

Our Pattern for Service

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[0:00] You can go ahead and be turning to Luke chapter 4. That song is a good reminder.! You know, the Bible tells us that sin is fun for a season. When Satan tempts, he doesn't always share! everything about sin. And in this chapter, Luke chapter 4, we won't be focusing on that this morning.

At the beginning of the chapter, you see exactly how to deal with those temptations, because Satan tempts Jesus. You know, 40 days Jesus had gone without food. I mean, he's literally starving to death, and Satan shows up. And I think it's interesting, I'm going to try to stay off of this, because this is going to be a message for another time, but he doesn't question Jesus's identity, his deity. He says, if you are who you say you are, then make these stones bread.

Feed yourself. You know, it's a legitimate request. He's starving, but Satan wants you to do it an illegitimate way. And then what does Jesus do? The Bible tells us that he quotes scripture, says man should not live by bread alone. Eventually, Satan, Jesus resists Satan. The Bible tells us when you resist Satan, he will flee. The Bible says Satan realizes, hey, I'm not getting anywhere, but I'll be back. You know, that's what Satan does with us. We can be strong one moment, but if we're not careful, he'll wait. The Bible tells us as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. He's just waiting.

So, I'm going to read first off, 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 21. So, you don't need to turn there. 1 Peter chapter 2, verse 21. It says, For even here unto were ye called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that ye should follow his steps. Our text here, if you'll stand with me, Luke chapter 4. We'll start reading in verse 16. It says, And he, Jesus, came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up. And as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and stood up to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

[2:45] And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister and sat down. And the eyes of all of them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, I just thank you for being able to be in your house this morning. Lord, I pray that you would just work on our hearts, just let them already be prepared to have what you would teach us this morning.

Lord, I pray that you would just be with those who aren't here for whatever reason, God. I just pray that you would be with them. Lord, I just, I ask that you would just be with any of the weights that are kind of burdening down our heart or our mind. Just set them aside as we just focus on what you have for us. I thank you and I love you in Jesus' name. Amen. You can go ahead and be seated.

You know, the synagogue here is the place where the Old Testament scriptures were expounded and explained. I did a little research, and the usual order of service in a synagogue began with an opening prayer and praise, then a reading from the law, then a reading from the prophets, and then a sermon. And back in this time, there wasn't like a professional, you know, preacher. It was just basically who was capable and learned enough to teach the scripture. We read here that there was a minister, and a minister was kind of the one who would focus on the word, and he would help, kind of help prepare how the service would be. I read that there were people who would take alms up and delegate those things out, but it would have been different from our church service that we know today. But since Jesus was at the synagogue this time, he was in Nazareth. Jesus was the rabbi there who was kind of their learned, you know, guest speaker, if you will. And, you know, he was able to read and teach in his hometown synagogue. You'll read on, I'd encourage you to read the rest of this chapter sometime. But he gets up there, and he expounds, and the people say they marveled.

And they're even asking, they're like, is this Jesus? That's Joseph's boy, you know, the carpenter. That's him. You know, they're kind of like, what is he, you know, they're kind of impressed. And then he starts reminding them, hey, the Messiah, Isaiah 61, 1 and 2, is that passage that he reads from. And he says, I'm him, and that year, that's now. And he reminds them, I'm here to save people, even Gentiles. And they're like, whoa, whoa, ho, ho. They didn't like that. You read later, it says that they hated him. I mean, they wanted to kill him. You know, there was Jews back then, as I was kind of just studying a little bit about this. They really believed that Jesus, you know, God created Gentiles just to stoke the fires of hell. And so when he's saying, hey, he's coming here, even for those people, I mean, they get mad. They're like, get this guy out of here. And that's kind of his, you know, he tells them, you know, there's a prophet, even in his own country, doesn't have any honor. So that's kind of our, you know, our story, our account going on here. You know, the house of God played a regular part in the life of Christ. You know, it was customary for a visiting rabbi to read before the people. If you read Isaiah 61, 1 and 2, he's speaking of himself as the anointed one, the Messiah, the Christ. He relates it to himself. And I looked at this passage, and what I saw for us is, as you can see our title, a pattern for service. The first thing I noticed is our place for service. You know, it was our Lord's custom, the Bible says, to be in the house of God. I think that's a custom we all need to put in our own life. That word custom means it was a habit. It was habitual. It was frequent. It was common. You know, I had a professor in Bible college old, gruff voice, but he'd say, it's better to crawl in sick than to call in sick. You know, and he wouldn't just say that. He lived it. I remember one time he spent the entire night in the ER, but he was going to be at class teaching, and he ended up having to go back to the ER because he was bleeding, and it was a big mess. But he, you know, the Bible tells us Daniel, he purposed in his heart. You know, he wasn't going to defile himself. You know, Jesus purposed in his heart, I'm going to be at church. That's where I need to be. That's important to me. Out of anybody who's ever walked the earth, I think we could all agree Jesus is the one person that didn't have to be at church, but he made it a point. I think we need to adopt that in our own lives. It's a custom. You know, Hebrews 10, 24, 25 says, and let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works. [8:04] You know, provoke. If you have a sibling, sometimes you've provoked each other, right? You get on each other's nerves. Well, we should be provoking, poking, prodding, do good things, do the right things.

You know, look around here. There's some people that we know who aren't here. For whatever reason, I'm not saying judge them, but send them a text. Hey, I missed you. You know, I'm praying for you.

Provoke them. I'd like to see you again next week. You know, be in their place. You know, earlier on in this text, Satan was tempting Jesus. It's easy to be tempted on a Sunday morning, right? Doesn't your bed somehow magically always feel warmer on a Sunday morning? But you don't want to get out of bed.

You want to stay there. You know what? Jesus, he was tempted. The Bible says, every point like as we are, yet without sin. He was tempted to stay home. He didn't. You know, it says in verse 25, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another.

As you see the day approaching. So our place for service. If we kind of want to pattern our life after Christ's, we need to make it a habit to be in church. Secondly, I see our program for service.

[9:24] Here in Luke chapter 4, if you'll read with me in verses 18 and 19, it says, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor.

He hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, and to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. I mean, that word is used three times in two verses. You better take some notice.

You know, Mark 16, 15 tells us that Jesus told his disciples, Go ye into all the world, preach the gospel to every living creature. You know, if we are disciples of Christ, that should be what we take upon ourselves, to go preach. You know, I think it's interesting that it uses the word creature, because it's not talking about animals. You know, we're not supposed to, you know, Pastor Mrs. Smith just went up into the mountains. You know, I'm telling you right now, Pastor wasn't out there preaching to the bears and the elk. You know, God says, repent. You know, nothing like that. You know, sometimes what sin does, it just disfigures you. I mean, you're a creature. It twists you into something. You preach that to those people. Those are the people who need it the most. So many

times, we just like to say, oh, you know, we just stick with our, you know, clean-shaven, suit-wearing people. And it's like, God died for everyone, even the Gentiles. If you're not a Jew, you're a Gentile. That's all of us. Creatures. Preach the word to every creature.

John 20, 21 says, Then Jesus said to them again, Peace be unto you, as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. So if we're supposed to have his life as an example, we need to be out there preaching, teaching. You know, this text describes to who, whom, I should say, we are supposed to preach to. It says, first off, the poor, the bankrupt, you know, the gospel meets you where you are because you're nothing. That's hard to hear. You're nothing at all. You bring nothing to the table. You know, sin, it impoverishes, but Christ brings good news. You know, aren't you thankful that you don't have to? This isn't something that only the wealthy can get into. You know, you don't need a certain amount of money to have Christ. I'm thankful for that. I mean, I could work a lifetime and never have the amount of money that some of these people have. There'd be no opportunity for me to ever get to heaven. It doesn't matter how rich you are. Christ comes to you where you are, the bankrupt, the poor. Then it says here, the brokenhearted, you know, to heal. Sin breaks hearts.

[12:29] I mean, if you see the wickedness, I think that's another reason why it's so important to be at church. You know, it's important to do your own Bible reading, your study individually, but getting back together with God's people, it's encouraging. It should be. You know, there's times when you look at the news and the chaos. Just when I was younger, I was telling my wife this. In scripture, when it says, you know, people did, that was good, and they called it wrong, and then they're doing things wrong, calling it good. I couldn't even comprehend that as a kid. But as I've gotten older, what I see, I'm like, oh, you know, judges, it says they did that which was right in their own eyes. I was like, that doesn't even make sense. But now you see these people, they're fighting on the behalf of a murderer who killed children, and they think they're right. Sin breaks hearts. You know, people, they need spiritual healing, and they're looking for it. They go to quack doctors. They get messed up with cults, false religions. It breaks hearts. You know, I think Romans 5a tells us, but God commanded his love toward us, and that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. You know, while we were yet sinners, while we were yet bankrupt, while we were yet brokenhearted, while we were yet bound, that's the third thing, deliverance to captives. You know,

Brother Ron sang that song, sin takes you far more than where you want to go. It makes you far more than what you want to pay. Sin makes captives. It enslaves people. People are bound in sin. They're bound by Satan, and that power needs to be broken. Luke chapter 13, I'll start reading in verse 11, and it says, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity 18 years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him, and said unto her, woman, thou art loosed from thine infirmity. And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight and glorified God. You know, Jesus can set free, make straight, glorify God. You know, he's given us that power to be able to do these things so we can follow his program for service. The fourth group of people we see here are the blind, those that need recovering of sight. You know, sin blinds us, but Christ can heal our moral and spiritual blindness. You know, what a joy it is for someone who was blind to be able to see. In scripture, I think that's probably, if I had nailed down probably the greatest testimony that I see in scripture, it's the blind man. I mean, they're grilling him. They're like, who did this? You know, it's the Sabbath day. Who did this? And he finally is like, listen, I don't know. The one thing I do know is I was blind. Now I see. I mean, what a testimony, you know, but joy, rejoicing that blinded eyes are made to see. You know, many are blinded today because of religious prejudice, traditions, politics, entertainment. They think that these are the things that will give them fulfillment that they're trying so hard to fill. You know, I've heard it said, everyone has a God-shaped hole in their heart, and only God can fill that. And we see so many people trying to fill it with other things. They're always going to be lacking, but God can give them sight, remove that blindness. John 8, 12 says, then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world. He that fall with me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. You know, it doesn't even take a lot of light.

If it's totally dark and you just have a little bit of light, you gravitate to that. You know, I remember being in some caves, you know, and the tour guide was like, all right, is everybody ready? We're going to turn the lights off, and boom, everything goes dark. And it's almost a scary kind of darkness. You can feel it, right? It's like kind of permeated into you. It's like, whoa, whoa, whoa, turn some lights on. You know, even if all you had was a lighter, that'd be enough to look at that. You might even get a little bit of hope. It's like, it's not totally dark. You know, we're not totally in despair.

There's a little bit of light.

[17:14] You know, that's what we are. We're just lights in a world of darkness. You know, people should be able to look at us and be like, hey, there's something different. You know, I know that this person has issues. We've talked about it at work, but they always seem to be upbeat. Even in the midst of the tragedy that they're going through, they've got to smile. You know, joy is above circumstances.

You can be in a really bad spot, but if you've got joy, if you've got peace, love, the fruit of the Spirit, you stand out like a light, and that light is supposed to reflect right back to Christ. Say, hey, it's not me. He's the one that gives us this light. We need to be those people to help those who are blind. The fifth group of people, we see the bruised. It says, the set at liberty, the bruised. You know, sin oppresses its victims. We see that many are bruised or scarred by sin, not even just physically. You know, when you read in Scripture, it talks about like demonic attacks, you know, devils.

The Bible talks about people cutting themselves. We still see that today. You know, people say that they're depressed, right, and they cut themselves. I'm telling you right now, that's, it's devilish. They're being attacked spiritually by the devil and his followers. You know, the Bible tells us when the maniac of Gadara, right, it says, we are many, plural, right? We see that today. People, you might think I'm crazy. People talking they, thems. That's plural. That's devilish. You know, these people, they're bruised. Chopping yourself up. They're bruised. They are being attacked by Satan. Satan's scars.

[19:10] The Bible tells us, Romans chapter 1, verse 16 and 17 says, For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Romans 1, 17 says, For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith. You know, Jesus came to help these people. You know, obviously Jesus couldn't reach everybody by himself because as far as, you know, he was 100% God. He was also 100% man.

Couldn't do it. He needs help. He had the disciples. The disciples were tasked to go train other people. You know, we have that same calling and responsibility today.

It says here, the acceptable year of the Lord. You know, this is probably referring to the year of Jubilee. You kind of read a little bit about that in Leviticus 25, 9 through 15. But it was a time where slaves were set free, debts were canceled, and you had a new start. You know, that's pretty familiar to when you're born again. You know, the Bible says you are a new creature. Behold, all things are become new, you know, that freedom that you get from sin. He pays that price with his blood, you know, that cancels out that debt. Thirdly, I want to focus on our power for service. In verse 18 of our text here in Luke 4, it says, the Spirit of the Lord is upon me. You know, we see here it was upon me, anointed me, sent me. I think it's pretty interesting. Jesus chose not to rely on his divine nature, but he submitted himself to God's leading and the Holy Spirit's empowering. You know, even being perfect, he still did things in the right channels, the right authority. And that's what we're to do. You know, Jesus came from a time of testing, temptations. I think he was stronger than ever after that. You know, when we are able to resist Satan and come back from a time of temptation, we're stronger.

As I was reading this, I guess I used to think as a child, it was probably easy for Jesus to resist the devil, right? Because he's Jesus, he's God. But honestly, I think it was harder.

Because I started seeing some similarities, okay? Because Jesus is a sinless person. Who was the first sinless person in scripture? Adam. And how did Satan tempt him? Look at this food. Eat it.

[22:06] Adam was in the ideal, like environment, right? There's no sin. He didn't have anything, like, ideal. And he fell. I think Satan is like, this is round two. I'm already one to know. I got this.

So he comes to Jesus and he's trying to tempt him. You know, can you imagine 40 days without food? I'm gonna be honest. I'm gonna fold. 40 days without food? And all you want me to do is show my power a little bit to make some bread? Right? We could probably excuse that away. Jesus, he says, hey.

He starts quoting scripture, Adam. You know, Jesus was fully man. 40 days without food, you're dying. You're physically dying. Jesus was strong enough to do that.

You know, he continued to walk in the power of the spirit after experiencing this victory over temptation. You know, Jesus needed the filling of the Holy Spirit to fulfill his ministry.

In verse 21 and 22 of our text, it says, and he began to say unto them, this day is the scripture fulfilled in your ears. And all that bear witness and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, is this Joseph's son? I mean, they could see his words, were gracious, filled with grace. They're like, there's something different about this guy.

[23:31] Why? It's because of who he was powered by. You know, it's the same with us. If we're powered by the Holy Spirit, it's that same power that gave Jesus power. I'm telling you right now, there's been times, I don't like being in front of people. I've gotten more comfortable with it the more I've done it. But I remember door knocking. And I'm a person, I like to have all my bases covered, all the what ifs, right? I don't want some stray question coming out of left field.

It's hard to have all the answers. And sometimes people ask you something and you're just like, and legitimate questions. You know, you know, if God is so just and holy, then why does he allow this suffering? And you're like, oh, you know, and you're like, I'm not prepared. If you're powered with the Spirit, he gives you the answers. There's no reason to be afraid. You know, I tell him, that's a loaded question. That's not even a fair question, because you're assuming that it's because of God that this happens. It's us. God gave us free will. We're the ones that ruin everything. You know, the more you rely on the power, the more, you know, I think about it as being under a tap.

You know, we're a vessel, a cup. And if you want to be filled, then you stay right under the tap.

Overflowing. Ephesians 5.18 says, and be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the Spirit. You know, this is the constant, continuous action to being filled and being kept full.

Being filled is being under the control of it. You know, if you're filled with wine, then the wine is what controls you. You know, we see people today, they're filled with things.

It's not Christ. You know, some people are filled with hate. So what happens? Hate controls them. Some people are filled with greed. So what controls them? Greed. That's what they do. We need to be filled with the Spirit. Acts 1.8 says, but ye shall receive power. After that, the Holy Ghost has come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judea and in Samaria and to the uttermost part of the earth. I'm going to just turn here real quick to Acts chapter 6, because we see some of that power going on. Acts chapter 6, starting in verse 3.

[26:04] It says, wherefore, brethren, look ye among you, seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually for prayer and to the ministry of the Word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost. And Philip, I'm not going to read all the other names because I'll butcher them, but you see them there. Turn to Acts chapter 8, 5 and 6. It says, then Philip went down to the city of Samaria and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did.

Then we'll turn over 35, 38. Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water. And the eunuch said, see, here is water. What hinder, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, if thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

Verse 28, and he commanded the chariot to stand still. And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized them. You know, just an example of Philip being filled with the Spirit. You know, I wonder sometime if we were going to be in scripture, what would the Bible say about us? Would we have these text verses about how we're filled? All right, the fourth thing is our period for service. Verse 17, I have here, it commenced. We opened the book. You know, he read in verse 20, it was concluded. He closed the book. I believe today the book is open. It's a day of grace. We have the opportunity to serve. Second Corinthians 6, 2 says, for he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I secured thee. Behold, now is the accepted time. Behold, now is the day of salvation.

But there's going to be a day where the book is going to be closed. John 12, 47 and 48 say, and if any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not. For I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words hath one that judgeth him.

[28:50] The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. I have spoke with people. I've heard, you know, I have a family member, a cousin, and he's said before that he can't get saved.

He's just done too much evil stuff. He feels guilty about things. He was overseas in Afghanistan. This is something he shared briefly. And in their convoy, you know, they're constantly looking out because they were getting attacked. And a little girl runs into the street. His commander says, keep going. And he's like, there's a little girl here. His commander's like, keep going. It's a decoy. We stopped. We get ambushed. And he kept going. It bothers him. He thinks he's too far gone. The Bible tells us there's only one thing that would keep us from heaven. And that's rejecting Christ. Nothing else. I mean, there's some wicked, wicked, wicked people. And the Bible tells us, for God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son. He loved them. You know, in our Sunday school class, we're going over in Genesis, and we came across the first pair of brothers that are mentioned. You know, Cain. I mean, you gotta be cold to kill your own brother. You know what? God gave Cain an opportunity to repent. He asked him, he's like, why are you angry? You know what I said, right? That sacrifice is a picture of what Jesus was going to do later. You have to have shed blood for that sacrifice. And what does Cain do? He wants to do it his way with fruits and vegetables. You know, you might have heard that song, you can't get blood from a turnip. You know, he was doing it his own way. God was like, Cain, you know, where's your brother? He's not looking for information. He's like, I'm trying to get you to make the right choice. I know your parents have taught you. You'd know from Abel, you'd know what's right. And the Bible says that Cain rejects. He says, this punishment is more than I can bear. You know, one day the book will be closed, and we're going to stand before God Almighty. And you might be saying, well, I went to church. I prayed. I even hand out some tracts. And if you do not have Christ as your Savior, Savior, he's going to say, depart from me. I never knew you. I mean, that's scary, because there's a verse in the Bible that says that people, I prophesied in your name. That's scary. I think that should give us a time to just reflect and be sure, hey, I need to make sure that this is real.

[31 : 46] You know, we see it. If you've been in church, you see it enough. Kids come with their parents, and the second that they're old enough to go, they're on their own. I'm not saying everybody's not unsaved if that happens, but there needs to be a check there. Was it real? Because it doesn't matter if your dad, you know, for Sophia or Melody, since she's in here, it doesn't matter that grandpa was a pastor at Plains. If she doesn't know Christ as herself, she's not going to be in heaven.

It doesn't matter that her dad got up and filled the pulpit occasionally. She'll go to hell. We only have a limited time to tell others. We have a limited time. It should break your heart. John chapter 9, verse 4. Jesus says, I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day. The night cometh when no man can work. James 5, 8 says, be ye also patient. Establish your hearts for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh. There's going to be a day, and the book is closed. There's no more opportunity.

The Bible, we already read a verse about today's the day of salvation. I'm telling you, if you're in here today, and you're kind of like, ah, I don't know, man. Dude, talk to somebody.

There's going to be a time where we'll have an opportunity. If God has spoke to your heart, come forward. Reach out to somebody. I remember when I was 16 years old, growing up in church my whole life. I got saved when I was six. I was 16 years old. We were at a Bible camp, and I'm sitting there, and the Holy Spirit is prodding me.

You know you're not saved. No one else probably could have seen it, but I'm sitting there on this wooden bench. I can't even tell you what the preacher was talking about, because I was fighting.

[33 : 48] The saint was like, you know, this is pretty ironic. You're going to go to hell, and you've been in church your whole life. I mean, I could just see he was giddy, and I kept trying to say, well, you know, I'm 16. I'm the captain of our bus route. It was a van, but I was still 16 years old. I was driving around picking up people for church. I was like, that's a pretty good thing. You know, I teach occasionally with Sunday school. I sing in the choir. I usher. I'm a deacon's kid, and I remember sitting there, you know, and I was like, no, no, no, no. I definitely got saved when I was six.

The truth of the matter was, when my head was bowed, I heard other pitter-patter of footsteps, and I didn't want to miss out. I had FOMO. What's going to go on? You know, I want to be there too, so I said a prayer, and that was it. That's all it was, was a prayer, not even a good one, because I didn't acknowledge anything. 16 years old. I'm sitting there. I know I am not saved, and then I start to panic. It's like, well, I know what the Bible says, and I've memorized the Romans road. I know John 3.16, and I remember fighting, and finally I said, I would rather, because I remember thinking at the time, if I come forward and people know that I got saved, they're going to strip me of everything,

because I was a liar. You know, how could you be the bus captain? You weren't even saved. You're not doing that anymore, and so I was keeping quiet, and then it dawned on me as the Holy Spirit kept prodding. It was like, man, I would rather go to heaven, you know, thinking that people thought I was a sham than go to hell because of my pride. I remember I grabbed my dad. We get up there. He says, what do you want to pray about? I was like, I need to be saved, and I don't know what I was expecting for him to, like, show me everything, and he said, you already know this. You know what you need to do? Man, I'm telling you right there, I got saved, and I knew it. I thank God that that time for me hadn't closed. The book was still open. We need to be opening the book today and training people before it's too late. You know, our kids, our loved ones, you know, even strangers. We need to open the book until then. Later on in this chapter, you know, Luke tells us that Jesus preaches to these people. They get angry with him. He ends up leaving. Later on, there's a woman with devils. He casts out.

I'm thinking with all of this, you know, it was in the back of Jesus's mind that eventually he's still going to have to go to the cross. You know, I think about, he set this pattern in motion, because I think that he knew it was going to be hard. The Bible tells us that Daniel purposed in his heart not to be defiled.

That purposing happened. I really do believe if you purpose something in your heart, that when the time comes of that testing and that trying, it won't matter, because you've solidified that. You've given it to Christ. You know, some of you know, this is just a personal example, and I want you to be, I want to be very clear. I'm not bragging on myself, but I made a personal decision in my life that I would not defile myself before I had found a spouse and we were married. That was just a personal decision. And I'm telling you, it wasn't always easy. You know, you start getting older and older.

[37 : 38] And the Bible tells us finding a wife is a good thing. That was legitimate. But what was Satan trying to do? Rearrange the order, right? And I waited for my wife. God blessed that. You know, I think about Christ, he was tempted everything that we are tempted, but he had a pattern set up. I think we need to have a pattern set up, just regardless. You know, I had a friend, pastor's kid, and he mentioned to me that growing up, because of his dad, he had a drug problem. And I probably broke my neck with the whiplash. I was like, what are you talking about? And he said, my dad drug us to church every Sunday. I was like, that's a good drug problem. It doesn't matter what the weather is like outside.

You know, my kids don't have to ask, are we going to church? Hey, we have purpose in our heart. You know, Joshua said, for me and my house, we're going to serve the Lord regardless. We need a purpose in our hearts. We're going to be at our place of service. We're going to have the power for service. We know who we're ministering to. That's something we need to just lock down in our heart to make us better disciples for Christ.

Let's go ahead and we'll stand as we have those who will come forward with the music. I pray that despite myself, that if the Lord has spoke to you, just use this time to talk with him.

We'll bow our heads and have a word of prayer. Dear only Father, I just thank you for this day you've given us. Lord, I just ask God that the studying on this passage has shown through and that Lord, that you would just speak to hearts like you've already spoke to mine. God, I just ask that if we're not sure, we would just come forward, speak to somebody. Lord, I ask that you would just give us a renewed burden for our loved ones or just even a good reminder of what we need to be doing and being busy for you. I just, I thank you and I love you for this time that we've had together.

[39 : 59] In Jesus' name, amen.