

Live 2026-09-13 820am

Standing on your feet this morning as we begin together, are you excited to be in the house of the Lord today? Amen. Colossians chapter 3 verse 16 says, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another with psalms in all wisdom, with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. That's the reason we sing on Sunday mornings, it's a command from the Lord and why do we do it? It's so that we can encourage and admonish one another to be thankful to the Lord for what He's done.

Are you thankful this morning for what the Lord has done? He's a good and faithful God, amen. So if He's been faithful, if He's been good, sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah. If He's been able and no one else could, sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah.

Let the redeemed guide the Lord with their voices, remember the things He has done. We've heard from our fathers and we'll tell our children the wonderful things that He's done. If He's been faithful, if He's been good, sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah.

If He's been able and no one else could, sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah. This is true. Eternity, He is good, His love endures now and for eternity.

Eternity, He is good, His love endures, our history, our legacy. He has been faithful, He has been good, He has been able. Sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah, sing hallelujah.

Come on, let's give our God praise today. I love that song because it moves from a question, has He, to is He, sing hallelujah. And man, shouldn't we praise God for all that He's done, He's been so good to us.

Has He been good to you? Amen. He's been so good to me. Hey, it's good to be back.

I'm glad that I'm still the pastor here. Y'all let me come back, I'm so thankful for that. But I just want to tell you, thank you for forgiving.

Man, God has blessed us so much. I was going to just let you know over the next week or two, you're going to see some things outside. We're doing some work in our children's area.

We're going to be doing some things in the parking lot. We've got ways that we're going to be ministering in our community at Trinity Fest. We've got coming up a trunk or treat, a way that you can serve with that.

I just got contacted from one of our missionaries in Oklahoma, Brother Phil Lawrence. We're going to be kind of helping them out a little financially with a new church that they're trying to remodel that has been given to them. And they're trying to reach people over there.

He even asked, he said, you think some guys would maybe want to come out and help put some

sheetrock up in October? So we might take a load of guys and head out there for a few days to help. But, you know, I just want to say thank you for giving of your time, your talents, and your resources. Because all of that goes to help us further the kingdom of God.

Because we are not here for us. We are here to point people to Jesus so they may be changed with the life changing message of the gospel of Jesus Christ that Jesus saves. He doesn't make us better.

He makes dead people come alive. And so we can worship that. We can proclaim that.

And we can sing hallelujah. So join me as we continue in worship this morning and praise our heavenly father. And thank him for his son Jesus Christ.

God, we love you. We praise you. We continue in our worship.

And we lift high the name of Jesus Christ. Help us never to take it for granted that we get to come here today with brothers and sisters and sing our praises to you. And collectively proclaim that you save.

So we love you. We give you glory. Take our words and our thoughts and may they be acceptable in your sight, oh God.

In your name we pray. Lord Jesus, may that be our song. May that be our prayer, God, that we would depend on you fully.

You are the source of all we need. You are our hope and our righteousness, God. It's not by anything that we have done that we can obtain salvation and forgiveness and life and mercy.

It's all you, Jesus. And because of your life and death and resurrection, we can follow you. You give us a new heart, a new name, a new standing, a right place in a home with God.

So, Jesus, we are forever indebted to you. You truly are the fount of every blessing. So, God, teach us to be in tune with who you are.

God, most high, we give you our worship today. We continue to sing this morning. In Jesus' name.

God's mercy my grace, streams of mercy never ceasing, call for songs loud and proud in praise. Peace be sung, and glory sung, sung by many tongues of God. Raise the mountain, fix the morning, mount of thy redeeming love.

Jesus, safely to the world by the door, Jesus saw me with a stranger wandering from the fold of God. Keep to this view, be from danger, enter God's tender worship song. Oh, to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be.

Let thy goodness, like a feather, bind my wandering heart to thee. Oh, to love, oh, Lord, I need you. Oh, to use my love, Lord, take and steal it, steal it for thy good to love.

Oh, words, I adore your name. Oh, promise to my heart to sing your praise. Oh, words, I adore your name.

Oh, to use my love, Lord, take and steal it, steal it for thy good to love. I love that hymn because it just talks about how we're prone to wonder, right? We're prone to go our own way. But how he still, he can take our heart, he can seal us.

And I love, even at the end, that chorus that it says, tune my heart. Man, may that be our prayer. That we would be men and women that would let God tune our heart.

So that we could give the loudest praise. I dare say yesterday there was a lot of loud shouting at whatever game you watched. But our loudest praise ought to be for the one who gave his life.

So that we could be made right with God. Amen? Amen. God, we love you.

We praise you. And I pray that our loudest praise would not be for something that's going to pass away. But that's something that we will eternally be at your feet.

Thanking you for what you've done and who you are. God, seal our heart. Tune our heart today that it may be in line with you.

And all God's people said, amen. Amen. You can be seated.

Thank you, choir praise team. It's neat to see some of the young people. Man, we had a couple students in the choir.

That fires me up, man. That gets me excited. They had several requests for me to join the choir, but I didn't.

And we want them to sound a lot better. But you know what? I love singing praises to God. Man, I love that.

I enjoy the opportunity that we have to come and worship together. What great worship today. Well, if you have your Bibles, turn to Mark chapter 6. We're going to continue on the gospel according to Mark.

I appreciate so much Pastor John Michael filling the pulpit the last two weeks. And he did a great job. I've heard several comments about that.

And I've been able to watch online. And I'm so thankful that he has been able to take my place. But, man, I'm glad to be back and in the house of the Lord.

And today we come to the passage in Mark. It's very familiar. And I've entitled this sermon today kind of three lessons from dinner.

Three lessons from dinner. And I don't know about you, but you can learn many lessons around dinnertime or when you're hungry. And you see a lot of stories in Scripture around a meal.

And I was thinking about just some lessons I learned around dinnertime. And I wrote down three of them. First of all, I wrote down that I've learned through the years that everyone likes a little encouragement.

Everyone likes a little encouragement. I hope my mother-in-law doesn't watch this. But my mother-in-law has a habit of when we go over and eat at her house, she'll make a spread.

And we'll eat it. And, I mean, it's superb. And she'll usually say something like this, It wasn't that good today.

I was just off a little bit. And for years I would say, No, no, it was awesome. It was great.

It's the best I ever had. And then I realized that's why she was saying that. She wanted a little comment.

She wanted a little encouragement that her food was good. Everybody needs a little encouragement. I wrote another one down.

Real flavor doesn't come from a recipe. It comes from love. We have a man and his son that came to Wednesday night.

We had our men's. About every five, six weeks we get together and do food. And I said on a Sunday morning that I was going to make my red beans and rice.

And the guy came up after our meal. And I had made some of that. And he said, Preacher, I just thought you were joking in the pulpit.

But, like, you can really cook. And I said, I don't joke about food, buddy. I said, I don't joke about food.

And real flavor, he said, Well, what do you put in it? I said, It's love. And we had another, I had another man said, Man, my wife, text me. My wife wants your recipe for your red beans and rice.

I'm sorry I haven't responded to you yet. But I don't give out recipes because they're made with preacher love. And you can't write that down.

And then I put a last thing that I've kind of learned around meal time. And that is say the blessing before you eat. And observe the blessing before you eat.

As a kid, I traveled with my dad all over. And we would go to places that people wanted to be so spiritual at time to eat. They would pray for every missionary ever that lived in the world.

And the rolls and everything, the smell of the roast, you could smell the sweet tea. And it would be a prayer. And they would pray on and on and on.

And Mom would look up every once in a while and catch my eyes peeking and reaching for a piece of food. And she had the look. She never said it, but it was the look.

Just go ahead and touch it during the blessing and see what happens afterwards. And so you always say the blessing before you eat and give thanks. But, you know, we joke about that.

But I want to give you three lessons around a specific dinner time here. And once again, I have a few pictures. I'm going to do some pictures because maybe I'm getting old.

Maybe I'm turning into Brother Steve with more pictures. But I want to help you as we walk through this. In verse 30, we pick up the story.

We've just come out the last two weeks about kind of around the death of John the Baptist and the disciples being sent out. And they were doing ministry in Jesus' name. And we come down to verse 30 when the apostles come back.

And we read this. The apostles returned to Jesus and told Him all that they had done and taught. And He said to them, Come away by yourselves to a desolate place and rest awhile.

For many were coming and going and they had no leisure even to eat. And so if you can imagine the setting as we've tried to get you to immerse yourself in the setting. Remember Mark has written this.

But he's written a majority of this probably under the conversation that he had with Peter and his ministry with him. And so this is kind of that firsthand information from Peter. And so as Mark writes this, he says, Look, they were gone away.

The apostles had gone away and they came back and they were around Jesus. And He was talking to them. And they were excited.

They were saying, Look what we have done. Look what we've done in your name. We've done some of the same things that you've done for the kingdom.

And so they're excited and they're going. And you've got to remember these are younger guys and they're on fire. And so they have a mentality of go, go, go.

And so Jesus comes here and He just says, Come away and rest for a while. And probably in their minds they're like, Well, what does that look like? Why should we rest? We've got things to

do. And so you go on in verse 32 and it says, And they went away in the boat to a desolate place by themselves.

So once again we see this surrounding a boat there. And He says, Look, let's get in the boat. Let's go away where there's a desolate place.

And let's just take some time to rest. Let's take some time to get away. And the first word I want you to see this morning is the word or the lesson solitude.

Solitude. Our culture struggles with authentic rest. Here if you look at this Greek word, it's *anapausis*.

And literally it's a recurring word and a thought throughout Scripture that literally means rest, refreshment, renewal or relief. And you see this here that Jesus says, Look, you're going to burn out. You're a little tired.

You've been going. You need to step away, but step away in a different way. And so whether you're dealing with bodily fatigue or maybe you're struggling with emotions that you have, strained emotions or weariness from your walk in this world or maybe even you're struggling with the hope of heaven, that type of rest, this word really gathers all of life's burden into the promise that true peace comes from God.

And only by being with Him do you experience true rest and solitude. So here in Mark 6 we see this word on Jesus' lips as He has this desire for His disciples to experience rest. And the thing about it is the disciples did not even realize they needed rest.

They're a lot like we are today. Sometimes we get so busy, we get so busy even doing good things, we don't realize that we need rest. And I want you to remember that Christianity is not a system on which we're being graded on the fullness of our accomplishments of a spiritual calendar, but Christianity is a response of a faithful life to Jesus Christ.

Sometimes in church, and I've been at churches, and I've been on staff at churches, that there were so many things going on that you come to the place sometimes that you thought, when am I able to actually live this? I can remember I was at one church and we would have something every night of the week and I would find over a period of time that my relationship with Melanie or my family would be strained at times and I was doing something good, but I was not doing the thing that was great. We see this in 1 Corinthians 4, when Paul is speaking in the first two verses, he says this, this is how one should regard us. He says, look, this is how people should talk about you.

As servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. So as we are stewards of the gospel of Jesus Christ, as we live, this is how people should regard you. Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.

You know, that's one of the things about solitude that we struggle with, stillness and quietness, because our culture is, it's literally permeated with a philosophy that we must always be on the move. We must always be engaged with every aspect of everything. I mean, even in our spiritual lives, if we're not doing something spiritual, we're missing out or somehow we feel like we're a subpar follower of Jesus Christ, because often I've heard people say, now, Jamin, time is short and time is short, but I think we have to remember that God is still working even when we are not.

I think that's something that it's hard for sometimes us because there is a culture that we do reward hard work and hard effort, and those are great things, but I think sometimes it can go over into our spiritual journey and we feel like doing more makes us more spiritual. I call it a checklist Christianity, but here's the thing that I've learned through the years is God is still working even when I am not working, and we all need to be reminded of this. I love how a guy named Richard Foster, it's a great book if you ever, if you like to read, it's called *The Celebration of Discipline*, and he writes about the spiritual disciplines.

It's a great book. A guy took that and wrote another book later, Whitney, on spiritual disciplines, but this is what Richard Foster says in *Celebration of Discipline*, and I love it. He says, Jesus calls us from loneliness to solitude.

I think sometimes we confuse that. We feel like loneliness and solitude are the same things, but they're totally different. Loneliness is by ourselves.

Solitude involves time with Jesus Christ, and in his book, he talks about the fear of being left alone, and I think we all have that. Maybe you're a student, and you've just gone to college, and at your high school, you were a big deal, and you go to college, and now you're the low person on the totem pole, or maybe you're even successful in your work or your profession, and you're in the midst of everything doing, and you've got a responsibility, but you feel lost in the crowd, or maybe you're getting to that place where you're at a nursing home, and you just want to go home and feel like you're forgotten. We have a fear of solitude.

We think that solitude equals loneliness, and we can be afraid of it, but the rest that Jesus gives here in this passage invites the disciples to be a part of intentional solitude. Right? We find ourselves so, so busy. Have you all got one of these things? When I was gone the last two weeks and I was overseas, I was sitting there and I was sitting there with my phone, and I was taking a picture, and I set it down, and the phone rang, and when it rang, I picked it up, and the screen was black, and then it stopped ringing, and then all of a sudden, it didn't work.

The phone went to be with Jesus or wherever phones, they don't go to be with Jesus, and I had no cell service, so I had to get Melanie. We had to get Wi-Fi with her and tell everybody, you cannot get in contact with me because my phone doesn't work, and the first two days, I had reachitis. You all know what that is? Somebody's phone would ring, and I would try to reach to find it, and I was looking, and I mean, people need to be in contact with me, and after day three, it

was so nice.

I had gone through the withdrawal process of not having a phone, and I was just like, you know, Melanie said a very wise thing to me. She said, all of those texts and messages and calls will be waiting when you get a new phone, and they were, but it's that thing that we fill our time with so many things, and we forget what intentional solitude is. I've talked about this before, previously in a message out of Matthew 11, 28 through 30.

It's a very familiar verse. It's verses. It says, Come to me all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

The same word. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls for my yoke is easy and my burden is light, and if you remember, if you didn't, I talked about what the yoke is and back in the day it was this apparatus that you put on two oxen or two cows and it kept them together so one couldn't go ahead of the other and it would keep them in perfect unity as they went ahead so that they could be better together in the ultimate purpose of plowing a crop. And so Jesus is using this type of analogy to the people to say, look, my yoke that you will put on, some people would think that a yoke is going to be constraining but my yoke actually will help you be more effective eternally.

And so here, Jesus wanted the disciples to understand that we don't even see sometimes when we're exhausted but refreshment and revitalization comes from dwelling with God. I love how the psalmist says in Psalm 91, He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty. You know, for some of us here, we need to just abide in Christ.

We need to come to the place of solitude and rest that we come back and it's not just taking a nap although sometimes the most spiritual thing you can do is take a nap and rest, but it's coming to the place that you just say, God, I want You to be my sufficiency. I need You. As we sang earlier, I depend on You for everything.

And so as we see here, that first lesson is a lesson of intentional solitude, time away with Christ. But the next lesson we see in verse 33, it says, Many saw them going and recognized them and there on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. As they got in the boat and they went, you see this picture of the people went ahead of them.

Literally, they ran ahead of them on foot and was waiting for them as they arrived on the seashore. And verse 34 says, And when He went ashore, He saw a great crowd and He had compassion on them because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And He began to teach them many things.

So as He gets there and they're going away for solitude and they're going away to just have some time together and He gets to the seashore and there are people that have ran ahead and they're just waiting because of all the things that they have seen and experienced. Some that were

miraculous and some were by His teaching. But He gets there and instead of being disgruntled, it says, He had compassion as He taught.

And He began to teach them and I would say the second lesson here is sympathy. It's compassion. That's the word that we see there.

It's a spirit-wrought emotion in which the whole inner being is stirred toward merciful action. He looked at them and instead of getting frustrated, instead of saying, man, I can't believe this. I can't believe that you're interrupting this.

He had compassion on them. And it says how He had compassion like sheep without a shepherd. I mean, it's a great illustration how He looks.

Because if you know much about sheep, sheep need to be led. They will be in utter confusion without a shepherd and that's the analogy that He gives. And He comes to this place and He has this deep, heartfelt compassion because as He looks at them, He sees those who need the hope of a Savior.

And Jesus' compassion here is always followed by action. And I would like to say this. You'll never have long-lasting action without first having compassion.

It's hard to act upon something until you truly have a heart for it. It's hard. You know, the things that we do, the things that we have passion for in action, they come from a compassion, a love for something.

You know, last week after I preached in the Sunday morning service there on the island, we went to have lunch with a family and we were there and as we had lunch, kind of the matriarch, one of the elderly mothers were there and we got talking about compassion and we got talking about love and I was sharing how in my home we always said we love each other and we had no problem with hugging each other and my dad always gave us a kiss on the forehead before we left and she's one of the most precious ladies you have but she's very straightforward. She said, Pastor Jamin? I don't know how deep her voice was but she said, that's not how it was in my house. And I was like, oh man, here we go.

She said, we never said it a lot but we showed it all the time. My dad, and I had the English accent, said, my dad said, love is action. And I looked over at Melanie like, what's action? And she said, no, she's saying action.

And I said, oh, love is action. I said, yes ma'am, love is action. She said, I can tell you all day I love you but I'd rather have somebody that would show me.

I was like, yes ma'am, yes ma'am. Love is action but to have action, you have to have love. You say, how do you know that, Pastor Jamin? Because we do what we love.

Amen? Right? We do what we love. You know, I love how Paul says in Colossians 3, verse 12 and 13, he says this, put on then, as God's chosen ones, or as followers of Christ, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another, and if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other. Oh wow, here comes that phrase again that he uses in Ephesians 4, as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.

Man, that is convicting to me, right? Because we live in a world, as we talked about, solitude. We live in a busy world. We live in a world of go, go, go.

We live in a world of me. We live in a world of I. We live in a world that if we get offended, if we get cut off, if somebody talks to us wrong in the drive-thru, if somebody messes up with our plans, buddy, I'm going to let you know about it. But Jesus had a compassion for people because He understood eternal destiny.

So action comes from compassion and Jesus had this compassion for them as He looked out and I would challenge you today, do you have compassion for others? Do you see others as Jesus sees them? As a soul in need of a Savior and if they do not have a relationship with Jesus Christ, they will spend an eternity apart from Him in hell. Do you see people as pawns? Do you see them as something that you have to maneuver or do you see them as a very precious thing in the sight of God? Aren't you thankful that God had compassion for you that He sent His Son, Jesus, that you could be made right with the Father? And so we see that sympathy here. We see that intentional solitude and then I'll give you the last lesson this morning and we see that in verse 35 and beyond.

It says, And when it grew late, the evening time, dinner time, His disciples came to Him and said, This is a desolate place and the hour is now late. Send them away to go into the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat. But He answered them, You give them something to eat.

And they said to Him, Shall we go and buy 200 denarii worth of bread and give it to them to eat? And by the way, that literally there, that denarii with which the worth is, it's about seven months wages. I mean, He said there when He said, We'll give them, Should we buy 200 denarii worth of bread? And He said, Should we give them seven month wages? Is that enough to do it? And they're walking and they're talking and Jesus had come to this place and He says, They're like, Man, just send them away. Let's not worry about it.

And He said, No, you give them something to eat. And I can imagine the perplexity as they were hearing this. Like, how does that happen? I mean, how can that, that is impossible.

Now here's the thing about it. Had they seen God work already, Jesus work already? I mean, that's all we've seen is the miracle and the hand of Jesus Christ in their lives. But they come to

another place and they're like, I've seen this Jesus, but I'm not sure about this.

It reminds me so much of myself when we have seen the faithfulness of our Savior, but sometimes we struggle in the presence of our moment. And in verse 38, He says to them, Well, how many loaves do you have? Go and see. And when they had found out, they said five and two fish.

Now by the way, this is in Mark's Gospel. Remember, Mark writes it, but he has a very strong influence from Simon Peter in his life as he's probably writing a lot of the first hand elements from Simon Peter. And here in Mark, it does not give all of the details that John does.

John, in John, we know that it's a little boy, they go and it says, the King James says, a little lad, I believe, that has five loaves and two fish. And so it might be like, well, why did he leave this out here? It doesn't tell us why Mark left it out, but if Peter is reciting the story as it happened, I'm sure Peter doesn't want him in the story because the whole central figure of the story is not them, but it's Jesus and His provision. And so they go out and they find the loaves and the two fish.

And in verse 39, it says, then He commanded them all to sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sit down in groups by hundreds and fifties. Can you imagine this? They go get the five loaves and two fishes and He's like, just have them sit down.

And they've got to be thinking, yeah, okay. And? And? When? What are you doing? What are you doing, Jesus? I don't know about you, but I find myself there. Have you ever found yourself there? What are you doing? God, what are you doing? And the whole time, God's not sitting there going, oh man, what am I going to do? Okay, y'all just go sit down and divide them up in these groups and I've got to think of a plan here.

God. Jesus, the Son of God. He just says, look, don't worry.

I've got this. And so this is where in verse 41 it says, and taking the five loaves and two fish, He looked up into heaven and said the blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the people and He divided the two fish among them all. This is really where we get the example of praying or saying a blessing over our food.

It's an example that Jesus gave us. He always blessed it and gave it to the Father. And so in verse 42 it says, they all ate and were satisfied.

And they took up the twelve baskets full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were about 5,000 men, which we know if that was the men, they were that many more because you had women and children and so there were thousands upon thousands that were there. And our last lesson I want you to see here is not just solitude that is intentional, rest with God.

And not just compassion, sympathy, but service. I want you to see service. I'm going to give you

three things about service here.

First of all, Jesus has called you. There in verse 37, I love how Jesus answered them. He said, you give them something to eat.

Jesus has saved you to serve. He didn't save you to sit, soak and sour. Okay, I've been gone a little bit.

Hang on a second. Amen! Okay, I'm back. Right? He saved us to serve, not to just sit around to soak and to sour.

Jesus didn't need the disciples in the process, but Jesus wanted to use them in the process. Has that ever sunk in? Sometimes it took a long time for it to sink in with me. Jesus doesn't need me, but He wants me.

He called me. He changed me. He will use me.

And I think sometimes we need to be reminded of that where He said to them, look, you give them something to eat. Scripture says it's the foolishness of the preaching of the Word of God that brings men to repentance. He has chosen us to be a part of His divine plan that when we are regenerated from our sinful nature and we are saved and changed, to use us to further His message, the good news that Jesus saves.

And here we see that Jesus called them and Jesus has called you. But I want you to see also that Jesus has not only called you, Jesus has called you to use what you have. And He said to them there in verse 38, how many loaves do you have? Go and see.

Jesus knew how many loaves they had. He wanted them to just be part of that process and He called them to use what they had. Jesus calls us to use what we have.

What do you have? And by the way, let me say this. Jesus cares more about your availability than your ability. He cares so much about you being available than your ability.

Jesus comes to this place and He simply says, hey guys, what do we got to work with? Now He didn't even need the loaves and the fish. But He used what they found. And I would ask this this morning, what have you been given? You say, that's easy pastor.

I have nothing. Bingo. That's a Greek word by the way in the New Testament.

That's what He will use, your nothing. He will take your nothing and make something out of it. And I love how we see Jesus will take what they have and use it.

I thought about this. And you know, when I share stories, I'm always cautious to share stories. But the last two weeks, I'm so thankful for John Michael.

Many of you know he's our student pastor, but he's also my son-in-law. And I've watched him from a small kid back in fifth and sixth grade playing middle school basketball. And I've watched him as he has grown into a young man, as he went to college, as he has walked through his faith, and how he has left the secular world to full-time ministry.

And in the last two weeks, he's preached. And honestly, as I got to watch, I had a sense of pride in several texts and several messages and said, man, he did a really good job. And I'm so thankful for him filling in.

But many of you don't know that John Michael had a very bad speech impediment growing up. To the point that he had to take speech therapy as a junior in high school. That he struggled sometimes putting his words together.

But, God. I think sometimes we listen to the enemy and we're so quick to throw up objections and roadblocks of why we can't be used instead of simply putting our yes on the table with Jesus. Because I don't know what you have, but I know this, when you give it to him, he will take it and he will use what you have.

I love our church. I love our people. I'm so thankful.

But I'm gonna call out to people. Miss Anna Lou Blair is one of my buddies over here. And Miss Ruth.

God has used them in my life in a way that they probably don't even know. Because they write notes to me periodically. And they come at the very right time when sometimes, as my dad used to say, when you're lower than a snake in a wagon trail.

I'll go to my mailbox and I will sit there and Miss Anna Lou I'm not gonna say your age, Miss Anna Lou. Okay, I'm not gonna do that. She's a young lady.

In her nineties. But it'll say, I just want you to know I'm praying for you. I just want you to know that I'm thankful for you.

Don't give up. And after I read hers or Miss Ruth has written often and she said, we're so blessed to have you and Miss Melanie in our church. Thank you for serving.

I'm so thankful for you. Guys, I wanna tell you, no matter how bad my day is, I could charge hell with a water pistol. I could swing out over hell on a rotten grapevine and double dog dare the devil to do anything.

Because I am encouraged. I am lifted up. Now, here's the thing about it.

They're not gonna run races. They're not gonna build houses. They're probably not going.

I don't think, Miss Anna Lou, you're gonna go to Oklahoma if we go and help build on a building. I don't think she's gonna do that. But you know what she can do? She can write a card of encouragement.

I feel like, honestly, sometimes we need to stop telling why we can't serve God. And we would just respond to using what He's giving us to serve Him for His glory. And that's the thing that I end on.

It says, Jesus has called you to use what you have through His power. Man, that's so neat. When you surrender yourself, and by the way, I love what it says, Jesus broke the bread.

Man, I find out when I'm broken, I'm far more effective when Jesus breaks me and uses me. And in Scripture there, it says, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, He looked up into heaven and said a blessing and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples and sat before the people and He divided the two fish among them. I love verse 42.

And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up the twelve baskets full of broken fish, full of broken pieces and of the fish. And those who ate the loaves were about 5,000 men.

Jesus, He satisfies. Now, I've got one last picture here. I know it's a bad picture.

It's a cartoon. But this is how I imagine them there. Have you ever just been satisfied from a meal? Like I'm talking, belt, undoing, top of the button, open, satisfied.

Y'all don't look at me like y'all are real spiritual, right? Have you been there where you eat and maybe you've eaten too much and you just, oh. That's what I imagine they did there. Oh.

You know what? When you take what you have, what Jesus has called you to do and you use it through His power, people will always be satisfied. Because Jesus is enough. Jesus doesn't desire to use what is yours.

He desires to use what is already His. Whatever you have is from Him. And so if you sit here and say, man, I don't know that I can do that.

God has gifted you uniquely to do what only you can do and to reach who only you can reach through the power of the gospel. Not because He has to have you, but He wants to use you and has invited you into His story. Aren't you thankful that we're not just an object that God looks at, but we are a part of the body of Christ because we have been changed forever.

Would you stand at your feet and I'm gonna pray over us and we're gonna respond. And as you stand, if you just bow your heads and close your eyes. And I want to pray over us before we close out in worship this morning.

And maybe you're here and you feel alone. Maybe you have equated loneliness and solitude as

the same thing. And I want to encourage you that if you are lonely, you are not forgotten.

And where we find true peace is in the presence of Jesus. Maybe you need to go to Him and talk with Him and just say, Jesus, I want to know you more. God, I want you in my life.

I depend on you. And maybe you just need to carve out some time that you come in His presence. And if nothing but sit there in stillness, allow Him to speak to you.

Maybe you're here and you need to create some space in your life for solitude with the Savior. Maybe you're here and you need to be reinvigorated in your compassion for others. Maybe you have been testy.

Maybe you have been on edge. And maybe sometimes you have been frustrated with people, but you need to be reminded of the compassion that God had for you by sending His Son. And we need to reflect that compassion of Jesus to others.

And maybe you just need to serve. I don't know what that looks like. I don't know what you're gifted with.

But right now, the Holy Spirit is saying, you know, this is something that I've been given that I could use. Or maybe, God, what do I have and how can I use it for you? And all of this is not to gain the approval of God, but it's to respond to a God who loves us so much that He sent His Son that when we respond in faith, we are made right in our life now as a response to His goodness, His grace, and His mercy. So wherever you're at, if you want to step out during worship and pray, man, the altar is here.

Feel free to. If you need someone to pray over you, we're here. If you don't know Jesus and do not have a relationship, we would be glad to introduce you to Him and walk with you through that.

If you're looking for a church home and you want to have conversation about that, we would love to talk to you about that. God is doing some amazing things here. But more importantly, we want you to fall in love with Jesus Christ because there is no one like Jesus Christ.

And because He came to this earth and died on the cross and rose again, we are not only receiving life eternal, but we have abundant life now. Father, we love You. We give You glory this morning.

And I pray that You would take the words of Scripture, this story that we read, and maybe open our eyes and our hearts to things that we have never seen, that we may not just be informed this morning, but we may be transformed to live for You. We praise You. We worship You.

In Your name we pray. From age to age Through generations Your steadfast love remains Retrial, You go before me Guiding my steps with grace You have marked my life with loving kindness Oh, I can't help but say The Lord is good, the Lord is good to me The Lord is good, the

Lord is good to me Your love is so much better Than all the world could offer The Lord is good,
the Lord is good to me You've been my help Since endless time, yes You are my storm In every
season Never my hope and strength Even in the loss Nothing is wasted My soul will sing in faith
The Lord is good, the Lord is good to me The Lord is good, the Lord is good to me I know Your
love is so much better Than all the world could offer The Lord is good, the Lord is good to me Oh,
so good Oh, to me promises Are all I need Everything, everything So much, so much better
Better than Oh, to me promises Are all I need Better than Everything, everything So much, so
much This is our testimony All I've ever known, all I've ever seen The love of God is surrounding
me It's all I want, it's all I need And I shall most never lose It's surrounding me, it's all I need Hey,
this week, spend some time with God in solitude Hey, have compassion, show it And let's serve
Jesus, not to just do But because we've been changed God bless you, have a great week We'll
see you Wednesday night