

Imitating God

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 06 October 2013

Preacher: Pastor Kenoyer

[0 : 00] In case some of you don't know it, I am a moderately emotional person.

! That's just the way I was hardwired from birth. And I have to tell you that as I walked to this pulpit and as I was coming across, I was getting cold chills.

Now, there are some of you that probably don't know what those are. But they are just, that's what they are. They're cold chills. And the reason I was having the cold chills, I was thinking of the fact that I'm going to stand here and I'm going to say, open your Bibles.

Do you know what that really is saying? God has something to say. Ephesians chapter 5, verse 1 and 2.

Let us pray.

[1 : 24] Holy Spirit, this morning it is our humble request that you who have been given to every believer God's prayer.

Father, to help, to strengthen, to sustain, to bring about progressive sanctification would be actively engaged this morning as we who are your children.

As we who are your children plead with you to work in us, that we might hear the word and allow it to make a difference in our hearts and lives and subsequently see the fruit of godly behavior.

And we are going to give you credit for what you do, recognizing that the things that take place are not the making of a man or of men, but of the work of your Spirit.

Now for your strength we plead. Amen. Our attention to this word that we're going to study this morning really is going to follow a very simple plan, and I want to tell you in advance what I'm going to say, not just so that the rest of you kind of go brain dead, well, why am I staying here for another 40 minutes, but so that you from the very beginning know what the objective and target is.

[2 : 59] We're going to answer three simple classic questions. What? How? Why? And the fact that the passage actually falls into this order is not going to be difficult for you to recognize, and I've broken it down in a larger way of saying we're going to look at the model, we're going to look at the manner, and we're going to look at the motive for Christian living.

Where we are in our study in the book of Ephesians is that the first three chapters reminded us of the fact that God is the one who does this unbelievable, miraculous work in bringing people from darkness and death into light and into purpose.

And it's our joy and our glory to be able to say, man, I have been saved by the grace of God. I have nothing other than His work to attribute the change that has taken place in my life.

All of God and the work of God and for the glory of God. That being the case, then in Ephesians chapter 4, Paul laid out in very careful characteristic that not only are we saved by His grace, but then we're connected into a body of believers.

Who I am together with you is actually in some ways more important than who I am by myself. I think that's an important statement to recognize.

[4 : 31] Because in Scripture, the believer is thought of principally in relationship to his connection to the body of Christ to other believers. And if there's any illustration of what a body is, I mean, you see it this morning as we enjoy corporate worship together, right?

I mean, I'll tell you what, you can blow your ears out in your car singing by yourself, and it's all good. And nobody pays any attention to whether or not you got the words right or not.

This morning, as I was singing over here on the side, where are you, John? John is a very patient guy because he just sings on, and he's not rattled when the pastor gets the words wrong or sings at the wrong time, right?

And when you're in the car by yourself, you can just let it rock and nobody cares, okay? But when you're together, man, you just, it's better together. Wouldn't you agree with that? I love it together.

By the way, I like singing by myself, too.

But I love it together. That's body life. In Romans, why am I stuck in Romans? I apologize for that. Here's a promise.

[5 : 41] I won't say it again. Romans, okay. We're in Ephesians. And in Ephesians chapter 5, we're moving into this next phase, which explains to us in greater detail how the believer is to act.

And I want us to recognize this morning that what we are looking at here in chapter 5 is a clear explanation that for the believer, we live and act the way we do because of what Christ has done for us and who He is in us.

I want you to understand that His expectations are not just kind of dropped on us as arbitrary requirements, but really the behavioral issues that are to identify the believer flow out of His grace and our relationship.

We're going to see that very clearly this morning. So let's go, first of all, to the model of Christian living. We begin there in chapter 5, verse 1. And as you read in your English text, it says, Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved children.

I don't want to belabor the point, but when you see the little word, therefore, it is reminding you that something before was significant. And if we're going to get the full value and benefit out of the Scriptures, one of the things that we should do is think carefully about what is being said.

[7 : 10] And so when you strike that little word, therefore, you say, Oh, what's that all about? And you recognize that Paul's earlier point, going back, if you will, just a little bit, back into 432, it says this.

It says there, Be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. And Paul's earlier point that he is now amplifying in chapter 5 is that it is because of Christ's work on the cross and His atonement that you and I have the blessing of even living the life that we do.

Now, because of the cross, we are given this little sharp bullet statement, this little summary of what Christian living really all amounts to.

What are we to be because we are believers? And let me put it to you very simply. Every believer is to imitate Christ. Every believer is to imitate Christ.

Paul gives to us a command. He says, This is what you are to do. You are to be an imitator of God. And when that word is stated, it's actually in the Greek, the word from which we get mimic.

[8 : 24] How many of you know what it is to mimic somebody? Now, some of you maybe did it in junior high for the purposes of irritating people, right? Someone would say something and you would just mimic it back to them.

But, of course, you would do a little something with your voice inflection. What were you trying to do? Don't raise your hand and wave at me and tell me that you actually did this. But what you were trying to do was irritate them a little bit, right?

You were mimicking them for the sake of mockery. Now, that's not talking about mimicking God for the sake of mockery. It is talking about mimicking God because He is supremely worthy of being the model that we follow.

And what Paul is saying to you is that you who have been saved by His grace have this obligation of doing your very best to act like God.

We see this expectation in so many different passages. Over in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 32 that I just referenced a moment ago, you remember that it says, we're to be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another.

[9 : 36] Why? Why? Why should we do that? In the same way, mimicking would be another way of putting it, mimicking God who in Christ has forgiven us.

So why should I forgive people that irritate, offend, trouble, harm me? I should forgive them because Christ died for my sins, and the Father because of Christ has forgiven me.

We find many different illustrations of this. I particularly appreciated. Last Sunday evening, Caleb Gibbs preached on a passage in Genesis chapter 19, not chapter 9.

Which was it, Caleb? 9. It was chapter 9. I was adding a 1 just to check. But in chapter 9, you'll remember that it tells us that Noah had wine.

He got drunk. He lay in his tent naked. And one of his sons came out and kind of shared with the other sons what was going on. His two sons, Shem and Japheth, then took a blanket or whatever and walked backward across their father and covered him.

[10:51] And Caleb made an excellent point in that the two sons covering of their father was the same kind of behavior that God the Father had done when Adam and Eve sinned.

What did he provide for Adam and Eve in their sinful state? He provided a covering, didn't he? We also find, and I want you to turn over to this passage, if you will, in Matthew chapter 5, verse 48. Jesus is teaching on the matter. And in Matthew chapter 5, verse 48, he says this, You must therefore be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.

In other words, act like your dad. Now, in the context of what that passage is saying, back up there in verse 43, it says, You have heard that it is said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.

But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons, and I want you to mark this in your own thinking, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven.

[12:01] Is it saying that by loving people I become a son? That's not the point. No. But it is saying that my loving people authenticates or verifies the fact that I am his son.

We also find in a passage in 2 Corinthians chapter 9, and you don't need to turn to that text, but in 2 Corinthians chapter 9, we are reminded that we're to be generous in our relationships with other people because he has been generous with us.

Now, there's another little thing that I want you not to miss in the text. And so, put your finger, if you will, on the fact that it says, Be imitators of God as beloved children. I want you to mark that word children.

You see, it's a fairly burdensome thought to us sitting right here, knowing as we do our own frailty, to be told that we're to act like God.

Isn't that right? That's hard. I'm embarrassed to say this, but yesterday I said to my wife, we're in the car, and I said, Honey, I want you to do...

[13:06] Judith is not well today, but she's my bride. And God hired her. She's been at the job for 43 years of slowly helping me grow in grace. Do you follow that? And so, we're driving back from a game, and I said to her in the car, I said, Honey, here's what I want you to do.

Dude, next time you hear me being sarcastic... I struggle with that sometimes. I said, Next time you hear me being sarcastic or critical to anyone, I want you to call me on it.

I want you to say this. That is ungodly, Tim. Okay? And I was, Man, Man, I'm supposed to be an imitator of God, and every now and then my tongue can just be as caustic and as critical.

You know, it's like, Ah, I don't want to do that. So, I solicited my wife's help. You follow that? See, that burden of being an imitator of God is pretty big.

And I recognize that. And you do too. But the next little part is a tremendous encouragement. When Paul says, as beloved children, he chooses to use a particular Greek word that is not identifying us as infants, nor identifying us as a child that is growing up, but he uses a word that identifies us as being offspring of a particular father.

[14:40] Is that an encouragement to me? Hey, what he is saying is, you have been blessed by the genetic characteristics of your father, and acting like him is doable.

I'm encouraged by that. He says, imitate God. Why? Because you are his beloved offspring.

You, by grace, are carrying the genetic code that makes behaving that way something that is possible. Do you understand that?

That's pretty significant. I think about the passage over in 1 John chapter 3, where the apostle is writing about the matter of Christian behavior, and he's writing about the issue of sin, and he says this, and kind of simplify it for you a little bit.

He says, listen, one of the things that you can be certain of is that if you're his child because his seed abides in you, because you're his offspring, you're not going to continue to get away with sin.

[15:47] You just can't keep doing it. There are some of you sitting here this morning. As you look about your life, you recognize that you may have some kind of, some superficial trapping about being Christian.

I mean, after all, you pray every night. Dear Jesus, how does that prayer go? Now I lay me down to sleep. I pray the Lord my soul to keep if I should die before I wake.

You know, I mean, hey, hey, hey, does that count? What's the answer? No, no, no, no. Just saying the prayer doesn't make you a child, does it? A child has the genetic disposition of his father, and when Paul says, you act like you're dead, he says, because you're his beloved child.

That's an encouragement. I want you to understand that the believer is the offspring of God and carries his genetic code.

I want you to look at a passage that helps us understand this a little bit more. Turn back to John chapter 8. In John chapter 8, Jesus is having a little bit of discussion with some Jews who were pretty full of themselves about their genetic heritage.

[16:59] And one of the things that the Jews had great confidence in is that because Abraham was their father, they made this presupposition or supposition that, well, hey, they had it in.

They were on their way. One of the rabbis actually taught that Abraham stood at the gate of hell, and any time someone was skittering down towards eternal condemnation, if that person was circumcised, guess what Abraham did?

Caught him, stopped him, took him on to heaven. And the Jews were pretty full of the fact that they were who they were. And so I want you to recognize that here in John chapter 8, verse 39, they answered him, Abraham is our father.

But Jesus said, if you were Abraham's children, you'd be doing the works Abraham did. What's the point? The thing that really made Abraham significant was his faith.

And they were not displaying that. In other words, Jesus is saying, if you're Abraham's kids, you'd act like them. And then he goes on, and I want you to look in verse 44, because here's where he really tags them between the eyes.

[18:08] You are of your father, the devil, and you will do your father's desire. The way you behave, everybody listening carefully?

Don't want to miss this. Ultimately, the way you behave is a giveaway on your genetic code. The way you act shows who your daddy is.

That's the point Jesus is making. Going back to Ephesians, I just want to make a little side statement in relationship to this, because when we stop and ponder the reality that you who know Christ, I who know Christ, really have this sacred obligation of acting like our father.

That's tough. I want to give you a word of encouragement, though. What God expects of us, He also enables in us. Can I go over that slowly? Because if you're sitting here this morning, probably a couple different things are happening.

Some of you are sitting here thinking, oh, well, how long is this going to be? It'll be long. Some of you are thinking, well, I can't do that. I can't do that. And my encouragement is, hey, God doesn't expect you to do it by yourself.

[19:19] One of the things that Jesus said to His disciples is, listen, when I leave, it's going to be for your good, because you're going to get the Holy Spirit. And you know what the Holy Spirit is there to help me do?

The Holy Spirit is there to help me act like Jesus. And I can count on the Holy Spirit to help me act like Jesus. By the way, can I grieve the Holy Spirit?

We learned that several weeks ago. Can I be offensive in my behavior? Yes. And I can tell you more and more, I'm thinking in my own life, when sin enters in and I find myself drifting left of center, I think to myself, Tim, you're offending the Holy Spirit.

I want you to come back and recognize this, that God, when He calls us to do something, He also enables us. And one of the things that is so spectacular about the reality of this is that there in Ephesians, when Paul says, you be imitators of God as beloved children, He's speaking to all kinds of people who had all kinds of backgrounds.

Have you ever bumped into people who, as believers, we're talking about people who say they're believers, they excuse their bad language or they excuse their rotten, stinky attitude?

[20:36] Well, that's the way I was brought up. Ever heard that kind of stuff? Hey, you don't get a pass. Because every one of us had an equally nasty background.

Would you agree with that theologically? We were all dead in our trespasses and sin, and we who were dead have been made alive by God, and we have received the Spirit of God, and we don't have to be the way we used to be.

And Paul says this, he says, hey, act like God. I want you to recognize that it's a blessing for us to recognize that the believer's past is covered by his blood, and the believer's present is enabled by his Spirit.

I want you to settle on that. I think back, I'm 65 now, and I can tell you, probably one of the very significant things that has changed in my understanding of the Christian life is just how thankful I am

for the ministry of the Spirit of God in Tim Kenoyer's life.

Not by might nor by power. Can anybody finish it off? But by my Spirit, saith the Lord. So when you're sitting there and thinking, I've got to act like my father?

[21 : 57] How's that going to happen? Well, by the Spirit of God. Let's come to the second part. Ephesians chapter 5, verse 2, And walk in love as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us.

We're looking at the manner of Christian living. We saw what we are to do. We're to act like God. Now we come to how that behavior is to play out.

And whether you're a believer or unbeliever, life is a journey. The question or the indicator of the authenticity of your faith is found in the tenor or the tone of your life.

And when Paul commands us to walk in love, he is using that imagery of something taking place. He says this in essence. He says, let the motion and the direction of your life be marked by genuine biblical love.

Let the motion and the direction of your life be marked by genuine biblical love. How many of you here were just born natural lovers? Judith and I, earlier in the week or last week, were babysitting our four grandchildren.

[23 : 12] We have 13 of them. Four of them were at our house. And we're dealing with the youngest one who is furthest from sanctification at this moment, I think, you know. She has a very, very narrow window of interest.

Here's what it is. She says, I want to be fed. I want to be warm. I want someone actually holding me, bouncing up and down.

You put me down, I'll let you know. That was not what I had planned. And by the way, when you put her down, it's not like she says, is anybody listening?

I'd like to discuss this. You know, it's like she can ratchet it up to where I'm concerned that my neighbors are going to call. You know, she really dials it up. And so, I'm convinced that she wasn't born with love in her heart.

But then I stop and realize that I probably am the genetic contributor to this little one. You know, follow that? Okay, so here's the deal. Paul says, and walk in love.

[24 : 17] Who? Now, the word that Paul uses is an interesting one because, and I'm not going to overplay the issue, but it's the word agape, which is talking about a love that is really focused on doing what is best for the other person.

And as we think about that kind of love, we recognize that's not typical of the natural heart. So, we come to a subtle characteristic of biblical truth that we might miss if we're kind of grinding through this passage.

The command to love is one that is directly connected to the model of love. Does that make sense? And I want you to see this. We're going to see it over and over again.

The responsibility of Christian living is not just kind of that Jesus backs the dump truck of truth, and, you know, you hear that beep, beep, beep, and out there it is, and you've got to deal with it.

Anytime he reminds you or he tells you, I want you to do this, he's going to give you a model so you can see what it's like and you can have some encouragement in it.

And by the way, you can connect to the blessing that you have found in the very behavior that you are now called to engage in. Walk in love. Tough thing to do.

[25 : 29] But then we read immediately, Furthermore, I want you to recognize that your love is also to be like Christ who loved us and gave himself for us.

That's what it says in the passage. As Christ loved us and gave himself for us. And I find those two descriptions of Christ's heart to be very deeply moving. One, it says that he loved us.

And by the way, when did he love us? Think for yourself. When did he love you? For one, it was before the foundation of the world. For another, he loved you while you were yet a sinner.

He loved you while you hated him. He loved you while you had no interest at all in him. How do we do at loving? Well, when we were back in junior high, we did fairly good at loving when someone else was smiling at us.

How many of you remember those days? And when someone was smiling at us, what would we do? You don't want to admit it. But you'd ask your friend. You never wanted to be direct about this. But you'd ask your friend to ask their friend if so-and-so actually was interested.

[26 : 44] Do you remember those juvenile things we used to do? Does she like me? Well, she did a couple hours ago. But, you know, that's how long it would take the message to come back

around.

You know, it's like we were great at loving people that loved us, but loving people that didn't love us. And Christ loved us while we were yet sinners. But not only did he love us, but mark what it says in the passage, And he gave himself for us.

His love drove him to the cross. Who should have been driven to the cross? I should have been driven there. You should have been driven there.

All of us deserve the righteous indignation and the wrath of a holy God against us because we have been rebels against his glory and his holiness.

And yet Christ died in our place, and he died for us. Finally, we come to something there in the passage, the last part of it, that really it tells us over in 1 Peter 1, verse 12, the angels, they're kind of flummoxed by it.

[28 : 00] I mean, you kind of think that angels in heaven have a pretty good grip on everything going on, right? Well, there's one thing that just kind of stirs their curiosity, and they're, you know, bumping each other.

Do you understand that? Do you get it? What's that about? The thing that just amazes angels is that God sent his son to die for us, and he has lavished his love upon us who didn't love him.

By the way, why do the angels not understand this? How many of you realize much of what you understand comes about by experience? Okay? And angels, did they have any experience in grace?

What did they understand of grace? It was not even baseball. It was one strike, you're out. And so the angels are sitting up watching what God is doing with sinners like you and like me, and they're kind of nudging each other and saying, what's that all about?

I mean, is that ultimately fair? How many of you are really into being fair? I mean, when I hear people talk about being fair, that's not fair. I always think to myself, there's probably a lot of angels in hell that are thinking that way.

[29 : 12] You know, it's like, that's not fair. Well, okay. Here are the angels pondering this business, and we come now to the explanation of it. There at the last part, it says, We're to act like God our Father.

Remember that? What we're dealing with is the what, the how, and the why. We're to act like God our Father, and when we're doing so, we will love like Christ loved us.

That's the two points that we've made so far. The third statement really deals with explaining the significance of Christ's death for us, and then bringing it all together and helping us understand that it is the motive that drives us to act like the Father.

So I could put it this way. If you are here today, and you are really not very often prompted to want to act like the Father, it could be, A, you don't know Christ.

But it also could be that as a believer, you have distanced yourself from thinking very much about what Christ has done and its significance to you.

[30 : 37] And I can put it this way. The further you wander from the cross, the clearer your difficulty or the more pronounced your difficulty will be in acting like Christ or acting like your Father.

We need to always be reminded of the significance of Christ's ministry for us. And so let's understand that Christ came bringing Himself as an offering.

The Greek word that Paul uses here is a word that just simply talks about bringing a gift. Bringing a gift. Bringing something to someone else.

I'll never forget, several years ago, Judith and I had the privilege, we have over the years hosted a number of different students that have come to OSU generally to do their Ph.D. work or whatever. And one of the things that we came to understand was just kind of normal, we kept on getting Chinese students. And Chinese students, when they walk in the door, one of the first things they give to you is what? A gift.

[31 : 40] A gift. Oh, Mr. Knoyer, I have this for you. A gift. A matter of respect.

A lot of times, salesmen at the end of the year around Christmas time, they will bring gifts to their favorite clients. Why do they bring gifts? Does anybody have any idea? Yeah. I think.

I'm not positive, but I think it has to do something with the year's business. Am I on page? Okay.

The Word is just talking about bringing something to another person.

Here, this is for you. I hope this stirs you to think favorably of me, right? It says that Christ came, bringing Himself as an offering.

And I want you to recognize that the Scriptures make it clear that Jesus was not forced to the cross. He came willingly. He brought Himself willingly. Secondly, it says that Christ came as a sacrifice. [32 : 43] And when the word sacrifice comes up in our theological thinking, we recognize that it kind of draws us back to the Old Testament.

And I want to think with you just for a moment about how sacrifice took place, particularly with the high priest once a year when he made atonement for the nation of Israel and for their sins. And so you'll remember that what he would do was he would choose a spotless lamb, and he would place his hand on that lamb, signifying that that lamb was taking the consequences or the burden of the sins of the people, and then the lamb was slaughtered, and the blood was thrown against the altar, carried in and put upon the mercy seat.

Do you know what happened to the body of that lamb? It was burned. It was burned. And there is a very interesting imagery that Paul now relies on, and I want you to mark it, if you will, because it tells us that his sacrifice was a sweet aroma to God.

Keep your finger in Ephesians chapter 4 and turn back in your Bible to Leviticus chapter 1. Leviticus chapter 1. We find in Leviticus chapter 1 three different times that the burning of the sacrifice is spoken of using this little English phrase.

Verse 9.

[34 : 40] Verse 17. Listen to me carefully.

The Hebrew root communicates the idea of something that is soothing and tranquilizing. something that calms the spirit of God.

And I want you to understand that as the smoke of sacrifice rose up in the Old Testament, what it was doing was declaring to God that people there in the Old Testament day had confidence in the sacrifice that they were making, not because of the significance of the lamb, but because the day was coming when God would send his own son to die in our place.

Do you understand that? And as that aroma of that burning flesh would rise up, it would soothe the righteous indignation of God against sin.

That's what this is saying. Christ's death quieted and satisfied the judgment against sin.

[36 : 14] I can't help it. I think about this passage of going back to Isaiah chapter 53, I believe it's verse 10 where it says, and it pleased the Lord to bruise him. That's a hard passage to understand, isn't it?

God the Father was pleased with the sacrifice of Christ. As the smoke of the sacrifice rose up in the Old Testament, it was an indication that the Old Testament saint believed that, are you listening? Sin could not be remedied by anything except the shedding of blood. That's pretty sobering, isn't it? What can wash away my sins? What? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole again? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.

My heart is overwhelmed this morning when I think about what I owe him. Oh, yes. Do I owe him? Yes. And what Paul is saying here, he's saying, here's the deal.

[37 : 37] You, who are believers, you ought to be acting like your father. And lest you have any confusion about what that looks like, he says, and you just work at loving like Christ loves you.

But why? Why? Why? Because as Christ's sacrifice was a pleasing aroma to God, so your behavior, which shows the character of your father, is a pleasing aroma to God.

So when was the last time that you thought to yourself, I think I'm going to do this because it will make God happy? That's what Paul's saying.

Do you know what? If we were a people that acted like our father more often, here's what would happen.

For one, our love relationships with one another would cause the unbelieving world to say, what's the deal with you guys? Do you follow that? Would you like for unbelievers to say that?

[39 : 06] Everybody nod your head. I really would like that. For another, if we were acting more like our father, then unbelievers, when they bumped into us, would be struck by our gentleness and our kindness and our sympathetic spirit and our willingness to be sacrificed for the cause, they would say, whoo, wow.

Are you listening? I'm all for evangelism. But a predisposition to effective evangelism is living like daddy. Did you hear what I said?

It's far more effective to be a sermon than to give a sermon. Now, do we have to give a sermon?

Yeah, because without the hearing of the word, there's no salvation. But let me tell you something.

A presupposition is that we who have been blessed with salvation and have enjoyed the gift of Christ's complete forgiveness have this divine and appropriate obligation placed on us, be like dad. Love others. Why? Well, because you want to be like Jesus out of thankfulness whose life was a pleasing aroma to the Father.

[40 : 43] Let's close in prayer. Spirit of God, this morning as we have studied your word together and we have heard what God has to say to us.

It is fitting for us to recognize that the preaching of the word is designed by your heart to draw people to obedience and to faith.

and so Lord, this morning without anybody looking around, I want to ask on your behalf for those who are believers here this morning that have felt the prick and the sense of the burden of the Spirit of God calling them to be obedient to this passage, that they would quietly put themselves on notice to say, yes, I hear the point and God being my helper, I'm going to change to be more like Christ. And if you're here this morning and the Spirit of God is convicting you to that matter, I would encourage you where you are quietly to slip your hand up, humble yourself and say, that's me, yes, yes, yes.

I am committed to be more like Christ, yes, yes, yes, yes. I've got to tell you this morning there are some here that do not know Christ.

[42 : 14] I'm reminded of what it says in 2 Corinthians, it says, in Christ's stead we plead with you, be reconciled to God. In Christ's place, this man pleads with you to trust in Jesus Christ, confess your sins and call upon him and say, I need Jesus as my Savior and I humble myself.

I have no other thing to do. And if you're here this morning and you need Christ as your Savior, slip your hand up and say, I need Jesus.

Slip your hand up and say, I need Jesus. Father God, I'm thankful that your word is as sharp and sharper than a two-edged sword.

Let it do its work. Create a passion for godliness in the lives of believers. Draw sinners to the cross. We ask this in your precious name.

Amen. Amen. Amen.