

12.09.22 Friday Womens night02

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[00:00:00] I love Vanessa. We are like sisters. And, um, I've just watched her walk with the Lord. Um, when I used to try to describe her to people, I would say there's no guile in her that, that just sums her up in one word. Uh, but she's also like a little butterfly, you know? Um, but, uh, Vanessa has, um, seven kiddos.

And how many grandkids do you have now? Five grandkids. And, um, she's married to Pastor Steve Warren up in Denton. And, um, she's just a little fiery redhead. Um, she is, she is, she knows she is. She tries to act like she's not, but she is. So, Vanessa, why don't you come on up and I wanna pray for you. Amen.

Don't turn your wireless on yet, otherwise we'll be crazy. Yes. So Father, we just thank you for Vanessa tonight, Lord, as she brings your word, Lord, as she shares the things that you've placed on her heart for us, may we have ears to hear what the Holy Spirit is speaking to each of us individually. Lord and Lord, I pray for your anointing.

I know that she is a woman who is full of the Holy Spirit and that she relies upon you, holy Spirit, to be her teacher. And so I just pray, Lord, for your anointing, Lord, remove any nerves that might be there. And Lord, I just pray that you would just, um, Lord, let her sense your favor as she stands and gives out your word.

In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

All right. This is my very first time to wear a mic like this. So I kind of feel like, I don't know, I should be bebopping and dancing around because I don't, I have my hands free. I know. No, don't do that. Don't do that. Um, you know, as Mercedes is talking about her friendship, she almost makes me wanna cry because any of you who know Mercedes, um, I'm the privileged one to have her as a dear friend and how the Lord built that friendship.

Um, I'm very blessed. Um, it's so sweet. With friends, you get to have lunch sometimes. And so Mercedes and I met for lunch and, uh, as we were, uh, leaving, she goes, oh, hey, um, you know what? The Lord put you on my heart. Will you come and share for our, um, Christmas gathering that you have? And she said, behold, comfort and.

and the moment she said that my mind went to my Bible at home where I have a daily read Bible and I have a little, um, tiny bookmark that says Joy and I got it here at this church. Last year when they did a day of refreshing, I got to sit at the joy table. And so I think God is so gracious just to kind of give us, um, like yesterday men's, you know, and so I was able to say with fear and trembling, yes, I wanna do that.

Um, so I am blessed to know Mercedes for a very long time. And I will tell you I am a veteran of these beautiful Christmas gatherings. The first one I ever got to go to was 18 years ago. It was in 2004. And the, um, the time of it was called behold. God is with Us. And so I still have my ornament from back then and it's been on my tree for 18 years.

And every time I see it, I know that God loves me. Um, but the beautiful thing about that is there's not only one heart. There's two other hearts because my daughters, who at that time were only 10 and 12, Rachel and Lydia, they got to come with me and be there for, um, the Christmas time. And that left a lasting mark on their hearts.

And so the Lord just really wanted me to kind of, um, highlight all of you ladies that maybe you're here with your daughter and you get to have a mother-daughter date tonight, or you're with a sister or a mother or a friend. Um, my, I get to have my sister-in-law, so she's got her mama, but I call her my mama too.

So I have my mother-in-law here tonight and um, you know, through the years I've gone to a lot of these very special nights. And one of those nights, I think it was 2013, um, they were meeting at the Botanical Grapevine Botanical Gardens, and Debbie Bryson was the teacher. and I got to have my mother, who is from Pennsylvania, come all the way and be there that night.

And at the marketplace she had bought like 10 bracelets. And I think I have two left, but I had to wear 'em tonight. Um, because I just believe that this is, um, a sacred night of special night of friendships and relationships. Um, and that the Lord wants to bless you, especially if it's a, a mother-daughter, um, relationship.

And so just to kind of talk about that special days and planned moments with people you love, the Lord tells us all about it. In Psalms 139, verse 16, he said, you saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had. And so I'm gonna pray, but just wanna encourage all of you as you guys go home tonight, that you talk to each other and share what did the Lord speak to you and encourage each other

in your faith because there is always someone watching you and they want to, to know Jesus like you do.

So, Lord, thank you again. I thank you for Mercedes, Lord, how she's already prayed, Lord, but we can never pray enough. Lord, that is the gift that you have given us. Lord. It opens doors, Lord, it changes the atmosphere. And so we just thank you, Lord, that you call us by name, Lord, and that when we call on you, Lord, we would never be put to shame.

And so we just pray for your presence and your power here tonight, Lord. And we thank you that you are a mighty God, and yet you are a Father who loves us. So we are blessed people in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, you know when she asked me about speaking and comfort and joy, and I said, yes, right? And then I get in the car and of course I start singing God, rescue Mary, gentlemen, right?

I'm like, I'm like going, oh, tis of comfort. I even wrote it in my notes, but I'm like, oh, I guess I don't need to share that because we sang it, you know, so I have all the words down. Um, but it is so beautiful this Christmas time that the world, even those that don't know Jesus as Savior, they're, they're singing and giving him praise through Christmas carols and different things.

Um, I have, like Mercedes said, I have a lot of children and we got to, um, go to their Christmas pageant for the charter school that they go to. And even there in this, um, public school, all the songs were honoring the King of Kings. They were honoring the savior who was born the rose of Sharon. And they had children memorized from the Book of Luke.

They were giving God's story as students that is part of their memorization. And I just thought, wow. Um, the whole world, the whole world right now is rejoicing. It is definitely a beautiful and unique time of year. Um, one of the things I wanted to, um, mention is that, um, the one who gives us joy, and as our comforter, as you all know, is Jesus our savior and Luke proclaimed, um, for us to read about how it was proclaimed to the shepherds.

And so we are gonna, um, start by looking at Luke chapter two. And as believers, you know, we can sing Christmas carols all year long because they're all about the good news. The good news are glad tidings that are Savior, the son of God, the Messiah that was promised, did come. He was born of a virgin and came as a baby.

He came because the whole world, all of creation was in sin and darkness. Jesus came the light of the world. He came not only for those who were, um, specifically waiting for him, for the Christ, the Messiah, the redeemer, the chosen people of Israel, but he came to all. all. Who would believe? I love what Mercedes talked about.

Pre believer, there's, until the day you die, there's that chance that I'm gonna say, okay, you're in the all. I believe Jesus, he came to save the whole world. All of us, you and me. Um, you know, this is incredibly great news, such great news that an angel of the Lord was sent to tell us this news. And so we're gonna read, um, Luke two.

And I know it seems like, um, I think I might have shared this once before, um, or at another gathering, but that's where your eye always goes to wanting to hear about what we're celebrating Jesus' birthday, right? This is all about Jesus's birthday and who he is. And it came to pass in those days that a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered.

This census first took place. Kenis was governing Syria. So all went to be registered everyone to his own city. Remember, God has our days planned out. God had it planned out that Joseph was gonna have to get up and go, was no surprise. And as Joseph also went from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Judea to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem because he was of the house and lineage of David to be registered with Mary, his betrothed wife who was with child.

So it was that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. I thought I'd make a little note too. You know, Mercedes and I are such good friends. Um, I had a home birth and she was there from the home birth of my son, Justin. So, um, Mary had Joseph, I don't know. She had some sheep around her too, maybe, but she didn't have a midwife.

So, but she had the Lord, right. and she brought forth her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling clo clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them. In the end,

Lori. [00:10:00] Okay, sorry. Verse eight. Now there were in the same country, shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock. By night and behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them and the glory of the Lord shown around them and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, do not be afraid for behold.

I bring you good tidings of great joy, which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David, a Savior who is Christ the Lord, and this will be the sign to you. You will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. . And suddenly there was with the angel, a multitude of the heavenly host praising God in saying glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men.

Um, as you guys know, this is the first Christmas carol, right? But I betcha if it was sung by angels, um, they had angel voices . So Luke two 15 through 20, so it was when the angels had gone away from them into heaven that the shepherd said one to another. Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us, and they came with haste and found Marion Joseph and the babe lying in a manger.

Now, when they had seen him, they made widely known the same, which was told them concerning this child and all those who heard it marveled at those things, which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, and as it was told them.

You know, verse eight, uh, it says, marveled, do you marvel at the things that God tells you? Do you marvel at the written testimony of his word? The Lord wants us to marvel at his plans, his handiwork. I marvel that the king of the universe loves me so much that he came and even more he is coming again and he gives joy and comfort.

See, I switched that comfort and joy. He gives joy cuz we're gonna talk about joy first, joy and comfort every single day. Because he gave me his spirit. He gave me his Holy Spirit. He sealed me and. All you who know him, it says in one John 2 27, the holy one has given you his spirit, his anointing. How do you know that he has sent the comforter to you because he has given you love, joy, peace.

Those are the, the first three attributes of his spirit. I love the word joy, right? Just saying the word makes me happy. You know, if you ever say jump for joy, you know, it's like, Hey, joy, right? Um, the dictionary gives the meaning and of course we sing that today, uh, the song tonight. But there is joy in the Lord.

Um, the dictionary gives the meaning of the word joy as this intense and ecstatic happiness, the expression or manifestation of such a feeling to tra to take great pleasure, rejoice. . So I wanna share a couple verses with the key

word of joy in them. So Psalms 32 11 says, be glad in the Lord and rejoice you righteous and shout for joy all you upright in heart.

Psalms 1611, you will show me the path of life and your presence is fullness of joy at your right hand. Our pleasures forevermore. Psalms 35, weeping may endure for a night, but joy comes in the morning. Psalms 35, 9, and my soul shall be joyful and the Lord it shall rejoice in hi in his salvation, Psalms 43, 4.

Then I will go to the altar of God to God, my exceeding joy. Those who sow in tears shall reap in joy. Psalms 1 26, 5. and then Isaiah 12, three. Therefore, with joy, you will draw water from the wells of salvation. And then in Jeremiah 1516, your words were found and I ate them. And your word to me, the joy and rejoicing of my heart with the context of having joy.

There also has to be a knowing or with a trust that something has happened or will happen. You can't have joy all by itself. Oh, you have joy. Why do you have joy? You have joy because you have the whole spirit. You have joy because you trust him that he is gonna work all these things for your good. You have joy because you have trust in Jesus, such as the joy of the Lord is my strength.

I have trust in the Lord what he said he will do. , even when we don't see things at the moment, right? Just a couple ideas. Maybe things aren't looking like you want 'em to look. As I was sitting at the table with, um, the, the sweet, now I'm gonna call 'em friends, but my sweet sisters in Christ, and we were just chit-chatting and one of the things that we were talking about is God answering prayer.

And you know, as a mom of seven, I'm telling you, it seems like there can always be something that is needed. And so you're always praying, you're like, Lord, will you help in this? Well, can you take care of this? And so, you know, things might at the moment might not look like they need to. Maybe your, your child's car broke down, it's in the shop.

You don't have the money for the repairs or your stove breaks on Thanksgiving. Or maybe you have a, a child in school and they're failing. Or even worse, maybe they're walking away from the. , but that that ladies doesn't affect your joy because your joy, my joy is in the Lord, not in what is taking place around me, but in who is in charge, and that is Jesus.

My joy is in the Lord. My joy is in my savior. My joy is in Christ and the work that he did for me, he came as a little baby, yes, lived a perfect sinless life. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for my sins, that I could be forgiven and that he

would give me himself, which is eternal life. I wanna say like David, restore the joy of my salvation.

I wanna humble myself like David and repent for my sins, and I wanna repent for my way of thinking. when I have thought, you know, sometimes us Christian girls, we've been, you know, I've, I've loved Jesus for a very long time, since the time I probably learned how to walk. Um, I had the blessing of saying, yes, Jesus, I want you.

And so sometimes we're thinking, Hey, I'm doing okay. I'm doing, you know, I'm kind of the, the 10 Commandments. I got 'em down, right? I don't lie, well, at least, you know what right? . But my thought life, sometimes it can like all of a sudden be going like, oh, you know what, he really, that's not gonna happen because you're, you know, things are gonna fall apart in any minute because the, the, the plan he had was not a good plan.

And you're just, you know, and you're like, whoa, wait a minute, wait a minute. That ladies, in case you didn't know it is. because we're to take every thought captive, right? So the, the little sins that can easily be said us, we just wanna quickly say, Lord, I'm so sorry for not having that thought, for not trusting you.

You've got a good plan. I'm gonna marvel at your plan. I'm gonna watch it unfold. I'm gonna trust you that you have good for me. So we don't look at the circumstances and we, we train our mind and our heart to say, Lord, I trust you. I don't wanna walk in a displeasing way of, of speaking things that are not true about you.

Keep my heart and my thoughts and my mind stayed on you. Lord, I wanna have that beautiful, perfect peace that you have for all of us who keep our mind on you. And when I have failed to trust him and his goodness for my life when I've focused maybe on the troubles around me, instead of going to the Lord and casting my cares and my troubles on him, because when I go to him, he fills me with strength and joy.

In Isaiah 29 19 it says, The humble shall increase their joy and the Lord and the poor among men shall rejoice and the holy one of Israel. If you wanna increase your joy humbly, come to him. Rest in him. Abide in him, and you will find the joy of the Lord. Rejoice in the Lord. Again, I say rejoice. We can be like the woman.

All of us can be like the woman that was written about in Proverbs 31, verse 25 says, strength and honor are her clothing. She shall rejoice in time to. , we have

nothing to fear because he who called us is faithful. And you know, ladies, every season ahead, we have nothing to fear. We might not know what it might look like.

All of us here are in different ages. I think we've probably got a 10 or a 12 year old or 14 year old all the way up to who knows how old, right. We're not gonna a, we're not gonna get the oldest one in the room. Might be my mom, but we'll see. Right now it's . Um, you know, all the way from the tens to the eighties when you trust the Lord, he has good for you and it's so beautiful.

[00:20:00] But, but there's different seasons in our life. Right. You know, I've always been known and I might start crying now, right. But you kind of get known. So in my area, in Denton and my friends, I'm known as, oh, a mom with a lot of kids, right. Mercedes even mentioned it. And I wasn't necessarily gonna bring that up tonight, but she mentioned it.

And so you kind of get known as, well, I'm a mom, you know, Hey, hey, I got kids, you know, and then I'm, I'm a homeschool mom, or Hey, I do this and, or I'm helping with pto, I'm this, and we can find that, that season is where we kind of get our joy from. And then all of a sudden the seasons change, right? Your kids go and get married and then soon the house is quiet.

And then you're like, Lord, what do you have for me in this season? I'm telling you, the Lord has been speaking in my heart over and over. I've, um, this year has been a very drastic change of seasons for me, where you go from a house full. I had seven kids at the moment living with us, and because of hardships, my grandchildren were living with us.

So we had like 10 kids. We had 12 people in the house to going three months later where I have two kids in the house and I'm like, oh my goodness. You know, um, the house stays clean. I will tell you that that's that kind of like, Hey, but I. Morning. And I say, Lord, what do you have for me in this season?

What are you gonna do in my life? I know that you have good things for me. And so I just wanna share with you ladies, maybe you've gone through a shift and a change in your season. Maybe your job ended, or maybe you, you are separated. I mean, there, there are so many different ways that all of a sudden what was is all of a sudden not.

And he is faithful. His love doesn't change, and it's in him that we can find the joy, our strength to go on in that season. He is always faithful. And Hebrews 12 too, talking about faithfulness. Um, it says, and you guys probably know the

verse, but it says, therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight and the sin, which easily ensnares us.

I talked about that. It might be little things, might not be some big thing, but lay it aside. and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who, for the joy that was set before him endured the cross. Jesus is so faithful, you know, he came on a mission.

He, God had a plan. He came on a mission in the first half of that mission. Um, the first half was coming as a baby and going to the cross, but the second part of that mission, ladies, we read about it in our word. He is gonna return to earth and redeem his people who are called by his name. And that is a comfort to our hearts.

This is just not all what we're living for, guys. Sometimes I talk to different people and they're like, well, is this it? I'm like, no, this is not it. There is so much more to come. and that he will restore us to the father, that he is coming again, not as a baby, but as a king, which brings us comfort and joy.

You know, the word comfort means to sooth in a time of distress, to ease physically, relieve also a condition of feeling, wellbeing and contentment. That's a big word for me, ladies, because there are many times when I was struggling to kind of find that contentment and yet, oh, it's in him. It's in his word.

He's he. It's just like that resting, okay Lord, all things are, well, I'm in you. Or soulless in grief or fear. Um, Mercedes just talked about death. I know this week, uh, I. early morning texts. The first thing when I woke up a family that were at our church for decades and we love them and I'm working with them cuz I'm a realtor, but their daughter, who is my daughter's age, Rachel and Catherine were friends growing up.

I have pictures of them at birthday parties playing dress up and dancing around and she entered into k into the kingdom. She went to be with the Lord. And you know, the beauty of that is I prayed for her because when I say the beauty of it, we are all gonna die one day. That, you know, and Jesus was the first one to die for us.

And then he was the first to rise. And um, you know, the Lord is so gracious, I know with this friend, um, one of the things that I prayed about because their, her, their daughter, I'm closer to the parents right, than the daughter, but started

kind of gradually stepping away from the closeness to the Lord, at least what I could see.

Right. You know, they stopped going to church and, and they're just kind of going on with their, um, college and career and not, um, pursuing the things of God. And so then you kind of like, Lord, , do they trust you? And so that was my prayer. I kept saying, Lord, you've given her an opportunity to say, I cling to you, Lord, I trust you, even in this cancer.

I trust you. And so in that text, it was so sweet. Um, she did, the mom just shared about these two verses that her daughter was clinging to. And um, I should have written 'em down to share with you, but it was just confirmation that she was trusting in the one who knows her. And he just called her home. And so it was a sweet and, and, um, peace.

And so it brought comfort to my heart, and I know that that brought comfort to that mama's heart. The scripture brings comfort to our hearts because it's truth. So if you're needing comfort, um, maybe some of you need comfort more than others. You know, I'm kind of, the Lord focused my heart on joy because like Mercedes said, that's kind of who I am.

Right? Jump around here, do this. It's like, Ooh, yay. I need more strength. Okay, joy. And then when it talks about comfort, you know, and we wanna be able to comfort others, right? Especially when they're walking through something. And you know what? Comforts is God's word. And so the Holy Spirit kind of gave me this picture, and I'm gonna give it to you guys and hopefully you can go home with it.

Um, you know, we talked about the Holy Spirit, the comforter. Um, when you go home and you're saying, Lord, I need more comfort. Um, in our household we have, uh, like a footrest that you open up and there's comfort, uh, blankets in there, and there's a white fluffy comforter. So if you could just picture me wrapping a white fluffy comforter around me, um, and sing quietly, maybe with a hot cup of, cup of hot chocolate maybe, or a cup of coffee and your Holy Book with you, and you have that comforter wrapped around you and say, Lord made this feel like your arms of love surrounding me, and I need your comfort.

And as you ask the comforter, No plan words, but as you ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you, he will lead you into all truth. Open up this book and say, Lord, would you speak to me? And so maybe you wanna go to Isaiah. We're gonna go to Isaiah in just a minute. Isaiah is full of promises and prophetic words such as an Isaiah one 18.

Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be white as snow or waiting in Psalms one 19. I love when it says and wait in quietness for the Lord's presence and comfort. My other verses that I take hold of, um, is uh, probably cuz I'm not quiet very often, maybe, but Isaiah 30 15.

you will be delivered. By returning and arresting. Your strength will be in quiet confidence. So all of you guys this week, if you say, Lord, I need your comfort, just envision and envision him wrapping his arms around you. Go in his word and take in his promises. Take in that comfort of his word. Um, we're gonna go ahead and end, um, our time in Isaiah, Isaiah 51

of, yeah, we're good. We might even have time for prayer. So Isaiah 51

to listen to me, you who follow after righteousness. You who seek the Lord, look to the rock from which you are human and to the whole of the pit. From which you were Doug. Look to Abraham, your father, and to Sarah who bore you for I called him alone and blessed him and increased him. Abraham and Sarah are part of that cloud of witnesses that we just read about in Hebrews 12.

We look to Abraham and Sarah because they had faith like we want, and let's say they had faith like us, everybody. It's faith that doesn't shrink back. It's faith that trusts it's faith that says he will do what he said he would do. He is who he says he is, and he is the giver of joy and the one who comforts our soul.

Isaiah 51 13. For the Lord will comfort Zion, he will comfort all her waste places. He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the Lord. Joy and gladness will be found in it. Thanksgiving and the voice of melody,

listen to me, my people, and give ear to me. Oh, my nation for law will proceed from me and I will make my justice rest as a light of the peoples. My righteousness is near. My salvation has gone forth and my arms will judge the peoples. The coastlands will wait upon me and on my arm they will trust. Jesus is trustworthy.

All who put their trust in him will never be put to [00:30:00] shame. You know, I wanted to give a quick testimony if I could. We were at the table, so they've heard it before, but, um, I talked a minute ago about prayer and um, you know, how important it is for us to say, Lord, I need. Lord, help me in this. Lord, I'm coming to you.

You are the source of my everything. Sometimes we just kind of go about our thing and say, how is this gonna happen? What is this gonna, you know? And we just kind of start getting tied up in knots and being anxious. And then we remember, oh, be anxious for nothing. Okay? And in everything, right? We come to the Lord with our requests.

And so, um, one of the things I do in my house is that I journal, um, probably like many of you, right? I go through the daily word and then I journal a scripture or two, whatever the Holy Spirit highlighted to me that day. And then I write out my prayer because sometimes we're praying about so many different things and then we forget what we prayed for.

And so then when he answers, you don't go, oh, here, you answer my prayer, because you forgot. You even prayed, right? And so I love, and the next year going back and reading through my prayers and going, oh Lord, you're so faithful. You took care of this. You did this, you answered this. Um, You know, my husband and I laugh, you know, I mentioned I'm a realtor and one of the things that I have wanted for a very long time, probably as long as Mercedes has known me, it's kind of was a joke in our house.

She didn't even send me pictures of houses that had pools because she'd always move and she'd get a house with a pool and I'd be like, where's my pool? You know, I'd move 20 times in Texas and I'd know how to pull. So it was kind of a running joke. So she'd send me these pictures, I'm like, oh yeah, I want that one.

You know? Um, but anyway, as we were, um, praying and asking the Lord and I even kind of came to the place where I said, Lord, I, I let this die. My husband was just kinda laughing at me cuz he knows really I want it, but I, I really had to lay it down at the Lord's feet because financially is this a good, good situation?

Everything but the Lord is so kind. And when we seek the Lord first, he gives us the desires of our heart. And so this summer he gave us a house with a pool. But one of the things that, alongside the pool, which was the first thing on the list, As my husband and I were praying and seeking, we'd go look at houses, we're praying.

So my husband had made a list on the computer of all the things that we were wanting in a home. You know, of course for him, the first list was the price, right? It to be under a certain price. And so the Lord opened this door and we moved this summer and he said, Vanessa, come into my office. And, you know, he just showed me the list that we prayed for and it was like, check, check, check, check.

Oh wow, okay, Lord, you love me. What me? But that's just his way of saying, oh, I get a hug and kiss from heaven. You know, when I swim my pool, I'm, I'm usually singing songs. I put on the radio praise in Jesus. And I'm, you know, it's too cold to swim right now, but when I got in, I was doing that. Um, but I wanted to share a praise report with you guys too, just to kind of remind you how in our own.

Okay, I'm gonna share this very fast. In our own mind, we can think, okay, I've got a plan for this. I see a need, my son, my, my child doesn't have a car. Okay, Lord, how can I step in and take care of this? Okay, well, I've got a used car, maybe I can sell it to 'em for points. Or, you know, you're, you're thinking about this and you're calling your husband, okay, maybe they can buy this car from us, dah da da, right?

And then you get home and you get a text from your son who you've also been praying for and saying, Lord, would you provide a car? And he texts to say, oh, someone in the church here in Texas is giving us a 2011 car. You know, it's like, wow, Lord, you are so much bigger and better than. So guys, let's not do it on our own.

Let's go to the one who knows. Let's go to the one that we can call out to. And he's the one that fills us with joy and said, yes Lord. And he gives us the desires of our heart when we seek him first. Um, so anyway, I'm sorry it wasn't in my notes, but I wanted to share one last thing and Isaiah. as we are reading.

Um, I wanna, uh, read verses six and eight and then, um, sure. Out of John real fast. Um, Isaiah 51, 16, lift up your eyes to the heaven and look on the earth beneath. For the heavens will vanish away like smoke. The earth will grow old like a garment, and those who dwell in it will die in like manner. But my salvation will be forever and my righteousness will not be abolished.

Listen to me, you who know righteousness, you people and whose heart is my law. Do not fear the reproach of men nor be afraid of their reviling for the moth. We'll eat them up like a garment and the warm will eat them like wool, but my righteousness will be forever and my salvation from generation to generation.

And John said in Revelation 21. John wrote this, that he, God will dwell with them and they shall be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There shall be no more death, no more sorrow, no crying, and they're shall be. No more pain for the former.

Things have passed away. Oh, the message of good things to come is so real. I can almost hear it. Do you hear the trumpet yet? Right. I can almost taste it. Taste and see that the Lord is good. I can hear his spirit just like the wind. He's speaking to us. And in verse 11 of Isaiah 51 says it, and we can even sing this, I sing this as a kid, um, back in the day.

So the ransom of the Lord. Shall return and come to Zion with singing, with everlasting joy on their heads. They shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sing shall flee away. Does anybody know? And they shall obtain gladness and joy and sorrow and morning show. Flee away. Amen. See, we're singing about the truth, his love for us.

It doesn't change. He has a plan. He's coming back. He's coming for all of us, and he's gonna make all things new. And as you behold him tonight, may he fill your heart with strength. That's his joy. Right? And may he comfort your heart. That's getting in and listening to his words, his his voice, his his

God is not just letters written down, but they're alive. , they are alive. And if you're feeling dead, all you gotta do is come and say, Lord, I need more life. I need your comfort. And so come. And so come and behold, let your heart be comforted with this knowledge that he has a plan. , and it's a very good one.

He's coming again as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and we're gonna rejoice with him. So may the joy of the Lord be your strength tonight, and may he just fill your hearts. And again, I have a picture of all of you sometime this week going home and wrapping yourselves up in a comforter and opening up the word of God and letting Psalms one 19 wash over you.

We're let, letting Isaiah so many of the promises of him coming as he's always already done and that he's coming again. So be blessed this evening. I know, uh, Mercedes is gonna come up and we're gonna have some sweet time. Um, as I'm leaving, you know, I brought, I brought just one of, um, the momentums that I have from our behold night.

But it's so sweet. If you come to my house and y'all aren't, you're, you're all invited. And at Christmas time, I can go around to the table and point or put on the tree. Oh yeah, that's from Ca Calvary Grapevine. Behold. Um, it's always a treasure, um, that we get to come home with. And so I'm just so blessed to get to be here tonight and share the treasure of his word with you guys.

Um, No. Yes.

Um, it's very bright . Thank you. My eyes are kind of like, ah, I'm, I'm, I'm just old and tired, you guys. I'm not kidding. I'm so tired. Somebody said, how are you feeling? I said, I'm gonna arrest tomorrow. . I keep, I feel like I keep saying that, you know, but we're women. We, we say that every time. How are you? I'm tired.

Yeah. Um, that's, that's kind of standard. Um, but, you know, I love Lord meets us. I love how he meets us. And I, and I love how, you know, the word of God is true. It is true. Like you can take it for a spin. Seriously. Yes. Like, I don't, I don't believe in just reading it. I, I think it's important you take that word of God for a spin and try it out.

Cuz otherwise it's just kind of like, . Well, I, I think the Bible says this, but I don't know cuz I really feel this way and you know, that's not gonna do us any good, our, our feelings. They just blow away like all these leaves that have been falling. Okay, one day the tree is full of 'em and the next day, I mean, I seriously, I went out, I had this beautiful tree in my front yard, went out and they're all gone.

All the leaves just like overnight. Seriously. And I was like, Lord, things ch can change so quickly, so quickly in some of us like to be driven and led by our feelings, and yet feelings change. But the word of God, it stands forever. It's eternal. It gives life. [00:40:00] it. It illuminates, right? It comforts, it heals.

It restores it, admonishes. It's like sweet honey, right? There's nothing like the word of God to comfort us. I was talking to my niece, we just lost our nephew the day before yesterday, and I said to her, honey, you've got to go and press into the Lord. You've got to get in the word of God right now because right now your feelings and the enemy can tell you all sorts of things that are just not true.

But the word of God, which I just love so much, and one of my favorite verses is in Psalms, and it says in the, in the multitude of my anxieties. And, and you know, in this world we can have multitudes of anxieties. This says, your word comforts me. Your word comforts me. Vanessa said that the word comfort means to soothe in a time of distress.

You know, as believers, we live between the two advents. Right? The first advent, she, she, uh, shared the verse in Isaiah 51, right? Um, I love that verse as one of my favorite verses. And I told her, I said, you know, that's the verse the Lord put on my heart for this dessert. Isaiah 51. I'm gonna go to it real quick and reread it.

Um, where am I? I'm on my phone because I wanna read it in, um, in the living. Um, I'm so bad at this, you guys. I'm sorry. Okay, let me see. Let me find it.

And it says, the Lord will comfort Israel again. again, meaning he had done so before. Correct. And he will have pity on her ruins. We all know hi Israel's history, right? They're up. They're down. They're all over the place, right? God's judging them because of the idolatry, and yet they're his people and he loves them, and he doesn't get tired of coming in and comforting them over and over and over again.

And I so resemble Israel. I feel like the Lord is constantly having to comfort me over and over and over again, right? I'm, I'm prone to wander. You know, I'm prone to leave the God I love, right? Maybe not walking away from the Lord, but maybe I'm thinking in a worldly way. Maybe I'm adopting the customs of the world.

Maybe I say I believe God's word, but it, when it comes right down to it, I don't put it to the test that's wandering and I need the God, I love to come back and comfort me again and bring me back to the truth that his word is alive, that it's eternal, that it moves mountains, that it heals, that it satisfies.

Do you know? You don't have to be always longing for something more, something better. You can be satisfied right where you are. I love that he says he will have pity on her ruins. Her desert will blossom like Eaton in her barren wilderness. Wilderness like the garden of the Lord. Think back to the garden where all was right before Eve gave way to the lie of the enemy, right?

The garden of the Lord. That's where his comfort takes us back to. And he says, joy and gladness will be found there, and songs of Thanksgiving will fill the air. I wanna encourage you, if you're in a time of difficulty, you know, we're called to walk with those who mourn. You know, if someone is mourning you, don't sing a song to them, right?

We we're called to grieve with those who grieve and we're called to come alongside and bring comfort to them and remind them that God's word can be that comfort to you. And then we're to rejoice with those who rejoice. Let's sing When it's time to sing, sing, you know, when it's time to mourn. It's okay to mourn.

And so, um, I felt like the Lord, um, this morning, and I, and I haven't had time to do anything, so I kind of just like, I, I've got notes like just scattered all over the place here. Um, I love that she said, um, , uh, referred back to the, um, uh,

the hymn, right? God Resty Mary Gentleman, uh, or the Christmas song, um, that the lyrics there that I love it, it talks about that the Lord came to save us, okay?

To save us from Satan's power when we had gone astray. So there's this calling back that, that Christ came, that was the first advent, right? He came to call us back to restore us because we were enemies of God. And in the second advent that were now looking forward to, he's calling us home, right? He's calling us home to be in his presence where there are no tears, there is no mourning, there is no night there, there's no pain.

There's no sorrow. in his presence is fullness of joy. And I love that. And so Isaiah says this the Lord, oops, sorry, I'm not there. That's Isaiah, uh, Isaiah says this, uh, chapter six verse three, let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord. His going forth is established as the morning, and I just felt like the Lord.

Vanessa and I kind of talked to about this a little bit, and then I was talking to my daughter, Brittany, and she said, mom, I was listening to this worship song, and I just felt like the Lord just, um, was speaking to my heart about, you know, really just that intimacy with him, that knowing him, right, that knowing him is so important.

I said, that's so funny because, um, Isaiah, uh, and Jose here, they're, they're in a, in a situation here with Jose, if you know Jose is a hard book, right? I mean, he's in trouble. They're, they're just, he, he's going, Lord, what is going on? Right? And the Lord is going, I'm asking you the same question. What is going on?

You know, but it says this, let us know, let us pursue the knowledge of the Lord. There is nothing more comforting than pursuing the knowledge of God. Because when we pursue him, when we pursue knowing him, joy automatically will come. It will, it will. All of a sudden, you start seeing him for who he is. You, you start discovering his ways.

You start discovering his nature. Right? And all of a sudden, in this age of no thyself and self-care and all of the other self situations, I don't know that are out there. You know? Sorry, um, I don't, you don't want me to get on my soapbox. Um, but you know, it's, it's this idea of you do get to know who you are.

The more you know the Lord, the more you will know. yourself, the more you will truly know your identity. And you won't stumble, you won't be wondering, you won't be looking around and going, well, why am I not like her? And why

am I not like her? And why am I not like her? You know, I, I, you know, I like her gift.

Well, Lord, why can't I have her gift? Because see, the more you know him, and the more you see that he's made you in his image, the more joyful you're gonna be, the more satisfied you're gonna be. And so he calls us to that. That is our greatest, greatest joy in life is pursuing the Lord. Yes. And he says that his going forth is established as the morning.

We all know that morning is gonna come every single day. We don't doubt that morning is coming. That's, that's the promise of God. If you pursue me, newness is coming. A new day is coming, new opportunity is coming, and then in verse six he says, I desire mercy and not sacrifice in the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.

Some of us love to be pious, right? We, the religious flesh is strong. The religious flesh likes to feel like we're helping God out. Vanessa talked a little bit about this, but God is saying, I don't want your sacrifice. I don't want your burnt offering. I want you to pursue knowing me. That's what's important.

He says, I want you to be merciful, right? We're the body of Christ, everything that we receive from the Lord, he wants us to walk in those same things, right? We want to be able to comfort those who are in need. We want to be joyful with those who are joyful. . So, um, we're gonna have, where's if you worship, girls can come on up.

Um, and then, uh, Barbie and, um, Vanessa and Mary, can you girls come on up? Cheryl, would you come on up? And also Karen, and, um, if you need prayer for anything, this is the time. It could be any, it could be somebody that's on your heart. Anything that you need prayer for. We don't wanna leave without praying.

Okay? [00:50:00] Over you girls. Um, and then while we're worshiping and if anybody needs prayer, go ahead and coming up. We're happy to pray with you. But what we're gonna do during that time also is you're gonna come up, um, if you've been with us before, you know, we have a tradition where we really do pray over you girls and we pray for over each one of them or each of the verses.

That the Lord puts on our hearts. So you'll come up, you'll ch um, take a verse from those trees over there and, um, you can either go back to your seat and just pray over it. Um, or if you wanna go over to the mar, oh, I, okay. I guess you

can go to the marketplace. Thank you. Um, and then, you know, get more coffee, dessert, whatever.

But we wanna invite you to come up, get your verses first, and then go ahead and come up for prayer. If you would like prayer. Um, we love you girls. I hope the Lord ministers to you. I hope he has ministered to you. Um, and I just, I just pray that each and every one of you, um, will have heard something from the Lord.

Maybe it's been as you have sat at your tables talking with one another. Maybe it was through the message, maybe it was. Um, the worship, and maybe it'll be that verse that lands on your hand. Hannah, can I tell your testimony from last year? It was so sweet. Um, Hannah had texted me the day after and she said, um, her little girl had gotten this verse and we had prayed and, you know, for if anybody wanted to accept the Lord, but she, uh, Lilly had gotten in the car with her and her mom, and her verse was about salvation and she wanted to accept Jesus.

And I tell you for me, if, if nothing else, that's like, hallelujah. Thank you Jesus. I love it. So, um, God bless you girls. Let's worship and then go ahead and comment on up. Grab your verses and coming up for, uh, prayer if you want prayer.