

One Final Charge

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[0 : 00] If you would open up your Bibles to Joshua chapter 23. Joshua chapter 23. The Word of the Lord says, A long time after the Lord had given Israel rest from all the enemies around them, Joshua was old, advanced in age.

So Joshua summoned all Israel, including its elders, leaders, judges, and officers, and said to them, I am old, advanced in age, and you have seen for yourselves everything the Lord your God did to all these nations on your account, because it was the Lord your God who was fighting for you.

See, I have allotted these remaining nations to you as an inheritance for your tribes, including all the nations I have destroyed from the Jordan westward to the Mediterranean Sea.

See, the Lord your God will force them back on your account and drive them out before you, so that you can take possession of their land as the Lord your God promised you.

Let's pray together. Lord God, you are good and kind. You offer blessing when we are undeserving. You give us grace. And so God, as we come now to study your Word, we pray for your grace.

[1 : 21] We pray for your mercy. We pray, God, that you would teach us. Teach us your truth. Teach us your ways. Let us live for you.

And pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So the end of Joshua, Joshua chapters 22 through 24, is a call to the people of Israel to be faithful to God, to remain faithful to the Lord.

Here in Joshua chapter 23, we see the beginning of Joshua's final address to the people. It spans through Joshua chapter 24 when Joshua hosts a covenant renewal ceremony.

Before they renew the covenant together, Joshua gives them this command, which is to remain faithful, to remember the things that God has done, and to look ahead to what God has promised. See, Joshua is preparing the next generation of leaders. This chapter 23 seems to be addressed primarily to the elders, leaders, judges, and officers in Israel.

[2 : 30] And it brings up a point of leadership that's pretty important, and I'm sure that most everyone in this room has heard of before, but in the workforce there's a phrase, and it's make yourself replaceable.

Have you ever heard this before? Anybody? Had a boss tell you, make yourself replaceable? The idea there is that you document the work that you do, you delegate tasks to leaders who are under your leadership, and you prepare people for what happens if you go, whether you, you know, retire or you quit or, you know, get fired.

You want to make sure that the company is able to continue on without you. And Joshua here knows that he's about to die. He knows that he's near the end of his life.

In fact, in Joshua 23, 14, he says, I am now going the way of the whole earth. And you know with all your heart and all your soul that none of the good promises the Lord your God made to you has failed.

Everything was fulfilled for you. Not one promise has failed. Joshua tells him, look, I'm going the way of the whole earth. Everyone lives and then dies. I mean, that's the way that it has been since sin entered the world, since Adam.

[3 : 36] There's life leading to eventual death. And Joshua knows this is what's taking place. We find out in Joshua chapter 24, he's pretty old. He's 110. So maybe, I don't know if he knew that he was about to die or if he was just ready to go.

I don't know. If I was 110, I think I'd be ready too. You know what I'm saying? But Joshua gathers the people. He gathers them. He gathers the leaders and he gives them some instruction.

He gives them a reminder. He prepares them for what will happen whenever he goes. And this is a similar succession story to what we've already seen. You remember, Moses died at the end of Deuteronomy.

Moses, the Lord's servant, died. And then before he died, he had prepared Joshua to take over the mantle of leadership. In fact, in Joshua chapter 1, the very beginning verse in this book says, After the death of Moses, the Lord's servant, the Lord spoke to Joshua, son of Nun, Moses' assistant. Verse 2. Moses, my servant is dead. Now you and all the people prepare to cross over the Jordan to the land I am giving the Israelites. See, the Lord had a succession plan in place.

[4 : 43] He knew that Moses was going to die before he took the people into the promised land because Moses struck the rock. And so his punishment was that he wouldn't get to lead the people into the land. And so he prepared Joshua to take over this mantle of leadership.

But now that the people are in the land, they weren't set up yet to have a monarchy, to have a kingdom. They were supposed to be a people who were unified even though they were spread out across the land in one purpose, and that is to be God's people and to worship the Lord.

And so the way that Joshua prepares the people for his departure, for his own death, is by speaking to the people who will actually lead the individual tribes all over the place, right?

All throughout the 12 tribes, all throughout the land, he spoke to them and reminded them of some very important pieces of information. In particular, he gave them this foundational truth, which is God expects covenant faithfulness.

God expects his people, this is, if we're looking back in Old Testament times, God expected his people to be faithful to him under his covenant. And why did God expect his people to be faithful to him?

[5 : 53] Well, because God was faithful to the covenant, right? God was faithful himself. And so you see in verse 3 here, he says, And you have seen for yourselves everything the Lord your God did to all these nations on your account, because it was the Lord your God who was fighting for you.

Joshua points the people, as he prepares them for his own death, points the people backwards to what God has done. God has been faithful to the covenant. He's given you the blessing that he's promised.

And now he calls you to remain faithful for the long haul, right? It's easy to remain faithful for the five to seven years that you're fighting, when there's all that excitement there in the conquest.

It's easy to remain faithful when you are coming off the spiritual high of seeing God destroy the walls of Jericho by the sound of a trumpet. It's easy to remain faithful after you see God punish Achan's sin so publicly and so clearly.

It's easy to stay faithful when you have those clear reminders and memories of what God has done in the recent past. But what about for the long haul? What about for prolonged faithfulness, perseverance, endurance?

[6 : 57] How would they remain faithful? Well, one, the leaders and the elders had to constantly remind the people of the things that God had done. Don't let those things slip away. And then number two, he pointed ahead to what God promised.

He says in verse five, He points ahead.

So not only do we look back to what God has done in the recent past, but we look ahead to the things that God has promised in the future. So how are the people of Israel going to make it after Joshua dies?

Well, they're going to stay faithful to the Lord by thinking about remembering the work of God and looking ahead in hope for the promises that God has given. But notice, too, the promise that God would drive the people out of the land required something of the Israelites.

It required their faithfulness and obedience in pushing those people out. We've talked about this before as we've gone through the book of Joshua. But this points us again to this truth, which is God is completely sovereign, and God gives men responsibility, right?

[8 : 08] God is sovereign, and man is responsible to act, to obey, to do what God says. And the way that the people of Israel would see this played out was through their obedience to go and fight in the Lord's strength.

They knew that God would give them victory, that God would drive the nations out from among them. And the way that God would give them victory, the way that God would provide that liberation, as it were, that complete inheritance, was through their obedience and fighting.

He would strengthen them and enable them to win. And it's kind of just, if we're looking at this chapter and really the book of Joshua from a high view, we have to remember that God's covenant is unconditional on the one hand and conditional on the other, right?

It's unconditional in the sense that God would accomplish what he said he would accomplish. But it's conditional in the way that individuals and even generations experience the blessing of God's covenant.

You know, God made a promise that he would provide the land to Abraham's descendants, right? After 400 years in slavery, Genesis 15, he said that he would give them the land. That's a good promise that God would fulfill.

[9 : 20] But that first generation coming out of Egypt didn't get to experience the blessing. Why? Because they were unfaithful to the Lord's covenant. So there's an unconditional aspect of God's covenant, which is that what he says he will accomplish.

And there's conditional aspects as well, which means we are responsible for obedience within the covenant that God has established in order to see the blessing. He even points to it here at the end of the chapter.

If you read verses 15 and 16, it says, Since every good thing the Lord your God has promised has come about, so he will bring on you every bad thing until he has annihilated you from this good land that the Lord your God has given you.

If you break the covenant of the Lord your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow and worship to them, the Lord's anger will burn against you, and you will quickly disappear from this good land that he has given you.

See, God was not messing around. He told them what the deal was. Be faithful and experience blessing. If you're unfaithful, then I'll remove you from the land. Right? And that does not make God go back on his promise.

[10 : 27] He's given the land. And we know that God fulfilled the rest of his covenant by sending Jesus, his son. But we know that for individuals and for generations, their experience of blessing depended on their faithfulness in the land.

That's why years later, about a thousand years later, the northern kingdom is already off, taken by Assyria, and then the southern kingdom of Judah gets ransacked by Babylon three different times. And they get taken into captivity. It's because generations were unfaithful to the Lord's covenant. God was still faithful. He freed them from captivity 70 years later. But that generation had to die off. That generation was unfaithful to the Lord's covenant. So Joshua gives them a really clear reminder of the importance of covenant faithfulness. If you, the leaders of the people, can do anything, then impress it on the next generations that, one, God has done amazing things.

Two, God will do amazing things. And three, stay faithful to the Lord so you can experience his blessing. But I want you to see how these truths that Joshua taught to the leaders of Israel still apply to us today.

[11 : 45] I want you to see how it applies to us today. So they have the covenant that they're called to live under. And if they live under it well, they live under it the right way. If they pursue the Lord, then they would be blessed.

And if they didn't, they would be cursed. But there's a few ways that Joshua's farewell address still applies to us, still is a model for us as we think about the future of the church and the future of our own lives as God's chosen people now, those who have faith in Jesus.

So, again, Joshua is 110 years old, okay? I mean, he's in the last days of his life, right? He's in that final few years, right?

Actually, 110 is when he died. So he's in that final year. He knows that his time on earth is short. And it's important to him to prepare the next generation through those leaders around him.

And I want you to see that it's important for us to do the same thing. We are called to prepare the next generation of Christ followers to lead in his church. We're called to prepare the next generation to understand the importance of faithfulness to God.

[12 : 51] So I want you to understand, I've done some research on our church. I shared this at the men's breakfast a couple weeks ago. But I want you to understand, I did some numbers, okay, on who attends, who's active members, and, you know, age groups that we can put these things in, okay, for our church, okay, for First Baptist Lewisburg.

So we have a good number of active members. It's fantastic. Of those active members, born in 1960 or before, are 82 people.

So if you were born in 1960 or before, raise your hand. You don't have to tell us what year, just before 1960, okay? If you want to tell us the year, that's fine. Okay, so 82 people.

Did you all see that? Raise your hands again, kind of wave around for a second. Look at how many people in the room that is. Isn't that awesome? Praise the Lord. Okay, now, if you were born between 1961 and 1979, there's 30 active members in that age group, just roundabout.

So if you were born between 1961 and 1979, raise your hand. Okay, the numbers are checking out so far. I'm not looking like a liar. That's good. Okay, all right.

[14:05] Now, if you were born between 1980 and 2005, which I know is a long gap, but if you were born between 1980 and 2005, 34 active people, give or take. So if you were born between those years, raise your hand.

That would be me. Okay. A little bit lower representation today. We're going to go with fall break. Okay. All right. And then outside of that, we have kids and youth.

Okay. So here's what that means. Okay. If our 65, 75, and 85-year-olds are not pouring into the 25, 35, and 45-year-olds and growing them in their walk with Jesus and helping them know the importance of faithfulness to the Lord and helping them know the importance of being committed to God and helping them know the importance of serving in the church, what's going to happen to this church in the next 20 years?

What's going to happen? Anybody have a guess? What? Flop. Yeah. Flop's a good way to say it. I like that. It won't be around. I mean, right?

Like, that's what will end up happening. That's what happens to churches all the time. Churches who don't pour into the generations below them, they end up dying off, or they have younger generations who come up and aren't sure about the things of God and aren't committed to faithfulness.

[15:26] And so then the church's leadership is shaky. Then the church's witness is shaky. And suddenly, it's not really representing a church of Jesus Christ. We have to be committed to pouring into the next generation.

You see the importance of it. If the church rises and falls on the backs of 65, 75, and 85-year-olds, then it's going to break. It's going to fall, right? But if those same people are pouring into the next generation, then we have a chance for revival.

We have a chance for energy. We have a chance for commitment across the board, all right?

Across the whole spectrum of the church. And so for us, there are some ways, and I want you to hear me.

I'm talking to you people who are in that final third of life, all right? 65 plus. And I'm also talking to the rest of you, especially if you have kids. All right, this isn't, don't check out. I want you to hear this too.

But if you're 65 plus, I really want you to pay attention to this, okay? Because Joshua knew he was at the end of his life, and he poured into those leaders again, and he reminded them of some things.

[16:26] So here's some ways that you, as that 65 plus final third of life, here's ways that you can continue on the faithfulness, the faithful witness of the church, all right?

Number one, like the people that Joshua talked to, you should point the next generation to the things that God has done. Point the next generation to the things that God has done.

You've seen God work. That's what Joshua says here in verse three. And you have seen for yourselves everything the Lord your God did. If you're 65 plus, then without a doubt, if you've been a Christian for any length of time, you've seen God do amazing things.

You've seen him restore relationships. You've seen him bring about forgiveness and grace with people that you didn't expect would ever be willing to forgive. You've seen God save souls, right? You've seen God do amazing things. And then if you've been a member of this church or in the church, you know, for any period of time, then you've also seen God use his church in powerful ways, right?

[17:26] So I've talked with people since I've been here. It's been a little over a year now. And some of you in this age group, 65 plus, you've really encouraged me by pointing to the ways that you see me being a young pastor as exciting for the future of the church.

And that's super, it's humbling. I'm grateful for that. It's not because I'm great. It's not because I'm fantastic or I'm really handsome, though that last one's true. If Audrey was in here, she'd be embarrassed.

She's downstairs, she can't. Anyways, it's not because of that. It's because youth in the church is encouraging for the future, right? Youth, faithfulness, faithful young people in the church is encouraging for the future of the church.

So pour into the next generation. Remind them of things that you've witnessed in this church.

Remind them of ways that you've seen God use this church to reach the lost. Remind them of ways that you've seen this church be filled with people and there being an excitement about the ways that First Baptist Lewisburg is being used by God in the community.

Remind the next generation of the faithfulness of God, okay? Number two, point the next generation to the hope that we have in God. Point them to the future that God has promised.

[18:39] All right, on the individual level, if you're 65 plus, you've experienced heartache, you've experienced loss, you've experienced grief, you've also experienced great joy and triumphs and victories, right?

You've experienced a lot of, a wide range of things, of emotions and experiences that young people sometimes haven't experienced yet. So what you get to do is encourage the next generation with a testimony of God's faithfulness even in your own life, right?

I've seen the Lord comfort me when I lost my spouse. I've experienced that. I know the joy of the Lord when I remember seeing my child and my grandchild for the first time, right?

Like you get to pour into the next generation and then also you get to tell people how excited you are to go from this life to the next because this life isn't all there is. You get to point people to the hope that we have in Jesus in resurrection.

You get to hope to, you get to point people to the hope that we have in Jesus in his second coming. Maybe you'll still be around when Jesus comes back. Wouldn't that be amazing? What an encouragement you can be to a younger generation.

[19:46] You've seen the Lord's faithfulness. You've experienced his goodness. Pass it on. A third way is to remind people about the importance of God's word.

Remind the next generation about the importance of God's word. I'm gonna read from Joshua 23 again. In verse six, it says, be very strong and continue obeying all that is written in the book of the law of Moses so that you do not turn from it to the right or the left and so that you do not associate with these nations remaining among you.

Do not call on the names of their gods or make an oath to them. Do not serve them or bow in worship to them. Instead, be loyal to the Lord, your God, as you have been to this day.

See, Joshua impressed on those leaders of Israel the importance of God's word. There's temptations all around that will distract people from faithfulness to the Lord.

For the people of Israel, it was idol worship, pagan gods that promised a lot of really good things. Fertility, rain, crops, things that they needed to survive, things that they wanted to pass on a generation, right, to continue their family line.

[21:00] And so they were tempted to abandon worshiping God alone and tempted to follow those false gods. A lot of those temptations exist today.

We just don't call it idolatry anymore. There's temptations that face young people that if they were committed to God's word, right, for Joshua, he says, the law of the book of the law of Moses, look, that was their Bible.

That was all they had at this point. For us, we have a lot more, right, point people to the importance of committing themselves to the authority of Scripture, to God's word.

Because in God's word, we'll find the strength that we need to say no to those temptations. In God's word, we'll find the importance, the reminders that those things will come so that we're not surprised by them.

In God's word, we'll be encouraged and know how to live for him even when the world around us doesn't. So, pour into the next generation, the generations below you, and remind them of the importance of committing to God's word.

[22:08] Point them to the word of God. Look, the reality is you have to admonish people in the Lord, in love, you have to admonish people to remain faithful to God's word.

Admonish people to stay committed, right, to not leave the pure worship that God calls us to. You do it lovingly, you encourage people to be faithful, but you encourage people most of all to love God.

So, the first way that you pour into the next generation is you teach it, right? Teach people the importance of what God has done and the fact that he has moved and done amazing things, the importance of what God has promised and how it's going to come to pass, and then also the importance of God's word.

That's how you pour into the next generation, but the next way, and this is equally important, how do we get from there, teaching it, to here, the next generation loving the Lord and remaining faithful?

You model it. Don't just teach these things, model these things, especially a commitment to God's word. Model a commitment to God's word.

[23 : 15] See, the reason that Joshua was even able to tell the leaders of Israel to do what he said in verse 6, be very strong and continue obeying all that is written in the book of the law of Moses so that you do not turn from it to the right or the left and so that you do not associate with these nations remaining among you.

The reason that Joshua was able to tell the leaders to do that and it carried some weight is because Joshua had modeled that same truth. In fact, if you go back to Joshua chapter 1 verses 7 and 8, these are almost the exact same words that God gave to Joshua.

He said, be strong and very courageous to observe carefully the whole instruction my servant Moses commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right or the left so that you will have success wherever you go.

This book of instruction must not depart from your mouth. You are to meditate on it day and night so that you may carefully observe everything written in it. For then, you will prosper and succeed in whatever you do.

You have a responsibility to pour into the next generation. But you can't just tell them what to do and not live it out. Can I tell you something? This is going to might sound a little harsh but can I tell you something?

[24 : 28] Lovingly? Someone said sure. Okay. The worst thing a young person in the church can see is hypocrisy from an older generation.

If we're not living what we tell people to live our message falls on deaf ears.

If we ourselves aren't transformed by the work of Jesus and committed to his word then we're wasting our breath.

We have to model a commitment to God's word. Joshua modeled against it. We have a warning against hypocrisy and so the question comes are you devoted to God's word?

Are you committed to God's word? Is God's word the very bread of life to you? Is God's word your source for wisdom?

[25 : 34] Or is chat GPT? Are you committed to God's word? If you want to see the next generation rise up in the church faithful then you have to show them what it looks like to live faithfully.

Now the next thing is you have to model a love for God. A deep love for God. Because like the hypocrisy of telling someone to follow God's word and then not living it out yourself.

Telling someone to live out a commitment to God's word without any love for God falls equally flat because that's legalism. Look at verse 9 through 11.

It says the Lord has driven out great and powerful nations before you and no one is able to stand against you to this day. One of you routed a thousand because the Lord your God was fighting for you as he promised. Verse 11 so diligently watch yourselves.

Love the Lord your God. I love this command from Joshua. I love this. Because when we think about the importance of being a faithful, committed, Christ-following believer, committed to God's word, we cannot separate the importance of a genuine love for God from the commitment to his truth.

[26 : 54] Right? In fact, our love for God should motivate us to model being committed to God's word. If you teach the generations below you to love the Lord, then you should do that by modeling a pure, diligent, faithful love for God yourself.

So, model what it looks like to faithfully live for God. I want you to think about this from a New Testament perspective because this reminder, or this lesson that we're taking from Joshua's speech to the Israelite leaders, is not in isolation.

The importance of these truths are timeless, and they're echoed in the New Testament as well. Our transformed minds should lead to true worship, which is spirit-filled living.

Romans 12, 1 and 2 says, Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God. This is your true worship.

Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God. See, the challenge for the people of Israel was that they may not look like they're distinct or separate from the world around them.

[28 : 13] And so they had to carefully, diligently watch themselves to love the Lord so that they loved the Lord supremely. If you love the Lord supremely, then you can prioritize your other loves.

Suddenly, the love for fertility and for, you know, crops growing and rain falling, suddenly the love for those things seems way less serious in light of your deep love for God, right?

That's the principle for the people of Israel. For us, the same thing is true. If our love for God is supreme above everything else, then our love for the things of this life seems to dissipate, right?

Because we love the Lord. We're committed to Him. And what Paul is telling the people here in the book of Romans is that your love for God should lead you to living a life that looks completely separate from the world around you.

So for the older people in the room, you should remind the next generation of the importance to separate themselves from this world, a call to holy living, transformed living.

[29 : 12] 1 Peter chapter 1 says, therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.

As obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance, but as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct, for it is written, be holy because I am holy.

If you appeal to the Father who judges impartially according to each one's work, you are to conduct yourselves in reverence during the time living as strangers. Listen, pour into the next generation by reminding them of the importance of holy living, right?

Of a deep love for God. This is how you model a deep love for God, is that you live like he says to, right? In 1 John, John says in verses 15 through 17 of chapter 2, do not love the world or the things in the world.

If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of one's possessions is not from the Father, but is from the world.

[30 : 13] And the world with its lust is passing away, but the one who does the will of God remains forever. Our love for God separates us from this world.

We should look different than this world. So live a life committed to God's word, rooted in a deep and abiding love for him, and model that for the next generation. Don't simply teach, don't simply say what other people should do, don't tell people what the Bible says, but what really you should do.

Show people that you are committed to God's word and that you love the Lord through your life. Model it. Model faithful living. So, what motivates your faithfulness?

Do you love the Lord, or do you come to church because you're checking a social box? What motivates your faithfulness to God? Do you love him, or do you just really want to be able to tell people that you read the Bible six days this week?

What motivates your faithfulness to the Lord? Lord. We have to check ourselves, we have to check our heart, so that we can pour into the next generation and see them rise up in the church and understand the importance of God's truth.

[31 : 30] Saying it's important for my kids to go to church is one thing. Taking them to church and prioritizing that over everything else is another. Saying that you love the Lord is one thing.

But showing your kids and your grandkids the love of Jesus by pointing them to scripture is another. So model this life.

Ultimately, that's what Joshua's telling the leaders here to do in Israel. If they're going to be out among the nation like Joshua was whenever he was the leader, then they're going to have to model faithfulness.

They're going to have to model a commitment to God's work. If the leaders of Israel weren't following false gods, then the people would likely follow suit. They wouldn't either. The same thing's

true in the church.

If the leaders, if the more elderly statesmen and women of our church are living faithfully for the Lord and showing the importance of sharing the gospel, of bringing people to church and discipling believers and all of these things, then the younger generation is likely to follow.

[32 : 38] So if you're an older person in this church, there's a call to us, and I'm using us, because again this extends not just to the 65 plus, but if you're a parent, if you have been a Christian and have any influence on younger believers, this extends to you too.

We have to remind people of what God has done. So take note of the things in your life, the moments where you can look back and say God moved miraculously. God did an amazing thing. I didn't expect him to do that, but he did. God is good. Think about what God has done in your life, and then think about the biblical record. What has God done that we have record of in scripture? Right? And teach people what God has done. Number two, point them to what God has promised. But not just what God has promised, like it's some distant thing that doesn't have any impact on us, but what God has promised and how that applies to us.

Right? I have hope that Jesus is coming back, and that changes everything about the way that I live. I have hope that one day I'll be with him for eternity, and that changes the way that I treat people, because I want other people to come with me.

[33 : 45] Right? Don't just tell people about what God has promised, but tell them what that means. Number three, be committed to God's word. Be committed to God's word. Again, you can't teach people to be committed to God's word if you yourself are not committed to God's word.

Be committed faithfully to scripture, to God's truth, and point the next generation to the importance of that same commitment. And then number four, remind the next generation to love the Lord. Remind them to love the Lord above anything else, before anything else. A love for God has to be supreme, because our love for God changes everything about our life.

And how are you going to tell people these things? One, with words, you should teach it. And then two, through your life, the way you live. You should live it. So prepare the next generation by living faithfully for the Lord.

If you have interest in seeing this church grow, if you have interest in seeing this church be able to reach more people, if you have interest in seeing this church do things for the kingdom of God and not for the kingdom of First Baptist Lewisburg, then this is what we have to do.

[34 : 55] This is it. This is how we will be used by God faithfully, right, for this city, for our county, for our state, for our nation, and around the world.

We can be used by God as a church faithfully if we live faithfully for Him. We pour into the next generation to also live faithfully for Him. And finally, I just want to say that the thing that the Israelites had was they had this call, but they did not have the Spirit of God living within them. We have this call, and by God's grace, the Spirit lives within us and empowers us and enables us to live it out faithfully. We have to deny ourselves.

We have to be committed to truth. And we have to live for God even when it's uncomfortable, even when it's hard, even when it isn't what we want to do. We're in Galatians in the men's Bible study on Thursday mornings.

Galatians chapter 5 says that the Spirit opposes the flesh so that you don't do what you want to do. That's the whole point of the Spirit of God is to oppose the fleshly sinful desires that rage within us.

[36 : 08] So live by the Spirit of God. Now, if you are not a Christ follower, then there's no hope here, right? But in Jesus Christ, you can live out this call, you can pour into the next generation, and you can also experience the hope, experience the hope of His promise.

You can see everything through the lens of what God has done. So if you don't know Jesus, please don't leave without settling that today. I'm happy to talk with you, but there's a lot of older Christians in this room.

If you saw their hands go up, and I bet any of them are happy to talk with you as well about what it means to follow Jesus and live faithfully for Him. Let's pray together. We'll sing a final closing song. Lord God, you are good.

God, you transform us. You make us new. And we are undeserving of your grace. God, the same way the people of Israel, the leaders of Israel needed your grace and mercy to live faithfully, God, so do we.

So God, let us be faithful. Provide us with the grace that's needed. Strengthen us so that we can walk purely in your word.

[37 : 15] Give everybody in this room a desire, a commitment, a faithful devotion to you and your truth. But God, most of all, bring our hearts to life with an unshakable love for you.

Your love for us provides the way for us to love you. God, you are good.

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.