

# Envy

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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. Any kids want to sing, they're welcome to come 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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- Good morning. Welcome to Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. I'm Kathleen, affiliated with Connectional Ministries. The congregation, pastors, and staff are thrilled to have you here this morning.
- If you've never visited our sanctuary before, be sure and pick up a welcome bag. And also, fill out a friendship card. We'd like to know about you and what your interests are.
- [ 1 : 2 1 ]     We hope you come again and visit us, and God bless. And we are glad to have you here at church. There are two opportunities going around on our clipboards for ministry. One is to help with a hot dog sale, a mission trip, and to help the teenagers in their mission trip efforts.
- There's also going to be a chicken barbecue on June 6th, and they're going to be selling tickets for that after service as well. The second one is a little strange.
- There was supposed to be a surprise party to celebrate my 25 years here. Well, it's not a surprise, because I kept scheduling things on that date until somebody finally told me, Hey, guys, stop it.
- So I know about it, just so you know. Now I know. It's going to happen. So that's about that party. I also wanted to mention to you real quickly that tonight in our Niagara Falls Church, there's going to be a praise concert, including our gathering band will be there to play.
- And several other enjoyable ways to praise God through music. So that will start at 630 tonight at our Niagara Falls Church. Shall we turn to the Lord in prayer? Dear God, we thank you for this day, and we pray your blessings upon us, that you just fill this place with your wonder, with your power, with your Holy Spirit.
- [ 2 : 3 3 ]     For we ask this all in Jesus' holy name. Amen. And now, if you're able, I'm going to invite you to stand as we're going to sing together, Leaning on the Everlasting Arm. What a fellowship, what a joy divine, Leaning on the everlasting arm.
- What a blessedness, what a peace is mine, Leaning on the everlasting arm. Cause we're leaning, leaning, Safe and secure from all alarms.
- Leaning, leaning, Leaning on the everlasting arm. Oh, how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way.
- Leaning on the everlasting arm. Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day. Leaning on the everlasting arm.
- We're leaning, leaning, We're leaning, leaning, We're leaning, leaning, Safe and secure from all alarms. Leaning, leaning, Leaning, leaning on the everlasting arm.

- [ 4 : 06 ] What have I to dread? What have I to fear? Leaning on the everlasting arm. I have blessed peace with my Lord so near.
- Leaning on the everlasting arm. We're leaning, leaning, Safe and secure from all alarms.
- Leaning, leaning, Leaning on the everlasting arm. You know what I really love is you go like this and you go like that, but then you kind of sort of do this at the end.
- Trying to find that balance there. The Lord be with you. Also with you. Take a moment, if you will, and greet your neighbor with the peace of the spirit. I'd like to invite the kids to come up and join me.
- If the kids want to come on, come. Come on. Here comes some. Come on. How are you guys doing this morning?
- [ 5 : 36 ] I got two things. Which one do you think is more important? This picture or this brick? It looks like glass, doesn't it?
- Yeah. You think one's more important than the other? No, not really, because we need them both in life, don't we? Yeah. That's right. We use this for special things. We use this to hold everything up.
- You know, they're both made from dirt. Did you know that? They dug dirt out of the ground and they baked this one into a brick and they baked this one into a pitcher.
- And did you know that people are all made from dirt? Dirt? We dig. Yeah, that's where we'll find dirt. But we're made from dirt. God made us from dirt. And actually, if you took all the water out of us, there'd just be a little bit of dirt left.
- That's what it would be. There's worms inside the dirt. There are, yes. But not inside of us. That wouldn't be good, right?
- [ 6 : 34 ] No. No. But you see, what God does is God shapes us and makes us into something special. Even though we just come from dirt and that's what we really are, it's because we've got God's spirit in us that gives us a soul and helps us to be a lot more than just dirt.
- Okay? What are you guys thankful for? You want to share something? Raise your hand. Friends and family. Our friends. My mom and dad.
- My mom and dad. Let's pray, shall we? Lord, we thank you for our parents, our friends, our family, the good things in life. And we thank you that you made us to be more than just dirt, something special.
- Bless us now and always. In Jesus' name, amen. Okay, you guys can all go out to church school. All the kids are welcome to go out to church school now. Amen. Good morning.
- Good morning. Good morning. Good morning. Our youth have a thankful moment for you this morning from our confirmands. This is about Confirmation Sunday, and it comes from one of our confirmands, Corey Margarucci.
- [ 7 : 48 ] Hello. My name is Corey Margarucci, and I am thankful for my church, Pendleton Center United Methodist Church. My church is awesome because there are many opportunities for youth like me to learn and be with God.
- For instance, last week we had our 30-hour famine for us where we raised money for Nicaragua by not eating for 30 whole hours while playing games and learning what it's like for the people there who live in poverty.
- Also, every Wednesday we have youth group at the church, which allows us to learn about and come closer to God. While we are at youth group, we are also involved in mission projects around the church.
- My church is also where my Boy Scout troop meets. Besides giving our troop a home, the church lets us have space in the attic and the garage in back to store our gear.

Every Thursday, we get to use the gym and fellowship hall for our meetings. During the meetings, we work to earn merit badges and perform community service. Our troop tries to give back to our church by setting up or helping with many fish fries, rummage sales, and special events that are important to our church.

[ 8 : 57 ] Finally, Pendleton Center United Methodist Church has helped my family become closer. Many of the things we do together as a family are when we are helping out at the church.

Joining in missions here allows us to work together for God and for others. It allows us to feel good in ourselves because we help those in need. And it means we can make great memories by helping others that we can share and remember as a family.

I am thankful that Pendleton Center United Methodist Church is my family's church home. It comes from Corey Margarucci and I know is the sentiment of our confirmands this year.

What a blessing to be able to share in that. And you'll find in your bulletin a special envelope for the youth mission trip if you would prayerfully consider helping them out to continue in mission work.

Our confirmands move on and become part of our youth group and they'll continue to work in missions and all kinds of things to serve our world as they learn and grow.

[ 10 : 00 ] As we bring our tithes and offerings before the Lord, let's remember it is an act of worship, letting God know how much we are grateful for the blessings God has poured out into our lives.

Amen? Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

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

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. I'm gonna leave this world behind me Gold where the devil cannot find me I'm going higher Higher Stepping on the clouds The old best moon The stars and the planets I'm gonna walk I'm gonna walk Red okay Red okay Gives a signal I'm gonna leave Forever to stay Forever to stay Stepping on the clouds We'll see Jesus Christ Meet Him in the air Stepping on the clouds He will greet us All the joy together We will share I'm gonna leave this world behind me Gold where the devil cannot find me I'm going higher

[ 11 : 50 ] Higher Stepping on the clouds Stepping on the clouds We'll see Jesus Christ Meet Him in the air Stepping on the clouds He will greet us All the joy together We will share I'm gonna leave this world behind me Gold where the devil cannot find me I'm going higher Higher Stepping on the clouds Stepping on the clouds I'm going higher Higher Stepping on the clouds Stepping on the clouds To go home To go home To go home To go home To go home To go home To go home To go home To go home Stepping on the clouds Amen.

Amen. Dear Heavenly Father, we do give you thanks and praise for this day and for the opportunity to gather together and worship you.

We pray that your Holy Spirit be among us, fill us, and work in us and through us, that our praise would be glorious to you. We thank you for the opportunity to give to the work of your hands.

Father God, bless this offering. Give us wisdom to know how to best use it for the furtherance of your kingdom. Bless especially the offering for the mission trip, Lord God, that the youth would be able to continue to grow in you, even as they serve others and draw others to you.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Please be seated. And at this time, I think, we have some baptisms happening. Wow.



- [ 19 : 13 ] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Daniel, you desire to be baptized. You accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. I say, yeah. Daniel, Emilio Rodriguez, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.
- Amen. Bridget Elaine Hersey. Bridget, do you accept Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?
- Yes. Do you wish to be baptized? Yes. Bridget Elaine Hersey, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
- Amen. Thank you. These are our newest members into the body of Christ.
- [ 20 : 30 ] We will be receiving them in confirmation in our next service as well. But you get to experience something very few Methodist churches do, the joy of this baptism. Amen.
- Don't you feel like singing? What a blessing. What a blessing. That is, to witness so many young people making a decision for Christ and giving their hearts to the Lord and being baptized in the Lord.
- It's just an amazing and a wonderful thing. And I'm rejoicing. You want to rejoice with the kids? Amen? Amen. Amen. And rejoicing in the Lord and all God has poured out into our lives.
- What a blessing and a joy that is. And it's a joy for all of us to share with our confirmands. If you're not staying for the service later, where the confirmands are all going to be, you know, be making their confirmation and their commitments to Christ and walking on with the Lord, please be in prayer today.
- Please be in prayer for them and for their families. And we do have some concerns as well. We want to lift up for this morning Don Elman, who usually comes to our 815, is going to be having surgery on Thursday.
- [ 21 : 48 ] And Judy Albert, who's also usually 815, her mom passed away this week. And so we need to keep that family in our prayer. And Marge and Jim Riggs' son, Gary, died this week.
- And she also is usually an 815 person, but she's been in the church a long time. And for Gary, there isn't a service planned at this time.
- So please just keep Marge and her family in our prayers. With these concerns and all of the joys that are in our hearts, and those in your hearts as well, let's turn to the Lord in prayer. Heavenly Father, we thank you and praise you.
- We are in awe of your awesome power and glory that you are the great God of all creation and you seek to have fellowship with us.
- You draw us to yourself so that we can be saved. Lord God, we are so humbled that you would seek us out.
- [ 23 : 03 ] That before we even know that we are in need of a Savior, before we even know we are in need of a God, you are drawing us to yourself, showing forth your wonders wherever we look.
- And God, it is a wonder when even one comes to salvation in you. And we are having so many today to make a decision for you.
- Help us to deepen our commitment to you, our love and our service to you, Lord. Father, we thank you that we can come before you and pray for all those who are sick, those who are infirm and in need of healing.
- We pray that you will give wisdom to their caregivers and that you will touch them, that they would be whole from the top of their heads to the soles of their feet. Lord, we pray for those who are grieving the loss of loved ones.

Even in cases where it is more of a blessing, it's still hard. It's still hard, Lord. Bring comfort to those who are here.

[ 24 : 22 ] Bring comfort to those who are missing their loved ones. Fill their hearts with your peace. Give us all compassion, Lord, for all of the people who don't know you, for all of those who don't know how to be in this world in a way that is godly, that is good, that is pure and holy.

Help us to be a light in a dark place. Be with us. Father, we pray for all of those who are sharing your good news all over the world.

Give them strength. Give them endurance. Give them the right words. Give them a winsome countenance. And Lord, we pray especially for those who are under persecution, that you would make them like Stephen, that they see only your glory in the midst of their trials, that their peace and the presence of the Holy Spirit in them and around them and working through them would be a witness to all, that many would be drawn to you, Lord, and saved.

Now, Father, as we hear your word, we pray that it would transform us and wash over us and strengthen us and teach us. We pray that you would bless Pastor Tom and anoint him to deliver the message you've given him for our nurture and for our transformation.

Let it be a blessing to us. And Lord God, make all of our worship to be a blessing to you this day. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

[ 26 : 13 ] Shall we hear from the word? Thank you.

Good morning. The reading today is from James chapter 3, verse 1 through 6 and 13 through 18.

Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. We all stumble in many ways. If anyone is never at fault in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to keep his whole body in check.

When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal, or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go.

Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boats. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body.

[ 27 : 49 ] It corrupts the whole person, sets the whole course of his life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell. Who is wise in understanding among you?

Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth.

Such wisdom does not come down from heaven, but is earthly, unspiritual, of the devil. For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure, then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness. This is the word of God. Thanks be to God. Thank you, Elizabeth. In the book of Genesis, in chapter 2, we read, The Lord God formed people from the dust of the ground, breathed into their nostrils and the breath of life, and they became living beings.

[ 29 : 07 ] God made us out of the dirt and said when he looked at us that we were very good, full of potential and possibilities and all the good things that can be.

When our little babies are born, that's what they're like. A life unwritten. We treasure them and we treasure them and we wonder what it'll be, this life that God has made for them.

We bring them into the church and we have them baptized. We hope that someday will come a day like today and they'll say, I want Jesus to be my Lord.

And they confirm the commitment. And they confirm the commitment. Confirmation in some people's minds is a graduation. We've gotten far enough now that we can graduate into being an adult, which is true and the church sees them that way.

But it's much more than that. I've gone to a lot of graduations over the years as a pastor. And I know that when people get up to speak, usually there's one that will say something like, you can be anything you dream of.

[ 30 : 15 ] Just put a goal in your heart and you can accomplish the dreams that you dream. You can make anything happen. Everything is possible. And I want to stand up and yell, no, it's not.

No, it's not. You're going to run into reality somewhere. You're going to find out you won't have the opportunities everybody has. You're not physically made like everyone else.

You don't have the money that some people have. Some of you aren't motivated. Maybe your family won't support you like others do. You might not even be smart enough.

It's hard. Reality, isn't it? When I was in kindergarten through third grade, I discovered very quickly that I was in the bottom fifth of my class.

80% of the kids in the class were smarter than me. It bugged me. I didn't like that. Nobody wants to be in the bottom fifth of the class. I wanted to be one of the smart ones.

[ 31 : 18 ] But I wasn't. What we want isn't necessarily what will happen. We've been preaching through the book of James and talking about the seven deadly sins.

And we're going to talk about the sin of envy today. We're also looking at Gilligan's Island in case you're with us for the first time. I wonder why we have a hut in the corner of our church.

Ginger or Marianne? Ginger or Marianne? When I was growing up, that was one of the questions. Which is the one you would want to date if you could date one of them? Ginger or Marianne? Envy.

Wanting to be somebody that we're not. Can destroy relationships. Can destroy other people. And eventually, destroy us.

In verse 14 of this passage, Elizabeth read for us, If you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, don't boast about it or deny the truth. Such wisdom doesn't come down from heaven, but is earthly, unspiritual.

[ 32 : 23 ] In fact, it's demonic. Bitter envy. Selfish ambition. Boasting about what's wrong. James tells us it's actually the work of demons.

We don't talk a lot about demons in our culture today, but what demons are is the fallen angels, those who followed Satan in rebellion against God. And their destruction is talked about in the book of Revelation when they'll be cast into a lake of fire, and their goal is to destroy as many of us as they can along the way.

And one of the ways they do it is by creating in us a dissatisfaction with our lives to where we feel this bitter envy. We end up destroying everything.

Competition. Fights. Struggles. Arguments. Wars. That's why they call it a deadly sin. It can literally lead to killing. And why?

Because we feel injured. We feel life isn't fair. We feel somehow we got cheated. It's an injustice. So we lash out. I got to fourth grade and we went to a different school.

[ 33 : 34 ] It was the same school system, but all of a sudden there were a bunch of kids we'd never seen before. Lots and lots of kids that weren't in our school or at least in our class. We didn't know them very well. And one thing I knew is I was not necessarily the smartest kid in my class, but I was one of the strongest.

So one day one of these kids I didn't know started getting in an argument with me and we ended up deciding we were going to have a fight out on the school ground to decide who's, you know, who's right here.

So we got out on the school ground and I was sure of myself because I was one of the strongest kids in my class. All of a sudden we started fighting. Bam, bam, bam. He hit me in the face three times.

I went down like a rock. Bloody nose. I was so embarrassed. Everybody's laughing at me. See, I was a classic loser in every sense. See, in my class, when you fought, that meant that you were going to wrestle and whoever pinned the other person down won.

You know, kind of like that uncle thing, not actually like smacking people in the face until they bleed. Where'd this kid come from? From a very different world than mine.

[ 34 : 38 ] So now I was not only one of the least intelligent people in my class, and I was also a defeated loser.

It's hard. We don't want to have what we have, and we don't appreciate what we have. We want what somebody else has, and it creates a struggle in us. And Marianne wanted to be ginger.

Now you might say, no, that's not true. I'm just making it up. But I have proof. Watch. She's wonderful. I'd give anything to be like Ginger Graham. A real movie star.

Then fill a day for you To make you my own papa. Boo, boo, ba, boo.

Ooh. I want to be loved by you, by you, and nobody else but you. I want to be loved by you alone.

[ 35 : 41 ] Boo, boo, ba, doo. Ooh. Oh, wonderful. She's finished. Okay, Gilligan, okay. Oh, you're wonderful.

You're wonderful, Ginger. Hey, Marianne. Hey, Marianne. Marianne, are you all right? Marianne. Hey, Marianne. Are you okay, Marianne?

I'm fine. But why did you call me Marianne? Why did I call you Marianne? Yes. You're not Marianne? Gilligan. Are you feeling all right?

Yeah, I'm fine. Don't you recognize me? I'm Ginger. You're Ginger? Of course I'm Ginger. That should be an interesting episode.

Yes. You see, we all even get to the point where we delude ourselves into thinking we can be what we really are not. And in the frustration, we find ourselves with bitterness and pain and hurtful feelings.

[ 36 : 43 ] In verse 5 and 6, it talks about the tongue. And it says, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest fire is set on fire by a small spark.

The tongue also is a fire. A world of evil among the parts of the body. Because we say things that are hurtful. Hurtful. Painful. When we feel somehow we've been diminished.

We lash out. Sticks and stones will break my bones. But words will hurt me for the rest of my life. I've often discovered that most people that bully someone feel that they're being bullied in life.

That's part of the reason why they do this. Because they're feeling somehow that they're the ones. And don't even realize what they're doing themselves. When I got to 7th grade, I had this girl who was a friend of mine who decided that we should be more than friends.



She wanted to be my girlfriend. Well, I didn't mind being friends with her, but all my friends told me that she wasn't good enough for me. She wasn't popular enough. She wasn't attractive enough. She just was kind of a plain girl.

[ 37 : 52 ] And even though I thought about it, I said, no, no, we're not going to do that. You're not pretty enough. You're not good enough. For a loser like me, right?

You know what's amazing? Between 7th and 8th grade, girls change a lot. A real lot. When she came back from summer vacation, she was one of the prettiest girls in our class.

I said, hey, are we going to go out? She said, no, I'm going out with Bobby, the most popular boy in class. Why would I go out with a loser like you? See, the problem is we strike out because we're feeling pain.

We're feeling hurt. And that bitter envy and that selfish ambition starts to gnaw at us. All this pain, I wonder if I'll ever find my way.

I wonder if my life could really change at all. See, we just want to feel good about ourselves, amen? We want to feel okay.

[ 39 : 00 ] We just want somebody to say, we're not that bad after all. James starts this chapter out by saying, most of you shouldn't be teachers. Now, I know he goes on to explain why there's a greater responsibility for teachers and such and such, but what a way to start out.

You probably won't be able to make it at this. You're really not up to it. Have you ever had somebody tell you you're not good enough to do something? It kind of bugs you, and it either causes you to push harder and sometimes not to any good value, or to just quit and give up.

He also says that we all stumble in many ways. None of us really are perfect. Only Jesus was.

And it's hard. Because there's things about us that just won't measure up to our expectations of ourselves or even the expectations of people in our lives.

But everyone has potential from God. Everyone has the possibility of being what God created them to be. And becomes when we want to be someone else instead of what God made us to be.

[ 40 : 16 ] And it doesn't usually work out very well. Marianne wanted to be ginger. She even came under the delusion that she was ginger.

But she wasn't ginger. Yes, I know you say ginger. I want to be kissed by you.

By you. And nobody else but you. I want to be kissed by you. Alone.

What's the matter with me? Maybe if I just dance it, I'll be all right. Hey.

Here. Here. Here. Here. Here. You all right? Here. Come on. Here. Here. Here. Watch the steps. Are you all right, ginger?

[ 41 : 29 ] Gilligan. I'm not ginger. I'm Marianne. Ah. I'm not ginger. I'm Marianne.

You see, the healing comes when we start to realize who we really are. The person that God made us to be. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we read these words from Paul where he says, Each one has been given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

All of these are one work of the same Spirit. And he gives up to each one just as God determines. God determines what we should be right from the very beginning.

From the same dirt, God made some to be like this pitcher. And God made others to be like this brick.

The problem is not with the dirt. And the problem isn't even with the purpose. Because without the pitcher, we'd have nothing beautiful. Without the brick, we'd have nothing to hold the pitcher.

[ 42 : 33 ] But we put the pitcher in our culture up on the table. And we throw the brick on the floor. When to God, both are sacred. Both are a part of the wonderful creation God made.

Each with their own particular design. And when we start living towards what God intends, then we start to see our lives turn in a different way. In the Buffalo Evening News this morning, there was a picture of snow.

Did you see that? I mean, I'm talking snow. There was one poor guy out there shoveled all by himself. You might remember this picture. Snow everywhere. Now you look out there.

It doesn't even imagine. It's hard to believe it's the same place. All around, hope is springing up from this old ground. Out of chaos, life is being found in you.

We feel okay. We start to feel alright about ourselves. Only through God. When we let the Holy Spirit start speaking to us and guiding us into what we were created and meant to be.

[ 43 : 39 ] And start living for what God intended. Then we get a healthy confidence. Not a confidence built on what other people say. But a confidence of knowing that we have become and we're doing what God wants in our lives.

Verse 18, it says, Peacemakers. They sow in peace and reap a harvest of righteousness. The Holy Spirit is peace. You ever see a symbol for peace?

It's a dove. Which is the symbol of the Holy Spirit. It's the peace within us. And if we seek it, we will find it. Philippians chapter 4. Probably one of the most wonderful chapters in the Bible says, Don't be anxious about anything.

Don't you just love that? Just don't be anxious about anything. But in everything, by prayer, petition, with thanksgiving, present your request to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Jesus Christ.

God will give us peace. God will give us a sense of feeling and knowing that we are what we were meant to be. Not what anybody else tells us we are.

[ 44 : 46 ] We can practice bitter envy and selfish ambition. We can practice bitterly. Or a positive desire to be something that God wants us to be.

You put into your life what you'll get at. And get out what you'll put in. When I turned about 14, I started reading books.

Partly because I started to experience God in my life. I could feel his spirit in my heart. So I read the Bible. I also read a book called The Power of Positive Thinking by a guy named Norman Vincent Peale.

He was a Methodist pastor. It's an old book. It's still in print because it's such a good book. It's really not all that complicated. What he simply says is you can look at life and see all the positives, all the possibilities, all the good things that are happening in your life.

Or you can look at all the misery and all the pain and all the hurt and all the defeat. It's not that that will make all your problems go away. But the difference is you won't create any extra ones.

[ 45 : 49 ] Do you follow? You start putting positives in. You start looking at the good things of life. You start looking at what God can do and the joys and wonders of life.

And you'll see more of that come around your way. You treat people with a blessing. And you'll have more of a blessing in return. If you act angry and bitter and selfish, what do you think you're going to get in return?

So Norman tells us we need to put a positive look at life. Live into the life that you want to be. When I was a wrestler in high school, I learned something real quickly.

And that was wherever you push somebody's head, it's the way they go. See? He doesn't have much choice. He goes whatever way his head goes.

Okay, go sit down. The truth is, whatever way your head goes is the way your life will go. Get your head straightened out. And you get your life straightened out.

[ 46 : 56 ] We think it's about all the conditions around us, all the exterior things, when really 90% of it is right here. Learning. Learning how to live into what God wants us to be.

In this passage, it says that small things can change a lot. The rudder on a boat moves the whole boat. It says that in your body, the tongue is a little thing.

But imagine all the trouble and problems that tongue could create. Or all the blessings and praise it could offer up. Begin with small changes.

Little by little. And eventually, the small changes will have a big impact. It's called leverage. Leverage.

Now, this might be surprising to you, but after finding out that I wasn't very smart, after finding out that I couldn't win a fight, after being rejected by the girls and everything else, I didn't feel very confident.

[ 48 : 04 ] I was what you would have called a shy, young person. I tended to basically just keep to myself in the corner, and I had a couple of friends at the most, and I really wasn't very outgoing.

Well, I made a decision when I was about 14 that that had to change. And all I did was decide to say hello. Have you ever said hello to strangers? I started saying hello to everybody I saw.

Hey, how you doing? Hello. Hi, how are you? Hello. Hey, hi. How are you doing? Hello. How are you doing? Hi. You know what's amazing? You say hello to people. Hello. People smile.

They smile back at you. You get a whole different attitude, a whole different sense of things. I still do it today. I see people I don't even know, and I catch their eye, they catch mine, and I say, hey, hi, how you doing?

They smile, they say, oh, hi. And they went, what the heck was that? Who's this crazy kid going around saying hello to everybody? It's only one word.

[ 49 : 04 ] But it changed the world around me. Not just me, but the people around me. Small changes can leverage into large things so that we can change our environment.

The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure, than peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. If we put good things, blessings into the world, it comes back to us.

What goes around comes around. If we put more joy, more positives out there, more come back our way. But when we try to live towards the brokenness, and we try to live towards somebody else's goal, somebody else's dream, somebody else's gift, we end up with bitter envy, unfulfilled, unfruitful, and frustrating.

When I was young, it was a big question. Who would you want to date? Marianne or Ginger? Well, you know, here's the answer.

Everybody wanted to date Ginger, but everybody wanted to marry Marianne. Absolutely. Given a choice, we'd go on a date with Ginger, and then we'd ditch her, and we'd get married to Marianne.

[ 50 : 24 ] That's the truth. Because somewhere along the line, we saw something that Marianne wasn't seeing in herself. We can look at our lives as being the glass half empty or the glass half full.

It might not sound like a big difference, but it makes a big difference. It changes our sense of who we are, and what we are, and what we've accomplished. It can give us that healthy confidence that comes through the Holy Spirit.

It doesn't mean all the troubles go away. I still had girlfriends break up with me in high school. I got benched from the football team.

I never got a lead part in the school dramas. Heck, I didn't even get a lead part in the play at church. I was arrested.

I worked crummy jobs. I was poor for a lot of years. I didn't get the promotions.

[ 51 : 31 ] I'd cry for them. I'd even score well and work hard, but somehow somebody else would get them. It was their life, not mine. My parents died.

I have struggles in my life I don't tell you about because I'm still wrestling with them, and they're still hard. But today, that little baby that my wife held and baptized, my grandson will be confirmed in the faith of God.

I can look at all the brokenness. I can look at all the pain. I can look at all the failure. Or I can look at the joys, the possibilities, the success, the dreams, the good things that happen, and see where God is blessing my life.

And in many ways, my life is blessed. And so is yours. If we just look at it and look for it. Sometimes the struggle does make us stronger, and we are on the right path, and God just wants to make us into what we need to be to get through.

Sometimes the struggle is simply God closing a door and saying, today isn't the day for you to be doing this. I'm sorry, but you're a brick. You are not a pitcher. Or, you're a pitcher, not a brick.

[ 52 : 53 ] It can go either way. Both belong on the altar, though. John Maxwell called it failing forward. Where is God leading you?

How can you take your failures and turn them into blessings, focusing on your own gifts, letting God, God, give you a life of happiness, and what he defines as success, not what other people around you do.

1 Corinthians chapter 12 again says this, God has arranged the parts of the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.

All are good. We complete each other. We live for the giftedness that God created us to be, and then God will make our lives a blessing. He formed us out of dust.

We're really, ultimately, nothing but a small pile of dirt. But that's not how God looks at us any more than that's how we look at that little baby of promise.

[ 54 : 01 ] In Psalm 8, we have some of the most beautiful words. The psalmist is saying to God, when I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, the stars, which you set in place, what are people that you're even mindful of them?

The son of man that you even care for him, but you made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with the glory of honor. God made you to be a blessing, to be a little less than the angels, something amazing taken out of the dust if we just live into it.

Today, we're going to have confirmation. We're going to have 61 young people make a decision for God. A few of them are going to say, that means now I'm done with God.

They will. I know that. But really, many of them are going to say, now I begin with God. Not to live what my parents decided, not to live what somebody else tells me I need to be, but to live what God made me to be.

And so confirmation becomes the beginning of an amazing adventure where God makes something beautiful out of each and every one of us. All this pain, I wonder if I'll ever find my life, I wonder if my life could really change at all.

[ 56 : 03 ] All this earth, could all that is lost ever be found?

Could a garden come up from this ground have long? You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, out of the dust.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, out of us.

All around, hope is springing up from this old ground.

Out of chaos, life is being found in you. You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, out of the dust.

[ 57 : 23 ] You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, out of us.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, out of the dust.

You make beautiful things, you make beautiful things, out of the dust.

If nothing has beenaded over you, in real love, therá Julioús's heart- yep- ...

The note stars esp\*\*\*\*\* And Talking Brown during special... ... That much is amazing, I question farm... ... And on earth yes be near us before it is I long for your embrace Every single day To meet you in this place And see you face to face Will you show me Reveal yourself to me Because of your mercy I fall down on my knees And I can feel your presence here with me Suddenly I'm lost within your beauty

[ 59 : 59 ] Caught up in the wonder of your touch Here in this moment I surrender to your love You're everywhere I know I am not alone You call me as your own To know you and be yours You are holy And I fall down on my knees And I can feel your presence here with me Suddenly I'm lost within your beauty Caught up in the wonder of your touch Here in this moment And I surrender to your love

I surrender to your grace I surrender to the one I surrender to the one Who took my place I can feel your presence here with me Suddenly I'm lost within your beauty Caught up in the wonder of your touch Even this moment I surrender to your love.

Amen. Please be seated. You know, it's not God who doesn't have expectations and possibilities for us.

God has an expectation that he can make us into something we couldn't even possibly do ourselves. God has decided already to offer you grace.

God has already decided to take the brokenness out of your life. God has already decided to place hope and possibilities and dreams and meaning and purpose into your world.

[ 62 : 20 ] All God wants you to do is let him. So that's what we do when we turn to God in our prayer of confession. As we open up our hearts to new beginnings. Let's pray together, shall we?

Dear God in heaven. I have sinned. I have rejected your purpose. Your plans. Your blessing.

I have chased after selfish ambition. I have become bitter. I have had envy. I have had envy.

Forgive me, Lord. Turn my life around. Help me to seek your blessing. Your purpose. Your life.

Your way. Forgive me, Lord. And heal me. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Right now.

[ 63 : 15 ] Today. Right now. Right here. All that brokenness. All that demonic power. I declare it. Cast out of this place. You are no longer held by this.

You are no longer bound by worries about bitter, selfish ambition. And worries about what you're now. God gives you the freedom to live into what you were designed 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. Our God has called us to this table.

To remember all God has done for us. To receive all God has for us. God wants to pour out his spirit into us.

God did pour out his spirit a long time ago. Made his disciples wait for it. They waited and they waited. And one day, God poured out his spirit.

[ 64 : 30 ] And we wait. We wait today. And we can call on God as they did too. Every time they had a need for ministry. Every time there was need for them to go out and share God's love.

They prayed that God would pour the Holy Spirit into them. And God did. And when we come to the table, we receive what God has poured out for us.

We receive so that we can be who God called us to be in this world. We can't do it ourselves. We need God to do it in us and through us.

So come to the table this morning. You are welcome to receive all God has for you. If you love God, earnestly repent of your sin and seek to live in peace as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

You are welcome to come to the table. You don't need to be a member of the church. You don't need to be a member of any church. You don't have to have been coming for a certain length of time.

[ 65 : 36 ] You can just come today. As God draws you. As God leads you. Come. Share in all God has for you.

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

In the beginning, your spirit moved over the face of the waters. 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.

Your spirit came upon prophets and teachers, anointing them to speak your word. And so with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn.

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.

[ 66 : 46 ] 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. At his baptism in the Jordan, your spirit descended upon him and declared him your beloved son.

With your spirit upon him, he turned away the temptations of sin. 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 day 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.

When the Lord Jesus ascended, he promised to be with us always, baptizing us with the Holy Spirit and with fire. Because on the day of Pentecost and on the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread.

And he gave thanks to you and he broke the bread and gave it to his disciples. And he said, take, eat. This is my body, which is given for you.

[ 68 : 02 ] Do this in remembrance of me. When the supper was over, he took the cup. 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. On the day you raised him from the dead, he was recognized by his disciples in the breaking of the bread.

And in the power of your Holy Spirit, your church has continued in the breaking of the bread and the sharing of the cup. 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 has risen. Christ will come again. Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here.

[ 69 : 08 ] 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 and empowered by the gifts of the Spirit.

By your Spirit. Make us one with Christ. One with each other and one in ministry to all the world. Showing forth the fruit of the Spirit until Christ comes in final victory.

And we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your Holy Church. All honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father. Now and forever.

Amen. Shall we pray with the confidence of children of God, the prayer Jesus taught. Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done. On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses.

[ 70 : 13 ] 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. It only takes a start to get a fire glowing.

And to above the ground and for the village glowing. That's how it is with God's love.

Once you've experienced it. You've spread his love to everyone. You want to pass it on.

I wish for you, my friend, this happiness that I've found. You can depend on him.

[ 71 : 49 ] It matters not where you're from. I'll shout it from above in the dark. I want my world to know.

The Lord of love has come to me. I want you passing on. I want you passing on. I want you passing on.

I want you passing on. Maybe God has called you to be a brick. Maybe God has made you to be a beautiful pitcher. We need both. And both are wonderful. And blessings. God-given blessings.

Live for what God made you to be. You know, if the tongue can start a great forest fire of evil by spreading around bitterness and pain. And damaging envy.

Imagine just how much that tongue can be the spark for a fire of God. This Holy Spirit working in your spirit to change and transform you from the bottom to the top.

[ 72 : 50 ] I was in the bottom 20% of my class. I discovered I was in an honors class that was in the top 10% of the school. I didn't know that. Sometimes God opens your eyes to possibilities you never imagined existed.

Go and live as God intended you to live. And be a blessing. Amen. Amen. Thank you.