

Glory Bound

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- [0 : 0 0] Good morning. This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it. If any of the kids want to come up and sing, they're welcome to join us. This is the day that the Lord has made.
- Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.
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- If you'd like to help out with that, there's a ministry opportunity for you for that. I think that covers our announcements this morning.
- [1 : 3 3] Let's turn to the Lord in prayer, shall we? Dear God, we thank you for this day and we pray that your blessings would be upon us. That you'd touch us and be with us and help us to experience the wonder of God this morning.
- For it's in Jesus' holy name we pray. Amen. The Lord be with you. And also with you. Take a moment if you will and greet your neighbor with the peace of the spirit. Amen. I'd like to invite any of the kids who'd like to come up and join me now to come on down.
- Got any kids who want to come up? Here comes one. Good morning.
- How are you this morning? That's good. You know what this is? It is. It's chocolate. And you know where I got this from? I got this in a restaurant. Both of these.
- I went out to dinner. And at the end of the dinner they brought me candy. How cool is that? So the last thing in my mouth when I ate dinner was chocolate.
- [2 : 4 8] How sweet, right? Because the best sometimes comes last. And the best that we have to look for is God plans for us to have eternal life and a wonderful world where we're going to have all kinds of great things and no problems.
- That's what God plans for us for the future. Okay? So the best sometimes comes at the end. And that's the way God has it planned. Right? What are you thankful for this morning? You want to raise your hand and share something?
- My mom and dad. My dad. All right. Lord, we are thankful for our parents and all the blessings they give to us. And we thank you for you and the glory you promised us. Be with us now and always as we pray in Jesus' name.
- Amen. Okay. You guys can go out to church school. All the kids are welcome to go out to church school now if they'd like to. This morning for a special mission offering, we have a special mission called the Angel Gowns.
- And this is kind of a touching ministry where they help people who have had a very significant loss. This video will share with you about what we're taking up our offering for. The Datton and Bebs.
- [3 : 5 4] Sparkles and Lace. I loved everything about it. The smallest details from one of the biggest and most special days in a woman's life.
- When I got my gown, I thought it was absolutely gorgeous. But Nicole Mock's wedding dress, like those of so many other brides, hung in her closet for years after her big day.

Until she saw a Facebook post last spring. A friend of a friend of a friend. And it turned out to go in the right hand. With her mother and husband's blessing, Nicole decided she would donate her gown to Missy Ray.

But you actually wouldn't believe how much material is actually in a wedding dress. Missy's growing collection of wedding dresses actually started... We take photos of every wedding dress that we receive. ...when she was trying to get rid of her own.

She's divorced, has no kids, and therefore had no use for an old dress. But Missy saw that same Facebook post about an organization in Texas with a heartbreaking but beautiful mission.

[5 : 08] As soon as I heard about Angel Gowns, I was like, that's it. That's what I need to do. Soon after, Angel Gowns of Western New York was born.

A lot of the wedding dresses are very intricate. They have beading and sequins and beautiful appliques on them. And we utilize every part of the wedding dress.

Missy and her 50 volunteers take apart the bodices, cut off the sleeves, and gently tear out the lining. And carefully craft tiny outfits as delicate and beautiful as the babies who will wear them.

Parents will use them sometimes for final photos. They will bury them in them. Some parents choose to keep them as a memento as well. There are miniature gowns, tiny suits, even angel wraps, little envelopes of fabric for babies that are too small and too fragile for regular clothing.

All include the smallest details borrowed from a happier time and shared with parents on their darkest of days. A father received an Angel Gown for his daughter that passed his baby.

[6 : 30] And he said very emotionally that this is the only wedding dress his daughter will ever wear. Everyone deserves something special, no matter if you were here for a second or for a hundred years.

You know. Our purpose, my purpose is to provide this liver of comfort to these families. Helping to make these tiny babies look like the angels they are.

Good morning. This morning's scripture is Romans chapter 8 verses 18 through 25.

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in the hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

[7 : 42] We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

For in this hope we are saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what he already has? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.

This is the word of the Lord. Thanks be to God. Pastor Sherry, you know, somebody said to me, all the churches were closed in western New York.

I said, you know, there's a lot more churches in schools. There's about 50 or 60 churches closed. There's about a thousand of them. So most of them are open, but we're glad to have you here and glad to see that you got here safely.

You know, in general, my life is what I see as being pretty good. There's some joys I have in it and a lot of things that I look at and see where God has blessed my life.

[8 : 53] But that doesn't mean that I don't have struggles and pains and sufferings and disappointments and discouragements just like everyone else has. We go through the difficulties of life and when we face them, they hurt.

Probably this week I'm going to be putting my dog down. I've had my dog for 14 years, but he's right now in pain and he's struggling just to get around and I don't want to wait until he's extremely suffering.

It's time. But it's not something that when you go through something like that, it's easy. Now this is just a dog. I've done this with both of my parents and my wife's parents.

We go through pain and hurt and struggle along with the blessings of life. You know, life is like a commercial. We get a glimpse of heaven and a glimpse of hell.

The best of life is like just a taste of what glory will be like and the worst of life is just a foreshadowing of what hell will be like.

[9 : 55] See, our world is not perfect. It was created good, but when sin entered into the world, it became a broken world. And that's why in this passage, it talks about the creation and the world around us and it says words like suffering and frustration, bondage, decay, groaning, pains.

And it's not just the people that have problems. The whole world, all of creation itself, is messed up. Verse 20 of this passage says, For the creation was not subjected to frustration by its own choice, but by the will of the one that subjected it.

Verse 22, it says, We know that the whole creation has been groaning us in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. The groans and struggles and difficulties of creation, we see it in life around us.

Storms and disasters and eruptions and tumors in people and diseases and sickness and hurt and war and pain. Sin has brought brokenness.

And it brings brokenness to our world. It brings brokenness to our lives. And we bring sin into the world. Last week we looked at chapter 7 of Romans. We've been doing a study, if you haven't been with us, on the book of Romans itself.

[11 : 11] And it says, The very thing that I would do I don't do, and the thing that I would not do, that's what I go and do. Sin in me. I do the wrong thing. I make mistakes.

I break the heart of God. Earlier in our study, in chapter 3, we read this verse, All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. We've all done it.

We've all brought about the brokenness, this decay and bondage it talks about in this passage. And sometimes it even happens when we're trying to do the right thing.

My wife and I, a couple weeks ago, went to see that movie, American Sniper. Has anybody seen this movie? It's a powerful movie. It's not for children, by the way. It's a powerful movie. I won't do a spoiler and give it all away, but one of the earliest scenes is this sniper who has to protect American soldiers from the rooftops, looking down on a little boy who's about to throw a grenade at American troops and struggling with what to do.

And as you go through the story, you find out there's also a sniper on the other side who's doing the exact same thing for his people. We can think we're doing the right thing.

[12 : 29] And we can find out we're wrong. Sometimes we find ourselves in a quandary that no matter what we do, somehow it will feel wrong, even when we're trying to do what's right. Paul, the apostle, wrote the book of Romans.

And so as part of our series, we've also been looking at some of the people that Paul lived with. The very first time we see Paul, he's actually named Saul.

And in this story, he's there at a trial for a man named Stephen. Stephen was a young man, full of enthusiasm for God. And he went out to preach about God's world.

And they received him by rejecting him. It says that while he was preaching, they stopped up their ears and ran screaming at him and they picked up stones and they hurled them at him, crushing his body and his life, smashing him with stone after stone until he died.

And it says that as he was dying, Stephen looked up to heaven and said, Lord, forgive them. They don't understand what they're doing.

[13 : 53] And it finishes by saying that they had given their coats to a man named Saul, who would later be Paul, the man who wrote this book, as he stood there and participated in the murder of Stephen.

I wonder why they took their coats off. At first it was like, why did they take their coats off? And I got thinking about it. If you took a rock like this and you stood close enough to really do damage to a person, you're going to get some blood on you.

They took their coats off so they didn't ruin them. And so that they can throw that rock a little more effort. Paul.

Paul, who wrote this wonderful book about our faith in Jesus Christ, also participated in one of the most gruesome murders of one of the first Christian martyrs.

And he thought he was doing right. He thought he was defending God. He thought he was doing a good thing. And yet he sinned. And sin separates us from God.

[15 : 03] It separates us from the perfection of God and it takes away our eternal life. And the reason for that is very simple. Eternal life is perfect. There's no flaw, there's no sin, there's no pain, there's no hurt, there's nothing but perfection.

And if you take us with our sinful attitudes and the nature we have and the brokenness we have and we put it in that creation, will destroy its perfection.

It's not that God doesn't want to give us eternal life, it's that in our current sinful condition God can't do that. And so people will be separated from eternal life and eternal reward.

Second Thessalonians says it this way, God will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction, shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of His power.

The Bible talks about people that won't make it. Not everybody gets there. Because sin breaks our relationship with God. But there's goodness.

[16 : 17] There's goodness. And that is that grace fixes our relationship with God. what's impossible for us to do, what we couldn't even possibly make up, even if we tried to be as good as we could, we can't take away the brokenness in us, God takes care of.

Verse 28, later in this chapter, it says, we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him and then called according to His purpose. If we love God, if we want to be in relationship with Him, He finds a way to make it work.

To make our brokenness to come together with His perfection. Ephesians says it this way, for it is by grace you've been saved through faith.

This is not from yourselves, it's a gift of God. That's what grace is. Grace is a gift offered to us if we'll accept and receive it. it's not something we earn, it's not something we deserve, it's just something that God does for us through Jesus.

I like this illustration. Next.

[17 : 39] File, please. Some lying, some stealing, and some acts of kindness here and there.

I tried to live a good life. Well, let's see how good. This way.

next. File, please.

Okay, I admit it. I did a lot of bad things. Yes, I see. But I've done good things, too. You know, to offset the bad things. Like, one time, I cheated on a test, but then I cleaned up trash in the park.

Mm-hmm. That should balance out, right? Let's find out. This way.

[18 : 38] That should have balanced out, right? It should have balanced out. Next. File, please. Impressive. Oh, yeah.

I devoted my entire life to make this world a better place. I dug wells in Africa. I donated blood every month. And I ran an orphanage in India. I mean, I just wish I could have done more.

Mm-hmm. And is this your subscription? I only read the articles. I only read the articles.

I only read the articles. Next. My mom goes to church. Was it baptized as a baby? Take American Express, right? Next.

File, please. Whoa. Somebody's been busy. Well, let's get this over with.

[19 : 40] Sorry. I didn't know he was with you. Okay. Step on the scale. Not you.

Him. Him. Hey, wait a minute.

That is totally not fair. That's why it's called grace. Next. Talk about it. I didn't know 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. Looks kind of easy, doesn't it? All we got to do is hook up with this Jesus guy.

And have you noticed, Jesus always looks handsome, healthy, strong, like the kind of guy you want your daughter to marry. Have you ever noticed that? Now, one of the things I noticed about this video is at the end, the people were yelling, it's not fair.

[20 : 47] It's not fair. You know, the truth is, it's not fair. Grace is not fair. Any bit of sin, whether it's a little bit or a lot, will break that perfection in eternity.

So it doesn't matter the quantity of sin, and it doesn't matter if we've done some good stuff. Ultimately, we have to be without sin. And it doesn't seem fair that somehow people get just forgiven, no matter what they've done.

Paul was a murderer. Yet God accepted him. Sometimes we make hard things look too easy.

I was talking to somebody who said that nowadays young people in their mid-20s to early 30s are all stressed out because they haven't gotten their \$100,000 job in their mansion in the suburbs, yet they're not driving a Ferrari like the world promised them.

Because that's what somehow our culture implies. All you've got to do is watch the TV shows. All you've got to do is listen to the stories. Everybody becomes successful overnight. And we're frustrated because we feel we deserve this.

[22 : 03] I do okay in life now, but I've been working full-time for over 40 years. Most of those years, over 60 hours a week. I do my own home repairs.

I've got the pains and the scars to prove what I had to do. Sometimes when we want to accomplish something in life, it isn't easy. It takes a little pain.

And we want everything to be simple and easy. And when we look at grace, we think it's just such a simple and easy thing to happen, but it's not. 2 Corinthians 5, verse 21 says this, What that means is that Jesus, who was perfect, Jesus who had nothing wrong with Him, God, if you will, because Jesus is God, who is perfect, became sinful.

Now that's even hard to get our head around, isn't it? How can God become full of sin? I don't know if you noticed in this video, the only one who wasn't wearing white was Jesus.

Now maybe they were just trying to appeal to Gen Xers by having them in a black t-shirt. I don't know for sure. But Jesus was the one wearing black. Jesus was the one with the sin. Jesus is the one with the brokenness, with the pain.

[23 : 31] It's not easy. It's not fair. He didn't do anything wrong, and yet He gets all the pain, all the hurt, all the brokenness from our sin.

That's what His death on the cross means. Obviously, God can't die. But God lost His perfection. God is no longer what we think.

You know, whenever we see a picture of Jesus, have you ever noticed how handsome He is? Blonde hair, blue eyes, kind of gazing off. But when you read in the Gospels what the risen Jesus looked like, when He showed up after the resurrection and appeared to His disciples, He had wounds in His hands.

He had scars on His back. Tell you the truth, if you saw the risen Jesus, I suspect you might be repulsed at how ugly He would look from the sin and the pain we caused.

It might look easy for us. It doesn't mean it was easy for God. And sometimes we just don't see that.

[24 : 44] We just got a handsome Jesus stepping up on a scale with no problem. But every time He does that, He takes pain and hurt from us. Just like you.

Every time that you forgive someone, every time that you let somebody who's hurt you back into your life, every time you accept somebody who's imperfect, every time you allow your child to be loved by you in spite of the fact that they do stuff that hurts you, every time you say it's alright to someone who's caused pain to you, it takes a little more pain in your life.

That hurts. And that hurt God. And He did it for the same reason we do it, out of love. This dog is hurting and struggling and having a hard time getting in and out of the house or even just walking around or controlling himself.

And we know He can't stay outside in sub-zero temperatures. He doesn't get it. He's a snow dog. What's your problem? I want to live out here. So in the midst of His pain, we drag Him and force Him to go into the house.

And then He smiles at us. Because that's what dogs do. And that's what God does so that we can stay connected to Him.

[26 : 06] This chapter ends with this wonderful verse we often read at funerals. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?

No. In all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I'm convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels or demons, neither present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus, our Lord God, made a way.

So that there is glory waiting for us. Glory waiting for us. And that makes a difference. It might not seem like it because it's after our lives.

What would it matter? It makes a difference right here and now. Most of all, because the purpose of this life is to the next one. We get all confused and think that we're living for this short little piece of life when God is offering all of eternity if we do this the right way.

Sometimes we go through the struggles. That's so that we get the right finish. When I was six years old, my mother sent me to live with my aunt for a week. It was just a week.

[27 : 22] She just was fed up to be here with me. So she sent me down there to New Jersey and my cousin Danny taught me a life lesson about eating food. Danny was six years old as well. And what Danny taught me was this.

When you eat a meal, always eat the stuff you hate the most first. Then you end up with a good taste in your mouth at the end. I have lived by that philosophy all my life.

The philosophy of how to eat by a six-year-old boy. Good idea! You see people who eat the good stuff first and leave the stuff they hate till the end and end up choking it down and then they got that taste in their mouth for the rest of the evening.

Not Danny. He knew how to eat. The truth is, when we have something good to look for, it makes life easier and the new creation is better than this one.

Verse 18 says, I consider that our present sufferings are not even worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The next life is better. I was listening to somebody interviewing Jim Kelly the other day and they said, Jim Kelly is lucky to be alive.

[28 : 34] And you know, in my mind I thought, well, no, actually it's not. Don't misunderstand. The whole process of dying stinks. But he already was going through a lot of that agony anyways. I don't have a real quick hurry to get out of here because I think God has stuff for me to do here.

But I'm believing that the next life is better than this one. So when people say to me, you know, well, it's better than the alternative. My answer is, no, it's not. What's people out when you say that to them, by the way?

But the alternative is glory. The alternative is eternal life. The alternative is a new creation. Verse 24 says, For in this hope we were saved. For in this hope we were saved.

Not only, not only so, but we ourselves, who have been the first fruits of the Spirit, grown inwardly as we wait for our adoption into sunshine, the redemption of our bodies, we're going to be part of God's family in a perfect way.

I don't know if you noticed, it said the redemption of our bodies. We have these people who think that when you die, you become like a fluttering spirit somewhere. I don't know how the in-between all works.

[29 : 46] But the Bible says that we're actually going to live in a new creation. God's going to wipe this broken one out and start new. Brand new beginning. New mountains, new streams. There's even going to be a city there if you like city life.

It says that there's going to be new bodies that we'll have that'll be like angels. That we're going to have no more pain or suffering or crying or death. That thing will be wiped away. It says that there'll be animals there.

There'll be nature and life there. And there'll be food. And we're going to eat food all the time. And I suspect it will only be the good stuff. No broccoli.

Well, that's my thought. Maybe you like broccoli. Then you'll eat all the broccoli. 2 Corinthians chapter 4 says it this way.

Therefore, we don't lose heart. Though outwardly we're wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

[30 : 49] So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. The blessings that come are amazing. Just because we can't see them doesn't mean they're not coming.

Believe it or not, this winter will end. I know, it's unimaginable. It just keeps going and going and going. My daughter said, I've never seen a winter like this.

I said, I have, but I've been living here longer than you. I've seen them. I don't like them. Can you imagine if you never saw anything but this weather? That's all you ever lived in.

Like you were living up in some kind of polar world or something and all you ever saw was ice and snow and misery. The other day, my grandson asked, what's the purpose of winter to my wife?

And she said, what makes you appreciate summer? But imagine if you hadn't seen it and all you had was a promise of spring. That's what God offers us, a promise, a hope.

[31 : 53] And that hope matters. Just because we haven't seen it doesn't mean it won't happen. The promise of glory gives us hope in a broken world. The promise of glory gives us the ability to go through the brokenness and the pain knowing that this isn't the end of it.

And we do carry the pain around with us. In chapter 22 of the book of Acts, Paul talks later about that time when he killed Stephen. He talks about Stephen as being the first martyr and how he was part of that murder.

You imagine every time he picked up a rock like this, he thought about those rocks crushing the skull of Stephen on that day. The hurt and the pain that he had caused.

And he carried that around with him every day of his life. Just as we carry around the pains and the struggles and the hurts and the regrets and all the sufferings that happen in our lives.

But in the midst of the suffering, we have eternity to look forward to. I consider our present suffering are not worth comparing to the glory that will be revealed in us.

[33 : 00] My dog is dying. And that hurts. Whenever somebody has a pet die, they ask me the same question.

Will my pet be in heaven? I know the Bible says there'll be animals in heaven. I don't know about specific animals. But I think dogs have a special, you know, plus.

I mean, after all, you turn their name around and dog spelled backwards is God. It's not like cats. Cat spelled backwards is just tat. Who wants a tat, right?

In fact, you know that cats are not even mentioned in the Bible. 143 animals mentioned in the Bible. Not cats. You cat lovers. That's because cats think they're better than people.

Dogs think we're better than them. They're not very smart that way. But I don't know. I don't even know about cats, but I want to look forward to that hope.

[34 : 01] And that belief that the love that this dog has shown me will be there forever. And hope gets us through. For in this hope, we were saved.

In this hope, we continue to trust and believe that God will be with us no matter what. Isaiah chapter 40 tells us this.

He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. Even teenagers grow tired and weary and young men stumble and fall. But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.

They'll soar on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not grow faint. God renews our strength and gives us a promise that carries us through the hard part.

When I was young, we didn't eat dessert. We were like those people who never saw anything but winter. We ate good food in many ways, but dessert, we just didn't have that in our house.

[35 : 07] Our idea of dessert was we'd take some bread and stuff it in our milk glass and put some sugar in it. And we called it dessert. It wasn't dessert. It wasn't because my mother and father didn't know what dessert was.

It's just they didn't give it to us. But when we went to Grandma's house, Grandma was a great cook. And I've got to tell you something. Even the vegetables tasted better at Grandma's house.

I don't know why, but they did. Everything was good. But then Grandma would start clearing away the dishes and she'd say, keep your fork.

She'd have a fork. Pretend there's a fork here. Keep your fork. And you know what that meant? Desserts, cafe. We're getting dessert.

Desserts? Can you imagine? We never got dessert. And now we're going to get it with the meal. That's what it's like.

[36 : 08] That's what it's like. It looks like winter will never end. But I'm going to promise you, spring is coming. And this stuff will melt away.

This time of year, it seems like the nights go on forever. But every day, the sun comes up and brings us light. Sometimes it looks like Good Friday in life.

Only brokenness and darkness and pain around us. We know. We know as people of faith that Easter's always coming. Amen? And you might have to eat broccoli, but save your fork because God's still got dessert coming for your life.

The best is yet to come. The best is yet to come. Save your soul. Eternity's coming. God is coming and we want to find ourselves on the right side of judgment.

Prince Corinthians chapter 15 says this, I declare to you, brothers and sisters, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Listen, I tell you a mystery.

[37 : 26] We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed in a flash, a twinkle in the eye, at the last trumpet. For the triumph trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will all be changed.

For the perishable must be clothed itself with imperishable and the mortal with immortality. When the perishable has been clothed with imperishable, the mortal with immortality, then the saying that is written will come true, death has been swallowed up in victory.

There is no victory for those who are in Christ by sin. God will bring the victory. It's coming and we want to be on the right side of judgment.

I know that day we will see the King of Glory coming from the clouds to redeem the world and we want to be redeemed. How do we get there? Well, it's a gift.

And a gift you have to receive. You have to receive. And this is the part that we don't like. God actually wants us to ask for it. We don't like to do that because that makes us owe Him something, but God wants us to actually ask for it.

[38 : 36] And we do that when we pray and confess that we need Him. So shall we do that together? Dear God in heaven, I have sinned.

I've broken your laws. I've broken this world. I've broken my world and the lives around me.

Forgive me, Lord. Bless me to be what you want me to be. Take away my sin. Take away my sin.

Not because you deserve it. Not because you deserve it. Or I deserve it. Or I deserve it. It's because you love me. Because you love me. And I love you.

And I love you. Forgive me, Lord. Forgive me, Lord. In Jesus' name. In Jesus' name. Amen. Forgive me, Lord. Jesus said all we have to do is confess our sins and turn.

[39 : 34] That's the hard part, isn't it? Turn and change our lives to be what He wants it to be. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven. In the name of Jesus Christ, your sins are forgiven.

Glory to God. Amen. Amen. Amen. And He invites us to His table. Our God invites us to come and have communion with Him and with each other.

everyone is welcome. Everyone is welcome at the table. You don't need to be a member of this church. It can be the first time you've ever walked through the door. It doesn't matter.

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

God desires to share with you just a little bit of what eternity is going to be like. God desires to enter into your heart and into your life.

[40 : 41] So come. Worship God. You're welcome at the table this morning. The Lord be with you. And also with you.

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

Before the mountains were brought forth or you had formed the earth, from everlasting to everlasting, you alone are God. You created light out of darkness and brought forth life on the earth.

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When we turned away and our love failed, your love remained steadfast.

You delivered us from captivity, made covenant to be our sovereign God and spoke to us through your prophets. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

[41 : 53] 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, in whom you have revealed yourself, our light and our salvation.

In his baptism and in table fellowship, he took his place with sinners. 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.

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 gave thanks to you. He broke the bread. He gave it to his disciples, saying, Take.

[43 : 13] Eat. This is my body, which is given to you. Do this in remembrance of you.

And when the supper was over, he took the cup, and he gave you thanks and praise, and he 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, 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.

[44 : 37] That we may be for the world, the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood, by your spirit. Make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world.

Until Christ comes in final victory. And we feast, at his heavenly banquet. Through your son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, and your holy church, all honor and glory are yours.

Almighty Father, now and forever. Amen. Shall we pray together, 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.

[45 : 39] For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen. You know, every morning I have to go get my newspaper, out across the street.

Across the street. Did I mention that? Right? And I walk out in that cold weather. Now there's two ways you can do that. This is how some people do it. Stinking winter. I hate this weather. This is terrible.

This is awful. When is it going to be over? Mystery, mystery. This is the way I do it. One less day of winter, one day closer to spring. One less day of winter, one day closer to spring.

You decide how to live life. You decide how to live life. You can live in the misery, and the pain, and the struggle, and dwell on it. Or you can live in the promise that God has made you.

That glory is waiting. And glory is going to be wonderful. Live in it, love in it, and let God help you to get through this life with joy. Go in his peace.

[46 : 36] Amen.