

Harris Creek Baptist Church  
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Series: Philippians  
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Unified in Opposition  
Philippians 1:27-2:2; Acts 16:37-38; Romans 5:3-4

[Video – CBS News Live Coverage]

**Woman on the phone:** ...by flames, and it looks like the building is still on fire on the inside.

**Male News Anchor:** Which building are we talking about? The one that's western-most?

**Woman:** Let's see. Yes, sir.

**Male News Anchor:** Did you hear the explosion from your position?

**Woman:** Yes, we did. As a matter of fact, we heard it, because I was just standing there pretty much looking out the window. I didn't see what caused it or if there was an impact.

**Male News Anchor:** So you have no idea right now...

**Woman:** Oh, there's another one! Another plane just hit! Oh my god! Another plane has just hit! It hit another building! It flew right into the middle of it! Explosion. Oh my god. It's right in the middle of the building.

**Male News Anchor:** This went into the East Tower?

**Woman:** Yes. Yes. Right into the middle of the building. Right now, yes. That definitely looked like it was on purpose.

**Male News Anchor:** You saw a plane?

**Woman:** Yes, I just saw a plane go into the building.

**Male News Anchor:** Why do you say that was definitely on purpose?

**Woman:** It's because it just flew straight into it.

[End of Video]

Do you remember where you were when it happened? It's sobering, watching it. I know we just did for the anniversary recently, but just to watch it again, it kind of sucks you in and reminds you. I know there are a lot of you who don't remember where you were. You've heard about it second-hand, this thing that happened.

I was over on Eighth Street at my buddy's apartment, and he ran in and said, "Turn on the TV! Turn on the TV!" and I did. That's what I saw. Then what happened right after that was... We knew about the plane that went into the Pentagon and the one that was crashed into the ground. The guy comes out and says, "Our nation is under attack."

Do you remember that? "Our nation is under attack." Then what happened in the following days was everyone was a little bit on edge. Just a little bit like, "Okay, what's next? We're gathering information." People started watching the news, trying to figure out, "Okay, what happened? Where is this going? Is it going to happen again? How do we know that we're safe?"

Then there was the thickest patriotism I have ever seen, at least in my generation. Everyone began to lock arms. It didn't matter what color you were, where you were from, what language you spoke, if you were tall, short, how old you were. We were Americans, and we locked arms together. You might remember George W. Bush went to the third game of the World Series, and he threw out the first pitch.

He stepped onto that pitcher's mound and he had his chest out and he threw a laser beam, a strike. The entire stadium started chanting, "U.S.A.! U.S.A.! U.S.A.!" We were bonded together. Then from a faith perspective, you had theologians and Christians believing that we were going to see the fifth Great Awakening.

A great awakening is when the people band together and look toward Jesus. They return to church. They return to God's Word. They say, "Hey, we want to live according to this. We're no longer distracted. We're focused." Churches were as full as they had been, overflowing. Everybody was kind of going back to church, and we had locked arms. "If there is a God... In God we trust."

A great awakening is like a revival. So we thought we were going to see the fifth Great Awakening. There have been four in our nation's history, but alas, it faded. It didn't turn into much. But what brought the intense unity in our country was actually opposition. It was an attack. When there was an external force attacking us, we banded together.

That's what I want to talk about from the Scripture today, *Unity in Opposition*. Unity came from opposition, so we're talking about unity in opposition as Paul continues his letter to the church in Philippi. This is our third week in Philippians. In week one, we talked about the genesis of Philippians. We went to Acts 16. We saw how this church was born. We talked about Paul's intense love for them. We talked about how to grow a love for people.

Then last week, we talked about how the gospel gives us courage to share the gospel. We talked about courage *from* and courage *for* the gospel as Paul continued his letter. But this week, I want

to talk about unity that comes from opposition. We've talked a lot about unity here recently, but let me ask you a question. Why is unity important?

Who cares if we're unified? Why do we need to be unified? Why can't we be individualistic? Why can't we go about it in our ways? Why can't we be isolated? Why can't we just continue to watch church from home in our pajamas with a cup of coffee? Why do we need to be unified? Why is it even important that we get along? Do we understand the answer to this?

It's imperative that you understand that we have one Enemy, Satan, and he works through the evil forces of this world. He hates what God is doing in this place, the way that the gospel is being advanced in this place. He hates the way that lives are being changed, that we are helping everyone follow Jesus by engaging the lost, equipping the saints, and empowering members for service.

I don't know if you had this thought as you drove to church this morning, but you have a bigger target on your back simply because of where you worship. Satan is always after works of God. Some of you might not have signed up for that. "Man, I don't *want* to be under attack. I don't *want* the Enemy to know who I am."

Then live a faithless life, full of indulging in your own pleasure. He'll leave you alone, won't want anything to do with you. Be benign for the kingdom of God. But if you start walking in faith and pushing back darkness, you'd better believe our one Enemy is going to attack you by every means possible as you journey home.

Churches are dying everywhere. What is happening to us? I read the back of the book in the Scripture, and the thing that I don't see in there is America. What happens to us? I see no mention of America in the future days. If that's going to happen, I pray that it doesn't happen on our watch.

Here is an article in the *Atlantic* about two years ago. It just says, "America's Epidemic of Empty Churches." It just talked about how, all throughout America, churches are closing and they're being turned into skate parks and civic centers and community centers and gathering places and coworking spaces. What happened to those churches? Why would a church ever close?

Can I tell you what happens? A force comes in from the outside, and they turn on each other. They don't get along. Their focus fades. They crumble from the inside out. It happens over and over. What are we going to do about it? How are we going to make sure that doesn't happen to *us*? I think Paul's words to the church in Philippi are appropriate today.

So as we move through this text, we're talking about being unified in opposition. I'm going to give you this idea that we are being *unified in conduct*, we're being *unified in courage*, and we're being *unified against comfort*. As a reminder, Paul is coming out of this idea, "**...to live is Christ and to die is gain.**" "What will I do? I don't know. If I'm going to go on living in the body, it's going to be for you so that you would know God, but if I die and I depart, that's better by far because I get to be in the presence of Jesus."

He says this in verse 27. **"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel..."** Where he says, **"...conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ."** That word *conduct* literally translates, act as citizens. This word would've gotten their ears. They would've perked up. Here's why.

This word *citizens* means something to the church in Philippi it doesn't mean to us today. Because they were a part of the Roman Empire, and because of a war that was fought about 40 years before Jesus shows up on the scene, about 42 BC, the Philippians were granted Roman citizenship. Now here's why that matters. Of the entire Roman Empire, only about 15 percent of people had citizenship. The entire city of Philippi was granted citizenship.

This means that they could vote. They could enter into contracts. They could marry. They could do business, and they had a right to a fair trial. You might remember this if you've studied Acts 16. Remember Acts 16 is where this church was born. So Paul and Silas are sharing the gospel. They convert this demon-possessed slave girl. They're thrown into prison. They're beaten. The jailer is converted. Then what they do is they let them go. They say, "Hey, you're free to go." This is what Paul says.

Let me read it to you. This is Acts 16:37. **"But Paul said to the officers: 'They beat us publicly without a trial, even though we are Roman citizens, and threw us into prison. And now do they want to get rid of us quietly? No! Let them come themselves and escort us out.' The officers reported this to the magistrates, and when they heard that Paul and Silas were Roman citizens, they were alarmed."** Because it mattered.

So when he says **"...conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ"** he is saying, "Hey, act as citizens of another kingdom." This is so important to us. Now this is very relevant to us. You're not citizens of this world. You don't have to be amazing at being worldly. You're citizens of another kingdom. You belong to *another* kingdom, one where you're going to be forever and ever and ever and ever.

So conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of that kingdom. **"...stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one..."** This *striving together* is the Greek word *synathleō*. *Syn-* means together, gathered together. *Athleō* is where we get the word *athlete*. So he is using this language saying, "Hey, Christianity is a *team* sport. There's no room for individualism that you would go at it alone."

There is no isolation and Christianity. It is a team sport. So to win at this sport, we have to band together. Like in 9/11, the mantra was, "United we stand." More than in 9/11, more than in the United States, the mantra of Christianity, "United under Jesus Christ we stand." We lock arms. So keep firm in the face of opposition by being *unified in conduct*.

In verse 27, he says, **"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel..."** Can you think of a more appropriate verse today than this one? Whatever happens on

November 3, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel. Your hope is not in a president. It's not in a government, be it local or national. Your hope is in Jesus Christ.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the kingdom that you belong to, which isn't this kingdom. Lock arms together. This is your team more than Baylor, more than any NFL squad, more than your coworkers, and more than your community. Look around you. This is your team.

I played in a basketball league with the YMCA. There were two leagues. One was for those who were really gifted at basketball. One was for those who weren't. We were actually the best team in that second league, the ones who weren't so gifted. So our team was made up of a bunch of people who were pretty gifted at basketball like me.

We really took this team thing seriously. We would dress the same. I remember we would wear the same socks. We would text or call each other and say, "Hey, make sure you get these socks. Get these shoes if you can." We showed up like a team. It was a part of the secret sauce as to why we were good. We played together for a long time. We were always playing together.

After work, we were going out. There was a basketball court behind my apartment at the time, and we would go out there. We would just always ball together. So we had that team chemistry. We were just honestly in this league of people who hadn't played basketball before. We were actually pretty gifted.

We were in the very local championship game. We were playing a team that we would beat nine out of 10 times, but they showed up with one strategy. That was just to tear us apart, to get in our heads. I have never to this day in my life seen somebody talk so much trash. They would not be quiet. It was like, "Oh yeah, where are you going to go? You have two left feet, huh? Hey, why didn't you get the rebound, big boy? You have lead in your shoes? What's going on?"

I mean, just constantly, "Oh wow, look at that shot. You're a bricklayer, huh?" I mean, just constantly talking. They got in our heads. I remember when we called a time out because it was going so poorly. When we got in that huddle, we started to say to each other what they were saying to us.

Saying, "Hey, what are you doing laying bricks up there? Hey, maybe you do have lead in your shoes. Why aren't you getting those rebounds?" The things that they were feeding us, we started to feed to each other. It broke down. This team that we would beat nine out of 10 times, it ended up being a blow out because we couldn't get along. Us getting along was actually the secret sauce to our victory up until then.

The church operates the same way. Satan has one strategy: to tear you apart, from each other and from God. This is what he is trying to do. Some of you, he doesn't have to try really hard because you're not even bonded, right? "We're not even together. There's no *united together*. No, we drove here by ourselves. We're going to leave here by ourselves. I don't even know anybody else here."

Often with the staff and the elders and sometimes with you guys I talk about what I see is the greatest threat of COVID-19 in our land. One, it's trying to prevent us from gathering together as some are in the habit of doing, right? Hebrews 10:24 and 25. It's making it very difficult for you to use your gifts and talents in the church, which is the reason that God has entrusted them to you, but it is imperative that you do.

Some of you, your only interaction with church in this season is that you turn it on for an hour every week. Others of you, it's even less than that. I'm telling you, you have to get involved. You have to get off the bench and into the game. You say, "Well, how am I supposed to do that?" Look at where your gifts and talents intersect with the greatest need of the body and do something to help us carry this mission forward.

So I think us no longer standing firm starts with compromising in fear, walking around, being afraid to hurt feelings, keeping our faith to ourselves, and not wanting to offend anybody. It just becomes this really individualistic, selfish pursuit so that we might feel good about ourselves. That is not Christianity. That's something different.

He says this in verse 28. **"...without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God."** That word *frightened* is not being frightened. *Frightened* was used to describe a horse that was not fit for battle.

So that in the calvary when soldiers would show up on horseback, there were horses that when they'd see opposition, they would be skittish. They wouldn't want to run forward. They'd want to run away. Those horses were worthless to the army. This is the word he is using. You don't need to be frightened in the face of opposition. You have God on your side.

You can march forward to that giant with some stones and a slingshot knowing that you need only be still and God will fight for you. Trusting in him. You can be courageous. Your faith produces courage, and your courage is a tool to display your destiny. So that when others see your courage, it will be a sign to them that you will be preserved and they will be destroyed because the one true God is on your side.

Your faith produces courage, and your courage is a tool to display your destiny. This is what Paul is saying to them. So keep firm in the face of opposition by being *unified in courage*. We have the same faith, the same courage, and the same destiny. When I read that, I thought about the Spartans.

If you've heard of the Spartans, it's because of their incredible ability to win. They were an army. Often, they would work together so well that when they would show up, they would do these chants and these yells. It was almost like a performance of a sort so their enemy would run before the battle every started.

When it would go to fighting, they had perfected this ability to operate as one organism. In fact, they would gather up as a group and they would put their shield into the back of the person in

front of them. Then on *go*, they would run full speed but in that really quite close tightknit organism. They would be a human battering ram. They would plow over anything in their way.

This is how they would win. They earn this reputation so that no one wanted to fight them. Because they operated as one. There were no holes. There were no gaps. There was no division. They operated as one. In the face of opposition, this is how victory came to them. So I think we have to start looking around.

When you're leaving and you're walking through those corridors and those hallways, these people who you don't recognize, you need to begin to see them as family. One day, they will be closer to you than your mama. That's what Jesus says. This is your family forever and ever and ever and ever. We're going to get up there, and there's going to be this Harris Creek hangout worshipping Jesus, a family reunion, if you will. So we watch out for each other.

I remember when my daughters were little. Presley, my oldest, was 6. Her little sister was 4 years old, and they were at a birthday party. It was one of those birthday parties that because of the age, the parents hung around. So all of the girls were playing in this tree fort thing. I was just standing there watching them, making sure nobody fell out.

So Presley and her friends her age were up there, and there was clearly a ringleader. You know, one who was in charge. Presley was listening to them. Then Finley, her 4-year-old little sister, climbed the ladder, climbed the rope to get into the tree house. The ringleader went and put her hand across the door, and said, "No, no, no. This is for the big girls only."

Presley, who is not extremely outspoken, went over there and grabbed her by the hand and pulled it down and said, "No, she is my sister. She can be anywhere I am. She is family. Come up here." I remember being downstairs like, "Yeah. That's what's up." It was one of my proudest moments as a dad. That has to be how the Lord feels about us when we're looking out for each other and caring for each other, having each other's back, being aware of who got laid off, who needs resources, how they're doing, and whose kid is going through a hard time.

The bigger we get, the harder that is to do and that Life Group becomes all the more important that you show up for that church every Wednesday night, every Sunday night. That you're gathered around that table and you're checking in on each other and you're praying for each other and you're at war with one another and you're locking arms together side by side.

No one should be more courageous than us, right? We're immortal. We live forever. If God is for us, who can be against us? We're not going to die one second before the Lord is done with us. When we do, we get to be with him in his presence forever and ever and ever and ever. So between now and the moment he is done with you, be used. Be available. Do his work. Do his bidding.

I think the courage that we need more and more is the *courage to suffer*. I was asked this question on Friday Q&A about what do I think is the greatest temptation? It said, "What do you think is the number one thing Christians...?" So on Fridays, I do a Q&A on Instagram, if you're not aware of that. I'll answer questions all day. You're welcome to ask questions on there.

Usually if I see someone is from Harris Creek, I try to take it. It said, "What do you think is the number one thing Christians love more than Jesus?" I just said, "Their comfort." Philippians chapter 1 verse 29, ironically, says, "**For it has been granted to you...to suffer for him...**" Where does that fit in our orthopraxy today? *Orthopraxy* is the practice of our faith.

Orthodoxy is our doctrine. Orthopraxy is the way that doctrine plays out in our life. I said, "Where does that fit in our orthopraxy today?" I think we are cessationists. Now *cessationists* are a group of people who believe that the sign gifts have ceased to exist. I said, not in sign gifts. I think we are cessationists not in sign gifts but in our suffering.

We love our central air and heat and love soft chairs. We'd rather give a missionary a check than check in on our neighbors and share Jesus. Christianity isn't safe. Now with that in mind, let me read this to you. Verse 29: "**For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.**"

He says *granted to you*. That translates it is a grace to you to suffer like Jesus. Not just to believe upon him, but you *get to* suffer like he did. None of us drove here thinking about that today. That is my hunch. If I'm wrong, I'm usually up front afterwards, so you can just come up and say, "Hey JP, I actually did. I was on 84 saying, 'Lord, would you please let me suffer like Jesus. Inflict me. Inflict me.'" Maybe that was you. Let me know.

My hunch is, none of us drove here thinking about that, that it's a grace, not only to believe upon him but to suffer like him. So in fact my friend Costi Hinn, he posted this this week. I saw it, and it's so appropriate. He said, "If your Christianity is comfortable, you should question your Christianity." And that's great.

I love that Costi said that because I think that is biblical, but it's like, "Who of our Christianity isn't comfortable? What, you want us all to question our Christianity, Costi?" The Creator of the heavens and the earth says, "Yes." It has been granted to you, not just to believe in him, but to suffer for him. You can suffer for him.

Paul says, "We're in this together, man. You're going through the same things that you saw me go through." This is what Jesus said in Mark 10. They said, "Hey Jesus, which one of us is considered at your right and your left in your glory?" He says, "**You don't know what you are asking...**" "Can you suffer like I've suffered?"

They're like, "Sure, yeah. We'll do whatever we need to do." He goes, "You know what? You will suffer like I've suffered." Paul is saying, "You will suffer like I suffered. I'm in prison, you're out there, but you need to know that Christianity is not a faith of comfort. It is one of suffering. You will be afflicted." He says, "Hey, we're actually in this together."

Everyone now is saying, "We're in this together." Everybody, "We're in this together." Have you seen this, this slogan on the sides of buildings? "We're in this together." I saw a meme the other day. It said, "[American] Airlines sending me, "We're in this together," emails. When my

suitcase was 52 pounds, I was on my own." I saw that. I was like, "Man, I have felt that. I have felt that."

What Paul is saying here is, "No literally, we're all in this together." Unified against comfort. Keep firm in the face of opposition by being unified against comfort. Unified against comfort. But no one wants to suffer, right? No one willingly, willfully chooses to suffer, right? Why would you ever do that? We do it all the time.

If you ever work out, you're pushing against weight, breaking down your muscles so that they build back stronger. If you've ever run... I haven't, but if you have, you're begging for air. You're out of breath. You're tired. You're being worn down to produce something. If you work out... I've been working out with my friend who works up here, Rich Bartel.

If you know him, I've been trying to train him, trying to get him strong. I'm doing what I can, trying to get that brother in shape, you know what I mean? So the other day, I'm like, "Are we going to work out?" He was like, "No, I can't." I was like, "Man, this is... You're not committed." He was like, "No, I just need to rest today."

I was like, "What do you need to rest for?" He said, "Well, I ran an Ironman yesterday." I was like, "Okay. All right. Whatever. You get a day off. Fine." So what happened was he was supposed to run this half-Ironman, and it got canceled, which if I'm ever signed up for an Ironman and it gets cancelled, I'm like, "That's the Lord. He is just protecting me, right?"

He said, "No, I'm going to get my friends together and we're going to run this thing. We're going to do this." Why would anyone ever in their right mind, assuming that they think clearly, do that? I don't know. No, it's so that it produces something, an endurance. When you suffer, you remember that you're not home.

When you're in that Ironman running and biking and swimming and whatever else they do, suffering, you long for the finish line, right? I think that's the problem with Christianity. There are folks who don't long for the finish line. They're like, "No, this place is all right. We can just stay here. I don't really want to go home. I don't really want to be with Jesus. I like this place."

He says in Romans 5, verse 3, "**Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings...**" No, we don't. No, we don't glory in our sufferings. Are we supposed to glory in our sufferings? "**...but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope.**"

Here's this graph. I'm going to show this to you for a minute. I think as we think through faith, we all say, "Yeah. I have a faith. I have a belief when I die, I'm going to heaven. I'm going to be with Jesus." We try to live there in that first bar. That's our faith. "I have a faith. I can call myself a Christian, but I want to stay in the safe zone. I want that flavor of Christianity that's comfortable."

Then if you look over *here*, you see the line of suffering. If you cross that line, that's where your faith actually pushes you. Because some of you are like, "What do you mean by suffering? Do

you mean like getting a deep tissue massage? What are you asking?" It's like, No, it's a suffering because of your faith, pushing through your discomfort, engaging people beyond what you're comfortable doing, giving in a way that sacrificially generous, and going without for the sake of the kingdom.

So you have this line of suffering that most of us never want to cross, but in reality, that's when real Christian growth happens. It says *Christian maturity* over here. That's where real Christian growth happens. That's where we want to fellowship with Christ in his sufferings, as the apostle Paul writes.

I want to be like him in his death. I long for him. I have this epic desire to be with him because I don't fit in this world. I'm not a citizen of this world. It doesn't accept me as its own. In this world, you will suffer. Some of us, we're going to miss out on that. We're going to be face to face with Jesus and look back and realize we missed out on what it means to be a Christian, to live as a Christian.

I'll just tell you the greater your ability to be comfortable, the more difficult it is to choose suffering. The greater your ability to be comfortable, the more difficult it is to choose suffering. There's a family here recently who went without their annual vacation and they took those resources and they supported this mission.

I only know about this because we have a relationship, because I don't look at what anybody gives. You don't ever have to be awkward. I will never ever inspect what someone gives. I don't want any temptation to treat any of you differently than others. We come here. The ground at the foot of the cross is completely level.

I do have to walk this line of celebrating when someone chooses to do something that's a sacrifice to them for the sake of the kingdom. That's what I think is a part of what he is talking about here, that growth and maturity comes from us living out our faith. So we are united, *unified against comfort*.

Our family went on vacation to San Diego one time. We went to the *USS Midway*. Has anybody been there, the *USS Midway*? It's a battleship there at the port in San Diego. We had gotten tickets. We were going to go see this battleship. As we walked up, there was a cruise ship at the same port, the same dock. We had to walk by the cruise ship to get to the battleship.

I'm walking by this cruise ship and I see the battleship. So if you see this is the cruise ship right here and there in the distance to the right is the battleship. So I thought about this reality. In fact, here's a picture of the battleship so you can see what it's like. They're very different, right? I thought about this reality.

They're both vessels. They're both made to go through the sea. They both carry large amounts of people. What's the difference? The difference is one is made for comfort and one is made for combat. One is made for comfort and one is made for combat. Do you want to know why the church in America is not mentioned in Revelation?

Because more and more and more we think about church for comfort, not combat. We don't think about coming here, locking arms, making war with the Enemy, who's against us. We need to be training up our kids to know that as they march out here like a sheep to wolves, like a lamb to slaughter, you have to stand firm in the face. Resist the one who roams around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour and make war.

I'm not talking about... Lest you think I'm trying to advocate you going out of here and like, "All right, man! This is my chance! I took Tae Kwon Do." No, that's not what I'm talking about. In fact, most of us do our fighting on our knees, the real warriors in the room. We have one Enemy, and you're not going to beat him with your fists or your AR-15. You're going to beat him through the disciplines of godliness, the disciplines for godliness.

So the unity against comfort, the unity in courage, and the unity in conduct comes from Christ. Okay, I'm out of time, but let me show you these two verses quickly because... **"Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ..."** So the unity actually comes from us first being unified to Christ. We gather around him.

**"...if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind."** So this is the next chapter, but those chapters are not inerrant. Those were added later. The Holy Spirit did not add the chapter break. Humans added those.

So this is one thought in a continuous letter written by Paul. It's almost the reverse order. He says, if you have any comfort. Remember, we're unified against comfort. He says our comfort doesn't come from the world, but it comes from the love of Jesus. **"...if any common sharing in the Spirit..."** Remember, courage comes from the Spirit.

Second Timothy 1, verse 7 tells us that. **"For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline."** Then he says, so then be unified in your conduct, in your tenderness and compassion, meeting the needs of other. Be one in love, one in Spirit, and one in thinking, and then you will be a team invincible, undefeated.

The power to live out this unity comes from Jesus that we press closer and closer and closer into him. So in summary, we're unified in conduct, we're unified in courage, and we're unified against comfort. I started by talking about this idea of a great awakening. As a reminder, a great awakening is when the nation has turned their eyes back toward Christ and returns to church. There has been a revival, resurgence in believers.

Our country has had four Great Awakenings. Most theologians agree we've had four Great Awakenings. I spent some time studying these Great Awakenings because they interest me. The first one was led by Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. It started about 1720, and it went on through to about 1770.

The second Great Awakening was led by Lyman Beecher and Peter Cartwright in 1820 to about 1840. The third Great Awakening was led by D.L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey in 1890 to about 1900. The fourth Great Awakening was led, by and large, by a man most of you have heard of

called Billy Graham. The Billy Graham Crusades and revival meetings started in the 1960s and went to the late 60s maybe early 70s. So there have been four Great Awakenings.

What has always intrigued me about these four Great Awakenings is they've happened in a rhythm of about 50 years in between. So about every 50 to 60 years, we see another Great Awakening. Now God often works in rhythms. I'm not trying to obligate him to. He just often does. So that last Great Awakening ending in the late 60s means that 2020...

Whoever would exist as a Christian, as a believer, a follower of Jesus in the year 2020 in America is positioned perfectly to see another Great Awakening. Now what's also interesting about these Great Awakenings is they've always happened when the church has suffered and grown courageous in suffering and began to live out a conduct worthy of the gospel, and revival happens.

God must really trust you the time and the space that he has placed you in. So I'll go on record and say I believe that we're about to see another Great Awakening or we're going to fall off a cliff. It's going to happen on our watch. In a way, the choice is yours. So let's pray.

Father, would you help us? As we worship together, stir in our hearts what you want from us knowing that you've given us everything in Jesus that we have eternal life in him. Help us not to settle for lukewarm Christianity. There are people in the room I've made eye contact with. Many of them, I've seen them, who are very gifted individuals.

I pray that our output matches our input, not for performing *for* you, but from the grace you've given us. Help us to live a life and live out our lives in a manner worthy of the gospel. We ask this in the name of your Son Jesus Christ, amen.

Let me tell you something. I'm not afraid. I'm not concerned. I don't believe we fall off a cliff because there's a group of faithful people here in McGregor. You need to know my hope is not in this world, and I have read the back of the book, and I know that Jesus wins. If Joe Biden wins, I'm not concerned. If Donald Trump wins, I'm not concerned. If Kanye West wins, I'm not concerned. Whoever... Fill in the blank.

Here's what I know. Jesus wins. Jesus wins! Jesus wins. You need to walk through those doors and remember that with your chest out and your chin up and proclaim his goodness to a world that, more than any time you've ever been alive, desperately needs it. You work as though it's true. You live as though it's true. You parent as though it's true.

Listen, I know that there are some people probably over the age 50 or 60 here who look back on the generation that's coming up like, "Man, I wished they studied the bible. I wish they spend more time in God's Word. I wish they weren't on their phones so much. I'm so... Social media, I don't understand it." Listen, teach them. Teach them. It costs you almost nothing to grab a young adult Life Group and say, "Hey, meet me at Starbucks at 6 a.m. on Tuesday, and we're going to move through the Bible verse by verse." Teach them. Instruct them. Show them the way that they should go.

Preserve Christian values in our land and, therefore, preserve our land. Vote accordingly. If you're wondering where I land on that, you vote according to what the Scriptures say, which first starts with knowing what the Scriptures say. If we can help you in any way, reach out to us at [hello@harriscreek.org](mailto:hello@harriscreek.org). For those of you watching online, thank you for being a part of our family from a distance. Go in peace and love and serve the Lord.