

WE ARE CHURCH

VALUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

We Are Church: Why Jesus Matters

November 14th, 2021

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1 Timothy 2:1-2:8

Welcome to the Doxa church podcast. What matters in the local church? In this series, We Are Church. We'll look at a few of the core values that Doxa holds from the scriptures. Join us in this six week series. As we explore the importance of an opportunity for the church in today's changing cultural landscape, for more information about Doxa or to join us for a Sunday gathering, go to doxa-church.com.

Good morning. Doxa how are we? My name is Donald. One of the pastors on staff here. If you're new and we haven't met, I just had my, my nine-year-old daughter just popped back there and checked in. As they arrived at church this morning, I said, Harper, would you pray for me? And she prayed the sweetest little prayer. And she said, basically that she hopes that Jesus touches every one of you touches your heart and that you get to enjoy him today. And I thought that was a pretty awesome prayer. So that's my prayer for you this morning as well. I, as I said, I'm on staff one of the staff pastors here. I've been on staff here essentially. As long as Doxa has been around, we will celebrate seven years in January, which is awesome. Yeah, absolutely. So I'm personally excited about that. I'm glad you're with us today.

If you're a guest and checking out churches, I got to say, this is a fantastic time to come through. This series is really important for our members, but it's also a great look at what Doxa cares about and the kinds of things we want to give ourselves to in the future. So my task today is to continue this series on the values that we hold as a church. These are our highest priorities. The things that we believe make Doxa who she is, the things that are going to help us and guide us and ultimately frame the decisions that we make in the future. And so in this series, we in week one talked about why Jesus matters, why he will always be the center of what we do as a church. We talked about why the gatherings this right here, this, what we're doing right now is essential to your growth as a disciple, that if you're feeling stuck or bored or flat-lined in your spiritual walk, that actually your very first step is to be here.

As often as you possibly can, to be a part of our Sundays, as often as you can, not once a month. But as I said, any kind of any time you can be here, please be a part of these gatherings. They're designed to Edify you, to build you up, to encourage you and to challenge you. And if you come

here and participate, not just spectate, but really participate in these gatherings, we believe that God is going to use them to not only change your heart, but also change the ways that you interact with God throughout the week. And the benefits of being here. These are really only apply to you when you participate, you can actually come and go almost every Sunday and not truly receive all of the benefits. I mean, no one can, can lend you their spiritual practices, right? It's just like going to the gym or studying for a test.

I mean, you don't benefit if somebody else puts in the time. And that's one of the many reasons why Eddie a few weeks ago covered why ownership matters, right? That was week three. And we talked about why community matters. The fact that we're not meant to do any of this on our own this week. I get to talk about why both prayer and song matter and how they intermingle and how ultimately the ways that you choose to opt in or opt out of those things will largely determine the trajectory of your spiritual journey, your maturity, the way that we said it. When we first introduced these values in 2018, was that prayer empowers everything that matters. We believe that that's still true today. Now I know a lot of us in this room have been following Jesus for quite some time. Maybe you've spent a few decades in church, you know, you've logged some years around God's people and you might say to yourself, I'm pretty sure I've heard everything there is to say on prayer and worship. And it might be true, but you have heard the dozens of verses that talk about these topics, but here's what I'm willing to bet. I would bet that if you were honest this morning, that sometimes God feels pretty far off your religious upbringing may not even allow you to think like this or say this out loud. But sometimes if you were honest, it feels like nobody is listening when you cry out for help.

Not sure if God is too busy or just preoccupied, and maybe because of busy-ness or the heart, just being a little bit numb or overwhelmed, you have neglected your prayer life, which you feel bad about. So then you're suspicious that God is upset or disappointed with you. So you keep your distance. So then you neglect your prayer life more, which makes you feel bad around and around. We go, I call this the cooling cycle and I'd be willing to bet the fact that even though a lot of what I may say today, you have heard pieces and parts before I believe the Lord today, right here, right now wants to do a fresh work in all of you, despite how long you've walked with Jesus to begin something new, to rekindle something dim to break that cycle. And if you're new to the faith, which I know we have some of you around as well, which I absolutely love.

We had our meet and greet last weekend and met a guy that got saved a couple months ago. And so everything that we're saying right now is brand new information for him. Love that if you're new to the faith, then this is a great primer on a vital part of what it means to be a Christian in the real world. So here's our big idea. This morning, the remedy for a tired soul. It's surprisingly simple. It's exceptionally elusive, but it's impossibly powerful. It's meeting Jesus in prayer and worship. I'll say that again. The remedy for a tired soul is surprisingly simple, exceptionally elusive and impossibly powerful. It's meeting with Jesus in prayer and worship. Let me pray for us, Jesus, we need you. We need you this morning. I need you to speak to the people of Doxa through, through me through these words, I have to believe that there are some folks in here that are just worn out.

They are exhausted that life has stacked and stacked and stacked and stacked, and they just are feeling it. And they need you to bring rest and peace this morning. So please minister to them, please, minister to them, I pray these things for your glory. Amen. All right. So the apostle Paul, he's the second biggest contributor to the new Testament by word count. And who's the first well

Bible trivia. Who's the biggest contributor to the new Testament based on word count. Ooh, that's fun. Any guesses? Very good. It's Luke, right? Cause he wrote acts. The apostle. Paul is the second biggest contributor. And many of those words that Paul writes are letters to churches. Okay? They're letters that he writes to affirm the things that are happening in those local churches that are praiseworthy and that he also addresses the places where those churches have missed the mark places, where they have neglected the gospel and areas of their lives, ways in which they still need to grow and repent and develop.

And I'll just tell you right now, today is going to feel a lot like a checkup at the doctor's office. I'm confident that if the apostle Paul wrote a letter to Doxa that the core or the heart of today's message would be included, it might even be the headline you see, Doxa is known for a lot of really great things. We're known for our generosity. We're known for our unity, with other churches, our history, our love for God's word, our care for children and the foster care system. These are all good and beautiful things. But I want to be honest. Doxa is not known for being a worshipful people. We're not known for being a people that richly enjoy the sung word and the prayed word. Now I'm not saying there's not exceptions. And I honestly can probably name about 10 or 12 of you right now.

In fact, I see you. And I'm so thankful that you're a part of our church. We need you. I cannot say that more clearly. We need you. But what I'm saying is the overall temperature of our church runs a little cold when it comes to prayer and song. And so today is an opportunity to redirect our course to change direction. And the only way the collective temperature changes is if many of us individually, we hear God's word and we respond in small ways in our own lives, because then that affects the greater body that affects families. That affects roommates that are living together, that come to Doxa together, that snowballs into something significant. And it starts with you and I. So with that in mind, let's dive into today's passage. We're in first Timothy two. So we can open up there on your Bibles or on your apps.

I don't want us to be defensive or discouraged today, but I do want us to be eager to receive God's word as a gift because that's what it is. I want us to be eager to have more of God, which I'm pretty sure is why you all showed up this morning anyway. So let's do that first Timothy two verse one, it says, first of all, then I urge that supplications prayers, intercessions and Thanksgivings be made for all people. So Paul was continuing his letter to this church and what we call chapter two. And he's talking about prayer and right out of the gates, we know that, yes, he's talking about prayer in general, but because of his audience, we know he's talking about prayer in the gathering and Paul's not trying to build an exhaustive list of every possible shopping list item that can be associated with prayer.

He's he's making the point that there are a lot of ways that prayer can happen. It's a, it's a call for all sorts of prayer, for all sorts of people, is how the ESV study Bible states that I love that he does the same thing regarding the songs that we sing in places like Ephesians five, when he says we should sing Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. So there's different types of prayers and there's different types of songs and prayers and songs are frequently interchangeable in God's word. In fact, they're often used side-by-side we here at Doxa believe that when we sing, we are singing our prayers and that we sometimes pray our songs and that's true in the New Testament as well. It's even true of Jesus. And the disciples. We look at Mark 14, and it says that Jesus gathered with his closest disciples and sang a hymn.

Just as a side note, I love thinking about what the voice of Jesus sounds like singing a hymn. Isn't that fun to think about? And prayer for some of us is a bit tricky. Some of us learned some acronyms, right? When I was a new Christian ACTS a-t-c-s was wildly popular and there's nothing wrong with that. That provides a handhold and a starting point for us. When we don't really understand how to approach prayer. I think that's a good thing. So I'm not, not trying to talk down about that, but I do think that sometimes these little prayer formulas present a danger for us because a lot of us think the prayer is a safe to crack as though God's inbox is password protected. And we've got to figure out a way to get through that is not how it works. That's not how our relationship with the Father works at all.

If we keep things really simple, most of the prayers and songs in the New Testament are either a, some version of petition asking God to do something, give something, change something, or b, some kind of praise, right? Saying something that's true about him or thanking him for doing something or giving something or changing something. The last third bucket that I think is worth mentioning are prayers and songs of confession prayers that clearly recognize the ways in which we fall short in the ways that we are not God. And I just want to say this. That is an important thing for us to remember as east-siders, that we are not God. So we have praise and petition and confession. And most of us lean into one of those three categories, more than the others, right? And praise, we come to God when we're thankful something cool happens in our life.

And we just kind of flinch to run to God and go, thank you, God. That was so awesome. Thank you for that. Or in petition some of us when we need something and we realize that we're not big enough, smart enough, rich enough, strong enough to obtain that ourselves, that we run to God. And that tethers us to the father. Some of us has confession. It's when we mess up. It's when we fall into sin and we come to him and say that, we're sorry. And get us back on track. That's the thing that usually tethers us to get back into prayer and listen. None of those things are bad. None of those things are bad, but I want you to hear me say to any of it by itself is insufficient to mature you as a believer. If you only ever come to God in praise, if you only ever come and petition, if you only ever come in confession it's insufficient and you can imagine how silly it sounds to the creator of the universe.

When we storm into the throne room with our demands, and then we disappear as fast as we came now he's gracious. And he is always glad to hear from us, but you can understand why that sounds and looks a little silly, and this is why prayer and singing in the gathering is not just a command in scripture, but it's a gift. And it's a gift because we all speak for Doxa. I can't speak for any other church. We're going to give you all three lanes. We're going to help you where you're weak. We're going to model for you and teach you what it looks like to pray and sing in all three categories. So if you tend to go to God when you need something, and you're a little weaker on confession and praise then be here on Sundays, and we will teach you how to do that.

We have prayers and songs of praise and prayers and songs of petition and prayers and songs of confession. So it's just another reason to be here on Sundays. Enjoy the training that's offered through our liturgy. Verse two, he says, we're praying for Kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. So Paul here is poking and prodding a little bit. He's throwing out a subtle example of who you should pray for knowing that these people have strong negative opinions about the king. I can't imagine any culture anyway. I won't go there. Paul's point is being that you're supposed to pray for

people, that you don't like you're supposed to pray for the people that you think are out to wrong. You, you pray for the people who have authority to make your life miserable.

You pray, as Jesus said, Matthew five for your enemies. And I got to say, that's quite an ask. That's quite a thing to ask of a believer. And it's something that only makes sense. If you know the gospel, as Jeff has said in the past, that's something that demands the gospel explanation. You cannot make sense of that. If your life is the American dream with a little sprinkle of religion on top, this is real gospel stuff, praying for your enemies. And it only makes sense to do that, to pray for enemies and to pray for Kings. If you know the king of Kings, who's over every seat of power, every government, every local and national official. So we pray for our leaders. We pray for peace. We're called to make war with sin and bring peace into the world.

And just as a, as an extra thing, I'll say this arguing your political position, your mask position, your vaccine position online is not how we make peace church. If you are, if you are here and your secularist or agnostic friends know exactly where you stand on those issues, but do not know where you stand with the savior. I'm saying that's problematic. I'll probably get emails. That's fine. I'm grateful for my religious freedom. It was my last comment on this. I'm grateful for my religious freedoms. I want to see those things continue for my kids, but can we please for four seconds, remember that man does not determine God's freedom. God determines the ways and steps of a man. There is no ruler or government or legislation that can thwart the kingdom of God from its advancement, its pace and reach are only determined by God in heaven.

So when we pray for our rulers, sometimes that's petition. Sometimes that's praise. I've seen your Facebook pages. Sometimes that's confession, but we pray for peace. We pray for peace church. We want to bring that peace into the world. That's how Jesus has sent us. He says in verse three, he says, this is good. It is pleasing in the sight of God, our savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. Man, I love this verse. I love all of the very natural questions that come from reading it us to say, that's a sermon for another day. I'll make this one comment we at Doxa believe in the sovereignty of God over salvation. And we also affirm that you and I have a responsibility to respond to the grace that God initiates. He moves first. He loves first.

He chases us down. He calls us first verse five for there is one God. And there is one mediator. When you see that word mediator, I want you to think, go between between God and men, the man Christ Jesus who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time for this, I was appointed a preacher and an apostle. I am telling the truth. I'm not lying. I love it. He says that a teacher of the Gentiles in faith in truth now verse five in verse six tell us concisely how Christianity is different than every other religion. And if you're new to the faith, you may not know this. You may not even consider yourself a Christian. You might consider yourself a humanist or an agnostic. And from where you stand, Christianity seems a lot like every other religion in the world that it's a crutch. It's a way for people to feel better about themselves. And if you're honest, when some people get too wound up, it actually makes the world a worse place.

I want to be clear about what Paul is saying here. Christianity is not like any other religion. It is fundamentally down to its core, completely different. You see, we believe that there is one God who has always existed in three persons. And that the only go-between between man, and God is the God man, Jesus Christ who lived and died and rose again, not because he had to because he

walked in obedience to the father and chose to offer salvation fully and freely and forever to you. And to me, this is why when we pray to the father, we pray in Jesus name. It's through Jesus that we are heard by the father. So the good news today is really, really good. And that is that your past, every wicked thing you have ever done every time you've chosen yourself over others. Every time you've done harm to others intentionally or not every time you've done harm to yourself intentionally or not that those sins are covered and paid for.

And they are sins because you belong to God and you're made in his image. You see, we understand this idea. It's why it's taboo to burn flags or destroy currency, right? Because those things are made as a symbolic representation of something more than fabric or paper. But if those things are valuable and protected from destruction, you and I are made in the image of God, we are far more valuable than flag or coin. It's why when Alison visits the DYCF office this week to deliver our Thanksgiving baskets and sees kids in the foster care system, sleeping under desks in their office because they don't have a home to go to. She's moved to tears because those kids are made in the image of God that feels wrong.

Those lives matter. So yes, when we sin against others or ourselves, we sinned against God. And that is a big deal. And there's a price to that. And Christians are the only ones in the world that believe that the price has been paid. That tab has closed. That debt is fulfilled and there isn't anything you or I can do to change that. But we get to decide whether we receive that gift or not. This last verse, verse eight, he says, I desire then that in every place men should pray lifting holy hands without anger. or quarreling, Paul closes this section by saying that he wants men, real men to constantly talk to God and listen for his voice to express with their body's hear me east side to express with their bodies. What is true in their hearts? And that this happens constantly. This is why he says every place did you know?

You have an invitation to talk with God and every place. Here's a thing about how cool that is. The maker of the universe has invited you to meet with him and talk with him in every place. You do not have to limit your conversations and relationship and connection with God, to the seat you find yourself in right now. I mean, when you wake up and it's dark and wet outside, because this is the worst time of the year, it's just cloudy and dark and dismal. And your mind starts to sprint to all the things that the day holds. You're invited to pray when you're waiting for your kid's soccer practice to wrap up, you're invited to pray when you're newborn wakes you up in the middle of the night and you stumbled down the hallway like a half dead zombie to go feed that bottomless pit.

You are invited to pray. I heard amen in the back. When your wife says something before dinner, that rubs you the wrong way. You're invited to pray when your boyfriend asks, if you want to come over to his place, cause nobody else is home. You're invited to pray when you wake up on Sunday morning and you feel exhausted and heavy, almost like there is a spiritual enemy who hates it. When God's kids get together to glorify him, you're invited to pray. Paul wants us in every place accessing the rights that we have as royalty. We are sons and daughters of the king and every place is an invitation. This is one of the many benefits of being loved by an omnipresent God. And he wants us to take advantage. I've told you before that our dads on this earth have shaped in many ways, how we think God feels about us and particularly how he feels about our requests to him.

You know, many of us grew up with a dad that was either not there or that everything was fine. As long as we followed the rules and stayed quiet, there was no invitation to talk about the day. There was no invitation to talk about what was going on in here. There was no connection or emotional intelligence. I just want to say, God is not like that. God wants to hear from you. And if you know that, if you really believe that it's going to change your prayer life, I promise you, we are invited in every place. He closes the passage and says the quarreling in the gathering is unacceptable. You see in the ancient middle east open debate and public worship happened pretty frequently. It was a part of their culture and Paul and multiple letters states that it can be dangerous and disorderly and ultimately a distraction quarreling really announces to the room that you don't actually know what the gathering is for.

And so on that note, I just want to make one more thought. I want to talk about worship through song for just for just a moment. There is a lie that is rampant among, I think it's in particular older men in the church today, and it's not just Doxa, it's the Western church and it's that singing and musical worship is a cultural thing that doesn't matter. It's for new Christians to get their feelings out. And that real men feed on the preached word. Men singing is not cultural. Football is cultural. The internet is cultural, Amazon delivering the entire universe to your doorstep, like a bunch of magic fairies. That's cultural singing is not cultural. Now the genre of the music that can be cultural, the language that we're all singing in of course that's cultural, but the act of God's saints gathering to sing is not cultural.

It's timeless. Singing is not for baby believers. It's not something that you grow out of. If you're a man here and you would say that you're just here for the sermon and you don't care for the singing. I get it as Western men. It is not very often that we come together to all sing together. That can feel a little weird. I get it. But your highest identity is believer. You are a son of God first before dad, before father, before boyfriend, before employee, certainly before westerner biblically, hear me. You cannot call yourself a non singing mature man of faith that does not exist. Men are called as this passage says to use their bodies as instruments of praise, including God help us raising our hands from time to time. We're going to do some more teaching on that in 2022. But for today, I just want you to hear this hear

Clearly worship and singing is not something that you grow out of. It is not something for the ladies only. It's not something that's even about you in the first place. Few weeks ago, I was singing with my family in the back. One of our great teams was leading us in song and there's a family there, newer at Doxa. And I looked over and I saw this dad holding his little one. And it was, it was kind of a cool moment. He wasn't really singing straight forward. He was just looking at his child and kind of singing over his child. I thought to myself, dang it. That's awesome. That is what it looks like to be a godly man. That is how we do this. I caught his family at the door and pulled them aside and said, Hey, man, I just want to thank you for modeling that modeling that for your kids, modeling that for our church.

I love that. So we've walked through the passage. I want to spend the rest of our time. How about what I said at the very beginning, because you might find yourself today as somebody who's in one of those cooling cycles, right? The heat and the passion and your walk are a little low right now. And I want to say it again. The remedy for a tired soul is surprisingly simple, exceptionally elusive, but impossibly powerful is that worship and prayer. So let's start with this first one, surprisingly simple. You know, sometimes we forget the basics of our physical health. It turns out after all thousands of years of study and man trying to find every pill and program that diet

and exercise still honestly are kind of the game changers, right? We want to be something else, but it's not. And our spiritual lives are the same. You might think you need some super complicated remedy.

You might need an epiphany from God or a seminary degree or a miracle or something huge. But it turns out that prayer and song will do a lot to heal your heart. If you let it some of us, think we have to be big theologians or have ourselves all together or watch for this one. And we have to be sin free for a couple of days before we can talk to God, not how it works this is not how it works. Church. We use big language in our prayers or specific passages that I'm not going to walk through today, but there are specific passages that say the big flowery language is not how you get God's attention. He does not need your thous and your thys. You pray with respect. Yes, but let's pray to Jesus talking to a man that called himself, the friend of sinners, God says over and over again.

He does not run to the perfect life. The perfect Saint one who's got it all together. But in fact, just the opposite. It is the broken one that he draws near to. Is that not good news? Are there not more days that you feel broken, than you feel perfect. Psalm 34, the Lord is near to the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit. I believe that there are some here today who are crushed in spirit and God wants to save you today. So even though it's surprisingly simple prayer and worship is a remedy to a tired soul, number two, exceptionally elusive to all of our singles or married folks in here. I want to let you in on a little secret about parenting before you were a parent before I was a parent, I assumed that if you had small kids and the house was quiet, that that was a good thing.

And some of you young families already know where I'm going with this. So you did. I didn't know yet that there was good, quiet, and there was bad. Quiet. See when your house is a little too quiet, you get this adrenaline shot. You jump up from the table and go, it's too quiet. And you find out that your kids are avoiding wherever you are in the house, right? Because they broke something pooped on something, shattered something, swallowed something. True or false? Yes. And, and some of us are a lot like our kids, you see, we know we messed up or slipped up or gave up. And so now we're keeping some distance between wherever we think God is his place of worship. His people, his book, whatever it's avoidance, it's fear, it's guilt, it's shame. It's not Jesus. And that's why some of us would agree with both of these conflicting statements as to why we would say my prayer and worship life are not what I want it to be.

But prayer and worship are important to the believer. I know a lot of us feel that tension. It feels very slippery at times and we feel distracted. And even though we're well intentioned it, we just don't follow through all the time. Well, the good news is this. God does not love you any less. I don't care if your prayer life right now is a complete disaster. God does not love you any less, but here's what else is true. And listen to me say, it's the host of heaven. And the kingdom of darkness are at war every single day. Over your focus, your attention, your time, your thought life, your affections. I mean, prayer and singing can be elusive because we may forget that it's vital to our thriving, but the enemy has not forgotten. Not for one second. So even though it's exceptionally elusive, prayer and worship is a remedy for the tired.

So last one, impossibly powerful prayer songs are powerful. Sometimes we like small and fast prayers, right? But God wants more for us. He wants big things for us. And from our perspective, God is willing at times to move quite slowly. I think it's because he wants us to ultimately get these good things. But when we get there, he wants us to look more like Jesus. I mean, sure. He

could take the thorn from your flesh, but he knows that the ways that you are going to strengthen and the resilience that will get built out in you, the ways you are going to depend on him are a hundred times worth it. And that's where our power comes from church. The power most often shows up for us in the suffering. If you've been a Christian awhile, you know that this is true and it will make no sense to you.

If Jesus is only a genie that you are hoping will grant your wishes. It makes all the sense in the world. When you know that the Bible says that our life is a blip, it's a temporary stop. It's a mist. We are on our way to be glorified with God and a new heavens and a new earth. That prayer is powerful. Singing is powerful. Paul broke down physical walls with prayer and song. You might need that today. So how do we do this? How do we experience this in the gathering? How do we get after the way we were designed, the way these things were designed, how does that work? I got two simple things for you. Number one, come to all of the gathering. Last week, I was going to take a picture at nine o'clock and then take another picture at 9:20 and show them to you.

But I didn't work out. You can use your imagination. I'm asking you as a pastor, please be here on time. It's good for you. It's the best way to enjoy the gift of these gatherings and enjoy the full liturgy. And it's not legalism. It's not legalism. When you go to the movies because you bought tickets. It's not legalism. When your boss's boss wants to have a meeting with you and you show up on time because you respect his or her authority over one small area of your life, right? It's not legalism. When you show up to your best friend's birthday party, cause you just want to squeeze every moment out of it. The Bible calls, every believer who comes prepared and invested and honest to the gathering. That's godly to use another language. Another option. You are a qualified sales lead for the holy spirit to do some awesome work.

When you show up that way, you see our service is designed top to bottom to meet your needs and equip you for the week. So please be a part of that. Number two, number one, come to all the gathering. Number two, come with all of you to the gathering, not the cleaned up version. I love this pastor John Tyson says this all the time. It's one of my favorite little quips. He says, God is not interested in transforming the pretend version of you. I love that. So did sin beat you up this week? All right. That's all right. Get in here and sing and pray his mercy over your life. You don't even have to wait for Sunday, but this expression of those things is fantastic for the soul. If you're in a season of doubt, all right, get in here and wrestle that stuff out. As we preach what is true and sing, what is true and pray. What is true? The gathering is not something to survive. The gathering is a feast, a banquet. So grab a plate. And as you feast, you look for ways to contribute to others at the table.

One last thought you guys will love this one. I love dressing up a bit for Sundays, right? You're familiar with the expression Sunday. Best. Yep. There's nothing wrong with that. I just want us to remember that being on brand or looking cute has no impact whatsoever on God's ability to work in your life. Right? I think sometimes we're more worried about her outfit than our infant. And when you walk in those doors, I think we are all, we are all going to be helped. If you take a moment to prepare your own heart, as you walk in here, just ask God what he's trying to do with you, ask him how the week has affected you. What things are you carrying? Because paying attention to our hearts is so, so, so helpful. Let's give ourselves space to check in. You know, you might leave the house bummed out and critical and cynical, and you might walk through these doors, a humble child of God.

If you give God a chance to show up and say something, I'm going to close with this really why all this matters, why this prayer and worship stuff is honestly, life or death. Something we talk about in my house from time to time is that it's important for us as Christians to talk to ourselves, to preach to ourselves and not just listen to ourselves. Have you heard that before? You see nobody gets more air time in your head than you do. There's nobody you listen to on the planet more than you. And if you passively just listen to your thoughts, which sometimes includes your flesh and sometimes includes some stuff that is not helpful. It can really wear you down. Sometimes we need to pray a sermon over ourselves. Sometimes we need to sing some truth over ourselves, right? So sometimes we need to say Donald, I got some good news for you.

Your sins are forgiven. You are in a new covenant. You have a new heart. You have a new power. You have a new, will. You have new mercies every morning, right? We say, Janice, you're gonna reign with Christ. Janice. You're gonna be able to walk up and hug Jesus high five. Him. If you want to, you will see him with your eyes Paolo. You're going to be free of every voice inside you. That shames you, you scares you. Every accusation on you will fall aside. Every disease will die off and every conflict will come to an end. That's good news. You see, sometimes we need to preach and pray over our own lives. We need to sing over our own lives. Just get a moment of clarity and sanity with the savior. So church, if you feel tired like way down inside, tired, you don't need to just push through it. You certainly don't need to feel bad about it. That'll never get you back to the father. You need to pray and sing your heart out. God is here. He's willing. He's gracious. You matter to God, prayer and song matter to us because we get more of him. Let's pray.

Jesus. I am simultaneously grieved and excited. I'm grieved that perhaps some of us have missed out on something you have for us. And I'm excited because I know that we are work in progress and that you are so patient you are so patient. I'm so thankful for the many people here at Doxa that model, these things that live these things out, they don't just talk about them in Bible study, but truly live them out. I pray that you would increase the temperature of prayer and song in our church. Thank you for the many fantastic works that you have already established like our unity and generosity, but grow us. We want more of you. We need more of you. And again, for those of us that are just weary from the journey, I know that you love us and care about us and want to meet with us. Let us not leave this space without inviting you in without giving you the restorer of our soul, a chance to breathe life we need, that we pray these things for your glory. Amen.