

June 12, 2016

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Date: 12 June 2016

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] Thank you.

This is the day. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Good morning and welcome to our church. We have a gift for our visitors at the Connection site. Please fill out your friendship card for any prayers or concern, or just so we can get to know you.

It's fun to be part of the welcoming committee here at Hamilton Center. Please stand in prayer as we worship together.

Thank you.

[2 : 07] We will serve the Lord as for me and my house. We will serve the Lord as for me and my house.

We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord.

Lord, we bow to live for thee. Bowing our knees to you only.

As for me and my house. We will serve the Lord. As for me and my house.

We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. As for me and my house. We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord.

[3 : 21] We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord.

We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. ■■■■ we will serve the Lord.

And we will serve the Lord. We will serve the Lord. We need each other Fathers and mothers Sisters and brothers In harmony and love As for me and my folks We will serve the Lord As for me and my folks We will serve the Lord As for me and my folks We will serve the Lord We will serve the Lord We will serve the Lord

We will serve the Lord And please form those I'd like to invite all the kids to come on up.

Any kids want to come up? Come on. Good morning, everybody.

[5 : 44] How are you guys doing? That's good. You know what this is? It is a teddy bear. That's right. Any of you own a teddy bear? You remember the...

You got a huge panda? Oh, you're going to. Oh, okay. You'll have to tell me about that later. So when was the first time you got a stuffed animal? Do you remember? Your very first one.

Do you remember? I don't think you remember. No. You figure it was your first birthday? I bet you got a stuffed animal before your first birthday.

I bet your mom and dad went out and bought you something really, really when you were young. Yes? Oh, so you got to build your own bear.

Okay. That's kind of cool. Well, cool. Yes, ma'am. So that's your first...

[6 : 54] Was that a real animal? No, a stuffed one. Yeah, okay. Well, two years old, mom and dad. You kind of waited a little while to give them a stuffed animal. Most parents actually give their kids a stuffed animal before the kids can ever remember.

And do you know why? Because they love you before you've done anything. They love you the minute they see you. The minute you're born, they look at you and they go, They're the most beautiful baby in the whole world!

Even if it's not true. They say it. Everybody says it. Babies all look like babies, you know. But we all go, Oh, they're so beautiful. They're perfect in every way. I love them. Did you know that?

Well, God loves you before you do anything. God loved you before you were even born. God cares about you no matter what. And all God wants you to do is to love them back, just like you love your parents, okay?

So as we're thankful for this, what are you guys thankful for this morning? Raise your hand if you want to share. I'm thankful for God and my mom. Friends and family.

[7 : 56] My family. Back. All right, Lord, we thank you for the blessings you give to us, for our family, our friends, for all the good things we have, even stuffed animals who make us feel good.

Bless us today and always and love us forever. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Okay, you guys go out to church school. All the kids are welcome to go out to church school now. Good morning.

Isn't it a beautiful day to worship the Lord? Amen. This morning for our mission moment, we have a special offering envelope for Alex's Lemonade Stand. Alex's Lemonade Stand is an organization that raises money for children's cancer research.

It's especially for children. And you can, if the Lord should put it upon your heart to give toward this wonderful mission, you're welcome to do that in your offering envelope.

They're also going to actually have a real lemonade stand out in the front as you're heading out the door later on. So you're welcome to just give a donation or get a lemonade for yourself with these wonderful opportunities to bring offerings to the Lord.

[9 : 20] Let's remember that when we bring our gifts, tithes, and offerings to the Lord, it's an act of worship. Okay? Let's give to the Lord. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen.

[12 : 04] Amen. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise Him, all creatures here below. Praise Him, Abba, He heavenly hosts.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise for this day, that we may gather together and worship you in spirit and in truth. Lord God, we ask that you would bless this offering now as we bring it as an act of worship.

We ask that you would give us wisdom to know how to best use all of the funds that have been provided for the furtherance of your kingdom, that many would come to faith in Jesus Christ.

[13 : 07] We pray especially, Lord, for the offerings for Alex's lemonade stand. We ask that you would just bless that organization and help them to look after the health and well-being of our children.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. We do have concerns to be brought before the body this morning that we can keep them in prayer.

Families, I know there are many on everyone's hearts, but we highlight these in particular today. Claire Bolslaw is in the hospital, and she is not doing well.

She's one of our older parishioners, and she usually comes Saturday nights. Pastor Bob's wife, Bonnie, is experiencing health issues right now, and she needs our prayers, and he does as well.

Autumn Craft, Pastor Tom's daughter, had surgery yesterday, and she is home now doing much better, but she is in need of our prayers as well. Karen Mahalski, that's Sean Mahalski's wife.

[14 : 17] Karen's mom, Marge, is in hospice now. She is at the end of her life, and we need to pray for her to have a blessed transition to not being with us anymore.

And for her mom, for Karen and for Sean, that they will be comforted in all of their family. And Betty Gemeinder, Betty Gemeinder's brother-in-law Warren Schreiber passed away last night, and we want to keep that family in our prayers as well.

These concerns and those that are on all of our hearts, let's turn to the Lord in prayer. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Gracious Heavenly Father, we know that you love us so much, that you are concerned for all of the things that concern us, all of the things that trouble us in our hearts.

You rejoice with us when we rejoice, and you mourn with us when we mourn. We pray in Jesus' name. That you would continue to bless us as we worship, that you would continue to bless us as we go through our daily lives, trusting you.

[15 : 44] Trusting you to care for us. Trusting you to look after the things of this world. Trusting you to work in us and through us to make things better.

Lord God, now we lift up before you all those who are sick and infirm, those who are in need from a healing touch from you.

Please touch them, Lord. Please bring them comfort and peace. Help them, Lord. Help their caregivers, Lord God, the doctors and nurses and family members and friends who look after them.

Give them the comfort and peace that they are in need of as well. Give them hearts of compassion and give them patience, Lord.

We pray, Lord God, for those who are nearing the end of their life here on this earth. We pray that their passing will be peaceful, filled with the knowledge of the love of family and friends and mostly of the love that you have for them.

[16 : 58] We pray that they would know you and know that they can hope with confidence that they will be going into your arms.

We pray, Father, for the families and friends of those who are in need of comfort, for someone who is passing now and those who have passed on.

We just pray for strength for them, Lord. We pray for comfort for them. We pray that your Holy Spirit just surround them with your love.

We pray for those, Lord, who are grieving losses. Fill them with hearts of compassion as well. Home will not be the same without those loved ones who are now missing.

But it's still home and you are still there, Lord. Fill the homes of all of these folks with your love and your mercy.

[18 : 06] Fill them with your presence, with your spirit. Let them know how much you love them. Let them know that you grieve with them.

Father, we pray now that you would just help to make each and every one of us to be your hands and your feet, your voices, your compassionate touch, your merciful words, as we reach out to people beyond these walls.

wherever it is that we go, that we would be those who could carry your message. Anoint the reading of your word and let it wash over us and transform us.

Be with Pastor Tom as he delivers the word you have given him. Give him grace, Lord God. Anoint him to be able to deliver it as you have called him to this day.

Let it be your message, Lord. Bless all of our time of worship here. Make us to be a blessing to you.

[19 : 18] That is why we came. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Good morning.

Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Today's reading is from John chapter 14, verses 15 through 27. If you love me, keep my commands, and I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever, the Spirit of Truth.

The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him, but you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans.

I will come to you. Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. On that day, you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you.

[20 : 51] Whoever has my commands and keeps them is the one who loves me. The one who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love them and show myself to them.

Then Judas, not Judas Iscariot, said, But Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world? Jesus replied, Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching.

My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own.

They belong to the Father who sent me. All this I have spoken while still with you. But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Peace I leave you. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not be afraid.

[21 : 59] This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Jeff. You know, this was one of those weeks where I hardly got anything done.

Anybody else have a week like that? Everything that I wanted to do didn't happen. I find myself needing to be places more than do things.

What they call in the ministry, the ministry of presence. So instead of being the pastor who leads the church, or the preacher who writes a sermon. Sorry if it's not good today. I was the pastor who had to be in places.

John says, if you love me. Have you ever heard that from somebody? If you really love me, you... And we've all heard those words, haven't we? If you really love me.

Jesus actually says that. When does love begin? How does love begin? And what really is love? We're going to go to the nursery this week, so let's start in the nursery this week.

[23 : 03] Anybody ever give their child a baby blanket?

And the kids hold them like this. You know what they're doing? They're smelling that. Actually, they're smelling you. And to some degree, they're smelling your fabric softener, just so you know that.

So, you know. Put that on the rest of your clothes, too. Because it imprints the child with you, with the sense of who and what you are. Your voice, the stories you tell them, when you hold them close, it causes them to decide that you're important in their lives.

How do we imprint our children? How do we imprint our lives with God? Part of it is the stories we tell.

It starts with reading Bible stories to them that they may not even understand at first. Talking about the family. Telling them a little tale.

[24 : 20] Being there with them so that they get used to hearing our voice. You know, when I do a baptism, I always go over to the child before the service to talk to them.

I've learned that if the children know my voice, they don't cry. Now, many of these children actually know my voice before they even come to that service because they've heard it so much.

I just start talking, and they go, Oh, that voice. I've heard that voice somewhere. And it's the same for us. We imprint our lives on each other as God becomes imprinted on us.

This week, one of my interruptions, if you will, which was a blessing, was we have a dear lady that's been a part of this church longer than me. Her name is Claire. And I heard that Claire was in the hospital and that Claire might not be long for this world.

And I was thinking, Well, I have things to do this afternoon, and I had already been to three different appointments that morning, but Wednesday afternoon, I turned to Lockwood.

[25 : 27] And I walked in the door, and Claire didn't have her eyes open, and I said, Good afternoon, Claire. And she didn't even open her eyes. She said, Good afternoon, Pastor. She knew my voice.

She said, I have one foot here, Pastor, and one foot there, and I'm trying to get my foot over into the other side so I could be all together there.

What a wonderful way to talk about it. Sometimes, we imprint our faith on even our children and on ourselves by getting used to hearing the voice of God and knowing who God is.

We're going to talk about four lessons over the next four weeks that are essential to pass along about our faith. One is the presence of the Lord, which we'll talk about today. Another is forgiveness. Another will be purpose.

And the last one will be wisdom. God chooses us first. In verse 18, it says, I will come to you. Before we choose God, God chooses us.

[26 : 32] It's called provenient grace in the Methodist church. That sense that God is with us, God loves us, God says to us, it's okay.

Jeremiah wrote, before I formed you in the womb, I knew you. Before you were born, I set you apart. I consecrated you.

I appointed you. I gave you a purpose before you were even born. Christianity is much more than a religion. It's much more than things we think about. It's God with us.

It's God wants to be with me and with you. Christianity is the living presence of God.

You know him, Jesus says, for he lives with you and will be in you. You're connected to him. He says, I'm in the Father and the Father is in me and you are in the Father through me.

[27 : 33] He says, I'm in the presence of God. So the first thing to understand about our connection to God is God made the connection before we did, just like we do with our children.

Before the children can speak, before the children can think, before the children have any possibility of choosing us, we choose to love them. And God does the same for us.

Let's go back to the nursery. I'm 15 for a moment Caught in between 10 and 14 And I'm just dreaming Counting the waves to where you are I'm 22 for a moment And she feels better than ever And we're on fire Making her way back from Mars 15, there's still time for you Time to buy and time to lose 15, there's never a wish Better than this When you only got a hundred years to live 15, wow, what an age.

What do we do with a teenager to keep connected to a child that's not quite a child and not quite an adult? We give them something. Maybe a locket with a picture on it.

Maybe a ring. We give them a token to take with them wherever they go. We do the same thing with our faith. Give them a cross.

[29 : 21] Not one so big that it hangs out here but just one that they can hide away but know that it's there and know that you're there with them. Why do we wear wedding rings? It's not for when we're with our spouse it's to remind us of who we chose and who chose us when we're not.

Maybe we give them a Bible one that actually has little more words in it. I got this one when I was about 15. I actually have tucked away in its lining my favorite Bible passages of that day.

Isn't that interesting? Now you gotta understand for a teenager this is perfect. I can put this in my pocket. I know that I've got the Bible with me I've got God with me wherever I go but I can hide it from my friends and not make them think I'm some kind of weird geeky kind of strange person.

You know? That's important when you're 15. You've gotta get close to people before you let out all the things that you're closest about and so give me a little Bible. This is mine from when I was 15.

Maybe something else. This week I was interrupted on Tuesday. I had a preschool picnic in the morning so I went and was with the children then.

[30 : 40] It's supposed to be the day that I start my sermon but instead I drove to Ohio because somebody was getting ordained. Rich and Sally's daughter. And you know as I was getting ready to go I thought oh I need to give her a gift.

You know that's appropriate right to give her a gift. So I figured I'd get a card and I could put some money in it but then I thought really? Really? Which I did do but really? I know what happens with those gifts.

They disappear and nobody remembers them right? I don't know if you've ever noticed but when I wear my red stole there's a little angel pin on it. Kind of like this one but not this one.

And that little angel pin was given to me by the pastor of the church I grew up in. And I remembered that. Every single time I put on that red stole I'd see that little angel and I'd remember the church I grew up in.

The pastor who cared enough to share a little token with me. And I thought I could give her a little angel pin. It'll cost a couple bucks. But then I realized that that wouldn't mean anything if it wasn't that little angel pin.

[31 : 49] So I told her this is for her to give to whoever comes out of her church someday as a pastor just so that they always remember. Hopefully even though I want somebody to come out of her church right away hopefully it'll be a long time away because then she'll be able to remember us and who we are and her faith because of a little pin.

You see at some point God wants us to choose him. God has already chosen us but God wants us to choose him to make a decision that yes we want to follow what God would offer.

Joshua spoke about it very clearly in the Bible. If serving the Lord seems undesirable to you then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve whether the gods of your ancestors served before the Euphrates or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living but as for me and my household we will serve the Lord.

At some point we have to make a choice we choose God. Jesus talks in this chapter from John about people who won't know God.

Judas not Judas Iscariot by the way it points out it was a very common name back then Judas because it's a name derived from God he asked Lord why do you intend to show yourselves to us and not to the whole world?

[33 : 14] Well God does want to show himself to the whole world but not everyone chooses to receive from God and if we run away from God God won't chase us down.

Do you remember the story of the prodigal son? He was the one who ran away from home. The father came out a distance but he didn't chase after him because when you chase after a runaway you know what they do?

They run further so you don't chase them. You go a little distance and wait so that they know that you care and you hope they'll return and God is calling out all of us saying please come be with me.

Please be someone who chooses me. Now for some they choose God because they've been away like the prodigal and for others they're more like that baby who was imprinted.

I was so proud when Josh got up a few weeks ago he didn't even know he said it I don't think. He said I've been coming to this church before I was born. I don't know and these are the most important words I don't know anything else because he was raised with God but somewhere along the line even though he says that he made a choice.

[34 : 27] We all make a choice. Some of us make a dramatic choice because we've walked away from God. Some of us make a natural choice because we were raised in such a way that it's the right thing to do usually by the choice that our parents make for us.

How do we see ourselves in our relationship with God when we open up our hearts to God and his Holy Spirit it changes us.

We realize we're not alone. How many of you grew up with I mean I know this is going to push you back into the old ages but sharing a bedroom with a sibling I had an older brother and I got to tell you when he was gone I was scared when he got there I was fine.

He didn't do anything in fact he usually said something like shut up bum or something like that you know what I mean it wasn't like a pleasant greeting but he was there and the presence of knowing that we're not alone that God is with us gives us confidence in this passage Jesus refers to the Holy Spirit as the parakletos or the advocate or the defender the one who is the presence of God who watches over us cares for us looks after us and verse 27 it says it brings a peace a peace which in Philippians they call the peace which passes all understanding knowing as Paul said I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me and loves me and says to me I'm not alone it's okay you know eternal life is a great part of the Christian faith and having some direction and purpose is important and having moral guidance is great for our children but that's all a part of the religion having God in our lives is what's transformational

Henry Crouch many years ago wrote a song he said if heaven never were promised to me neither God's promise to live eternally it'd be worth it just having the Lord in my life living in a world of darkness he came along and brought me the light we're not alone God is present with us and it changes us it transforms us anyone who loves me will obey my teaching my father will love him and will come to them and make our home with them anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching these words you hear are not of my own they belong to the father if you are connected with God it changes us the advocate who brings the peace transforms us there's a little fella in the bible called Zacchaeus we sing about him in the church Zacchaeus was a wee little man wee little man he lived in a town called Jericho he was very wealthy and you would think that with great wealth we'd come great power and everybody would love him but nobody liked Zacchaeus he was a short little guy and he was a tax collector well unfortunately being short particularly in that day and age was not a positive and being a tax collector was a big negative so nobody likes Zacchaeus in fact when Jesus came through the town they wouldn't even make a space for Zacchaeus to see him they pushed him back and crowded him out and he had to climb a tree and he climbed up in a tree to see Jesus and as Jesus was walking through the town he looked up at Zacchaeus who he knew before Zacchaeus was even bored and he said

[38 : 17] Zacchaeus get down out of that tree we're going to your house for dinner today Jesus was like that he'd invite himself to people's houses for dinner it's kind of a good plan I've thought about it pastors used to do that more Zacchaeus had Jesus at his house and he said you know I've got to tell you I'm changed if I've cheated anyone I'm going to give them their money back threefold and I'm going to give half of what I own to the poor now some people think that meant that Zacchaeus was a cheat but he couldn't because if he was a cheat he gave away three times what he cheated there'd be nothing left you follow so he couldn't give away half he probably was trying to do his best he was probably a morally good man in many ways but he was left out and now he's been included in you know we so much want to be included in we so much want to be the first one picked by the softball team right

I take Billy I take Jim I take Sally I take Jane we want to be the first second third please please don't make me be last oh good lord don't let me be last right Zacchaeus was always last always last and we would do almost anything to be included by other people God the creator of everything heaven and earth the whole universe has chosen you do you understand how transformational that is Zacchaeus became a new person because instead of worrying about what all these other people thought about and they still did all he cared about was that God himself chose him God chooses us and it gives us a confidence it changes us it transforms us but there's more so let's go back to the nursery

I'm 43 for a moment but you see I'm a there kid on the way baby a family on my mind I'm 45 I'm 45 for a moment to see his time and I'm heading into the water across the sea chasing the years of my life 15 15 I'm 45 I'm 45 I'm 45 I'm 45 I'm 45 I'm 45 I'm 45 time to lose yourself within a morning star 15 I'm 45 I'm 45 I'm 45 I'm 45 15 there's never a wish better than this when you've only got a hundred years to live

It's different. When your kids get to be a little bit older, they're not under your roof. You can't tell them what to do.

So it's more important that you stay connected. Somebody asked me the other day, they said, aren't these horrible for a pastor? Because like they can get you 24-7 now. I said, these things are wonderful.

[41 : 54] Because it means that we can stay connected even when we're not. I don't give it out to everybody, but you call our emergency line and they'll get me if they need to.

It's important to stay connected. In fact, another thing, and this has gone out of style, not those silly little things on the internet that only take you 10 seconds and everybody knew they didn't cost you anything.

Send a card. Think of you. What a cool thing to get, huh? It just says, hoping today the sun will shine brighter and smiles will come into bloom.

What a great way to say hello. By the way, if your kids are away at college and you haven't heard from them, you can send them the card with the little note and say, and I've enclosed \$100 for your use.

Just, you know, just use it as you want, but don't put it in the chat. You'll hear from them. This week was actually yesterday morning.

[42 : 57] Seems like about three days ago. I got a phone call at 8 o'clock in the morning. Dad, I hurt so much, I don't know what to do. I'm doubled over in pain.

My daughter's not a little girl anymore, but she's my little girl. I don't know if I can make it even to the hospital. So what does Dad do?

Say, oh well, call an ambulance and I don't even know how it turns out. Doesn't work that way. Not if you stay connected. So I spent yesterday in the hospital.

My daughter had emergency surgery. She's okay, she's at home. She insisted on going home. Not to our house. So I spent last night sleeping at my daughter's house, which was not a good experience.

Yeah, exactly. On the couch, or in this room, with these noises, with that discomfort, with my daughter waking up every so often saying, Dad, I need your help.

[44 : 08] Well, that wiped out any time I had to write a sermon. You do know that, don't you? And left me in a situation where I'm saying, what do I do as the 5 o'clock hour is approaching when I'm supposed to lead a worship service?

And the answer was, I got on the cell phone, called a couple of our other pastors and said, guess who's preaching tonight? It ain't me. They said, just take care of your daughter.

As good Christian friends would do. If you love me, Jesus said, if you love me, you'll show it.

What do you do to show your children, whatever age they are, even adult children, that God matters to you? Do you read your Bible in front of them? Do you talk about God?

Do you go to church? Or was that only for when your kids were little? You pray. You pray with them and for them. Real power of the Holy Spirit comes when we live in love.

[45 : 14] And love is an action. God said to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love your neighbor as yourself. But love is not an emotion. It's an action. John, 1 John, chapter 3 says, Dear children, let us not love with words or speech, but with actions and in truth.

You see, there's a catch. If you want to receive love, and that's your main motive, you won't ever get it. The way you receive love is by giving love.

Because love is not self-focused. Love is not self-serving. This sounds like a scripture. I think it's 1 Corinthians 13. Let's see. Love is patient. Love is kind. It doesn't envy.

It doesn't boast. It's not proud. It doesn't dishonor others. It's not self-seeking. It's not easily angered. And I love this one. It keeps no record of the wrongs.

You see, because love is about what we're doing for other people. What we're doing for God. In this passage, Jesus says, If you love me.

[46 : 27] He mentions love several times in this passage. The word for love is agape. Every single time. Agape. A self-giving love. The love that God gave. If you love me, you will love me the way God loved you.

It's what Jesus says. Not about earning our salvation, but about living out love. It's a two-way street that we walk with God.

God wants to bless us. God wants to be with us. God wants to care for us. God wants to send a defender, an advocate. God wants to teach us.

God wants to give us purpose. God wants to give us life eternal. God wants to live. God wants to live. God wants to live here. God wants to live their lives. God wants to live to make God happy. God wants to live to make God happy.

God wants to live to live to make us happy. The Holy Spirit presence gives us many things. Wisdom.

[47 : 27] Wisdom. In this passage, it tells us that it shows us the right way to live. The Spirit of Truth, he calls it. the spirit of truth. What's true anymore? What can we really believe in?

We're taught one thing in high school, and 10 years later, we're told it's wrong. Somebody told me I wasn't supposed to eat bacon. I'm still eating it. Don't eat butter. I'm still eating it.

What's true? God is true. And he says he will teach us in verse 26. And this is amazing. He will teach us all things. Do you realize God is willing to download directly into your hard drive everything that will matter for your life?

We spend years trying to educate ourselves by listening to other people, don't we? I went to high school. I went to college. I went and got a master's degree.

I study all my life reading what other people have to say. When I've got the direct source of everything that will ever matter available to me, how much time do we spend with that?

[48 : 40] Could you imagine if we spent all the time? I'm not saying education is wrong. But could you imagine if we spent all the time trying to educate ourselves, trying to learn from God? What amazing things God would open up to our hearts.

Even a portion of that time. And God will open up wisdom to you. You can't even imagine. Imagine. And we will live in love with God.

1 John chapter 4 also says, No one has ever seen God, but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

Complete in us. This passage actually began by one of the apostles, Philip, saying, Show us the Father and that will be enough for us. Just show us God, Jesus.

Just show us. Wouldn't that be amazing if God would just, Hey, appear in the sanctuary today, fire and smoke and pillars and stuff flowing around. We'd all be going, I saw God, that's it.

[49 : 46] I will always, right? Show us the Father and that will be enough for us. And Jesus gave him this answer.

He's not going to show himself to you. He's going to live with himself in you, for you, with you.

So eventually you have a blessed assurance and you'll believe because God is who you are. They learned that in the nursery. Half the time goes by, suddenly your eyes, another blink of an eye, 67 is gone, the sun is getting hot, we're moving on.

I'm 99 for a moment.

I'm done for just another moment and I'm just dreaming. Counting the waves to where you are.

[50 : 54] Fifteen, there's still time for you. Twenty-two, I feel that too. Twenty-three, I know you're well.

Every day's a new day. Fifteen, there's still time for you.

Time to buy and time to choose. Fifteen, there's never a wish. Never this. When you only got a hundred years to live.

One hundred years. Maybe. We have a hundred years to live. This is my sister-in-law. Her name is Georgie. My daughter wears a little G ring on her finger.

It's got a little G on it. That's what her Aunt Georgie's. Georgie died at 36. 36. This is my wife's older sister. So when Jackie was 30, her sister died.

[52 : 16] That was quite a while ago. The citizen lives on our piano. As do pictures of family and folks that have gone through our lives. And will always be in our lives.

They don't disappear from our lives because we don't let them disappear. What do we give our children? Memories. Memories, words, sayings, principles, values to live by.

Things that will change and transform them. Not just today, but for the rest of their lives. Get down off there. You want to break your neck? Put that stick down. You want to poke your eye out? Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

The golden rule. Or the platinum rule. Do unto others as you would have God do unto you. One more interruption this week.

As if I didn't have enough already. And I had others I won't tell you about. But I got a call from my cousin. This is my second cousin once removed or something like that.

[53 : 24] Her father died. I grew up with this man. I knew him since I was born. It's always been in our lives. And they called and said, could you do the funeral? What's my answer supposed to be?

I most likely won't ever see you again. Your second cousin's four times removed. How often will I look at you people, right? I don't have time for this. I've got a meeting to prepare for. I've got some report I've got to make out.

I've got something I've got to do. But Gordon was always part of my life. And I need to be there with his family.

Interruptions are really ministry. Everything else we do is the stuff to keep us busy. In between. I will not leave you as orphans.

God says, I will come to you. I'm an orphan. My parents are both gone. They passed away. I went to their grave because I found out cousin Gordon's grave was right down the road.

[54 : 31] Right across the field from my mom and dad's grave. \$50 graves they used to sell down at Acacia Park. Anybody here remember that? Can't get them for \$50 anymore. And I went over and stood over my parents' graves.

After that funeral, I remembered everything they ever said and taught me and loved into my life. And they're never gone.

And I don't have to figure out whether I believe in God. I don't have to think about whether I have God in my life. I don't have to consider whether I should choose God.

God is God. And God will always be God to me. He's been planted in my heart from before I even knew about it. My parents raised me in a church.

He was planted in my heart when somebody gave me a little Bible. I don't even know who gave that to me when I was a teenager. It was planted in my heart when my wife gave me a cross to wear around my neck so that not only is she always with me, but God is too.

[55 : 43] Memories. Values. The things that matter. A couple chapters later, John wrote these words. Because you've seen me, you have believed.

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet believe. We don't need to see God because we have God with us always in our heart, in the faith of our parents, which has become us.

Did I do everything right this week? No. I didn't make the calls I should. I didn't visit everybody I should. There's places where I needed to be and I wasn't because I'm not God.

I can't be everywhere. We all have to make those hard calls and choices and decide what we will and what we won't. But with God, that choice isn't hard.

The Bible starts out by saying it's not good to be alone and so God himself decided to answer that and never leave you alone again. He said, I will be with you in verse 16 forever.

[56 : 43] He said in the Bible, I will never leave you nor forsake you. Don't be afraid. God is with you. His peace, His Holy Spirit is yours.

Just open your hearts and receive God and let Him bless you and be present with you in all the things that matter.

Lord, my life is an empty cup.

Here's my heart, won't you fill me down? I'm faced to the ground forsaking my pride, leaving my will, leaving my will, my burdens behind.

all I want, all I need, just to be with you, just to be with you.

[57 : 50] Here I am, at your feet, just to be with you, just to be with you.

I have come to the end of me, and there's nothing I have to bring.

You said I belong, you said I belong, you said I am yours, you said I am yours, nothing compares to knowing you more.

All I want, all I want, all I need, just to be with you, just to be with you.

Here I am, at your feet, just to be with you, just to be with you.

[58 : 51] You made a way for me, Oh, Savior, I am yours forever, oh, you made a way for me, Oh, Savior, I am yours forever, oh, I am yours forever, oh, all I want, all I need, all I need, all I need, is just to be with you, just to be with you.

Here I am, at your feet, just to be with you, just to be with you.

All I want, all I need, just to be with you, just to be with you.

Here I am, at your feet, just to be with you, just to be with you.

I long for your grace, every single day, to meet you in this place, to see you face to face, will you show me, reveal yourself to me, because of your mercy, I fall down on my knees, and I can feel your breath, and tear with me, suddenly I'm lost, within your beauty, dried up in the wonder, of your time, here in this moment,

[61 : 20] I surrender, to your love. Everywhere I go, I am not alone, you call me at your own, you know you and me, you are holy, and I fall down on my knees, and I can feel your breath, and sad that you are Brooke.

All Donal Director, for rem meaning, and I can feel it live, and you'reelli six, and you are holy. I am not alone, to your hustle, and I feel someenWasnÄk, that you have hammered some music, without Rick longing and Rayiland.

The light is so dale you and he has acredites a union that his stehlen I surrender to the one who took my place I can feel your presence here with me Suddenly I'm lost within your view Could have been the wonder of your kind Here in this moment I surrender to your love Draw me close to you

Never let me go I lay it all down again To hear you say that I'm your friend You are my desire No one else will do There's nothing else to take your place To hear the warmth of your embrace Tell me by the way Bring me back to you You're all I want

You're all I've ever needed You're all I want Help me know you are needed You're all I want You're all I've ever needed You're all I want Help me know you are needed Help me know you are needed You're all I want

[65 : 42] You're all I want I can tell you about the things That I think I did right this week But I also could tell you all the stories Of everything I did wrong this week That's next week when we talk about forgiveness Because I made the wrong decisions a lot of times We all do We all do Sometimes they're just little things Sometimes they're important things The little things we can let go of The big things kind of hold on to us Don't they And that's why we need to take them to God Because he's the one who said He'll remove them from us Remove them from us And bury them deep As deep as the ocean is In his heart Let's turn these things over to our heavenly daddy And give them up to him shall we Dear Lord in heaven I have sinned By some of the things I chose to do By a lot of the things I neglected to do

Forgive me Lord Fill my mind with you And my heart with you And my soul with you And I might live for you Having all your wisdom And all your spirit And all your love Forgive me Lord And give me life in there In Jesus name we pray Amen Amen God came into this place Expecting to forgive you He decided that before you were born I don't know if you know that Because he loved you From before you even entered this world And will love you If you let him Beyond the end of this age So in the name of Jesus Christ Your sins are forgiven Glory to God

Amen He like the presence Of the lives In heaven And we dare to study If the presence of the lives His backgrounds Be the presence of the Lord in this place. I can feel His mighty power and His grace.

I can hear the rush of angels' wings. I see glory of each face. Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.

Jesus invites all His family to come to the table and join Him for supper.

[69 : 02] And the neat thing about it is, if you're not a member of the family right this minute, you can become that right now.

Everyone is welcome at the table of the Lord. If you love God, repent of your sin, and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ, you are welcome at the table.

When you come, you receive Jesus and you become part of the family. It's a blessing. So come to the table. Join with all your brothers and sisters in Christ and worship God together.

The Lord be with you. And also with you. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right. It is right.

It is right. It is right. It is right. It is right. And a good and a 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.

[70 : 14] 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 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.

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.

[71 : 26] By water and the spirit. 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, saying, Take, 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 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. It is 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.

[72 : 39] 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.

Shall we pray together? The confidence of children of God. The prayer Jesus taught. 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.

[73 : 57] 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 this morning, please come forward. 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. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

[76 : 02] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[78 : 32] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[81 : 02] Thank you.
 Thank you.