

August 16, 2015

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Date: 16 August 2015

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

- [0 : 00] Good morning. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad then. 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. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.
- Good evening. Welcome to our church. We have a gift for our visitors at the Connection site. Please fill out your friendship card for any prayers or concern or just so we can get to know you.
- It's fun to be part of the welcoming committee here at Hamilton Center. We are glad to have you here this morning with us. If you're here for the first time, we do have a gift for you out at our welcome center.
- I did want to mention that there's two clipboards somewhere floating around the sanctuary and they're individual ones. So they need to keep going around because they're for communion elements and flowers and bulletins and things like that.
- [1 : 27] So if you happen to see them, I don't know where they went. Just keep passing them along until we figure that out. All right. We do have a blood drive here this Saturday. If you'd like to donate to help with that gift of life, let's take a moment, shall we, and center ourselves on God as we prepare for worship.
- Dear God in heaven, we thank you for bringing us to this place and for all the blessings you give to us. Give us your joy. Give us your wonder. Give us your strength today and always as we pray in Jesus' name.
- Amen. I'd like to invite you, if you're able, to stand as we sing together, Immortal, invisible, God only wise. Immortal, invisible, God only wise.
- In light, inaccessible, hid from our eyes. Most blessed, most glorious, the ancient of days. Almighty, victorious, thy great name we praise. Unresting, unhasting, and silent as light.
- [2 : 43] Nor wanting, nor wasting, thou rulest in mind. Thy justice like mountains, high soaring above.
- The clouds which are fountains of goodness and love. Thou reignest in glory, thou dwellest in light.
- Thine angels adore thee, all will in their sight. All what we would render, all help us to see.
- Thine angels adore thee, all will in their sight. The Lord be with you.
- Take a moment, if you will, and greet your neighbor with the peace of the spirit. Invite the kids to come up and join me now.
- [3 : 58] If any kids want to come on up? You know what this is?
- This is a book of pictures of people I went to school with a long time ago. It's called a yearbook.
- You can't even find me in here. I know that. There we go, I think. Here I am.

Where am I? Still not there. Looks like I disappeared from the pages of my own yearbook. Oh well.

Anyways, these are people I haven't seen in 40 years. 40 years. That's a long time, isn't it? Yeah.

[5 : 06] And I still can't find me in here. But I must be in here somewhere, right? Yeah. 40 years ago, I went to school with these people. They've invited me to come to a party next week. I haven't seen them for 40 years. Do you think I should go? Yeah? You think I should? You think any of them will recognize me? No?

You're probably right. Now, you know, the interesting part is when I went to school, I thought these people were so important and they were so much a part of my life in every way and now I haven't seen them at all.

I don't see them anywhere. Ever. Because actually, it turns out that they weren't really the most important people in my life. They were just people I went to school with. You know which people I've known forever?

Yeah. People in this picture. That's my family. Where are you? Where am I? Right there. See me? That looks like me, doesn't it?

[6 : 04] Yeah. That's me. You know, the truth is, is some of these people... What's that? My eyes are halfway closed? Yeah, it was sunny that day. Some of these people aren't even around anymore for a lot of reasons.

Some have gone to be with the Lord and some we just don't see anymore. But most of them I see regularly. And you know what's even more important than these people? It's to stay connected with the one person that will be with us forever.

That's God. That's right. So if we keep God with us, God and Jesus, yeah, that's the same person. That's right. We'll talk about that another time. But when we keep them in our lives, then we make sure we always have somebody close to us forever and forever.

Okay? So sometimes it's important to remember what's important. What do you think before this morning? You want to share something? Raise your hand. My family and friends. My two cats.

Mom and dad. Okay. Okay. Lord, we do thank you for the blessings you give to us. And we pray that you'll always keep us close to you.

[7 : 10] Close to our family. Close to those who we love and love forever. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. You guys go out to church school. All the kids go out to church school if they'd like to. If I find myself, yeah, I've got to go find myself.

That's a good idea. I've been trying to find myself for 40 years. I can't find myself. This morning, I'm thankful for being here.

I'm thankful for the rain, even though it was excessive. We needed it. As we're thankful for all this, let us return our gifts, ties, and offerings to the Lord. último minis of the Lord.

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Amen. Amen.

[9 : 20] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Dear Lord, accept these gifts we bring to you today.

We pray that you use them and multiply them to further your kingdom here on earth. We ask this in Jesus name. Amen. You may be seated.

My junior year book, that's why I can't find me in there. Didn't know any of the people in there either. Sometimes we find things confusing.

This morning I have a couple of concerns I want to share with you. First of all, the flowers are in memory of Brandon Peller who passed away last week. His funeral was here yesterday. You may know the Peller family. You may know Brandon.

[11 : 34] And so we do want to be in prayer for that family and their concern this week. Also, I want to be and continue to be in prayer for Jan Gertz, who's going home tomorrow?

Tom? Tomorrow. Okay. And Bob Dimmick, who's gone home from the hospital. They both still need our prayers for continued healing, but we are glad that they're on their way to recovery.

Also, we had Vacation Bible School here this week and it was successful in spite of the fact that it rained on our parade Friday afternoon. We still had helicopters landing and fire engines and police cars and all kinds of crazy stuff going on.

So we had a great time and enjoyed it. And now I'm looking forward to not doing it next week. If you've ever been here for VBS, you'd know why.

We do have many thoughts and concerns and joys that we share in, things that we bring in our heart to lift up to God. So let's take a moment and share in our own prayers with the Lord.

[12 : 44] Let's center our hearts on you. Pull our mind in from the many directions in which it races. Help us to experience you in this place.

Reach into our lives. Reach into our thoughts and our worries and our concerns. And to our families. And to the lives of those we love and worry about.

Provide your blessing, Lord. Your healing touch. Wash over us, Lord, with your peace.

The anxieties that race through our lives. For our world, our community, our nation. And just our own lives, Lord.

Sometimes can be overwhelming. But you promise us the peace which passes all understanding. So Lord, send that peace upon us. Lord, you know our needs before we even ask.

[13 : 51] So listen as we share those things we brought about people close to us. About our own lives that we want to lift up before you.

Lord, listen as we pray. Listen as we pray. Listen as we pray. And now, Lord, for a few moments.

Help us to enter into your presence in a powerful way. That as the scriptures are read, they might open up a new meaning. New ways of seeing our lives and our relationship with you and with each other.

Bless us to be filled with your grace. Help us to come to the table to receive the living God. Be our God in this place as we have come to be your people. Help us to come to the table to receive the living God. Be our God in this place as we have come to be your people.

Lord, we pray this all in Jesus' holy name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[14 : 53] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Now, shall we listen to the Word of God?

Good morning. The scripture today is Matthew 11 verses 2-19. Jesus replied, Go back and report to John what you hear and see.

The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me.

As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John. What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see?

[16 : 01] A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in king's palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

This is the one about whom it is written. I will send my messenger ahead of you who will prepare your way before you. I tell you the truth. Among those born of women, there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist.

Yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.

For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. And if you are willing to accept it, he is the Elijah who has come. He who has ears, let him hear. To what can I compare this generation?

They are like children sitting in the marketplaces and calling out to others. We played the flute for you, and you did not dance. We sang a derj, and you did not mourn. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He has a demon.

[17 : 10] The son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Here is a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners. But wisdom is proved right by her actions.

This is the word of the Lord. Thank you, Amy. In life sometimes, we think that what the key is, is to just get things right.

Just to make that perfect splash. Something that people will remember forever. As I talk to teenagers, they've told me that one of the most important pieces of high school is not graduation.

It's not what they do in school. It's not even the prom. It's the invitation to the prom, which you have to get just right, like this guy did.

I wonder, wonder, will the doobie will? Will you go to prom with me? But now you tell me, Morgan, will you go to prom with me?

[18 : 21] I'm not going to know the answer, or I'm going to take a pee. I wonder, wonder, will they do me well? Will you go to prom with me?

I wonder, will you? Will you go to prom with me? I think that was a yes.

I think that was a yes. I hope that was a yes. After all of that, the prom ask is the highlight of life.

All of life depends on getting the prom ask right. It starts everything off for the perfect life. This is a very interesting story.

We have John the Baptist sitting in a prison cell. Out in the desert, while Jesus is going around the countryside, preaching with people, eating, enjoying life.

[19 : 30] And John is in a prison cell in the desert. You can just picture what he's thinking. Really? Really? I keep hearing these reports about Jesus having a great time.

All the crowds are coming out to see him. Here I am, stuck in a prison. So he sends off somebody to Jesus. One of his disciples who says, Are you the guy?

Or should we be looking for somebody else? Because I thought you were the guy. I was there on that day that you got baptized and the heavens opened up and a dove came down and a voice from heaven said, This is my beloved son.

Listen to him. And I was sure you were the guy. But I got to tell you, right now it's not looking so much like that's true. Because you're leaving me in this prison cell.

While you're just off doing whatever. Sometimes life can feel like a disappointment. It can be hard to believe in God.

[20 : 35] And God's power and God's miracle power when we're struggling with problems, real difficulties in life. Last week on Friday, Jerry decided that we should sing certain songs in a row.

Seven of which were on the guitar. It's like, seriously, I've got arthritis, man. I can play about three. And then my hand goes, like this.

Which is exactly what happened. About midway through the fourth song, the kids are watching as I'm standing there going, whatever. Can't play this song anymore. And it doesn't work.

For all I've done, you couldn't give me a third arthritis. Arthritis. And I wish arthritis was my biggest problem. I wish arthritis was your biggest problem.

I don't want to diminish it. That can be very painful and very crippling for people. There are things that break my heart, rip my life apart. Sometimes I just say, if you're really God, why don't you fix this?

[21 : 42] And maybe this whole thing isn't what I thought it was. This fall, we're going to talk about the miracle power of God. We're talking a lot about accessing it.

But right now, I want to talk about the things that are keeping us from it. And doubt is one of the biggest ones. Jesus said, if you have faith in such a way as to have no doubt, you'll be able to take a mountain and say, move to the sea and it will be done.

Are you sure you've got enough faith without any doubt to make mountains move? Disappointment leads to doubt about God.

Now the interesting thing is, actually, it wasn't God that John was doubting. In the years I grew up and we had this goofy notion, it's a modern idea that we should decide whether there is a God or not.

Like that really even matters. First of all, the Bible says, a fool says in his heart, there is no God. But even so, it makes no difference. You think that God is sitting up and going, oh, I hope they believe in me. I hope they believe in me.

[22 : 52] Oh, oh, oh, what am I going to do if they don't believe in me? Or he'll disappear. If we stop believing he exists, that really doesn't mean a whole lot to God. God wants something more than that.

And John's not struggling with that. You know, most people don't struggle with that. Most people believe there is a God. In fact, we have a whole lot of people in our country that we would call agnostics.

And what that means is, they believe there's a God. They believe there's a God that created the universe. They just don't think that God cares much about us. Or has much to do with us.

Sort of set things in motion and went off on that eighth day of rest and has been just sleeping ever since. Are you the one? Or do you not really care about us?

See, the question is not whether we believe God exists. It's whether we believe in God. We organize our life around God. Let those who have ears listen.

[23 : 53] Listen to what the Spirit says. Can you hear it? Can we hear the truth? We've also been talking a little bit about gardening.

Now, the thing about planting a garden that I find most troubling is the very beginning. You get these little seed packages. And they tell you, plant the seeds in such and such spacing at about certain depth.

Like, you know, they'll say something like three quarters of an inch. What are you supposed to be? Get a ruler out? Measure this thing, right? And then, then space them out in rows, cover them over, and water them.

And water them. And water them. And water them. Anybody else do this? And about the third day, all you see is what?

Weeds. Weeds and dirt. Weeds and dirt. Like, really? Then you start to go, I wonder if I planted them too deep. Or maybe I didn't plant them deep enough. Maybe I missed the watering when it needed to be watered.

[24 : 57] I don't think they're really going to grow. I don't believe it's going to happen. I don't know what to do about my garden. I spent all this time and work on it. It's not going to happen. I hate that part of it. That's why nowadays, people go out and buy plants that are already growing.

They usually kill them. But at least they buy something that they can see die, rather than something that never even started. They're getting one out of three to grow.

That's okay. See, the problem is, is we get disappointed. So we start to have doubts. It happens in gardening, but it happens in life and it happens with God.

And one of the reasons we're disappointed is because we have the wrong expectation. And the first part of this is, we actually think that God's purpose is to somehow serve us.

We've misunderstood the whole idea of God. God is someone we're supposed to serve. Not someone who's supposed to do what we want. We've got it in our mind that God is some kind of magic genie that we're supposed to be able to call to fix this.

[26 : 02] Hey, you've got it down here. I've got something for you to do. Take care of it. That's like not getting the idea of God. God is in charge.

He makes the decisions. Jesus actually says in here an odd little verse where he says, Blessed is anyone who does not stumble on account of me. Some people stumble because they don't understand God's plan.

They don't get the whole thing. They think it's all about them. I don't go to church. What's in it for me? I don't get much out of it.

You know, we don't come to church for us. I don't know if you understand that. So if you go to church and you're absolutely bored out of your gourd but you worship God, you did the right thing. That's what it's about. It's not about us.

It's about God. I hope you're not bored out of your gourd. That's not the goal, by the way. But the point is is that from time to time we're going to find that things are not what we expect them to be but it's not about us.

[27 : 06] We think miracles are to bless us. You know, when we're blessed by a miracle, it's a byproduct. Miracles exist to honor God and to draw people closer to God.

We think it's about us. And on top of that, our expectation of the results is wrong. You know what one of the most frustrating things about growing things in a garden is?

They don't come out the way they're supposed to. Have you ever noticed that if you grow carrots, they're like these short, stubby, weirdly shaped things? Your peppers are not clumping around.

They're kind of curved and twisted. Zucchini look like baseball. Clubs, right? Not bats, clubs, huge things. They don't come out the way they're supposed to.

No matter how hard you try. Because we've got an expectation that all vegetables grown will look like the ones we see in the supermarket. you know that farmers are not allowed to sell those things to the grocery stores or to sell them to anybody else either.

[28 : 24] If you don't have a tomato that looks plump and roundish, you know what they do with them? They shred them. A couple of years ago, we found some of these farmers and they actually let us give them away to the poor.

They can't sell them because that would give people the wrong idea of what a vegetable is. A vegetable has to look like the ones on veggie tails.

Perfect in every way. And when we grow vegetables, they don't work out so good. And have you ever noticed how much work and time and money goes into growing vegetables?

Right? Like you've got to buy the vegetable seeds, right? Or plants. Put them in the garden. You've got to water them. Water them. Water them. Water them. And weed them. And weed them. And weed them. And your time's worth money too, you know.

And then on top of that, you've got to get fertilizer and you've got to take care of making sure something's down there, some kind of weed barrier. And then you buy marigolds to keep the bugs away. And then you're buying sprays for your vegetables so that they'll taste better, right?

[29 : 27] I don't mean that. And so we end up spending almost as much, maybe more money, than it would be if we just went over to the market and bought a bushel basket of perfect vegetables.

Perfect ones. You see, we've got an image problem. We've got a problem with what we're expecting and miracles are the same way. We think it's all about making us happy.

When miracle, godly living, is about what makes us healthy. And those aren't always the same thing. We don't want God to really fix our real problems.

We want God to ignore those problems and do something that makes us happy today. I've had people who are lonely and they say they'd like to have somebody to share life with.

They have a romantic partner. So they're praying for God to send them somebody to love. But God isn't answering their prayer. And you know why? Because they're messed up.

[30 : 34] And so God has instead offered to fix them and help them to be healthy people that will attract the kind of folks that would be good for them. People that will improve and make their lives better.

That's not what we want. We want somebody that will accept us just as we are, flaws and all. Why do you want somebody who likes you broken? Why do you want somebody who appreciates what's messed up with you?

Why would you want somebody who is satisfied with what's dysfunctional about you? God is offering to make us healthy.

When we're healthy, it will lead to happy. We don't want healthy. We want to stay in our brokenness. And just have something that diverts our attention from it for a while.

When I look for somebody to love, I want somebody who's going to be dissatisfied with what's broken with me and will push me to be better than what I thought I could be.

[31 : 44] Don't misunderstand. We all need people who will accept that sometimes we mess up because everybody does. Right? We all need people who will allow us to have our faults and our imperfections.

But to have somebody who says, well, I'll take you as an all messed up, confused, broken, dysfunctional person. I'm satisfied with that. Why would you want to be connected with that person?

They're not going to make you better. God isn't saying, I'll make you happy just for the sake of making you happy. He said, I will make you healthy. And that's miracle.

Power of God. See, even in the miracles, we think it's all about some kind of special physical healing. Jesus caused the lame to walk. He caused the blind to see.

These are all great things. He says, but the good news was also proclaimed. By the way, lots of other things happen in people's lives. Do I believe that God can do these amazing miracles where he can repair broken people, where he can do things doctors couldn't do?

[32 : 46] Absolutely. Have I seen people heal? Absolutely. I've seen incredible miracles that the doctors can't explain. And I've seen things happen when I pray for them that I can't explain because God makes things occur in our physical world that makes life amazing.

But we say that we're supposed to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength. So why do we focus so much only on one of them? Why do we focus only on the strength part?

When so much of our lives, so much of our concerns, so much of our troubles are really heart, soul, and mind things. Stuff that messes up the way we feel in our relationships with other people.

Stuff that causes us to be stressed and emotionally a mess. Stuff that keeps us from the saving power of God. And when God turns those things around, life, long, lasting miracles occur.

And this other stuff will go away. Even Lazarus isn't with us anymore. All the people that were healed ended up breaking again. But if you can fix the soul, it goes on for eternity.

[34 : 05] If you can fix the mind, you can have a healthy life. If you can fix the heart, you can have healthy relationships. God wants us to do so much more.

We become so obsessed with what's on the outside of our lives. What we look like. How our health is. Whether we're successful in our careers.

Whether people will applaud us. We've even come to the point of thinking that the perfect person to be in a relationship romantically in our lives is the most attractive one.

Now there's nothing wrong with physical beauty. I like it. I appreciate it. But it's such a small part of a relationship. It's a piece that makes you look a second time at a person.

It's not the thing that holds you together for the rest of your lives. That comes in your heart. and your soul and your mind when these connect. Then you create a relationship that lasts a lifetime.

[35 : 09] We doubt because we've got the wrong expectations out of life and out of God and we doubt because we're looking in the wrong places for God. John the Baptist says, are you the guy?

Because dude, I've been sitting in this prison for a long time. I thought you were the guy. Because you know, I saw the clouds part and all this kind of stuff. I even told people, there's the Lamb of God.

He's the guy. Now I'm starting to wonder because you haven't fixed my world. You haven't made things happen for me. The people in John's era, they thought that a Messiah, a Savior, would be somebody who would come and fix all the political and military and economic problems of the world.

Kind of like what we do every four years in this country where we think somebody's going to come along as a Savior and fix everything knowing it's not going to happen. God wasn't even offering that.

Not that he couldn't do it, but he wasn't going to do it. And John says, I'm sorry, I'm not seeing this showing up with the soldier. You haven't broke me out of prison. Dude, where's the dynamite and the horses?

[36 : 15] Come on. Get me out of this jail. Then I'm going to believe you're God. You want a God that wows us. Like on the baptism day.

Wow. This is so cool. We want it from God, too. I went to church last week, just about fell asleep. Oh my gosh, I didn't think that guy would ever end talking.

And the songs they sang, oh, where do they get those things from? It just wasn't exciting for me. It didn't do what I needed. See, we got some idea that the whole idea of going to God is, yeah!

Yeah! And I'm all for that. I hope you have a wonderful, exciting, and moving time every time you come to worship, but I bet you won't. I'm betting you won't, no matter where you go.

But we're thinking that it's about God wowing us, God having this amazing impact on us, God moving our emotions, God touching us for this moment in some particular way.

[37 : 17] And you know, that's good. But that's not the whole thing. That's just the first thing. That's like looking at the beautiful person, the attractive person, and going, wow, I like that.

But that's just the starting point. That's not the end. Paul talks about it in Corinthians when he says this, I could address you as spiritually.

I could not address you as spiritual, but as worldly. Mere infants in Christ. I gave you milk, not solid food, for you weren't ready for it. Indeed, you're still not ready. There's people who are just going through life looking for one high after another, wherever they can find it.

And they do the same thing with God. God is just their new drug of choice. How can I get high on Jesus today so I can get through this miserable life for a short time longer? That's not real, God.

God can do that. But the problem is when you go up, typically you're going to come down where real life occurs.

[38 : 23] Should I do this Christianity thing, John says. And Jesus says, look around. Look at what's going on. People are getting healed. People are getting changed.

God is being talked about. Folks' lives are being transformed. Look, you'll see God if you just try. If you pay attention, you'll hear God.

You'll see God everywhere. On our mission trips with these teenagers, we do something interesting. At the end of each day, we sit in a little circle and we talk about where did we see God that day?

Now, the first night, you've got a couple of the ones that have been there a long time that will share because they know it's coming. But the new ones are like, whoa, where did I see God today? He didn't see that coming.

What do I do with this? So the interesting part is they go out for the entire day looking for God because they know at the end of the day, so where did you see God today?

[39 : 20] It's going to come. I've got to be ready. I've got to have an answer. Where did I see God today? And the fascinating part is if you'd ask them any other day of their lives where did they see God that day, most of them probably wouldn't have an answer.

But on the mission trip, they always have answers. They've got all kinds of answers. In fact, some of them will even say this. They'll say, well, I didn't see God particularly today, but I've got to tell you about when I saw God like three weeks ago.

So now all of a sudden they're seeing God where they didn't even see God before. I can tell you about God because I've been thinking about Him, because I've been looking for Him. And you know what I found out? God is all over the place doing all kinds of stuff.

I haven't even been noticing because I was too focused on all the other stuff. God is doing amazing things in our lives, in the lives of other people.

But we don't see it because we're looking in the wrong place. Jesus says to the people, what did you go out in the desert to see? What impresses you?

[40 : 23] Was it somebody in the fine clothes or somebody in a king's palace? Was it a powerful person? Was it an impressive person? Was it a multi-bazillionaire? Somebody with connections?

Somebody who dresses to impress? What impresses you about people? The first time you might be impressed because they show up with some rented knights out there to ask you to the crown.

Maybe they do something special for that date. That's just cool. Those things are fun and they're good to do. I've gotten the horse and buggy for my wife.

I've sent the limousine for her. I've done the special little things that are fun and exciting. But you know what? Those aren't the things that make real life a real love together.

You get up in the morning and coffee's made. You need a shirt to wear and somebody did the laundry. You go out in the yard and somebody mowed the lawn.

[41 : 33] Your car got fixed and you don't even remember asking. Somebody did something small and little. And my wife every day, since she'd been doing this new job with the military, she'd leave before I even get out of bed.

You know, she's gone before I even get up. So I make her the coffee which goes off at four in the morning which is insane, right? I'm just going to bed. She's like, you know, whatever.

Anyways, every morning there's a little note. It doesn't say very much. A lot of times it just says, have a great day. This is a little note. And I get up and it's like, cool, a little note.

You know, I've got to tell you, man, I'm just so excited about these little notes. Now you'd think by now I would be writing little notes for her but I'm not. I'm not doing it. I'm making the coffee, okay?

She's got the coffee. She gets coffee. I get a little note, you know? And she got the newspaper. Somebody a couple of weeks ago said, we saw you, Pastor Tom, going out to get your newspaper in your pajamas.

[42 : 37] Oh, yeah. It's like, thanks, I need that. You know? You're walking out going, why are the newspaper boxes on the other side of the street?

I mean, seriously. I love the cheek to walk and they drop the thing in your house. You're not going to walk across the street? That's ridiculous. Anyways, she gets paper for me.

When she goes out to get the paper, it's dark. Nobody sees her. It's okay. That didn't matter. It's little things. God moments happen in the parts of life that sustain us every day in small ways that we're not really even noticing.

little bit of growth, a little bit of change, a little bit of moving our heart. One more time when we turn to God in desperation and he was there.

A word we read in the Bible that just says, oh, I didn't see life that way. We're not looking for God in the right way. On verse 16 of this passage, it has a curious little thing.

[43 : 50] It says, to what can I compare this generation? They're like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to each other. We're still playing like we're in school.

We're still worried about what these people think. Now, you know, I've got to really tell you, I'm struggling whether I should drive all the way to Cheek the Wagga to go to my graduation at my reunion party.

My brother was supposed to come to his. He's five years younger. He called up. He said, no, I'm not driving 15 hours to see people I haven't cared about for 40 years. For 35 years. I said, yeah, good move. But we're still living as if the kids on the playground are the most important thing in life.

What are they going to say about me? Will they lick my hair? Oh no, am I going to impress them in the right way? Really? I've got to tell you something about the kids.

They mock you. They make fun of you. They always seem to find something wrong about you. Did you hear what Jesus said?

[44 : 57] John shows up neither eating nor drinking. They said, this dude's got a demon. So Jesus shows up and he drinks and parties and happens to a good time. They say, he's a drunk and a glutton. How do you please the crowd?

You can't. They will always find something to pick at. But we live for what they'll say. even our faith in God.

Why would we even think about questioning what God is or who God is in our lives except we're worried about what somebody might think of us. They'll think I must be some kind of uneducated person.

They'll think I'm not sophisticated. Who cares what they think? They don't matter. Forty years later, you won't see them.

four years later. You might not see them. But God promises to be there forever.

[46 : 03] I don't want somebody in my life so I can have someone to impress other people with. I don't want a trophy life.

I want a person to love and share every day with. I don't want somebody who's going to make my invitation to something like a prom into a show for the other kids to see how clever I was.

Not only that, do you know how hard that is on the person who's being asked, what was that girl supposed to say? Not likely, loser. I mean, what's she supposed to say? She's stuck.

And if she does say, I'm not going with you, where's that guy? Whoa! Didn't see that? Come and blow it away. How about a quiet invitation?

You're the one that's most special to me. I'd like to have a special evening with you. That's why I asked my wife to the prom and she told me no.

[47 : 07] It's the truth. She told me no. Isn't that funny how life goes that way? Don't make your life peak on prom night or the prom ask or on your wedding night.

My gosh, people are spending a fortune on that these days, trying to impress everybody. One of the most important things is just to have a special time with each other. don't spend your life worrying about what other people think.

Spend your time building a life together with some people that will really love you and with God that will be with you always. James chapter 1 says this.

When a person asks from God, they must believe and not doubt because one who doubts is like a wave of the sea blown and tossed by the wind in every direction. We have too many insecure relationships built on the next high.

Not just people relationships, but relationships with God dependent on what we think will make us happy. We look to God to save us for this life.

[48 : 22] Where God offers to save us in this life for the next one. very different. The best part about this passage happens around verse 11.

You've got to remember to set this up right. John just sent Jesus a messenger. A personal messenger saying, I am so disappointed in you.

I thought you were the guy. I really put everything, all that I ever thought mattered into you. And you have been nothing but a whole disappointment for me.

Imagine somebody comes to you with that. And Jesus' response, I tell you, among those born of women, there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist.

Can I tell you how wonderful this guy is? Did I tell you how impressed I am by John? How spectacular John is? Right after John rips him, Jesus loves him, builds him up, cares for him.

[49 : 42] John might have begun to doubt Jesus, but Jesus never doubted John. we have a tendency sometimes to doubt God.

But the good news is God doesn't give up on us. You know, we turn to God. We turn to God and every single time, he's there.

He doesn't say, you had the chance last week to do it. I'm done, I'm out of here. He's there to love us, to care for us, to forgive us, even when we do wrong. How many people do you know that will forgive you every single time you do something wrong?

Every single time you do thousands of things wrong. They'll forgive you anyways. Even my wife was in fact, don't tell her I told her that. She's forgiven a lot of stuff.

God forgives everything, every time. Our relationship with God is not about what we are and what we do and how we impress the world.

[50 : 42] It's about what God is, who he is. And what he can do to change our world. We turn to that God. And that lasts beyond a life.

Who am I, that the Lord of all the earth would care to know my name, would care to feel my earth?

Who am I, that the bright and morning star would choose to light the way from my ever-wandering heart?

love you, not because of who I am, but because of what you've done, not because of what I've done, but because of who you are.

I am a flower, a flower quickly fading, picked today and gone tomorrow.

[52 : 11] We're tossed in the ocean, paper in the wind, till you hear me when I'm calling.

Lord, you cast me when I'm falling, and you've told me who I am. I am yours.

I am yours. I am yours. Who am I, that the eyes that see my sin would look on me with love and watch me rise again?

Who am I, that the voice of God would sing, would call me through the rain, and calm the storm in me?

Not because of who I am, but because of what you've done, not because of what I've done, but because of who you are.

[53 : 36] I am a flower quickly fading, picked today and gone tomorrow, a wave tossed in the ocean, a vapor in the wind, till you hear me when I'm calling.

Don't you catch me when I'm falling, and you've told me who I am. I am yours.

I am yours. I am yours. I am yours. I've got a God who knows us.

He knows everything about us. You know, he even knows how many hairs are on our head. He knows everything we've ever done, everything we've ever been, and loves us in spite of that.

That's a gift. That's a gift you can't get from anywhere else. I have a make room a gift of listening to other bodies.

[55 : 05] I have a Adventist city, even if it'scellent y'all, you know who's all there. When he's never going toallah and we're going to problem, surah- ■■■■, makes sense. He knows my name.

He knows my name. He knows my name. He knows my every thought.
He sees each tear that falls. And hears me when I call. I have, oh Father.
He calls me His own. He'll never be in me.
No matter where I go. He knows my name.

[56 : 16] He knows my every thought. He sees each tear that falls.

He hears me when I call. He hears me when I call.

He hears me when I call. He hears me when I call. He hears me when I call. He hears me when I call.

He hears me when I call. He hears me when I call. He hears me when I call. I give thanks to the Lord our God of faith. His love endures forever.

For he is, good, he is above all things, his love endures forever, sing praise, sing praise.

[57 : 22] With a mighty hand and an outstretched son, his love endures forever, for the life that's been reborn, his love endures forever, sing praise, sing praise.

Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong, forever God is with us, forever, forever.

From the rising sea of the same sun, his love endures forever, by the chains of God we will carry on, his love endures forever, sing praise, sing praise.

Sing praise, sing praise. Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong, forever God is with us, forever, forever.

Forever God is faithful, forever God is strong, forever God is with us, forever, forever.

[59 : 07] Please be seated. You know, I have to say, I misspoke. I can't think of one thing my wife has not forgiven.

I can think of lots of things she's not very happy with me about. I can think of all sorts of things she thinks I need to improve on. I can think of all sorts of things she's not forgiven over the years we've been married.

Because that's what love really is. Love really isn't about what wows us or what gets us all excited or even what our partners can do that make our lives go.

Love is about having somebody who loves us and is with us and cares for us just because of love. And God does the same thing. And he says that if we come to him, turn to him, with all our sins and brokenness, he will forgive them.

So let's do that, shall we? Dear God in heaven, I have sinned. I've done all sorts of things wrong. You know what they are.

[60 : 15] Forgive me, Lord. Guide my life to follow you. Take away the doubts. Give me the right priorities.

That I might live. The way you'd have me live. For this life. And the next. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. God says every time we take our prayers to him and confession, forget about it. Don't even think about it.

It's gone. It's removed. We're just going to go on from here. And see what we can make out of your life. And mine together. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

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

[61 : 43] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen.more Lord. Amen.

Amen. back to the heart of worship. It's all about you. All about you, Jesus.

I'm sorry, Lord, for the thing I've made in. But it's all about you. All about you, Jesus.

[63 : 12] God invites all those who seek after him to come to the table.

When we come to the table, we actually come to receive the living God, to make him a part of our lives, and once again say, I'm a Christian. This is what we do.

So you're welcome at the table to come and join us in meeting our God. The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right. It's good. And it's a joyful thing, always and everywhere, to give thanks to God. Not just in the happy times, but even in the struggles that we have a God that walks through the shadowy valleys with us.

Not just in the times when we need him, but even in the times when our lives seem like a celebration. And we can remember God as a giver of all good things.

[64 : 19] And so with all the people on earth and all the angels in heaven, we praise his name and we join their unending hymn saying, 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. Blessed is your son, Jesus Christ, who loves, who loves, even when people turn against him, who forgives, even when people are killing him, who cares, even when people ignore him.

Hosanna in the night. On the night which he was betrayed, he took the bread and gave thanks to God. He broke the bread and then he gave it to his disciples. He said, Take and eat.

This is my body which is broken for you for the forgiveness of sin. Eat of this, remembering me. When the supper was over, he took the cup 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 these mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice in union with Christ offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

[65 : 55] Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us, Lord. Lift us to the heavenly throne room itself. Fill us with your grace and your wonder and your power and your joy.

Help us to experience the amazing grace of God, the amazing love of God. Touch our very souls. Bless us to be a blessing that the world might come to understand the living God, that we might be your people, to point to the miracles of God, to point to you.

Bless us, Lord, as we offer our prayers in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen. And now as Jesus taught his disciples to pray, let us join together in saying, Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

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

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

[67 : 14] For those who are assisting with communion, come forward at this time, please. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

And now you're invited to join us at the table, at the rail for prayers for healing and anointing, to light a candle. Come and join us with the Lord. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

[70 : 33] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

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

Do you like the part where they switch? Did you see that? Very good, ladies. You see, this is what happens when people grow up and care for each other and know each other so well that one can raise up their hand like that, and the other takes the bell from them, because they know where it's going to be.

[74 : 02] If the Buffalo Bills could get that down, then we would... If you're able, I'm going to invite you to stand as we sing together, Great is Thy Faithfulness. Great is Thy Faithfulness, O God my Father.

There is no shadow of turning with Thee. Thou changest not, Thy compassion save me or not.

As Thou hast been, Thou forever wilt heal. Great is Thy Faithfulness.

Great is Thy Faithfulness. Morning by morning new mercies I see. All I have needed, Thy hand hath provided.

Great is Thy Faithfulness, Lord, unto me. Summer and winter and springtime and harvest.

[75 : 31] Sun, moon, and stars spin their courses upon. Join with the faith, the rich man and full witness.

To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love. Great is Thy faithfulness.

Great is Thy faithfulness. Morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed, Thy hand hath provided. Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

Pardon for sin and the peace that endureth. Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide.

[76 : 39] Pray for today and bright hope for tomorrow. Blessings of mine with ten thousand peace that endureth.

Great is Thy faithfulness. Great is Thy faithfulness. Morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed, Thy hand hath provided. Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

You know, I want you to have special times. I want you to have special miracles happen with God. I want you to be lifted up to the heavens above themselves. I do special things for each other. You know, I picked that particular video not because it was the best ask on the internet.

There were guys jumping around and circus acts and everything else. I did it because that was normal. I could do that. They sang off key even. It was all right. It was all right.

[77 : 53] Do touching things. Do loving things. Do kind things. Do special things. Experience the power and wonder of God. But live for what matters. Live for what really will make a difference in your life.

The love of people. Special people. And the love of God. All the rest of it. Someday fade away into an old book I can't even find right now.

May God go with you and bless you and keep you in joy and his wonder and his blessing and his miracles. Today and always. Amen. cloud 1st. Open by reached 10 lo To the legend and to the end of flor They'll lift me in a rhythm.

"? Thank you, everyone. All the rest of the way, You fly and hear and hear to the end of longing. May God be here. Please peace and say to The Lord. The moment is a dream. You sing the blessing and love of God. The joy of God for all the Gentiles is on the world.

It's the quickest way that you can hard through. For the LOVE of God, You and the joy of God you will be out. you