what, about six, seven months? He raised cattle. That tells you how much the markup did between the farmer and the store. Others would bring me what they grew in their garden.

I did get tired of the cicatis that looked like Bam Bam's club. I don't know what a sucker, right? But they were paying you with the produce. It was part of what we did.

[ 39 : 59 ] We don't do that because that's not practical in our culture for the most part. They'll load up the whole front end of all kinds of stuff and then we'd have to go out and figure out how to sell it. And some of us don't even do anything that actually creates a product.

What are we going to bring? So instead, we do what it says in here. We exchange it for our money. We bring it before God. And the purpose, as it says in verse 23, is that we learn to revere God.

Now it's important that we learn to revere God because basically this is not natural behavior for a person. Think of babies. Babies are the most selfish creatures on the face of the earth.

Wah! I'm a wealthy baby! Wah! I'm a wealthy baby! Wah! I'm a white bride because I'm a baby! That's what they do. All they do is say, take care of me and they give us what in return?

A smile, which is probably gas. I mean, really? They're useless! Little self-serving creatures!

[ 41 : 05 ] God loves them! We learn to not be babies. Right? We learn how to give of ourselves. We learn how to share.

We learn how to revere God by learning how to give to God. How much are we supposed to give? I keep those asking, do we give off my net income or my gross income?

You know, this isn't like a little game or something. When I was in the village of Wyoming, I was on a scholarship committee. Me, the banker, two other pastors and a principal.

I thought it was the weirdest scholarship committee in the world. They've got three pastors on there. But we knew it was pretty helpful because we would have people that would come with these income statements and we're like, yeah, really?

He owns the biggest farm in the entire county and the guy is paying \$1,500 a year. This is not about playing a game to figure out what we can get away with.

[ 42 : 01 ] This is about proving our love, our faithfulness to God. What does that? What shows our respect for God? What tools that God's born church have done other things in our lives?

We learn to do this. When I was young, I was a teenager, I gave a buck. That was back in the 70s. A buck was worse than a big back coming. You know, I got married so we gave two.

That's a 100% increase. We had a baby so we gave three. That's a 50% increase. It's only three bucks. But I have to tell you, as life went on, by the time we were in our mid-20s, we were giving probably about 5% of our income and by the time we were in our late-20s, we were giving a tithe.

But I'm not tithing anymore. I sat tithing a while ago because God's blessed me more than I ever would expect. And so, the tithe isn't enough.

Not to really prove what God means and what God has done for me. So we sat tithing a while ago. I don't know what the right amount is. I'm not really worried about a specific dollar amount.

[ 43 : 11 ] Now, what proves that God is more important than anything else? And you know, churches need to tithe, too. They need to give of themselves outside of what they are.

In the Bible, they have something called a burn offering. For what they do is they take and bring the sacrifice and burn it to a crisp so that nobody got any benefit out of that except God.

Years ago, when they kept the offering up here on Sunday mornings, this would be the point in the sermon when I reach in and pull out some money and burn it and flip you all out. People go out and hear, that was a little heap of money.

Oh my gosh. The world will come with that. I've heard the dollar bill. They freak. Because God really is not always our God.

But we don't usually do burn offerings in our church. We just simply give it away. Give it to somebody where it will have no benefit to us.

[ 44 : 09 ] Send it to Nicolai, ship it off to people in Buffalo. Have somebody somewhere where it will help. Absolutely, there's no possibility of coming back to us. That's what we're talking about.

And it proves our faith to God, which is the primary reason why we give our gifts to God. Yes, it will do to work. Yes, it will do support. But mostly, it proves who we are to God and to ourselves.

We made a false choice in our world. A choice is if we have to take care of ourselves or we have to take care of the community. We have to give away everything we have or we have to keep it all so tight that there's no room for anyone else.

a choice between selfishness or some sort of communal sway of work. And that's not what God calls us to. God calls us to work together. In the book of Genesis in the second chapter it says, God said it's not good for people to be alone.

He'll make people to help each other. We need people to help us through life so that we can move through this culture in a healthy way and live in this world in a proper way.

[ 45 : 21 ] We've become too focused on rugged individualism. We've become too focused on it doesn't matter what you do you should be taken care of anyway. We have to find the balance of you.

Reset it. So that we're a family of people that care for each other look out for one another and respect each other individually as well. This choice that's being put out is not a real choice.

It's a false choice. It's a deception. It's a lie in our culture. We can take care of ourselves while we take care of each other. Amen? God calls us to abandon us.

But it starts with who we are and how we approach each other. People ask me how much should I give? What if I'm poor?

Should I still give up? Of course. Poor people need to feel their part of it too. They need to feel that they've contributed something. We need to have everybody feel that this is everybody's work.

[ 46 : 22 ] But you see, when we ask the question how much, we've already abandoned the right way of thinking. When I need to give a gift to my wife, I don't ask myself how much do I think I have to spend on her so I'll be okay.

Really? I wonder if I could away with 20 bucks with that. Really? Really? I would walk in thinking how much do I get to spend on my wife?

How much do I have the opportunity to share with the person I love? It's the same. 2 Corinthians chapter 9 says it this way, Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly.

Whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each of you should give what you've decided that your heart would give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, where God loves a cheerful giver.

God wants us to give because we want to give. Not because we have to give, but because He gives us joy in our heart to take care of the kingdom work, to help the poor and prove our love to God and say thankful this to God.

[ 47 : 35 ] In Luke chapter 6 it says to us, Give it to you, give it to you, put it back to your present, shake it together running open and pour it in your lap for the measure it will be measured against you.

My dad used to say to me, Don't worry, Tommy, someday you'll get a chance to pay me back. I did get a chance to buy a better a few times.

I had the opportunity occasionally to pay the bill. My mother didn't like it very much, but once in a while I got a chance to pay the bill. But no one here enough to pay him back for as many times as he fought for me.

So I've decided the only way I can pay my father back is to take other people out for dinner, buy other people something, do something for other people who wouldn't otherwise be able to do it.

So I like to buy dinner for people. I really do. I enjoy being the guy who picks up the bill. Why? Because every time I do it, I say, pay you back, Dad. I feel the same way about what I can give for God.

[ 48 : 45 ] What I get the opportunity to do for God is God has given me an abundance. Life's not fair. It's not fair.

As Christians, we've been given the gift of eternal life. Some people don't have it. as Christians, we've had our sins forgiven. We have the presence of God himself in our lives.

We have a church people to be a part of. This is a great church. Some people don't have that. Some of us have an abundance of stuff or of wealth or whatever it might be, and God has given that to us.

God does that. We need to figure out how we grow and we're thanks. How are we going to say thanks for all that God has given to us for our salvation, for our church, for families that love us and that we can love, for the food over our head, for the food that we eat, for the breath of life that we breathe, for the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the sky, for the love which runs on earth, over and around us from our beauty of Christ.

the Lord, all of the dreams are young and great. for the Geld■ in theamente hour, so O'er the earth, and I think of the whole thing.

[ 50 : 21 ] For the beauty of the earth, for the glory of the skies, for the love which come on earth, for her and the crowns of skies, for the love long to be raised, this I give a grateful praise.

For the joy of human love, brother, sister, parent, child, friends on earth and friends above, for all gentle, cross and mild, Lord of all, to thee be raised, this I give a grateful praise.

For thy church shall evermore lifteth holy hands above, offering up by every shore, firm your sacred Christ the Lord.

Lord of all, to thee be raised, this I give a grateful praise.

For thy selfless gift divine, to the world so freely given, for the love which come on earth and the crowns of skies, for the love which come on earth and joy in heaven.

[ 52 : 12 ] Lord of all, to thee be raised, this I give a grateful praise.

And I'm just going to come closer to you. Oh, Lord of all, to thee be raised, this I give biddies rich on earth and done. For I will scream longer to us, let us old. Maybe, and I'll shine more now on earth and the■ of land, I think what would the people say of me, but I though it's just a terugense Kollegeaste What I love, no one has to just go out, but I need you to be stuck, a world which is more than just a time.

I want to live my land, give it all I have, but everything has saved you, or you.

I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

I want to live my land, I want to live my land.

[ 53 : 48 ] I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

There's an evidence that I have to change, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear. I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

[ 55 : 04 ] I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will we bear.

I want to live my land, I want to live my land, I want to live my land, I want to live my land.

I want to live my land, I want to live my land. I want to live my land, I want to live my land, I want to live my land, I want to live my land.

[ 56 : 44 ] Lord, I wish I could praise you with every word, for you will lead me to me to me. And this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, I want to live my land.

I want to live my land, and this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, never will I bear.  
I want to live my land, if you stay in mind.

And this is where I will stand, the rejecy of heaven, not the rejecy of heaven, not the rejecy of heaven, not the rejecy of heaven. Where's the spirit of me? That's what all my days to be It's like a great hero to be the king I can hear the song in its red and green For there's a lot of many people need That's what all my days to be Do you?

Do you? Everything I can do You already protest You are so worthy I'm just one of the millions You stand and protest Yes, do you hear me?

Your heart is only mine You're the one that brings My prayers are now divine The simple of the race I can cross and breathe For the time I'm in Like a son of a son Will be born and raised I can stand the way But you stand the way That's what all my days to be Like a great hero to be the king I can hear the song in its red and green For there's a lot of many people need That's what all my days to be Do you?

[ 58 : 55 ] Lord, I want my days to be That I can breathe the summer's rain That's what all my days to be That I can breathe the summer's rain That I can breathe the summer's rain That's what all my days to be Like the picture's on the love That I can breathe the sj AH And the rising on your series Like the heat of the sun That's what all my days to be Like a great hero to be I can settle into an ocean I can breathe the snow In its red and green Please be seated.

You know, the course of our lives, it's so easy to go back to that primal instinct to think it's all about us. It's so easy to go back to that primal instinct.

It's part of who we are. They'll give it to us. And so sometimes we've got to come before God and we have to admit we're broken and we need help. When we come to the table to receive this lesson, we come first to say, Lord, I need your forgiveness.

So we can make right with God again. So I invite you to join me in our prayer for you guys. Dear God in heaven, I have sinned.

I've been selfish. I've put other things before you. Forgive me, Lord. Help me to be faithful.

[ 60 : 51 ] Lord, I have other sins. You know what they are. They're deep in my heart. I brought them to share with you.

So listen, Lord, as I pray. So listen, Lord, as I pray. So listen, Lord, as I pray. I now be a God for giving me. Take the brokenness out of my life.

Take the brokenness out of my life. Take the brokenness out of my life. Teach me to be weary. Teach me to be weary. And to be a blessing. And to be a blessing. In Jesus' name we pray. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Before you came in this place, God decided that he already wanted to forgive you.

He already wanted to bless you. He already wanted to bless you.

[ 61 : 52 ] Today you were born, he decided to forgive you and bless you. He was waiting for us to turn and make him God. In the name of Jesus Christ, who our sins are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, who our sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. DO Smart engagement. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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

Amen. Amen. Jesus Christ invites all those who seek after him to come to the table of the Lord. You don't need to be a member of this church. You don't need to be of some particular creed or anything else.

[ 62 : 49 ] If you seek Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, if you desire to have God in your life, you're welcome at the table of the Lord at our church. We ask that you take communion by what we call intention.

Take the bread, give it at the cup, and communion with communion. The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

He is right. Give our thanks to the Lord. He is right. It's a good thing. Always and everywhere to give thanks to God. In the midst of blessings, in the midst of struggles, in the midst of joys, and in the midst of sorrows, God is there for us and God blesses us.

And so we return our thanksgiving with all the people on earth and all the angels in heaven. We praise his name and join their unending hymn saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord, God our might.

Heaven and earth are full of glory. Hosanna, O highest. Blessed is he who comes to the reign of the Lord. Hosanna, O highest. Holy are you.

[ 63 : 53 ] Blessed is your son, Jesus Christ. Hosanna, O highest. Who came to forgive our sins. Who came to die that we might live. Who came to love us in spite of ourselves.

He came to be with us even though we betrayed him. For it was on the very night that he was betrayed by his disciples that he took his breath. He gave thanks to God and he broke the bread.

He gave it to his disciples and he said, Take and eat. This is my body which is broken for you for the forgiveness of sin. He took this, remembering your name.

When the supper was over, he took it to God and he gave thanks to God. He gave it to his disciples and he said, Drink from this all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant. It's poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sin.

Drink of this. Remembering me. And so in remembrance of his mighty acts of Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and in thanksgiving.

[ 64 : 59 ] As a holy and living sacrifice. In union with Christ offered through us. As we proclaim the mystery of it. Christ is mine. Christ is risen. Christ is over on our hand.

We're out of the Holy Spirit on us gathered here. On these gifts and bread and top. That they might be for us the body and blood of Christ. That we might be for the world the body of Christ. Living to revere you.

Living to bless those around us. Living to be an example of a living Christ in this world. Change and transform the badness and the healing. The hurt and the grace.

The pain and the loss. Be with us Lord and help us to walk through life as an example of you. That the world might be drawn to this day and to your grace.

We pray this in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Now as Jesus starts the prayer, let's go together and say, Amen.

[ 66 : 31 ] Now those who are helping with the syruvic community. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Now God himself lights us up, and pray us regularly, and rejoining with the light of candle.

Come join us. Now God himself lights us up, and pray us regularly, and rejoining with the light of candle.

- Now God himself lights us up, and pray us regularly, and rejoining with the light of candle.
- [ 69 : 15 ] Now God himself lights us up, and pray us regularly, and rejoining with the light of candle.
- Now God himself lights us up, and pray us regularly, and rejoining with the light of candle.  
Now God himself lights us up, and pray us regularly.
- Now God himself lights us up, and pray us regularly, and rejoining with the light of candle.
- Now God himself lights on, and rejoining with our light of candle. Thank you.
- Thank you.
- [ 71 : 09 ] Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you.
- Thank you. Thank you.
- [ 73 : 39 ] 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. You know, my father let me buy him dinner a few times. Not enough. My mother would strenuously object. She didn't think we should ever be buying dinner for them.
- [ 76 : 28 ] But by my dad knew that sometimes it's important to learn how to receive the gift. The Bible says it's better to give than to receive, but that means that you sometimes have to give the gift to other people to let them give to you as well.
- Do you think God needs your stuff? Do you think God Almighty needs your money or needs your things that he couldn't just simply create at any time he'd want to?
- But he graciously receives our gifts as the token of our love for him, as our way of saying, thank you, daddy. He takes these things we bring, but he really doesn't even need.
- And he looks at us and he says, thank you so much. This is such a wonderful gift. Like the child who's brought a homemade something to their parents.
- May God bless you. May God bless you with an abundance that you might be able to share with the world the wonderful gifts God has given you.
- [ 77 : 35 ] May God bless you with a heart to receive and to give. May God bless you with a heart to receive and may God bless you. Come and hang and drive. We'll have 9 a.m. tomorrow. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.