

John: The Word Became Flesh - John 15:1-11

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[0 : 00] Well, as we get to this section of scripture, this is now the final I Am statement in the Gospel of John. So, there are seven of them, and this is the final one.

Jesus here this morning is going to be declaring to us that I am the vine. This is the closest that Jesus, or actually that John, the Gospel of John actually gets to recording a parable.

This is not, scholars would say this is not actually a parable, it is an extended metaphor. Okay, so please don't get that wrong. Very important.

What's the difference? Parables typically have a narrative thrust to them. They're in story form, and perhaps you can create a story here, but at any rate, it's a metaphor.

Now, where do we pick up our story as we come to chapter 15? We know that it is Thursday evening. Jesus has been here in the upper room down in probably the southeast quadrant of the city.

[1 : 13] He celebrated the Passover with his disciples. They've just finished a meal together, and they are now about to make this one-mile walk towards the Garden of Gethsemane.

There on the Mount of Olives. It appears now, and I know this is going to be controversial for some. Don't sleep over it. I know that we're in that section of scripture that we call the upper room discourse, which is chapters 13 through 17.

I am proposing something to us this morning, actually, that they're going to leave the upper room. If you go back, actually, to chapter 14, the final words of chapter 14, verse 31, Jesus says, rise, let us go from here.

So I am suggesting to us this morning that actually the words shared in chapters 15 to 17, we actually have Jesus walking with his men through the city, not actually in the upper room.

And even perhaps a detour, so I want us to reimagine in our mind's eye Jesus walking with his men this green mile, a somber spirit in the air, heavy spirit.

[2 : 30] Maybe there's a bit of still confusion. Where's Judas in all of this? And Jesus is now giving final instructions, right?

Those words that are often given at the end of an evening together, maybe at the door post, and often we reserve our most important words for the goodbye. And so there's a gravity to these words that Jesus is sharing, and I want us to feel the weight of these last words in a sense that he's sharing on this evening.

And really, for these men, these words would have echoed then for their lifetime. And their words necessary for God's men because they're about to do life differently.

They're about to do life without Jesus now being physically present. And so Jesus has some words for them in how to now do this life. And really the nature of chapter 15, if you want to sort of structurally map it in your mind, it's about relationships.

Chapter 15 is all about relationships. And let's face it. Life revolves around relationships. It's the context in which we express faith.

[3 : 42] And so the three sections in John 15 verses one through 11 is how we relate to God. Verses one through 11, how we relate to God. Verses 12 through 17 is how we relate to believers.

One another is part of the family of God. And then finally, verses 18 to 27 is how we relate to the world.

This morning, we are going to be dealing with this first section. How we relate to God as friend. And so I want you to sort of imagine that you are present on this evening.

You're walking with Jesus towards the temple. You're heading east towards the eastern gate to head out into the valley there up to the garden.

And Jesus stops. And perhaps he actually shared these words at the temple. We don't know, but I'm conjecturing here. And he points to the golden vine draped across the columns in the front of the temple.

[4 : 47] And we know that there's a vine there because Josephus records this first century historian. He actually records in his writings. He says, the gate opening of the temple was overlaid with gold above it, the golden vines from which descended grape clusters as tall as a man.

And so it could have been that Jesus was there at the temple gates, sharing these words, this extended metaphor with his men saying, men, look at, look at these vines.

And then he says, Hey, I am the vine. Now in this particular society, the men would have understood this metaphor.

This is a farming community. It's an agrarian culture. This word picture would have made sense to them. Jesus talking about viti culture, this science of working in a vineyard.

This is different than viti culture. We don't talk about that at fourth. The science of making wine. We're very Baptist esque here in a way.

[5 : 54] So we're talking jams and jellies only. We're talking viti culture, not viti culture. Don't confuse the two.

But this metaphor of a vine, you see it throughout the Old Testament. God describing Israel as a vineyard. We see that in Psalm 80.

We see it in Isaiah chapter five, they were to be this vine through which blessing would flow to the nations and yet they struggled.

In fact, they rejected the Messiah. It says in Hosea 10, one, it says Israel is a luxuriant, luxuriant vine that yields its fruit. The more his fruit increased, the more altars he built.

And so life was supposed to emanate through Israel and Jesus now saying, no, life emanates through me. I am the true vine.

[6 : 59] Now Jesus uses this illustration of a vineyard to tell us how he wants us to relate to him. And there's a key word in this metaphor that you've heard before.

Okay. It's obvious what Jesus is calling us to as we read this metaphor. In verse four, he says, abide in me, abide in the vine, abide in me.

Verse five, he says again, abide in me. Verse six, abide in me. Verse seven, abide in me. My words abide in you. Verse nine, abide in my love.

This word occurs 11 times through verse 17. So Jesus is trying to tell us here something. Repetition.

I want my people to abide in me. Now are we capable as God's people to abide?

[7 : 59] Or do we need a particular set of skills, some very specialized resources? Do we have to go off to a particular expensive school to be able to do this sort of a thing?

Well, what does it mean to abide? The word abide in the Greek is meno, and it can be translated to remain, to dwell, to continue, to tarry, to endure.

So Jesus is explaining it to us by simply painting a picture to his men, and he's saying, you know what it's like? It's like a branch being connected to a vine.

That's what it means to abide. Stay vitally connected to me. And he's telling us the same thing this morning, church.

Amen? We're to be people that abide. The heart of Christianity is a relationship with the living God.

[9 : 07] It's a relationship with Jesus. And I think it's important for us to make a distinguishment, you know, differentiate here.

We actually, we're to stay connected to a person, not simply a proposition. I love what the French philosopher in the 17th century, Blaise Pascal said.

He was a philosopher, mathematician, philosopher. And he said this. He said, the God that we worship is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, not the God of the philosophers and scholars.

Okay? We worship a person. We have a relationship with a person. And I love the image on this final night Jesus has with his men.

He takes them. They're not clustered off in the upper room. They're now walking in the world. It's dark. And he's saying, you want to do this well? There's only one way.

[10 : 13] You need to abide in me. You need to remain. You need to dwell. You need to stay vitally connected to me.

And as we today, church, stay vitally connected, we nurture that friendship with Christ. There's blessing in it. And this passage that we've been given this morning gives us three of them. And so let's read this passage. We'll read it a bit at a time and kind of work through it. And I want us to see these three blessings that come from a life of staying vitally connected to Jesus.

Okay? So standing here in verse one to five, John writes, Jesus speaking, I am the vine and my father is the vine dresser.

Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away. And every branch that does bear fruit, he prunes that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you, abide in me and I in you.

[11:19] Because a branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine. Neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me, you can do nothing.

The first blessing of a life as followers of Christ, if we stay vitally connected to him, if we nurture that friendship in this life, the first blessing is this, our lives will bear fruit.

Pretty straightforward. Our lives will bring glory to King Jesus. You know fruit is actually mentioned in this passage eight times.

But I don't want you to hear this section of scripture this morning and go, man, I got to bear fruit so that I can be right with God and I can make sure that I get into heaven. No.

[12:25] In fact, what does it say in verse three? Jesus says, already you are clean. You are already clean. Good works are the product of new life, not the means of acquiring it.

You're already clean. And recall who's not present now? Who's not present? Judas. And recall back in chapter 13 verse 10, Jesus says to Peter, hey, you're clean, but not every one of you is.

But now he says to the group, you're clean. Okay. You've been declared righteous by faith in me.

I had a, at the church that I pastored back on the west side, I had a friend, Pat Dismitt. And he was an amazing, he is an amazing man.

But before he met Christ, he was a brawler and he would tell you, yeah, my favorite activity was going into bars and starting fights.

[13:42] And he came to faith in Christ and he no longer brawled, no longer went into bars and picked fights.

And that was a fruit of new life, the fact that he wasn't in these bar fights. That wasn't his ticket into heaven. It was just the fruit that was born in his life.

Right? And so if God were to ask him, Pat, like, why should I let you into heaven? He wasn't, he's not going to tell God, you know, because I'm not kicking guys in the, that's what he would say.

That was his move. He was a small guy. And no, because I placed faith in you, Jesus, you're a magnificent savior.

And you would die for, for an angry rebel like me. That was the fruit. It was born from new life.

[14:41] Fruit is the product of a relationship. And what was so beautiful is Pat who, and I didn't know him before Christ.

I didn't know before he was a believer. He was one of the sweetest, meekest, kindest men in our church. I would have never thought like that's who you once were.

And it was just beautiful to see the fruit, the transformation. And here's the thing, church, if we're vitally connected to Christ, to Jesus, then his character, his spirit, it will be evident in our lives.

Amen? It will be evident. And you know that. And you know what it's like to be around people who, they just walk closely with the Lord. And when you're around them, you're like, man, there's something good there.

There's a kindness. There's a gentleness. There's a selflessness. There's something very winsome. There's something very attractive about them. That's fruit bearing in their lives.

[15:48] Jesus actually expects there to be a difference, a radical difference in our lives now that we know him.

That's the sense of what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6, 11. He says, such were some of you. And he lists a whole list of different sins. Such were some of you. But that's not who you are now.

There's been a change. There's fruit being born in your lives. Here's a basic question. What is the ultimate goal of a farmer working in a vineyard or an orchard?

What's their ultimate goal? They want to grow great fruit. That's what? I have a father-in-law. I have a brother-in-law. They run an orchard in Wenatchee area.

And I can tell you their main goal, they want to create great apples. They want to create beautiful pears. They want to make amazing fruit.

[16:50] And so this metaphor tells us that fruit bearing ought to be the normal life of the believer. And Galatians 5 gives us a number of examples of fruit.

Love, the fruit. Joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness.

You're a different kind of driver today, confession of sin. Our hearts grow callous to God's voice when we wallow in sin, church. And we know this.

We know this. Fruit perhaps stymied for a season. But here's the good news. Yeah, God's highest name is not for our comfort, but guess what?

He's a great high priest who loves to forgive as we confess sin, church. Amen? It will be bold.

Approach the throne of grace.

[17:50] Confess daily your sins. I'm an old school barbecue guy. I don't do that gas propane stuff. I don't do that. That's for weak leans.

You are weak men if you just turn the dial and push the button. That's not barbecue. You got to get the briquettes. You got to get the Weber. You got to get, I'm just saying.

And how do you keep them cold slit? He just, right? You pile them together. We need one another.

How do you stay vitally connected to the Lord? Fellowship is huge. You ever feel like you don't want to be around Christians? Well, this morning actually. No, I mean, often, right?

It's when we need to be with one another most. Satan is predictable. He loves to isolate believers.

[18:45] He loves to give believers like the lie of like, those people are hypocrites. Nobody actually cares about you. I mean, he just feeds that stuff, right? Oh, you don't want to be with them.

They don't actually care about you. We need one another. He loves to isolate us. Keep discouragement lies in order to destroy.

And I would say the most critical thing in this abiding peace, we've got to hear from the Lord. We've got to have time in the Word. We've got to prioritize time to hear God's voice.

I would suggest doing that every morning. How do you recenter your affections on the Lord? I love the fact that God has marked time with 24 hour periods so that yesterday can be awful, but today can be great.

Yesterday you could have strayed, but today it's like you wake up in the morning and you're from the rising of the sun to the setting. I want your name to be praised in my life today. Or forgive me for whatever sin is kind of ruptured that vital connection between us.

[19:49] You haven't left me, but I'm not feeling close with you. I'm not hearing your voice. Forgive me. So every day we have opportunity to do that and to hear from him.

And I would suggest without being a legalist, maybe Scott, you shouldn't listen to me because, you know? For most of us, right, we go the other direction. And morning, spending time with the Lord, hearing his voice.

CJ Mahaney, a pastor, said, you know, every morning the same voice greets me and it's the voice of opposition.

Because he wants to get in the Word, but then he has like five different things he can do. Oh, sports center. Oh, I can scroll. I mean, newspaper. You know, it's like there's so many things. Oh, I'll sleep a little bit.

I mean, there's so many things, right? The voice of opposition greets them every morning. And I love that because I feel the same way. So figure out a way. Figure out what you need to do.

Redeem your commute.

[20:50] We've encouraged you to download the Dwell app, whatever it is for you. But finding time to hear God's voice, and I would just say this to all of us here, something's better than nothing.

Please, what are we in June? You could start a read through the Bible plan in June. Shocker. Yeah, you could do it. I know breaking all the quiet time rules, right, in Scott's book, right?

I'm kidding, Scott. I'm kidding. You're recovered. You're recovered. You could start, you could start it this month. You could start it next month. Well, Jay, I don't know if I could read like, I don't know, three chapters a day, then read a chapter.

Oh, that's still a lot. Well, you know what? Take five verses. I mean, something's better than nothing, to hear God's voice. Now, anyone ever tried to live the Christian life ostensibly without

God?

Now, don't raise your hands. We don't want, that's too much transparency on a Sunday morning. We probably all have at different times, right?

[21 : 55] Try to live out this life of worship, of glory to God without really attending to our soul, without staying vitally connected to the Lord.

It sounds so stupid. You know what? It's impossible. It's impossible for fruit to be born if that's our approach. In fact, Jesus tells us very clearly in verse five, he says, hey, apart from me, you can do nothing.

Now, he doesn't mean nothing, nothing. He just means nothing of eternal significance, of eternal value. You can certainly do plenty of things, but they're not going to be to God's glory.

You have to stay vitally connected to Christ. You have to nurture that friendship. That's where the energy, that's where the power comes. Last week, Julie's like, hey, hon, our freezer isn't freezing stuff.

I'm like, well, that's weird. It's probably broken. So I went out there.

[23 : 03] I came back in the house. I'm like, I'm a GM. I fixed it. What'd you do? Well, it's complicated.

I plugged it in. To be fair, it was a loose, it was, but it was a, okay, at any rate, man, those turners are not very bright, right?

How are you going to keep food cold? Well, you got to be plugged into the source. I mean, there's no power for us to live out this life of worship if we're not nurturing our souls, if we're not people vitally connected to the Lord that are abiding, that that's the rhythm of our lives.

You abide first blessing is going to be fruit in your life. Second blessing comes from verse six to eight. Let's see, Jesus says, if anyone does not abide in me, he has thrown away like a branch and withers and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned.

I know it doesn't sound, there's a blessing in here. Just wait. Verse seven, if you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. By this, my father is glorified that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

[24 : 23] Now, I'm going to give you a bonus blessing. It's not even in the list of three. It's just, let me comment briefly on verse seven because I know you read that and you're like, whoa, right?

Ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you. The bonus blessing of a life of abiding is this, more of your prayers are going to be answered.

That's a bonus blessing. That's not even in the list here. I'm giving that one away for free. All right?

Why are more prayers answered? Because you're praying more in accord with God's will.

The things you're asking for, they're emanating from a heart saturated in God's word coursing through you. You can't help but pray God's will. Do you catch that?

Because you're thinking His thoughts because you're staying vitally connected to Him because you're actually treating that relationship as real.

[25 : 23] That Jesus is a friend that you can know and that you can commune with. Well, that's pretty cool. But the second blessing that I want to highlight here, blessing of a life of staying vitally connected to Jesus is this.

It's an indicator that heaven is your promised home. That's a blessing to know that heaven is your home. So maybe you're going, Jay, are you saying that my fruit saves me?

No. I'm not saying that, nor is the passage here. But your abiding, which then produces fruit demonstrates that new life has come.

In fact, that's what Jesus says in verse eight. He says that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples.

A real spiritual experience will be authenticated by something in a person's life. Isn't that what Jesus is talking about to the false prophets in Matthew 7?

[26 : 25] You'll recognize them by their fruit. If there's faith placed in Christ, there's going to be change.

Paul, the Pharisee, the brutalizer of the church became unrecognizable to all who once knew him when he came to faith in Christ.

New fruit because he's been made new. Those who abide, they demonstrate that eternity with God awaits, not eternal separation.

Now perhaps you're thinking as you look at this metaphor, and you're going, Jay, this metaphor seems to communicate that a person can perhaps lose their salvation.

Verse six says, if anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and it withers. And the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. Verse two, which you thought I skipped, which I did not, I was saving it, says, every branch in me that does not bear fruit, he takes away.

[27 : 37] Now how can a person be a branch and then cease to be a branch? It's simple.

Not everyone who claims to be a branch is. And so we have to sort of figure out what does it mean then when Jesus says like a branch in me?

Is that like a branch being in Christ? Again, this is a metaphor. So read it as such. And I believe what Jesus is saying here is, here's, it's somebody who's claiming to be in me.

Claiming something without faith. There's been no transfer of will. It's a false branch. In high school, I played football with a guy that we called Big Niko.

Big Niko was a big, he's a big boy, he's a big guy. Niko would tell you he was the best football player on our team in high school.

[28 : 43] He projected that he was like an all state football player. Big Niko would wear his uniform to class without pads, but he would regularly, I mean the pants, the jersey, because he's saying school, I'm the football guy.

That's me. That's what he was projecting. That's what he was claiming. But then on the field, and the only place he got to play was kickoff. He was a disaster because he was running to everybody's lane, tripping our guys.

He was claiming something, but it wasn't the case. And I think it's just a great illustration of what we have here. You can claim to be a branch and not be a branch.

John said it this way in his epistle in 1 John 2 19, he said, hey, they went out from us. There were some that went out from us. They were part of us, right? But they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.

You can claim something. And we have a story right here where we have a man, an individual who did just that. For three years, Judas claimed to be a branch in me, and yet there was no faith.

[30 : 06] Okay. But I want you to leave here this morning being assured that once saved, always saved. It's God who saves. It's God who rescues. John 10 28 says, I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand.

But an indicator that faith has come, there's fruit. There's a change, right? Or perhaps said better, there is a changing life.

It's progressive sanctification. And so I would just say this this morning, if fruit is lacking in your life and you claim to be in Christ, here's your warning.

Okay. Either Hebrews 12, which talks about additional pruning that God may do.

There's no fruit in our life. There's no joy. There's no peace. There's no patience. There's no self control. These things aren't growing incrementally in our lives. Hebrews 10 12 says they are fathers, our earthly fathers, disciplined us for a short time as they seem best to them.

[31 : 18] But he, God disciplines us for our good that we may share in his holiness. So that's the warning that pruning may be around the corner, or the more concerning thing is you've never actually connected to the vine.

You've never actually placed your faith in Christ. But a life where fruit is beginning to manifest, it's beautiful.

It's an indicator. Heaven's our home. Well, the third and final blessing comes from the last section here, verses nine to 11. Jesus says, as a father has loved me, so I have loved you.

Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love just as I have kept my father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be full.

The third blessing of an abiding life, is it boredom? No. What does Jesus say? He says in verse 11, you're going to experience joy.

[32 : 35] GK Chesterton actually called joy the gigantic secret of the Christian life. And as we stay vitally connected to Christ, there's actually something joy producing in that.

As we pursue that friendship daily, it produces something in our lives. It emanates joy emanates from this daily nurturing of our friendship with Christ from staying close to our shepherd.

I would say the most miserable creatures on planet earth are Christians who have ceased to abide and then are wallowing in sin.

They're miserable. They've hewn out cisterns that hold no water. And perhaps you have tried that for a season as I have.

There's no joy. You long for that communion with the Lord. You ache for it even while you settle for it less.

[33 : 58] Jesus began this section by stating that he alone is the true vine. Now why might someone make the point that they are the real thing?

Because there are other vines that will not provide salvation nor then produce joy. There are other vines that you can connect to.

It's not Israel. I mean Acts 15 tells you, you don't have to become a Jew before you place your faith in Jesus. Jesus saying, I'm the vine.

I'm actually the true vine. You can connect yourself to legalism. It's not going to save you nor is it going to produce joy. Or you can go the other direction into license.

But that's not going to produce joy either. And so maybe the question for all of us this morning is this. And sorry to be so pointed, but I'm doing it to myself as well.

[35 : 05] What vines exist in our lives where we are demanding joy other than Jesus?

I mean it's so interesting because if you just scan society quickly, you go downtown and it's amazing to me that people, what are they connected to?

Their material things and their revelry and their phones. I'm going to squeeze like, I don't know, 5% of joy out of scrolling for the next hour.

Great. This is going to be great because after service, no one's going to look at their phone. We're not because we're not going to be that guy or gal because they're like, Jay's looking and Scott's looking and we're not looking.

You scroll away because I know you're going through the Bible. It's all good. Yeah, where are we demanding joy? Cermons are not good unless we quote C.S. Lewis, so I will.

[36 : 23] And he nails it. He says we're half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea.

And perhaps then for each of us this morning, the prayer ought to be this, Lord, help our unbelief that joy is truly found in walking closely with you, with you.

And by the way, I believe that a big piece of the joy we experience is actually what we talked about first, which is the fruit that's produced in our lives.

I think fruit is a massive aspect of the joy that we are promised, that our lives accrue to something which blesses others, which brings glory to Jesus.

It's those good works, Ephesians 2.10, that were promised to enjoy, to walk in, to participate with God. I think it's a massive aspect.

[37 : 28] And I will say this, that as we spend time pursuing our relationship with the Lord, often what will happen is it's in those moment when the Lord prompts us to minister to somebody.

And I don't know if you have these experiences, I would assume. If you're in Christ, spending time, you're talking with Him, you're in prayer, you're reading the Scriptures. Often it's in those moments where the Spirit of God just pricks your heart and you're like, I need to reach out to this person, or I need to pray for this person, or I need to set up, I need to connect with that, I need to send them an encouraging note.

Like, that's fruit, and it's joyful when we get to participate and do that in one another's lives. I love that I have this really odd, like fruit, like orchard area of uberine.

I got to tell an army vet last week, I got to tell him that he was healed miraculously from his cancer, and he's like, man, I was thinking the universe. And I actually just thought, I was like, you were thinking in Adam an object that you were miraculously healed?

I said, do you think God might have had something to do with that? He's like, oh yeah, yeah, yeah, that's actually what I meant. But I got the joy of getting to tell him, hey, the gift that you received on that occasion, I know the giver, and let me tell you who he is.

[38 : 55] It's joy inducing when we get to be used of the Lord. Ultimately the joy, it emanates, I think, from us daily preaching and reminder of ourselves of the gospel, right, that we're forgiven.

There's nothing better to go, I'm clean, I shouldn't be clean, but I'm clean because of what Christ did, paying for my sins past, present, future.

There's nothing more joy inducing than that. And I'll end with just this testimony because we're reading his book this summer, but John Newton, he was a debauched sailor who God magnificently rescued, transformed, wrote these words to a lesser known him than amazing grace.

He wrote to him called, the joy of the Lord is your strength. He says this, he says, joy is a fruit that will not grow in nature's barren soil.

Can't squeeze it out of scrolling on your phone. All we can boast till Christ we know is vanity and toil. But where the Lord has planted grace and made his glories known, their fruits of heavenly joy and peace are found, and they're alone.

[40 : 18] So good. And then he spent the next 42 years of his life pastoring, exhorting people that, hey, joy is found in place in your faith in Christ and then nurturing that relationship for the rest of your life.

Amen. Father, thank you. Thank you that you've actually made a promise to us that if we would be a people that draw near to you, that you would reciprocate and you would draw near to us.

And Lord, I pray that we would not hear this message this morning and feel condemned and feel like we've got to somehow like make up for lost time, but Lord, that we would just recognize that you love spending time with us and that we would rework the way that we do our daily lives where we could actually do one thing each day to pursue you, just to pursue your presence.

Lord, thank you that you've promised blessings as we would seek you out. We know that it ultimately was you who sought us out.

But Lord, we want to nurture that friendship with you. So Lord, thank you that as we do that we get to participate in the work that you have that you're doing here as you're advancing your kingdom.

[41 : 43] And Lord, we even got to hear this morning from a group heading out to Romania. Lord, we pray that there would be great fruit and there would be great joy as they participate in the work that you're doing there in that country and then beyond.

And Father, you've called each of us as we're here right now in Spokane to carry out your work here. And Lord, I pray that we would do that amongst your people here at fourth and then those that we live around and we do life with and Lord, that we'd have opportunity to proclaim your goodness and talk about your grace with people that have never met you.

They don't know you as Savior Jesus, but we do. Lord, thank you that you are patient with us.

Thank you that Heaven's our home. And thank you Lord that you've promised joy as we would pursue you and help us to believe that that is so.

We love you Jesus. It's in your name we pray. All God's people said. Amen. Amen.