

Journey to the Cross: The Great Banquet - Luke 14:12-24

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Preacher: Jayson Turner

[0 : 00] Amen. Thank you, Josh, worship team. Did you enjoy that this morning, church? Amen. Well, it's good to see you this morning. And you were here earlier for our meeting, members meeting. So a lot of pew time this morning, a lot of pew time. We have coming up this week a few things to be aware of. There is a family fun night this Friday evening. And the time has shifted. So it's a little bit earlier 5pm. And that's so that you guys can have dinner together and enjoy just an evening of fun and just being with other believers, other families. And so that's happening this week. In addition, we have a starting point class next week. If you're new to fourth and want to find out more about the staff and the ministry and what forth is about, that happens at 9am. That's next Sunday. And then there's also a membership meeting for those interested in becoming members. And that will happen next Sunday as well after service. So that'll happen during lunchtime, lunch is provided. And you can sign up for that on the church center app. And for those of you that are like, I don't know, what is the church center app? One of the things that we'll be doing this month for the entire month of February at the resource board out there, we've got a little kiosk set up with tech help. And so if you need help figuring out how to use church center, we have somebody dedicated out there that will help you get that working on your phone. I think that's it. Alright, go ahead and turn open to Luke chapter 14. We'll be looking at verses 12 to 24 this morning. I might sneak in a few other verses. We'll see how that goes. But let me pray for our time and ask the Lord's blessing on our study. Let's pray. Father, again, it is always good to gather to begin our week, seeking your face. Father, we want you to have our hearts as we begin a new week.

Lord, we want to walk this week with you. We want to be in step with you with your spirit. Lord, we don't want to be so familiar to familiar with you where we don't recognize that you're a God and we are not. And as your people, you have full authority over our lives. This morning we asked that you would use our gathering to encourage. There's folks at home watching. Would you encourage and minister whatever the needs are, Lord, would you show yourself faithful and strong? But as we open the text this morning, would you enlighten the eyes of our hearts that we would gain a spirit of understanding? We would know what you desire of us, Lord Jesus. Would you change us because we have spent time with you? It's in your name and all God's people said, amen.

So Luke 14 is what I would call the food chapter of the Gospel of Luke. Within this text we're going to see a scene where there are folks eating and then Jesus proceeds to tell a couple of stories about food. We're going to look at the second of those two. And so if you want to give a sermon title this morning, it's either the Great Banquet or what I sort of toyed with was the most awkward dinner party ever. So that'll give you a little heads up on what we're going to be encountering this morning. But let's set the context before we get to the section that we'll be in. And I'd like to go all the way back to verse 1 of chapter 14. So Luke 14 beginning in verse 1. Luke writes, One Sabbath when he went to dine at the house of a ruler of the Pharisees, they were watching him carefully. So Jesus is dining at the house of a leading Pharisee. This is a gathering of the religious elites, those important in society, the upper crust. And it's interesting because it says they were watching Jesus closely, carefully, right? You never know when Jesus is going to break the rules, be kind to someone, show compassion. And recall, as of last week we saw in Luke 13 that Jesus had just healed on the Sabbath there in the synagogue. And the day of rest, you're not supposed to work on that day. Well, sure enough, we have a repeat performance here of Jesus, loving people and no less on the Sabbath. And it's interesting because in Scripture we have seven occasions where Jesus heals on the Sabbath. And from last week the application, one of the things that we should have come away

with is that God's kingdom, it's a kingdom of compassion. And here we see Jesus again being compassionate to someone who has great need. And in fact, at this dinner party, there's a man who has a medical condition, edema, they call it dropsy in Scripture, and the condition is very painful, it's fluids building up in one of your extremities. And there was an individual here at this gathering of religious leaders. And Jesus heals this man. No one at the dinner party is thrilled.

And Jesus asks the question, why? So let's look here, verses three to six. Jesus responded to the lawyers and Pharisees saying, is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not? But they remain silent. Then he took him and healed him and sent him away. And he said to them, each of you having a son or an ox that has fallen into a well on a Sabbath day will not immediately pull him out. And again, verse six, and they could not reply to these things.

[6 : 33] Kind of imagine this scene here, they've been caught. It's like a child, parent comes and says, what were you doing? What were you thinking? And there's no good answer. So they just opt for crickets, right? I'm just going to remain silent. And that's what Jesus encounters here.

He asked them, is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath? And no one says anything. And there's no answer they could give. If they said, well, yes, it's okay to heal on the Sabbath, then they would look heartless for not caring about this man that was before them. And if they say no, it's not okay, then they will have broken their own law in the way that they take care of their animals or even their son, right? And I can't imagine any of them there in the room, right? If their son had fallen in a hole, and it's a Sabbath and for them to go, oh, I'm just going to leave him there, right? Hey, son, I'm sorry. Tomorrow I'm going to throw a rope down, right? It's nonsensical. So they just remain silent. Well, Jesus happens to be on a roll here. And so without missing a beat, he addresses sort of this exclusive dinner party, those that are in attendance, the guest list and the pride in the room. And he shares this story, this parable about a wedding feast and that's verses seven through eleven. And in it, he's calling out the fact that everyone in the room is simply caring about themselves and thinking about their own personal honor and fame and not really even caring about this individual that was present that was hurting. And we don't know how this individual even got in there, this sick man. Maybe he was a plant so they could see what Jesus would do. We don't know. But Jesus calls him out. You're gathering, you want the place of honor. Life is about looking good, right? You're gathering to be served.

You're gathering to be seen. Not to care for anyone else in the room. And it reminds me of what Jesus says in Luke 11.43 says, What do you Pharisees, for you love the best seat in the synagogue and greetings in the marketplace. Well, if things aren't awkward enough at this point, Jesus now turns his rebuke to the individual who is hosting this party.

Let's look now at our beginning in our section, verses 12 to 14. He said also to the man who had invited him, when you give a dinner banquet, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, lest they also invite you in return and you be repaid. But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind, and you will be blessed because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the just. And you have to wonder if those sitting in the room are wondering who invited this guy, who invited Jesus to this dinner party, right? He just got done giving them a question that they couldn't answer. And then he calls out their pride in the story of the wedding feast that he gives. And now his point to he's speaking to the one that's putting on the party, right? That, Hey, ministry occurs, deeper ministry occurs outside of friends simply ministering to friends. How do we show the kingdom to the world if we only care and serve those that look like us, that talk like us, that have something to offer us in return? And so Jesus has sent you saying your kindness here at this gathering, is simply directed to those who have something to offer you in return. And he calls out the individual who's sat on the party and everyone else saying, Hey, those here, you're living by the law of reciprocity. You only serve your only kind because you think you're going to get something in return. We know the unbelieving world does this. There's always something in it for me. There's an there's an angle to be had in the Sermon on the Mount and Matthew five, Jesus says, Hey, the tax collectors, they do that. They're kind to one another.

[11 : 26] How are we as God's people any different? Those who claim to be God's people, do we have an ethic of compassion because it glorifies God? Have you ever been to a party that stopped being a party? I recall I went on a camping trip and with a couple of my friends and we were all responsible for a meal and we're having a great time. And then it was dinner time and my one friend, he got out two boxes of craft, macaroni and cheese and said, All right, here's dinner. And

there was no utensils, no plates. There was no nothing to cook it in. No ingredients. I mean, have you ever had dry macaroni? That camping trip just plummeted.

Folks, this dinner party, it's plummeting. It's getting very, very awkward. There's an uncomfortable silence. People don't know. I mean, Jesus is just calling them out for their hypocrisy, for their pride. And then all of a sudden, there's somebody in the room going, Man, this is, this is, I've got a salvage things. And so he pipes up, let's look at verse 15.

Says when one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, he said to Jesus, Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God. Doesn't that sound sort of like the Christian thing to say? He's the guy that's like, Man, things are getting awkward here. Who wants dessert? I mean, that's what he's doing here. And he's saying something that sounds sort of vaguely like spiritual, like, Oh yeah, Jesus is going to agree. And this is the dumbest thing that this man could have said. Trying to salvage this dinner party. It's, it was just so very stupid, because essentially, what he was saying is okay, granted, we're not great at loving people. And we're kind of into ourselves.

But it's good, because we can learn to do better someday, when we're all in heaven together.

Amen, Jesus. And that's when Jesus is silent. What's the assumption of this man? His assumption is that he and all of the religious leaders in the room, that they will be in heaven together.

And presently that everyone in the room is part of God's kingdom. And this is where Jesus has a story. And so I just want to run through this. And then at the end, I'm going to give you a couple of applications. So let's look at this story that Jesus tells the parable of the great banquet. And it's really a response to this man's assertion that everyone at the party is making it into God's kingdom. Let's begin here in verse 16. But he said to him, Jesus speaking, a man once gave a great banquet and invited many. Okay, so the setting of this story that Jesus is telling is, it's a great banquet.

Could have been a wedding feast, could have been another important occasion. If it was a wedding feast, it could have been a dinner party that lasted three to seven days. This is a big, big deal. This is not, okay, we're going to go grab some Costco pizzas and you want to come on over. It's not that sort of a thing. This is like an invitation in the mail. This is a seven course meal that you're going to be having for the holidays. Hey, I rented out clink and daggers for this special meal that we're going to have together. This is an invitation that you want. It's a great banquet. And these were the social events and culture that you wanted to be invited to.

[15:42] Well, in the story that Jesus is telling, he's talking about a man who's putting on a banquet. Who's the man in the story? God. God. And the banquet is analogous to God's kingdom. The now, but also the not yet. That there is a future yet awaiting us. And so it's very much Jesus talking about this new heaven and new earth that we will all be a part of if we're in Christ.

I love that Isaiah the prophet talks about the future kingdom. And it sounds a lot like the story that Jesus is telling here. And Isaiah 25, 6, the prophet says it this way on that on this mountain, the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich foods, a feast of well aged wine, of rich food, full of marrow of aged wine, well refined. And so the point the prophet Isaiah and now Jesus in this story is making is that heaven is akin. It's like a great banquet.

And it's the best meal that you could ever possibly have. It's a place of wonderful conversation.

Place of laughter, a gathering where everyone is equal, everyone. And so you have this image of, yeah, heaven is like this. And if your idea of good food is McDonald's, that's bad theology.

Okay. And the twins, we got to grow in this department. Heaven is not like Mickey D's. That's just, it's just awful theology. But I love that Jesus again uses the familiar to paint for them a picture of his kingdom and future heaven. So the host here is preparing this great meal.

He's made out a guest list. Look at verse 17. And at the time for the banquet, he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, come, everything is ready.

[18:12] So a couple of invitations have gone out and that would have been customary in Jesus's day. This oral culture, there was no telephone to call and make an invitation. I mean, look at what I'm doing here. Like, I mean, right? I mean, I just dated myself, right?

Well, this goes way back. And so if you're throwing a great feast, the way that you let folks know is first, you send someone out, you send a servant out, like letting, you know, the guest, hey, save this date kind of a thing. There's this party coming. There's this gathering coming.

Know that it's coming. Right? So there's a first invitation, those who had been invited. And then the day of the event, there is a servant that is sent out to remind everyone that, hey, it's time. Dinner is on. Let the feast begin. Can you? Thanksgiving, can you smell it? Oh, it's time. We've been waiting.

You've been anticipating getting this second invitation.

How did those invited respond? Well, let's see. Look at verse 18. But they all alike began to make excuses. The verse said to him, I have bought a field and I must go out and see it.

Please have me excused. And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen and I go to examine them. Please have me excused. And another, he said, I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come.

[20 : 17] So all three guests hear about this banquet. Sounds like initially they RSVP'd. And then the day of, they make excuses. They can't come to the party. Why? Are these good excuses or are these bad? I mean, let's just consider the first individual says, hey, I bought a field and I must go out to see it.

Please have me excused. I mean, who buys property without first inspecting it? This is an agrarian culture. Your life depends on good land. You don't buy land that you have not already inspected. This is not a real excuse. And what you see is this individual simply does not want to attend. So they're coming up with an excuse. Now, I know none of us have ever done that, right?

Something's happening. We've been invited and we're thinking to ourselves, oh, oh, no, we got nothing going on that day. Okay, hun, say we're out of town. And then you're like, okay, that events in Spokane, but if we go to the valley, right, that's out of Spokane. It's Spokane Valley. It's not a real excuse. That's what you have here. And then you have the second individual.

I bought five yoke of oxen and I need to go examine them. Like, no one in this culture would buy something as expensive as 10 oxen and not first inspect them. Those are the tools of your trade.

[22 : 09] It would be like today, a farmer buying a used piece of farming equipment, a tractor, whatever, sight unseen. It wouldn't happen. You would inspect that thing. Is this a good use of dollars?

And I mean, come on, men, we research things to death before we make big purchases. Typically, if you're a man-man, that's what you do, right? Because you've got to feel good about spending that much money. And so you do your research on the front end. So again, this is not a good excuse.

And then third, probably the worst of the bunch excuses, I have married a wife and therefore I cannot come. It's almost like the guy's blaming her, right? She's got a headache. We can't. Sorry. It's not going to happen. And maybe this individual is referring to that military exemption, first year of marriage, Deuteronomy 24-5 mentions that. But that's a bad excuse. I mean, men, consider, right? You have opportunity to take your wife out on a date. The meal is paid for.

Maybe there's even ballroom dancing. Is she going to want to like say, no, I'd rather just stay home and watch you lounge on the sofa, right? That's not how it works. So what I want us to see here is all three of these excuses. They're just poor, right? And that's the point. These are just lame reasons to avoid this wonderful feast that is being offered. All of these excuses are just pathetic. If you connected the dots, what's Jesus saying? Hey, there's no good reason to say no to being part of my kingdom. There's absolutely no good reason to say, I'll pass on the gospel.

[24 : 11] There is no good reason to reject Jesus in this life. There's just none. I was speaking with a gal Friday night as I was out driving and she was sharing about her kid that was at a Christian school doing super well. And she's like, you know, I just, I'm not really into it. I'm more the wild child. And proceeded to share about how her and a girlfriend snuck booze into the school bus as they were chaperoning a trip. No, not a school that any of your children are attending. I'm sure. And she was just like, yeah, I just, I want to enjoy life. I'm so glad for my daughter that she's behaving. You know, culture around us, they want to focus on the temporary, on comfort, on pleasure. Oh, I would much rather have status for 30, 40 years than to be part of God's kingdom. Or how about this one spoke with a young man that says, you know what, heaven is lame. The party's in hell.

And doesn't Satan love that to build a sort of a caricature of what heaven is going to look like? And what, you know, the mirth in hell. And yet what you have in Scripture related to God's Word talking about hell, it repeatedly says this is a place of darkness. This is a place where it's so terrible that you will just be wanting to grind your teeth.

And that said over and over Matthew 8, Matthew 13, Matthew 22, Matthew 24, Matthew 25, all of these all of these chapters give that description of hell. And then Satan would love for us to think about heaven as just this boring place. Heaven is not a place church where you just sit in pews.

Okay, you don't go to heaven and we just sit in pews for the rest of eternity. All right. All right. I love the fact that in Scripture, when it talks about our future as part of God's kingdom, that the not yet we haven't experienced yet in Revelation 21, it says that then I saw a new heaven and they knew

earth. It's a new earth. We don't think about this oftentimes. It's more familiar than we realize. It's a new earth. Do people like earth? Yes. I mean, you can go online.

You can look at anybody who's like little bio and what will they invariably say? Right? Describe yourself. Well, I love a good cup of coffee. Right? And I love the outdoors.

[27 : 22] I'm so unique. I'm the only one. People love God's creation. They love it. I mean, consider the fact that we're on a fallen planet and yet there's beauty and there's things to enjoy. I've got some images just of one little slice of God's creation. I think I have some yes.

I thought, you know what? Let me just show some trees. These are sequoias. This is the redwoods. Is that kind of cool? You want to go see those? Yeah. I think there's even one you can drive through.

What else we got? Look at those are different trees. Somatogascar. That's cool. I want to see those. I love the outdoors. What else we got? Look at that. That's so horrible. Oh, man. That is gonna, that's just rough. Think about this. Just arguing from the lesser to the greater. We enjoy the things that God has made in the here and now. And yet it's broken. It's fallen. It's marked by sin. And what is described about heaven is that it's, yeah, a new heaven, but it's a new earth. It's not sitting indoors for the rest of eternity. It's enjoying all that God has made. And so if you have this weird sort of view of, oh, heaven is going to be awful. I'm going to be on a cloud with a harp and man, I'm not into wearing diapers like that's not heaven. Scripture doesn't paint that picture. You know, it's interesting in Scripture, it talks about in Revelation 22, too, that there's a tree that produces because we're just looking at trees today. It produces 12 kinds of fruit. What? But that'll just be normal. Oh, yeah.

It'll be wonderful. We'll enjoy it. We will all love the outdoors. Well, let's go on. Look at verse 21. So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame. The host is angry. The host is God. Why is the host angry?

[30 : 05] Because the folks that should have responded to the invitation did not. They made excuses. They rejected the invitation. Who are the excuse makers in this parable?

Everybody at this really, really awkward dinner party. Everyone in the room with Jesus.

These are the Jewish religious leaders. They felt spiritually secure in their manmade works that they had established a righteousness apart from Christ. These were the folks that look like they were getting in. I mean, these are the religious leaders.

They're connected to Abraham. They had all the information about the approaching feast throughout the entire Old Testament. That's the first invitation. It's Isaiah. It's Jeremiah.

The invitation. It's gone out. Hey, my kingdom. It's approaching. So when God sent out the first save the date invitation and from this parable, the host then sends out a servant to say the food is on.

[31 : 37] When was that second invitation made? Right now. Who is that servant? You're in church. Jesus.

We are a sharp bunch this morning. Yeah, it's Jesus. Because what did you say? Hey, my kingdom's arrived. It is the now, but it's also the not yet. It's just going to keep getting better. But I'm here. I'm present. Remember back in Luke four, Jesus in Nazareth, and he's there in a synagogue and he's reading from the prophet Isaiah. Spirit of the Lord is upon me and then he sits down and like, okay, and then he says this, hey, today that prophecy has been fulfilled in your myths. What? What would you say? The kingdom's here. I'm the king. The feast is prepared. It's ready. And the folks that should have responded, they did not. And so the host invites others, the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame. And in this story, it would have been those beneath the Pharisees, beneath the religious leaders, right? The ceremonial unclean, the crippled. It was the lower class Jew. And yet, Jesus says, I'm inviting them. Look at verses 22 to the end.

And the servant said, sir, what you commanded has been done and still there is room. And the master said to the servant, go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet. Jesus here, he is going to collect folks inside the city. I think it's referenced to the Jews, not part of the religious establishment, those who would respond to Jesus in faith. And then it talks about Jesus collecting folks, right? Go to the highways and hedges, folks outside the city. And I think there's a reference here to the Gentiles who would respond to Jesus in faith. But this story is dastardly because what Jesus essentially has done to this man's assertion, well, we're all getting in.

We're all getting in. And what does Jesus do? He says, no, you're not. No, you're not. We're getting in. Okay, our lifestyle is nothing to brag about. We don't really care about people. We care about ourselves. We want to look good. We really like the appearance of being righteous. [34 : 52] Jesus says, none of you, he excludes everyone presently dining at this dinner party. You're not actually going to be part of the banquet in heaven. Luke 17, Jesus says this in verse 33, whoever seeks to preserve his life will lose it. But whoever loses his life will keep it.

The religious leaders loved their lives. Love for God, not so much. Love for people wasn't present. And it's revealed in these religious leaders that ultimately, in a future day, past for us, they led the crusade to crucify their Messiah.

Well, let me give us a couple of applications here from this parable that Jesus has told us.

First one is this, let's not be like the Pharisees. Believe that we are going to the banquet all the while trusting in something other than the gospel of Jesus. The finished work of the cross.

[36 : 18] The gospel is the only ticket in. That's it. In fact, it says, Paul says in Romans 10, 9, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. Salvation is not by works. It's not by appearance. Salvation is not by birth. Well, Jay, my grandfather was a pastor and my parents, man, they were missionaries. I'm good.

You can be familiar with Jesus and not be connected to Jesus. Well, Jay, how do I connect my life to Jesus through simple faith, crying out to Jesus to forgive your sins and to become the Lord of your life? Jesus, I need you more than anything to be my savior because I know my life. I know my sin. I know the thoughts, the intentions of my heart. I know the darkness and I need a savior. Church, it's everything. It's everything. This is a serious story. And when you're in those moments of recognizing that the temporary is just that, you start to go, whoa, do I really, if I really trust it in Christ as my savior?

It's interesting. I had a chance to go visit a gentleman in the hospital a few months back and he, like, his life was quickly coming to an end. And it was interesting because when we conversed, he actually said, I need a pastor. I need to talk with a pastor. So I was invited in to interact with this individual. And it was interesting because he didn't want to talk about sports. He didn't want to talk about his job. Didn't want to talk about his hobbies. Didn't want to talk about the weather. He wanted to talk about important things. He wanted to talk about the Lord.

If you have the Son, you have life. If you don't have the Son of God, you don't have life. So it's everything. Make sure that you have placed your faith in the finished work of the cross.

[39 : 02] It's everything. It's everything. You could gain the world, but if you forfeit your soul, it's been a waste. And there are forever consequences. So Jesus is the issue. That's why we do what we do. That's why earlier we were in here and we were talking about these different projects. It has nothing to do with money. It has to do with the gospel and people coming to meet the Savior.

That's why we do what we do. And by the way, saying yes to Jesus, unlike these religious leaders, it should produce some changes in us. There should be some changes occurring. And God's word doesn't teach works unto salvation, but it certainly teaches salvation unto works that you can create in Christ to carry out good works. A redeemed life produces fruit. The whole idea in Matthew 7, 17, every healthy tree bears good fruit, but the disease tree bears bad fruit. So opposite of what was happening at this gathering that Jesus was at, people concerned with themselves, loving the temporary, their pride, caring little for other people, no fruit. And if you are living for the applause of man and for temporary pleasures of this world, you should be concerned. Okay?

Because there's two possibilities here. Either you know the Lord, but the zero fruit is going to equal zero reward someday. And we have this image in 1 Corinthians 3 of the Bema Seed judgment where we stand before Christ and our lives are tested by fire. Not unto salvation. The foundation is Jesus.

That doesn't change, but what have we done with our lives? And it says that some, everything will just be gone and they will escape as through flames. Still in eternity, but it's like, you can't go back and serve the Lord at that point. This is it. This is it. So I'm thrilled and not to make this about like our campaign, but I'm thrilled that we get to participate in some of the Lord's doing. The leadership here is walking my faith and we get to participate in that. That's just one, one thing we get to do and there's joy in that. So either there's no reward or, or the other option is the fruitlessness of, of one's life may indicate, man, something more concerning that you have never actually trusted in Christ as your personal savior.

And Paul tells the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 13, 5, Hey, examine yourselves to see whether you're in the faith. And he was saying this to the Corinthians who were just living, not great.

[42 : 02] Examine yourselves. And if there's things that you need to repent of, do that. Amen. Because that's where joy is. And the Lord loves to offer that to us as we repent of sin. Well, the second application is this, if eternity really is at stake, and it is, then we need to be busy about inviting others to the banquet. Amen. If eternity is real, are we living in light of that? No one is beneath an invitation church. The table is set and I have it on good authority that the host, the father, he's so very kind. He delights to forgive and rescue sinners. Amen. I love the example of Andrew. We'll end with this. Meets Jesus. And what does he first do? I got to go tell my brother. I'm going to go tell my brother Peter. And he brings him to Jesus. There is a day coming when we will celebrate the fact that death is gone, tears gone, ache gone, mourning, pain, former things gone, all things are new. And we will be at the banquet with Christ.

And we will celebrate. We'll break out in applause as we gaze at our King. And there will be joy at being in His presence and it will just go on and on and on and on. Amen.

Let me pray. Lord, it's sobering to all of us that you would not just get caught up in the temporary things of the occasion, Lord, but you used everything as an occasion to direct people to good news and to cause them to think about their lives in light of eternity. And Lord, I pray that we would be those who have said yes to you, Jesus, that we recognize our lives, that there's sin that we cannot undo. We cannot do enough good to outweigh it. We can't do enough good to be seen as righteous in the sight of holy God. But you did everything necessary for us to have friendship with you and that you offered yourself in the person of Jesus Christ. And you are willing to go to the cross to die in our place.

And then you demonstrated your power over death by rising from the grave. Lord, that we have a resurrection to look forward to as well. And we've trusted ourselves on the work that you accomplished on our behalf.

If you're here this morning and you've never trusted in Christ, you don't have relationship with Him. You're like, man, I want to be a Christ one, a Jesus follower. It's as simple as just crying out to the Lord.

[45 : 20] Lord, you see my life, you see my sin, forgive me. And would you be the Lord of my life? Lord, would you stir us as a people to be thinking about our neighbor, our co-workers, people that we have influence with, those that we come in contact with all throughout the week.

Lord, we are your church gathered and scattered. And you've called us as missionaries to be light, to be dispensers of good news.

Father, we want to invite more, still more, to this heavenly banquet that awaits. Lord, thank you for the picture that you paint, that heaven is not some stodgy, boring, weird place.

But it's actually a renewal of this planet as it was always meant to be. Lord, we long for that day when we are in Your presence. But as for today, there's ministry for us to accomplish, work to be done.

So would you fill us today with Your Spirit? Would You give us enough encouragement from being with the body that we could live out our faith and be agents of showing the kingdom to those that we interact with throughout this week?

[46 : 44] And we'll give You praise and glory for the fact that You would just use ordinary us to accomplish Your work. And it's in Your wonderful name, Jesus, we pray. Amen.