

Topical Message:
Jesus New Beginnings
Pastor Leitu

KAPONO: Thank you, Lord. Would you join me in a word of prayer? Lord, Father, we come to You this evening. Thank You so much, Lord, for this time to get together in Your word, Lord. We thank You that this evening we also get to take part in communion, Lord, as we remember the sacrifice of Your son, Jesus Christ, Lord.

This evening, as we get into Your word, Lord, would You bless this time? And I pray that You would open up our hearts and mind, Lord, and our ears that we would receive what You have for us this evening, Lord. And I pray that when we leave this place, this building, and as we go home and continue about our week, that what we learned here tonight, Lord, would not go to waste.

So speak to us, Holy Spirit, tonight. We thank You for Pastor Leitu as he delivers Your word. Give him strength. Continue to help him stand, Lord, proclaim Your word in Jesus' name. Amen.

[Congregation says, "Amen!"]

Well, Aloha!

[Congregation says, "Aloha!"]

Hey, why don't you have a seat? If you haven't received your communion cups yet, You can go get them in the back by both doors. Aloha and welcome to Calvary Chapel! For you online and you in the sanctuary, welcome. I pray that you had a blessed New Year's. On behalf of Pastor JD Farag, Happy New Year!

[Congregation says, "Happy New Year!"]

PASTOR LEITU: Oh, we go through this every week. Let's try that again. Happy New Year!

[Congregation says, "Happy New Year!"]

PASTOR LEITU: Amen! We have two services on Sunday, one at 8:30 and one at 10:45. Our 8:30 service is our Prophecy Update. And our 10:45 service, we're teaching through the New Testament. And ah, I'm sorry, yeah, the New Testament at 10:45. Our midweek study is on Thursdays at 7:00 p.m. And Pastor JD is teaching through the Old Testament.

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Pastor JD is on staycation spending time with his family. So please keep him and his family in prayers. Don't forget to pray for his wife, Kellie. She has cancer, and we're praying for her healing. Amen.

[Congregation says, "Amen!"]

Pastor JD will be back next Tuesday and lead us in a time of prayer. That prayer meeting will be held here in the sanctuary at 7:00. Every Tuesday, the first Tuesday of every month we always come together for all-church prayer. So you're always welcome.

I was going to teach in the Book of Galatians again tonight, but the Lord redirected me as only He can. Since this is the new year, God wants to reach people. He wants people to experience a new life. He wants to reach people with the Good News. This is our first meeting in 2024, and the Lord wants to speak to those who are not saved. He also wants to speak to us, His church today. The Holy Spirit has led me to teach in the Book of John. One of my favorite gospel passages is *John Chapter 3*.

In this chapter, we meet Nicodemus. He wants to meet with Jesus. He's heard all the amazing things that the Lord has done. Some of us know this account in the Book of John, but some of you have maybe never read this before. My prayer is for those who are not saved, here and in the sanctuary and you online, don't wait. If you've been away from Jesus for a while, come back. He's waiting with open arms for you.

So let's turn in our Bibles to *John Chapter 3*, and we'll start with *verse 1*. But before I do, let's bow our heads in prayer.

Father, we come before Your throne. Thank You, Lord, for Your word. We pray and give thanks, Lord, that You teach us and guide us through Your word, Lord. We're so excited, Lord, when we get into the Scriptures, and You just speak to our hearts, Lord. We just are amazed that those things that You reveal to us, Lord.

So we come before You to just thank You, Lord, what You're going to do tonight, Lord, through the power of Your Holy Spirit. So I come before You to thank You. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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John Chapter 3:1, "There was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews."

In *John Chapter 3*, Jesus meets a fellow Jewish man. His name is Nicodemus. He lives in the city of Jerusalem, the capital of the country of Israel. The beautiful Jewish temple is still standing, and Judaism is the state religion in Israel. Rome had conquered Israel 63 years prior to Jesus's birth, and they now occupy the nation of Israel.

The Jews, they despise the Roman occupation, and they've been waiting for their Messiah to eliminate the Romans. He thought that he would be a conquering king, a mere man. Surely, he could defeat this Roman yoke. They didn't realize that He came already. His name is Jesus Christ. He came as fully God and fully man, and He came to fulfill God's plans, not man's.

Nicodemus is a ruler of the Jews. Politically, he was a powerful man. He was also a member of the Sanhedrin, similar to a U.S. senator here in the United States. He's also a Pharisee, which means he's a religious leader. They were 600 men strong. They were strict in their religion. And he was also a teacher concerning the religion of Judaism.

Like the rest of Israel, the Pharisees wanted no outsiders. Gentiles were anyone in the world who were not Jewish. Jews didn't associate with the Gentiles. Nicodemus is living in exciting times because Jesus is on the scene, He's healing, the lame, the blind, the sick, and no one had ever seen such power before. Jesus also had taught in the temple. No one had taught God's word like He did. But there were issues that had always plagued Israel.

Much of the leadership in Israel was corrupt, pretending to be righteous, God-fearing men. Many of these leaders were crooked, even the priests, powerful, rich, smug, greedy, ambitious, and selfish. Many were rooted in evil and living in sin. They were well clothed on the outside, but inside many were wicked. They followed their own rules, and they did what they liked. Many of the Pharisees, they hated Jesus.

Jesus had criticized them for being hypocrites. He overturned their money-making tables. People built a marketplace in God's temple, and so Jesus reacted. Nicodemus, he was different. He was a man who loved, and he was seeking God. He came to seek truth from Jesus.

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Nicodemus has seen the hypocrisy, these men who served with Nicodemus. Nicodemus probably knew these men all his life, men who went to college, Bible college with him, who were supposed to serve the Lord, men who were supposed to represent God to the nation and to the world. They were supposed to serve the people, but they had their own agendas. Really, they served themselves. Sadly, many leaders in churches today do likewise.

These men were ruling Israel, and people's lives were in their hands. They were supposed to make religious laws, yet many were unethical.

Proverbs Chapter 29:2 tells us, **“When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice. But when a wicked man rules, the people groan.”**

The Jewish temple was a beautiful structure in Israel. It was a place where God was to be worshiped, where people could meet with the Lord, a place where the people could pray. They offered sacrifices for sins at the temple. They could fellowship there with fellow Jews, yet the people knew. They knew the corruption that was going on with the leaders and with the priests, yet they still went to the temple.

The Hebrew Bible instructed Jews, the Jewish men to visit the temple three times a year: once at Passover in the spring Shavuot in the summer, and Sukkot in the fall. Many who came had a sincere love for God. They wanted to be closer to Him to worship at His temple in Jerusalem. They needed to bring their offerings for their sin as well.

Like the temple in that day, many have come to visit Calvary Chapel, Kaneohe. This is a beautiful structure that God has blessed us with. God has truly blessed us with this sanctuary, and people come from all over the world to visit us: Australia, South Africa, Europe, South America, the U.S., Asia, Japan.

God's Holy Spirit is leading them to this place. This Holy Spirit has protected our church as well. People know they can come and meet with Jesus here in this place. They know this is a safe place. They can come and worship the Lord here. They can come and hear God's word taught. They can ask and be prayed for. And they know that the leadership here is led by the Holy Spirit.

Again, the Jewish leaders were jealous of Jesus. They were covetous of Him. They wanted to heal like Jesus did. They wanted to teach like He taught. He wanted the people to follow

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them as they had followed Jesus, but they rejected Him. Some of the Jews saw the miracles that Jesus had done. No one showed love and healed like Jesus did. Instead of humbling themselves, though, they balked. Instead of repenting, they still wanted to kill the Savior.

Nicodemus was not only powerful, but he was rich. He was financially wealthy. He could have had anything that his heart would want. But with all of his accomplishments, with all of his status, with all of his prosperity, with all of his power, and all of his riches, there was still something missing in his soul. There was an emptiness in his heart. At this moment, his only desire was to seek Jesus.

I try to picture Nicodemus and what he may have thought. I know Jesus has the answers. He would think He's not like anyone I've ever met. The miracles He's performing; No one has ever healed a blind man. Could this be the long-awaited Messiah? Perhaps He really is the Son of God.

Maybe He is God, like the people were saying. If you're here today or you're online watching, maybe you're wealthy beyond measure or maybe you don't have anything at all. Maybe you're searching for answers about life.

Please hear this. When you have Jesus in your life, when you've surrendered your heart to Him, when He becomes your main focus, you will have everything that you will ever need and so much more. Amen.

[Congregation says, "Amen."]

And God created us, and He loves us. God proved that by sending His Son as a sacrifice for us.

Titus Chapter 3:3-7 tells us **"Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. But when God our Savior revealed His kindness and love, He saved us, not because of the righteous things we have done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and a new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of His grace He made us right in His sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life."**

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When Jesus is Lord of your life, you'll be blessed. Heaven is promised to those who believe in Him. Surrender your life to the Lord. I promise you; you'll be blown away.

Let's continue in *verse 2 of John Chapter 3*. **“This man came to Jesus by night and said to him, “Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him.”**

Though the leadership in Israel hated Jesus, they recognized that He was sent by God. They heard talk going around that He was the long-awaited Messiah, that He was the Son of God, that He was God come in the flesh. Some believed but most didn't. Jesus was disrupting their corrupt practices. Again, He dared turn over their tables, as we mentioned earlier.

Throughout Israel's history, they kept backsliding as a nation. They would slide away into idol worship. They would return to the Lord and fall again. This was repeated over and over again. God chose and blessed the Jewish people. They were the apple of His eye; the Bible tells us.

God chose them to bring Jesus into the world. He would come through the lines of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. King David was also in that line, and so was Mary, the mother of Jesus. God brought the Bible through the Jews, His love letter to us, His instruction book for life on Earth, His guidebook for eternal life. Yet so many Jews were in a fallen state, and they were far apart from God, empty and unfulfilled.

And maybe you're here in church or online. Maybe you know the Lord. Maybe you said a prayer years ago to accept Him. You might even give an appearance in church of religion, but inside, your hearts are far from the Lord. And you know it. He loves you and is waiting for you to return. He has never left your side. God sees and knows your struggles. His grace is such that even in your fallen state, He wants to pick you up. No matter what you've done, He wants to make you whole. He wants your joy to return. He wants to be with you in heaven.

Nicodemus has respect and cares for God, and He sees the truth and the love that Jesus had. He's not seen love or truth in his inner circle, among his brethren or the priests. In fact, the priests are plotting. The leadership is getting ready to kill the Savior of the world, Jesus the Christ. Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night.

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The Bible tells us in *Proverbs Chapter 29:25*, **“The fear of man brings a snare, but whoever trust in the Lord shall be safe.”**

Nicodemus knew the wickedness of his associates. His peers would have persecuted him, so he comes to Jesus under the cover of darkness. The Jews in a town called - the Jews in town called Nicodemus, “Rabbi.” Rabbi means “teacher.” It carried with it a sign of respect. But he comes to Jesus and calls Him “Rabbi,” says Nicodemus.

Jesus grew up as a carpenter, yet He taught and preached God's word with such power and with such meekness. People came from all around the world to hear Him. Jesus talked with such detail and truth, and there was love and humility in His countenance. Nicodemus gave Jesus the utmost respect, and he called Him Rabbi.

In this same verse, too, he said to Jesus the leadership in Israel recognizes this truth. They realize that you are sent from God. These Jewish religious men witnessed what Jesus did, the teachings and the miracles, raising Lazarus from the dead, yet they would reject Him. You would think that they would bow down. You would think they would humble themselves, yet they rebelled instead of repented.

You know, “repent” is one of my favorite words. It means “to turn and change direction.” It means to stop running from God, to turn and start running towards Him. I promise you that repentance will bring you such blessings, to be blessed with a new and better life and have a joy in your life. Even through the trials that you go through, you can have a best friend in Jesus.

In *John Chapter 3:3*, Jesus is speaking. **“Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born-again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'”**

Jesus knows what Nicodemus wants, so He cuts right through the small talk. He gets right to the point. Nicodemus, unless you are born-again, you won't make it to heaven. Although the text doesn't say it, I'm sure Nicodemus is shocked. All his life he thought he was good enough. He thought he did enough works to get to heaven.

After all, he's Jewish, one of God's chosen people, the apple of God's eye. I'm a good person, he would think to himself. I'm not a sinner like the Gentiles. I've served God all my life. I read the Scriptures daily. I go to synagogue every Sabbath and even during the week.

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But here's this Jesus, Nicodemus is thinking, telling me, a religious man, that I need to be born-again, or I won't make it to heaven.

As a new believer in Jesus, I remember sharing the gospel with my family. "You're not one of those born-again Christians, are you?" I was so young in the Lord. I didn't know what being born-again meant. I just knew that there was a new me walking around. But I know what it means today. It's a spiritual birth that can only come from above. It's a gift from God. He's the one that gives it.

Your first birth was a physical birth. It was filled with selfishness and sin. Me, myself, and I were on the throne. My eyes were filled with lust and coveting. We could never forgive anyone. With this new birth comes a different life. You take on a new nature. You become a new creation. God will start to mold and shape you to be more like Jesus and less like ourselves.

One of my favorite verses is *2 Corinthians Chapter 3:18*. It reads, "**We all, with unveiled faces, are looking as in a mirror to the glory of the Lord and are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory; this is from the Lord who is the Spirit.**"

God is transforming us. From glory to glory means that we won't be the same tomorrow that we were today. As we continue to grow with Him, walk with Him, He continues to mold us daily. A glory can be a lesson from the scriptures that we read. It can be from a teaching that you heard at church. It can even be a rebuke from a brother or a sister who cares for you.

God improves our character and improves our testimony. As a potter spins the clay on a wheel, so we're spun around in this life. We're not the same, as Jesus changes us from one glory to the next. Sanctification is God separating us from this world. He takes away from us the influences that hurt us. He then brings us to the next glory; all the while being blessed with a new heart and a new mind change.

Also, with this birth, you have an all-new attitude. God flips you around. Your life was upside down. Your life is flipped right side up. He makes things right in your life. It won't be a perfect life. There will be difficulties, but your life will change for the better. God will bring you peace even in the midst of storms.

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The Lord gives us new priorities. God is now - God is first in our lives, even before our families that we were born into. We still pray for our families to be saved. We still meet and fellowship with them, but our new family will be with us for eternity. Amen.

[Congregation says, "Amen!"]

PASTOR LEITU: Our relationships with believers are just a glimpse, just a foretaste of what heaven will be like.

In John Chapter 3:4, **"Nicodemus said to Him, 'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?' "**

Nicodemus was puzzled by what Jesus said. He's a teacher of religion, yet he doesn't know or understand the phrase being born-again.

Moving on to John Chapter 3:5-6, **"Jesus answered, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.' "**

Being born of the water speaks of our first birth, the birth from our mother's womb. At birth, the amniotic sac breaks, and the water comes flowing out, and we're born. Then Jesus mentions being born of the Spirit.

As we continue in *verses 7-8*, Jesus will explain. John Chapter 3:7-8, Jesus says, **"Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born-again.' The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit.' "**

In *verse 8*, Jesus references the wind. In Scripture, the wind is likened to the Holy Spirit. We know the Holy Spirit is God, the third person in the Trinity. The wind is invisible. The Holy Spirit is invisible. Like the wind, the Holy Spirit can be felt, a gentle wind, the cool breeze during the summer, a hurricane that has power to destroy.

The wind comes and goes where it pleases, so too does the Holy Spirit. We can't see the wind, but we can see the effects of it. The wind blows by, and we see a branch move. We see the coconut trees swaying. So just as we can't see the wind, so too we can't see the Holy

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Spirit, but we can see the effects of the Holy Spirit. We see the change in a person's life. The Holy Spirit enters a believer's heart, a new believer's heart. They become a different person.

2 Corinthians 5:17, Chapter 5, verse 16 tells us, **“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he's a new creation. Old things have passed away; behold all things become new.”**

The Holy Spirit, whom we can't see, starts His work. What are some of these effects that we can see? What changes can happen? Some changes happen instantly; some take a while.

Alcoholics: They stop drinking. Some become worship leaders, and some even become pastors. Thieves stop stealing. Adulterers stop fooling around. Husbands stop beating their wives and kids. His wife finally respects and submits to him. His kids are now at peace at home. They even get saved. Bad language and foul mouths get cleaned up. Covetous people are happy with what they have. Atheists: They now love God. They can't get enough of Jesus.

If you're here in the sanctuary or online and you rejected Him, Jesus, for whatever reason, you're fighting against what your mind and heart tells you is true.

Romans Chapter 2:14-16 tells us, **“Even Gentiles who do not have God's written law show that they know His law when they instinctively obey it even without hearing it. They demonstrate that God's law is written in their hearts for their own conscience and thoughts either accuse them or tell them they are doing right. And this is the message I proclaim — that the day is coming when God through Christ Jesus will judge everyone's secret life.”**

Gentiles never had a Bible to tell them that sin was wrong, but their conscience told them that sin was wrong. Their conscience also told them that there is a God. God created us all. He made us to know Him. In this life, we will never be satisfied without Him. I want to encourage you who don't know Him. Surrender.

John Chapter 3:9 tells us, **“And Nicodemus answered and said to Him, 'How can these things be?’ “**

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In *verse 9*, Nicodemus, to his credit, approached Jesus the right way. He humbled himself. He didn't ask "why," but he asked "how." He didn't come to Jesus with an attitude. He didn't come to Jesus with his credentials.

He didn't say, "Look, Jesus, I'm a member of the Sanhedrin, I'm a ruler in Israel, and I have political clout. I'm a Pharisee; I have all the connections. I attend all the best religious - I attended all the best religious universities. People come to me for religious answers." He could have directed Jesus to all his good works, all his good deeds that he's done all his life. He had a laundry list of good works, things he had done for God since his youth, things he did for his community, things he had done for his fellow man.

Instead, he humbled himself and asked God "how." You know, humility is attractive to God. The doors of blessings are open to the humble. God resists the proud and pompous heart, but He gives grace to the humble. He also exalts the humble. He adorns the humble with salvation.

Proverbs Chapter 22:4 tells us, "**By humility and fear of the Lord, are riches and honor and life.**"

Humility is so attractive to people as well. I came across the definition of humility, and it goes like this. It's the absence of pride and arrogance. People are more prone to esteem the humble, and it's not easy to warm up to someone who's puffed up with pride. If you're not yet saved, if you hadn't put your faith in Jesus Christ, please don't wait. His return is sooner than you think. Make sure your salvation is settled with the Lord. The Bible tells us that Jesus is the way to heaven.

John 14:6 tells us, "**Jesus said to him, 'I am The way, The truth, and The life. No one comes to the Father but through Me.'**" Jesus is that path to heaven. There's no other way by which you can be saved.

Ephesians Chapter 2:8-9 tells us, "**For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves. It's a gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.**"

God doesn't save you by your good deeds or your works. As we spoke about in the last two weeks, He knows pride will set in, and God hates pride. The Bible says in Romans. "**There is none righteous.**"

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Romans Chapter 3:23 tells us, “That **All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.**”

Sin separates us from God for eternity. Hell was created for the devil and fallen angels. It's also a place for those whose names are not written in the Book of Life.

Romans Chapter 6:23 tells us, “**For the wages of sin is death. But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus, our Lord.**”

Again, it's an eternal penalty and separation. It's called death. And that's why death exists. The sin in the Garden brought death to all mankind. That's why we need a savior. That's why His name is Jesus.

Romans Chapter 10:9 tells us, “**That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.**”

So when you humble yourself and admit you're wrong and believe that Jesus died on the cross and rose again on the third day, you will be saved. All you have to do is just call out to Him.

Romans Chapter 10:13 tells us, “**Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.**”

That's all you have to do. Believe by faith and call out to Jesus. God wants to do a great work in your life, you here in the sanctuary, you online. He's waiting for you to call out to Him.

Now, I'd like to address the believers here who continue to walk with the Lord Jesus.

Whether you recently came to the Lord, or you've been faithful for many years, the Lord has a word for you this year.

I'm reading from *Romans Chapter 12*. *Romans Chapter 12:1* tells us, “**I appeal to you, therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.**”

Give yourselves completely to God. Give Jesus priority in your life, top priority. Jesus sanctified us, sacrificed for us, excuse me. So let us sacrifice for others.

Romans 12:2 tells us, “**Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.**”

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You know, the devil wants to rob, kill, lie, and destroy your life. Don't let the enemy separate you from God. Renew your mind by reading God's word, the Bible. Let God continue to transform you into His image. Find out what God's will is for your life and follow it.

If you obey, it will be an amazing journey. Just ask the guys who came back from Nepal.

Romans Chapter 12:3 tells us, **“For by the grace given to me, I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”**

I mentioned it earlier, the attractiveness of humility, how pride is nauseating and repulsive. You have a calling from God. So obey and enjoy it. Amen.

[Congregation says, “Amen!”]

Romans Chapter 12:4-8 tells us, **“For as in one body, we have many members, and the members do not at all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.”**

There's a tendency to think more highly of ourselves in our ministries, especially in church. We can forget that our call in ministry came from God. I see many fall because of pride.

But each of us has his or her calling from the Lord. Be faithful in the calling that God has given you. God is love, and He forsakes pride and a prideful attitude. Love calls us to honor and respect all who serve, our brothers and sisters here in church. Love and respect them and the volunteers who give their hearts and time who sweep the floors and take out the trash.

For those whom the Lord guides in leadership, deacons, elders, pastors, though we serve in different functions, we are one. We are all one body and should love one another. And I love going to conferences that we have where love abounds. You ever see these people that

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come from the mainland? They come from all over the world to Calvary Chapel conferences. And you see that same love that we have here in church there, people we've never met. But I've also met Christians who are conceited as well.

Romans Chapter 12:9-11 tells us, **“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal. Be fervent in Spirit. Serve the Lord.”**

Let us serve our brothers and sisters here in church and let us love them as well. Amen.

[Congregation says, “Amen!”]

You know God has always been there for us. Do the same for our brethren who are in need. Be eager to serve; don't be lazy or sluggish. Help your brother and sister.

Romans 12:12-15 tells us, **“Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.”**

Don't forget that the saints in the Bible are all believers. If you've accepted Jesus as your Savior, you are a saint. Amen.

[Congregation says, “Amen!”]

We should always be in prayer for the body of Christ and always seek to comfort those who are hurting.

Romans 12:16-19 tells us, **“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God. For as it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine. I will repay,’ says the Lord.”**

You know, living in harmony and peace is easier said than done. When we're challenged, our flesh rises, and we sin. Let our God fight our battles. God will repay in His time and in His way.

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Finally, *Romans Chapter 12:20-21* tells us, **“To the contrary, 'if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by doing so, you will heap burning coals on his head.' Do not be overcome but overcome evil with good.”**

Tonight we are going to partake of communion. And this would be a perfect segue into communion for Jesus was never overcome by evil, for He is God, and He is always good, even to those who have hated Him.

But the time is coming, and the hour is at hand. This was the Last Supper, a Passover Seder meal. There will be another meal but not here on earth. Soon Jesus would usher in a New Covenant in His blood. The Old Testament, the Book of Jeremiah, we read that the Gentiles were always included in God's plan of salvation. Though the Jews, never; they balked at that.

We see that in *Jeremiah Chapter 16:9-21*. Jeremiah says, **“O Lord, my strength and my fortress, my refuge in a day of affliction. The Gentiles shall come to You from the ends of the earth and say, 'Surely our fathers have inherited lies, worthlessness, and unprofitable things. Will a man make gods for himself, which are not gods? Therefore, behold, I will this once caused him to know. I will cause him to know My hand and My might. And they shall know that My name is the Lord.”**

So yes, this New Covenant in Jesus' blood is for us Gentiles as well as the Jews. The Old Covenant was lifeless. No one obeyed it. The Bible tells us that, **“all have sinned and fall short of God's glory.”**

In the New Covenant, God gave us His Holy Spirit. He gave us this Holy Spirit to give us the desire and heart to follow Him.

Jeremiah Chapter 31:33-34 tells us, **“But this is a covenant that I will make with the House of Israel after those days,”** says the Lord. **“I will put My law in their minds and write it on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.**

No more shall every man teach his neighbor and every man his brother saying, “Know the Lord.” For they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them,” says the Lord. **“For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more.”**

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So let us partake of communion together. If you don't have your communion elements, they're at the back by the doors.

I'll be reading from the *Book of Luke Chapter 22:14-20*. **“When the hour had come, He sat down, and the twelve apostles with Him. Then He [Jesus] said to them, “With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”**

Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, “Take this and divide it among yourselves; for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes.” And He took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, “This is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.”

[You can open the top of the cup and let's partake together]

“Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.”

So let us take partake of the cup. Thank You, Lord. Kapono, come up. Why don't we stand? And let's pray if you're able to.

Father, we come before You throne today, this evening. And we thank You, Lord, for the salvation that You wrought through Your Son. We never forget. We never forget the cross, the sacrifice that You made, Jesus, Father.

We are so sorry, Lord, for what we did, for our sin that You had to initiate the cross, Lord. And so I come before You to just say, “Thank You, Lord.” Thank You for Your plan of salvation, Lord, that You would have to send Your son Jesus to die on a Roman cross.

Jesus, forgive us for the pain, the shame that You had to endure. Lord, we never forget. We never forget what You did for us because of Your great love that You have for us. Your word tells us that, **“God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believeth shall not perish but have eternal life.”**

And so we're grateful and we're thankful. And Lord, we never forget what You did for us, Lord. We come before Your throne to say, “Thank You, Father.”

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Thank You, Jesus. And we thank You, Holy Spirit, for how You lead and guide us in our lives and how You led and guide us tonight, Lord. So we come before You to praise You, and to thank You, and to give You all the glory that You so, so, so deserve. And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.