

Ecclesiastes 3:9-13 “Into the Wild”

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[0 : 00] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.

Wow, I wish I could sing like that. When we were playing in the worship service, I had run across that passage and reading Psalms, and it just came alive to me in a way that throughout the years I just never saw.

Has it ever happened to you? Like you're reading something almost for the first time, like God is just speaking. And so I said, would you please do that old song? Old, like maybe 30 years ago, 50? I don't know.

That's how old I am. But yeah, I told Will I like to be called a visiting pastor because I get to park close and park in the visitor parking on Sundays.

It's a game changer, I tell you. Hey, I want to do something while we're here together. I want you to do a thought experiment with me. Just want you, because this will be a chance for you to relax.

[1 : 04] Maybe wish the sermon was over, but just sort of relax for a second. And we're going to do a thought experiment. We're going to imagine something together. And I'm going to give you some guardrails. Peter, in his first letter in chapter 2, verse 12, he says something like this.

This is kind of an expanded version of what he says. But he says, live such a beautiful life. He said, live such a beautiful life out in the world, out in the culture, before people that are far from God.

Go live a beautiful life such that even if they don't like you, even if they hate you, even if they do things against you, they will on the day of the Lord, on the day of visitation, and they'll glorify God.

You know, that beautiful life, whatever sort of begins to come to your mind, okay? So just hold that. Hold that. A beautiful life. Live such a beautiful life. Some other guardrails, I would say, on this journey.

Back in January, Will preached on keeping the main thing the main thing, which was the greatest commandment. When Jesus was asked, what's the greatest commandment? And he said, love God with every ounce of your being and your neighbor as yourself.

[2 : 16] So imagine those two things sort of are guardrails, and you're desiring to live a beautiful life. And let me just focus on one part. Imagine, what would it look like for you to really love your neighbor?

And so let's just imagine. Let's take a breath, and let's imagine. Maybe it's something like this, that you become a non-anxious presence. You're a non-anxious presence in a very anxious world.

Yet you operate that way with people. You live sort of with, you know, nothing in your hands, sort of palms turned upward, in a world that is just crazy, seems to be progressing backwards, but you live just receiving and surrendering.

In every setting you find yourself. You're generous with your time. You're generous with your money, right? Living a beautiful life.

People get the best part of you, not the worst part. They get the best of you. The best thing about you, they get. You can be present with people. You're not distracted by distraction.

[3 : 28] You're not distracted, right? You're not distracted in any way. But that you're fully present with people, such that you can discern what hurts in them.

You can hear it. You can pull that. You can understand what's going on. And when you understand what hurts, you have compassion, deep compassion.

That's the kingdom of God. That's the kingdom of God coming to a neighborhood near you, right?

That is the kingdom of God coming fully. Imagine that beautiful life. But the reality is for all of most of us, I would say all of us, actually.

It just seems so far away. That kind of life seems far away. It's the exact opposite of everything I described. You don't have time. You would love to be generous with your money, but you don't know how we're going to make it through the next quarter, the next month, the next week, right? You want to slow down. Oh, gosh. You want to slow down to be fully present with your family, let alone some neighbor you don't quite like, right? You just want to be able to be there, but it seems too far away.

[4 : 43] Okay. It's okay. I want to, let me help you. I think I can help you this morning in the next little bit of time here. And here's where I want to start.

Is it up there? Yeah, there it is. Okay, I couldn't tell back there. I had a ministry along with three other guys. It was sort of our brainchild of like, hey, can we create a ministry, like an evangelism ministry for the rest of us?

You know, it's so daunting to think about evangelism. We've got a lot of baggage that comes with it, but that's where we started. But our ministry is beginning to expand and become something, I dare say, beautiful.

All right. So when we came up with this design, if you see sort of the river that's sort of flowing out to the church doors and any architect out there, Leonard, you probably hate this because the doors are swinging in, all egress doors swing out.

I get it, but it made more sense to swing them in. But the river is just flowing out into the city, out in the distance. It's leaving the church, going out into the wild.

[5 : 48] And it's going to the city. And we know from scripture, the cities are our people. Like when New Jerusalem came down, it wasn't a bunch of cool buildings. It was people, right? So we go out into the city to be with people in different settings.

And that was the idea. We're going to go and bring Jesus. But just in God's design, I'm beginning to look at this logo differently. The river was, the idea there was, it was John 7, 37 through 38.

You know, that passage, I think Derek preached on it a few weeks ago. It was fantastic. Go back and listen. But it's the idea that Jesus stood up on the last day of the feast, the great day, and he cried out.

He said, And so here's the thing.

I'm finding out, and so the next slide, you'll see that there are two hearts in a setting, right? There are the hearts of those, we go into the wild of our hearts of people who are following the way of Jesus, to go be with people, to go to address and listen to the hearts of people who are far from God, who are following the way of the wild, okay, the way of the world.

[7 : 14] But we bring love into those situations all the time, right? And so that beautiful life you imagine, it's going out with the hearts of living water flowing into every setting and situation to be with people.

All right, so let's expand on that. Let's just focus on the first part. So there's two hearts, right? Hearts of followers of Jesus, hearts of people who are running the other way, and we bring those into settings.

We bring the heart of Jesus into settings. So the first thing we want to do, though, is we want to deal with our own heart. And how do we understand it? Like, what's going on? What does it mean to believe Jesus?

What does it mean to drink from him? What does it mean that rivers of living water are going to come flowing out of our hearts? So let's just begin. Maybe my idea was, let's just begin last week. Let's kind of review Easter. Let's review Easter. So let's start with Maundy Thursday. Maundy Thursday was the new commandment Jesus is giving.

[8 : 13] And that new commandment was to love one another just as I've loved you. And so that heart of living water is a heart of love that will flow to love other people, right?

And that love continued on Good Friday. The greatest example of love, the universe, this expanding universe as ever known, is Jesus on the cross, right?

He was the propitiation for our sins. And that word propitiation just means that the wrath of God was exhausted fully on Jesus. That God's wrath, there's none left.

Those of us who are followers of Jesus, there's no wrath left for us. It was exhausted on Jesus. That's incredible.

And then the resurrection on Sunday, Jesus rose. It was the death of death. For believers, the worst thing that can happen to you will never happen to you.

[9 : 11] You will never be sent out of the presence of God. You will never receive his wrath. It's been all poured out on Jesus. Death has been conquered.

And that means you are free. You are free to live a beautiful life. Now, Jesus doesn't, that's just part of what's going on.

On resurrection Sunday, something really crazy happened. Something really unique. Mary Magdalene's at the open tomb. And she's there kind of freaking out. Like, where is, where's the body?

What's going, what happened? And she's, she looks over and she's talking to a gardener. And she says, did you take the body? She's asking questions. And then the gardener speaks and says her name.

And it's that gardener is Jesus. John Foreman talked, he taught on that a couple weeks ago. He expanded on the symbolism of the garden. And the gardener, it's beautiful. But for our thing, it's just, it's Jesus.

[10 : 12] Jesus spoke to her and she ran to him and said, teacher. She puts her arms around him and she's hugging him. It's like, this is the most amazing event that could ever happen. And you're alive, right?

And she's holding him. But then what did Jesus say? It's really unusual. He said, do not cling to me. I don't know how he said it. Maybe probably nicely. Like, you know, do not cling to me. I don't know. But, you know, why can't I cling to you?

And he said, because I have yet to ascend to my father. Now that's unique. How do we understand this? What does that mean? And so I think we can go, we can start with Jesus and the rivers of living water.

John 7. But I think we just got to do a little bit of calculus here. Maybe add a few things to it. And we're just going to, you could go to a number of places. We're just going to pick two. Maybe to keep this simple. Maybe to keep you engaged.

Okay? So if you go to John 14. You know, you see, he said, I have yet to ascend. Jesus said. So at John 14, he's telling his disciples, if you love me, you will keep my commandments.

[11 : 13] And I will ask the father and he will give you another helper to be with you forever. Even the spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive because it neither sees him or knows him.

You know him. You know him. That's critical. You know him. For he dwells with you and will be in you. Jesus said, you're going to love me with everything you've got.

I'm going to send the spirit so that you can do that. That's why we can love well. That's why we can live a beautiful life. Now we do that in John chapter 14. Add John 15 to it.

Jesus says, I am the vine. You are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. Rivers of living water. Think.

That's part of the same idea. You will bear much fruit if you abide in me. For apart from me, you can do nothing. Abide means, it can be translated remain.

[12 : 11] But it can be translated, make your home in me. Make your home in me. And have you had your house become a home? Right?

When it becomes a home, it's like all the things, all the beautiful things you want in your life. It becomes a home. You know, it's the kitchen table. That's where you have all those deep discussions.

The living room where you celebrate. And you can, you know all the things that have happened.

You make your home in Jesus. Now, here's what's going on with Mary Magdalene holding Jesus.

He says, I have yet to leave and go and ascend. To send the Holy Spirit that you can make a home in me. And what he, I think what he's saying is, Mary, let go. I'm going to ascend.

And when I send the Holy Spirit and you abide in me, it'll be better than if you were holding me. It'll be better than if you could look into my face right now.

[13 : 05] It will be better. Do you believe that? It is better that we have the Holy Spirit indwelling us. That we can abide in him, make our home, and have a deep relationship and know God.

Now, one day in heaven, he will fully fill the earth and it will be better then. And his physical body, if he's before you and you hug him, it'll be better then. But he's telling Mary, I'm going to ascend the Spirit and it will be better for my followers than if I was standing physically before them and they could hold him.

So the Holy Spirit has come for that. And as a result of that, the fruit of the Spirit will pour from us as we spend time with Jesus, as we abide in him, as we make our home with him.

And so the idea is that we slow down. We take a deep breath and you be with Jesus. You be with him.

Now, let me give you something practical before we go on to the second point. This is the...

Actually, I probably could do the benediction and you would probably love that and we could go home after this. Seriously. Seriously. Because everything else sort of starts to fall into place if you spend time with Jesus.

[14 : 20] And even the psalmist said, look, an offering I do not want. I have opened your ears, God said, to be and hear the voice of Jesus in your life. Now, here's what I would recommend.

And this is wise advice that's come down through thousands of years, at least 2,000 years of Christianity. It's near the top of the list of if you're a new convert and you say, well, now what do I do?

And you say, spend time with Jesus. That's what you do. You abide in him. You make your home in him. You spend time with Jesus. And one of the practices that's taught and has been taught through the centuries is silence and solitude.

It's that spending time of quiet before the Lord to hear his voice because even if he was standing there, you could hug him. To be in his presence through the power of the Holy Spirit is better than that.

And so here's what I would recommend you do. And I've combined a couple of thoughts from two different places, but I love how this is phrased. Before, if you, and here's what I would say, a practice to just sort of add.

[15 : 23] This is an invitation. You can do this, but I recommend it highly. Just be quiet and spend like 10 minutes just before you do what you've normally been doing.

If you've been reading scripture, memorizing, whatever it is, 10 minutes of quiet. I have a friend who even lights a candle. And you just, you breathe in and you spend time with Jesus because you've been given the Holy Spirit.

He said, make your home in me. Maybe that's what you're doing. You're making home. You're home in Jesus. Take five or 10 minutes. And I sort of say this to myself too.

Take a deep breath. Put your cell phone away. Let your heart slow down. Let God take care of the world. Sit in silence and solitude alone with yourself and God.

Try that this week. Do 10 minutes. Look at the clock. And you just close your eyes. Light a candle. And just breathe. And be in God's presence.

[16 : 24] It's better than a hug. It's better than a hug. I've added that to, just recently added that to sort of what I do. That posture has given me a pace through reading through Psalms.

It's slowed down. I'm hearing things and reading things differently. I started back to sort of even more starting to memorize scripture because I want to maybe just hear a word of the Lord and grab onto something.

And abide in Jesus and remain with him throughout the day. It's the most significant thing you can do. Abide in him. Making your home in Jesus. All the best things you imagine of what a home is, is found in Jesus and more.

And as you adopt that, it'll be hard a lot of times. I think it's Henri Nouwen said that our brains are so crazy full.

We're thinking about stuff all the time. It's like having wild monkeys in a banana tree in your head. Have you felt like that? And as we begin to breathe in scripture, as we read, and as we hear the voice of Jesus, it is calming.

[17 : 36] It is better than a hug. It's better than the hug Mary Magdalene got. It's better. Okay, so imagine yourself, because we're going to go on a point two.

That's your heart. And you want to stay, as the hymn says, no further than the cross and no higher than the feet of Jesus. And just stay there. And breathe. And sense his presence as he does his work in you.

Because all the practices of following Jesus, they really accomplish this. It's something you can do. You can carve out ten minutes. You can read your scripture.

That's something you can do. And it creates space for the Holy Spirit to do in you what you cannot do. That's the beauty and that's the mystery of knowing Jesus.

And by the way, do you know what eternal life is? If somebody said, what is eternal life? Do you know what Jesus said eternal life was? John 17, 3. He said, this is eternal life.

[18 : 34] That they may know you, Father. The only true God. And me, in Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. Eternal life is knowing God.

Eternal life is experienced now. Dallas Willard said, you know, eternity is now in session. It's knowing God. And that's enough.

I'm telling you, it's enough. It's everything. It's beautiful. It's the beautiful. It is the only path to a beautiful life. He is it. Period. Right? Benediction.

Let's go home. All right. Well, hold on. That's our hearts. And they're tamed. The wild of our hearts is tamed by the Holy Spirit as we abide in him. Second thing, the hearts of somebody in the wild. It's good to understand what's going on. I'm going to read this passage from Ecclesiastes. It's crazy. I'm going to see if I can explain it. Hear now the written word of God. Receive the gift of his written word.

[19 : 34] What gain has the worker from his toil? I have seen the business that God has given to the children of man to be busy with. He has made everything beautiful appropriate in its time.

Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end. I perceive that there is nothing better for them than to be joyful and to do good as long as they live.

Also, that everyone should eat and drink and take pleasure in all his toil. This is God's gift to man. Amen. Thank you, Lord. What does that mean?

Ecclesiastes, just like we did at the beginning of the sermon, is a thought experiment. The whole book is a thought experiment. It's saying, what is life like without God? And the phrase is, under the sun.

Like there's nothing new under the sun, we know. And then the author of Ecclesiastes uses that imagery to say, this is life without God. You live life just with the sun and just the earth and everything you can touch.

[20 : 38] There's no God. There's no transcendence. There's no, life isn't enchanted. It's just life without God with all its consequences. You know, Friedrich Nietzsche was sort of had the same thought experiment because he was the one that coined the phrase, God is dead.

You know, we've killed him. But he was concerned about what was going to fill that void because there are consequences to living without God. Now, his solution, you know, played out really nicely in the 20th century, but horribly.

But even G.K. Chesterton said, look, be careful. If you take down a fence without first asking why it's there, you're going to reap the problems that come with it.

And so we as a generation of people in a nation and a culture are reaping the difficulties of life under the sun, life without God. We are in a post-Christian world, period.

And it's getting worse and worse and worse. So how can we understand the heart of somebody out in the world that has no sense of transcendence, no idea, and wants to live life their own way?

[21 : 46] I think the author of Ecclesiastes is certainly helpful here. The human heart. We think about the heart, it's the place where we have emotions.

It's the place where we think, feel, and desire. It's everything, all of our being, everything involved. Now, God's, in Ecclesiastes, the author says, God has placed eternity in the hearts of man.

And it's frustrating because man under the sun, without a reference to God, it's frustrating because they're trying to make sense of a world without God. Where does the meaning come from?

Where does identity come from? And we see that just being played out so often. But it's very frustrating for someone apart from God. They're haunted by a deep desire, a deep compulsion to know the meaning of it all.

But they have a problem. They don't believe in God. They don't believe in transcendence. And so they have to make it what they want. And the only one who can do anything with that frustration is God himself.

[22 : 47] Ezekiel 36, right? We need a heart of stone pulled out and a heart of flesh put in so that we can begin to look to the one who makes sense of it all.

Now, people in the wild, okay, are far from God, who are far from God. They're haunted by transcendence. They're haunted by eternity. That word eternity, there is a phobia, a fear of infinity that's out there.

There is an actual thing. And the studies that have looked at the fear of infinity, people that wake up, you know, we are just like thinking about what that means. It is along the same spectrum. And in fact, it's probably overlaps with the fear of death. And so our culture fears what is out there, but they can't quite put their finger on like, what is that?

They're haunted by eternity, haunted by forever. They're haunted by the notion that this is an enchanted world. And yes, I believe this is an enchanted world.

[23 : 49] And what I mean by that is that there is more than meets the eye. It's sort of like Elijah with his servant. And he said, he prayed and said, God, show him what's going on behind the scenes. You know, there's more than meets the eye.

And God opened up the heavens, right? And so that he could see all of God's army fighting. That's what I mean, that there's more than meets the eye.

That's what we believe. But people apart from God, far from God, that's not on their radar. And it's hard for them to reconcile what that is. And in fact, the idea is that they buffer themselves from that truth, that there's eternity.

And they even buffer themselves against death, the inevitability of it. Okay, so where does this come from? This is, I think, the best example of what's going on in the heart of somebody far from God.

Julian Barnes is a Pulitzer Prize-winning author. He wrote a book called Nothing to Be Frightened of. It came out in 2008. It's a memoir. He is an agnostic. And what he does throughout the whole book, he's looking at the inevitability of death.

[24 : 53] Like, hey, as an agnostic, how do you make sense of it? How do you buffer yourself from thinking about it? How do I kind of redirect my thoughts so I don't have to think about that?

He's English, so it's kind of funny on one hand, tragic on the other. Very interesting. But this is how the book begins. I don't believe in God, but I miss him.

Do you see the eternity planted in his heart? I don't believe in God, but I miss him. This is somebody haunted by transcendence. Doesn't quite know what to make of it.

Now, he was an agnostic, but he tells this story. And by the way, that theme of death that runs through that memoir runs through all of Ecclesiastes.

You know, because the author of Ecclesiastes, you know, we get the, you know, hey, if there's no God, the best thing for you to do is earn as much money as possible. But then guess what? You earn all that money.

[25 : 53] You die. Someone else gets it. Somebody else spends it. All of life is meaningless. Vanity, vanity. You know, vapor, vapor. All of life. If you read that, that's. And so the author of Ecclesiastes and the Pulitzer Prize winner, Julian Barnes, are talking about the same thing.

Life under the sun without God. No reference. Now, he tells a story in the book. He said his mother was a staunch atheist, like just really rabid. Always giving him a hard time with his being an agnostic.

She said, the only reason why you're an agnostic now, because he said he was an atheist in his 20s, agnostic when he was in his 60s. She said, the only reason why you're doing that is because you've had a death awakening.

That's when you sort of realize, I am going to die. And he said, you've had a death awakening. Now you're just sort of hedging your bets. And he said, no. He said, I had my death awakening when I was 14.

Just sort of realize, wait. And he said that feeling was something like this. And this is a quote from the book. It's like being in an unfamiliar hotel room.

[26 : 59] Death awakening is. Where the alarm clock has been left on the previous occupant setting. And at some ungodly hour, you are suddenly pitched from sleep into darkness, panic, and a vicious awareness that this is a rented world.

No wonder he's a Pulitzer Prize winning author. That is profound, right? And it's tragedy. A rented world. And I've been in one of those hotel rooms with a person.

Have you ever, that ever happened to you? And it goes off. And that feeling. That is the feeling of eternity planted in the hearts of people that don't believe in transcendence, enchanted world, none of that.

And they have to buffer themselves from it. And they have to think of anything else. And they do. They try to figure out so much. That should bring us compassion.

That's really what that all should work in us. So we have two contrasting hearts. The hearts of people far from God living in a rented world.

[28 : 02] And then there's those of us that follow Jesus that know eternal life is just knowing him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent, Father.

And we don't live in a rented world. We live in a world that's being renovated. It's being renovated along with our hearts. God is making our hearts come alive for a love for him and a love for people that is the kingdom coming in a powerful way through the power of the Holy Spirit.

We can make our home with Jesus. And in his presence is better than Mary Magdalene's hug to Jesus. That is eternal life.

That's what we have right now. And so apart from God, people are left with defining their own identity, meaning, and purpose.

It's a heavy yoke to bear. But Jesus said, come to me, all you who are weary and heavy laden. And I will give you rest. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

[29 : 11] Come and learn from me. Learn. Be in his presence. Know me in a deep, abiding way through the power of the Spirit. That's a beautiful life.

That's what Jesus offers us. And then when we think of people far from God, it breaks our heart. God creates room in our soul to go and be with people.

All right, so let's land the plane. And the last part is we go into the wild with a heart of love. So this idea of loving our neighbor. Well, it all begins with, and it can end with, truly, we spend time with Jesus.

He gives us a heart for the world. Holy Spirit empowers us to become more and more like our teacher, Jesus. Right? Learn from me, Jesus said. And to, by faith, imitate our teacher, Jesus. Jesus. Right? And that space that God creates in our soul, we can bring into the wild in different settings and with different people. Now, the example, if we were going to cover, if you were going to imitate Jesus, and there's lots of ways, how about this one?

[30 : 21] How about Zacchaeus? What about Zacchaeus? Right? Zacchaeus was a major sinner. He had stolen from his people because he took taxes. He took more. And he was living off of the backs of poor people.

This was like the ultimate, the ultimate in loving people, the opposite. It was the opposite of loving people. And Jesus looks up at him and he says, Zacchaeus, he didn't read him the riot act. He didn't name all his sins. He didn't shame him. He looked up in the tree where Zacchaeus was, if you know the story. And he said, come down, let's go eat and drink together. Let's go eat and drink together.

Sort of Ecclesiastes. What did we have left to do but eat and drink and take pleasure in our toil? But he says, Zacchaeus, let's go eat and drink. And so Zacchaeus spends time with Jesus.

He's in Jesus' presence. He's with him. He's in his presence. He's talking with him over a meal, eating, drinking. And Jesus is there with him. We don't know what was said, but I think the imagery is he just spent time with Jesus.

[31 : 21] And as a result of time with Jesus, he became this generous man. He lived a beautiful life. He said, I don't care anymore. I'm giving back everything I stole plus more.

He lived a beautiful life. The kind of thing you imagine. Generous. Just happy he had spent time with Jesus. And as he was transformed. It's a miracle. It's beautiful.

That's what happens to us as we spend time with Jesus. Jesus. So I want you to remember that as you start to think of, well, how do I love my neighbor? If I go out into the wild to be with people, how do I love my neighbor?

Man, all those sort of things on the surface, like, hey, you know, why don't you have a couple over for dinner? Why don't you ask somebody out for coffee? Why don't you, you know, sit over the fence, talk to somebody?

You know, have a big giant cul-de-sac party. You type A's go, yeah, that's great. Let's do that. The rest of us are going, no. But here, how about this? What if it's simply this?

[32 : 20] That you spend time with Jesus and your heart is transformed and you have compassion for people. So now maybe what is it? Why wouldn't it just be that God has created space in your soul so that when you're out and about, you have room to hear people.

You have room to hear what's going on. You have room to hear hurts. What if loving your neighbor was that? That you give them time and space and you're generous with it all because you have

become a non-anxious presence because you have spent time with Jesus and he has done something to your soul that only he can do, only the Holy Spirit in you and only making your home in Jesus can that happen.

What if that's loving your neighbor? I dare say it is. Do you know that? Do you know that peace? Have you made a home in Jesus? I don't know if that's something we ever really, it's something I really didn't learn, but I'm learning and it's a beautiful thing.

Making a home in Jesus. Now one last thing, and I promise you this is it, I've probably gone too long. When we take, you know, in Ecclesiastes it says, what else left have you got to do but eat and drink and take pleasure in your toil?

[33 : 44] When we take communion, I think it's next week, when Jesus instituted that, he said, come and drink, come and eat.

Do this in remembrance of me. So we were remembering something. We eat and drink and it's magical, mystical, wonderful, joyous.

It's just this amazing thing. But do you know what we take pleasure in? His toil. It's his toil. We eat and drink and we take pleasure in his work.

The finished work on the cross. The life he lived that we should have lived but didn't. The death he died. That work he rose again to end life.

He took the wrath of God. We take pleasure in his work. We eat and we drink. And by the way, it's just not a communion, although that's special in particular because when one day in heaven, we'll say, I know this meal.

[34 : 48] I know this. And it'll be fuller. It'll be like, that was the hug. This is the grand love, right?

You'll know it. But the other thing, it happens too in his presence. It happens in his presence. We drink Jesus. He said, come to me, all you who are thirsty and drink.

And out of your heart will flow rivers of living water. We drink. We eat the word of God. It's that thing that happens. We take pleasure in his toil. And he does the work in our hearts.

And so that when we go out, we bring the love of Jesus to every setting we're in. And loving your neighbor is having enough room in your soul to listen and hear what hurts, to pray and love and be patient and proclaim the gospel.

And you say, I know the name of the man who is fixing all of this. All of the things you're running from, all the things that are weighing you down. I know the name of the man who's fixing it.

[35 : 50] It's Jesus. And I meet with him all the time. That is loving your neighbor. Knowing your heart. Knowing the heart of the people in the world far from God.

Having compassion and going in love. Let's pray. Father, I'm so grateful for your word. You are kind. You are so kind. We give you all the honor, glory, and praise.

It's in your name we pray. Amen. For more information, visit us online at southwood.org.