

The Journey Home: Faith and Family | Ezra 2

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Date: 28 July 2024

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[0 : 00] Welcome to Ontario Community Church, where we're dedicated to encouraging, equipping, and engaging lives for Christ. Located in Ontario, Oregon, Pastor Patrick Daly preaches insightful sermons from the Word of God, offering practical applications for modern living.

We're delighted to share this sermon with you. Well, let's get started everyone. Well, good morning everyone. It is great to be with you as we're continuing our sermon series through the book of Ezra. We're in Ezra chapter two. If you want to go ahead and turn your bibles there, it's going to be on page 458. And you know, it's really great when we're able to go through the Old Testament and see the context and the connections, the fulfillment of the prophecies, and all of these things that are happening.

But what's also really great for us to know is that God continues to work in and through his people, through us Christians today. This last week we learned about how the Holy Spirit stirred the spirit of Cyrus and the people of God to rise up and to return from exile in Babylon to Jerusalem.

We learned about how Cyrus, the Gentile King, is a representation, it is a foretelling of Jesus Christ by returning the stolen vessels to their rightful place.

[1 : 26] And what a great representation we find a lot of spiritual truths, right? Much like how we find many different parables and different aspects in scripture that are very applicable for us today.

That when we become Christian, we're transferred from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of light and it's just a powerful connection. We also learned about how the community came together, right?

And they contributed their time, their talent, and their treasure towards the rebuilding of the temple. Taking this journey and later rebuilding the altar and the temple, it would not be easy and it would require contribution from others.

And it makes me think about Christians today, that it is so important for us to take inventory of our time and our talent and treasure. Just as the community came together and contributed, we too should do the same for the building of the church, the local body, the assembly.

And all of these are of great importance. And what we're gonna see here in Ezra chapter two is a list of long lots and lots of names.

[2 : 35] I want you to briefly look real quick here. You're gonna see in verse three, you're gonna see names, the sons of, who are all of these people? You're gonna see numbers that are assigned with it, the amount of people that are going on.

And what I want you to keep in mind, we're gonna pray and we're gonna go ahead and continue, is that there is an account here. There is a record of all of these families, all of these people who, you're talking well over 40,000 people who are going on a 500 plus mile journey across the desert, carrying over 4,000, or excuse me, over 5,000 vessels.

And that's not everything on this journey. And it's showing, it's to encourage us and to inspire us of how our God has moved in the past and how God continues to move in our lives today.

That is why we should pray for revival. That is why we should pray that God will restore the broken and renew our spirits in our hearts. So let's pray and we'll go into Ezra two.

Gracious Father, we come before you hungry for your word. We're continuing through this amazing book of Ezra. We pray that truth is spoken here and that lives will be transformed.

[3 : 54] Father, you call for us to enter into a relationship with you, to grow in faith through discipleship and learning what it means to read and study scripture, but also to follow in the footsteps of Christ.

And you move us, Father, you move us to do good in your holy name by being an ambassador for Christ. As we go through Ezra two and we're learning about all of these names, we don't know

everybody in here, but we know that they are important because they have been written and recorded.

In a similar manner, may we recognize that we are on a spiritual journey when we believe in your son, Jesus Christ and are on a path of going towards you.

We pray that we have you as the firm foundation, that we grow and that we're molded into who you want us to be. We say all of this in the name of Jesus Christ, the savior of the world, we say together, amen.

So let us turn, so page 458 in your Bibles, we're gonna read the beginning of Ezra. It's also gonna be on your screen. Feel free to use mobile device, pew Bible or just read up on the screen here.

[5 : 05] So it says here that, now these were the people of the province who came up out of the captivity of those exiles whom Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon had carried captive to Babylonia, right?

They returned to Jerusalem and Judah, each to his own town. That is the main idea of what's happening here. That's the main thing that we need to understand. That's the focal point of what's happening in Ezra too.

Then you go further down, right? You have all of these names that are happening. Then we continue on Ezra chapter two, verse 64 to 68.

The whole assembly together was 42,360 besides their male and female servants of whom they were. So it goes on, right? 7,337, 200 male and this is very specific, male and female singers.

I thought that was very interesting in there, right? And their horses were 736, mules 245, right? It talks about their camels and overwhelming amount of donkeys, 6,720.

[6 : 08] Some of the heads of the families when they came to the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, check this part out, right? It says that they made free will offerings for the house of God to erect on its site, right?

So there's this continued contribution to building or rebuilding in this case. It goes on then saying, they gave according to their ability, right?

They gave to the treasury of the work 61,000 derricks of gold, 5,000 minas of silver and 100 priests garments.

Now the priests, the Levites, some of the people, the singers, the gatekeepers and the temple servants lived in their towns and all the rest of Israel in their towns. That is showing the amount of people, right?

The families that are represented and the amount of funds that were raised in order for this project to happen. And so let's go to that next slide here.

[7 : 06] So what are the observations that we can see? We have over 40,000 men. If you notice in your Bibles where it says the number of the men of the people of Israel, the sons of Parsh, right? Parsh, Elam, it keeps going on, Zattu, right?

Over 40,000 men which is representing about 120,000 to 200,000 people. That's assuming a family of about three to five, okay?

So back in biblical times, obviously, it was more of a patriarchal society and it was more common to count the males. And so we'll just stick with over 40,000 but it's very interesting to think that there's probably a lot more people who are on this journey.

So over 40,000, right? Journey of more than 500 miles from Babylonia to Jerusalem to rebuild the temple and they brought 5,400 vessels.

Now in the bulk of chapter two, you'll find there's this list of names. Now what's very interesting in here is what you find in Ezra chapter two. I want us to do this real quick.

[8 : 08] Let's turn our Bibles to Nehemiah chapter seven. It's gonna be on page 473. You'll see in here, sometimes I can be a nerd or a geek, I love knowledge and connections here but I didn't wanna overwhelm you with having the charts of the connections with Nehemiah and Ezra.

But just look in here in Nehemiah, you'll see in here in chapter seven, there's part of that list again. Do you see it?

It's gonna be Nehemiah chapter seven verse six. It goes on. Do you see? There's like a very similar connection.

It's that same, pretty much respectively, that same list. There's a couple numeric discrepancies but you see the point that it's still this record of these people and I only mentioned this to let you know that these families are mentioned only a couple times in scripture.

And it kind of makes you wonder the question of why that is, right? We have to think first of all, the logistics of such a travel, right? A journey across the desert is not an easy one.

[9 : 20] I'm sure many of us, if you haven't been on a road trip before, you need to go on one, right? How many of us have been on a road trip? Or Matt, I know earlier, you've said you've flown across the country.

You know the logistics that have to happen when you're traveling from point A to point B. I can tell you a little bit of humor here is that when I travel for a few hours, when I go into Boise or I go into Turner, Oregon, the amount of stops when you have seven people in a van, you have to stop quite a few times.

And I think one of the most frustrating things is when my son's like, I need to go shishi, I need to go to the bathroom. And then they go and then you drive another 20 minutes.

Well, I need to go to the bathroom too. And you're like, come on, we have somewhere to go. And that's just for a family of seven. I can't imagine the magnitude and the logistics of people going to the bathroom and people needing a snack or whatever it is.

It's just remarkable. Now, it doesn't necessarily, and I kind of wish I knew how long it took for them to travel this journey, but we don't necessarily know that. I just think that it's the logistics of that, right?

[10 : 30] The amount of bathroom breaks and snacks and all that had to be, maybe that's why we had the 6,720 donkeys on there. Maybe they were the ones carrying the snacks kind of thing.

But with all of this here, there's a few things that we can take away from the observation. Let's go to that next one. What can we learn from this chapter here? We see that God's faithfulness, right?

It's this first lesson that God is faithful, right? We can see from this entire sermon series that on

Ezra, right, we had the 70 years of exile, but God kept his promise to restore his people, right?

Because God gives us an opportunity at each and every single day here on this earth to have an opportunity to come to know Jesus Christ, right? To be saved, to believe in the Lord, and to have that, receive that salvation, to grow in faith.

And then finally, to be moved to do good in the name of Jesus Christ. We can see in the word of God that God is faithful to his people, right? Just as we were talking about the setting up of the scene of Ezra, there was moral decline that was happening.

[11 : 39] There was, I mentioned, I think it was in Second Chronicles, that there was people who were polluting the temple. Well, they're not talking about smoking in the temple, it's talking about the pollution of sin that was happening in that time period, right?

And so despite the moral decline, despite destruction, there is still hope that is found in God, God's faithfulness, right? The prophecy being fulfilled about Cyrus, the return of God's people, even the coming of Jesus Christ being foretold that Jesus Christ, right, that he was born in a manger, the miracles that he performed.

I always found it fascinating how, when you think of Jesus Christ, did you know, there's a fun fact here, when Christ was on the cross and he said, my God, my God, why have you abandoned me? Why have you forsaken me? He's quoting Psalm 20. And in some translations, right at the end, where Christ says it is finished, it's right at the end of Psalm 22.

So the implication is that he was going to recite Psalm 22. Very interesting, that's a very fascinating thing, all of that to say, this shows God's faithfulness, God's consistency in his word, right?

[12 : 51] It proves, it provides us a case in his word that God is not a liar, that God is the provider of light, life and truth, and he gives us everlasting life to all who believe in Jesus Christ.

Let's go to that next slide. The power of family and community, right? This second lesson is about the power of family and community, right? 40,000 men, but I like to think of it as 40,000 family units here, right?

All of the people that were involved in the returning to Jerusalem, it shows that, look, it wasn't just one person returning, right, it was many people that were on this journey, right?

It's the community, families coming together and going on this journey together to where they were supposed to belong. And all of these people, remember, when we went back into Ezra chapter one, right?

You had verse one, the spirit of Cyrus, it was stirred, right? The moving of the Holy Spirit, and then later in verse five, the stirring of the people, right?

[13:52] There was a movement that was happening of people to go on this journey together. And we have to think that when we, as the body of Christ, we are a spiritual family, even as we can also think of family units, right?

You know, mom, dad, brother and sister, or uncle, Steve, or whatever it is, right? That when we come together, when we come together for the cause of Christ, just think of the amount of transformation that can occur.

Just think of the greater impact that can happen in the community. And I pray, and I hope that you do as well, that God will restore the brokenness in our lives, right?

Let us ask God for healing in our own lives. Let us ask God for renewal, right? That we have a renewed mind and a renewed spirit.

That's the power of our God. And of course, you know, we pray that there will be revival in this land. I don't like turning on the news anymore.

[14:52] I think there's no point in me having, you know, streaming service, or at least live TV anymore because of all of the bad things that are happening. But when you read about all of the bad things that are happening in the media, or any event for that matter, think of it as this is why we ask God for healing and restoration and for revival to happen in this land.

Because this world needs not just love, but the love of Christ. And when we come together as the body of Christ, as brothers and sisters in Christ, when we work together, when we're focusing on the things that bring us together, not the things that divide us, just think of the great things we can do by the leading and the guiding of the Holy Spirit, that we can do great things together in the name of Christ.

And I want you to consider how you can be a beacon of hope for your friends, for your family, and those around you, right? So when we talk about family, the power of family, it can be your family unit, but also your spiritual family.

So consider how you can be a beacon of hope. And as Christians, we are to be filled with the Holy Spirit as a good vessel. Isn't it interesting that Cyrus was mentioned as an instrument for God?

And in a similar way, we are to be vessels filled with the Holy Spirit, right? There's such parallels and such connections with these physical objects.

[16:26] Let's go to that next one, the importance of record keeping, detailed records and scripture. They showcase the significance of each individual to God. You have this list of families and it's meant to give us encouragement and inspiration on how God moved in the Old Testament.

And like I said earlier, God continues to speak. God continues to work. We don't believe in a dead God. We believe in the living God. We believe that the Holy Spirit can move in our hearts and in our very lives.

For many of us, we may know someone who the Holy Spirit has worked in and through their life. You may know someone whose heart was hardened before they knew the Lord.

And how God transformed their lives to love the Lord and to love other people. Maybe you know someone that was living a very sin filled life but they lived a spirit filled life, focusing on the things that are higher, the things that are of God.

So all of these names that are written here in chapter two, they are all of significance in the eyes of God. And just think of the fact that how Eswa was written, many, many years ago.

[17:40] How many people have read Ezra and wondered the same thing? Who are these people? What were they like? What was it like going on this journey with over 40,000 or 100,000, however many people there were on this journey?

That must have been an incredible thing to see. I mean, for some of us, it's like, I'm not going anywhere. But when you're having the moving of the Holy Spirit, let alone this mass amount of people that are journeying together, that's an incredible sight, something to see and experience, but also something for us to read.

So I want you to think for a moment that just as these names were written in God's book, for us believers, there's a book that we want to be written in and that is the book of life in a similar way. And we'll go further into that, but I want you to think about that, right? We must make a decision to believe in the Lord and to be saved. Let our name, we want to have our name placed in the book of life.

Let's go to that next one, responding to God's call. The next lesson is about how important it is for us to respond to God's call, right? God is the God of restoration, renewal and revival.

[18 : 50] God transforms our very lives, right? We have to trust in the Lord with all of our heart and lean not on our own understanding. I always love saying this. Many of you know that Bible verse, trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.

The implication of that verse has to do with leaning on a wall, right? And when you're leaning on your own understanding, you're leaning on a wall that could tip over.

But when we are trusting in the Lord, we're trusting in the firm foundation rather than leaning on a wall kind of thing. We need to trust and obey the Lord.

And I want to remind all of you that it's not just about following this continued list of things that we have to do. We must place our faith and trust in the Lord first and upon that salvation, right?

Upon believing in the Lord and being saved, we are called to grow and to do good in the name of Christ. Let us take to heart that God continues to speak to us today.

[19 : 50] Ask yourself the question. Have you answered God's call to enter in a relationship with you? Have you answered God's call to open the word of God and to pray? Or maybe there's a specific calling that God has for you, a specific plan for your life.

Let's go to that next slide. It is the power of community generosity. And the thing that we have to keep in mind is that it says here to give generously according to your ability, right?

There is so much that we can do in the name of Christ when we are generous together, right? This generosity is not just about finances, right? It's about giving our time and our talent and our treasure.

If you go to Ezra chapter two, verse 69, if you wanna go there real quick, it says in here, it's verse 68 to 69, right?

Some of the heads of the family, when they came to the house of the Lord that is in Jerusalem, they made free will offerings to erect on its site according to their ability, right?

[21 : 02] So it's talking about the free will offerings to rebuild the temple. They contributed what they could, right? They were focused on the cause that is greater to themselves.

And so this is an encouragement for us that when we contribute of our time and our talent and our treasure, we can have a greater impact for Christ. I always like to think about that story when the woman gave, what was it, like the two pennies, right?

That was all that she could give. Was that more money than someone who could give you know, a million dollar check? Well, it was giving according to their ability. And so we can have a greater impact for Christ when we come together and we work together.

And unfortunately, we don't know who gave what, how much they gave, and that's okay. All we know is that they were on a journey together, they contributed together, and they were able to do such good in the rebuilding of the temple.

And so in all of this, you might ask yourself the question now, all right. So you explained to me, Pastor, that there were 40,000 families here that traveled 500 miles with 5,400 vessels and all of these donkeys and things.

[22 : 14] They were able to raise a lot of money. So it comes up with the next question, what can I do with this information? What action steps can I take? So we provided the lessons here, right? The lessons from Ezra chapter two.

These are wonderful questions to ask. Because when we're reading the word of God, sometimes we may think, well, okay, it's just a list here, but it's more than just a list, right?

There are things that we can do, things actionable steps that we can take. And the first one here is to trust in God's faithfulness.

As God was faithful to his people, he is faithful to believers. It's not like God's like, all right, I'm only faithful to only a few people and that's it. All done, we'll move on.

God is still faithful. The faithfulness of God, right? And I want you to think about that. The consistency of who our God is, and that's why we focus so much on the context and the connections of scripture, right?

[23 : 12] It goes to show that God is constant, God is faithful and he never fails. Are you trusting in the Lord? Perhaps this is a time for you to trust in the faithfulness of God and begin in your spiritual journey.

Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. Let's go to the next one here. Become a part of a spiritual community. It's talking about joining the local church, right? A spiritual community, a family.

To journey together in faith. When we read Ezra chapter two, these families were all journeying together. They were a community as it were. And this is a call for us to invite our friends and to invite our family to be a part of something that is bigger than themselves.

And I wanna ask yourself the question. It's a very interesting thought. And these people are traveling with their families. They weren't traveling alone. They were traveling with their, literally their families, but also with others whose spirit was stirred.

So who are you traveling with on your spiritual journey in Christ, right? Who are you joining with in your walk with Christ? It's something to really reflect on and think about.

[24 : 20] As the body of Christ, we are called to love one another, to encourage one another and to lift up each other during good times and bad. I cannot emphasize this enough.

That is what is one of the beautiful things about the church is that we celebrate the birth of a child. When someone knows to come, when someone believes in Christ, when someone gets baptized, that is a time for us to celebrate.

And then also when times of crisis happens, when we need help and assistance, that's something that we can all come together and help one another just as the scripture says, to bear up one another, bear one another's burdens.

It's so important for us. And I always think about, I think about this church. I think about how we are a church that we're focusing on loving the Lord and loving others.

That's something that's so critical and important. I can't imagine being a part of a church that doesn't love the Lord or doesn't love other people. But let us be a church that is faithful to God, and to his words.

[25 : 28] Let us love God and love other people. Let's go to that next one is realizing your value to God. And listen, you are valuable to God. You are made in his image.

You are loved by Jesus Christ. And think about how God knew you before you were born. And in knowing this, I want you to know that Jesus loves you.

And he calls for you to have a relationship with him. Believe in Jesus Christ, believe in his death, burial and resurrection.

Begin on this journey. And God is calling for all of us. Will you respond to that call? You see, just as all of these names were recorded, not only in Ezra and Nehemiah, we have to think that God knew every single one of those people, but it's just like how God knows every single one of us and calls for all of us to be written in the book as it were.

Your name is known to the Lord and you matter to God. And I encourage you to take time this week and even today to thank God. Maybe write a list of the things that you are thankful for.

[26 : 39] For God desires for you to believe in him. Just as Cyrus, right? He made the decree. He made a call for people to respond, to rise up and return to Jerusalem.

Jesus Christ calls for us, right? Jesus Christ as wisdom, as the bread of life, as life, as the living word, he calls for us to place our faith and our trust in him.

Perhaps God is calling for you to believe in him. Maybe it's to step up and to, or step out boldly into faith. Ask yourself if you are responding to God's call for your life.

Let's move to that next one is practice generosity, right? Give according to your ability of your time, your talent and treasure, right? This is something that we are seeing in Ezra and something that we see throughout scripture.

Just as I mentioned earlier in Ezra 269 that they gave according to their ability. Be encouraged that, you know, sometimes we get so caught up in, I can't give a lot of my time or I can't give a lot of my talent or my treasure.

[27 : 45] You give what you can, that's between you and the Lord, right? How you answer that, it goes from person to person. And in knowing this, we can all give to God, that's the encouragement here, we can all give to God in some capacity.

It varies from person to person. I know that when I was younger, it was very difficult for me, you know, when I was a teenager, I'm like, and I don't have any money, right? But I could still give of my talents, I could give of my time.

And again, how you answer that varies from person to person. Be encouraged to really reflect on how you can give to the Lord. Let's go to that next one. It says, begin on a spiritual journey in Christ. We have to, you hear me say time and time again that to be a Christian, right? You're saved by grace through faith. It is the beginning of your journey in Christ.

The people of God, they responded to God's call. Their spirits were stirred by the Holy Spirit, but it did not stop there. They went those 500 plus miles through the desert of all places.

[28 : 53] It wasn't like, you know, they were going through all of the fields, so to speak. It wasn't like they were going through hot, you know, they were going through hot weather. It's not like we know anything about hot weather.

You imagine journeying 500 miles and that kind of hot weather. We wouldn't know anything about that, would we? But in that, our spiritual journey in Christ is a lifelong one.

We're always encouraged to learn and to grow, to never stop growing, right? It's very unfortunate when you hear about people, they become a Christian and they just stop there, right?

You are encouraged to grow in the things of God. You are encouraged to be molded by the Lord into the man or the woman that God wants you to be.

And you never stop growing, right? How many of us, well, you don't have to raise your hand, but I hope you all believe that we're still a work in progress, right?

[29 : 55] We never stop learning, we never stop growing. And that not only is applicable to the Lord in our spiritual walk, but us as people. We are to continue to grow and we continue learning things all of the time.

And let us be encouraged to continue to know the word of God, right? To pray and to know the deeper things of God, but also to be more like Christ. It's that famous balance between grace and truth, right?

We gotta know the truth of the word of God, but we also have to exhibit grace to other people. The closer that we get to God, the more transformation will happen in our lives.

And it just keeps radiating out to other people. We must trust in the Lord first. Then we obey what the word has to say.

And the next thing here is leave a legacy. Leave an everlasting legacy in Christ with your name written in the book of life through faith in Jesus Christ.

[30 : 55] This is something that is incredible. I mean, let's go ahead and let's turn our Bibles real quick. Go to Revelation 20 if you can, if you're able to.

I'm gonna show you a couple of verses in Revelation because this is incredible here. Revelation 20 verse 12.

Revelation can be a very complex book, yeah? Let's read it here. Revelation chapter 20 verse 12.

It says here, I saw the dead great and small standing before the throne and books were opened.

And another book was opened which is the book of life.

And the dead were judged according to what was written in the books according to what they had done. Then go to verse 15. If anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

[32 : 05] And that goes to show you, I just wanna show you those two verses. The importance of why we want to believe in Jesus Christ. We want to have our name written in the book of life.

I know it gets very overwhelming and it can be very like, whoa, that's heavy when we're reading Revelation. But it's the encouragement for us to come to have our name written in the book, right? Isn't it incredible? Like I said, Ezra written so many years ago. We read Ezra and we see all of these names, right?

How God worked in their life. Just think of the parallel then about how our legacy, our lasting legacy will be our name written in the book of life.

I always find it encouraging and just simply amazing to see just the simplicity of that. For many of us, we may think of legacy as meaning, you want to have your name remembered for your children and your community and that's absolutely true.

[33 : 12] Be a person who is remembered with your friends, your family, the community as well. But another type of legacy that we can think about is the everlasting legacy, right?

Just as we're finding in Ezra that these names were remembered years later, many, many years later by many different pastors and many different theologians and those studying the word of God, that's a legacy right there.

And in the same way, we are to be encouraged to have our name in the book, leaving a lasting legacy. And it goes to show that Jesus Christ offers everlasting life to those who believe in him.

This is great encouragement for us because when we consider having our name written in the book, we have to think that of how God provides everlasting life.

Be encouraged by the names of all the people and the legacy that lasted all of those thousands of years. Having your name written in the book of life, it means, well, it means that you are going to live, you're going to have that everlasting life.

[34 : 20] And so in some of those verses in your notes, you'll see those verses, those mentions, mentionings of the book of life.

And it goes to show that again, if our name is put into the word, we will have everlasting life. I want us to think, can we put the title slide on real quick?

Chapter two of Ezra is more than just a list of names and it is more than just history. It is a call for us to trust in the Lord, to believe in him, to be saved, to grow in the faith and to respond to his leading and for us to focus on what matters.

And as we close our message today, I want us to think of the lessons but also the actionable steps and also the history. You see, we are all on a spiritual journey in Christ together.

It's a spiritual representation of historical truth, right? You're having these people that are traveling. Think of all of the storms they might have faced, the heat they might have faced, but they were still faithful because God had placed in their spirit, right?

[35 : 38] The stirring of their spirit to continue to return home. And what a great representation that is for us that when we believe in the Lord, we're on this journey together.

We should embark on this journey together in Christ. Sometimes the heat will be turned up, right? Sometimes it will be treacherous but we continue on that path in Christ until we make it home.

Do you see the wonderful parallel with that? It's just something that we should be encouraged by.

So the next time you look at Ezra chapter two, yes, it's a list of names, but it's much more than that.

Let us all embark on a journey together. First, may your journey be coming to know Jesus Christ.

And from there, be on a journey in Christ to our home in heaven.

Let's pray together. Gracious Father, we come before you in awe of who you are as we've learned in this chapter two. We are reminded of your promises and the hope that we have in you.

[36 : 45] Lord, we thank you for these lessons. And from your people who journeyed back to Jerusalem, we pray Father that in a similar way that we may journey together to be more like you.

May we recognize that in being a Christian, there's going to be hills and valleys. There's going to be seasons of good and even seasons of trial or there's even going to be temptations.

No matter what opposition, Father, what adversity or decline in culture or anything that is ungodly that's happening in the world, may we remain focused on you.

May we continue our journey towards you. May we set our minds on things that are higher and the promises that you provide. We pray that we can really take that inventory of our time, our talent and our treasure.

May we be generous and give according to our ability. We pray Father that our names will be in that book of life and we can know this by believing in you.

[37 : 49] The legacy of eternal life. May we have that blessed and assurance in you. And Father, we ask that we may sing this last song together and may we be encouraged to know you, grow in you and do good in your holy name.

We pray all of this in the name that is above all names, the name of Jesus Christ. Amen. Amen.

Thank you for tuning in to the Ontario Community Church sermon podcast.

For more about our church and how you can get involved or support our mission, please visit ontariocommunitychurch.org. May God's blessings be with you.