

Providence And Predestination

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Date: 04 August 2019

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

If you're new to our church, please pick up a welcome folder at our connection site. For everyone attending our service today, please fill out our little friendship card.

Include your name, contact information, especially if you would like one of our church newsletters. On the back, you can ask for prayer requests, share blessings, or leave notes for our staff.

[1 : 55] Enjoy the service and welcome to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. Good morning. Good morning. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day. This is the day.

That the Lord has made. That the Lord has made. Let us rejoice. Let us rejoice. And be glad in it.

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. This is the day. This is the day. This is the day. This is the day. That the Lord has made. Let us pray.

[2 : 55] Oh, come Lord. We pray that you will come and fill us with your Holy Spirit. Fill us with your grace. Help us to experience you powerfully as we reach out to you, to glorify you.

May this service of worship be a blessing to you as we continue to exalt you and praise you in Jesus' name. Amen. I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together, Forward Through the Ages.

Forward Through the Ages. In unbroken life.

Move the faithful spirits. And the call divine. Gifts in differing measure.

Hearts in one accord. Manifold the servant. Gifts in others.

[4 : 04] In unbroken life. Forward Through the Ages. In unbroken life. Move the faithful spirits.

At the call divine. Wide across the kingdom. Rain of love and light.

For it we must favor Till our faith is sight Prophets have proclaimed Martyrs testified Poets sung its glory Heroes for it died Forward through the ages In unbroken light Through the faithful spirits At the call divine Not alone we conquer Not alone we fall In each horse our triumph Lose our triumphal Bound by God's far purpose

In one living hope Move we on together To the shining goal Forward through the ages In unbroken light Through the faithful spirits And the call divine The Lord be with you And also with you Please be seated Our God is a great big God Our God is a great big God Our God is a great big God And He holds on to the And He holds on to the And He holds on to the And He holds on to the And He holds on to the VBS is a fun week filled with games, dancing, and crafts

And we always do a lot of cool activities And they always have a lesson behind them Every year we learn something new and we grow closer to God What I like about VBS is that we're able to come together with our friends and praise and worship our God and Savior And the leaders are really great And the leaders are really great They manage the tribes really well Now that I'm older I love coming back and helping out doing exactly what I wanted to do when I was younger Leading all the groups I like coming to VBS every year because I get to connect with kids each week Having the opportunity to work with the children and spread the word of God Learning about God and teaching the kids more about God over the summer Fun dancing, singing, going crazy, having fun We're all in this together and we're having fun We're here to spread the love of God to everyone Gonna get a little crazy and a little wild Here we go now, I'm giving it a try Move it to the left now Move it to the left now

[7 : 38] Move it to the right Move it to the right Find someone you don't love Give them a high Move it to the right Love that cause Oh, oh, oh VBS is starting tomorrow And VBS is a powerful ministry That this church does to reach out to the community And we have hundreds of kids actually pre-registered for this.

So it's an opportunity to spread the word of God. And the children are touched. The youth leaders are touched. The adults are touched. And the families are touched. So that is open to you as an opportunity to give this morning for that incredible ministry to the community for VBS.

And I ask that you keep us all in prayer as we go through that. It's an exciting time. But it's also a real moving time for the word of God in people's lives. I am thankful for many things.

First of all, there's a couple of clipboards being passed around. The one is for volunteers to help out in the children and youth ministries. So check that out as it goes by. As well as something to sign up for donations for the community dinner in Niagara Falls.

And we could always use help with that as well. Thankful this morning that we had an incredible mission trip. It was a youth mission trip. And we served some families.

[9 : 09] And in the end, the families were moved. The youth were moved. I mean, it was just a powerful thing. And you'll hear more about it through Pastor Tom's sermon, actually, about some of the things that went on.

But it was an incredible experience, an opportunity to serve others and make an impact for God. So I'd love to hear from you. What are you thankful for today?

Yeah. A little break in the hot weather. Yes. Becky. Our gardens are finally producing. Gardens are finally producing. I was wondering about that knee-high by the 4th of July thing.

How much that was going to work. Yeah. Anyone else want to share? Okay. Well, as we come in worship, we come with a thankful heart.

We have gratitude for what God has done, is continuing to do in our lives. And as we take up our gifts, tithes, and offerings this morning, please take some time to reflect on the blessings that you have received.

[10 : 21] I see you in the sunrise.

I see you in the rain. I see you in the laughter.

I feel you through the pain. Everything that you have made is beautiful. Oh, my God, I can't believe my eyes.

But in all of this, to think that you would think of me makes my heart come alive.

Your love is like a mighty fire deep inside my bones. I feel like I could climb a thousand mountains all at once.

[11 : 29] And I'll never have to wonder if somebody cares for me. I love the maker. And the maker loves me.

The maker loves me. I see you. I see you. You are creation. I see the grandness of your majesty.

The universe is singing all your glory. I can't believe you live inside of me.

Everything that you have made is beautiful. Oh, my God, I can't believe my eyes.

You are creation. I see you in the sunrise. The maker loves me. I see you in the sunrise. I see you in the sunrise. And the maker loves me. The maker loves me.

[12 : 34] The maker loves me. And the maker loves me.

You love us like a mighty fire deep inside my bones. I feel like I can climb a thousand mountains all at once. And I'll never have to wonder if somebody cares for me. I love the maker And the maker loves me More than just some words upon a page You show me in a million ways But there is one that stands above them all Hands of creation on the cross The maker, yeah Your love is like a mighty fire deep inside my bones I feel like I could climb a thousand mountains all at once And I'll never have to wait

Somebody cares for me I love the maker And the maker loves me He loves me He loves me Yes, he does The maker I love the maker And the maker loves me And the maker And the maker I love the maker And the maker He loves me We're even Lord, you are beautiful.

And we praise you for who you are and who we are through you. Lord, we thank you for your generous gift of grace. And we give back to you this gift as a reflection of our gratitude and our love.

We pray that you will accept this gift as a blessing. Transform it into a witness that your grace and your love will shine. And lives will be transformed through it.

[15 : 38] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Please be seated. Amen. Okay, let's come to the Lord in prayer. Gracious and loving Lord, we come to you this day knowing you are good, knowing you have the best for us, and that you want us to live a full and wonderful life in you and through you.

And we come to you today humbly offering our lives to you, taking these burdens that are upon our heart and giving them to you.

Because we know that you are majestic and glorified and you are a healer and you love us. And so we pray, Lord, that you will take these burdens from us and do miraculous work in the lives of your people.

We pray for people. We pray for people who are struggling physically. For those who are struggling with all kinds of diseases, cancer, diabetes. Lord, so many different things going on in people's bodies that are making them ill and not the way you created them to be.

We pray that your healing hand will be upon them and you will cast that disease out. And you'll be with them, giving them strength. Give them courage.

[16 : 58] Giving them health and wellness and wholeness. That they may experience you in the midst of this struggle and see you clearly, knowing you are there holding them up.

Lord, we pray for people who are grieving at this time, people with heavy hearts. We pray that your comfort and your peace will come upon them.

That you will lift them up with encouragement and surround them with your love. Help them to walk through this time, knowing that you are there and that you do love them.

Lord, we pray for people who are experiencing any form of mental health issues. We lift them up to you, Lord. May they have the mind of Christ.

Your healing hand be upon them. Give them discernment, wisdom, and help us to be a helping community of faith and love. We pray for families who are struggling with different issues.

[18 : 04] That there be tensions in families. Lord, we pray for your healing to come in families. That your love will abound. That forgiveness will be shared.

And that people will come to know you through families. Knowing you and loving you together. Father, pray your hand upon our families.

Keep us safe, Lord. A hedge of protection around all of us, Lord. We pray for our nation. May you be with the leaders.

Give the leaders wisdom. Give the leaders discernment. And I pray that your peace will come upon this nation. That people will humbly come to you.

That violence will stop. And that people will rejoice in who you are and who you've called us to be. I pray for this church and its ministries.

[19 : 00] That we will continue to follow you in boldness and strength, Lord. Give us that boldness and strength. Give open hearts. Fertile ground.

That people will be ministered to. And help us to be assured of your presence. When witnessing to others. Give us your strength. Your power.

Your passion. Give us a hunger and thirst for more and more of you. Lead us, Lord. We're placing our lives in your hands.

We're trusting in you for all things. We pray that you'll continue to reveal yourself to us as we seek you. In the midst of whatever storm we are walking through.

For it's your name that we praise. Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen. Now let's hear from the word of the Lord. Good morning.

[20 : 00] Good morning. The scripture this morning is taken from the book of Romans, chapter 9, verse 14 through 24.

Excuse me. What then shall we say? Is God unjust? Not at all. For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy.

And I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on God's mercy. For scripture says to Pharaoh, I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.

Therefore, God has mercy on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden. One of you will say to me, then why does God still blame us?

For who is able to resist his will? But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God? Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, why did you make me like this?

[21 : 12] Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purposes and some for common use? What if God, although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath, prepared for destruction?

What if he did this to make the riches of his glory known to the objects of his mercy, whom he prepared in advance for glory? Even us, whom he also called, not only from the Jews, but also from the Gentiles.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Carol. Through the course of this summer, we're looking at the book of Romans, which is Paul's theological writings.

As we have trying to explain the Christian faith to the community in Rome, where he's never been a pastor, it's almost his resume, if you will, to become a pastor in that community.

And today we're going to talk a little bit about providence, about God and his aspect of how much he's involved in our lives, how much he has control over our lives, directs our lives, looks after our lives.

[22 : 30] And in the meantime, we'll talk a little bit about, in the process of that, how much do we have a role in that? Americans have an interesting concept of something called fairness.

We want everything to kind of be equal. We sort of have this idea that somewhere along the line, everything should be leveled out so that things are fair. One of the most extreme examples of this is that holiday we call Christmas, where people exchange presents, right?

I present a gift to you, and then you present one to me. And if your present doesn't match mine, then I adjust what my present will be. If you send me a card, I'll send you a card.

If you stop sending me a card, I'll stop sending you a card. This goes on and on. A young man named Sheldon, in Big Bang Theory, was struggling with this whole issue.

Great news, Leonard. I've solved my penny-gift dilemma. Yippee! You see, the danger was that I might under or over-reciprocate.

[23 : 45] But I have devised a foolproof plan. I will open her gift to me first, and then excuse myself feigning digestive distress. Then, I'll look up the price of her gift online, choose the basket closest to that value, give it to her.

And then I'll return the others for a full refund. Brilliant. That way, it will be fair.

But to quote a president from the last century, life's not fair. It's just not. Sometimes things go your way, and sometimes they don't.

I had a boss one time who said to me, sometimes you get the bear, and sometimes the bear gets you. There was a fellow in the Old Testament, as we're looking at our stories, who was born poor.

Actually, he was born in chains. His family was in chains. His mother and father were in chains. His grandparents and their parents before them.

[24 : 51] Generations of slaves. Stuck in bondage. And in the process of that, there came a decree from the king that all the children, the boys that were slaves, were to be tossed into the river Nile and drowned.

His mother was struggling with that dilemma, and so she took a basket. Probably one a little bigger than this one. And put him in it. And floated him down the river. Where he was discovered by a princess.

And she took him and drew him out of the water. And then raised him as her own son. And he became a prince. Instead of a pauper.

Anybody know who I'm talking about? Moses. Of course it was Moses. It's that fairy tale life. To go from being an abject poverty poor and with the world against you.

To having everything. As he grew up, he saw that his people, the Hebrews, were in bondage. And it bothered him.

[26 : 04] And so one day when he saw an Egyptian beating the Hebrew slaves, he decided he was going to step in. He figured that if he stopped this Egyptian slave driver, all the Hebrew people would gather around him and proclaim him the hero.

And he would lead his people out of Egypt. And he actually killed the Egyptian slave driver. But the Hebrew people didn't gather around him. In fact, what they said is, we're going to tell everybody that you killed that Egyptian slave driver.

And so he had to run away. He ran off out into the wilderness of Midian. Where he met a woman. He settled down and spent the next 40 years watching sheep.

I don't know if you know anything about watching sheep. But basically, you just kind of stand there and watch them. Not exactly what you'd call a thrilling job.

Not exactly what most people set out for in life. I think I'm going to stand around watching a bunch of sheep to see what they do. And he did it for 40 years. Providence.

[27 : 15] Sometimes we feel as if we're in the midst of something phenomenal and amazing. It's a time in our lives that the Greeks referred to as Kairos time. When the special miracles of God seem to be pouring down all around us.

When Moses is drawn out of the river and saved from death. He grows up as a prince in Egypt. And other times it just seems like life is just going on.

Day after day after day. Watching sheep. It's not fair. Paul writes in Romans, what shall we say then?

Is God unjust? Not at all. For he says to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I have mercy. I will have compassion on whom I have compassion. See, fairness and righteousness and equity are not all the same thing.

Sometimes the right thing is not the fair thing. And mercy and compassion in and of themselves are not really fair. Unfortunately, in this life, sometimes we're made for what the world calls a good life.

[28 : 31] And sometimes we're set on a course for things that people would call a difficult life. Some people have children that are more of a struggle than others. Some people have jobs that are more rewarding than others.

Some people find themselves with struggles in life with their health and others don't. We have a tendency to look at our problems and say, it's not fair that those other people get it so good.

But we rarely look at our blessings and say, it's not fair that I have it so good. Count your blessings.

Name them one by one. Count your many blessings. See what God has done. You see, an easy life is a blessing. Listen, if for some reason, in some areas of your life, you have it a little easier than others.

It's not because you're better. It's not because you're special. And believe it or not, I know this goes against completely what the American world teaches us. It's not even necessarily because you work harder than the next person. There's a lot of people that work very hard.

[29 : 38] And don't get as far as where some people get who don't work at all. Right? And that's not fair. Hard life could be because of the choices we make, the wrong choices.

But sometimes, people who do nothing particularly wrong find themselves with a struggle, with a difficult life, or off in some field watching their father-in-law's sheep.

In fact, the Bible even says that sometimes we find our lives with a life that is set out from the beginning to be suffering, like Jeremiah from a couple of weeks ago, who didn't have much pleasant about his life at all.

And Peter says to us in his book, Rejoice inasmuch as you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed. If you are insulted because of the name of Christ, you are blessed for the spirit of glory, and of God rests on you.

So, it's great to suffer because that means glory will feel even better. Really? Really? That's not fair. So, Pastor Sherry mentioned that I fell off a ladder.

[30 : 54] We were putting windows in this big house, and there was a window up on the second floor, and I didn't think that any of the kids should be climbing up the ladder with this window. So, I picked up the 50-pound window and decided that I would climb up the ladder with it.

So, I started up the ladder, and I got about to here, and the window started doing this. Now, of course, if I had had the presence of mind, I would have just dropped the window, and it would have broke, but I didn't drop the window. I held on to it.

It pulled me down, and I ran into a dumpster about here and hit myself right here in my back. It hurt. I'm laying on the ground in pain. But, you know, after a while, you just got to get on with life.

So, I muscled through it. We went back to the camp, and I said to my wife, I'll just sleep it off. I'll be better. Just give me an hour or so. After about an hour or so, I said, listen, fool, how many people have you said, go get it checked out?

How many people have you said, you know, the pain means something? Go see what's going on. So, we drove to the hospital, and we went into the emergency room, and they took the pictures, and they came back out, and the emergency room doctor said, you got a fracture in your collarbone.

[32 : 08] You got a bone chip roaming around in there that broke off. Your back is broken around the middle here, and you broke a rib. Oh.

Nothing got punctured, so I'm really okay? So, the next morning, I got up, and I went back to work. After all, I was the one helping these young people know how to do this work, so I had to be there to give them advice, and I will tell you, if I got anywhere near a ladder, I mean, one step up, and I got every young person there saying, get off the ladder, Pastor Tom.

If I drop something, they're picking it up off the ground before I could even move. They were watching out for me. They were trying. But you know, I was doing God's work.

I was on a mission trip to help people, to teach young people good lessons. I was doing your work, and I get hurt. It's not fair.

And sometimes life just isn't fair. We feel like it should be, but it isn't.

[33 : 19] Because life isn't about God serving us. It's about us serving God. Sometimes we've come to the idea that life is about a narcissistic pursuit of whatever makes us happy, when actually life is about doing what God wants.

And in verse 20, it says to us, one of you will say to me, why does God still blame us? For who's able to resist his will? But who are you, a human being, to talk back to God?

Shall what is formed say to the one who formed it, why did you make me like this? Does not the potter have the right to make out of the same lump of clay some pottery for special purpose and some for common use?

God is the one who determines what we were created for. Before you were even born, it says in Jeremiah, God called you to a purpose specifically written into your spiritual DNA.

Romans 8, chapter 28, in the chapter before this says, we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him and who have been called according to his purpose.

[34 : 31] The purpose of life is to serve God and to find the purpose that he created us for. Not to figure out how we can have more fun.

Not that it's wrong to be blessed. Not that it's wrong to be happy. Not that it's wrong to enjoy life. But our purpose in life is much greater and much more important than that. It says in this passage, God used Pharaoh to demonstrate his power.

He hardened his heart. to prove that God was more powerful than the greatest king on earth. God will use us for the purpose he's defined, not what we want.

It says that he calls us. He calls some of us to a purpose that seems amazing and that the world applauds. And he calls others of us to a simple task that nobody pays attention to but is essential.

even though we don't always see it. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12 he says, in fact, God has placed the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

[35 : 38] Do you know God made you with your gifts, your abilities, your talents, everything you're capable of exactly the way God wanted you to be. And when we live into the purpose that God gives to us, he gives us a satisfaction, a blessing that goes beyond being happy.

It goes down to what they talk about in the Bible as joy. A satisfaction of our soul of knowing that we've done what we were made to do.

What did God call us to be? What did God make us to be? And when in our lives is God using us? There's Kairos moments, those special, amazing moments, and then there's Kronos moments, just time that goes along.

We know of Moses because he was the guy who brought the people out of Egypt. He didn't even really want to do it. But God sent him back at the age of 80 and amazing miracles and plagues happened and lightning and power from the mountain and the Red Sea was parted.

That Kairos moment is what we remember Moses about. But he also spent 40 years watching sheep. Sometimes God calls us to one thing in one part of life and something else in another part of life.

[37 : 10] I've had times in my life that are what you'd call Kairos moments. Amazing moments. Moments where some people would even talk about how I had done something absolutely astonishing and then I have other times that are just day-to-day life.

Why can't we always live in Kairos moments? Well, because we'd probably burn up if we did. But it seems unfair that some people seem to have these amazing moments and others they just watch sheep.

It's not fair. But then again, God's mercy in and of itself is not fair. It's right, it's good, it's righteous, but it's not fair. In verse 19 it says, one of you will say to me, then why does God still blame us for who is able to resist God's will?

There's something in theological circles known as predestination. It's not a Methodist teaching, it's a teaching that comes from a man named John Calvin.

And we have some churches in the Christian community that follow this teaching and this is how it goes. It says that if God were to offer you grace, if God were to offer you mercy, if God were to give you the possibility of being a part of his covenant community, you could never resist because his grace would be irresistible.

[38 : 38] We're just human beings, how could we resist God? So, what they've decided from that is, because we know in the Bible some people are destined for eternity and some people are destined for damnation, therefore, it must have been decided that way before they were even born.

So, before you're even born, God made a decision that you're going to heaven or you're going to hell and it really has nothing to do with what you say or do because if God offers you irresistible grace, you must receive it, you must take it.

And so, some of you are blessed and some of you are not and oh well, that's the way life goes. And really, it's fair, it's fair because God says, I'll have mercy on whom I want to have mercy, I'll have compassion on whom I want to have compassion.

If God chooses to give us mercy to one and not to another, that's okay. He can be gracious to who he chooses to be gracious to.

Mercy's up to God. Now, there's good news for those of you who don't like that theological idea. we don't believe it. So, if you don't like what I just said, then you're in the right church because we don't believe that.

[39 : 56] What we believe is that God in his infinite, amazing love, wanting to create us in his image, like him, gave us the ability to make choices, even choices to refuse him.

even though he could force us to do what he wants us to do, instead, he gives us a choice, a possibility to decide.

In Acts chapter 3, they say it this way, repent then and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, the times of refreshing may come from the Lord. Repent or make a decision to turn your life around.

You can't make a decision if you don't have the ability to do it. In fact, you want an even more clear one. Look at the Old Testament and Deuteronomy. This day, I call the heavens and earth as witnesses against you that I have said before you, life and death, blessings and curses.

Now choose life so that you and your children may live. We believe that we have a part in choosing grace.

[41 : 03] We have a part in choosing our destiny. That even though in God's providence his decision was that our lives should be about an amazing journey that he's designed specifically for each of us, he gives us the ability to say no.

If you read about Moses, he actually said no to God three times. And God finally said, you got to go do it, dude. And he did. God gives us the ability to refuse his providence even refuse his grace.

People aren't sent to damnation. They choose it. Why? I don't know. God gives them the opportunity of eternal life and they choose to go in a different direction.

He gives mercy to everyone. Not dependent on who they are or what they've done. In verse 16, it says, it does not therefore depend on human desire or effort but on God's mercy.

Nobody, not you or me or anyone is good enough. Moses was a murderer. He refused to do what God wanted.

[42 : 21] He didn't live the life that God had chosen for him for years. but God still gave him the opportunity to choose grace.

None of us are good enough. None of us are perfect. None of us fulfill the complete demands of God. It says in the Bible, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

That's you and me and everyone in this room and everyone out of this room. and probably me more than many of you. We all have something in our life where we look back on it and say, I really messed up.

How could God forgive me? But see, that would make it dependent on your ability, dependent on how good you are. Mercy is dependent upon how loving God is.

The only fair outcome would be for all of us to be condemned and yet God gives all of us the opportunity to find grace because God doesn't want us to see him as some harsh overlord trying to point out everything wrong with us, sitting up up in glory pointing down saying, ah, I caught you.

[43 : 38] He wants us to see him as a God of mercy and righteousness. It says in verse 22, what if God although choosing to show his wrath and make his power known, bore with great patience the objects of his wrath prepared for destruction?

What if God chose mercy? What if God chose to forgive the greatest gift of all? In fact, 2 Peter says to us, the Lord is not slow in keeping his promise.

As some understand slowness, instead he's patient with you. Not wanting anyone to perish but everyone to come to repentance. That's what's fair.

Actually, it's beyond fair. That God wants to offer mercy where we deserve punishment. And all he wants us to do is to turn to him, repent, if you will, and receive that grace.

So if you're willing, I would offer you that opportunity right now to pray with me. Dear God in heaven, I have sinned. I haven't followed your desires for my life.

[44 : 59] I haven't followed your rules. I haven't done what you want. I'm too focused on myself. Change me, Lord.

change my heart, forgive my life, and set me on a new course. In Jesus' name we pray.

Amen. Jesus doesn't love us only because we do something good, although he wants you to do good. He loves us because he loves us.

and even when we're in brokenness with God, he loves us still. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. Glory to God.

Amen. Do you know, a couple weeks ago, I said in my sermon right after this, I said, you know that you're all perfect right now? That kind of messed with somebody's mind.

[46 : 06] They came to me and they said, I don't know what to think about that because I know I've done something really wrong in my life. I wanted to say you've done a lot of things wrong. You're just thinking of one thing.

But the truth is, right now, right here, at this moment, you are absolutely perfect. Doesn't that feel good?

That's the amazing gift that God offers. And it's a gift way beyond anything we could ever repay, anything we could ever feel we deserve.

God offers us not a present, but a gift. And to understand a gift, we need to realize it's more than we could ever expect.

Even Sheldon figured that out. Oh, good, Henny. You're here to exchange gifts. You'll be pleased to know I'm prepared for whatever you have to offer.

[47 : 08] Okay, here. I should note I'm having some digestive distress. So if I excuse myself abruptly, don't be alarmed.

a napkin.

Turn it over. To Sheldon, live long and prosper.

Leonard Nimoy. He came into the restaurant. Sorry the napkin's dirty. He wiped his mouth with it. I possess the DNA of Leonard and Nimoy.

singing. Yeah, yeah, I guess, but look, he signed it.

[48 : 18] Do you realize what this means? All I need is a healthy ovum and I can grow my own Leonard Nimoy. All I'm giving you is the napkin, Sheldon.

And you possess the DNA of God made in his image for his purpose, intended for grace, intended to do something absolutely amazing, whether it's in a Kairos moment or a Kronos moment.

God is doing something special. And to receive and understand God and the amazing gift that he gives us, which is beyond being fair, we just need to accept that God is God.

And we're not God. Philippians chapter four says to us, I know what it is to be in need and I know what it is to have plenty. I've learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well-fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength. Everything we are called to do, we are called to do for the glory of God, not for our glory, not for our benefit, not for our pleasure, because God has a plan in everything he's designed for us.

[49 : 55] That next day, curiously, they managed to make an appointment with an orthopedic surgeon for me. Can you imagine? I'm in the middle of nowhere and I've got an appointment the next day.

I walked into the doctor's office, dressed in my work clothes. He's looking at me. He says, so why are you in here? I said, well, they tell me I've got a fractured shoulder and bone pieces here, broke my back, broken rib.

He says, what can you do with your shoulder? I said, stuff like this, you know. He says, there's nothing wrong with your shoulder. You just got an old man's shoulder, that's all. He said, you didn't do anything wrong to your back.

I don't see anything wrong with it. But you do have a broken rib. Now, interestingly, I learned later that a lot of our young people were praying for me the night before and that they claimed that a miracle happened that night and that Pastor Tom was healed from a lot of the brokenness.

And I'm going to go along with them. I'm going to claim God's miracles. That God gave me just enough pain that I would learn that there's things I don't do at my age on a ladder anymore.

[51 : 07] But not so much pain that I can't be here with you. Instead, I'm in a hospital up in the Adirondacks. You know, the things that we sometimes see as difficult or tragic or bad can often be something that are really a blessing in disguise.

We tend to think we're the point of creation. That God exists to serve us. We think of Moses during the Exodus. But Moses is also the guy who spent 40 years watching those sheep.

And in those 40 years, he learned patience. He learned how to be able to watch a bunch of creatures wandering off in all sorts of directions. Because after that amazing Kairos moment, he needed to spend another 40 years watching these children of Israel wander around in the wilderness.

Same experience, just different creatures. I have experienced Kairos, but I've also experienced the amazing aspects of Kronos ministry.

Things that nobody will ever call me up to receive an award for that nobody is ever going to say were spectacular, that nobody is going to pay much attention to. But I was with Elaine the other day and we prayed and talked.

[52 : 29] And now my wife is with her as she's dying. I was with a man I've known for 30 years the other day, just sitting on the front porch talking about life, remembering people that most of you wouldn't even know ever existed, but I remember them and he remembered them.

And his heart was better and so was mine afterwards. I went on a mission trip with a bunch of young people. We figured out how to put windows into a house and how to put siding on a house and how to fix things so that they were fixed enough for a family that needed some joy and some blessing.

It's just regular living. But it makes a powerful difference in some people's life. When we start to learn who we are and who God is, we'll understand God's providence.

The purpose of our lives is to serve God. And the purpose of worship of coming to this place is not for what we get, not for even what we learn, not for even what we feel.

It's that we remember who we are. God is God. And we're his servants, his creatures, the pots made in his image.

[53 : 51] And God doesn't call us to gather around so that we can receive something special from him, even though he can and will give those special gifts. And so that we can remember to thank him for every piece of our life, and especially that great gift of mercy that we could never repay.

You know, the first act of worship in the Bible is giving our gifts back to God, making a sacrifice. Do you know why? Because we need to remember that whatever we give, it's not enough for what God gave to us.

Even Sheldon could learn that lesson. Be right back. Sheldon, what did you do?

I know. It's not enough, is it? Here. Leonard, look.

Sheldon's hugging me. Do I know what you can do for God? Just love him. Just love him like he loves you.

[55 : 22] Reach out and give God a hug. Because it's that love that makes the difference. John the Baptist, the greatest, greatest prophet that ever existed, was out in the desert and thousands were coming to him and Jesus showed up.

He didn't say, oh, you're stealing my thunder, dude. He said, he must become greater and I must become less. Servants of God, remember that we're not God.

Providence is how we live out our lives to honor the one who has given everything to us. God's God created by human hands.

You're not a God dependent on any mortal man. God in need of anything we can give by your plan.

That's just the way. God████cz to the man déf mé In good times and bad, you are on your throne.

[57 : 03] You are God alone. You're the only God whose power none can contend.

You're the only God whose name and praise will never end. You're the only God who's worthy of everything we can give.

You are God, that's just the way it is. You are God alone before time began.

You are on your throne. You are God alone. And right now, in good times and bad, you are on your throne.

You are God alone. You're unchangeable. You're unshakable. You're unstoppable.

[58 : 04] That's what you are. You're unchangeable. You're unchangeable. You're unstoppable.

That's what you are. You are God alone. You are God alone. Before time began. You are on your throne.

You are God alone. And right now, in good times and bad, you are on your throne.

You are God alone. You're unchangeable. You're unshakable. You're unstoppable.

That's what you are. You are Mumm. You are unchangeable. You are un██ed. You are un████Nothing. You are unnamed. I am uniliyor.

[58 : 59] You are unqueAST. You are unFO of unnak ████████. You are un83y Charlotte and her 329. At least it's un hit college. You are unaccountable. I am unmu██, spre de gall. You are un peace and their tracks.

Therefore, growth and riders oftek in electrimonious filters are enhanced and HDL. Beautiful Lord, wonderful Savior, I know for sure All of my days are held in your hand Crafted into your perfect land You gently call me into your presence Guiding me by your Holy Spirit Teach me, dear Lord, to live all my life Through your eyes I'm captured by your holy calling Set me apart

I know you're dying to yourself Leave me, Lord, I pray Take me wholly Use me, fill me I give my life to the Father's hand Hold me, guide me Lead me, walk beside me I give my life to the Father's hand You gently call me into your presence

Guiding me by your Holy Spirit Teach me, dear Lord, to live all my life Through your eyes I'm captured by your holy calling Set me apart I know you're crying Lead me to yourself Lead me, Lord, I pray Take me, hold me Take me, hold me Use me, fill me I give my life to the Father's hand Call me, guide me

Lead me, walk beside me I give my life to the Father's hand And now as a community of faith-filled, forgiven people of Christ Preparing for the table of grace Let's greet one another with the peace of the Holy Spirit Of course, and if you're part of the bread We must confess The peace of the Holy Spirit And we're together That was the we ■ison Avec hyflo

[63 : 17] All right. All right.

All right.

All right. May I be like you. All right. All right.

God does change our hearts. You know, he doesn't leave us. It's said that God accepts us right where we are. But he doesn't leave us that way.

He moves us on and perfects us into the love that he has created for us. To be in us at all times.

[65 : 21] He makes us new. And then we're new. And we don't have to worry about the other things of life because we move forward in him.

We move forward in Christ. And when we come to the table, God blessing the bread and the juice. God blessing us as we come forward.

It just seals that. It seals that covenant. It seals that love that is between us. So he invites everyone. Everyone is welcome to come to the table because God seeks for all of us to move on with him.

Amen? Amen. Everyone is welcome if we love God, repent of our sin, and seek to live in peace as disciples of Jesus Christ. We can come to this table knowing that the work is done and that God will continue to change us.

So we go on with him. Come to the table this morning. Come expecting to leave this place different because you have encountered the Most High God.

[66 : 33] The Lord be with you. And also be with you. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks and grace.

It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth. You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life.

When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God and spoke to us through your prophets.

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

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

[67 : 36] Holy are you and blessed is your son Jesus Christ. Hosanna in the highest. Your spirit anointed him to preach good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind.

To set at liberty those who are oppressed and to announce that the time had come when you would save your people. He healed the sick, fed the hungry and ate with sinners.

By the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death. And made with us a new covenant by water and the spirit.

And at his ascension, you exalted him to sit and reign with you at your right hand. On the night in which he 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.

[68 : 48] Do this in remembrance of me. And when the supper was over, he took the cup. Again, he gave you thanks and praise and gave it to his disciples.

He said, drink from this, all of you. This is the cup of my blood. The blood of the new covenant poured out for you. Poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin.

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

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here. 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.

[70 : 01] 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 God, now and forever. Amen. Amen. Shall we pray together with the confidence of redeemed children of God, the prayer Jesus taught us?

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. 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. A cole■ todos posit ç■kart, lumber has the name of God, sir.

[71 : 38] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Yet bring her into a garden, ...herde■ cultivation.

Y'all are looking for water. Booster■i, jeised you. My moon and sair SAPRASFORFA, ...compr arise from the Shopify brand.

Who's that, what are you Phillip? Because the service is targeting humans atenenously, If you're able, I'm going to invite you to stand as we sing together, Jesus Calls Us.

Jesus Calls Us Jesus Calls Us

[73 : 57] Probably on our site, while we had many eventful events, watching their pastor fall off a ladder from 12 foot up and slam into a dumpster was probably the Kairos moment of the week.

But the fact that I didn't get hurt more was not the miracle. The fact that an old man didn't realize he's kind of old and came to realize he can't do these things anymore was probably not the greatest miracle.

We had a man there that we were working for. His name was Larry. Larry had a struggle in life and he'd come to the point now where he couldn't see. It had a stroke.

And you could see that his life had been confined to a little room. That's all he lived in basically. And his wife did her best. But they were watching their life go more and more sad.

Here's the miracle. In the middle of our working, Larry would come out and sit right in the middle of us. He was often in the way. We'd have to be careful not to trip over him or have him trip over us.

[74 : 57] But he came out because he said he wanted to hear the sounds of his house being changed. He wanted to hear the voices and by the end of the week he could identify every single young person there and me.

I'm the old person there. By their voice. What a blessing. And at the end of the week he smiled. And you could see joy. You see, sometimes it's the huge things we do in life that we think are important.

But sometimes it's just the little chronos things we do. Day to day that can make a difference. Go out and do something special for God. God, he's made you special. He's given you his providence.

Go and be a blessing in this world. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. The Lord Jesustha Ulysses. Weise. Serve this yeah. God. Thank you.

[76 : 41] Thank you.