

Purpose

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Date: 29 September 2019

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] Empire shukki yizzy Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Please feel free to pick up a welcome folder at the back of the sanctuary at the connection site or from the welcome and information desk. And for everyone, we would like for you to fill out a friendship card.

If you would like to receive our newsletter, be sure to fill in your address. On the back, you can put down prayer concerns, blessings, or notes to the staff. Welcome to Pendleton Center Church, and have a good day.

[2 : 08] Good morning, everybody. Good morning. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad. This is the day that the Lord has made.

We will rejoice and be glad. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad. Let us pray. Oh, holy God.

We come here today to worship you, to praise you, to encounter you. And we pray that your presence, your blessing will come and fill us with your abundance.

Fill us, Lord, to overflowing, that we may experience you and praise you even more. For it's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. I invite you all to stand, if you're able, as we sing together, Make Me a Captive Lord.

[3 : 36] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Bring me captive, Lord, and then I shall be free.

For spit, you enter of my soul, and they shall conquer thee. I sing in my song, where by myself I stand.

If prison may within thy heart, and strong shall be my hand. I'm our saint and all, till I have my to serve.

[4 : 46] If acts like in and fire to fall, if acts like priesthood. He cannot help the world, until it's sunny to day.

If sin can only be on cross, and I shall breathe forever. I lose on my own, till thou hast made it lie.

If it might rich upon our tongue, and bless its crown resign. There only stands on land, while in the passion's strife.

When all the rules of heaven has left, and found in the inside. The Lord be with you.

And also with you. Please be seated. This morning, we have something that you can do with that. Lose change, you don't know what to do. And you could help people around the world. This is Violet, and her husband Abraham.

- [5 : 59] And these are the children they call their own. Before Violet and Abraham took them in, many were abandoned, abused, and malnourished. Fighting for survival on the streets.
- So she took them in, and loved them like they've never been loved before. And the children began to grow and get stronger. As they grew, so did their appetites.
- Which created a big problem. Fortunately, Rice Bowls partners with loving grassroots children's homes around the world to cover 100% of their food budgets.
- Rice Bowls started over 35 years ago using a plastic piggy bank in the shape of a bowl of rice to fight world hunger. To ensure thousands of orphaned children enjoy delicious, locally sourced meals every single day.
- By removing the financial burden on these homes, you enable them to focus on loving, teaching, protecting, and providing for the children in their care.
- [7 : 06] Every one of the kids we serve is a hero who has already overcome so much. They have the potential to make a real difference in the world. Let's give them a boost.
- Let's give them a boost.
- Let's give them a boost.
- Let's give them a boost. Do you reject the evil powers of this world, repent of your sin, and accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist Satan?
- If so, answer, I do. Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior and promise to serve as Christ's representative through faithful participation in his church? If so, answer, I do.
- [8 : 42] Will you nurture this child in Christ's holy church? And by teaching an example, lead him to accept Christ as his Lord and Savior? If so, answer, I will. And for the sponsors.
- And for the sponsors. Will you sponsor this child and support and encourage him in his Christian faith? If so, answer, we will. For the church. Will you, as the church of Christ, renew your own vows of commitment to Christ and accept your responsibility to assist these parents in fulfilling their vows?
- If so, answer, we will. We will. We will. Wonderful. Let's go this way. Shall we pray?
- Lord, bless this water as a symbol of your sanctifying and renewing grace. As you have used water to bless the saints of history, let it now bless your child. Pour out your Holy Spirit on this gift of water to bless this child.
- With your grace, it leads to eternal life. Help us to know that as we die to this world, we become alive to Christ and share in his final victory over sin and death. Amen.
- [9 : 54] Amen. Hey, Jackson. Jackson. Come see me for just a second. No. Okay. Jackson Wyant Wasico.
- I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. May the Lord bless you this day and forevermore into eternity.
- Amen. Good job, Jackson. Good job. Shall we greet our newest member into the family of God? Amen. Thank you.
- Thank you. Thank you. It is such a joy when families make a commitment and children are baptized and welcomed into the family of God.
- And I'd love to hear from you today. What are you joyful about? What is God doing in your life? What are some wonderful things to praise God about? Weather.
- [11 : 00] Absolutely. Summer is lasting a little while longer. I don't care what the date says. Hello. What? Some of you might recognize that. Several years ago, we had a pastor named Suzanne Plyle.

Next week, she is being installed as a district superintendent in Southern Pierre. Yes. It's now in the Holy Air. And she's invited you all to come and join her Sunday evening. I'm going to be there.

We hope you can all come out and support Pastor Suzanne. Yes. Pastor Suzanne. Exciting things. Yes. Anyone else want to share? Yeah, Linda. Last week's retreat, a joy for many.

Yes. The prayer vigil. Oh, I attended the prayer vigil. It was wonderful. Wonderful. Anyone else want to share?

Yeah. Water? Absolutely. Yes. Anyone else want to share? This morning, we come with grateful hearts.

[11 : 59] Excited for encountering God in every area of our lives. And as we give back our gifts, tithes, and offerings, let's reflect on God's goodness and grace in our lives. Hope p Alfie Wasong To be reappe Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Lord, we do praise you this morning and always, and we give back to you a gift out of our love for you and for who you are. We pray that you will bless these gifts, that they may be a blessing to others, giving your love and your grace to the world, transforming it into your likeness as we continue to praise your name.

[15 : 38] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. I invite you all to be seated. Okay, let's pray. Lord, we come to you today exalting your holy name, and we lift up to you these concerns on our hearts.

We give to you the burdens that have been drawing us down, and we remember that you said that your yoke is easy and light. And we come to you, Lord, giving it to you, trusting in you, and we pray that you will see our repentant hearts, that you will know our longings, and you will respond in bold ways.

Help us to respond to you with grace and trust. Lord, we pray for your healing touch to be upon all of the people who are hurting, physically, mentally, emotionally, relationally.

Lord, we pray that your healing hand will be upon them, and they will experience your presence, that they will become whole and well, that you will come through them and in them and surround them and be flooded with your healing power.

Lord, we thank you, Lord, for the healing you're doing in the lives of your people, as we lift them up to you and trust in you. We pray for people with grieving hearts, that they will have your peace and your presence.

[17 : 08] Give them your comfort, Lord, and help them to see you and experience you in the midst of their pain. Lord, we pray for our families. We pray for discernment, for wisdom.

And give us your Sabbath rest to enjoy our families and be with them. Lord, we pray that you will continue to draw us closer to you, closer to one another.

We pray for your blessing upon this church, that you will continue to guide our ministries and make them stronger. Lord, help us to walk in your way, always focused on what you would have us to do, in the way you would have us to do it, Lord.

Keep us focused always on you, for you are the center of all we do. Lord, we pray for our country. May the divisions cease. May we find peace in your presence.

Lord, we pray for your Holy Spirit to wash over this congregation this morning, that this experience of worship will be one that powerfully anoints us more with your Spirit and your presence, that we will leave here empowered by your Word and by your Spirit.

[18 : 26] Lord, we pray for our Spirit. Move us to walk boldly. Strengthen us for the journey. Strengthen our faith, Lord, when things look weary.

And give us more of your faith as we encounter struggles and trials. And Lord, as we come to you this day, we know that you are good and you are holy.

And we are striving, Lord, but there are times when we fall short. And we know that if we come to you, that you love us no matter what.

And you are there and will forgive us if we just come to you. And so we pray a prayer of confession. Lord, I have sinned. Forgive me.

I've not always obeyed you. I've not always been loving. At times I've been selfish. Lead me, Lord.

[19 : 29] Cleanse me from my sin. Convict me when I'm wrong. Give me the power to repent. And walk in your way.

For it's in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Hear the good news. Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. And this proves God's love for you and for me.

So in the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. And now let's hear from the word of the Lord.

Good morning. This is Romans chapter 15, verses 14 through 29. I myself am convinced, my brothers and sisters, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with knowledge and content to instruct one another.

Yet I have written you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to Gentiles. He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

[20 : 41] Therefore, I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done, by the powers of signs and wonders, through the power of the Spirit of God.

So from Jerusalem all the way around Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ. It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so that I would not be building on someone else's foundation.

Rather, as it is written, those who are not told about him will see, and those who are not heard will understand. This is why I have often been hindered from coming to you. But now that there is no more place for me to work in these regions, and since I have been longing for many years to visit you, I plan to do so when I go to Spain.

I hope to see you while passing through and to have you assist me on my journey there, after I have enjoyed your company for a while. Now, however, I am on my way to Jerusalem in the service of the Lord's people there.

From Macedonia to Ohio, we are pleased to make a contribution for the poor among the Lord's people in Jerusalem. They were pleased to do it, and indeed they owe it to them. For what the Gentiles have shared in the Jews' spiritual blessings, they owe it to the Jews to share with them their material blessings.

[21 : 52] So after I have completed this task and have made sure that they have received their contribution, I will go to Spain and visit you on the way. I know that when I come to you, I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Madeline. It's a beautiful, sunny day. Today, in Orchard Park, we've got 10% of our congregation out rooting for Go Bills!

Against the dreaded and evil New England Patriots, led by that accursed man, Tom Brady. Is it possible?

Could the Buffalo Bills win today? Could the Buffalo Bills ever beat a team led by Tom Brady? Yes, they can. Now, they were down 21-0, and here we have a ball game.

Fourth touchdown of the season for Chandler. Brady looking for Gronkowski. George Wilson with the pick. His third interception of the game. Tight coverage, and Brady usually fits the ball in tight Wundles.

[22 : 56] But Buffalo says the door in Wundle will be closed. All right, well, here we go again. Catch number 16, I believe, Michael. To Walker for the touchdown. All kinds of time in the huddle, and Tom just waits for Wes to work open.

Incredible how Tom Brady just sat in that pocket all cool and calm. So we're tied up at 31. Fitzpatrick to Fred Jackson. This is Mr. Do-Everything Fred Jackson.

He's a short yardage runner. He goes out as a receiver. He'll block you. This is against a blitz on scat protection for the big play, setting up the game-winning field goal. 39 yards for a touchdown.

They reviewed it. His knee was down, so it was reversed. Ryan Liddell comes on for the game-winner. The Bills are 3-0. Yes! They beat the Patriots 34-31. Buffalo can defeat the New England Patriots.

It might take Fred Jackson coming back. Of course, then again, our running back is named Frank Gore. You know he's like 345 years old.

[23 : 53] He's ancient. But we can win. And we like to win, don't we? Do you know that the Bible even encourages us to win? In the book of Philippians, it says to us, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.

The prize of God. The prize of God that is eternal life, that is the power of God for the life to come, but also in this world as well. In verse 19 of this passage, it says, by the powers and signs and wonders through the power of the Spirit of God.

Signs and wonders, the miracles of God, the power of God. This is the last passage we're preaching from Romans. We've been doing this since June.

I hope you've enjoyed this sermon series. As we've looked at Romans and some heroes from back in the Old Testament, we're going on to a sermon series called Redemption. Where we're going to look over the next few weeks as to how God can redeem our whole lives.

Our finances, our time, our relationships, our life with Him. How can God bring redemption into our entire life? But today, we're still looking at Romans.

[25 : 01] And I want to talk about one last Bible hero from the Old Testament. He was called by God to go into battle. And he said to God, I'm not sure if I should go.

I need a sign from you. So God caused fire to come out of a rock. Now, we've got an angel. We've got fire coming in a rock. Most of us would say, oh sure, we'll go for that, right? He said, no. Here's what I want you to do.

I'm going to put this fleece on the ground. And I want you to make it wet in the morning and the ground around it dry. Okay, God did that. Well, Gideon, the prophet says to him, no, we can't do that.

We can't do that because we're not sure if it's true. So I want now the ground to be wet and the fleece to be dry. And I already told you who it is, right? Who is it? Gideon. Gideon, who actually had the audacity to put God to the test.

To see if God could really make miraculous things happen. And God can. And God will. Make signs and wonders and the power of the Holy Spirit happen in our church.

[26 : 07] But first we have to have faith. We have to have faith. We are a seven point underdog for today's game. You do know that. Seven points. The experts across the nation have made a decision that Buffalo will lose.

By seven points. Do you believe that's true? No, of course not. Of course not. On any given day in the NFL.

Any group of people can win. I believe the Buffalo Bills could win. I think they're just a kooky enough team this year that they might just pull this thing off. Because the New England Patriots can't even figure out what they do.

Actually, they just go out and play sandlot football. Get yourself open and I'll throw it to you. That's what's going on out there. No plays. Do you believe in God? Do you have faith in God?

Do you believe in the gospel? The goal of the Christian faith and of Paul's ministry is to help people to understand that the power of God is available to us.

[27 : 09] To each and every one of us. God's salvation. God's forgiveness. God accepting us. God saying, as you heard in the prayer of confession, you are forgiven. And now come and live in the joy and the wonder of God.

Do you believe in God? That's the starting point of the Christian faith. It's the main thing we need to come to terms with. Not a God that's way out there.

Not a God that doesn't care. Not an intellectual idea. But a God that wants to and will be with each one of us in our lives. But it doesn't end there. That's just the beginning.

We need to practice our faith. In the book of Luke, it says, maybe it's over here. Got the book of Luke? Well, maybe we don't.

There it is. As everyone who comes to me and hears my words and puts them into practice, I will show you what they're like. They are like a man building a house who dug down deep and laid a foundation on a rock.

[28 : 08] When a flood came, the torrent struck that house but could not shake it because it was well built. The wise man builds his house on a rock.

A rock. Jesus said to Peter, on this rock I will build my church. And that doesn't mean on the rock of Peter. On the rock of his faith and his commitment. It says we need to put what Jesus teaches into practice.

We need to make it an effort. We need to work on it day after day. We're going to have a new Sunday school class starting next week. And what it's going to be about is how do we read the Bible.

You can go to that after church if you want to where you can learn how do we go about this. How do we make it a part of our daily practice? How do we make our faith something we do so often that it doesn't become something we turn to.

It's something that we have. It becomes like a stream of water that we walk in. We need to be, as it says in verse 14, we need to be filled with goodness, with knowledge, and competent to instruct one another.

[29 : 20] You know, the Buffalo Bills are a weird team this year. I don't know if you know it, but they took these people from all over the country. People that used to be somebody. You know, Frank Gore is like the number four running back in all time history in the NFL.

And we're like, Frank who? That's who all these guys are. They're a bunch of misfits and nobodies and people that they pulled out of here and out of there. But they're extremely talented, but they have one problem.

They've never played with each other. They don't know what the guy next to them is going to do. The New England Patriots, they're like a machine. They know exactly what they're going to do next because they've done this again and again and again.

That's why football teams practice. They go over it again and again and again. I don't know if you've ever played football or a sport like that. I have. And what you do is you keep doing the play and doing the play and doing the play.

So it's not like really the quarterback is throwing the ball to that open receiver. He's throwing the ball to the spot that he's thrown it to and the receiver is supposed to be there. Because that's what the play says.

[30 : 21] That's what it means to practice. And we need to do the same thing so that our faith becomes just natural. Instead of being like a well that we send down a cup to get a little bit of water and it splashes on the way up, it's like we stand in a stream of understanding and knowledge about God where we can just reach down and drink as much as we want.

God calls us to be a people that practices our faith so it's built on a rock. He also calls us to accountability. Accountability.

That's why we come each week and confess our sins to acknowledge we have faults and we need accountability. In verse 15 it says, Paul has written quite boldly on some points to remind you of those points again.

We all need somebody to remind us. We need somebody to walk through our lives with us. The best friend you can ever have is not the person who tells you everything you want to hear, but tells you everything you need to hear.

Amen? In fact, this is what the book of Ephesians says about it. It says, Instead, speaking the truth in love. That's that easy. A lot of people speak the truth and a lot of people love, but speaking it in love is hard.

[31 : 33] We grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head. That is Christ. From him the whole body is joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love as each part does its work.

The truth is we need people that will help us on the journey. We need accountability. We need to hold ourselves accountable. We need to hold others accountable. That doesn't mean we go around saying, Oh, I know what you did wrong.

Or we're trying to look for faults in people. It means that when somebody truly needs our help to explain what we're doing wrong and where our life has gone astray, someone will have the boldness and the love to share that with us.

Paul did that with the church in Romans, and he doesn't even know these people well. That is the best friend you will ever have is the one that will tell you the truth, not tell you what you want to hear.

As much as we like that. And we need to keep on growing. In verse 16, it talks about sanctification. That's a big, fancy word that simply means to grow more like Jesus.

[32 : 38] Sanctification means to become sanctified, to become sacred, little by little becoming more and more like God. Paul is using it here to talk about the work he does amongst the Gentiles.

We need to do that. We need to build a faith through the power of the Holy Spirit that makes us better little by little, day after day. A complete faith.

We've talked a lot about loving the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. The reason we talk about that is because without it, we have an incomplete faith. There's a lot of people that are very good about learning about Jesus.

They love God with all their mind. But they don't have anything else. They end up with a shallow faith and a heartless faith. We have people that love God with all their heart. They have all kinds of wonderful friends in the Christian faith and church, but they don't understand their faith at all.

They have no concept of what it's really about. We have people that love God with all their soul. They come to worship every week. They pray to God regularly. But their faith is dependent upon the gathered crowd.

[33 : 46] They don't have anything personally for themselves. God calls us to have a full faith. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind.

Oh, and yes, the last one, strength. And Paul leads into that strength and says, Our faith is completed in our service. Our strength. Believe it or not, there was a time in my life I was a strong man.

I could lift a lot of weight. I was actually on a weightlifting team competitively. I also played football. I also was a wrestler. I also ran track. I know it's hard for you to imagine now, but there was a time when this was a five, two, three.

And the fascinating thing is, you know what we did as weightlifters? This is what we did. That's it. That's it.

We did nothing with those muscles. Now in football, we used those muscles. In track or wrestling, those muscles made a difference as to our success.

[34 : 49] In weightlifting, we just went, look at this. What's the point? What's the point of having a whole lot of muscles that you do nothing with?

We're a strong congregation, filled with a lot of people with a strong faith. But God calls us to do more than just have a faith. He calls us to live out that faith.

If we're truly going to redeem our life and the world around us, we have to infuse it with the energy and the power and the gifts that God has given to us. What are you doing with your life for God?

Paul gave his whole life to God. In fact, he says that his purpose was to go to a mission field and share with other people about God. He says, Because of the grace God gave me, as a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, he gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God.

He knew what his job was. He knew what his mission was. In verse 21, he says, To those who are not told about him, they will see. And those who have not heard will understand.

[36 : 07] When I became a pastor, I knew what God had called me to do. He called me to bring faith to people in the church that had no faith and bring the church to people outside the church that had faith.

And that might sound a little strange, but what I discovered early on in life and in ministry is that there are a whole lot of people in the church that went to church every single week but had no idea what they were doing there.

They didn't know who Jesus Christ was. They didn't know about the grace of Jesus Christ. They didn't know they could be forgiven. They didn't know about eternal life. They just went because it's what you did. And God told me those people needed to hear about the grace of God.

They needed to understand. They needed to believe. They needed to live a full life of faith. But God also called me to talk to the people who knew God but didn't have a church.

You'd be amazed how many people in this culture around us believe in God are trying to live for God. They even read the Bible regularly and pray but they don't have a church. Maybe they were hurt by a church.

[37 : 14] Maybe they were bored by a church. Maybe they were confused by a church. I don't know why. But they found themselves with no community of faith. And the power of our faith is when we take and have this incredible, awe-inspiring faith of our own and we put it together with the community of God.

Together we can do so much more. By ourselves we can't. But it needs to be driven by a faith in God. So I know what I was called to do. I know what God put me on this faith to do.

I even know what I'm supposed to do as a pastor. What is God calling you to do? Gideon was called to go to war. He was called to go to war against the Midians.

The Midians had amassed an army of 135,000 soldiers. Now even today that's a pretty big army. 135,000 armed soldiers waiting for Gideon.

So Gideon sent out the call to all his brothers and sisters and all the nation of Israel across the country and he said, we need to fight. Come fight with me.

[38 : 21] 32,000 people showed up. I think that's pretty amazing. I can pretty much guarantee that if I put out a call for people to go to war there wouldn't be 32,000 people.

I don't think there'd be 3,200 people going to war. Gideon was amazing. The people followed him because he knew what his call was and it was to lead an army.

32,000 people responded. What are you doing with your life? And that passage from Ephesians it said to us at the end from Christ the whole body joined and held together by every supporting ligament grows and builds itself up in love.

What does it say? As each part does its work. That's what you are. Parts. Parts is parts. And we need all the parts.

You're going to have a huge machine if you're missing the one little cog that drives it. It won't do anything. If you're missing the button that starts it you won't get anything happening. What we need is we need all the parts individually put together as God has arranged them.

[39 : 28] Not what other people do. Just like a football team. We don't want the linemen to run out as receivers. They do that every once in a while. Have you ever noticed that? They kind of go whoop, whoop, whoop.

They don't get very far because they're not fast. Alright? We need each one to do what they were specifically designed by God to do and God has specifically designed each of you to do something.

I don't know what it is. For Paul it was going to the mission field. But for us it's something entirely different. And not all of us are called to go to the mission field.

In verse 24 it said how Paul is looking forward to going to Rome because I don't know if you caught this he wants to take up a collection so that they can help pay for his trip to Spain.

Did you hear that? That's what they said. He said I want to take up a collection so it will support my trip to Spain. Meaning that the Romans could be a part of what he was doing even by simply what they gave.

[40 : 30] And what we do to support can make all the difference in the world. Romans says to us in chapter 10 how can they call on the one they have not believed in and how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard and how can they hear without someone preaching to them and how can anyone preach unless somebody sends them.

I don't know what God is calling you to do but I know each of us can do our part. When I was a little little boy I had a pastor we were at Christ United Methodist Church over in Snyder and my pastor got up one day and he said there's a guy in Japan who's a missionary and they were looking for some support from the conference for him to be a missionary and everybody said no so I said our church is going to support him.

I thought that was audacious. I had an audacious pastor growing up. And what he said is that we were going to do what we needed to do to help this man in Japan. Now I'm a little boy I don't even know where Japan is.

I don't care about Japan. I don't even know this guy. His name was Norm Parsons and every week we would come and put our pennies in a jar like these banks that they're talking about.

We put our pennies and our nickels into this jar for some guy named Norm Parsons. No idea who he was. We just know our pastor said support him so we did. Even us kids did our little part.

[41 : 56] The fascinating thing was years later he actually came home. He came home from Japan and his son went to school in the town right next to me. He went to our church and I actually got to know him.

His name was Mark. They just bought a home down the road here in Pendleton. He's also a pastor. And he became a friend of mine over the years and I know his father Norm and I got to know him because of pennies and nickels we put in a jar.

See, the problem is is we've got the idea that we're gifted or that our abilities are about us but they're not. It's all about God. It's about the mission of God.

The mission of God. In verse 18 it says to us by the power and signs of wonder we do these things through the power of the spirit of God. Through the power of the spirit of God.

God is the one who makes it work in us. We need to have faith in God and do what God wants even when nobody appreciates it, nobody applauds it, nobody seems to care.

[43 : 00] I played football. You never guess what position I played. I was on the line. I know that might seem a little weird because I don't seem big enough to be on the line but when I was in 8th grade I was the same size as I am now.

I was huge. They had these little guys in 8th grade. They were about this big and we'd just push them aside, right? We were giants! So they put us on the line. That's where you put big guys.

So I played on the line. By the way, as I got older those guys got bigger and bigger and bigger. Hello? Want to go through? Go ahead. I was so great at the line but I didn't know what the line did.

And I learned that in football you can have the best running back in the world and the best quarterback in the world if you've got nobody up front to protect those guys you've got nothing. Tom Brady without his team in front of him his linemen in front of him can't do anything.

They're the unsung heroes of football. The ones that people don't talk about but the people that make the difference and sometimes we need to be like that. Philippians tells us in chapter 4 I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength.

[44 : 10] Say that with me. I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. God wants us to have the power and the victory that only he can give.

It says they were pleased to do it indeed they shared their gifts the Gentiles with the people who had brought them faith. because what goes around comes around and what we do together can make all the difference in the world.

A number of years ago I went to become a United Methodist pastor. I stood before a committee that was interviewing me and to my surprise they told me no.

I couldn't be a pastor. And then they told me to go back to the church and be a pastor. I was so confused and so conflicted and I was about this close to saying forget this thing obviously this isn't what God wants me to do.

And there was a man named Norm Parsons at the time. The only one in the entire United Methodist Church in upper New York that reached out to me this guy named Norm Parsons who just sent me a book saying keep the faith Tom next year I'll come.

[45 : 25] And he gave me a book of devotions I read three times a week during that year. And you know the amazing part is it was a small gesture on his part but it made all the world to me.

The guy who we put pennies in the jar for is the reason why I'm still here to be a pastor. The next year I was approved in case you were wondering.

I did get approved. They said now that you know that God is first and not you we're going to approve you. God calls us to unleash the powers of signs and miracles.

In verse 21 he says I know that when I come to you I will come in the full measure of the blessing of Christ. Don't we want the full measure of the blessing of Christ? Football games are an amazing sport where we work together to accomplish a goal.

But sometimes even the best football team needs a little help. Do you remember this? Ravens trying to end it here. Fourth down. Dalton steps up. Dalton throws.

[46 : 27] It's complete. Caught by Boyd. Tyler Boyd. Touchdown. Remarkable. The Cincinnati Bengals have stunned this crowd.

I heard that guy playing when we were playing against Cincinnati and I'm thinking oh that's the good guy.

We like him. We like him. We want him to lose but we like him. He sent us to the playoffs for the first time in 14 years. We all need a little help.

We're gifted. You have abilities. You have wonderful good things and amazing things God has made you to do. But what God is calling us to do is to go from the glory that we live in into an even greater glory.

This is a great church. You are great people. You really are. I know you well. But God doesn't want us to be good. He wants us to be amazing. He doesn't want us to be okay. He wants us to be spectacular.

[47 : 25] He wants us to go from the glory of God to an even greater glory. And that's what he calls us to. So that we all can win that prize. We all can win in that battle.

Gideon went into war. 32,000 strong facing 135,000. Kind of a little bit lopsided but that's okay. And then God said no you got too many guys.

Send everybody who's afraid home. You want to know how many went home? 22,000. So there's 10,000 courageous guys standing there. Gideon's going okay let's go to war against 135,000.

God said too many. Get out of the water and see which ones drink like a dog and which ones drink like a human. And he ended up with 300 guys. And God said 300?

Yeah. I can show I can show that God gives the victory through 300. And they went down into the Midian camp and he won. He won the battle.

[48 : 26] God is calling us to signs and wonders amazing things. God is calling us to go from glory to glory to go from just surviving to thriving.

From being a people who think about God who love each other who know God to a people that are redeemed and redeem the whole world around us.

war in this morning I have sighed Like the tree planted by the water We never will run dry
You'll really want it going through God, we thirst for more of you Fill our hearts and find our
souls Who find these light Just to know you and to think You know you lift our name on
high Like the sun made God

His running out We know we will make our soul Our joy in ordinary life It's time for us to
more than just survive We were made to thrive Oh, oh, oh, oh Oh, oh, oh, oh Oh, oh, oh,
oh, oh To your word we're digging deep To know our Father's heart To the Lord we're
reaching out To show them who you are So living on and going through God be blessed
from all of you

Fill our hearts and fill our souls With what we are dying Just to know you and to make you know We lift our name on high And like a Sunday God is going in high We know we were made for so much more In ordinary lives It's time for us to know That just to lie We were made to cry Joy unspeakable Unspeakable, faith unseakable, love unstoppable, anything is possible.

[52 : 06] Just to know you and to make you know we lift your name on high. Shine like the sun, make darkest room in time.

We know we were made for so much more than ordinary life. Time for us to hold and just survive.

We were made to cry. Oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh, oh.

We were made to cry. You know, Pastor Sherry introduced me to a song a few weeks ago that I think is a theme song of what we're trying to do in the next few weeks.

You are great people. You are a great church. But we don't want to just be glory. We want to go on to even greater glory. God doesn't call us to be good. He calls us to be great, amazing, transformed. We go from glory to glory to glory.

[53 : 25] Created from dust.

You came and you lived among us. You took on our frame. You walked in our pain.

And now you're taking us higher. You stepped into time. You laid down your life to save us.

You took on our shame. On the cross it was laid. You took on our shame.

Ruined in our shame. You took on our shame. You brought into your endless kingdom. By the one I was named. No longer a slave.

[54 : 55] And He taken us higher. We go from glory to glory to glory. We'll never be the same.

We'll never be the same. We go from glory to glory to glory. We're forever changed, forever changed Until we reach that day of God's every beat We'll cry an anthem singing, Holy, Holy And when we see that day, we'll stand in face to face We'll shout an anthem singing, Holy, Holy Until we reach that day of God's every beat We'll cry an anthem singing, Holy, Holy And when we see that day, we'll stand in face to face We'll shout an anthem singing, Holy, Holy Yeah, yeah You took on the grave

So not even death can shake us Though victory has won and heaven has torn Now you're taking us higher Now you're taking us higher We'll go from glory to glory to glory We'll never be the same We'll never be the same We'll never be the same You take us higher and higher and higher We'll forever change Forever change We'll go from glory to glory to glory We'll never be the same We'll never be the same You'll never be the same

We'll never be gosh And now as confident children of God, let's greet one another with the peace of the Holy Spirit.

More love, more power, more of you in my life.

[58 : 18] I guess we're done. I guess we're done.

I guess, I guess so. She said we might cut it. Did you hear how loud it was when I dropped the capo? Just before we started.

Amen. God does take us from glory to glory. Amen? Amen. And it all, it begins for us when we come to the table. We come into the house of the Lord, gather together with one another, worship God from our heart of hearts, and feel the love of God.

Learn to know that the love of God is among us. And God has invited us here to this table. God has invited us in a way of showing his great, great love for us.

That he sent his son before we even knew we were in need of saving. If you love God, repent of your sin and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ, you are invited to the table this morning.

[59 : 33] It doesn't matter if you belong to this church or any church. You are welcome to come because God has said, I want my children to come to me. I want them to come and share.

And when you come to the table, you can trust that in the bread and the juice, as Jesus' body and blood, God himself will meet with you.

God himself will fill you in a way that you have never been filled before. Come expecting the Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. Blessed are you, our Alpha and Omega, whose strong and loving arms encompass the universe.

For with your eternal word and Holy Spirit, you are forever one God. Through your word, you created all things and called them good. And in you, we live and move and have our being.

[60 : 35] When we fell into sin, you did not desert us. You made covenant with your people Israel and spoke through prophets and teachers. In Jesus Christ, your word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.

And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn. Holy, holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you and blessed is your son Jesus Christ who called you Abba, Father. Father, you embraced a people as your own and filled them with a longing for peace that would last and for a justice that would never fail.

In Jesus' suffering and death, you took upon yourself our sin and death and destroyed their power forever. You raised from the dead this same Jesus who now reigns with you in glory and poured upon us your Holy Spirit, making us the people of your new covenant.

[61 : 50] On the night before meeting with death, Jesus took bread and he gave thanks to you. He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples. He said, take and eat. This is my body which is given for you.

Do this in remembrance of me. And when the supper was over, he took the cup.

Again, he gave you thanks and praise and gave it to his disciples. He said, drink from this, all of you. This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new covenant, poured out for you, poured out for many, for the forgiveness of sin.

Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. And so in remembrance of these, your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ's offering for us.

As we proclaim the mystery of faith. Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here.

[63 : 05] And on these gifts that in the breaking of this bread and the drinking of this wine, we may know the presence of the living Christ. And be renewed as the body of Christ for the world, redeemed by Christ's blood.

As the grain and grapes once dispersed in the fields are now united on this table in bread and wine. So may we and all your people be gathered from every time and place into the unity of your eternal household.

And feast at your table forever. Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever.

Amen. Shall we pray together with the confidence of children of God? The prayer Jesus taught us. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

[64 : 13] And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Amen. Will those who are serving please come forward. Thank you. Amen.

Thank you. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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

Thank you.

[65 : 27] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. If you're able, we're going to invite you to stand as we're going to sing together.

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness. My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

[67 : 39] I cannot trust the sweetest friend, the holy name of Jesus' name. On Christ the Son, the holy name of Jesus' blood and righteousness.

All other ground is sinking sand. When He shall come with hope and sound, away and end, yet He may come.

Dressed in His righteousness alone, all I am to stand before the throne. On Christ the Son, in the rock I stand.

All other ground is sinking sand. All other ground is sinking sand. When I came to this church, I said, if the Buffalo Bills, who could never do this, ever go to the Super Bowl, I'll wear a t-shirt in church with the Bills on it.

Back in that day, the people who gathered in Foxborough Stadium dreaded the day that the mighty Buffalo Bills would come to town.

[68 : 48] Remember that? Jim Kelly! Oh my gosh, and they can't go. Can they just go away? They're a curse on us. Tom Brady is 42 years old. George Blanda.

I mean, that's about it. And you know, he beat us 50 to nothing, really, okay? We just got to go away someday. That's his human glory. He's got to go away. He can't do this when he's 90.

All right? So you got 50 years, and then he's got to go. It's football, guys. It's a game. I'd love to see the Bills win. I'd love to see that happen. That would just be wonderful. We'd all feel better today.

But don't lose the game of life worrying about games that don't matter. You are the redeemed of God. God has called you not just to live in glory, but to go beyond it to greater glory. You're not called to just be good, but to be great and amazing and transform this world.

Go and be the transforming agents of Jesus Christ. Go to his peace. Amen. God's voice is about you. Thank you.

[69 : 50] God's voice is about you. You are the bare little heart. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.