

Gull Lake Sunday 2020

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Preacher: Steve Roadhouse

[0 : 0 0] Good morning, Braemart Baptist Church. Pandemic greetings to you from Gull Lake Center. My name is Steve Roadhouse. I'm the director here at Gull Lake Center at your camp.

And it is good to virtually be with you today in the midst of all of this crazy and difficulty and strange times and everything that's going on.

And the sorrow and the sickness and the calamity that comes with this and also the change and the sunshine and everything else that happens in day-to-day life as well.

So greetings, good morning, welcome to you. Thank you for inviting me into this virtual space where I can share an update on the camp and how things are going there.

And also share with you some of the things that are on my heart as we navigate this challenging and difficult time. I'd like to start by saying a big happy Mother's Day to all the mothers that are watching.

[1 : 0 5] Mothers that are part of Braemart and mothers that might be tuning in from everywhere else. A happy Mother's Day to you. Mothering is a huge and a sacred task and responsibility and gift.

And to you who have born children, who have raised them from womb to whatever age they are now, well done. Well done and thank you.

It's a big, endless, relentless job. And thank you for carrying that burden. And blessing to you in the joy that comes with it as well.

And for all of you that maybe have difficulty on Mother's Day. Maybe because your relationship with your mother is hard and it's strained and it's difficult. And this is a really challenging day because it brings up stuff of disappointment and difficulty.

Peace. Peace to you in that today. Things are hard sometimes. And yeah, I pray peace to you. And for all of you who may have difficulty being a mother.

[2 : 1 5] Either because you are not able to be a mother and that is something that you have longed for. And it is a heart's cry and this is hard. And it's hard to be reminded of it daily and certainly yearly when Mother's Day comes.

Peace to you. And for those of you who maybe don't want to be a mother. But you still feel the societal expectation of being a mother. Peace to you. And for those of you who are a mother and it's hard.

It is hard. It is hard. It is so hard. And it's not going well. Peace to you. Regardless of where you are today.

God sees you. And God is with you. In the joy and in the sorrow. In the mountaintops and the valleys. In the hardship and in the fulfillment.

God is there. So wherever you are in your Mother's Day journey today. Peace to you. Grace and peace to you. And for all of us men.

[3 : 17] All of us guys. Peace to us in this as well. May we be able to celebrate the goodness of Mother's Day. And may we be able to journey with those who have difficulty on Mother's Day as well.

Yeah. And for most of you. I pray that this is a blessed day. That this is something that brings you great joy. And it's something that brings up a lot of positive memories. And if that's the case. Wonderful. That is so, so good.

Let us be deeply, deeply grateful for the wonderful mothers out there. And the great memories and experiences that we've had. So to all of you. Happy Mother's Day.

In however it finds you today. Let me pray for us. And then I'll get started talking about camp and everything else. So let's pray. Holy God.

You are Lord of all. You are the creator. You are the master. You are the Lord. And God, we turn and tune our hearts towards you today.

[4 : 19] God, you know the difficulties and the trials that we are facing right now. God, you know the difficulties and the trials that are facing the world right now. God, I pray for peace in all of us.

Your peace. True peace. Holy peace. Peace that only comes from you. God, I pray for our leaders.

That they are filled with wisdom. That they help us navigate this well. God, I pray for me. I pray for wisdom in my words.

And that the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart would be pleasing to you, O Lord. I pray for our Braemar Baptist Church. As they are a church.

Not so much in building today. But in your spirit. In your bond. I pray a blessing on them in that. Pray for Pastor Kent as he leads.

[5 : 21] Pray us in the holy name of Jesus the Christ. Amen. Amen. Amen. All right. So a couple things. First off, camp.

Oh boy. This is... Pandemics are not great for camp. I don't know if that comes as a surprise to anybody. But it was a harsh reality to me when we realized that, oh boy.

Just about all of our revenue. All of our revenue except for donations comes from large group gatherings. So that's tough. Because we can't have those right now. But I want to maybe touch a little bit on last summer first.

So last summer was actually our biggest summer ever. It was our 99th summer. It was wonderful. We had 1,136 kids which broke a new record. Which is just phenomenal. So we're really hoping to build off of last summer.

And so much momentum. And coming to this summer. Which was going to be our big 100th celebration in June. And it was going to be wonderful. And then nope. That doesn't get to happen. So it's been difficult.

[6 : 21] And we're going to talk about difficulty and obedience takes. That's really been on my heart. So things are obviously changing here. We've decided to postpone the 100th celebration. We're pushing it back a year. Which is disappointing for sure.

But it's okay. We'll celebrate on the 101st. We're still going to call it the 100th. It's still going to be a huge party. It's still going to be wonderful. And honestly it's not that big of a setback for us.

The hardest thing is that we probably are not going to be able to run camp this summer. As we know it on site. I've been tracking with the government and hearing their different updates. I saw that Alberta has launched its reopening strategy.

And at first actually summer camps was part of stage 2. They've actually moved it into stage 1. So summer camps can start opening May 14th. Which is crazy. But I was at a town hall.

Or like a virtual town hall. And they clarified that. And the government's version of summer camp is different than our version of summer camp. So they see summer camp as day camps. You know sports camps.

[7 : 22] Arts camps. VBSs. That sort of stuff. And they still have the same rules of physical distancing. Of 6 feet. And no more than 15 people. So a stay away residential camp like we do.

Where kids come and sleep in cabins and things like that. Is probably not opening up until phase 3. Or stage 3. Which means that I think it's probably pretty unlikely. That we'll be able to run camp this summer.

Which is miserable. Oh that is. It's hard. I don't like that. I've put out a couple videos about this. And expressed it. So you can check those out. But it's terrible.

I'm really very sad about that. Specifically for our LTD students. They're our leadership students. You know summer camp will come. And hopefully all the kids that were going to come this summer.

Will get a chance next summer. But for LTDs. It's a three year program. It's really good. And each year has a different experience. So I'm really sorrowful. For. Especially level 1s and level 2s.

[8 : 21] Kind of the book. Or the level 1s and level 3s. The bookends. The level 1s. Because it's their first experience. It's their first taste. And level 3s. Because this is when they're the top dogs. This is when they get to really like. Show their leadership.

And really affect the culture of the camp. And practice that out. So I have a deep deep lament. For these students. And we're going to do everything we can.

To have some sort of LTD experience. This year. So if we can. We're going to run it this summer. Hopefully maybe by the end of August. If the numbers keep going well. We'll be able to run LTD week. Even if it's with reduced numbers.

Or something. And if we can't do that. Then maybe we'll look at running LTD. Either over Thanksgiving. Or over Christmas. Or something. Some break. We can get together. It won't look the same.

But we can hopefully have the same values. And the same key pieces of relationship. And teaching. And prayer. And praise together. As we grow in our discipleship of Christ.

[9 : 17] And in our leadership of ourselves. And of others. So that's what we're working on. We're looking at all the different options. We haven't. We're not planning on shutting down.

We have laid off our staff. We got the wage subsidy. Which allows us to extend their layoffs. Until June 6th. Which is great. After June 6th. It's really up in the air. So we'll wait and see how that goes.

But we're looking at everything. And trying to figure out. How are we going to run a meaningful program. In some way this summer. Even if it looks very different. So stay tuned for updates.

We'll keep you posted as we know. Every time I seem to make an announcement. It changes within a day. Or within a couple days. So at this point. We're just kind of holding pat a little bit. And waiting and seeing.

And gathering resources as we can. And making plans where it makes sense to do so. So yeah. That's where we're at. So in all of that.

[10 : 12] There's a lot of disappointment. And that's just camp. And I mean camp is super important in some ways. But oh. There's one other thing I want to talk about. So in the midst of this. We're trying to make the best of it.

And I'll talk about that in kind of a more. The sermon part of this. Where in the midst of disappointment. In the midst of difficulty. Can we still be obedient?

And can we still be pushing a little bit further? And what does that mean? And what does that look like? So for us with camp. Not being able to have camp as we know it. We're looking at a few different things.

And one of those things has been online camp. And online camp has been surprisingly good. I was not expecting it to be good. But I wanted us to give it a try. And learn from it. And it has gone quite well.

We've had about 100 kids participate in it. Consistently over four weeks. Plus we've had some LTD retreats. And the staff retreats. And things like that. Which has been great. And it's gone pretty well.

[11 : 10] In fact. Last week. We even had a kid come to Jesus over online camp. Which. You know. Oh ye of little faith.

That's me. I was thinking. Oh this is just a placeholder. We're just going to try it out. It's going to be a practice run. And you know. God being God. She was like. No no. I'm going to use this. I'm going to make something of this.

And a kid came to Jesus. Which is just phenomenal. In their virtual cabin. Their cabin leaders. Walked them through what that meant. And they accepted Jesus.

So. Praise the Lord. God is doing. As God does. Incredible things. In the midst of our. And my. Disappointment. And my.

Trying to figure it out. God. God. Is still God. So. Amen to that. And that's really wonderful. And we're going to keep doing things like that. We're going to keep experimenting.

[12 : 05] And trying different things. And. And using them as tools for future things. One of the things that's been really difficult at the camp. Is figuring out. You know. Kids have this really incredible experience in the summer.

And then we send them home. And some of them. You know. Don't come from a church background. Don't come from a Christian family. So we're kind of sent back into the. You know. The spiritual desert. And they have to wait. You know. A full year. Before their next time at camp.

And that's been on my heart a lot. Which is how do we connect kids. Either to church. Or to keep them with some sort of spiritual engagement. And. Voila. Online camp.

So. After this whole pandemic passes. This is a tool that we're going to use going forward. So. In the midst of all the hardship. In the midst of all the. You know. The economic crisis.

Not to mention the actual health crisis. Where people are getting sick. Where people are dying. We're trying to. You know. Find some silver lining.

[12 : 59] And do the best we can. So. And that's not to say. That this isn't a super serious thing. That it isn't something that is of deep sorrow to me. And certainly of the individuals. And the families that are affected.

And that have lost family members. And loved ones. This is hard. This is very very hard. And it's very very serious. And I'm very thankful. That our leaders are taking it so seriously.

And I am taking it very seriously. You know. I made sure to follow the rules. And I hope that you are as well. Because we are in this together. And it depends on us working together. To overcome this.

And if there's any hope. You know. Again selfishly. Of camp opening in August. It's because we're all following the rules. And we're doing what needs to happen. So that people can avoid getting sick.

And if they do get sick. To avoid spreading it further than that. So. We're in this together. But it certainly is a difficult time. But in spite of it being difficult.

[13 : 55] There is always hope. And there's always light that breaks through the darkness. And I want to talk about that this morning. So. I'm going to talk. I'm going to say three. This is a different type of sermon for me.

Normally I try and do it. You know. The proper way. Which is pick a passage. And kind of break it down. And look at that specifically. But today I'm going to talk more thematically. I'm going to kind of pick my way through the Bible. And I'm going to tell three stories.

So I'm going to tell three stories. About three different people in the Bible. Who were obedient. Amidst extreme difficulty. Or were obedient. Amidst real disappointment.

And real hard times. So the first story I want to tell is of Joseph. And this is Joseph from Genesis. So the story of Joseph begins.

And it's going really, really well for him. He's young. He's 17. He comes from a wealthy family. There's lots and lots of good going on for Joseph.

[14 : 52] He's the youngest. So he's kind of a bit spoiled. But you know. Maybe in a nice way. You know. His dad gives him this gorgeous jacket. And he's just loving it. Life is going really, really, really well for Joseph.

And he's pretty stoked about it. Maybe a little too stoked. You could say. But everything's coming up Joseph in his life. And then his brothers grab him.

And they dump him in a cistern. And their plan is to leave him for dead. So everything's going really good. And then completely out of the blue. Where he had no idea this was coming.

He's in real trouble. His health is in real trouble. He's about to die. But then his brothers change their mind. Like well why just kill him? We can make some money off of this. So they pull him out of the cistern.

They sell him into slavery. They get some money. They go tell his dad that he's dead. And now there's Joseph. So his health is now okay. But he's a slave. You know.

[15 : 53] You could make the comparison to today's pandemic. His health is okay now. But his economy is ruined. It's actually worse than it. He's a slave. He doesn't even own himself. Somebody else owns him. And the story of Joseph is really quite amazing.

Because it has this incredible ups and downs. And ups and downs. And ups and downs. And through all of it. Joseph just keeps going. So he ends up a slave. And he works really hard as a slave.

And gains favor with his owner. And then it doesn't go well. He ends up in prison. For something he didn't do. He actually was being honorable in it. And he ends up in prison. And he kind of wastes away in prison.

But while his life was wasting away. He's again working hard. He takes on all these responsibilities. He becomes a leader in the prison. He's interpreting dreams even in the prison.

God's speaking to him. He ends up getting out of prison. And is suddenly face to face with Pharaoh.

[16 : 51] Pharaoh. Obviously the most powerful person in Egypt. Viewed as a god by the Egyptians. So he's face to face with Pharaoh. He's helping Pharaoh. He interprets a dream and says. Hey.

You need to do all of this. And Pharaoh basically gives Joseph control of all of Egypt. He says. Okay. I can see that there's going to be.

You know. Seven years of plenty. Seven years of good economic times. And then seven years of economic hardship. We're going to have famine. And he entrusts Joseph to go and manage the good times.

So that they can manage the bad times. And there's this really interesting refrain through this all. So in the ups and the downs. Ups and the downs. There's a refrain of. And the Lord was with Joseph.

So I can only imagine. That in this. Joseph probably had some down days. Right. Like. I would imagine. Having my brothers throw me in a cistern. Leave me to the dead. That would be a tough moment.

[17 : 48] I would imagine. After I finally. You know. Get up to a place where I'm doing well. That I end up in prison. That would be a tough moment. I would imagine. That even at the.

At the highlight. Where I'm doing all these great things for Egypt. Realizing that I'm estranged from my family. Would still be a hard time. And that's where. Kind of the story turns. So. Now Joseph has done all these great things.

Egypt has all of the food. Basically in the known world. So people start coming in from. All over. Looking to sell their livestock. And eventually their property. To get food. And wouldn't you know.

Joseph's brothers. Come to Joseph. And they don't recognize him. But he recognizes them. And you know. Through this. Kind of. Series of events. He ends up giving them a bunch of food. And saving their lives.

So in the midst of calamity. Where he is. Nearly killed. Then enslaved. Then imprisoned. God seems to be weaving all this together.

[18 : 47] So that in the end. Joseph can one. Literally save the lives of his family. It clearly mentions that. That he saves them. And two. Actually save. Like. That whole country.

And that whole region. Because through his obedience to God. And the wisdom that came through that. They were able to store up enough food. For everyone to have that. Now. I want to be clear. I'm not saying.

Necessarily. That God said. This is what I'm going to do. I'm going to imprison. And enslave. Joseph. And then out of that. I don't know if it was that specific.

I don't know if God works. In that specific way. Where he causes calamity on somebody. And then works out for good. But what I do know. Is that God was with Joseph. So in the midst of all his suffering. In the midst of all of his difficulty.

God was there. And he was weaving it together. So that there would be good that comes out of it. And I wonder for us in this time. If God is seeing us in our calamity.

[19 : 44] Seeing us in the despair. Seeing us in the difficulty. And he's starting to weave it together for good. He might not bail us out of it completely. He doesn't jump into the cistern and grab Joseph out.

He doesn't jump into prison and pull him out there. He doesn't wipe out his brothers. And avenge him for that. But he weaves it together. And I think a key part of that.

Was that Joseph just kept going. One step after another. I don't think he had this grand vision. When he was in the cistern. Thinking. Ha ha. I'm going to turn this into my best self.

And I'm going to go and save the whole nation. I think he just was like. Well here's where I am. What do I do now Lord? And God heard him.

So that's story number one. Of someone who had a very difficult time. And remained obedient. I'm going to tell a very different story now. I'm going to tell the story of Jonah. So Jonah is someone who was obedient.

[20 : 44] In a difficult time. But it's a bit of a different spin. So the story of Jonah is really interesting. It's probably one of my favorite. If not my favorite story in the Bible. Because it's so weird.

And it's funny. And it's bizarre. And it's unexpected. So Jonah hears. He's a prophet. So he's somebody who's used to hearing God's voice.

Hears God say. Go to Nineveh. And go and tell them that they're screwing up. And Jonah goes. No. I will not do it. So this story actually begins with disobedience.

On the part of Jonah. God says go here. Jonah says absolutely not. I'm going the other direction. So he goes to a place called Tarshish. Which apparently is like paradise. It's like our version of Hawaii.

Where everything's nice and wonderful. So he buys a boat essentially. But charts like the whole thing. And sails off. And while he's sailing off. You know a big storm comes. And the sailors all freaking out.

[21 : 44] And they're trying to like. What's going on? And Jonah's like. You know. Pouty. And he's upset. And they're like. What do we have to do? And he's like. Oh. Kill me. Throw me overboard.

I'm bringing this on. All this. Which is crazy. He doesn't go talk to God about it. He doesn't like. Beg for repentance. Or sort of beg for forgiveness. Or offer any repentance.

He's just like. Kill me. Throw me overboard. I'm done with this. The sailors don't want to do this. You know. These are pagan. Not God-fearing. Sailors.

And they instantly become. You know. Super God-fearing. Because they're in the midst of the storm. They're throwing over their cargo. They're doing everything they possibly can. To not have to kill Jonah. Eventually they run out of options.

Say. Okay. Toss him overboard. A giant fish comes. Of course. Swallows Jonah. Now Jonah's really in a climate. Right? He didn't die. He didn't obey God.

[22 : 40] And now he's stuck in a fish. And here is where he finally. Kind of has a change of heart. So he does this. This long poem. And it's really beautiful. And it's excerpts from the Psalms.

Of basically praise to God. So he has this change of heart. He has this change of direction. And. And he's like. You know. Basically. You know. Commits his will to the Lord.

So then this fish. Throws him up. He ends up on shore. And he decides to go. To Nineveh. And do what God asked. Originally. And he does it.

But he. Barely does it. He barely does it. So he walks into. This great city of Nineveh. A city that's so great. It says it takes three days. You know.

To get across. That's how long. That's how big of a city it is. And he does. Basically the weakest. Prophecy. You can imagine. So there's other.

[23 : 36] There's other books. Of the Bible. That are just prophetic words. Against Nineveh. Like this same city. And they go on for chapters. And it's talking about like. Fire.

And lifting. Like it's. It's very graphic. Intense. Prophetic language. But here's Jonah's. Prophecy. As it's accorded. 40 more days.

And Nineveh. Will be overthrown. That's it. One sentence. And it says. He doesn't. He like barely gets in the seat. So this first day. He goes in 40 more days.

And Nineveh. Will be overturned. Doesn't say why it's going to be overturned. Doesn't say who's going to overturn it. 40 is kind of an ambiguous number anyway. So it doesn't even say when. Just 40 days. And Nineveh.

Will be overturned. And it becomes. Like the most successful. You know. Prophetic word. Ever. Because the whole city. Instantly repents.

[24 : 33] Instantly repents. Humans and animals. The king puts out a decree. That not only do humans have to wear sackcloth. Which is really itchy fur. But animals have to wear sackcloths as well.

So can you imagine. An entire city. Wearing really itchy clothes. And you look. Oh. And there's a cow. Or a chicken. And they're all wearing. Really itchy clothes as well.

Like it's. It's ridiculous. As to how. Well received this word is. And you would think. Jonah. Being a man of God. Being a prophet.

Would be overjoyed. That this city has repented. That they have heard the message. And that they are turning their hearts. Away from their evil ways. And towards God. But instead.

He gets super. Angry. He is. Livid. And he's not livid with the Ninevites. He's livid with God. He is so upset. That God would allow them.

[25 : 28] The opportunity to repent. Because the Ninevites. Had done. Terrible. Terrible. Terrible things. To the Israelites. Like just. God awful things.

And Jonah. And honestly. I agree with Jonah. Believes that they should be wiped. Off the face of the earth. He does not want them to be saved. He wants fire.

He wants brimstone. He wants absolute destruction. Of this city. He wants God to do. Everything. That they had done to the Israelites. And more so.

And instead. God offers them mercy. God offers them. A chance to repent. God offers them a chance. To turn their heart towards him.

And Jonah. Does not like that. God. And at the end. I mean. It ends so abruptly. But it ends with this line. And this is God speaking. And should I not have concern.

[26 : 27] For the great city of Nineveh. In which there are more than 120,000 people. Who cannot tell their right hand from their left. And also. Many animals. God shows a great compassion.

For these people. And I wonder for us. In the midst of all of this. And not just in this pandemic. But in our greater world right now. Where I see such a polarization. Of us versus them.

Right versus left. Conservative versus liberal. You know. Whatever. Whatever your you versus them is. I wonder if we're really excited.

About the thought. Of God destroying the others. And I wonder if. In this time of pandemic. God is maybe. Offering his chance.

To soften our hearts. And see that we're all in this together. That we all. Don't deserve. A second chance. But that God through his grace.

[27 : 24] Offers us. A second chance. Or a hundred and second chance. Or an eight hundred and second chance. That maybe our team. Isn't really a thing.

Maybe there isn't our team. Versus their team. Maybe. Maybe we can all be a team in this. And that's not saying universalism. That's just saying. Maybe. Maybe God.

Is offering us a chance. To work together. And maybe there's a softening of hearts. In this. Where we can be. Obedient and gracious. To each other. In the midst of this difficulty.

In the midst of this hardship. And. Hopefully. It won't require us. Being swallowed up by a fish. For that to happen. Hopefully we can see that.

And be gracious and generous. In it. As we go. So that's the second story. Of obedience amidst difficulty. It was a difficult situation. For Jonah. He did not want to forgive.

[28 : 19] He did not want to offer grace. To these people. But in the end. After some. You know. Pretty serious cajoling. He became obedient to God. Sort of. Through it all. So the third story.

I want to get to the third and final story. So I talked about Joseph. I talked about Jonah. And it wouldn't be a third. A three-part series. If there wasn't some alliteration in there. So we got Joseph. Jonah.

And then we're going with. Jesus. As our third story. So. I want to. I want to go to Jesus. In Matthew. Right at the end. Where he's in the garden of Gethsemane. And Jesus is there.

And he's got his disciples there. And he asked him to go sit. And pray. While he goes and prays. And you just can see. And sense. How hard. This is for Jesus.

And he's. He's calling out. To. To his father. To our God. To the heavenly father. And he's saying. My soul.

[29 : 15] Well he says it to the disciples. My soul is overwhelmed. With sorrow. To the point of death. Stay here. And keep watch with me. And then it says. Going a little farther. He fell with his face to the ground. He prayed.

My father. If it is possible. May this cup. Be taken from me. Yet not as I will. But as you will. And Jesus is begging.

He's begging. The father. Because he knows. What's coming. And I don't know. If he knows. To the exact detail. I don't know. If God has revealed that. To him. Where he knows exactly. What's going to happen.

But he sees the writing. On the wall. He sees. What's about to happen. I think at this point. He knows. That he's dying. For everybody's sins. And it's going to hurt. And it's going to hurt.

A lot. And he doesn't want to do it. And I think. This is one of the most shocking. And surprising. Pieces of the bible to me. Where. Jesus. Is struggling.

[30 : 10] He's struggling. With his mission. He's struggling. With his call. He's genuinely. Struggling. To put one foot. In front of the other. And obey God. God. But in the midst of it.

He does it. He does it. Anyways. You know. The next line is. Yet not as I will. But as you will. And I.

That is. That is an overwhelming. Two lines. That's an overwhelming couplet for me. My father. If it is possible.

May this cup. Be taken from me. Yet not as I will. But as you will. Here we have Jesus. You know. God's son.

God himself. Our holy Lord. Fully. In the flesh. Begging. To not have to go through with it. But choosing.

[31 : 07] Intentionally. Choosing. To do it anyways. Because that is the father's will. And knowing. That so much better. Is going to come from it.

So that is my. That is my invitation. For us today. Is can we lean into. The disappointment. Can we acknowledge the disappointment.

Can we keep taking a step forward. Into and through the disappointment. Knowing. That there is good on the other side. Knowing.

That the Lord is with us. And that the Lord sees us. And the Lord is guiding us through it. And knowing that we don't have to have it all figured out. We don't have to know what the end plan is.

All we have to do. Is take one. Step. Forward. All we have to do. Is act in obedience. The verse. That has really.

- [32 : 02] Stood out to me in this. Is Micah 6.8. Micah which is the book. Right after Jonah. 6.8. Which says. He has shown you. He being God.
- He has shown you. O mortal. What is good. And what does the Lord require of you. To act justly.
- To love mercy. And to walk humbly. With your God. Those are my. Those are my three anchor points today.
- To act justly. A lot of what Joseph did. Was acting justly. He acted justly in his own life. He was above reproach. He never fell into sin.
- That we know of. Or it's told in the story. He acted with justice. Jonah did not love mercy. He didn't want mercy. But it's a story that reflects and shows how God is merciful.
- [33 : 00] Even to those who. We really don't like. God is merciful. And then Jesus. Who is God? Who's God's son?
- Chose to be humble. Humble enough to die. On a cross. He walked humbly. With our God. God. And I wonder if we. In this time of uncertainty.
- In this time of crisis. In this time of. You know. Difficulty. In both the physical health sense. But then also the emotional health. As we're being distant. And it's changing.
- And it's stressful. And it's hard. And then also the financial stress. And everything like that. Is it possible for us. In the midst of this. To know. That God sees us. That God is with us.
- And for us. To act justly. To love mercy. And to walk humbly. With our God. So that is my invitation. For us today.
- [33 : 56] And I. I want to. To remind you. And to remind myself. That these are not wasted days. These are hard days for sure.
- But they are not wasted days. The Bible is full. Of hard days. In fact. If you look at the Bible. Almost all of the days are hard. It was hard. It was a hard living back then.
- So we shouldn't run away from hard days. Hard days are a part of life. And I think in our. Our western. You know. 21st century. World right now. We get by without a lot of hard days.
- But there are hard days. And some of you. Have had way harder days than others. And some of you are really in the hard days. Right now. But hard days are a part of it. But they're not wasted.
- There are huge chunks in the Bible. Of laments. Of people crying out to God. To tell him how bad it is. You know. Through the Psalms.
- [34 : 55] Through the major prophets. Through the minor prophets. There's even an entire book of the Bible. Called lamentations. The whole book is just lamenting. About how bad it is.
- So in this hard time. In this trying time. It is okay. And it's even good. Even biblical. To feel it. Not to like it.
- Not to. Embrace it. And say. Oh good. This is how I become my best self. But to feel it. To even want to change it. And to ask for it to change.
- Right? Like we saw. Even Jesus begged for God. To change the plan. And to take the cut from him. But. At the end of the day. It is not our job.
- To decide what happens. We don't get to do that. Our job. Is to decide how we are going to be in this. How we are going to show up each day. And if we are going to be obedient to God.
- [35 : 52] As he guides us through. So my invitation to you. Is to be obedient. What is God calling to you. This hour. Or this day.

Or this week. Because these are hard times. But I would argue. That God does his best work. In the midst of hard times.

He has shown us. Oh mortals. What is good. And what does the Lord require of us. To act justly.

To love mercy. And to walk humbly with him. Grace. And peace to you. In the midst. Of these hard. And uncertain times.

May you go. And act justly. Love mercy. And walk humbly. With your God. Amen. Peace to you.

[36 : 49] Thanks again for letting me share. Peace. Peace.

I'm bon Conf estou. I'm ready. Father.