

Luke 19:45-20:8

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Preacher: Peter

- [0 : 0 0] You are listening to a message from Southwood Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, Alabama. Our passion is to experience and express grace. Join us.
- If you have your Bibles, open up to the 19th chapter of Luke, and we're going to begin today in verse 45, and we will continue through verse 8 of chapter 20.
- We're going to continue this morning in the detailed last week of Jesus' life that Dr. Luke lays out for us here over these next several chapters.
- Will helpfully placed us all in this story last week as we were able to marvel at the unique King Jesus through the eyes of the young man Samuel. We saw Jesus prophesy, and he fulfilled prophecy as he sent his disciples into a village to bring back a cult with which the owner easily parted, which is weird.
- We saw people gladly throwing their cloaks on the ground in front of the unique King, not because they were compelled to by his power, but because they were compelled to by his person.
- [1 : 1 2] And we saw the people cry out hosannas to Jesus because even if they didn't, the stones surely would. And then we saw King Jesus weep over his city, Jerusalem.
- The God-man overlooked his home and wept at the coming judgment for this place and for these people. And as we move to this morning's text, the seemingly mild-mannered King Jesus does something that's seemingly out of character when you consider last week.
- Then the seemingly patient rabbi gives a short answer to the Pharisees. So let's catch up with Dr. Luke as we read Luke 19, starting in verse 45.
- And he, being Jesus, entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold, saying to them, And he was teaching daily in the temple.
- The chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him, but they did not find anything they could do, for all the people were hanging on his words.
- [2 : 2 6] One day as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes, with the elders, came up and said to him, Tell us, by what authority do you do these things?
- Or who is it that gave you that authority? And he answered them, Well, let me ask you a question. Tell me, Was the baptism of John from heaven? Or was it from man?
- And they discussed it with one another, saying, Well, if we say it was from heaven, he'll say, Well, why don't you believe him? But if we say for man, all the people will stone us to death, for they're convinced that John was a prophet.
- So they answered that they did not know where it came from. And Jesus said to them, Neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things. This is a trustworthy retelling of the events in Jesus' life.

We should put our faith in that. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we come before you this morning as a needy people, as a thankful people, who were driven to consider you and consider what you've done in our lives, even over the last couple of days.

[3 : 41] But all too often, we are people who compartmentalize our lives, and we have you slotted in a certain space. And we pray that you would send your Holy Spirit to us now to illumine our hearts and our minds so that we would allow you to be the backdrop of our entire life so that everything we do would be glorifying to you and that you would be not a part of our lives, but that you would be our lives.

Just as you sent your Son to give his life for us and rise again so that we can have hope, eternal and everlasting hope. Please be with the words of my mouth and the meditations of all of our hearts.

I pray that they would be pleasing unto you. And all of this in the name of and for the sake of King Jesus. Amen. Most organizations of any size go to great lengths to let the people around them know what their mission and vision is.

And you don't have to be at Southwood long. Perhaps you listened to Will a couple of moments ago to hear him say, we are a church that experiences grace and expresses grace.

And that's to say that we desire that all who engage with us might experience the grace of Jesus Christ in their lives and then turn around and express that grace to others.

[5 : 11] We're people who love people. We want to live in community with each other. And we're driven by these relationships. I'll put the core commitment slide up behind us now.

If you see these, these are the five things that we're committed to as a church beyond that. And we strive to love the least, the lost, the littlest, the lonely, and the left out. We know that our personal restoration, it's only a piece of the puzzle.

And that we've been called to be agents in our Heavenly Father's greater mission of restoring all of creation in Huntsville and beyond. I was challenged by Will Sermon a couple of weeks ago as he discussed the sacrificial giving of our times and our talents and our treasure.

And whether or not we take our mina and put it away for safekeeping or do we reinvest it and see it multiplied tenfold? Do we engage the world with our time and our treasure in a sacrificial way?

The core commitments that I've mentioned so far are wonderful things, but we can't even seem to do those well. And if you see the first two up there, the most important one of those five is the one that's listed first, that we're committed to being Christ-centered.

[6 : 29] A natural outflow of what it means to be Christ-centered is that we recognize our deep dependence and need for prayer. As we look at our text this morning, we shouldn't be startled at the unique king, even though we could be.

We were marveling at him that last week, and now we see him angrily going through and cleansing the temple. And this is kind of a brief statement of that compared to what the other gospels say. But we shouldn't be surprised at this at all because Jesus has been giving us his mission and vision statements throughout the entirety of the book of Luke.

And as he enters this last week of earthly ministry, he comes face to face with his people who can't do it right. He's face to face with his people who have made an idol out of what is sacred.

He's face to face with his leadership who refuse to acknowledge his lordship. As the church of Jesus Christ, even here at Southwood, all that we do and everything that we are must start with the king and be measured against who he is.

We ought to work backward from who Jesus is and what he says about the kingdom of God and what he says that that's about. And then we can define who we are as a church and what we're supposed to be doing in this world.

[8 : 00] We're going to look at this in three ways this morning. First, with his unique authority. Second, with his unique righteousness. And third, with his unique grace handily that is all printed on the back of the bulletin that you should have received as you walked in.

So considering his unique authority, I'd like to dive into this idea of him cleansing the temple. Luke doesn't make a mistake when he places this section of scripture immediately after Jesus weeping over Jerusalem.

If you remember what Will said last week, this is a real, the heart of Jesus is that you see him looking down knowing that judgment is coming for these people and he's weeping about that.

That's who Jesus is. And so if we look at verse 45 and 46, he entered the temple and he began to drive out those who sold, saying to them, it is written, my house shall be, this shall be a house of prayer, but you've made it a den of robbers.

And he's referencing back to Jeremiah. And basically the idea there is that a den of robbers would be that these people are coming to sell their wares and their goods and then they're going to take them and hide them in their dens, which would be like caves in the mountains, right?

[9 : 20] That they're going to take that. It's a really bad imagery and having a son of God say that about you is not really a good thing. That's not where you want to be. But this is his house.

And we shouldn't be surprised at him saying that about his house. We can go back to Luke 2 and remember his parents couldn't find him anywhere. They couldn't find him anywhere in the city. And when they finally did, they found him in the temple and he said to them, why were you looking for me?

Didn't you know that I must be in my father's house? Woe to you Pharisees for you love the best seat in the synagogues and greetings in the marketplace. Woe to you for you're like unmarked graves and people walk over them without knowing.

Woe to you lawyers for you load people with burdens too hard to bear and you yourselves don't want to touch the burdens with your fingers. Woe to you for you've taken away the key to knowledge. You didn't enter yourselves and you hindered those who were entering.

This is his house where the key of knowledge is supposed to be given freely to those who come in. And instead it's become something else. Probably what was going on here was stuff that you could slip into easily.

[10 : 34] Certainly there was some bad things going on or Jesus wouldn't have called them a den of robbers. But there were also people who were making pilgrimages to Jerusalem to do their sacrifices and some of these people were selling things to be sacrificed.

There was a need. Right? Demand called for it. So someone's going to meet that demand. But somehow we got from the tabernacle where they used to tie something to the ankle of the high priest in case he died in the presence of God so that they could pull him out to what Herod's temple looks like here in Jerusalem.

We're a long way from that. And his leaders aren't very happy with him as he goes on doing this. He was teaching daily in the temple and the chief priests and the scribes and the principal men of the people were seeking to destroy him.

This is the first time that is specifically said in Luke that they're going to do something to Jesus. And the word for destroy there is certainly at least death but also wiping him and any memory of him off of the map.

They want him gone. This is going to be done. He's making people angry. What does he call from his leaders though?

[12 : 02] Is it that? You remember when he called Simon way back in Luke 5? Hey, don't be afraid. From now on you're going to be fishing fishers of men. And then they brought their boats to land and how did the leaders respond?

How did his disciples respond? They left everything and followed him. He told his leaders be merciful even as your father is merciful.

He asked them why do you call me Lord, Lord and don't do what I tell you? And then he said blessed are those who hear the word of God and keep it. Whoever would lose his life who saved his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.

And these leaders are nothing like that. They don't recognize that the prophecy has come to them. The thing that they're so zealous about is actually in their presence.

I don't know if you're familiar with the basketball player Marquez Foltz was reading late last night. He was the first player picked last year in the NBA draft. He plays for the Philadelphia 76ers. And he was a lights out unbelievable young player.

[13 : 21] He had a shot that was pure and deserving of the number one pick in the draft. Something happened to him though. Over the course of time in the past year and a half he has developed a hitch in his jump shot.

And basically he can't score. He's a fine NBA player. I believe this season he's averaging something like eight points and four rebounds and a couple assists. Something like that. If you don't know basketball that's good and if you're doing that in the NBA that's really good.

But that's certainly not what they were expecting when they spent millions and millions of dollars on him and got him first in the NBA draft. And I was reading last night that Elton Brand who was the general manager of the 76ers former Duke basketball player said that they're pretty much moving on from Markel Fultz or Markel Fultz.

And Heap has pulled himself off of the team in the last couple of days citing a shoulder issue that nobody on the team has been able to find. None of the team doctors none of the team surgeons nothing like that.

Rather their assessment of the situation is that he kind of stopped practicing the fundamentals of his jump shot that made him worthy of a number one pick in the NBA draft. He stopped working he stopped paying attention to the things that made him successful in the first place and ultimately where that's brought him to is a point that he has a problem with his jump shot that he can't recover from.

[14 : 49] It's not a problem with his shoulder it was a problem with his orientation ever since he became drafted. So now here he is without a team and his stock has really plummeted he's not worth the contract that he has so he'll be hard to unload and hard to trade I don't mean unload in a bad way the business of basketball is all I mean by that.

I use that illustration because I don't think it's hard for us to understand and relate to losing track of the fundamentals in our lives. when we lose sight of fundamentals it becomes easy to be complacent with the good things that we're doing.

Most everyone thinks that they're right I know I do but thankfully we have holy scripture against which we can balance all of our notions of that. When it comes to the church and the idea of our core commitments the things that we're doing in our personal lives the things that we should be excited about as a community of believers if that can't be balanced against this and what's going on in the Bible and most importantly for our context in the life and through the words of Jesus we've really lost the plot.

Unlike Markel Fultz you and I can't go out every day and work hard enough to be good enough to do what we're called to do as believers. I wish I could but I can't.

And Jesus isn't calling anyone to that through these words. He's calling people to recognize that he is the Lord who has come to call sinners to repentance.

[16 : 33] He is the only way we can be good enough for anything. Repent and follow after me. Not go do things well enough so that you can do them on your own.

Today the church has developed a relationship with a school in our community where we'll be doing a prayer walk. And the great thing about a prayer walk is that you can't do it wrong. So please come.

I encourage everyone to come out to Weichsburg P8 for five minutes or for an hour or whatever time that you can spare. We'll mention no more than a half an hour. If you want to stay beyond that nobody is going to pull you off of the property.

Believe it or not things like a prayer walk can be wrong. See we do this because we believe that the full scope of the gospel of Jesus Christ is in view when we engage our community in love and in justice and in sustainability and in restoration and in reconciliation.

James song or not James song the song that James performed a few moments ago hits it on the head. God is not interested in our show. We've not been equipped to put on a show for anyone.

[17 : 51] We've been equipped to live out the gospel of Jesus Christ every minute of every day. And as a church we need to be excited about the opportunities to go and do something like that.

When my heart is left to itself I want to do what I want to do when I want to do it. I don't know if anybody else can identify with that. I'm glad that something is going on but I'm also glad that there's somebody else out there who's doing it.

Don't hear what I'm not saying. Everyone can't do everything all the time and if we notice that you were trying to do everything all the time we would discourage you from that because that's not healthy. But the reality for most of us is that we don't do anything most of the time.

Not only are we not really participating, but we don't even watch to see if what's happening is biblical and representative of Jesus and his passion for the world. The temple didn't get to this place because people were meticulously watching and balancing what was happening against the laws and the scriptures.

It got to this place for the opposite reasons. Jesus comes in because he knows the stakes are high. The stakes are really high.

[19 : 12] When we talk about this book as pastors, I constantly use the phrase that was used by one of my professors, eschatological intensity. Jesus is so concerned about the eternal reality of every soul that he encounters that there's no time for games in the meantime.

He's always on about that mission. He's always on about that thing. Now, thankfully for my heart, Jesus is happy to reorient me.

And he reorients me as he points me to his unique righteousness. We can see it there in that passage, but also as we look to the first four verses of chapter 20.

One day, as Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes with the elders came up and said to him, tell us, by what authority do you do these things, or who is it that gave you that authority?

He answered them, I will also ask you a question, tell me, was the baptism of John from heaven, or was it from man? The first part of this is amazing because it shows us Jesus' heart.

[20 : 35] What's happening there at the very beginning of that first sentence? One day, Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the gospel. gospel. Luke 4, 43, this is what Jesus said, I must preach the good news of the kingdom of God to other towns as well because I was sent for this purpose.

This is Jesus' heart. In Luke 9, he talks about the little children coming to him and the child coming to him, and he said, whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me.

this is when the disciples were arguing about who the greatest was, and they were bickering back and forth. And Jesus says, hey, whoever thinks that you are great, you're going to be the least.

But whoever's the least among you, you're going to be the one who's great. Then he talks, there's a popular song right now that uses this line. He said, I tell you there's more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.

And then even as we heard last week, Jesus drew near to the city, and he started weeping over it. This is what Jesus is doing. This is his heart.

[21 : 59] He didn't come to judge. He came to share and give of himself to the world. As good Presbyterians, we don't always like to think about that reality.

When I talk to the teenagers, I use the idea of there are things that are above the line and things that are below the line. If you can imagine that this is the line. We know above the line things such as predestination and election and all of those things that we like to discuss.

And we somehow put them at tension with the below the line things, the way that God has descended to us and told us to go out and act in the world. Romans 9 doesn't exist without Romans 10.

Romans 9 talks about God and his disposition toward us as people, as the heavenly father. And we can't get into his mind and know what he is doing because we are finite.

He is not. He then says to us, basically a summation of what Jesus says, who do you say that I am? Because if you confess me with your heart and believe that my father raised me from the dead, if these things are really true, like Michael said today that they're true, then you're one of mine.

[23 : 25] Jesus came giving of himself to everyone because people who harden themselves and deny Christ are ultimately responsible for that action.

But his heart is that that wouldn't be the case. And his mission is similar. We can go back to Luke 4. The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he's anointed me to proclaim the good news to the poor.

He sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed and proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. God's favor. Again, I didn't come to call righteous people.

I've come to call sinners to repentance. And then some more drastic commentary from Luke 12.

I came to cast fire on the earth and wood that it was already kindled. Do you think that I've come to give peace? No. I tell you, I've come to give division.

[24 : 26] You can't encounter the God-man without being on one of two sides. There's no neutral reaction to who he is and what he does in the world. Being asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, he said to them, the kingdom of God is not coming in ways that can be observed, nor is anybody going to say, look, here it is, or there.

Rehold, the kingdom of God is amongst you now. His mission is for people to know him and to know the kingdom of God.

This idea of reorientation is easy for most of us, I think, if we use an illustration. Most of us in here either have kids or have worked with children in the past.

Not naming any of you in particular. If you're paying attention, I'm not sure that they are. But it's not weird to say to any of my children, hey, buddy, go grab your, go get your PJs out, put them on, and brush your teeth.

I wish I had a camera that could follow 10 seconds behind them to figure out why when I go in the bedroom, they're listening to stories on the CD player and playing with Legos. Or there's a thing with a cup and tapping it on a desk that I don't know why that happens.

[25 : 56] I can't get in the mind of my children, but I'm sure it's very, very interesting. And in that moment, as a parent, you have a decision to make, right?

Do I treat my child like a 40-year-old? Or do I treat them like their actual age? But the really simple decision you have to make is, regardless of how you respond in the moment, they still need to get their PJs on and they still need to brush their teeth.

How do you reorient them to what they're actually supposed to be doing in that moment? How do you get them to do the things that you know are best for them?

Because, you know, bedtime is one thing, but if your house is anything like our house is, or if working with the kids in the nursery, or any of the ways you might plug in to children, it is more herding cats most of the time.

So this could be applied to lunchtime, or breakfast time, or playtime, or rest time, or any time of the day. We get trained in what is the right thing to be doing, right?

[27 : 10] Which is also a good, that's an aside for parents. Make sure that we're choosing the right battles with our kids, right? You don't have to be right all the time about everything.

I'm not encouraging your parents. Don't let your kids disrespect you, you know what I mean? But there are also battles that need to be fought and battles that don't need to be fought. That's just an aside. I don't mean to belittle you as a person, but it belittles me as a person, but this is how Jesus treats us.

This is his ultimate goal for his people, is that he constantly takes us, and that's a move I do in my house. The TV is a magnet, so regardless of what is on the TV, even if it's a clock bouncing around and you just want it to go right in the corner, but regardless of what's happening, the TV always has to be looked at.

Turn their heads and focus them back on what they're supposed to be doing. That's most of us, most of the time. If you're like me, your pie is divided in so many ways that you can be distracted doing any number of things.

That's one of the reasons I prayed earlier, because for me, one of the biggest things I need to remember all of the time is that God is our backdrop. God is our top, because everything we're doing is supposed to be filtered through that grid, and our focus is always supposed to be oriented based upon who Jesus is and what we're called to do in the world because of that.

[28 : 46] I need that all the time. And sometimes correction and reorientation is not enjoyable. We see at the end of that passage, he says to the Pharisees, neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things.

In the second, we'll talk about why that's so sad. But some of us just don't want to be reoriented. But thankfully, he shows us correction and mercy in those ways.

So finally and quickly, why does Jesus show us this kind of correction and mercy? Well, because of his unique grace. Those last four verses, five through eight of chapter 20, the Pharisees discuss Jesus' question with one another.

And you notice they're not even thinking of Jesus and all of the things that he's done. They're giving it zero time a day. This is the danger, by the way, for us when we seek to logic people into the kingdom of heaven.

We don't want to get into a conversation where people stop seeing Jesus in us and rather start to combat our words and experiences based upon those things.

[30 : 20] So rather than thinking of what Jesus might have actually been saying to them by asking this question, they said, well, if he's from heaven, if we say that he's from heaven, he's going to be like, well, why don't you believe him and who I am?

But if we say he's from man, all the people are going to stone us to death because they think he's a prophet. And so they answered that they didn't know where it came from.

And Jesus said, neither will I tell you by what authority I do these things. Throughout the book, he's been very willing to engage with the Pharisees and to answer them, attempting to reorient them in myriad ways.

And at this point, he finally says, I'm not going to answer you. This is the leadership of Israel. These are the people who are charged with leading his people.

And he says, I'm done. But there's a unique grace that's being said here that Jesus shows to his people throughout all of time because at the same, we can only imagine that he went back to teaching at that point in time, which is what he was doing at the beginning of this.

[31 : 46] They come to a stalemate in their argument. And Jesus probably turned around and began to do what he was doing before. His heart for his people is shown in that type of action, but it's also shown in simple ways and in complex ways throughout the book.

In Luke 4, he casts a demon out of the man and the man wasn't even harmed. Remember when he healed the paralytic in chapter 5?

He answers the Pharisees in this one. He said, well, what's it easier to say? Your sins are forgiven of you or is it easier to say rise and walk? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins.

He said to the man who was paralyzed, I say to you, pick up your bed and go home. He's terribly interested in healing our bodies as well as our souls.

And even when that doesn't happen, we know from passages like that that he is with us and empathizes with us in our struggles and our lives. After he sent out the 72 in chapter 10, they came back and they're like, man, you should have seen.

[33 : 08] We were casting demons out and I made a cloud go from here to there. I don't know why I did that, but it was awesome. And they're saying all these great things that he had done through them. And the eschatological intensity, the end times intensity, the reality of eternity, Jesus focuses them back and says, nevertheless, don't rejoice in that, that spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

For those of us who are anxious, are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs on your head are numbered.

Fear not, for you're of more value than many sparrows. And if God so clothes the grass which is alive in the field today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you, O you of little faith?

Instead, seek his kingdom. And these things will be added under you. Fear not, little flock, for it's your father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. And his passion for his world can't be lost in this also.

The grace he shows to his world. As for that, in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart and bear fruit with patience.

[34 : 34] This is, again, talking about preaching the gospel openly and people receiving it. Jesus said to him, remember this story, no one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom.

In the same hour, he rejoiced in the Holy Spirit and said, I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and the understanding and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for such is your gracious will.

All things have been handed over to me by my Father. No one knows a son except the Father. Father. Or who the Father is except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

It's another above the line, below the line statement. Great for assurance. Terrible to club someone over the head with. Then last week, as he was coming into the city and the Pharisees said, hey, tell them to stop saying Hosanna to you.

It's really disruptive and they think you're the great one, the Messiah who's coming. And Jesus said, hey, I could tell them that. But even if I did, even the stones would cry out.

[35 : 40] You can't deny what's happening right now. Perhaps the biggest sign of his grace to the world is that three times over the course of the book to this point, Jesus tells of his death.

death. He says it's going to happen. And it has to happen. The ultimate grace that we find in Jesus is that when we might want to play cognitive or intellectual mind games with, as though you can play this with some other part of your body.

At any rate, we want to play cognitive or intellectual games with the word and with the reality of the gospel. Jesus still has our hearts and our souls in view.

As he knew, he ultimately came to die because only him dying and raising again, physically raising again, is ultimately going to bridge the chasm that you and I create between ourselves and our Heavenly Father every single day.

I've heard all sorts of analogies for what it means to repent of your sins, but I can't help but feel that we get it wrong because we think that there's some tit for tat at play as though if I repent of this sin, if I just keep doing that enough, then I'll keep up with Jesus in all the times that he's forgiving me.

[37 : 16] Here's a crazy thought. That's a reality. During this 40 minutes or 35 minutes that I've been up here talking right now, there's no way that through this entire time I've been honoring God with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength.

And I don't know how. I don't know how to confess those things specifically. Let alone from 6 o'clock this morning up until this point.

Our debt load is so exponential that Jesus has zero interest in us thinking of how we could possibly repay him through our actions.

And he knows going through this that only people who know how desperate they are for their heavenly father and how the only way to him is through Jesus.

They're the only ones who inherit the kingdom. We see Jesus for who he is and we love him and we do what he says and we follow him and we repent and we do all of those things and they're effective only because his death satisfies a debt that we can't even imagine.

[38 : 35] We don't know what it is. That's the ultimate grace shown to his people and to his world.

This is ultimately what Southwood is about. This is why we want you to be excited about giving of your time and your talents.

God doesn't need your money. God will use you in spite of you just like he has used me in spite of me. But Jesus calls us to action in the world not because he needs us but because we need him.

We've been given the key to happiness that no one is ever going to seek out and find on their own. Our neediness is his glory. Our brokenness is his passion.

He loves people and he loves his world. Let's be excited as we get to give of ourselves sacrificially for the one who gives of himself eternally.

[39 : 53] Pray with me please. Father thank you for the gift of your word. Thank you for the way that Luke has taken the time to draw it out and even as we step away over the next several weeks to celebrate the advent and the coming of our savior.

Father thank you for the gift of we think of the fact that he came to die. He came to show us grace unfathomable and unmeasurable.

And we pray that our response to that isn't to do anything other than marvel at the wonderful love that Christ has for us.

And I pray that that would drive us today and that many of us would come out and pray and walk around Whitesburg. But even if we don't that that would drive us throughout this week and the coming weeks as we consider what does it mean to be your people living with your heart and on your mission here in the world.

How does that impact Huntsville and beyond? How do we live in a Christ centered way in front of people that we live around and work with? What does it look like to pray as though we need to pray?

[41 : 17] Where are the least and the lost and the littlest and the loneliest and the left out? And I pray that we would know and have experienced your grace so that we can really express it to those who live around us.

And who you've put in our path. Thank you for your love for us. In Christ's name we pray. Amen. Amen.