One Big Happy Family — Delivery Transcript

Colossians 3:12–17 (CSB) · Wes Terry · Sunday, July 3, 2022 · *Standalone Sermons — 2022*

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All right, if you have your Bible, we're going to be in the book of Colossians. You know, I thought about preaching Revelation 17, but then I thought, the kids, the kids. It would be such a disaster. So we're going to look at a passage in Colossians that I think is family-friendly and not family-friendly, because a lot of you in here don't have your family with you, you're empty nesters; maybe you didn't have a very good family growing up and maybe your family that you tried to raise just didn't work out too well and so family is a source of pain for you.

Even the word family— just please stop saying it, because it's upsetting. And you need to be reminded that when you think about family, it's not just that our biological families are the only game in town when it comes to God's ideal for the family. In fact, they're almost an inferior source of understanding what God's design is for family. God's ultimate design for family is not predominantly seen in the biological family, but it's predominantly seen in the overarching household of God, the family of God. In fact, the same thing is said of marriage in Ephesians chapter 5.

God created marriage. It's a good gift from God. But he created it as a reflection or a mirror of the gospel. And in a similar way, our biological families, for good or for ill, have as their ideal, if you want to use the Platonic ideas, the ideal is God's family in heaven, the eternal family. Our earthly families are here today, gone tomorrow. They kind of come and go with us as the founders, matriarchs, patriarchs, whatever you have. But God's family lasts forever. And so it's not surprising that when you look at the New Testament, you see metaphors like family being applied to the church, even a gathering like this church, this local church, Broadview Baptist Church, in the New Testament would have been talked about as a family.

In fact, did anybody grow up in church and you called your preacher brother? Brother Jerry, Brother Tim, some people call me Brother Wes, Brother Frank. I remember Brother Frank in our church growing up. Brother Frank led the music. I think he smoked for like 80 years, even though he'd only been alive for 60; he'd been smoking for 80. Just like born with a smoker's lung. And he'd be singing and coughing up all this snot and phlegm and stuff. Good old Brother Frank. May he rest in peace, you know. That's just not random; that's not just like Christians being weird, okay?

That's a biblical ideal. There's all sorts of passages. We're looking at Colossians, which is a good place to start, but in Ephesians, which is a sister book of Colossians. Ephesians chapter 2, verse 19, God actually— or the Holy Spirit, in inspiring the Scriptures— talks about the church as a family. He says you're "no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members" of the household of God, or "members of God's household." So it's a family. Galatians chapter 6, verse 10 is another example. As we have opportunity, let's do good for everybody, but especially those who belong to the household of faith.

So this idea that the church is a family. First Timothy chapter 5, verse 1: Don't rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a what? As a father. And don't rebuke a younger man, but exhort him as a brother. Older women as mothers and younger women as sisters. Now none of these older women in our church want you to come up to them and say, Hello, Mother. You know, that would just be weird and awkward. But the respect with which you treat them — I don't think any younger women want to hear you say sister either.

Sister, sister. That would be awkward, but it's this idea that I didn't choose you, just like you didn't get to choose your biological family. They were just— it is what it is, baby. You got what you got. You don't get to choose your church family. You can choose what church you go to, but you don't get to choose what people go to that church. Eventually there will be people there who are not like you, who don't look like you, think like you, act like you. But it's a good thing because God puts you in the context of that family.

And we grow one another, we test one another, we shape one another, encourage one another. We are the family of God. I love this passage in Matthew where Jesus is being asked by his disciples, Hey, Jesus, your mom wants to talk to you. She's outside. And it's almost like he disses his mama. He says, who's my mom? Who's my mother? Who's my brother? Those who do the will of my Father in heaven, that's who is my brother and my sister— and yeah, my brother and my sister and my mother. In other words, the true family is our Christian family, our family in heaven, God as our Father.

Jesus as our brother, the Holy Spirit as that unifying person who brings everything together in love. Scripture refers to the church as a family. Now, that being said, for a church to be a healthy church, it needs to be made up of healthy families. In other words, nuclear families who are taking the truth of the Scripture— whether it's a traditional nuclear family or

whether it's a hodgepodge from other things, if it's just you, you have what you have— there is a design, there is a blueprint, there are keys that make for healthy families.

And when those families, moms and dads, brothers and sisters put into practice God's practices in their nuclear families, and those families participate in the context of a local church, then you have a healthy church. And so this message this morning is for both. It's for our nuclear families because healthy families make for a healthy church. In fact, when you read later on in this passage in Colossians, the same thing happens in Ephesians. You keep reading and you get into what are called these household codes, which were not totally new to that culture.

They had all kinds of household codes with Aristotle and Plato and other people. But what Paul did is he Christianized them, and he said, Here's what the culture thinks a healthy family should be. But here is what a Christian healthy family should look like in light of who Christ is, what he's done, his teachings for how we should interact with one another. This is what it looks like in the home. And this is what he says leading up to that household code of Colossians chapter 3, starting in verse 12: "Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on"— like you would put on your clothing every morning— "put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience."

And all the mamas and the sisters and the brothers said, Amen. Compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience. "Bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive. Above all, put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. And let the peace of Christ, to which you were also called in one body, rule your hearts. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." And so this passage, short, succinct as it is, is the blueprint. It gives us keys for how to have one big, happy family in the Lord Jesus Christ, whether it's in your home or whether that's in our church. And the words are important. It's one family. There's not multiple families of God. It's not like God has multiple plans of redemption. There's one plan of redemption, one Jesus, one Lord, one death, one resurrection, one church, one mission.

One. It's a big one. It's not just white people, not just black people, not just brown people, not just Americans, not just people in Romania, not just Poland, not just Tanzanians. It's literally Revelation 7, people from every single tribe, tongue, and nation on the earth. It is a big, diverse family, and it's a happy family. They're joyful. They're singing. They're thankful to the Lord for their deliverance. Christians should be the happiest people on the planet, not the meanest or the grumpiest. So how do we go about that? This passage gives us keys.

And I'm not going to tell you anything that's super insightful. I wish I could. I just don't have anything insightful to say today. It's simple. It's right there in the text. It's obvious. But I can guarantee you, every single person who walked in this room, myself included, we need to be reminded of these simple, basic building blocks of what makes for a happy family. And right there in the text, I'm going to break it down three ways. Let the love of Jesus Christ lead in your homes, let the peace of Christ rule in your homes, and then let the word of Christ dwell.

They come right out of the text. Above all else, put on love, so let love lead. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts. And then finally let the word of Christ dwell richly among you. So we're going to look at those three things, make some application, and then we're done because there's kids in the room. So let's be short. All right. Let's get this over with. First, let's let the love of Christ lead in our homes. You notice that list he starts out with, he lists all these different virtues: kindness, compassion, humility, gentleness, patience.

I don't know about you, but whenever I read a list like that in the New Testament, it just kind of goes over my head because there's so many words and that's tempting to do. So it's helpful when he does that list, he follows it with the phrase, above all else. Anytime you see the phrase above all else, it's almost like a, Oh, this is what he's talking about. This is what's most important. And the thing that he says that is above all else is love. Agape. And he says that love is the bond of perfection, as the literal— that's how the Greek translates it.

I think the CSB says the perfect bond of unity.[1] It's the perfect bonding agent. How many of you kids in here have ever played with glue? How many of you have ever eaten a little bit of glue in your life? Kindergarten, yeah, baby. I got a good dose of that medicine in my life. Glue. What does glue do? Glue holds things together, right? That's the purpose of glue. You got two pieces of paper, you want to bring them together, you put glue in between them, put your little glue stick down, bond them together.

In our family we have a Ford Expedition 2010. It's barely making it anymore, but it's a great car. But with age every car, you know, breaks down, and our car, the fender's kind of— the glue stopped working on the fender, so it's kind of flapping in the wind. When you're driving at certain speeds, it's just like— that almost puts you to sleep. It's a nice lulling sound. And it was driving my wife crazy. She said, You got to fix that fender. So I went to the AutoZone or whatever the store was.

And I looked for some glue to hold it together. And the super glue wasn't going to do it. The duct tape wasn't going to do it. No, that was my first recommendation. But it was this special kind of glue. A glue specifically suited for that kind of plastic. And it did, it worked beautifully. You put the resin with the stuff and you mix it together, and I put way too much and it's almost like a new paint job on top of the glue stick thing. But it worked perfectly until the other fender started messing up.

But that fender's perfect. So that's basically the picture Paul is saying: in the home, in the church, God has a destination that he's taking us. He has a— think of perfection. The Greek word perfection is the word telos. It means to be complete. It means to be working properly, like the fender's supposed to be a certain way. If it's perfect, it doesn't mean it's faultless, sinless. It just means it's achieving its purpose. Well, you have a purpose as a person. We have a purpose as a church. You as a family, you have a purpose as a family.

We all have dreams, hopes, ambitions, goals. What Paul is saying is, love is the glue that's going to hold you together until you get there. It's good to be smart. Smarts is not enough to hold things together. It's good to be disciplined. Discipline's not enough to hold things together. It's good to be zealous, it's good to be cheerful, it's good to be all sorts of different things, but those things are not sufficient to get you across the finish line, to hold things together until they arrive at their intended destination. Do you know what the one single thing is that will get you across the finish line?

It's love. It's love. Not discipline, not willpower, not money. Love. And not just any love. He uses the Greek word agape. I think when we think of love today, it's almost wishy-washy sentimentality, warm, fuzzy feelings in my heart. We almost think of love like a crush or, you know, other different— that's not the biblical definition for love. You've probably heard this before. Agape love is a love that originates in the lover, not in any attractiveness in the beloved. It's a love that's given to the other, whether they're worthy of it or not.

It's a love that is a verb. It acts. In First Corinthians chapter 13 you have a different list, but it's the same idea. Love is patient, love is kind, does not envy, does not boast, is not arrogant, is not rude, does not insist on its own way, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love is an action, love is a verb, it's not passive, it's active, it's not just kind of taking a ride, sweep me away. No, it's on the streets, it's doing the hard work.

It's taking the towel off, it's washing the feet. Love is a verb. And that's what Paul is saying holds your family and holds our family as a church together until we arrive at that intended destination. How specifically does it act? Well, that's what the seven words are for. How specifically does it act? It acts with compassion and kindness and humility and gentleness and patience and forbearance and forgiveness. That's seven virtues. That's not accidental. A lot of times these lists have seven because seven was the perfect number, the complete number. And so he's not trying to give you an exhaustive list.

He's just picking out seven virtues off the top of his head that relate to life in the home and in the church. And he's saying, this is what love looks like. Love is compassionate. In other words, love has a heart. Love gives a darn. When love sees the beloved hurting, suffering, having a hard time, it doesn't say, Well, you deserve it and serves you right and I told you so. I guess it could do that a little bit, but it has a heart. It feels sorry for that person. It's with tears.

I wish she would have listened. I'm so sorry that this has happened to you. It's compassionate, just like Jesus had compassion on us. It's kind. Kindness is kind of like compassion, but it's an extra layer. It's, I'm sorry you're going through what you're going through, so I'm going to enter into the mess and brokenness and I'm going to help you out. I'm going to lend you a hand. I'm going to give you some cash. I'm going to alleviate your suffering. I'm going to get involved. That's what kindness is. It's compassion, it's kindness, it's humility.

That's not the normal word for humility. It's the same word that's used in Philippians 2. When Paul says don't have a lofty opinion of yourself, but rather elevate the interest of others ahead of your own. We've all had instances, if you've ever been married, where you feel like you didn't marry Superman, but he thinks he is, or you didn't marry the greatest thing since sliced bread, but she sure thinks that she is. This kind of inflated ego, cherishing ideas of their own self-importance. You look yourself in the mirror and say, You are the most important person in the world.

I'm being a little bit facetious, but this is the opposite of that. This is sober judgment, this is humility, this is I'm not all that, it's not all about me. I'm just as broken as the next person. So instead of the family orbiting around my agenda, I'm going to put the needs of others ahead of myself, elevating the interest of others as more important than my own. That's humility. Thinking of yourself less. Gentleness means the opposite of brashness. Your mom ever tell you, Take a chill pill? Chill out. That's this word.

It's even keel. It's chill. Patience: two Greek words, makrothumia. Macro, we know what macro means, it means big. Thumia is— think of thumia as your fuse, how long it takes you to go off the— you know, get mad. So he's saying have a long fuse. Of course your kids annoy you, but put up with it. Of course, your parents make you mad. You don't understand why they won't let you play on your iPad all day, every day for the rest of your life. But put up with it. Be patient. Be a long-fused person.

And then finally forbearance and forgiveness. We're going to talk about those in just a few minutes. But this is what love does, this is how love acts. And notice he says the power for that kind of love is not within you, it's outside of you. Notice he says in verse 12, as beloved children, love one another. As people with whom God has been patient, be patient. As people for whom Jesus put your interest ahead of his own. He laid down his life for you. Now you lay down your life for one another.

That's the source. If you're taking notes: in order to love others like God, you've got to remember you're loved by God. That's the dynamic. And to the degree that you forget the gospel, to the degree that you kind of live as if you're saving yourself and God should save you because of just how awesome you are, to the degree that you're living in that pride and arrogance is the degree to which you will not be able to love people well. But to the degree

that you live in the love of God, to which you rejoice in your own forgiveness and God's grace, it is to that degree that you're going to love other people well, as beloved children.

Here's a quote from Charles Spurgeon. I just love— I've used it in several different messages before: "Christ loved you before you loved him. He loved you when there was nothing good in you. He loved you though you insulted him, despised him, and rebelled against him. He loved you in your backslidings, and he loved you out of your backslidings." Can anybody say amen to that? This is a perfect picture of parental love. Before you even had your baby, you loved your baby. Before they could even be in the world and be cute and poop and sleep and all that stuff.

They were the apple of your eye. That's how God loved us. Before we were lovely, before we were lovable, He loved us. If you've ever had kids, you know they'll eventually turn into teenagers and lose their ever-loving minds. They'll insult you, despise you, rebel against you. True parental love never gives up, never quits, always committed to the very end. You know that phrase, a face only a mother could love? That's what's going on here. That's the kind of love with which we've been loved by God. And here Paul is saying, live in that love.

Let your identity be shaped by that love and let it fill you with power to love other people the same way. That's the kind of love that needs to lead. That's the kind of love that's going to glue you together. That's the kind of love that's going to get you across the finish line. Above all else, put on love. So let the love of God lead. Secondly, let the peace of Christ rule in our homes. Colossians chapter 3, verse 15: "Let the peace of Christ, to which you were also called in one body, rule your hearts.

And be thankful." The word translated rule means to be in control of or to be the determining factor of something. And the word peace comes from the Hebrew word for shalom. It means wholeness or put together or have you ever had that moment in your family when no one's being crazy and you don't have anywhere to go or anybody to be? You can just kind of be at peace. Usually lasts for like sixty seconds? Oh, that's shalom, that's peace. And Paul is saying, let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, which means in your heart the way that you feel, the meditations of your heart, Jesus Christ needs to be the determining factor of what is and what is not in there.

I have an illustration of a referee. You kids watch sports, you know what a referee does. What does he do when someone breaks the rules? What does a referee do? Right? He blows his whistle. I'm sorry, sir, you can no longer do that. Five-yard penalty. That's out of bounds. This is inbounds. Touchdown. They're the one that's in control. They're the determining factor. Think of Jesus like a referee. Or a traffic cop. This is allowed, this is not allowed. This is a permissible thought. This is not a permissible thought. This is helpful.

This is not so helpful. I can understand why you might think that, but let's not dwell on it too much longer. It's going to disrupt the peace. And if you will be sensitive to the Holy Spirit and not living in sin, not, you know, on a— how we get sometimes, but if you will be sensitive to the Holy Spirit, he will, he will literally be a referee on your heart, and he'll say, That comes in, that comes out. That's helpful, that's not helpful. I don't know how to explain it. It almost is a still, small voice.

It is a whistle in your heart where Jesus says, if you want the peace to rule, that can't stay there. You can't dwell on that. And that doesn't mean you never disagree with people in the church. Doesn't mean you never disagree with people in your home. If you married someone that you were at least attracted to, that means they're not like you in every single way. Most people don't marry themselves. Although there was that one Seinfeld episode where he dates himself. Did anybody ever watch that? She likes the same cereal as him and the same soup as him.

And at first he's all about it. He's like, it's so awesome. She's so much like me. We think the same thoughts, we go the same places, but then eventually he gets tired of himself and at the end he says, I hate myself. So good. So that's not who you marry. You don't marry yourself; you marry someone who's not like you. Sometimes you marry the opposite of you. You're not very organized. They are organized little Nazis. Like they're super organized. So that means you're going to disagree. You're not going to see eye to eye.

You're going to butt heads. You're going to conflict. That's good, that's healthy, that's normal. Peace is not the absence of disagreement. What peace is, it's the absence of hostility. Peace is I'm not going to be mean to you because I disagree with you. I'm not going to be rude or belittle you or somehow think myself superior. That's what peace does. And how Christ creates that peace is by saying, That attitude isn't welcome. That kind of speech is not helpful. That kind of mindset will not produce what you want it to produce.

So let Jesus be the referee. Let the peace rule. How do you maintain peace in your home? Because we've all had moments where peace dissolves. That's where we get to forbearance and forgiveness. You remember in his list of love, the last two that were on the list of love was forbearance and forgiveness. That's how the King James Version translates it. And I love that translation. Forbearance— think of a line. So forbearance is the stuff that people do that annoy the snot out of you all the way up to the line.

It's like, it's not a sin. It's not too far, it's just it's annoying. Do you remember growing up your parents would be like, Stop hitting each other, stop touching each other, and your sibling would just almost touch you. Did anyone else's brother do this? Almost touch you and then they would say, not touching you, not touching you, not touching you, not touching you and they would kind of dance on the line and have a party on the line but not cross the line. Forbearance is brushing that off. I'm not going to let it get to me.

I'm going to let it go, brush it off. My kids— Blaze is like eight, Addie Jo's like four, and they're big on telling on each other right now. It's always, Blaze did this, and, Addie's mean to me. The other day I was having a search team meeting and Blaze comes up and says, Addie's being mean. I was like, Did you just come all the way in here, disrupt this meeting to tell me that your sister's mean? Girls are mean, son. You're going to have to get used to it and brush it off.

It's a lesson we all need to learn. Now everybody's laughing, but we sometimes act like kids. We sometimes act like, Well, how dare they? And they should have known better. And, well, maybe they should have, but you're not going to have any peace in your life or any peace in your home if you're always demanding everyone to measure up to your standard of perfection. Much easier for you to just learn to brush things off. So up to the line, brush it off, and then when they cross the line, this is the hard stuff.

When they cross the line, forgiveness is, I choose not to treat you as you deserve to be treated. I choose to relate to you as if you did not do what we both know you just did. That's difficult. And Paul's not saying do it because they deserve it or do it because you have to. He's saying do it because that's how Jesus treated you. As beloved children, love and as forgiven children, forgive. It's not for them, it's for God. It's not just for their benefit, it's for your benefit because there's nothing like bitterness to erode a loving, healthy heart.

Brush it off. Let it go. Why? Because we're one body in the home, in the church, where God's plan A, B, and C, it begins and ends with us. Romans chapter 12, verse 18, I love this passage: "If possible"— meaning sometimes it's not— "as far as it depends on you"— because you can't force other people to keep the peace. "If possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." That's how you preserve. And then finally, very quickly, let the word of Christ dwell within you. "Let the word of Christ dwell richly among you, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing" with gratitude in your— it's so interesting.

Ephesians is a sister book to Colossians. So Ephesians chapter 5 and Colossians 3 are simpatico in so many ways. But in Colossians it says, let the word dwell. If you look at the same passage in Ephesians, it says, be filled with the Spirit. Almost as if to suggest that being filled with the Holy Spirit is the same as letting God's word dwell in your heart. Sometimes there's the big spirit-led churches, the spirit-filled churches, and then there's the word-filled churches, and we think those are two separate animals. In God's kingdom, they're really one and the same.

When you let the word dwell, you let the spirit fill. When you let the spirit fill, you let the word dwell. And he's not just talking about the Bible, although you could apply it to the Bible. He's talking in particular about the word that Jesus meant when he said, Abide in my word. He's talking about the gospel. He's talking about the message that he's the way, truth,

and life. He's talking about the idea that we're sinful, but God loves us anyway, and he sent his son into the world to die on the cross for our sins, so that if we would repent of sin and believe in him, we could be saved.

That God so loved the world, he gave his one and only son, that whoever would believe in him not perish but have everlasting life. That's the word we want to let dwell. Never move past it. Never graduate from it. Never forget it. Never think to yourself, well, now we're to the book of Revelation. We don't have to focus on the gospel. No, the gospel is the beginning, it's the end, it's everything in between. It is the power. When you focus on the gospel, the Spirit of God actually fills your heart and gives you new power and new resources to love and to forgive and to be patient and to let it go and to brush it off.

So when it comes to building a healthy family, in the church or in the home, let the word do the work. Let the word do the work. Four things, and then we're done. Homework to make the home work. Homework to make the home work. They come right out of the text. We've actually just talked about them. Number one, learn the word and live it out. I know that a lot of you are moms and dads. You got little kids at home. Family devotional probably feels very daunting to you. What do I do?

What do I read? How do I get 'em to actually pay attention? All they're doing is farting on each other and bugging each other, and I'm trying to pray and read the Bible. And all I can say is, something's better than nothing. So just anything, just something. In fact, these days I don't even read from the Bible. I just kind of creatively tell Bible stories that have the main point. So, you know, Daniel and the lions' den, David and Goliath, tell your own version, but tell the story, get to the main point.

Let them learn the word. And I know the Bible's a big book. I know it's bigger than the Harry Potter books. But you can start at the beginning and you can eventually get there. If we're going to break our Baptist tradition and let a girl up here to preach, that'll be something else, you know. That's awesome. Number two, let it go. Learn to let it go. Learn the word and live it. Number two, let it go. This applies, remember, brushing it off and letting it go. Forbearance and forgiveness. If you can learn this, you can get across the finish line.

And the only way to get across the finish line is to learn to brush it off and let it go. You'll never get where God wants you to go if you can't learn to let it go. And then thirdly, let them hear it. This is the idea in this passage: it says teach one another, admonish one another, rebuke one another, sing to one another. Over and over again it's talking about these one another. And the idea underneath it is open your mouth and say the words. Let the other person know.

In your marriage, the idea that you never talk about spiritual things, that's not super helpful or healthy. You don't have to like have a seminary class, but if the Lord's working in your

heart, say the words. And then not only what God's doing in your heart, but say the words of gratitude. Two, three times this passage talks about be grateful. In all things, give thanks. Well, that's not just giving thanks to God. That's also giving thanks to the other person for whom you're thankful. There's such power in your tongue when you say the words I love you, I appreciate you, I would be a wreck without you.

I could not survive if I did not have your help. You are smart. You are kind. You are disciplined. You know, I don't know the words. You come up with the words. But the point is all of us feel these things, right? If you are grateful for someone, you feel grateful. But gratitude that is felt but not expressed is not helping anybody. It's not. Who cares if you feel it if you never say it? So say the words. Say the words. And then lastly, love them through it. Love them through it.

A couple of years ago I heard a sermon built around a question. The sermon was decent, but the question was great. The question was, what does love require of me here? And I like the question because it links the word love with the word require. And it's a reminder that true love is sacrificial. True love costs you something. And love is above all else. Love is the glue that holds everything else together. And for you to truly love people the way they need to be loved, it's going to hurt you sometimes.

I don't know if you've ever had to forgive someone who really, really hurt you. That's one of the most loving things you can do because of how much it costs you to forgive them. How much it costs you to let it go. But that's what love does. And when you let love do what God has created it to do, it holds you together. It inches you forward step by step by step by step until eventually one day you stand up, you look at your family, you say, Here we are. We made it.

We're still together. We didn't kill each other. Or as a church, you know, we're maybe not where we thought we would be, maybe not where we imagined ourselves to be, but we're together. And people are being saved, God is discipling people, good things are happening, children are climbing on stage, everything's good. Love is that which holds us together. They're perfectly fine— unless they get to the drum cage, then maybe you want to go— no, I'm just kidding. So, hey, let's come down. We're done. Let's come down. Alright. So here's how I want us to respond as Taylor leads us.

If you're here this morning and you're not a Christian, I think the application for you is to begin there. You can't love people this way if you don't have the Holy Spirit living inside of you, if you haven't repented of your sin and made Jesus your Lord. I think most of us in the room would say, yeah, I'm a Christian. But I've moved on. Maybe I've made life more about me than it is about God. The way I think about my family has less to do with what Jesus wants and more to do with some preconceived notion.

I don't know where I got it from, but that's what's driving my mood. So we have an opportunity this morning to let our minds be renewed by the Word of God. And I just want you to ask the Lord on these four things— or three things: love and peace and the word— to ask the Lord for wisdom, to know how to grow in these areas and how to let the Holy Spirit make you one big, happy family. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for this time. We thank you for your word.

We do thank you for the families represented in this room. And we pray for the power that only you can give to make us one big, happy family. Would you give us wisdom, give us discernment so that we can walk in the lives that you have destined for us, the good works that you've created beforehand, so that we would walk in them. We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. All right. The altar's open if anybody wants to come to the altar and hang out with the kids. Or right there where you're seated, you can respond to the Lord.

Honestly, though, let's not rush out of here. Don't feel like you got to leave this place. In our last service, an eight-year-old boy named Oakley came down and gave his life to Christ. And so if your kids are at an age where they're wanting to go public with their faith like Jackson did with his baptism, or maybe the Lord's beginning to draw them to himself. And you want to come down to the front and make that public? Then you can certainly do that. But whatever the Lord leads during this time, you can do that now.

Heavenly Father, we thank you for this time. We remind ourselves that your word is living and active, sharper than any double-edged sword, that it is effective in accomplishing what you intend for it to accomplish. The word does the work, and so I ask that you would cause it to bear fruit in our life, in our homes, in our church, for the glory of Jesus and the advancing of his gospel to the ends of the earth. I thank you for this time together and as we leave this place, may we do so as people fully surrendered to your will for our life.

And we pray it in Jesus' name. Amen.

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1. Transcript note: spoken as "I think the CSB says the bond of perfection"; the CSB renders Colossians 3:14 "the perfect bond of unity" (the KJV has "the bond of perfectness"). Source: Colossians 3:14 (CSB, KJV), BibleGateway. ↩