

Service

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Date: 13 November 2016

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[0 : 00] Welcome to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church.

I'm Scott Dabb. If you are new to our church, please pick up a gift at the connection site in the back of the sanctuary after worship. And please fill out your friendship card to get on the mailing list, sign up for activities, and for prayers and concerns or notes for the staff.

Enjoy the service. We are glad to have you here with us this morning. Your clipboard opportunities for ministry this morning are two things. First of all, if you'd like to help with the Thanksgiving dinner down at Seddon at the street, we'd love to have your help with that.

That'd be great. And the second one is for our hanging of the greens, where we decorate the church. We have a meal here. We have kids' activities, and we have a little service at the end. We'd love to have you come and participate in that.

I also want to mention this Tuesday, we have a mission program for children three years old through sixth grade. That's three years old through sixth grade. It's to help them have some understanding.

[1 : 11] It's right here at the church of outreach and giving to others and helping to do things for them. So we do encourage you, if you have children of that age, if you want to participate in that. Also, Thursday, Grief Share is hosting something called Surviving the Holidays.

For those of you who struggle through the holidays, they're going to have a gathering at 7 p.m. on Thursday night. Let's turn to the Lord in prayer, shall we? Dear Lord, we thank you for this morning.

And we just pray that you'll pour a special blessing into us, that whatever we say, whatever we do, whatever we are, they'll be what honors you. Bless us this morning to be your people.

In Jesus' name, amen. I'd like to invite you, if you're able to stand as we're going to sing together, love divine, all loves excelling. All love divine, all loves excelling.

Joy of heaven to earth, come down. Fix in us thy love, full dwelling. All thy faithful mercies crown Jesus, thou art all compassion Your unbounded love thou art Visit us with thy salvation Into every trembling heart Breathe, oh breathe thy loving spirit Into every troubled breast Let us all keep the imperant Let us find that second rest Take away our bent to sinning Alpha and Omega B End of faith as its beginning

[3 : 18] Set our hearts at liberty Come Almighty to deliver Let us all thy life receive Suddenly return and never Nevermore thy temple sleep Be we would be always blessing Serve thee as thy hosts above Pray and praise thee without ceasing Glory in thy perfect love Finish then thy new creation Pure and spotless Let us be In salvation Perfectly restored in thee Changed from glory into glory

Till in heaven we take our place Till we cast our crowns before thee Lost in wonder, love and grace Come on up, any other kids want to come up and join me?

I am opening a gift I got something I got one in here for everybody Any kids want to come up?

I'm going to give you something But it is tiny I mean tiny You see it? It's a seed It's a mustard seed Yeah You know in the Bible Jesus said if you've got faith The size of a mustard seed You can move mountains Not because that seed alone Could move mountains Not because faith that big Could move mountains Because God will make that faith Grow into something incredible So if we let God into our lives He will grow into something amazing You know I had a young woman Who's about, I don't know 25, 30 years old And she said to me I still have my mustard seed I got when I was your age When she was your age So that's pretty cool So you can have one of these Alright But it's going to take me a minute To actually figure out How to give them to you Because they're so little Alright But we'll figure out A way to do that First of all What are you thankful for?

Raise your hand If you want to share something And then family My mom and dad Family and friends Family and friends Family and friends My clothes The bees who pollinate The flowers Okay Let's say a prayer Lord we thank you For the blessings you give to us And the faith Even tiny faith That makes wonderful things happen Bless us in Jesus name Amen Okay If you still like a mustard seed I'm going to have Miss Adrienne come up And hand these out Because there's no way I'm going to be able To do this up here And we have something else We're going to be doing right now So If you didn't get a mustard seed Go see Miss Adrienne Okay Thank you Miss Adrienne Sorry about that

[6 : 49] This morning we have We have something special We're going to do We Once a year We honor the people That have been members Of our church The longest And these people Have been members Of our church At least 30 years I won't say how much more Than that Some of them Wouldn't appreciate that But But they actually Have been members Of our church For quite a long time And so This group of people We call our matriarchs And patriarchs And on our heritage Sunday we recognize them So if you're here If you'd raise your hand high We have a rose for you Okay Olive Burbage Jeannie Prendergast Bob Wurtenberger Keep your hand up Because they'll lose you In the midst of everybody Bob Wurtenberger Marge Wurtenberger Ed and Dorothy Getty

June Smith Anna K. Anderson Ursula Morrison Rich Anderson Jim Riggs Dick Anderson Darlene Brooks Marge Riggs Bev Spencer Vicky Spencer Sam Latina Shirley Duchere Carolyn Patterson Did I say Dick Roseland And Sandy Roseland I don't know if I did But I did now Gary Duchere Claudia Rowe Tam Bush And Gene Beeger A lot of them Go to the late service Because they like to sleep in So Let's thank these people For their years Of service for our church We have a thankful moment This morning This comes to us From Lori McGinn Who is actually Usually attending This service But she wasn't able To be here this morning And she asked us

To express her thanks In these words I am grateful For the support Of my family My church family And an unusual answer To prayer That comforted My mom and I During a very difficult week On October 22nd I had to put My ailing dog down My sister Pam Provided emotional support As she took me over To the vet And stayed with me While they performed The procedure Mom stayed at home To deal with a home Inspection As we had gotten An offer on our house And the prospective Buyer requested The inspection I returned home Only to learn The inspector Discovered our roof Was leaking And would need To be replaced And later that day The buyer backed out I prayed to God And told him The double blow Seemed too much To handle And I felt led To also request Prayer from our Church family Knowing the church Was praying Brought me some

Consolation A few days later God answered Our prayers In the most amazing way I came home From work one night And saw a card Sitting on the Dining room table When I asked mom About it She told me She'd gone to The plaza That morning And when she Got out of her car She discovered The card Lying on the pavement She wasn't able To find the person Who had dropped it So she just Brought it home She hadn't read it So out of curiosity I read the card And was stunned It said I know things Have been kind of Tough for you Lately So I just wanted To say I'm Praying for you And trusting that Things will be A lot better soon In light of what Had happened to us This could only Have come from God I read it to mom And she was Equally amazed Our spirits Soared for days After that And things didn't Look so bleak I truly believe That your prayers

Combined with ours Brought about This unique answer To prayer So I just wanted To say thanks Church family For those prayers And all that support Thank you Pam For a shoulder To cry on And the flowers You sent us And thank you Lord For all you've done To get us through this Amen Our God is amazing And pours out Blessings That we don't even Know about sometimes They're so abundant We don't even realize it As we return Our gifts, tithes And offerings To the Lord Let's do this As an act of worship Let's thank God For all of the blessings Of our lives Blessing Do you know lagi?

[12 : 01] Connect that Is but evil When the streams Of our bodies■■ Blessing That we are ■■■■ That we are Know yet Let's say That we are Knowing I'm found in the desert maze Now I walk through the wilderness Blessed be your name Every blessing you pour out I'll turn back to praise When the darkness closes in bars Till I will sing Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your love I'll ask my name Blessed be your name When the sun's shining down on me When the world's out as it should be Blessed be your name

Blessed be your name On the road walked with sorrow God is pain and we are away Blessed be your name When the sun's shining down on me And when the sun's shining down on me When the darkness closes in bars Till I will sing Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your love, I'll be your name You give and take away You give and take away My heart will choose to say Lord, blessed be your name You give and take away You give and take away

My heart will choose to say Lord, blessed be your name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be the glor i am ■■ Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be your name Blessed be the name of the Lord Blessed be the glor i am ■■ Thank you.

Thank you.

Lord, we just ask that you would bless all of this that we offer to you. And along with it, all of the gifts and abilities and talents that you've given to each and every one of us.

[15 : 45] We lift them up to you, Lord, and ask you to bless them. And give us wisdom to use them for the furtherance of your kingdom. It is our desire to draw many to faith in Jesus Christ.

And Lord, we just ask that you would help us to do that. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen. Please be seated. And I'd like to invite our lay leader, Jan Hodge, to come forward with the Wheeling family and their sponsors.

As we welcome them for membership. Brothers and sisters in Christ, through the sacrament of baptism, we are initiated into Christ's holy church.

We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All this is God's gift offered to us without Christ.

As a representative of this congregation, I present Jennifer Wheeling and Chad Wheeling for membership. Thank you. Thank you.

[16 : 57] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

you that I've been born by the water in the spirit you may live as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ Chad Wheeling may the Holy Spirit work within you that having been born by the water in the spirit you may live as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ and I may God bless you and may God receive you as members in preparation in our church bless you with the spirit fill you with his presence give you his grace and peace in all that you do in Jesus name amen and shall we invite and welcome the Wheeler family into our congregation and this morning after the worship service there will be a reception in the fellowship hall so you can greet them a little more personally in the in the morning thank you isn't it a blessing to welcome new members into our body isn't it a blessing to know that God is doing a work in this church bringing wonderful folks to be blessed with us and to be a blessing to us as we come to our time of prayer we do have some concerns to lift up June Phillips has been hospitalized and Claire

Bolslaw is struggling with some health issues Diana Rooney fell off the ladder and injured her head so we have to pray for Diana and we have to do something to keep her off ladders I guess or Diana we also want to be with in in spirit and in prayer with a couple of families in our church Christian Kristen from Moeck who is one of our preschool teachers her grandmother passed away so we want to keep that family in our prayers and Mark Ash jr who is the son of Mark Ash senior and brother of Matt Ash and his family passed away suddenly and we do want to keep that family in our prayers as well with these concerns and those that are on your hearts we will turn to the Lord in prayer and you're welcome to join me at the rail or our Lord God in heaven what a blessing it is to know that you call us to pray that you call us to come before you with a all those things that trouble us and with all those things that bring us joy knowing that you rejoice with us as we rejoice and you mourn and are in sorrow with us when we are in mourning and sorrow Lord God we pray for all of those people who are in need of a healing touch from you touch them with your healing power Lord make them whole in their spirits and their souls in their bodies let them be healed from the top of their heads to the soles of their feet

[22 : 08] Lord God you are the one who knows what they need and we trust that you will touch them that you will restore them to yourself that you will help them to find peace in this world in their physical and their spiritual selves Lord God we pray for those who are grieving losses oh Lord we pray that by your spirit you bring them comfort that you bring them peace that you send help be with them in the watches of the night Lord be with them as they go through their days help them to have blessed and beautiful memories that console them and keep them strong help them Lord to move forward and to continue to be a blessing in this world even as they are a blessing to you

Lord God we pray for all of the troubles of our nations and our states and our communities Lord we pray for unity we pray that even where we may have differences that are difficult to overcome that you would show us the way that you would help us to treat one another as we like to be treated that we would treat one another as you treat us help us Lord give us a spirit of collaboration and cooperation and helpfulness to one another help us to minimize our differences and maximize those things that we hold in common those goals that we all see need to be accomplished be with us Lord as we hear your word let it wash over us and transform us into Christ likeness help us Lord to be the people that you have called us to be the people that you intended us to be from before the foundations of the earth be with Pastor Thomas he delivers the message we know that it has come from you let it be a blessing to him and to us

Lord God make all of our worship and all of our days to come to be a blessing to you the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts would be pleasing in your sight in Jesus name we pray Amen Shall we hear from the word of the Lord?

Amen upside down ...

on globe are the only two a love me the only one you and over come back to my belly and he did you your old we had a Good morning.

[26 : 04] Our scripture this morning is from the book of Mark, chapter 12, verses 29 through 34. The most important commandment, answered Jesus, is this.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.

The second is this. Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these. Well said, teacher, the men replied. You are right in saying that God is one, and there is no other but him.

To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding, and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.

When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, You are not far from the kingdom of God. And from then on, no one dared to ask him any more questions.

[27 : 05] This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Jan. This morning we're doing a two-week, it's actually this week and next week, a two-week sermon series on the two great commandments.

A discipleship series, if you will. So this passage, love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, is probably the key passage in our church.

If you've been coming to church here for longer than two weeks, you've probably heard it. Because we say it quite often, it's written on the wall coming into the sanctuary. Because it's the greatest commandment that God ever gave.

It's actually based on the Shema, the Jewish faith. In the book of Deuteronomy, chapter 6, it says, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.

You'll notice that there's one missing. Mind, yes. In the time of Jesus, as the Greek culture began to spread across the world, people started to think that what they thought and what they knew, and how much intelligence it accumulated, was more important than anything else.

[28 : 15] And so Jesus said, we also need to recognize that we need to love God with our mind. And the Greek people looked at the mind different than the Jewish people, so he put that in there.

And I think it's appropriate for us as well today. Because the more we learn, and the more intelligence we have, the more we start to think we don't need God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, with all your strength.

And the second is like it. Love your neighbor as yourself. Now, the part about these commandments, Jesus saying that they're the greatest commandments, is that there's so many other commandments he could have chosen, and yes, he picked two that were positive.

We've got all kinds of, don't do this, don't do this, don't do that, don't do this, don't do that, don't do that, don't do this, don't do that, right? We've got all kinds of those in the Bible. We've got all kinds of those in our culture. And they're good.

They're designed to keep us safe. Like, don't go through a stop sign. That'll get you killed, right? But they're not the great commandments. The great commandments are positive. Love the Lord your God.

[29 : 19] With all your heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love your neighbor as yourself. On these, all the commandments, all the other commandments are based. And God doesn't say to love him with your heart, or your mind, or your soul, or your strength.

He wants us to have a complete faith. And that's why we organize our life and our teaching around these. If you happen to pick one up, we had a chart as you were coming into the sanctuary.

I worry some of you got one. If not, you can get one on the way out. This is what the chart looks like. And I'm sure you can read these tiny little letters up here, right? Because your eyes are probably a lot better than mine.

But you can read the big ones. So I can give you some idea of how this works. And by the way, this is not anything that's perfect. It's just something we did to give people kind of a guide to say, where are you?

Where are you in the course of your life following Jesus? Some people are just beginning. They're seeking God. They might not even call themselves Christians. Others would say that they're followers.

[30 : 17] They try to follow the teachings and beliefs of God. Others are disciples. They would say that they focus their life and center their life around God. And some are actually ministers.

They're leaders. They're people who draw others along in their faith journey. And then we have the different categories. Heart, soul, mind, and strength, and your neighbor. And these are just to say, well, how does my life line up in these four different areas?

If I were to use these as markers, where would I be? And by the way, we wouldn't think anybody would have all 20 boxes. But where is your life? And how are you progressing in your faith?

We need to love God with our heart. Our heart means our relationships. The people we surround ourselves. Do we include within our friendships and our relationships people that will support and nurture and encourage us in our Christian faith?

We tell our children that the people that they hang with are the people they will be known by and the people that will influence them. How do we make the circle of friends around us? The people that will influence us in the right way.

[31 : 27] And we can influence them. With all our soul. Which is to worship God. And to pray to God. Do we pray to God regularly? Do we pray to God throughout the course of a day?

Not just once or twice a week. Do we worship God? And see that as important and an essential part of what we do. Because worship is our way of saying God is God and we're not.

So it also includes the sacrifices we make, which is a part of worship. How we give of ourselves and our time and our wealth to say God is more important than anything. Do we recognize God with our mind?

Sometimes we try to put that on a different side. Well, what I do intellectually I don't do spiritually. As if they're two different places, but they're not. God gave us our mind.

Do we use it to learn about God? How many Christians have read the Bible? You know, they say that the percentage is about 20%. About 20% of Christians have read the Bible.

[32 : 25] I don't mean a part of the Bible. I mean the whole Bible. Do you look at the book? We have people in Bible studies throughout the week that are learning and growing in their faith. Are you trying to learn more about God and your strength?

Your strength is very simple. It's your actions. In the book of James, Jesus' brother wrote, saying, if you say you have faith but you don't have any actions, you don't have a real faith. It's dead.

It's not just talking the talk. It's walking the walk. And if we do all of these, we have a comprehensive, full, and complete faith that makes us stronger.

My wife's talked to me through the years about the military service. And she said that there's a military code that they call the comprehensive airman fitness. And that is that they need to be mentally, physically, socially, and, you might find this surprising, spiritually fit.

And that the military actually makes an intentional effort for all four of those things to be healthy because they believe that if their soldiers don't have all four of those, they're not healthy, complete soldiers.

[33 : 32] And by the way, if you look at those, it's heart, soul, mind, and strength. We've been around longer than the U.S. military. It's an old institution, but we're a little older, right?

They recognize it. Shouldn't we as Christians recognize our own laws and commandments? Because loving God is doing what God wants, not doing what we want.

This passage is actually part of a larger section, and I was actually going to have Jan read it, but we read it last night, and everybody missed the most important part, which is what you heard.

So let me tell you the stories of what happened. Two guys came up to test Jesus. One was a Sadducee, and the other was a Pharisee. You may have heard of those words. Maybe you sang them in a kid's song or read them in the Bible.

They were two political parties back in the day. I know you find it surprising that there were two main political parties in that particular nation, but there were. And there were the people who followed the Sadducees who said the most important thing about following God is worshipping God.

[34 : 38] And they believed in certain things like giving sacrifices, and they didn't believe in other things like the resurrection. On the other side of the aisle were the Pharisees. The Pharisees believed the most important thing was to study about God, learn about God, know his lust, and follow his rules.

And they didn't think a lot of that other stuff really mattered very much. They came to Jesus. The Sadducee came first, and he said, you know, there was, I got a question for you.

There was a woman who was married to seven different guys. Not to misunderstand, each one of them died. She had six husbands, each of which died. And as a widow, she married another one, and then another one, and then another one, and then another one, until she had seven spouses.

And then she died. When she goes to glory, who's she going to be married to? A trick question. How is Jesus going to answer this one? We gotcha. And what they're trying to prove is there's no resurrection.

They thought that they had caught Jesus, who said to him, you don't know the scriptures or the power of God, in verse 24 of this same chapter.

[35 : 46] You don't know the scriptures because you don't love the Lord your God with your mind, even though you're loving God with your soul. After this passage, oh, and then he said, by the way, that Jesus talked to the people who were no longer here as if they were alive.

So that said, that obviously they were still living. If God talks to people as if they're alive, then they must be alive. And he also gave an answer about marriage, which we'll get to in a minute.

And then a Pharisee came up, and he said to Jesus, which is the greatest command? Because he wants to find out whether Jesus is on their side. It's amazing how people want to believe God is on their side.

God's with us. We'll even watch in the political contest as people will count how many times their candidate says, God, God's with us. No, God's with us. Now, I know some of you feel very passionate, and you have very strong feelings right now.

And I'm not trying to disrespect those. But I'm going to say something that will probably get you even more irritated. And just be prepared. I know this is a shock to some of you. But I am absolutely convinced there will be Republicans and Democrats in glory.

- [37 : 00] I'm sure of it. So be prepared. Because you're going to have to live with them forever. So maybe we should figure out how to live with each other here on earth. Amen? See, the problem is that we want God to be on our side, and we're supposed to be on God's side.
- We're trying to co-op Jesus and get him to say what we want to say. They did it back then, too. Jesus said to them. He told the one guy, he says, you're badly mistaken.
- The other one, he says, you don't know what you're talking about. Because, see, over the years, we forget how the process worked.
- In the beginning, God made us in his image. And ever since that time, we've been trying to make God over into our image in return. So we shape and form God after our desires.
- My God wouldn't do that. Well, my God wouldn't say that. Oh, my God, hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord our God is one God. There is no other God. There's not your God and my God and their God and that one's God.
- [38 : 08] It's one God. There's not a Presbyterian and a Methodist and a Roman Catholic God. There's only one God. You do understand that all the rest of this is religion that people make up.
- Some of it very good to help us to follow the faith better. Some of it just people's ideas that they're trying to push on other folk. Like these guys are doing.
- Making stuff up. In the book of 1 Timothy, it tells us this. Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales.
- Sorry, ladies. Rather train yourselves to be godly. I didn't write the Bible. It's just in there, okay? Have nothing to do with these myths and these made-up ideas and these silly things that people say.
- Because they say them. Who's this one to marry to in glory? A lot of you won't like the answer. Jesus said, there is no marriage in the resurrection.
- [39 : 10] And we all go, you're just wrong about that, Jesus. I'm sorry, but I haven't been married to this lady in 40 years. I'm going to be married to her in glory, whether you like it or not.
- That's what we say. Jesus says, there's no marriage in glory. We will not have a need to be connected to one person intimately as close as marriage is.
- Because we'll be like that with everyone. The great and beautiful love that people have in marriage will happen with everybody. Well, we don't like that.
- But it's what the book says. It's what the Lord says. God helps those who help themselves, according to what? Book of the Bible. It was Ben Franklin, by the way, who said God helps those who help themselves.
- Which sounds a lot like Ben Franklin, because sometimes he liked to help himself. Well, that's a different story. Politics aren't new, just by the way. Cleanliness is next to godliness.
- [40 : 17] Yeah, we made that up to get our kids to wash their hands before they ate dinner. That's not in the Bible either. Oh, man, you're wrecking everything, Tom. When we die, we become angels. No, in fact, in this chapter, it says we become like angels.
- We'll get angel-like bodies, which is cool, because I'm looking forward to the angel-like body, you know. But we're not going to become angels. They're a different order of beings, and you'd know that if you knew the scriptures.
- God's most important concern is that we be happy. God would like us to be happy, and God wants to fill us with joy. But God's main concern is that we're faithful. That's far more important than that he's happy.
- You won't like the fact that there was no apple in the garden. Some fruit grower made that up. I suspect from around here, but I'm just guessing. People make stuff up.

We need to know the difference so that we don't pass ourselves off as an expert like this guy did and find someone like Jesus himself saying, we're badly mistaken.

[41 : 24] I know when I go to glory, I'm going to stand before the Lord, and I hope and pray he's going to say, well done, good and faithful servant. But I know that he's most likely going to say, but when you used to tell people that, what were you thinking?

I expect that. I know that I have an imperfect understanding of God, but I'm seeking the perfect one that God reveals to us. And that's what we need to seek, not what we want to hear.

See, the problem is, is the Christian faith is not necessarily easy. It wasn't designed to be easy. It requires something called discipline. discipline. We get the word discipleship from that.

But we don't want to choose something that's difficult, something that's hard, something that might be a struggle, even if it makes us better. We want some kind of easy way out.

But there is only one God. Not your God, not my God, not a made-up God, not the God that says what we want to hear, but the God who is God. Just like there really is only one army, even if Private Benjamin doesn't think so.

[42 : 32] Most pathetic trainees I have ever laid my eyes on. Wow. Ladies, my companies are the best trained, the best disciplined soldiers on this base.

Excuse me. Um, I hate to interrupt you, but, um, could I speak to you for a second? Oh, my Lord, Sergeant, would you look at this?

I've seen it, ma'am. What's your name, Princess? Huh? Judy. Judy? Judy Benjamin. Judy Benjamin. Um, I think they sent me to the wrong place.

Uh-huh. See, uh, I did join the army, but I joined a different army. Uh-huh. I joined the one with the condos and the private rooms. What?

No, really, my, my recruiter, Jim Ballard. I don't care. I don't care what your nosy recruiter told you, Benjamin. Now, I'm telling you, there is no other army. Wait a minute.

[43 : 36] I don't want to have to go to your boss or anything, okay? I just, look, to be truthful with you, I can't sleep in a room with 20 strangers. Oh, dear.

And, I mean, look at this place. The army couldn't afford drapes. I mean, I'll be up at the crack of dawn here. And I have to tell you, I am, frankly, a little shocked. You're shocked?

Yes. Why? This place is a sty. It's a sty? Yeah, I mean, look, look. Look at these stains. God knows where this has been.

Yeah. And have you seen the bathroom? But, uh, do you think that the latrine, do you think that it's unsanitary?

Oh, it's disgusting. It's disgusting. There are urinals in here. Well, that's because this is the army. Benjamin is not a sorority house.

[44 : 35] Um, may I see your toothbrush, please? Thank you. This is the army, Mr. Green.

We like our barracks nice and clean. You had a house made to clean. You're full of his budget. He won't help you out anymore. That's from a different era, but it's still true, let me tell you.

It's still true. There's only one army, and the army has expectations. They have discipline. It's not always easy. You're not always going to walk the easy trail. Sometimes you're going to go uphill, and they're going to make you go uphill.

Because the goal is to make you stronger and make you what you need to be to fulfill the mission of the military. And for God, it's the same thing.

And he has expectations on us so that we can be what God wants us to be. Because, and I know this is a shock to some of you, you are not the center of the universe.

[45 : 39] God is the center of the universe. This is what the first church looked like. Acts chapter 2. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching.

To the fellowship and the breaking of the bread and prayer. We've got like three of them right there, one shot. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common.

They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who was in need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God, enjoying the favor of all the people.

And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved. They enjoyed the favor of people. People thought well of them. Today there's a whole lot of people that don't think too well of Christians because Christians are not acting like Christians.

God didn't call us to judge and condemn the world, but to love the Lord our God with our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and love our neighbor, which we'll talk a lot more about next week.

[46 : 48] And did you know what happened? When they did what God called them to do, signs and wonders broke out amongst them. People say, Welcome, God's not doing a miracle for me today.

Well, what are you doing that God would break out miracles? How are we living in such a way that we are so committed to God that our God is God?

That God wants to demonstrate it with the power and amazing wonders that he can do. Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God. The Lord our God is one God, and it's not you and it's not me.

We need a complete discipleship. Not a partial one, not two out of three, not a piece of it.

It doesn't matter if you know the Bible through and through. You've got to have all the parts that they lay out in here. This fellow, the Pharisee, came to Jesus, and he tested Jesus by asking what are the great commandments.

[47 : 51] And then when Jesus gave the answer, he said, You've done pretty good, Jesus. You know, if I were Jesus, I would have wanted to say, Oh, thank you. I'm glad you think so. You know, really? He's telling Jesus.

He's telling God that God's pretty good. That's what we do, by the way. And then he gives this. He says, Did anybody figure it out?

He left one out? Love God with all your soul. He left out the soul. And he says, And by the way, Sacrifices, burnt offerings, all that worship stuff, that's just a bunch of nonsense.

We don't need to do that either. Because the Pharisees didn't believe in that. That was the Sadducees who did that. See, here's the problem. They're both right, and they're both wrong.

Does it sound familiar? Do you realize what our trouble is? We've got political parties that when we try to vote for them, we feel in one place, they're great. In another place, we're just... And then we've got the other one.

[49 : 00] Oh, wow, they're wonderful there. It's not like one of them has the truth and the other is false. I know some of you believe that. But honest to goodness, both of them have some truth and they have some problem.

And that's what we see here. That's what we see here. Because they're people. Does it matter if we worship? Does it matter if we bring offerings to God?

Can we be a Christian without that? Well, not a very healthy one. Complete health is emotional, physical, spiritual.

Amen. God wants us to love him in every way. One out of two is not enough. Three out of four doesn't make it. Although Jesus did say to him, You're pretty close.

That's pretty good. You got three out of four. That's not bad. Three out of four. And you got the neighbor one. Pretty good. But you're missing one. Does God need our money?

[50 : 03] Of course God doesn't need our money. It's just paper to him. To us it means everything. We do all kinds of stuff with money. I like money, by the way. I don't want you to misunderstand. The Bible never said money's bad.

It says the love of money is the root of many evils. But money in itself is just a tool. I like it. Most of us like it. It helps us get through life pretty well. But because we like it so much, God wants us to give some of it to make sure that even money isn't more important than God to us.

Now don't worry. We've already taken up the offering. I'm not trying to get into your pocket here. Okay? I'm not really concerned about the church. We're doing okay. Thanks to you. I appreciate that. If we had a problem, I'd send a letter out to you.

I'm talking about our own faith. We need to prove to God that God's more important than anything. That's why we worship God. It's to say, Oh, I'm not God.

You realize that's what you do most of worship. You stand here or sit here saying, I'm not God. That's what worship is for. To remind us. It'd be good for us to do it every day like they did.

[51 : 09] But at least once a week, God says, You're going to forget. And the gifts are part of it because they help remind us of who we're not. Do we work on it?

That doesn't mean you're all there. That's why we made up that chart. Because some people are here and they need to try and take a step up. A little bit up. Just try to get a look. God recognizes our progress. But are we progressing at all?

And when we stand before God, will we pass the test? My wife talks all the time about this thing called PT. PT. Which means physical test.

Once a year, she has to pass a test. She has to do push-ups. Like this. Right?

She's got to do sit-ups. Like this. Right? Okay. And she's got to run 1.5 miles, which I'm not going to do right now. If I can't do those, I shouldn't be talking to you about discipline.

[52 : 17] The truth is, she worries about this. It's a test. It determines whether or not she's capable of doing the basic job in the military.

Now when you're around 30, the test says you've got to do 33 push-ups in a minute. Now when you're my age, you've only got to do 15. Yeah!

So I was doing it with her. You know, kind of we're working together the one day. And I did the run. And then I did the sit-ups. And then I did the push-ups. And then she said, no, you stopped short.

I said, well, I did as many as you. She says, yeah, but you're a man. You've got to do more. And I said, I don't have to do any. I'm not in your military. I don't have to do one. I'm just doing this to be supportive. But see, that's the key.

I don't have to pass the military's test. But if I'm going to call myself a Christian, I have to pass God's test. And am I prepared? Have I lived to the disciplines of the Christian faith that make our faith strong?

[53 : 29] Discipleship is not the goal. Discipleship is the process. It's like if you went to plant something, you till the soil, and then you water and fertilize and pull the weeds out, right?

Because if you plant seeds, it'll grow better that way. There is a story in the Bible where it says that God is like a farmer and he cast seeds around. He drew some on a hard path and those were taken away by Satan because they couldn't grow there.

And some landed in the rocks. They grew up quickly, but they had no roots and they died away. And some were planted amongst the weeds and the weeds choked them out. But the ones that were planted on the good soil produced an incredible crop.

So discipleship is like preparing the soil. I have people that can misunderstand, though, that discipleship is not the goal.

It's not the intention. The intention is something much more powerful than just going through the disciplines. You know, the training is not what makes the military powerful.

[54 : 42] Believe it or not, what makes the military powerful is the same word we have in here. Because it's not heart, soul, mind, and strength that makes your faith powerful.

It's love. Your love for God and God's love for you. For God so loved the world that he gave his own son. Not discipline the world, right?

Discipline is a servant of love. Soldiers fight on the battlefield because they love their family. They love their country. They love the friend that's fighting alongside them.

They love the way of life that they have and they don't want to give that up and they're willing to make a great sacrifice for it. The disciplines just prepare them for that. In verse 24 of this chapter, it says, you're mistaken because you don't know the scriptures or the power of God.

In Acts chapter 1, it says, you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you and that will make you witnesses. You will receive power.

[55 : 49] And the greatest thing is the power of God. In that planting illustration that they gave us, the most important thing was not the tilling, not the weeding, not the watering, not the fertilizing.

It was the seed. If you do all the other stuff and don't put in a seed, you get nothing. I've said to most of you somewhere along the line that the essential thing about having Christian faith that will transform your life is to allow the Holy Spirit to work within your heart, within your life, within your soul.

That's the power of God. In this passage, that's where it says, love the Lord, your God. When we love God, we become one with God just as a husband and wife become one with each other.

In fact, Paul uses that illustration in Ephesians. Went to a wedding yesterday morning. It was fun because I actually attended. I wasn't doing anything.

I was just sitting in the pews. There were these two women in front of us. The one woman had come from Michigan and the other one from Florida to attend their friend's wedding. We started talking with them because we were all there a little early.

[57 : 05] My wife asked them about themselves. The one young woman said, my wife said, are you married? She said, no, I'm not married, but I want to be. She says, I just haven't met the right single guy yet.

We said, well, you will. Encouraged her. She had a good attitude. But I'm watching her during this wedding. I'm watching her watch the wedding.

I've seen a lot of people at weddings before. I've never seen someone like this before. As her friend is getting married, she is so excited she's bouncing out of the chair. She's like bouncing.

You know? Somebody asked me the other day, was she a young girl? I said, I don't know. She was about, I said she was about 30 to 35 years old. But see, to me, all women are 30 to 35 years old. Someone asked me, they're all 30 to 35 years old.

I have no concept of it. My wife said I was off by a few years. She's a little older. But I don't know. I think all women are 30 to 35 years old. That's the way they all look in my mind. Okay? Anyways, she's watching this and she's so excited.

[58 : 10] She's taking pictures of everything. She took pictures of the people taking pictures. I have never seen anyone take pictures of the people taking pictures. And whenever they would do the vows or the rings or anything, she's clapping.

She's so excited because she loves her friends so much. She's so glad to see her experience this joy that she looks forward to someday.

Love's a powerful thing. We have it for each other. We have it in our lives. It drives the marriage. It's not the dress. It's not the vows.

It's not the church wedding. It's not the house or the partnering or even the family we might have together. It's something much deeper. It's love. Discipline.

Prepares the soil. Gets us ready. I've had people say to me, well, I haven't experienced God. Well, how much are you loving God with your heart, soul, mind, and strength?

[59 : 16] Till that soil. Prepare that soil. God's thrown the seeds out. But for some people, they're hard soil. Satan takes you away right away. Others are in the rocks and they can't understand this.

Others are so crowded with weeds and problems and troubles that the seed never grows. And they say, I don't understand it. Why won't God bless me with his presence? Live to the discipline.

your heart, your soul, your mind, and strength and then you will experience the power of God through the Holy Spirit. if I speak with the tongues of men and angels but I have not loved, I'm nothing but a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal.

If I have faith to move mountains into the sea but I have not loved, I've gained nothing. Love is the key. Love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.

And God will change your life. I gave out those little mustard seeds to the kids this morning. It says in the Bible in Mark chapter 4, it's like a mustard seed which is the smallest of all seeds on earth yet when planted in good soil.

[60 : 29] It grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants with such big branches the birds can perch in its shade. Seek that love, that power of God.

that spirit of God and prepare your lives for miracles and signs and wonders to occur. If you do everything else and not that, it's for nothing.

If you seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, all the rest will be added. Amen. Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

Allelu, alleluia. Ask and it shall be given unto you.

Seek and ye shall find. Knock and the door shall be opened unto you.

[61 : 59] Allelu, alleluia. Seek God's kingdom. Nothing else compares to knowing God, experiencing God, having that power in our lives.

M ■■■■■uku xjimizi spread tak arch ■■■■ic poised ■■■ king xjimizi■ ang 40 ini gaveäng na sing ci ng na sing us God w Ey manner we die I our God I build my life upon all this worthy peace.

And once to once, all I once thought came. I have counted thoughts, till the world has come, come back to thee.

Knowing you, Jesus, I know you. You will live no braver than me.

You're my all, you're the best. You're my joy, my righteousness. And I love you, Lord.

[63 : 39] Now my most desire is to know you, Lord.

To be found in you. And all that's yours to go, I think what I do now is all surpassing in the righteous name.

Knowing you, Jesus, knowing you, there is no greater thing.

You're my all, you're the best. You're my joy, my righteousness. You're my joy, my righteousness.

You're my all, you're the best. You're my joy, my righteousness. And I love you, Lord.

[65 : 00] O-o- voyeur. O-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o-o.

And the glass of■■ dwells like you, with excuses And the spirit of wanting... Oh-oh Oh-oh Here in the sworn injured land Where many three had died Like a stream land by the water We never will run through that Living water flowing through God be there, so more of you Clear our heart, but our soul We want you to die Just too lonely like to make you go

We live to leave our lives Like a Sunday clock, it's no damn high We know we were made for so much more Than ordinary life It's time for us to do more than just to abide We were made divine It's time for us to do more than just to abide To our world, we're digitize To your word we're digging deep To know our Father's heart Into the world we're reaching out To show them who you are

So there's a water flowing through God's reach is the Lord of you We're our hearts in God's heart In one need of God's will know your life Till we can only lift the name of God Like the sun in God He's coming in love We know we were made for so much more Than ordinary life In time for us to more than just to arrive We were made to try Joy unspeakable, faith unsinkable Love unstoppable, anything is possible Joy unspeakable, faith unsinkable

Love unstoppable, anything is possible Joy unspeakable, faith unsinkable Love unstoppable, anything is possible Joy unspeakable, faith unsinkable Love unstoppable, anything is possible Joy unspeakable, faith unsinkable Just to know you and to make you know You know we lift your name on high Shine like the sun in darkness Strong and high We know we were made for so much more Than ordinary life Time for us to hold it just to arrive We were made to try God intended our lives to be amazing

[69 : 45] Signs and wonders, powers poured out But we live for all the wrong things To the wrong false gods To things that will not change our world God has called us to live lives Filled with him We've been chasing after idols And all sorts of false dreams God said if we confess our sins And repent of our sins He'll forgive us He'll forgive us And change our lives So we need to take all that brokenness And confess it to God now Dear God in heaven I have sinned I put other things in front of you I've not loved you With my whole heart Soul Mind And strength I don't always love my neighbor Forgive me Lord Open up my eyes

Open up my heart And my life Let me see you Experience you And thrive in your power And your love In Jesus name we pray In the name of Jesus Christ Your sins are forgiven Glory to God Amen sings diabetes As a deer çab■■ó o The waters No But so long It dispel to be You alone are my God's desire and I want to worship thee

You alone are my strength, my shield You alone may my spirit be You alone are my God's desire and I want to worship thee What's your desire this morning?

What's the deepest desire of your heart? Is it to know God? God has invited us to come and to know him. To dig deep into all God has called us.

To dig deep into so we can be who God's called us to be. And we have been invited to the table. We have been invited to receive from God all those blessings that God wants to pour out into our lives.

[72 : 50] We have been invited to receive God. Everyone is welcome in the United Methodist Church. If you love God, repent of your sin and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

You are welcome to come to the table this morning and receive what God has for you. So come. Come and be blessed. The Lord be with you.

Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give our thanks to the Lord. It is right and a good and joyful thing always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

By your appointment, the seasons come and go. You bring forth bread from the earth and create the fruit of the vine. You formed us in your image and made us stewards of your world.

Earth has yielded its treasure and from your hand we have received blessing upon blessing. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hand.

[74 : 00] 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. Though he was rich, yet for our sake he became poor.

When hungry and tempted, he refused to make bread for himself, that he might be the bread of life for others. When the multitudes were hungry, he fed them.

He broke bread with the outcasts, but drove the greedy from the temple. By the baptism of his suffering, death and resurrection, you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

And on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread and he gave thanks to you. He broke the bread and gave it to his disciples, saying, Take and eat.

[75 : 04] This is my body, which is given to you. Amen. Do this in remembrance of me.

And when the supper was over, he took the cup, and he gave you thanks and praise and gave it to his disciples. And he said, Drink from this, all of you. This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new covenant, poured out for you.

It is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin. Do this as often as you drink 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.

[76 : 21] 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 and your Holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. Amen.

Shall we pray together the prayer, Jesus Christ? 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. For those who are serving, please come forward. Amen. Amen.

[77 : 25] Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[80 : 58] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Take my life and let it be consecrated. Take my life and let it be consecrated.

Take my life and let it be consecrated.

[84 : 41] Take my will and make it thine. It shall be no longer mine. Take my heart, it is thine all.

It shall be thy royal throne. Take my love, my Lord, I pour. At thy feet it's precious stone.

Take myself and I will be ever only on for thee. You've come to worship your God, our God.

To fill up your heart, your mind, your soul. And now to be the strength of God into the world. So may God pour out signs and wonders into your life. That you might be witnesses to the ends of the earth.

For the amazing power of God. And that his love might spread to you to the ends of the earth. God is peace. Amen. Amen.

[85 : 44] Amen. Amen.

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

Amen. Amen. Samuel. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.