

February 22, 2015

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Date: 22 February 2015

Preacher: Pastor Bob Franke

[0 : 0 0] This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Good morning. We're the Fish Fry Kitchen Cleanup Crew. 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 the mailing list. Sign up for activities. List any prayer concerns and any notes for the staff. Welcome to our church. We do welcome you to worship this morning here at Pendleton Center United Methodist. Yeah, the fish fry.

Wow, first fish fry and even with the weather the way it was, 494 dinners. Is that amazing? And we need lots and lots of help with the upcoming fish fries. Adrian's looking for, did we find those clipboards? We don't know where the clipboards are. Do you see clipboards anywhere?

There's some clipboards. Alright. We have four clipboards this morning that are going to go around for fish fry sign ups. And then there's one real special clipboard. Not that the fish fry clipboard isn't special, but the clipboard for the praise concert.

[1 : 2 0] We need, it's over there. Okay. We need some folks. Thanks, Louie. We need some folks to bring cookies. Sign up to bring cookies for the reception after the praise concert.

Praise concert is next Sunday evening. And if you have some kind of a gift you want to offer up to God and to the congregation, an offering of praise. Whether you sing a song or dance a dance or something uplifting and wonderful for the people.

See Adrian back there. Adrian Almeida. And he'll sign you up for the praise concert, which is next Sunday. That clipboard for the cookies, we need that to go to all four sections. Okay?

So if you could please take a look at that and sign up. If you'd like to help plan this year's Easter egg hunt, there's a planning meeting on Tuesday at 7 o'clock. And Pastor Tom sends his greetings. He is preaching up in Niagara Falls this evening.

So we have the pleasure and blessing of having Pastor Bob speak to us this morning. Would you pray with me? Heavenly Father, we give you thanks. We give you praise.

[2 : 2 4] For the opportunity to gather together and worship this morning. Lord God, you are enthroned on the praises of your people and we are here to praise you. Be with us, Lord. Open our hearts and our minds to receive all you have for us this day.

Make our worship to be a blessing to you. In Jesus' name. Amen. The Lord be with you. And also with you. Will you greet one another with the peace of the Spirit of Christ? And with you.

God's peace be with you. God's peace be with you. We did wine. I got it. It makes sense. Amen. Amen.

Good morning. God's peace be with you. And God's peace be with you. And God's peace be with you. And would the children like to come forward? Good morning, children. Coming forward. Where are all the kids today?

We're gonna go up there. Here we go. Here we go. And Pastor Bob's gonna talk to you this morning. Did you ever meet Pastor Bob? Did you? He's a really neat guy and he's gonna speak to all the grown-ups today.

[3 : 36] And he wants to talk to you first. This is Pastor Bob. Hey. I brought with you, brought with me some toys here that my kids used to play with.

These are called weevils. You ever seen weevils before? Have you? You know what they do? Weevils wobble. But they don't fall down.

Look at that. Look at that. They wobble but they don't fall down. Ooh. Come on. Get up. There he's up. Okay. You make a layer out of me. Weevils wobble but they don't fall down.

You know? I kind of thought that's an interesting comparison because, you know, God loves us no matter what we do. We want to do what's right. What mom and dad tell us to do.

What God wants us to do. But sometimes we make a little mistake here and there. We kind of wobble a little bit. And, but then God forgives us and we come back to him.

[4 : 45] And he loves us all the time no matter what we do. Even when we wobble around, he still loves us all the time. So, remember that. No matter what happens.

When you get discouraged sometimes and things may be in school or not going just the way it should be going. Just remember God loves you and it's going to be okay. As long as you continue to love God and serve him.

Anything you're thankful for this morning? My mom and my haircuts. My parents.

Friends and family. Friends and family. Shall we pray together? Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for your goodness to us.

We thank you for our moms and dads, brothers, sisters. We thank you for this church. Thank you for loving us all the time. No matter where we are or what we do. You continue to love us.

[5 : 46] Thank you Lord. Be with us now. We pray in Jesus name. Amen. Good morning everyone. Good morning. This morning I would like to offer a thankful moment.

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ. May the peace and love of our Lord be with all of you. My name is Julaine Beck.

I am a humble servant of God. Last year I had been steeped in a Bible study called Disciple One. Week after week we would read scripture and discuss its meaning.

We would pray for each other and those we care about. I learned deep in my heart of hearts that God really loves me.

I learned that I mattered. What I said mattered. What I did matter. And what I felt mattered. I was important to God.

[6 : 51] This year I'm immersed in the Disciple Three class. Again, in that small group setting, we discuss our readings and share our God more and more intimately.

We pray for each other and those we care about. While some shared more openly, I could not. I knew I wasn't feeling well and the concerns of others seemed more deserving of God's attention.

Maybe pride was getting in the way. The others were openly lifting up the frailties of their humanity. I wasn't frail. I'm a strong, independent woman.

In the darkness of my own little world, no one knew how I hurt. There were days and days, entire weekends that I would wail uncontrollably in pain.

In denying my weaknesses week after week, the burden of carrying my health concerns, the weight of my sins, the physical pain as a result of sin, was just becoming too much for me to bear alone.

[8 : 01] I had to admit my frailties. Oh, how frightening to be vulnerable. I remembered. God loves me. I mattered. God is so good. It wasn't long before someone heard my cry.

My needs were put before the prayer team. I can't tell you the exact day or the hour, but I can emphatically say the power of prayer was absolutely overwhelming.

The physical pain that was debilitating had ease to something tolerable. I felt the grace of God healing me. God loves me. He really, really loves me.

I'm extremely grateful for the opportunity to grow more intimately in Christ through my disciple class. I'm ever thankful for the loving concern of all who prayed for me.

I thank God for showing me the power of his love through prayer. May the peace and love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.

[9 : 17] Thank you, Julian.

God bless you. Our church, the ministries God has called us to in this place are indeed touching lives and reaching out. And we, as a church, are so blessed.

Let's have a moment now during which we can return just a small portion of our blessings back to God through our tithes and offerings. Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise for this day and for the opportunity to worship you.

We ask that you would bless these gifts, Lord God, and bless all of the gifts that you have given us that we offer up for your service. Father God, we ask for wisdom to know how to best use all of these things, to draw many into your kingdom and see many saved in Jesus Christ.

It is in his name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. We do have, we have a joy and a concern that I have to bring before you this morning.

[10 : 34] And of course, you have those joys and concerns in your hearts as well, which will take all to the Lord in prayer. But Shirley and Mike Schlieb, who are, yeah, there's Shirley right over there.

Daughter Jen and son-in-law Chad have had their baby. Addison Taylor was born on Friday and she's just a joy to both of her folks. Everyone's doing well.

And so please congratulate Grandma over here. Yeah, congratulate, congratulate all who are, all who are involved in this wonderful blessing.

And on the concern side, Kelly Putney, her aunt Molly has been moved to hospice care and that's down in West Virginia. So Kelly and the family are traveling or have probably traveled already and arrived down to West Virginia to be with her at that time during this difficult time.

And we just need to keep them in our prayers, not only the whole situation, but also the traveling. You know how that can be this time of year. So we pray for a safe return and also for that transition that that family is going through.

[11 : 42] With these prayers and those that are in your hearts as well, let's turn to the Lord. Our gracious Heavenly Father, we are humbled with the opportunity to come before you.

We know we are not worthy to be in your presence, Lord God, but because of what you have done for us in Jesus Christ, we are able to do that.

You are the one who has made us able. We are grateful. We are grateful for who you are. We are grateful for the opportunities that you give us to bring our concerns and joys before you and to offer up those of others that you put on our hearts.

Lord God, now we pray for all those who are in need of healing of all kinds, healings in their spirits, their souls, their bodies.

Touch them, Lord God. Bring your healing power into their lives. For those who are experiencing grief, Lord God, grief from losses of all kinds.

[12 : 59] And there are many different kinds of losses that we experience in this life, Lord. Father, we just pray for comfort and for peace in the midst of those storms and in the aftermath where there is all kinds of clean air.

Cleaning and repair. And Lord God, restoration that's needed. Father, we pray for those who are experiencing the joy of parenthood, the joy of new parenthood and all that goes with that.

We pray for each and every child that they will grow and come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior. And Lord, we pray for all of the parents that they would have all of the skills that they need, all of the wisdom that they need to care for their children well.

Help us, Lord. We don't know how to do this without you. We pray in Jesus' name, in thanksgiving for all those into whose lives you have already brought healing.

The kinds of healings that we can just lift up before you and use as testimony to your great love, your great mercy, your wonderful grace.

[14 : 24] And Lord, as we look at this world around us and see all of the turmoil and unrest, all of the injustice that there is here, we pray in Jesus' name that you would make us your witnesses in those situations as well.

Give us wisdom, Lord. Give us wisdom, Lord. Give us wisdom, Lord. Put words in our mouths and give us boldness to go forth in your name.

Father, as we hear your word read to us this morning, we ask that it would wash over us like a cleansing flood. That it would draw us to become more like Jesus.

We pray for Pastor Bob that you would anoint him to deliver the message you've given. Let it be a blessing to us and to a blessing to him. Make all our worship to be a blessing to you, Lord.

It is in Jesus' name that we pray. Amen. Good morning. This morning's reading is from Romans chapter 11, verses 11 through 24.

[15 : 36] Again, I ask, did they stumble so as to fall beyond recovery? Not at all.

Rather, because of their transgression, salvation has come to the Gentiles to make Israel envious. But if their transgression means riches for the world and their loss means riches for the Gentiles, how much greater riches will their fullness bring?

I am talking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch as I am the apostle to the Gentiles, I make much of my ministry in the hope that I may somehow arouse my own people to envy and save some of them.

For if their rejection is the reconciliation of the world, what will their acceptance be but life from the dead? Yes. Yes.

For if the part of the dough offered as firstfruits is holy, then the whole batch is holy. If the root is holy, so are the branches.

[16 : 52] If some of the branches have been broken off and you, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those branches.

If you do, consider this. You do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.

Granted, but they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid.

For if God did not spare the natural branches, he will not spare you either. Consider, therefore, the kindness and sternness of God.

Sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off.

[17 : 58] And if they do not persist in unbelief, they will be grafted in, for God is able to graft them in again. After all, if you were cut out of an olive tree that is wild by nature, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more readily will these, the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree?

This is the word of the Lord. Amen. I've seen some of you folks in and out when I come in on Sunday morning.

Bob, Pastor Bob is my name, and I generally am preaching at this time, well, from 9 to 10 over at the Royalty and United Methodist Church in Middleport. And then I come here at 11 o'clock service.

But it's my privilege and honor and a humbling experience to be here with you today and to be representing that God of the creator of everything.

To think that here I am speaking on his behalf. Hmm, it's a humbling experience. But it's a joy to be here with you today, too. And I'm going to be talking about Paul's letter to the Romans, and Paul talks about God's kindness and his sternness.

[19 : 32] I have to admit that I, the first 50 years of my life, I was focused more on God's sternness than I was his love and grace and mercy.

And in the church that I grew up in, I was always reminded how God was going to punish you if you sinned. And that's a, that's not a really happy way to live.

But it was good for me in the sense that I was respectful and fearful of God. The Bible says fear of God is the beginning of wisdom. But there's a kindness as well as a sternness to God.

And Paul, in the scripture today, is talking about God's sternness as well as his kindness. And he has some cautions for the people in Rome as he wrote this letter to them. And so we're going to be talking about both.

So, but before I speak to you about that, I just wanted to say that when you leave here today, I want, I don't want you to go here leaving with a sense of fear.

[20 : 37] But a healthy respect for God. And I want you to leave knowing that in your heart, God loves you no matter what. Like the weevils and wobbles there, you know, you make mistakes.

But as long as you love the Lord, he continues to love you and forgive you. And you can live in his joy, have that peace in your heart, knowing that he continues to love you no matter what you do.

He continues to love you. And scripture says he's not willing that any should be lost. It certainly wasn't his will that in the garden Adam and Eve sinned.

It wasn't his will, but he gives us a free choice, a free will to serve him and to love him or to choose otherwise. And in our, in our text today, some of the Jews were cut off.

They were separated because of their unbelief, because of their attitudes, because of what they were doing. And they could be regrafted back in, but we could be cut off.

[21 : 41] I know over the years, some folks that I've talked to believe in eternal security. And once you're, once you're saved, you can never be lost.

As United Methodists, we believe that our free will is still present in our lives.

God doesn't take away our free will. So, I gave my heart to the Lord, but I still believe that if I were to decide in my heart that I really want to go to hell, I think God would allow me to, but it would hurt, would hurt him.

He would be terribly hurt by that. And after I gave my heart to the Lord, the Holy Spirit came into my being. And now, when I transgress, when I sin, this little spirit within me says, guides me back, or draws me back to him.

And I sincerely believe in my heart that God will do everything he can to draw me back to him when I err and go in the wrong direction or when I sin. Excuse me.

[23 : 02] So, Paul has got some cautions for these folks, and we should pay attention to those cautions as well.

I just wanted to share with you some cautions that may not be as serious as what Paul was talking about. It says, the Michigan Lawsuit Abuse Watch has sponsored an annual contest, and people send in the most absurd warning labels.

You know, when you open a package or something, and they'll give you these warnings, and some of them are kind of ridiculous. I mean, you'd think you know that you wouldn't use an electric care dryer while you're taking a bath or something like that, but there are warning labels on these things that we purchased.

These warning labels are among the top place winners. It says, do not use a snowblower on the roof. And I mentioned that to my wife, and it was just interesting that this past week in Boston, you know, they're really getting dumped on the snow.

In the evening news, there was a picture of a guy up on the roof with a snowblower cleaning his roof off. Next one is, do not allow children to play in the dishwasher. This one, a clothes iron, had this advice.

[24 : 23] It says, warning, never iron your clothes while they're being worn. I don't know if you remember Superman or not, but it said, on a Superman costume, warning, cape does not enable the user to fly.

On a bottle of hair coloring, it says, do not use as ice cream topping. Evidently, somebody did. There was a, on a cardboard sun shield for your car, it says, do not drive with the sun shield in place.

A toner cartridge had this warning. It said, do not eat the toner. This is a good one. Remember this one now, on a portable stroller. It says, caution, move the infant before folding for storage.

And in a microwave oven manual, it said, do not use for drying your pets. Well, those are, sound kind of ridiculous to us, but Paul's cautions here were more serious.

And he was writing them to the Jewish believers and the Gentile believers in Rome. Everybody knows you could save 15% of you on your car insurance if you went to the right company.

[25 : 36] But did you know that if you grew up in a family that went to church every Sunday, not automatically going to heaven? Your mom and dad could be wonderful folks and your grandparents could be missionaries around the world and all that.

But that doesn't automatically mean you're going to heaven. Each person has to make a commitment to Christ themselves in their heart. Abraham was called to trust in God and became the father of the nation of Israel.

Israel was chosen to be a nation that brought salvation to the world through Jesus Christ. Jesus was born in earthly terms, was born a Jew, but was actually God incarnate.

In other words, God came to earth in the body of Jesus Christ. And he lived on earth. He was crucified, rose from the dead, came back again and spoke with his disciples.

Because over 500 people saw him after he rose from the dead. And then he went to heaven and said he would be back. And left his Holy Spirit to be in our hearts and lives with us every day.

[26 : 47] God used the prophets of Israel to announce his plans for those who would accept him as Lord in their life. The nation of Israel and the prophets recorded his message to us in the laws of the Old Testament.

They built the temples and shared the message of God with us. So his plan from the beginning was to use the nation of Israel to bring the plan of redemption to the people of the world.

However, each person, whether they're Jews or Gentiles, had to make a personal commitment to Christ. Even being born a Jew didn't automatically mean that they would be going to heaven.

In verses 17 to 19 of Romans 11, it says, If some of the branches have been broken off, you, though a wild, he's talking to the Gentiles, though a wild olive shoot had been grafted in among the others, now share in the nourishing sap from the olive root, do not boast over those other branches.

So we can picture these as the Gentiles had been grafted in to the tree of life, the nation of Israel.

[28 : 03] And in fact, it seems as Paul was writing, some of these Gentiles had become prideful, thinking, Oh, look at me. The other one's been cut off and we've been grafted in.

And so even the Gentiles were getting kind of prideful in the sense that they felt that they were better than others because they had been grafted in. As Julaine read to us a few minutes ago, the Jews can be brought back into the fold, can be grafted back in again when they accept Christ and humble themselves.

Paul cautions the Jews not to be conceited because they were members of the chosen race of people through which the Messiah would come. God showers his mercy and love on those who serve and love him, but he'll take away his kindness and blessings from those who take it for granted and do not acknowledge him as Lord in their life.

My dad was a Sunday school teacher and my mom was a pianist and of course she played for the junior choir every time they practiced and when we sang in church.

I can remember when my buddies, four or five of us, there's four boys, Dennis and Jimmy and Donnie, when we were like six or seven, we'd get up and we sang, I'm on the battlefield for my Lord, you know, and it was kind of fun, but Saturday morning, I would rather be out playing, riding my bike and doing stuff like that, but anyways, my mom dragged me there and I had to be there because she made me be there.

[29 : 48] And so at the time, sometimes I was not anxious to be there, but when I look back over the years and the things that have happened in my life, God had a plan for me and even though sometimes I wasn't really cooperating with it very well, God had a good plan for me and I'm grateful for my folks who made me go to church.

My brother told me one time when my aunt was in a head-on collision over in Middleport and his daughter was driving the car.

We were there at ECMC for about eight hours and his kids are adults now and having some difficulties in their lives, you know, and I didn't bring this up, but my brother looked at me and had some tears in his eyes and he says, you know, I wish I'd made my kids go to church.

I wish I'd made my kids go to church. I said, where'd that come from? I didn't say where'd that come from, but you know how it is when you're trying to talk to your brother about bringing your kids to church and, you know, and bringing them up in Christ, but at the time when they were younger, he said, well, I don't want to indoctrinate them.

I don't want to make them do this and this. I want them to make their own decisions and so on. And I said, well, Paul, I said, the world is training them in this way and if we train them this way, then when they get a little bit older, they'll make a decision which way they go.

[31 : 20] But let's balance it out a little bit because the world is trying to draw them into some things that are not good. But the Lord will have his will, but I encourage you to help the younger folks be exposed to God's claim in their life so that when they get a little older, they'll make a decision that honors the Lord and God will work in their life as you continue to pray for them also.

But I do appreciate my folks taking me to church and exposing me to the claim of Christ in my life. And about 11 years old, well, it was 11, I think it was January, and our church went to a Billy Graham crusade down in Kleinhans Music Hall.

And as it was 1956 and the last century. And at the time, I looked at that big building there in Kleinhans, you know, and I thought, like today, you would think of HSBC Arena, you know, and now when I go back there, I'm like, it's not very big, you know, Kleinhans is not really that big.

But Billy Graham was there and I made a commitment to the Lord and I can remember very distinctly afterwards, everybody from our church was out in the bus waiting for me and it was January and it was cold and there was a fellow named Hewitt who was standing outside of the bus when I came and I was late and I was sure my dad was going to bawl me out, you know, and be upset with me.

But Hewitt was standing outside the bus and he greeted me, put his arm around me and said, oh, Bobby, we're so happy that you received Christ in your heart and just loved me. And the reason I tell that story is because, you know, sometimes us older folks begin to think that young kids don't really want to talk to us or we don't think what we have to say is important.

[33 : 16] But those older fellas in that church that we went to as a youngster just made me feel like I was worthwhile, like I was important.

And so, to you older folks, if there's any older folks here, don't hesitate to shake hands of that young kid and say hello and encourage them in their walk with the Lord and let them know that you think they're important.

Because sometimes in the world today, I taught biology in high school for 33 years, you know, and I know there's an awful lot of kids that are feeling worthless.

An awful lot of kids that are feeling worthless. And so, whatever you can do, make them feel the love of Christ in their heart and life to encourage them.

Because I remember very distinctly those, of course, as kids, you know, you see somebody who's 50 and you think they're ancient, you know. But as kids, these old fellas used to make me feel important in my life.

[34 : 21] So, I suppose that goes for the women too. But I'm just speaking from the male perspective that ladies or gentlemen, the old folks, let those kids know that you love them.

And really, deep down inside, they do appreciate it. So, in our text today, Paul warns the Jews not to be conceited. Being born in the nation of Israel is not a ticket to heaven.

Paul wrote this letter to the church in Rome and many Jews there had the attitude they're better. God lived each one of them and would share his kindness and mercy to each person who humbly acknowledged him.

Those who rejected would be cut off. So, the cautions that Paul said to them, don't be conceited. Okay? Don't be conceited. I don't know if there's anybody here that's conceited today, but Paul warns the Jewish Christians not to be conceited.

Don't be looking down on the Gentiles. Reminds them that they were sent into the world to bring the good news of salvation to the rest of the world. I don't know if any of you folks ever get the feeling that because you attend this beautiful church, you know, and a lot of good things going on here.

[35 : 31] If you ever get the feeling like, well, you know, you're a little bit better than those pagans that don't go to church on Sunday, don't let that sink into your head. You know, Satan throws these ideas through your head sometimes.

Just get that out right away because we're just one beggar sharing the bread with another beggar as we come to the throne of grace. We don't deserve it, but God loves us and he cares for us.

So humbly acknowledge God's goodness and our unworthiness. Paul also cautions about complacency. He wants us to have a healthy attitude.

A complacent attitude is a dangerous one, but have a healthy attitude of humility before God. And a scripture, Revelation, the third chapter of Revelations, says this about the church of Laodicea.

It says, He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the angels of the church in Laodicea write these. These are the words of the Amen, the faithful, and the true witness, the ruler of God's creation.

[36 : 38] I know your deeds, that you are neither cold nor hot. I wish you were either one or the other. So because you're lukewarm, either hot or cold, I'm about to spit you out of my mouth.

Wow. Let's talk about end times. Church at Laodicea were kind of, oh, I can take it or leave it. No big deal. I don't need to, I don't need it, but it's good.

It's warm there. I got friends there. You know, don't be complacent about God's working in your life. people at Laodicea evidently were neither hot nor cold.

I tried our buses for grand tours over there in Lockport. I just started doing that back in 1974. And a friend of mine, I go down, I take Nichols High School down Holiday Valley on Friday nights.

And I was sitting, not this Friday, but a couple weeks ago, I was sitting in the lodge there and it was kind of quiet because it was not too cold that night and the kids were out skiing so it was pretty quiet in there.

[37 : 49] And I was reading some material for my sermon and another driver named Chris came up and sat at the table with me. And he knew I was a pastor and we started talking about God.

I just said, hmm, where do you go to church? And Chris said, well, I don't really go to church. I used to when I was a kid, you know, but I don't really go to church, you know.

So he talked about it a little bit and he said, didn't really care to communicate or interact with God in any way. He said, there is a God.

I think there is a God, but I don't really pray or I don't talk to him and he doesn't talk to me. In other words, he said, God was irrelevant to him.

He had been to church in the past but didn't really see any reason to attend or learn about God. He didn't have anything bad to say about God or anything good. He felt that everybody can and should believe whatever they want in regard to God.

[38 : 51] Believe whatever you want. For Chris, God was irrelevant. This fellow was complacent. There's a church, I don't like to use the word church, but there's a group down on Main Street and they have a website and a friend of mine from Royalton, his daughter went to this place in Williamsville and for Sunday worship.

church, and I looked at the website and it said some commonly asked questions, I don't know if the pastor wrote this or what, but some common questions and their responses to it.

Like one was the question, what do you think of the Bible? and the response from the church was, well, it's like any other magazine, some good stuff, some bad stuff, whatever.

And a friend of mine who used to teach in the middle school was talking to me one time, he said, he goes to that church, I'll use the word church, and he said, we had a speaker there one time and he was reading from that book you'd probably know which one I mean, that book, I can't think of it, you know, after a minute or something, I said, you mean the Bible?

Yeah, yeah, yeah, he was talking about the Bible, you know, and all this stuff. So, there are places that you need to know where you're going or where you're sending the young people.

[40 : 23] Don't send the young people to some place like that. And another question was about prayer and they said, no, we don't do much of that. And about God, they said God was like a big Santa Claus in the sky.

When you need something, you just pray for him and give you that. Just like ridiculous. I don't like to call it a church, but I could tell you what it is, but just check out those things before you go and know that God has a good plan for us and come here and worship with us because we hold up God's word and we worship the true God.

So, Paul warns us to be cautious with God's goodness as well. Paul explains that some of the Jewish Christians had sinned and fallen away and the Gentiles who believed in Jesus Christ took their place in God's plan of redemption.

redemption. So, because of their pride they were cut off. Romans 11, 21 said, If God did not spare the natural branches, he'll not spare you either. Consider therefore the kindness and the sternness of God.

Sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off. So, it sounds kind of tough, but there is the option of being cut off.

[41 : 43] There is the option of losing it. So, pay attention to God. The real reason the branches were broken off issues a warning so that it may not happen to us.

They were broken off for their unbelief. And in the day of judgment he will determine who will enter into his paradise. You read the book of Job, you'll see Job was pretty true to God, even though his wife said, why don't you just give it up?

And his friends came to him and said, you know, admit your sin and come back to God. Well, Job hadn't sinned and he was true to God. And, at the very end of the book of Job, Job begins to question God a little bit and it's interesting to listen to God's response to Job and it helps us to recognize our humility, what we should be because God says to Job, so, Job, where were you when I put the song moon in place, when I put the stars up there, when I created everything?

Where were you, Job? Just to remember that we are nothing in comparison to God. So, God will make judgments. You may not like it, you may not be happy with it, but God will make a judgment in the final day and it says every knee will bow and whether you're complacent or happy with God or joyful relationship with God, whatever, everyone will stand before God and every knee will bow and so, those that are complacent in this life and don't think that God's important or irrelevant to them.

Someday they will see God's relevance. So, these warnings are important and they make sense so remember them. The first psalm, if you look in the book of psalms, the very first psalm, the first verse of the first psalm says, Blessed is the person who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of the sinners or sit in the seat of mockers but delights in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night.

[43 : 59] 1 Peter 5, 8, be self-controlled and be alert. Your enemy, the devil, falls around like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Lion, the devil, is always there seeking to trip you up.

And Ephesians 6, 8 says, Pray in the spirit on all occasions. Be alert. Always keep on praying. Hebrews 3, 14, We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first.

As has just been said, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion. Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt?

With whom was he angry for 40 years? Was it not those who sinned whose bodies fell in the desert? And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed?

So we see that they were not able to enter because of their unbelief. You remember when the Israelites came out of Egypt, came across the Red Sea and they began to complain and murmur against God and finally God said, okay, you folks are not going into the promised land and their children, the next generation, went into the promised land but all those in the desert died in the desert and their offspring went into the promised land.

[45 : 32] So God can be a stern God and God is also a loving God but we need to obey him and take him seriously. So please, if you remember anything from today, remember God loves you and he'll do everything he can to draw you into heaven but you can cross the line.

You know what I mean? So, come back to God. Humbly acknowledge his power and authority in your life and he will lift you up. He will forgive you and draw close to you.

So we pray. Our dear Heavenly Father, thank you for loving us even when we don't deserve it. Thank you for sending your son to die for me to pay the penalty for my sin.

Help us, Lord, to be attended to your Holy Spirit to obey you, to honor you and have a healthy fear of you in our lives that we might be wise in the word that you have sent to us and honor you in all things.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. It's a simple thing, isn't it? To come to know Jesus. So simple.

[46 : 42] If you confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.

So simple. Ask him. Ask him. And Jesus will come into your heart. Draw on his grace and his mercy and he will see you through anything and everything in this world.

How amazing. We're going to come to meet with God. Know God has been with us. We have been in the midst of his presence.

This whole worship service, we know this, is true. Even if we don't feel it, we know it's true because God has promised he'll be with us. Amen? So he is here.

But now we're going to meet with him and commune with him, partake with him, have supper with him. I think that's amazing.

[47 : 59] Everyone is welcome at the table of the Lord. He invites each and every one of us. If you love God, earnestly repent of your sin and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ, you are welcome at this table this morning.

You don't have to be a member of the United Methodist Church. You don't ever have had to walk through church doors before in your life. If you are ready to come, you're welcome and God will meet you here.

God will refresh you and restore you and give you the eternal life that everyone needs. So let's pray. Heavenly Father, I know I have sinned.

I have followed my own ways instead of your ways. I have been a fool.

Forgive me, Lord. I have not loved you with the love you have loved me with. And I have not loved other people the way you love them.

[49 : 19] Forgive me. Lord, I seek to walk in your ways to be your disciple and to know you in eternal life forever and ever.

In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. God loves us so much. Before we even knew we needed saving, he sent his one and only son that whoever would believe in him would not perish but have eternal life.

In the name of Jesus, your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God. Amen. Amen.

It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. You brought all things into being and called them good.

From the dust of the earth, you formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

[50 : 32] 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 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.

when you gave him to save us from our sin, your spirit led him into the wilderness where he fasted 40 days and 40 nights to prepare for his ministry.

When he suffered and died on a cross for our sin, you raised him to life, presented him alive to the apostles during 40 days and exalted him at your right hand.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death and made with us a new covenant by water and the spirit and on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread and he gave thanks to you.

[51 : 42] He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples saying, take, eat. This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

and when the supper was over, he took the cup and gave you thanks and praise and he gave it to his disciples and he said, drink from this all of you.

This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new covenant poured out 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. and on these gifts of bread and wine.

[52 : 53] Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ that we may be for the world the body of Christ redeemed by his blood. By your spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other and one in ministry to all the world until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your son Jesus Christ with the Holy Spirit in your holy church all honor and glory is yours almighty Father now and forever. Amen. Shall we pray together as disciples of Jesus Christ the prayer he taught us.

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Amen. Well when you leave today I want you to take with you assurance that God loves you dearly God loves you dearly so when you stray a little bit weevil wobbles get off course a little bit come back to God and he forgives and draws you close to him so may the love of God and may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and may the Holy Spirit's guidance and direction be with you now until we meet again in the name of Jesus Christ I pray Amen.

Amen.