

# Prayer

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Date: 29 October 2017

Preacher: Pastor Tom Kraft

[ 0 : 0 0 ] We'll be right back.

Thank you.

Thank you.

I hope everyone will fill out their friendship card that you find in the bulletin. If you have any updated information, please be sure to fill out the card with your address and phone number.

If you'd like to receive the newsletter, we ask that you do the same. On the back, there's a section for prayer requests, blessings, or notes to the staff. If you'd like them to stay confidential, we can do that too.

[ 1 : 5 5 ] We hope that you enjoy the service and have a wonderful day. Good morning. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day.

This is the day that the Lord has made. Let us rejoice. Let us rejoice.

And be glad in it. And be glad in it. This is the day. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day. This is the day that the Lord has made.

[ 2 : 5 5 ] Shall we pray together? Dear God in heaven, we pray that your blessings would flow down into this place. That you'd touch us, move us, fill us, help us to experience you in our lives, in our worship, in our songs, in all that we do.

For we've come to be blessed by you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together, Come Thou Almighty King. Come Thou Almighty King Help us Thou Almighty King Help us to praise Father all glorious For all victorious Come and reign over us Ancient of days Come Thou incarnate Word Turn on Thy mighty sword

Our prayer attend Our prayer attend Come and Thy people bless And give Thy word success Spirit of holiness On us descend Of holy comforter Of holy comforter Thy sacred witness bear In this glad hour Thou who almighty art Thou rule in every heart And e'er from us depart Spirit of power To Thee great one in three To the great one in three Eternal praises be Hence evermore Thy sovereign majesty May we in glory see

And to eternity Love and adore The Lord be with you And also with you Please be seated As we approach our giving to God I would want to share with you just briefly That our finance team is looking to finish out Purchasing the chairs for our sanctuary So if you'd like to help with that effort You can make a contribution For every chair you buy Somebody else will contribute another one We do have a benefactor So just giving that to you For your opportunities this morning Pastor Lisa Good morning And I am so thankful And grateful to be here this morning with you It's been a few weeks Since I've been in this service And I'm very very blessed I want to let you know That Junior Church Is a wonderful blessing Those kiddos Are having so much fun And learning about the Lord And learning about how Our service runs So that when they get a little bit bigger They're going to be joining us In this sanctuary too So you keep those kiddos in prayer

Amen Amen What are you thankful for this morning? Karen Amen That's right Yeah Yeah Amen Amen Yes Daniel Heath is doing much better There are all kinds He's speaking And he's breathing better He's moving on Amen Go ahead I'd like to thank this church And the congregations For praying for my wife Janet And myself Thank you very much Amen Amen Who else?

[ 6 : 57 ] Carl? I want to thank everyone For helping out At the fish fries this year Amen For the fish fries And all the help For all the fellowship And folks getting together What a wonderful thing What a wonderful thing Other thankful things Judy Amen Amen Amen Amen Amen So these folks are moving on They've got the jobs that they need And they're expecting How amazing Wonderful Any other thankful moments?

Yes Amen Amen Praise God Because our pets You know They mean so much to us They really do minister to us God has given us God has given us the animals In the world To love us And for us to love and care for And when they're sick We feel bad And when they're well We feel great Amen Any other thanksgivings this morning?

Well we all are rejoicing In our hearts before the Lord Let's turn to the Lord With our gifts Our tithes And our offerings Let's offer them up With thanksgiving And joy As a grateful gift To the Lord And his work What can wash away my sin?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus What can wash away my sin?

Nothing but the blood of Jesus What can make me whole again?

[ 9 : 19 ] Nothing but the blood of Jesus Oh, precious is the blood of Jesus Oh, precious is the blood that makes me white as snow No other fount I know Nothing but the blood of Jesus Nothing but the blood of Jesus Nothing but the blood of Jesus Nothing but the blood of Jesus Your touch Your touch

My heart How could I live Without your love My life Your blood Your body Your body Broken For the promise of This wayward souls Return To your arms Your touch Your touch My heart How could I live

This is all my hope And peace Nothing but the blood Of Jesus This is all my righteousness Nothing but the blood Jesus Jesus Oh, precious is the blood Oh, precious is the blood That makes me white as snow No other fount I know Nothing but the blood of Jesus Nothing but the blood of Jesus Nothing but the blood of Jesus

Touch Touch my heart Touch my heart Nothing but the blood of Jesus Nothing but the blood of Jesus notification numa mim Jesus transitional Hurry upon as snow Peace Hou Nab vous dados vous Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.

Praise Him, all creatures here below. Praise Him above, ye heavenly hosts.

[ 14 : 13 ] Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Dear Heavenly Father, we give you thanks and praise for this day, that we may gather and worship you in spirit and in truth, that we may offer our gifts to you, Lord, all of the gifts that you have blessed us with.

We give them over to you this day, knowing that you will use them, that you will bless them for the work of your kingdom. Be with us, Lord God.

Give us wisdom to know how to best use them for the furtherance of your kingdom. And in all that we give, let us be blessed. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. Please be seated. And we need to turn to our time of prayer now, as we come before the Lord with those things that are on our hearts.

[ 15 : 14 ] What are those things this morning that you come before the Lord with? Yes. Yes. Yes.

Chris' mother's neighbor, who died and was very, very good to her mom and very much of a help and a comfort, and he's passed away. So we'll lift up his family.

Others. Yes. Yes. Yes. Ah, Amy, who is exhausted, taking care of her elderly grandmother.

We want to pray for strength for her. Okay.

Little baby with food allergies or something going on that's keeping him from being able to take nutrition well and respond to that well and use it. Any others? We know that we have needs that God knows already before we even ask, that we haven't spoken out.

[ 16 : 33 ] God hears those prayers as well. So whether you join me in your seats or you come to the rail, let's turn to the Lord in prayer. Amen. Our gracious Heavenly Father, we are so grateful for the opportunity to come before you.

You hear and answer our prayers as we come to you by the prompting of your Spirit. Lord, we are so grateful for the Lord.

Our hearts, our souls, cry out this day for those who are sick and infirm, that you would touch them, Lord. Touch them with your healing power.

Let them be made whole from the tops of their heads to the soles of their feet, Lord God. Let them be made whole in the way that only you can, knowing exactly what they need.

We trust you, Lord. We pray for their doctors and nurses and other caregivers, for family members who are caring for those who are sick and infirm, for those who are elderly and in need of help, for those in whatever circumstance makes it necessary for someone else to look after their needs.

[ 18 : 01 ] We pray that you would give them the strength that they need, the endurance that they need, the wisdom to know when to rest and when to rely on you for greater strength than they ever thought possible.

Be with those, Lord, who are grieving losses. Be with their families. Be with their friends. Help them. Draw close to them by your Spirit with great compassion and impart your peace to them.

Lord, we pray for all of our children this day. We just ask in Jesus' name that you would give them knowledge of you, that you would touch them and let them know that you are with them.

And Lord, we extend that prayer now to all of your children. Let us all know, Lord God. Draw us all into a deeper understanding and knowledge of you, that we may be a witness in this world.

Lord, we lift up now our nation and all of the troubles and the turmoils that are going on in it. We hear so many things.

[ 19 : 31 ] We hear from one group or another group, one side or another side, one source or another source, all different things, different sets of facts and information, different assessments of what they need, what they mean, Lord God.

Lord, give us wisdom to know how to pray. Give us wisdom to know what the truth is, for we have the Spirit of truth in us.

Give us wisdom to take care with our words, that we do not judge things before the time, and that we seek God's wisdom to judge all things.

Be with us, Lord, this day, and let your word wash over us as we continue in worship. Let it transform us into Christ-likeness. Be with Pastor Tom as he delivers the word you've given him for us today.

Let it bless him, Lord, and bless us as we continue to worship, Lord. Make all of our worship to be a blessing to you, for that is why we came.

[ 20 : 47 ] In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Shall we hear from the word of the Lord? Amen.

Amen. Amen. Good morning.

Today's scripture reading is taken from the book of Acts, chapter 12, verses 1 through 17. It was about this time that King Herod arrested some who belonged to the church, intending to persecute them.

He had James, the brother of John, put to death with a sword. When he saw that this met with approval among the Jews, he proceeded to seize Peter also. This happened during the festival of unleavened bread.

After arresting him, he put him in prison, handing him over to be guarded by four squads of four soldiers each. Herod intended to bring him out for public trial after the Passover.

[ 22 : 14 ] So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him. The night before Herod was to bring him to trial, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, bound with two chains, and sentries stood guard at the entrance.

Suddenly an angel of the Lord appeared, and a light shone in the cell. He struck Peter on the side and woke him up. Quick, get up, he said, and the chains fell off Peter's wrists.

Then the angel said to him, Put on your clothes and sandals. And Peter did so. Wrap your cloak around you and follow me, the angel told him. Peter followed him out of the prison.

But he had no idea that what the angel was doing was really happening. He thought he was seeing a vision. They passed the first and second guards and came to the iron gate leading to the city.

It opened for them by itself, and they went through it. When they had walked the length of one street, suddenly the angel left him. Then Peter came to himself and said, Now I know without a doubt that the Lord has sent his angel and rescued me from Herod's clutches and from everything the Jewish people were hoping would happen.

[ 23 : 32 ] When this had dawned on him, he went to the house of Mary, the mother of John, also called Mark, where many people had gathered and were praying. Peter knocked at the outer entrance, and a servant named Rhoda came to answer the door.

When she recognized Peter's voice, she was so overjoyed, she ran back without opening it and exclaimed, Peter is at the door. You're out of your mind, they told her.

When she kept insisting that it was so, they said, It must be his angel. But Peter kept on knocking, and when they opened the door and saw him, they were astonished.

Peter motioned with his hand for them to be quiet and described how the Lord had brought him out of prison. Tell James and the other brothers and sisters about this, he said, and then he left for another place.

This is the word of our Lord. Thank you, Amy. We've been talking about what are the things we need to do to prepare our lives for the life to come.

[ 24 : 38 ] And this week, I want to talk to you about prayer. I pray a lot. I pray with people in large groups like this. I pray at the rail for people for prayers, for their healing, for their lives to be changed.

I pray with people in the hallways. I pray with people in the hospitals. I pray with people a lot. Sometimes people wonder, does prayer actually work? Do miracles actually happen?

In this passage, we have King Herod, who's decided that he's going to put Peter to death. He's killed James, and he's got Peter in prison, and he's taking no chances, because he remembers it was one year earlier that Jesus was guarded by soldiers and put away in a tomb, and somehow he disappeared.

So he's not going to let it happen a second time here. He's got 16 guards guarding Peter. He's got two sets of chains on the guy. Sentries at the door. And the chains fell off, and the doors opened.

The guards didn't see anything, because nothing is impossible with God. Do we believe that? Do we really believe that prayer works, that God will reach into our culture and somewhere along the line, change the rules, and make something different than what we expect to happen?

[ 25 : 57 ] It's fascinating. These people were praying all night for Peter to be released from prison, and yet when Peter comes to the door, they're astonished that their prayers actually were answered. See, they're no different than we are.

They prayed all night, Dear Lord, rescue him from prison. And when he's rescued from prison, they go, Really? Maybe you're kind of just seeing something. I remember many years ago, I was a pastor in the Wyoming and Covington churches, and I declared that we should have like 100 hours of prayer for a couple of weeks to pray for God's miracles.

And so the people did. They all signed up, and they prayed faithfully. It's just a little church. At the end of a couple of weeks, I got up and declared, Well, you know, God really has already answered our miracles.

Look at how the church has grown and how things are so much better for a lot of people. God has already given us the answer to our prayers. And then God started doing miracles. So the truth is, is sometimes we don't want to fully try.

Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief, the man said in the Bible. Because miracles do happen. I've seen amazing things occur in answer to prayer.

[ 27 : 08 ] I've seen people who are brain damaged end up graduating from college. I've seen people who are supposed to die get up out of their bed and walk away and live a regular life.

I've seen people have their voice returned. One of the most interesting ones was a number of years ago in this church. Some of you have heard this story. We had built a parking lot out in the back area there.

And we didn't have a lot of money, so we built it out of stone. And we got the big stone so that it could be paved over the top. We figured that would be a prudent use of our money, so we put all the money we had into building this parking lot and never thought about women's high heels.

Women don't like walking on big stones, evidently. I never really thought about it myself. And so after about a week or two of this, I started getting all the reports about how the new parking lot was terrible.

And I said, Lord, what am I going to do? I said, Lord, I need little stones. And in my prayer, I said, God, I need stones about this big. About this big.

[ 28 : 11 ] Sometimes you need to be specific with God. I need stones about this big. About three days later, a guy pulls into our parking lot and he comes up to my office. He said, Pastor, I was wondering if you could do me a favor.

He says, I've been working on a roof down the street. And I've got all these stones I need to get rid of. He says, you know, they're clean. And I saw your parking lot out here and I thought maybe I could just spread them around for you.

He said, and this is what he did. He said, they're about this big. I've seen things happen in the course of my life to say that, yes, God reaches in sometimes and makes something special that astonishes us, that changes us.

In the next few weeks, we're going to talk about expecting the unexpected. About looking for the angels' visits, looking for the Holy Spirit to truly speak to us and change us.

And I believe in it, but sometimes our hopes and our dreams don't turn out the way we want. I don't know if you saw last week's game, but Tampa Bay was hoping for a miracle at the end.

[ 29 : 20 ] It looked like this. No timeouts, nine seconds. Humphreys, who lost the football with a little pitch, and they go back to Evans, who's going to throw it back to an offensive lineman, Donovan Smith.

And he gets the ball flipped back as the clock has expired. Mike Evans throws back.

That's Charles Sims, the running back, who goes back to Deshaun Jackson. The Bucs are going in the wrong direction. Evans.

This is as well executed as I've seen up until that point. It's over. They kept it going.

And they're hoping that he's going to sneak out and run, go, get that guy, come on. Sometimes it doesn't work out.

[ 30 : 24 ] Go skate in the crease, glide right. Sometimes the miracles don't happen. You know, this is a story where we focus on the miracle of Peter being released from prison.

And it's such a dramatic story that we sometimes ignore what happened at the beginning. James is dead. James was like one of the top three, Peter, James, and John.

They went everywhere with Jesus. And he's the first one that dies. We're all looking at this and going, what? God let one of the lead apostles of the church die on Easter?

And the religious people of the day are approving, which is also a little weird. When religious people are happy about death, there's something wrong with their ideas.

It's hard. And it's hard. And sometimes it takes us off the real focus of life because the purpose of this life is to get to the next one.

[ 31 : 27 ] Glory is better. We've been looking at 1 Corinthians 9, where it says, everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever.

You know, this passage shows us that glory is better. We got an angel with an attitude. It's really kind of, I mean, I don't know if you notice this.

This is not Monica in touch by an angel, you know? He shows up in a prison cell and he doesn't say, be not afraid. He doesn't say, I brought a message from God. It says he shows up in the cell and he smacks Peter.

He smacks him. Get dressed, get moving. Come on, what's your problem? Let's go. Takes him out in the street, doesn't really say anything else to him, dumps him and leaves.

I don't know if you've ever really paid attention to angels in the Bible. They don't like being here. They don't want to be here. They seem to always be in a hurry to get out of this place because they know that the place to come is better than the place we're in.

[ 32 : 34 ] They know that glory is better. They've been there and they don't want to be here. Even the angel at the resurrection of Jesus is sitting there on a rock. The people show up. He says, okay, now what you're supposed to do is go to Galilee where he'll meet you.

There, I've told you, I'm out of here. Angels don't like being here because they've seen glory and they want to go back. The greatest miracle that will ever happen in the history of all humanity that will ever occur is when I will be resurrected from the dead.

And you and you and you and you and you and you and you and you. Do you follow? The resurrection of our lives to new life is what it's all about.

Not stones for a parking lot, not being healed temporarily for this life, but to receive the promise, the assurance of eternal life.

In Philippians, Paul writes about this. He says, for me to live is Christ and to die is gain. What? If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me.

[ 33 : 40 ] Yet what shall I choose? I don't know. I'm torn between the two. I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far. Some people say to me, you've heard me say this before, better than the alternative.

No, it's not. It's not. The alternative is better. That doesn't mean God wants you to, you know, like, this is done and we're going to drink purple Kool-Aid or something. But sometimes, we lose track of the whole idea of what's going on here because we're focused on our world.

It's like a football player who only sees what they're doing and doesn't have any concept of the overall plan. The person who calls the plays is not the quarterback. Typically, it's not the running back.

Typically, it's not any of the players. It's a coach. In the old days, he wrote them all down on a clipboard. He'd have all these plays listed on a clipboard. Nowadays, it's a computer that they call a clipboard, but it's really just a computer.

And they carry it around and all the plays are there and the coach calls the play. Well, God is our life coach. And God calls the plays for our life. It's not really up to us because God knows what's best for our lives.

[ 34 : 58 ] It's not about what makes us happy. It's about what makes what God's plan for us happen. This is what Paul continued to say in Philippians. It's more necessary for you, more necessary for you that I remain in the body.

Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and I will continue with you for your progress and joy in the faith so that through my being with you again, your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.

Or in other words, he's still got stuff to do. God has a plan for you and you might not understand what it is, but God's still got something for you to do. Sometimes I have people tell me, well, they're not physically able to do things.

Well, you can write a note. You can make a phone call. There's always something you can do that God would call you to do. The problem is, is we don't want what God wants.

We want what we want. A number of years ago, it was a Tuesday and I was talking to my parents.

[ 36 : 01 ] The day before, we had just planned a new bathroom remodel my father and I were going to do at the cottage and they had just come up from the south and my mother called me and told me my father had a stomach ache, which was really weird because my mother's never called me and told me my father has a stomach ache.

But she did. I didn't pay much attention. You know, I said, well, good. Take a Tums. I said, you know, I mean, what, right? Well, the next night, the next evening, I get a phone call that my father's been taken to the hospital because his stomach ache won't go away.

So we drove out to Warsaw, talked to the doctors, put my father on a mercy flight to ECMC. When we got there, we found out he had a ruptured aneurysm.

You're not supposed to live for a couple hours, nonetheless, 24 hours was such a thing, but my father's an old German, you know, tough guy. Got a tummy ache. Tommy. So we had a prayer together and the last words my father said to me is, I'll see you on the other side, Tommy.

I'll see you on the other side. That night we prayed. We prayed for the doctors. We prayed earnestly. We prayed with tears in our eyes. We prayed and prayed and prayed that God would come, would bring my father through this surgery.

[ 37 : 16 ] until about four in the morning when the doctor came in and said, you know, we're having a hard time with it and he might pull through. We're not sure we're trying, but if he does, he's not going to be the same.

We just want you to be prepared. He probably will not be able to care for himself and he probably is not even going to be able to think very well. And so I prayed for the rest of the night, dear God, take him home.

Dear God, let him go to his reward. He's ready. I'll see him on the other side. Because you know, at some point in time, it's not about what we want, it's what about God wants and what's the best thing.

You see, we tend to look at God like a magic genie. And when God doesn't do it the way we want, we get upset. Friday, I drove out to the cottage.

I had a choice. I could clean up the leaves in the yard at the parsonage, okay, or I could drive to the cottage and rake leaves out there. I only had one or the other to do. That's all the time I had.

[ 38 : 28 ] So I figured I better do the cottage because, you know, I had this window. So it took us, you know, three hours driving and four hours raking leaves. But we got them done.

I came back and yesterday morning I figured there's no problem. I'll still have time to rake the leaves. It's not going to rain until three in the afternoon. Worked on my sermon about quarter after twelve.

I got ready to go outside. I'm like, really? Really? You couldn't keep the rain away for two hours so I could get my leaves done? Like, God is going to change the plan of the universe so I can clear my leaves off my yard.

Really? Seriously? You think that's the way God works it out? Hold off the rain, keep it out west, let it dump on Ohio, Tom needs his leaves cleaned.

Really? But that's the way we approach God. God is our coach. But here's the rub. If God's calling the place and if God does what he wants, then what's the point of us praying?

[ 39 : 31 ] Why should we even bother? Well, sometimes it's hard to understand what God wants and we need to connect with him.

Have you ever watched a coach on the sidelines? They're interesting because this is how they talk with a clipboard in front of their mouth like this, right? And they send the plays in in huddles, you know, where the guys are crouched down like this so you can't see what they're saying.

Do you know why? The NFL is such, such a valuable enterprise that they hire lip readers to sit out in the stands of the stadiums and try and figure out what the coach is saying to the players on the sidelines because if they can figure out the player, the play, and tell the other side, man, they've got it.

It can make the difference of winning a game and that's money in the bank. The problem is is sometimes they don't get it quite right. Hey, just laugh if you're mad.

Just laugh if you're mad. I swallowed a penny, I swallowed a penny. Why a penny, why a penny, why a penny went that deep? Why a man, why a man, why?

[ 40 : 41 ] Go to church, church, church, and go to church, church, church. No! So you're pregnant? What? You're acting like you're pregnant. Just let it be what it is. Granny Maple's garden game is sick.

Look how I dig this little hole and I drop in the seeds. Look at the little seeds. It doesn't always come through exactly the way intended.

And the problem is we're walking through life expecting to God to just drop it down into our mind without having to make the connection with God. Prayer connects us with God and His plan for our lives.

James is dead. You know, that's probably as important as Peter being released from prison, maybe more important.



Why would God allow James to die? I don't know. What people have said over the years, and I think it may be true, is that God said that they were to be witnesses in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.

[ 41 : 45 ] And it's a year later and these guys haven't left Jerusalem. Their idea is if people want God, they can come to us. We're not going out there.

That's too difficult, too dangerous. Let the people come to us. Other people had left Jerusalem. Philip had left Jerusalem.

But these guys were hovering around this city and some people believe they need to be scared. Scared enough to go do what they're supposed to do.

Maybe James is dead because people didn't talk to God and listen to what He had to say to them to get about the tasks that they were meant to do. We connect with God in prayer to figure out what His plan is.

And also because I think God wants us to be part of the solution. The angel only took Peter so far and then he left him.

[ 42 : 44 ] He could have taken him all the way but he didn't. He took him so far and then the rest was up to him. God expects us to live out our faith. These people were in earnest prayer praying all night long.

We don't want to do that. We don't want to do that. Dear God, I can't find my car keys so if you could help me with that I'd appreciate it.

Hey, catch you later God. Have a good day. We not only keep it so short He doesn't have any time to talk to us. We never stop talking to give Him a chance to talk so we can listen. Earnest prayer.

Praying. Praying through the night. I had a bishop once who said pray as if it all depends on God but then work as if it all depends on you. Because God wants us to be part of the game.

You see those players who are looking at the computer thing? They're trying to figure out so they can say, Hey coach, did you notice? God wants us to be part of His holy huddle.

[ 43 : 49 ] He wants us to be part of the decision. And believe it or not, we can change God. If you've ever read the story of Jonah, it's a really fun story.

It's probably one of the most fun books to read in the Bible. You know, the whole idea of Jonah's going to run away from God because God can't find him in Spain. It's hilarious. And then he's vomited up on the shore and a pile of fish vomit.

He decides to go to Nineveh where God told him to go in the first place. But when he gets there, and this is one of the most intriguing parts, it says for 40 days he preaches to the people, you are, now three days, you're going to be destroyed in 40 days.

You're going to be destroyed. God's going to wipe you out in 40 days. It will be done. And then Jonah went and sat on a hill to watch the fireworks. In the meantime, the people of Nineveh decided to pray.

They prayed. They actually didn't eat. They actually sat in sackcloth and ashes like us wearing a garbage bag and saying, God, we're nothing compared to you. We're so sorry.

[ 44 : 51 ] And here's what it says in the Bible, in Jonah. It says, when God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, actually the word is he repented.

And he didn't bring on them the destruction he had threatened. That really ticked Jonah off because he's embarrassed as can be. But the most important piece is God can change his mind.

God has a plan. God's plan will happen. But God's plan may happen in a different way depending on what we do and how we do things. God wants us to be part of the solution.

Part of this effort. Because God is trying to prepare us, transform us so that we're ready for glory. And as we connect to God, as we experience God, as we get closer to God, we learn who we are and what we're supposed to be.

This week we were talking about the mission of our church. A little bit about what my mission has been my whole life as a pastor. When we come to church in this congregation, we expect to experience God.

[ 46 : 01 ] Amen? Now we hope to experience it. We know God is with us. And we are here to experience God and to learn how to love each other the way God loves us.

We're going to talk about that over the next few weeks. God expects us to experience Him so we can be changed for the glory to come.

When God was separating people out like sheep from goats, He turned to the good people and He said this to them. He said, He said, well, He didn't say this to them. They responded this way.

He told them that they were righteous and they said, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in or need in clothes and clothe you?

When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you? And the King will reply, truly, I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. That parable points to the idea that we're supposed to naturally, naturally be the kind of people that can live in love with each other for all eternity.

[ 47 : 09 ] We're not going to a place where we're going to argue and fight. We're going to worry about who's Republican or a Democrat or belongs to the Green Party or Libertarian or whoever I left out. I'm sorry. We're not in a place where we're going to fight with each other.

We're going to look for how we can help and love on each other. God wants us to prepare for the glory that is to come.

And sometimes we are so unprepared. This story is actually hilarious. I mean, besides the angel with an attitude, you got Peter. He goes to the house. Now remember, He goes to a house where they've been praying all night for Peter to be released.

He knocks on the door. This young girl Rota opens the door, looks at him, slams it in his face. Goes in and tells everybody, Peter's at the door. They go, you're nuts, man. There's no way he's at the door.

We've only been praying all night that he would be released, but he couldn't possibly be at the door. Then they say this, maybe it's an angel. Either way, we ain't opening the door. Right?

[ 48 : 07 ] We're not opening the door whether it's going to be Peter. It's going to be angel. We're not opening the door for God himself. Peter found it easier to escape from a highly guarded prison with 16 soldiers and two sets of chains to escape from prison than to get into the church.

That's a scary thought, isn't it? And so who are we locking out of the church? Who are we keeping from glory? Because we think we've got it figured out.

We pray to God so that he'll pour into us what we need to be. Because what prayer does, even more so than changing God, even more so than changing your circumstances, prayer changes us.

And we need to change. We need to experience the power of God. When you pray, it's not a miracle happening in your life that you need to pray for.

Pray that God will change you. God will change your church. God will change your world. Because the purpose of this life is to get to the next.

[ 49 : 18 ] To prepare our lives, to prepare our souls, to prepare our hearts and our understanding for God. When we pray, we should expect the unexpected.

We should expect that God will speak to us because he does. that the angels might appear, that the Holy Spirit will converse with our heart because he does. I can tell you, he does it with me all the time.

And I've talked to plenty of people he does. Some people say, how? Forget about how. You'll figure that out. God will reveal to you the way God will speak to you, which is different for each person.

We need to expect the unexpected and trust God that he knows what he's doing. About three, four years ago, Pastor Sherry pointed out that every October I'm sick.

I went, what? She said, you're sick every October. What? I didn't know that. She said, yeah, I've noticed. Every October you get sick. So I started thinking about that.

[ 50 : 19 ] What do I do? What could possibly cause me to get sick in October? Taking flu shots, all this kind of stuff that's happening. And then I finally figured it out. You know what it is? Anybody want to guess? Leaves.

It's leaves. All that mold and leaves going up. You know? So Friday morning, all afternoon, I raked these fool leaves. I came to the fish like this, right?

You know, people are looking at me, man, you look a mess. Yeah. All the allergies blowing all over me. And you know what? What the difference is between me and God, I wanted those leaves off the parsonage lawn.

God wanted me to be able to talk to you today. How about that for an idea? Because if I would have gotten the leaves cleared off my lawn, I'm going to tell you right now. I can do them tomorrow.

That'll get me all week long to get rid of that stuff, right? God knows what He's doing. He may not give us the answer to the prayers that we think we're going to get.

[ 51 : 20 ] And maybe some of the things we talk about are old stories like the stones you've heard about so many times. Well, let me tell you, He's still doing the miracles today. Why do we pray to God?

We open up our hearts, we open up our lives, and it will change us. It will change our church, and with it, we can change the world. Not a short little mamby-pamby prayer.

Take the time. Take an hour. Open up your lives. Open up your hearts. Listen to the Lord. He's got something to say to you. He's got something to say to you.

No more. CKING Thank you.

Thank you.

[ 52 : 58 ] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

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

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

Thank you. I will bless the Lord forever I will trust Him at all times He has delivered me from all fear He has set my feet upon a rock I will not be moved

[ 55 : 31 ] And I'll say, oh Lord, you are my shield My strength, my portion We live alone My shelter, strong tower My very presence, help me, I love me Who have I in heaven but you?

There's not I desire, this I do You have made me glad And I'll say, oh Lord, you are my shield My strength, my portion Delivered My shelter, strong tower My very presence, help me, I love you You are my shield My strength, my portion Delivered My shelter, strong tower My very presence, help me, I love you

Won't you pray a prayer of confession along with me?

Lord, I am a sinner Lord, I am a sinner I need your grace I need your grace Pour your love into me Pour your love into me Set me on the right path Set me on the right path Open my heart Open my heart Open my ears Open my ears To receive you, Lord To receive you, Lord To know your voice Forgive me Forgive me For not seeking you Forgive me, Lord Forgive me, Lord For not walking in your ways For not walking in your ways For it's in Jesus' name we pray It's in Jesus' name we pray Amen Hear the good news Christ died for us While we were still sinners And this proves God's love for you and for me So I can say in the name of Jesus Christ Your sins are forgiven In the name of Jesus Christ Your sins are forgiven Glory to God Amen

And now as we are now made right with God Let's create a body of Christ prepared for the table Won't you greet one another with the peace of the Holy Spirit? Amen Thank you Thank you A few of us Good morning Amen Amen Amen Thank you.

[ 59 : 49 ] Thank you.

I trust in you. I trust in you.

I believe you're my healer. I believe you are all I need.

I believe you're my portion. I believe you're more than enough for me.

Jesus, you're all I need. I believe you're my healer.

[ 61 : 17 ] I believe you're all I need. I believe you're my portion.

I believe you're more than enough for me. I believe you're my healer.

I believe you're my healer. Amen. Jesus is all we need. God has given him to us so that we can be saved, so that we can know that everything we need will be provided according to God's riches and glory.

Amen? When we come to the table, we can receive of all that God has provided for us. God provided his son for our sins.

We remember that at the table. God wants to bless you. God wants to bless you.

[ 62 : 36 ] God wants to bless you. Come this morning. Come and receive all God has for you. Everyone is welcome at the table. If you love God, repent of your sin and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

That's all that's needed. That you want to come. That you want more of God. That you want your faith to increase.

Everyone is welcome, so come to the table. The Lord be with you. Lift up your hearts. Lift up your hearts. Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

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

[ 63 : 42 ] And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn. Holy, holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest. 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 by water and the Spirit.

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

[ 64 : 53 ] This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.

When the supper was over, he took the cup. He gave you thanks and praise and gave it to his disciples, saying, Drink from this, all of you. This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new covenant poured out for you, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sin.

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

Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again. pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here. And on these gifts of bread and wine, make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world, the body of Christ redeemed by his blood.

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.

[ 66 : 22 ] 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, with the confidence of children of God, the prayer Jesus taught us? Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. Will those who are serving, please come forward. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Ecclesτη Hore 112 Thank you.

[ 68 : 27 ] Thank you.

If you experience the living God at the table, at the rail, for prayers for healing and anointing, or to light a candle, come and join us with God. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

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

[ 72 : 09 ] Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. If you're seated, please raise your hand.

If you're seated, please raise your hand.

I'd like to invite you all to stand if you're able as we sing together, Our God. Water you turn into wine, open the eyes of the blind.

There's no one like you. There's no one like you. Into the darkness you shine.

Out of the ashes we rise. There's no one like you. It's not like you.

[ 74 : 20 ] Our God is greater. Our God is stronger. God, you are higher than any other. Our God is healer.

Awesome in power. Our God. Our God. Our God. Into the darkness you shine.

Out of the ashes we rise. There's no one like you. It's not like you.

Our God is greater. Our God is stronger. God, you are higher than any other.

Our God is healer. Awesome in power. Our God. Our God. Our God. Our God. Our God is greater.

[ 75 : 22 ] Our God is stronger. God, you are higher than any other. Our God is healer. Awesome in power.

Our God. Our God. Our God. tile church anyway.

grand What could stand against?

Our God is greater, our God is stronger God, you are higher than any other Our God is healer, awesome in power Our God, our God Our God is greater, our God is stronger God, you are higher than any other Our God is healer, awesome in power Our God, our God Now may God pour out his Holy Spirit upon you May God send angels to give you his message May God make miracles happen in your life To change you and change this world And may the Lord bless you in every way And in every place that you might be

True servants of God Go in his peace and his strength this day and always Amen G■m  
Hai G■m emi ■ No Gähí G■m ■■■■ We're 160 We're 160 Can Ke', self u Garg we're  
160 G där Over Brief E a Gkom■■■■ Marowned Toto B Nick episode S flashes Us Let's  
Kim ■■■ Yu Toto■