

Seeing the Potential in Others

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- [0 : 00] Good morning everybody. That's better. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.
- 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.
- Let us rejoice. Let us rejoice. Let us rejoice. Hi, we're the Pendletones.
- We have a fish fry this Friday. Two more to go. We appreciate everybody's help and involvement last week.
- [1 : 42] It was a great fish fry. So if you want to sign up and be a part of it, we'd love to have you sign up for this week. Also, there's a clipboard for our Easter egg hunt. We have about 800, 900 people here for the Easter egg hunt.
- So we could use a little help. So if you'd like to be part of that, we'd love to have you sign up for that. And during Holy Week, we have special services. On Thursday, we have Maundy Thursday. And on Friday, we have Good Friday.
- And on Saturday, we have an Easter vigil. The Thursday service is kind of a little special in that we actually try to experience what Jesus and his disciples experienced during that time.
- And so we need some help. We need especially 12 men, right? So Pastor Sherry needs 12 men. You know, if you can help her out, we'd love to have you find her.
- Are there any other things about that service? Okay. So we'd love to have you participate in that. I do want to mention Easter, there's only two services, 9 and 11. That's because we get so many people that it's a little hard to move people in between.
- [2 : 43] So 9 o'clock and 11 for Easter. Let's turn to the Lord in prayer, shall we? Dear Lord, we do thank you for all that you do for us. And we pray that your presence would be powerful in this place.
- That you let your Holy Spirit to speak in us, move in us, transform us, and change us as we come to worship you. Bless us in Jesus' name. Amen. Hear these words from the Gospel of John, chapter 13, verses 34 through 35.
- Jesus said, A new command I give you, love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this, everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.
- This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together. Pass me not, O gentle Savior. Pass me not, O gentle Savior.
- Savior, hear my humble cry. While on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.
- [4 : 03] Let me at thy throne of mercy.
- Find a sweet relief. Beating there in deep contrition. Help my unbelief.
- My Savior, Savior. My Savior, Savior. Hear my humble cry. When on others thou art calling, do not pass me by.

Trusting only in my merit, would I seek thy face. Heal my wounded, broken spirit.
Save me by thy grace. O Savior, Savior, hear my humble cry.

[5 : 26] While on others thou art calling, do not pass me by. The Lord be with you.

Take a moment, if you will, and greet your neighbor with the peace of the Spirit. I'd like to invite the children to come up if they'd like to join us. Any kids want to come on up?

Come on up, guys. Come on up, guys. Good morning.

You know, we're coming up on something called Holy Week. And what we're going to talk about is we're going to talk about when Jesus died on a cross. You've probably heard about that. You know, when Jesus died on a cross, they put nails in his hands.

That would hurt, wouldn't it? Yeah, that would be like, ouch, right? And what do you think it would do to his hands? It'd probably leave like a big hole. Yeah, that wouldn't be very nice, you know?

[6 : 43] And it says that when Jesus rose from the dead, he still had those holes in his hands. Did you know that? Yeah. He's alive, but he's got a hole in his hand now because he got hurt by the people that hurt him.

You know, I don't know if I'd want to even touch that. In the Bible, there's a guy named Thomas. He's the guy I'm named after. He said he wanted to stick his hands in those holes. I wouldn't want to do that, would you?

That'd be like kind of yucky, wouldn't it? But I would want to see Jesus even if he had holes in his hands because that would be a great thing. So sometimes we have to deal with things that aren't so easy or maybe what we want to do for us to have the right thing happen, okay?

So Thomas wanted to see Jesus, so he saw him with the holes in his hands. And if we want to see Jesus, we might see him with a few marks. And if we got to do the things God wants us to do, sometimes, well, we might have some troubles too, okay?

You guys have anything you're thankful for? Raise your hand if you want to share. My mom. Family. My family.

[7 : 50] All right. Lord, we do thank you for the blessings we have. We thank you for our families and our parents and our mothers and for you and all the things you've done for us. Bless us, Lord.

Bless us to be filled by you in all that we are. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. You guys go out to church school if you'd like to now. All the kids are welcome to go out to church school.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Good morning, church.

Isn't it a beautiful day? Aren't you glad spring has sprung? Amen. You know how I can tell it's spring in my neighborhood. On my street, all the cars are now up and down the street all night long instead of being stuffed in people's driveways.

It's a wonderful thing. God is so good. God blesses us with the change of season. Pretty soon there will be leaves on the trees. How can you not rejoice in all of the good things God blesses us with?

[8 : 59] As we continue in our worship, let's bring our gifts, tithes, and offerings before the Lord. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. One day when heaven was filled with his praises, One day when sin was as black as could be, Jesus came forth to be born of a virgin, dwelt among men, my example is he.

The word became flesh and the light shined among us, his glory revealed. Living he loved me, dying he saved me, buried he carried my sins far away.

Rising he justified, freely forever, one day he's coming, oh glorious day, oh glorious day.

[10 : 31] One day they led him up Calvary's fountain, one day they nailed him to die on a tree.

Suffering, anguish, despised and rejected, bearing our sins, my redeemer is he.

A hand that healed nations, searched out on a tree, and took the nails for me. Living he loved me, dying he saved me, buried he carried my sins far away.

Rising he justified, freely forever, one day he's coming, oh glorious day, oh glorious day.

One day the grave could conceal him no longer.

[11 : 46] One day the stone rolled away from the door. And he arose over death he had conquered, now is ascended, my Lord evermore.

Death could not hold him, the grave could not keep him from rising again. Living he loved me, dying he saved me, living he loved me, dying he saved me.

Buried he carried, my sins far away. Rising he justified, freely forever, one day he's coming, oh glorious day, oh glorious day.

Glorious day. Glorious day. Glorious day.

One day the trumpet will sound for his coming, one day the skies with his glories will shine, Wonderful day my beloved one bringing, my Savior Jesus is mine.

[13 : 09] Living he loved me, dying he saved me, buried he carried, my sins were away.

Rising he justified, freely forever, one day he's coming, O glorious day, O glorious day.

Glorious day, O glorious day.

Thank you.

Holy Ghost, praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

[14 : 35] Dear Heavenly Father, what a blessing it is to be in your presence, to be able to rejoice in you, to gather together and worship. Lord God, we offer our gifts to you, all of them, those from the financial resources you've poured out into our lives, and all of the gifts that you have given us to serve in this world, to bring blessing to you, to bless this world because of you.

We just ask in Jesus' name, Lord God, that you would use all the gifts that we offer up to you this morning. Give us wisdom so that we would know what to do and how to do it.

Help us, Lord God, by your great power to draw many into your kingdom. It is in Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated.

We hear the word of the Lord proclaimed so beautifully as the choir did this morning. How can we not love God? How can we not trust in our Savior?

How can we not be prepared to bring our praises and our prayers before God, knowing that God hears us and knowing that God responds?

[15 : 54] This morning, I know there are many prayers on your hearts. We have a few that we need to lift up before the congregation for you to keep in prayer this week. Irene Tate is going in for more surgery tomorrow.

Jeannie Prendergast has been battling pneumonia, and we need to pray for her. Mary Ellen Schutz broke her arm, took a good tumble and broke her arm in a couple of places, and may need surgery.

We're not sure. And Ron Elman is going to be having some tests tomorrow as well to determine the cause of some health ailments he's been having. With these concerns and those in your hearts, you're welcome to join me at the rail or from your seats as we turn to the Lord in prayer.

Glorious Lord, All that we have comes from you. We know that you hear us. We know that you answer us.

We come before you, Lord, because we have been invited. You have made us welcome. Lord God, we lift up this morning all of those people who are sick and infirm, who are having surgeries, who are home convalescing, whatever it is that's going on in their lives, Lord God.

[17 : 22] We pray that you would touch them with your healing power. We pray that it would flow in them and through them, and heal every single cell in their bodies that is in need of that.

We pray for wisdom for doctors and nurses and other medical professionals, that they would know what to do, that it would be a wisdom that is beyond their learning and their experience, that it would be something that comes from you.

All the glory would be given to you, Lord. We pray for those, Lord God, who are caring for elderly and infirm loved ones, those who are sick, those who are okay but just need an extra hand.

Lord, Lord, we pray that you would give them compassion, that you would give them patience, that you would give them knowledge of what to do.

Lead them, Lord, in right paths so that they can do what is needed in the circumstances they live in. Lord God, we pray for all of those who are grieving losses of all kinds.

[18 : 40] Sometimes loss, Lord God, is not the death of someone that we love, that we hold very dear. Sometimes it's the loss of a way of life.

Sometimes it's the loss of a relationship. Sometimes it's just a feeling of being lost.

Father, we pray in Jesus' name for all of these people who are experiencing these kinds of things. We ask that you would come close to them by your Spirit. Draw them into your presence.

Let them know that you are there. Let them know that you are the one who provides everything they need. Let them know their peace, their rest, their hope, their contentment can be found in you and really in you alone.

Lord God, we pray for our community, our schools, our workplaces, our neighborhoods, and the wider world.

[19 : 56] We pray that you would help us to touch others with your love. That you would move in us and through us so that many would come to know you.

We pray that you would transform us into the people who can accomplish all that you have called us to accomplish. We pray as we hear your words spoken, as we sing songs of praise, as we experience being together in the love of God, that we would be changed.

Be with Pastor Tom as he delivers the message you've given him for us today. Give us eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts and minds to understand and receive all that you have for us today.

Let us be a blessing to you, Lord. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord?

We pray for the Lord? Amen.

[21 : 11] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Good morning.

The scripture today is taken from the Gospel of John, chapter 9, verses 1 through 16. As he went along, he saw a man blind from birth.

His disciples asked him, Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Neither this man nor his parents sinned, said Jesus, but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

As long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me. Night is coming when no one can work. While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.

[22 : 23] After saying this, he spit on the ground, made some mud with the saliva, and put it on the man's eyes. Go, he told him, wash in the pool of Siloam, which means sent.

So the man went and washed, and he came home seeing. His neighbors and those who had formerly seen him begging asked, Isn't this the same man who used to sit and beg?

Some claimed that he was. Others said, No, he only looks like him. But he himself insisted, I am the man. How then were your eyes opened?

They asked. He replied, The man they called Jesus made some mud and put it on my eyes. He told me to go to Siloam and wash. So I went and washed, and then I could see.

Where is this man? They asked him. I don't know, he said. They brought to the Pharisees the man who had been blind. Now the day in which Jesus had made the mud and opened the man's eyes was a Sabbath.

[23 : 23] Therefore the Pharisees also asked him how he had received his sight. He put mud on my eyes, the man replied, and I washed, and now I see. Some of the Pharisees said, This man is not from God, for he does not keep the Sabbath.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Pastor Sherry. As we look at these stories about Jesus, as he's walking towards the cross, he's meeting different people.

And in the process, he shows us how to love the way Jesus loved. And today he's coming upon a blind man who's sitting by the row with a bandage wrapped around his eyes and a stick and a cup so he can beg for a living.

And he says in this passage something a little disturbing. In verse 3, he says, This man is blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him.

His purpose is for God to display his works in him. Which is a little troubling to think that he was made blind from birth, seemingly on purpose.

[24 : 37] And we all have a purpose. Some of the purposes are easy to understand. Some of the purposes are amazing. And some of the gifts that God gives us are astounding. And each one has some particular gift.

The book of Romans in chapter 12 says, In Christ, we though many form one body. And each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts according to the grace given to each of us.

And some of the gifts are simple and easy to see. And others, we have to look a little closer to discern what they are. Now this clip is pretty old. Many of you may have seen this.

This is from Britain's Got Talent. But I love this and wanted to share it with you if you haven't seen it. Hi, what's your name, darling?

My name is Susan Boyle. Okay, Susan, where are you from? I am from Blackburn near Bathgate, West Lothian. That's a big... Thanks, Susan. ...

[25 : 34] γ

... ..

Okay, big song.

Yeah? Yes. You didn't expect that, did you?

Did you? No. Didn't expect that, did you? No, I didn't expect it either.

[26 : 55] Some people, we just by their appearance assume, we assume that they're not gifted or that there's something about them that, and then they do amazing things.

And we see the gifting of God. What about people who not only don't seem amazing, but their gifts aren't quite so apparent?

Did God make this person blind on purpose? Does God make people broken or short of what we call normal or what we might consider to be whole intentionally?

In the book of Psalms, it says, you created my inmost beings. You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Your works are wonderful, and I know that full well. God made each of us the way he intended and said, this is very good.

[28 : 05] I can use this. So what does that mean when people are made blind? Or something about their body doesn't work, or what if they're made bipolar or schizophrenic, or their mental capacity isn't what we would consider to be at the normal level?

What does that mean? God made them that way. God designed them for a purpose that way and said, this is very good.

I'm pleased with this. God made this man blind so that the miracles, the power of God could be displayed, and so that his life would point to God.

Because that's the purpose of life. You've seen this passage for moments before. We know that in all things, all things, everything, all things, God works for good of those who love him and have been called according to his purpose.

So people that we might see as not quite measuring what our culture calls acceptable.

[29 : 27] God has made for a purpose. And maybe even in part, so that we will understand what love is.

Boy, that seems unfair, doesn't it? It seems unfair to believe that God made people with those kind of what we would call deficiencies. But you see, there's the whole piece of it.

We see them as deficiencies. God sees it as good. Very good. Amazing. It's not God that has a problem. It's not even the people themselves that has the problem.

It's us. We have the problem because if people don't act and look and seem the way we want, we struggle with it.

So the disciples said, who's sinned? Who messed up? This guy or his parents?

[30 : 27] Don't you notice how we love to blame somebody? He must have something wrong with him. He must have done something wrong. That's why he's got a problem. Or his parents, because it's easy to blame the parents. All you parents understand that.

It's all your fault if your kids have a problem, right? Yeah. You know? All you got to do is watch Disney now and you'll find that all of you parents don't know anything anymore. Right? Father knows best is gone.

It's difficult to push those prejudices aside and realize that maybe, maybe, this is in God's plan too.

When I first went to be ordained as a United Methodist pastor, I went before this committee. And as I was sitting there in the group and waiting for the answer, they told me, no.

No. We won't ordain you as a pastor. And so I asked the natural question, well, why? They said, we looked at your grades and we looked at your paper and decided it wasn't good enough for the grades you had.

[31 : 31] I said, so let me get this straight. If I had poor grades, you would have approved me. Yeah. Wait a minute. I'm missing something. So the paper was acceptable. Accepting that my grades, I'm missing something here.

So you turned me down. Why? I struggled with that. And I had somebody ask me the year later when I went. And they said, you know, did the committee make the right decision? I said, absolutely not. Absolutely not.

That was ridiculous. I said, but God made the right decision. Because throughout a large part of my life, whatever I put my hand to succeeded.

And I needed to understand that some people who are good, some people who have done nothing wrong, some people who are trying their hardest fall flat on their face in the mud. And that doesn't mean it's their fault.

It doesn't mean we have to blame them or call them losers or decide there's something wrong with them. Good people struggle. All of us do. It's not this man's fault, Jesus said.

[32 : 37] People sin in a general sense. And that is called the brokenness of our world. And so we have pain. We have suffering. We have diseases. We have all this. Because we took a good creation and made it bad through our sin.

But that's a general condition we all struggle with. It's not specifically designed for one person. We look forward to the day when we'll go to glory through grace of God and his forgiving love.

And then we won't deal with these issues. But right now, it's part of the condition we all face. But not a specific issue. God says we need to learn to love like Jesus loved.

To open our eyes to the gift that everyone brings. Even the ones that are hard to discern. That we can't appreciate. Because they don't fit in the box that we've created as a culture.

Love as Jesus loved. Love people. Love people. Even if it's difficult. Even if it comes with a cost.

[33 : 45] Sometimes wonder if God just made people with deficiencies. To see if we'd love each other. In fact, it says that all of us have a gift of some sort.

But what it doesn't say is all of us are missing something. All of us have something wrong. We just, some of us hide it better than others. Jesus sees the man.

It's kind of fascinating, right? He's walking along. Disciples don't even notice him. Nobody notices this guy, right? But Jesus sees the man. And that's when the disciples saw him. Have you ever walked by somebody and just not even seen that they're there?

We do it a lot, don't we? We walk by people in the church and don't notice that they're there. We walk by people in the streets and we don't see that they're there. We walk by in the malls.

We don't even notice those people. They don't exist. Jesus saw this man. Now let me tell you, if you see a pretty person, a happy person, a wealthy person, a charming person, a normal person, we all want to be around them.

[34 : 55] They make us feel like we're brought up by their very presence. But what if there's something a little kind of off? It's almost Easter, so we're going to get out the Easter bunnies.

What does an Easter bunny look like? When you think of a bunny, isn't this what you picture? Right? We've been watching a little movie called The Secret Life of Pets.

And this week, instead of a dog, we're going to look at a bunny. Don't you worry, Viper.

You will not be forgotten. You will be avenged, Viper. And if you don't believe me, you can look at my battle plans.

It's all laid out right here. Boss, I can't tell who anyone is. Well, you got to really look at it to understand it. Like, that's you guys right here.

[35 : 55] And see, that's Brooklyn. That's when we're going to get them dogs. Bam! Bam! That ball of fluff's got to screw loose.

Let's skedaddle. Bam, but you get it. You see what I'm saying. That rabbit.

He had crazy eyes. There ain't no cure on what's wrong with that thing. Gidget, here's an idea. Maybe there's a dog in the neighborhood that looks like Max.

Start hanging out with him. After a while, you'll think it's him. You'll be done. We are not just giving up. We're dedicated. We're loyal. We're easily the greatest pet ever.

We're dogs. Cat. Hawk. We're dogs! Not really. There's a lot of people that don't look like us, don't act like us, don't seem like us.

[36 : 56] Some of them might even have crazy eyes. And you'll think there's no cure for that. Are there people we don't want to see? It's inconvenient.

It's troubling. We don't look at them. You know, we've been doing these little things to get you all to know each other a little bit better. So today, we're going to do it right here, right now.

Okay? It's pretty simple. Somebody said to me, when I come to church, all I ever see is the backs of people's heads. So I wish they'd turn around. And then I thought, well, if everybody turns around, you're still just going to see the backs of people's heads. So that's not helping anything.

You'll just see different backs of the heads, right? So here's what I want you to do. I want you to look around you and ideally find somebody that you don't know very well, okay? But just anybody. I want you to take about 20 seconds and just say, good morning.

It's good to see you. That's all. Okay, now I said 20 seconds.

[37 : 55] I don't want you to get carried away with this friendliness stuff, okay? All right, people start thinking we're a church or something, all right? We don't want people to get the wrong idea. Do we see the people that are hard to see?

Can we embrace the unembraceable? Can we love people that are hard to love?

Some of you know that a couple of weeks ago, I was in the hospital. Kind of a sort of an unexpected thing. It happened on a Friday night and about 4.30 in the morning as I'm sitting in the emergency room.

See what happened is I was at home and I started shaking uncontrollably until I was in such pain that we just decided I had to go to the hospital because, you know, nothing was fixing it. And they told me I was severely dehydrated from what appeared to be a virus.

They weren't sure. And so this doctor came in at 4.30 on Saturday morning and said, okay, well, you should be okay, but you're going to be in for two or three days. What?

[38 : 56] Saturday morning. I can't do that, dude. You don't know what I do. Well, that's what you're doing. So guess who got a text at 6 o'clock in the morning? Hey, Pastor Lisa, guess what? You're on.

And I'm sure she did a wonderful job. They took me upstairs on the floor. And it was so cool because I said, hey, I've got a private room.

This is so nice. But, you know, there aren't a lot of hospital rooms that have two doors. So I went in the first door and it went whoosh. And then they opened the second one. And I thought, that's weird.

And then they all started wearing these gowns and gloves and things. I'm being isolated. I'm like being completely cut off.

And I could see when the nurses and people came in, they were like, out of here, you know. They weren't wearing masks. They told me whatever they thought I had was not, you know, past that way, which was good because I had just, you know, breathed on like a thousand of you.

[39 : 58] So I was feeling better about that, right? But basically, I really didn't know why I was in this room. And what I found out when my wife came in, because when she came in, she had the gloves and the gown on and this look on her face like she had, you know, seen a ghost.

And they had told her, and I don't remember the name of it, that they were afraid I had this highly contagious, permanently damaging disease. And I'm like, what?

What? Because I'm sure she walked in and they told her she had to wear the gloves and gowns. She said, I'm his wife. I've been around him all week. I don't need to do it. But she put him on.

And she visited me. What would have happened if you came up to the hospital that day and found me in that room? Would you have put on the gloves and the gown and come in to say hello?

Or would you have said, I don't think so. Maybe what I have, I don't, he has, I don't want to get. Now, I'd understand that, by the way, in a temporary condition like that.

[41 : 09] I go to visit people in those circumstances, but I understand that, that we have a concern. But people didn't want to go near this guy simply because they were afraid that his problem could become their problem.

They don't want to look like they have anything to do with him. Because he's not exactly the top of society. He sits over here on a mat. Probably doesn't look very good because, you know, blind people have a hard time seeing in the mirror what they, you know, right?

He wears this blindfold thing, which makes him look strange. And why does he do that? Well, it's the same reason why people nowadays who are blind, you know, they wear dark glasses. You think that's because it helps them to see better through the dark glasses?

That's for you. So you won't get creeped out, you follow? And he begs for a living. Well, we say, well, we'd want to associate with him after he was healed, right?

But would we really? I mean, after all, this is kind of a guy who's got now a strange life. He spent his whole life with only one occupational talent.

[42 : 21] Let's say he's 30-something years old. And the only thing he knows how to do is to say, you got some money for a blind man? What's he going to do now?

Walk around with his little tin can and say, excuse me, can you help out a guy who used to be blind? And you're going to say, get a job, you bum.

It's the only job I know. And so we disassociate with broken people. We look at them and say, what's wrong with them?

Why are they acting this way? Must be because there's something wrong in their lives. They're sinners. So they took them to the religious people to have them checked out.

That's a good thing to do, see what the religious, good, loving religious people said. And they said, so, tell us what happened. And they said, well, you know, I was sitting there collecting my coins.

[43 : 25] And this guy came along. I think his name is Jesus. And he put mud on my eyes and then told me to wash my eyes off. And then I was healed.

I said, on the Sabbath day he did that? He's a sinner. You're a sinner. You were a sinner from birth. Get out of here. Wow.

You see, that's what oftentimes people feel like. People who feel like their lives are broken or having struggles or falling apart. Or they don't exactly measure right in between those lines on the level.

They come to the good church people and the good church people say, you can sit over there. They used to have the benches in the back. They called them the sinner's bench. You know what they were for? They were for the people who were too poor to get a nice seat up front.

Glad we don't do that anymore. Can we learn to love people who are broken?

[44 : 27] They told them, you were steeped in sin from your birth. And yet you would teach us. Could we actually think that people like this might have something to say to us? People who are obviously dysfunctional and messed up.

And if you remember, I think it was last Easter, but it might have been the year before. That I showed up for the sermon and I had on a wig and, you know, old crummy clothes and things. Anybody remember this?

And I walked in the sanctuary and I sat down and amongst the people, they all moved over, you know. And I thought everybody would see through my costume, but evidently they didn't.

Because as I was walking up to preach, I had four people after service tell me they had their hand on a gun. And they were going to take me out if I went the wrong way. Really, they're going to blow the pastor away if I moved the wrong way.

That's kind of scary, you know. It really is, right? I know they were trying to protect. I'm not trying to pick on anybody here. And nobody shot me, which is good. Pastor Suzanne Block, you remember, some of you remember her?

[45 : 25] She did this in her church. They had her arrested. Called the police and they were hauled away. Because we can't learn from people that don't look like us, that aren't like us, that don't smell right, look like, talk right.

It's hard. And even more so, we might get in trouble for associating with them in the first place. So let's take a look at this story. Jesus, you know Jesus, he used to heal people by just saying, be healed.

And they would get up and walk. Let your eyes be open. Right? He'd do these miracles all the time. But for some reason, this time, right, he takes some dirt.

Bam! Right in the guy's eyes, right? Talk about like, really? So now this guy's not only blind and disheveled and everything else. He's got mud and spit running down his face, right?

So he says, go down to the pool there and wash up. Now, that's just weird, right? But it was the Sabbath day, the day that the rules said that nobody was supposed to work.

[46 : 35] So what Jesus was doing, he was intentionally breaking the rules. See, telling him to travel was breaking the rules. Telling him to wash on that day was breaking the rules.

And this thing with the spit and the mud, that's called making mortar. And it's against the rules. So Jesus intentionally broke the rules that say you're not supposed to work on the Sabbath.

But Jesus had something to say about the Sabbath and Mark. He said, the Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath. It's there for our recreation, for our healing, for our rest.

We're losing the concept of the Sabbath. It's disappearing. Sunday's becoming any day. Sunday's becoming any day. It's no longer the Lord's day. It's just a day. Some people don't even think about God one day a week.

So we do need rules, and rules are good. They help to keep us in order and keep us safe and keep us working as a culture and a society. But sometimes the rules should be suspended for something more important.

[47 : 51] So we get to the hospital, right? Over at Suburban. And we're pulling towards the emergency room. And we're looking for where to park. They've got reserved parking spaces for the emergency room.

They're about a mile and a half from the door. Have you ever seen them? It's like, seriously? This is where we're parking? I get out of the car, and I'm like, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah, ah. Really?

Really? And you're going up to the door, and you think, well, you could go drive up. No parking! Don't you come in here! We will shoot you if you get anywhere near this door, you know? It's like, really?

I get it. I get it. They need to keep it open for ambulances and emergencies. It's an emergency room! Some of us need to get dropped off at the door! They've got parking spaces for all kinds of other people that can walk in front of those parking spaces for the people who need them, right?

That's like, wow. Can you break the rules sometimes? If it's better. If it's going to mean something good is going to happen. But see, our problem is, we struggle with this.

[48 : 59] And we worry, what do the rules say? Not what does God say. We worry about, what will people talk about us instead of what will God say about us? We're so concerned about what everyone else thinks.

When all we should be concerned about is what God, our Creator, thinks. It's risky. We could become outcasts ourselves.

They went to see these religious leaders. They even called in His parents. And they said, is this your son? They said, yeah, I think that's our son. But we want nothing to do with this.

We don't want to get kicked out of the church, really. Right? Did you notice the disciples are nowhere to be seen? Just disappeared. They're not even in this story, basically.

All these good, wonderful followers of Jesus have done nothing. And the religious leaders booted this guy out. They're kind of put on trial.

[50 : 01] And basically, he says, what do you want to believe in him too? And that just made him crazy. See, following God can get us on the outs with a lot of people that could cause us trouble.

Some people don't want to risk that issue. So, here's this guy. He's out in the streets wandering around. Remember, he used to be blind. He doesn't know where he's going.

Even though his eyes are open, he's never seen anything before. Right? So, all this stuff is new to him. And, in fact, probably confuses him. I could see him closing his eyes so he could see how to get around. Right? Okay, let me see now.

If I close my eyes, this is where the market is. Okay, I hear the birds. Right? But he's got his eyes open. So, he's all confused. He doesn't know where to go. Nobody's trying to help him. Nobody's trying to find him. His parents ditch him.

All the people ditch him. The disciples aren't anywhere. Who shows up to take care of him? Jesus. Jesus. Thank God for Jesus.

[51 : 00] Amen? Jesus. Because he needs Jesus. Do our lives point to Jesus?

Do we even see Jesus? Do we see the power of Jesus in what we're doing? People ask me how I got cured. You know? I'll tell you the truth. All they did was put an IV in me. They said all the liquids are going through me.

I needed IVs. That drinking water wasn't going to help me. So, I had to have IVs. That's all they did. They didn't even give me any medicine or anything. I said, boy, that's what they did to cure me. That's what I told everybody.

And I thought, duh. You know how I got healed? Jesus did it. That's how I got healed. If we counted on doctors and nurses and emergency rooms to heal every virus and every bacterial infection we ever had, we would be in real trouble, don't you think?

Because 90% of these things just seem to go away on their own. Because God heals us. We don't point to God. We point to everybody else.

[52 : 04] Everything else. Everybody else. They could see that there was a change in this man.

Can they see by the way we act, the way we talk, and what we do that we're different? On the day that I was leaving the hospital, I took a shower.

I don't know if you know anything about hospitals, but usually you don't take a shower. So you like laying there in bed, you know, these weird gowns that are open in the back, right? You know, your hair gets all kind of messed up and you look sort of grungy and such.

You haven't shaved and things. So I took a shower. I shaved. I put on regular, you know, street clothes because my wife was going to come. I didn't know when. Now, in the meantime, nobody visited me, which was one of the most wonderful Sundays I ever had, sitting there just reading the paper, watching old movies, relaxing.

I thought this was kind of sweet, you know? Kind of stuff other people do. I thought it was kind of cool, you know? So anyways, I went out. My wife called.

[53 : 02] I went out to the nurse, my nurse, right to the nurse's station to the nurse. It's my nurse. And I said, my wife's coming in about half an hour. I just want to let you know so you get the paperwork and things together. She looks up at me. She says, who are you?

I said, I'm the guy from that room, but I'm cleaned up. That's all, right? You know? They couldn't recognize this guy because he didn't look the same. Well, yeah, he's combed his hair.

His eyes are open. He looks a lot better, right? He looks a lot better. He looks like maybe something happened to him. Do people see the change in us because of what God does through us and for us?

And the change isn't just physical, but sometimes it is. See, when Jesus found this man, he said, do you believe?

He didn't say, do you like being able to see? He didn't say, wasn't that a cool miracle? He says, do you believe? See, us Christians have this idea in our head that if we believe enough, we'll all be healed of all our problems.

[54 : 04] But if you read this story, it says, he was healed and then believed. Not he believed and then he was healed. Do you follow? Because healing is the point to believing.

Those of you who already believe don't need to be healed. I know that isn't what you want to hear, but it's the truth. Because if we're changed in our lives, in our souls, we shouldn't need those healings.

Because Paul, probably arguably one of the most incredible Christians ever to walk the face of the earth, the Apostle Paul, he talked about a problem he has in chapter 12 of Corinthians.

It says, therefore, in order to keep me from becoming conceited, don't you love that? In order to keep me from becoming conceited, I was given a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan to torment me.

Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. And he said to me, my grace is sufficient for you. My power is made perfect in weakness. So I'm going to boast all the more gladly about my weakness so that Christ's power can rest on me.

[55 : 10] You don't need to be healed to believe. You don't need to have everything fixed in you. All you need is to turn to God and let his love embrace you.

And then go out and embrace the unembraceable. Because if you do, some amazing things can happen. Goodbye.

Does anyone know where we are? Bye, Max. Bye, Gidget. Okay. Bye-bye. See you guys. Man, I feel sorry for them. Got to run home today.

They're owners. Not us. Now, it's back to our primary mission. The downfall of the human race. It is own, humans. It is own.

Yeah. Woo-hoo. Mommy, can I have a bunny? And a pig and a crocodile and a lizard? Uh-oh.

[56 : 12] Yay, bunny. Jab, jab, jab. Body blow, body blow. Break away, move. Brr. Aw. Aw. Aw. What's going on? What's she doing? Bunny, I'm going to love you forever and ever and ever.

Aw. Aw, bunny. Can we embrace the unembraceable? Can we change the broken to healed?

In 1 John, we read these words. Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates their brother and sister, they're still in the darkness. But anyone who loves their brother and sister lives in the light, and there's nothing in them to make them stumble.

God calls us to be people of the light. God calls us to be people of the light, to bring the light, to change the world, to embrace the unembraceable, to love as Jesus loved. God calls us to be people of the light, to love as Jesus loved.

Th publishes us to be people of the light, to love as Jesus loved.

[57 : 31] There is a spirit who brings a fire Ignites a candle and makes it whole Carry your candle, run to the darkness Take out the hopeless, confused and torn Hold out your candle for all to see Take your candle, go light your world Take your candle, go light your world Christ's maiden brother, see how he's tried to

Light his own candle some other way See now your sister, still robbed her light too Still holds a candle without a dream Carry a candle, run to the darkness Take out the lonely, the tithe and water Hold out your candle for all to see Take your candle, go light your world Take your candle, go light your world We are a family whose hearts are blazing

So let's raise our candles Light up the sky Pray to our Father In the name of Jesus Make us a beacon In darkest night Carry our candle, run to the darkness Take out the darkness Take out the helpless, deceived and poor Hold out your candle, take out the helpless, deceived and poor Hold out your candle, for all to see Take your candle, go light your world Oh, how light your world Carry your candle, Ree, and grow Raven, get your candle, control in upon

Hurry up the Lorenzo to trust, jä may God appreciation Local gifts are blazing, be called theOR melatonous amen Take your hand, Lord.

Go light your world. Take your hand, Lord. Go light your world. You know, it's so hard.

[61 : 17] Because we've got a world around us sending all kinds of messages to us, and we mess up. We walk right by the blind, man. We ignore the people are hurting. We don't love as Jesus loved.

We fail. The good news is that God has decided to heal us. Oh, it may not fix everything broken in your body. It may not fix everything broken in your mind.

But God has said he will make it well with your soul if you'll turn it over to him. God calls you to confess so that he can heal you.

Let's pray, shall we? Dear Lord in heaven, I have sinned. I fail to see the people in need, to love as you loved.

I become afraid. I become afraid. I become afraid. And worried. And worried. And just too busy. Just too busy. Forgive me, Lord.

[62 : 14] Forgive me, Lord. Take away my brokenness. Take away my brokenness. The sin in my life. The sin in my life. The pain that I cause. The pain that I cause.

And the healing I don't bring. The healing I don't bring. Cause me to repent. Cause me to repent. And love like you. And love like you. In Jesus' name we pray.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. God has decided to bless you. And he's always blessing you. Whether it be the good times or the bad times. He's there to bless you.

And today, a special blessing. 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. Mother at heaven. Blessed be your name.

[63 : 15] We love what I'm sorry. When Lord is busy on my prayers., and feels as if the Lord go for your Superman lives. For your mundane love. For your Kopf cellphone abond thesewenies, Lord bless you between and of your Rabbids.

Blessed be your name when I'm found in the desert plain So I walk through the wilderness, blessed be your name Every blessing you bore out and took back to pray When the darkness closes in more, still I will say Blessed be the name of all, blessed be your name Blessed be the name of all, blessed be your glorious name Blessed be your name when the sun's shining down A musical world, full as it should be Blessed be your name

Blessed be your name on the road Marked this offering So let's pray in the offering Blessed be your name Every blessing you bore out and took back to pray When the darkness closes in more, still I will say Blessed be the name of all Blessed be your name Blessed be the name of all Blessed be your glorious name Blessed be the name of all Blessed be the name of all Blessed be the name of all Blessed be your glorious name You give and take away You give and take away

Blessed be the name of all Blessed be the name of all Blessed be the name of all Blessed be the name of all Blessed be your name Blessed be the name of all Blessed be your glorious name Blessed be the name of all Blessed be the name of all

Blessed be the name of all No matter what we have in this life, God is with us, God is good, and so it is well with our souls. Praise the Lord.

[66 : 41] Amen. Amen.

It is well with my soul.

It is well, it is well with my soul. Though Satan should bother, though trials should come, and his best assurance control that Christ has regarded my helplessness dead, and has shed his own blood for my soul.

It is well, it is well with my soul. It is well, it is well with my soul.

My sin, O'er the bliss of this glorious thought, my sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more.

[69 : 10] Praise the Lord. Praise the Lord. O my soul. It is well.

It is well with my soul. With my soul. It is well.

It is well. With my soul. Please be seated. This morning, we celebrate all that God has done for us to make it well with our souls.

Everyone is welcome to come to the table. If you love God, repent of your sin, and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ, you are welcome to come to the table this morning, to meet with God, to receive all that God has for you.

So come. You don't have to be a member of this church, or a member of any church. If you desire to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, this is the time to come and meet with God.

[70 : 26] The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

In love, you made us for yourself. And when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, your love remained steadfast.

You bid your faithful people cleanse their hearts and prepare with joy for the Easter feast, that renewed by your word and sacraments and fervent in prayer and works of justice and mercy, we may come to the fullness of grace that you have prepared for those who love you.

And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join there in ending 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, whom you sent in the fullness of time to redeem the world.

[71 : 51] He emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in our likeness. He humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.

He took upon himself our sin and death and offered himself a perfect sacrifice for the sin of the whole world. 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.

On the night in which Jesus gave himself up for us, he 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. When the supper was over, he took the cup and gave you thanks and praise, and he gave it to his disciples.

He said, take this, drink from it, 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.

[73 : 05] 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, 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. Amen. Shall we pray together with the confidence of children, dearly beloved by 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.

[74 : 30] 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. Will those who are serving please come forward. Amen. Amen.

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

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

[76 : 04] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[79 : 04] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[81 : 38] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. It's a beautiful one.

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