

# The Power of Words (James 3:1-12)

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Preacher: Brett Sanders

[ 0 : 00 ] Thank you so much, choir. Jenny, Grant, beautiful, beautiful job. I think every time I hear that song, He Will Hold Me Fast, I remember a time coming up on five years ago now, right after Russia had invaded Ukraine and there was a group of believers that a video was coming out of a group of believers singing in Ukraine that song He Will Hold Me Fast.

And what a beautiful reminder it is for us today that no matter what is going on in this world that Christ will hold us fast. I know that many of us are coming to church today with heavy hearts and that the tragic killings this week on a national scale as well as tragic events closer to home have taken a toll on us in some form or fashion.

Whether it be the assassination of Charlie Kirk or the brutal murder of Irina Zaruska or the school shootings in Colorado. We as believers must strongly condemn all of these wicked actions.

These tragedies are evidence of the evil that resides in the human heart. Evidence that we need Jesus now as much as ever. We as believers pray that the criminals in these violent acts are brought to justice, but also ultimately to repentance and saving faith in King Jesus.

We pray for the families of the victims. We pray for our nation. These acts of violence should never be who we are and we must never make light of evil.

[ 1 : 46 ] These are sad and dark days for our nation. Yet, as believers, we do not grieve without hope. We pray that in the darkness that others will be able to see more clearly the light of the gospel.

That others will more clearly see the hope that we have as believers. Jesus is the only one who can heal brokenness in our nation and save the lost.

We pray this morning that we, those of us who follow Christ, will passionately proclaim the message of the gospel to our communities, to our nation, and ultimately to our world around us.

Until Christ returns and wipes away every tear from our eyes and makes all things new. Danny Akin reminds us, he says, this day is coming.

And until it does, we speak courageously and we work diligently against the powers of darkness and evil. We have a great commission from a great king.

[ 2 : 52 ] We will faithfully carry out that assignment that he has given us until he returns one day. And so this morning, I want to encourage us as a church to pray for our community, pray for our nation, pray for our world.

That we may show light in darkness. That we may point people to a saving faith in Jesus Christ and ultimately point them to the only hope that we have in this life and the life to come.

And so if you would join me in praying this morning, Father, I thank you that we can come together and lift our burdens, lift our requests to you and that you hear us.

And so, Lord, I pray that you be with us as a church, as a community of believers. I pray that you be with believers all over this country, that we in this dark time would point people to you as the only source of hope in this life.

So, Lord, give us the boldness. Give us the courage to speak out against evil when we see it and point people to you as the only source of hope that we have.

[ 4 : 04 ] And so, Lord, I thank you for Jesus. I thank you for the hope that he gives us not only in this life, but the life to come. And so, Lord, let that be what fills our hearts and our minds today and in the days to come and forevermore.

So, Lord, thank you for that. And we ask all these things in Jesus' precious name. Amen. Amen.

And so, this morning, we're going to be sharing and talking about our words and the importance of our words as we continue through the book of James.

But I want to see if you can complete this sentence for me. Sticks and stones may break my bones, but words will never what? Isn't it amazing how all of us know that, even though it's completely false?

Isn't it amazing how all of us know that phrase, know that saying, even though there's no validity to it whatsoever? To say that words can never hurt us is not only false, but it's unbiblical.

It's not what we find in Scripture. And what is amazing, or I should actually probably say troubling to me, is the fact that we live in a day and age where verbal communication, that is this face-to-face communication, seems to be, at least to me, on a downward trend.

[ 5 : 24 ] Where people aren't communicating face-to-face as much anymore. We're still communicating. We're communicating over our phones, through social media, through text, through any different avenues that we can come up with.

But this verbal, this face-to-face communication, seems to be on a downward trend. And yet, at the same time, this malice communication, this communication that brings harm to one another, seems to be, at least from the perspective that I'm looking at, you may have a different perspective.

But from the perspective that I'm looking at, it seems like that is on an upward trajectory. You see, words are powerful. In good ways and in bad ways, words are powerful.

And this shouldn't surprise us. After all, we serve a God who speaks, right? We serve a God who speaks, who spoke the world into existence. You go back to the very beginning in Genesis 1, and we see very clearly that we serve a God who speaks, and there's power in His words.

There's nothing God speaks, and all of creation listens. There's nothing God speaks, and all of creation comes forth as He intended.

[ 6 : 37 ] Words are powerful. And we see that God not only spoke the world into existence, but He continues to speak to us today, primarily through the Word of God.

And we are created in His image. And so it shouldn't surprise us that our words carry power, and our words carry meaning as well.

And in our passage today, we're going to see this, and we're also going to see the importance of being guarded with our speech. But even more so than being guarded with our speech, being guarded with our hearts.

And so if you have a copy of God's Word, I invite you to open with me to James chapter 3. This week, we're going to be in James 3, verses 1 through 12.

And this is what the Word of the Lord says. It says, Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers. For you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

[ 7 : 34 ] For we all stumble in many ways, and if anyone does not stumble in what He says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle his whole body. If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well.

Look at the ships also. They are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs.

So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire.

And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness. The tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body, setting on fire the entire course of life, and set on fire by hell.

Every kind of beast and bird or the reptile and sea creature can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no human being can tame the tongue.

[ 8 : 39 ] It is a restless evil full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so.

Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water?

Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives, or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water. Now there are a few things that I want us to understand when it comes to this passage this morning.

And a few things that I want us to recognize and see when it comes to the importance of our words. And the first thing is this, that we should understand the importance and weightiness of teaching God's Word.

That we understand the importance and weightiness of teaching God's Word. Now there are many passages in the book of James that we can look at and that we can see that will apply to our lives.

[ 9 : 50 ] In fact, that's one of the reasons that I love the book of James. It's because in James, James very clearly states many things that we should be giving our lives to. And he says very clearly things that we should not be giving our lives to.

A lot of times there's not a lot of room for error in misunderstanding what James is saying. He says it very clearly. And that's one of the reasons that I love James. And so there's many things that each of us could look at this passage and see, well, that really applies to me.

Well, this passage this week was one of those that really applied to me and caused me to think. Because these first two verses here in James 3, 1 and 2, it says, This is a passage that is incredibly relevant for us today.

This is a passage that makes a lot of sense in the context that we are in today. But it's also a passage that at the time that it was written made a lot of sense to its readers as well.

Douglas Moo, he points out several different characteristics that made this particular passage important in the life of the early church. Noting that Paul ranked the gift of teaching very high on the list of spiritual gifts that God bestows on the church.

[ 11 : 22 ] For the early church, Jewish Christians in the church that James would be writing to here, a lot of them, the role of the teacher would be very similar to a role that they understood.

The role of the rabbi who is going to be teaching. And so they understood this and made that jump very easily to see the teacher in this role. It was a very prestigious role.

A role that would require a certain level of education in a day and time when very few people could read. And they needed to be cautious about people aspiring to this role as a means of getting ahead in society.

They needed to be very cautious that people would be trying to go into this field as a way of gaining prestige or power or authority. This, James is saying, should not be the case.

You shouldn't view this role as a means of self-promotion. Many of you are reading right now the book, Love Your Church by Tony Morita.

[ 12 : 23 ] It's a book that many of our life groups are going through right now in some of our Sunday school classes. But this week in Love Your Church, Tony Morita, he talks about what it means to be a faithful leader.

And he says, pastors are called to do their work willingly. They are called to live holy lives before God. He says, most of the pastoral qualifications are related to character and not skills.

When you look at 1 Timothy chapter 3. He says, most of those qualifications for the pastor aren't related to their abilities, aren't related to the skills that they have, but they're actually far more intertwined with their character.

They are called to be humble servant leaders, he says, like Jesus. To be sure, pastors aren't perfect, and they will have bad days and make mistakes, but the pursuit and pattern of a shepherd's life should be marked by happiness, holiness, and humility.

In the book, Tony Morita goes on to give an illustration about a pastor that I have a lot of respect for. And his name is John Stott. He went to be with the Lord several years back.

[ 13 : 34 ] But John Stott was one of the greatest expositors of a generation. He was a pastor who was able to clearly communicate God's Word, but he was also a pastor who had a deep sense of humility when it comes to serving others.

And in the book, he gives a great illustration, but there's another illustration, there's another story about John Stott's life that I want to bring our attention to this morning. You see, he would go around and do lots of conferences and work with aspiring young pastors and going around doing these teaching seminars.

And one time he was asked, he says, what goes through your mind before you step on the stage to give a sermon? He says, what goes through your mind as you're walking up to the pulpit?

And John Stott responded, he says, there's three steps that I walk up on my way to the pulpit. He says, there's three steps. On each step, I remind myself, he says, I believe in the Holy Spirit.

I believe in the Holy Spirit. I believe in the Holy Spirit. And what Stott was communicating here is a deep sense of dependence on God to teach his Word.

[ 14 : 45 ] A deep sense of dependence on God to expound his Word. And then he was also asked, he says, well, what goes through your mind as you're leaving the stage, as you're walking off after you give a message?

He says, what do you feel after a sermon? And this is what Stott responded. He said, ashamed. Ashamed that I couldn't do a better job.

What? What? One of the greatest communicators, one of the greatest expositors of God's Word, at least that I've known about in this generation, is saying that what he felt as he left was this ashamed that he couldn't do a better job.

And I can't tell you how challenging and comforting all at the same time this was for me this week, to think about one of the greatest expositors and the humility that he approached teaching God's Word.

This deep sense of humility that I need God when it comes to teaching His Word. You see, James is not saying, do not follow God's call in your life to go to be a teacher of the Word, but rather he's saying, check your motives.

[15:54] Make sure you understand reason why you're going into this. As teachers, we have the ability to not only sin with our words, but we have the ability to lead others to sin with our words as well.

There is a real need for pastors in the church today. For the last couple of years, the Georgia Baptist Convention has made a large emphasis on the need for pastors, the need for training up pastors in the church.

They said there's a real shortage of pastors in the church. The average age of a senior pastor in the church is steadily increasing, while the number of young ministers, the young pastors coming into ministry is steadily declining.

And they said it's not just a problem that we're going to see in years to come. It's a problem that we're seeing right now. So there is this need, there is a real sense of urgency to call people into pastoral ministry.

So hear me when I say this, we need people answering the call into ministry, but we need young men of character and not just talent.

[17:00] We need young men of character and not just talent. As a church, it is our responsibility to raise up these leaders. The next thing I hope that we can see from this passage is this, that we must understand the disproportionate strength the tongue has to lead us.

I know that's a whole mouthful, so let me say it again here. We must understand the disproportionate strength the tongue has to lead us. James says, If we put bits in the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well.

Look at the ships also. They are guided, they are so large and are driven by strong winds. They're guided by very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs.

So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. I don't know how many of you in here have ridden a horse before. Who in here has ridden a horse? Okay, that's actually quite a bit of you have ridden a horse before.

And I can remember growing up, I actually took horseback riding lessons when I was younger, when I was in elementary school, and I thought it was great. I, as a small child, had the opportunity, I had to get help to get up on top of the horse, but I had the opportunity to ride this mass, I mean, a horse now seems big, but to a child, a horse is huge.

[18:24] And so I can remember riding these horses around, and it was so amazing to me, me as a small child being able to lead and guide and direct this 1,200-pound animal that I'm riding.

And I can remember one time in particular, I was riding this horse, and I asked the instructor, I said, can I take the horse through the mud over there? And she didn't know what I was talking about, and she said, sure, go ahead and do that.

And so what I was actually referring to was this giant dirt pile that a dump truck had come in and put out so that she could spread around the corral to fill out any potholes.

And so there's this giant mound of dirt that was right on the side of the corral. And so before she knew it, I had taken that horse around, and I, proud as I possibly could be, sitting on top of this horse, on top of this giant mound of dirt, just as happy as I could be.

So it's amazing when you think about that even a small child can lead and guide and direct this giant horse with just a small little bit.

[19:27] And James says it's the same thing when it comes to a ship. James says it's the same way with a ship. You can guide this massive ship with a small little rudder.

Our tongues not only have the ability to guide our lives, but they also have the ability to guide others as well. Winston Churchill used words to inspire and rally a nation when he came over the airwaves and said this.

He said, Never give in. Never, never, never, never. And nothing great or small, large or petty. Never give in except to convictions of honor and good sense.

And with those words, he inspired a nation. But at the same time, Hitler used words to inspire the killing of millions. You see, words have power.

They're disproportionate in their strength to lead us. Words are funny things. They have the potential to share hope, and they have the potential to destroy.

[ 20 : 30 ] How are we going to let words guide our lives? How are we going to let these words guide our lives? Paul in Romans 10 says, For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?

And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news. But they have not all obeyed the gospel.

For Isaiah says, Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us? So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. May we let the words of the gospel guide our lives.

May we let the words of the gospel transform our lives to lead us, to guide us. May we let the words of the gospel be the message that we proclaim to a lost and dying world. And it's amazing how those words are life transforming.

[ 21 : 35 ] May we be open to the gospel message when it is shared with us. And may we let those words change our life as we share with others. Finally, as we look at this passage, it is my hope and prayer that we catch a glimpse of and understand the overwhelming power of words.

That we catch a glimpse of and understand the overwhelming power of words. We've been very cautious and somewhat negative in our approach to words so far. And for good reason.

James is very cautious and in many ways negative when it comes to how we use our words. But we also see that both good and bad can come from our mouths.

Words have the power to build up and they have the ability to tear down. James says, How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire.

A tongue is a fire. A world of unrighteousness. To help us understand the power of the tongue and the potential it has, James gives us a picture that every single boy that has ever been on a camping trip understands all too well.

[ 22 : 47 ] That a picture of something that every single child who's ever been on a camping trip understands all too well that a small fire can get out of control in a hurry. Just ask Rex or any of the other scout leaders.

A small fire, when you take these scouts out or you take RAs on camping trips, a small fire can get out of control in a hurry. In high school, and I may regret sharing this, but I already shared it once, so I might as well share it again.

But in high school, I was a little mischievous from time to time. And I can remember a time in chemistry class, and I sat in the back of the room, and we had these tables for chemistry, these tables where two people could sit at and had this wooden top that was just like a really smooth black surface on it.

And then the table that I was sitting at was in the very back of the room right next to where we conduct all of the experiments. And we had just conducted an experiment the day before in chemistry, and this day we had a substitute teacher.

And so we weren't doing very much in class that day, and I started looking around, and all of a sudden I realized there were two things that were left out from the experiment that we were doing the day before.

[ 24 : 01 ] One of those things was rubbing alcohol, and the other thing was a striker. Now, if you don't know what a striker is, it's the little thing that you use to make a spark to light a Bunsen burner.

And so I got the bright idea to take a little bit of that alcohol, pour out on the table, use the striker, and then watch it catch on fire and burn for a second.

Now, it was just the alcohol, so it would burn very quickly, and it wouldn't burn for very long. And so I decided, you know what? That was fun. Let's do a little bit more. And so I poured more alcohol out

on the table, took the striker, and all of a sudden, you know, flames are kind of dancing there on the table.

It was great fun. And what do you do when you do it a couple times? You pour a little more alcohol out, and you light it up again. And I don't know if it was good timing on her part or bad timing on my part, but next door to where this was was another teacher who kept hearing this striker go off. And she thought, I better go check out what's going on because I know there's a substitute in there. They shouldn't be doing any experiments. And so she walks in right as I, and then all of a sudden, the table is just dancing with flames on fire.

[ 25 : 11 ] And there's nothing you can do about it at that point. I mean, you can't, I mean, there's nothing you can do about it. And the bad part was at the time, my dad was the assistant principal at the high school.

And she says, what would your dad think about this? And I said, I don't know, but I bet we're about to find out. And no, I really didn't say that. But to her credit, she actually never told my dad.

And I finally told him about two years ago. But it was one of those things. But the whole point of this is for us to understand that our words have this same effect in our lives.

This picture is something that we can all relate to. A spark, a small little flame, has the potential to turn into something so much more. It has the potential to turn into an out-of-control fire.

Our tongue, our speech, our words have this kind of potential. James is warning us here that they are out of control. And he says that there is stain.

[ 26 : 10 ] Listen to these words. He says, the tongue is set among our members, staining the whole body. You know how you ruin a brand new shirt? Go out to eat with it and get ketchup right here on the front of it.

It doesn't come out for anything. And so all of a sudden, that brand new shirt that you're excited about is ruined with this stain. And James is saying here that our tongue has the potential of staining the whole body.

He says, it's a wild beast that no one can tame. For every kind of beast and bird and reptile and sea creature can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind. But no human being can tame the tongue. One of my earliest memories that I have is going to the SoCo Zoo. I don't know if any of you remember the SoCo Zoo, but I remember going to the SoCo Zoo.

And one of the things that we love, I think, as people is to interact with potentially wild animals. There's something that's exciting about that for us. We love to go to the zoo.

[ 27 : 10 ] We love to see them at a safe distance. And if they're tame, we love to interact with animals that would normally be a dangerous creature. And I can remember going to the zoo and watching my brother put this big python around his neck.

And I'm thinking, my goodness, this is crazy. And now looking back, it probably wasn't that big and it probably wasn't as scary. But at the time, I'm like, this is so dangerous.

This python, it could really harm him. But the thing was, this python had been handled so many times that it was as calm as it could possibly be. People have tamed horses, elephants, dogs, bears, birds, dolphins, seals.

It's amazing. You go to the aquarium and see all the kinds of animals that have been tamed by man, except for cats. Can't do a whole lot with cats. They kind of do their own thing.

But most animals we can tame. Most animals we can train and do things. And James says, you can tame all sorts of animals, but the tongue is something that we can't tame.

[ 28 : 15 ] And then he goes on to say that it is a restless evil full of deadly poison. And so a snake, we see, is not the only creature that can kill us with venom. So can man.

You see, our words are overwhelmingly powerful. And that is why James tells us that we must be consistent in how we use our words. He says, with our words, with it we bless our Lord and Father and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God.

From the same mouth come forth blessing and cursing. He says, my brothers, these things ought not to be so. Does a spring pour forth from the same opening both fresh and salt water?

Can a fig tree, my brothers, bear olives or a grapevine produce figs? Neither can a salt pond yield fresh water. You see, our words are powerful.

And they can be used in one of two ways. Our words can be used in the worship of God, which is what God desires for us to use them for. With our tongues, we can praise God, which is the highest and best possible way to use our speech.

[ 29 : 28 ] What greater way can we use our tongues than to use our speech than to praise God? We use our speech to worship and point others to the source of our hope.

And I think as believers, I think as people who follow Christ, we get this right at least part of the time. We get this right many times, but at the same time, it's amazing how we can go in the same conversation from praising God to tearing down other people.

In the same conversation, in the same hour, in the same minute, in the same sentence sometimes, we can praise God with our tongues, but at the same time, tear other people down. And James says, this should not be the case.

It doesn't work with plants. He says a fig tree is not going to produce olives. Those apple trees that I told you about last week in Lone Creek, South Carolina, they're not ever going to start producing oranges.

A spring is never going to produce salt water and fresh water at the same time. It's an impossibility for these things to happen. Yet we often find ourselves praising God and tearing down our brothers and sisters who are made in the image of God.

[ 30 : 41 ] We do this in many different ways. Sometimes it's with the words themselves that come from our mouth. Sometimes the words themselves are harmful and hurtful. But sometimes it has much more to do with the tone of the words that are coming from our mouth than the actual words themselves.

This is true for many of us as parents. Many times the correcting words need to be said. Many times those words need to be said, but the tone in which they are said does far more harm than the words do good.

And so we've got to be careful what we say and how we say. And sometimes it's gossip that is coming from our lips. Sometimes it's gossip that we struggle with.

And we as believers have gotten really good at justifying gossip, right? We just say simply that it's a prayer request, right? You say, oh, you need to pray for this person. You're not going to believe what they did.

Let me tell you. You need to pray for them. You're not going to believe what they're going through right now. Let me share with you what they're going through. These things are gossip. And I realize this may be hard for some of you to hear.

[ 31 : 51 ] Just because you start a sentence with bless his heart doesn't mean that it's going to end well. Just because you say bless your heart doesn't give you free reign to say whatever you want to after that.

Bless his heart. He's an idiot. He just can't help it. His parents were like that. Or bless her heart. She doesn't know any better. Now, if you didn't grow up in the South, you may not realize this yet, but if somebody says bless your heart, it's not a compliment.

Okay? It's not. It's really not. But it can also be gossip even if what is stated is true. It can still be gossip even if what you're saying is actually true.

How many times have you heard one say, well, it's not gossip because it's true. Let me tell you about this. Nine times out of ten, if you start a sentence with, well, it's not gossip, then there's a good chance it's gossip.

There's a good chance it actually is gossip and it's tearing down and hurt doing more harm than it is good. It almost seems like James is presenting the problem without offering a solution in this.

[ 33 : 06 ] But with some common understanding in the immediate context, we can clearly see where we go from here. You see, James in, or Jesus in Luke 6 reminds us, he says, the good person out of the good treasure of his heart produces good, and the evil person out of the evil treasure produces evil, for out of the abundance of the heart, his mouth speaks.

Out of the abundance of his heart, his mouth speaks. And so going along with all these horticultural analogies that we've already talked about, we see where the heart of the matter is.

And the heart of the matter is in our heart. You can take apples and you can staple them to an oak tree, but that doesn't make it an apple tree. Eventually that fruit rots and it falls away.

The only way to produce the fruit is from the inside. The solution to our problem is not simply trying to control our tongue. James says that's impossible.

The only way to change our speech is with a new heart, with new desires. Faith in Christ produces faithfulness to Christ. This is what we talked about last week and honestly what we continue to talk about through this whole section.

[ 34 : 20 ] And so what do we do with this powerful, inconsistent tongue? We let God change us from the inside out. And how do we do that? Well, it starts with listening.

We listen to God's word. You see, we still serve a God who speaks to us today and he primarily does so through his word. And so we see his word as authoritative.

We see his word as beneficial in our lives. We see his word as life transforming. And so we listen to God through the reading of his word. But we don't just listen to it.

We believe it. And when we believe it, we do what it says. It's one thing to know the word and it's a whole different thing to do what it says. James has already told us, but be doers of the word and not hearers only deceiving yourselves.

Words, when they are believed, are powerful. Words, when they are believed, are powerful. The gospel, when believed, has the power to transform.

[ 35 : 26 ] And maybe you're here today and you've heard the words of the gospel your whole life. You've heard the words and you could probably tell somebody else these words that you are a sinner and that there's absolutely nothing you can do to save yourself.

But God, but Jesus, left the glory of heaven, lived the life that we couldn't live, died the death that we deserve so that those who put their faith and their trust in him can have new life.

So that they can go from death to life. You've heard these words, but there's a difference in hearing them and believing them. When we believe them, when we believe those words, all of a sudden those words have power.

All of a sudden those words have meaning. And it is my prayer that these words are not just heard, but they are believed. Because the gospel is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes.

It's only good news if it's heard and believed. And so this message is a message of hope for all of us as sinners. All of us who have used our speech to lie, all of us who have used our speech to gossip, to slander, to say things that we shouldn't say, to tear down instead of building up.

[ 36 : 42 ] This message is a message of hope for each of us today. And this is a message that I hope that we will hear God's words, but we won't just hear them. But that we'll believe them and do them.

Father, thank you so much. For your word, thank you for what it teaches us about you. Thank you for the life transforming power that your words have when we actually believe them.

And so Lord, help us to not just be hearers of the word, but that we will believe your words and that we will do them. We'll put them into practice. And Lord, I pray that if there's somebody here today, maybe they've heard this gospel message their whole life, but today they believe it.

And today they're ready to give their life to you. Lord, I pray that you give them the boldness and courage to step forward and to live a life that seeks to honor you for all that you've done for us.

And so God, we thank you for that. And we ask all these things in Jesus' precious name. Amen. I want to invite you to turn in your hymnal to hymn number 542, Lord be glorified.

[ 37 : 47 ] And if God is speaking to you this morning, won't you respond as we stand together and sing?