

# What's your attitude to Jesus?

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Thanks, girls. Well, I did introduce myself every week, someone who made a joke about it last time I was here, but my name is Sam, if I haven't met you. I've only been to Evening Church a handful of times, so hopefully I'll be getting to know everyone progressively.

But I'm excited where we're up to as a church because I know that you guys had an early start last week for those who made the effort. But last week, as Steve got up and cast the vision for church, there was a real sense of excitement, I think, among the people of St. Paul's and no one less than Roxy, who was visibly buzzing as she walked out of church last Sunday morning.

Because God has given Steve an exciting vision, I think, for us as a church, and it is exciting to think what he might do through us if we kind of just put our shoulder to the wheel and are willing to be used by him.

So I'm excited to get stuck into the Philippians passage tonight, but I wanted to warn you as well, this is, I think, one of the richest passages in the whole of the Bible. It's all good, but this is a particularly rich passage, and so I'm not going to get to deal with everything in it.

But the good news is you'll get to deal with it in your Bible study groups, doing the books that the church has given us. So if you're not in a group, that's a quick plug that you should get in one so that you don't miss out on the good stuff that I'm not going to get to tonight.

[ 1 : 1 4 ] But worst case scenario, if you can't be in a group, grab a book from out the back so that you can at least look at it by yourself and get everything that is in there. I'm going to pray, and then we'll get stuck into that passage, so keep it open in front of you.

Father God, we thank you so much for the chance to be here tonight. We thank you for the blessing of your word. We thank you that your word always achieves the purpose that you send it out for. Lord, we ask that tonight that you would work in us, that you give us soft and humble hearts, Lord, that we'd be ready to hear you speak.

And Lord, I ask that the result of us meeting together tonight would be that we walk away more like your son Jesus. Amen. Do you ever feel like you're being set up? Do you ever feel like, you know, in a conversation somebody's kind of talking you into a corner?

So maybe, you know, they've got some news to give you, but what they do is they kind of bait you before they give you the news. Maybe you've even done this. So you go home from school with a sort of dodgy report card, and instead of opening up with, I got a bad report, you open up with, Mum, you know how you said you'll love me no matter what?

And then you pull out the report card. Or, you know, Dad, you know how you said that I'm more important than any stuff? Well, there's a problem with the car. Or something like that. It's kind of, you know, you kind of, there's the commitment implicit in the first question, isn't there?

[ 2 : 3 3 ] It's just a reminder. Remember that commitment you made? Well, that's kind of how Paul opens this second section of chapter 2. Because all through chapter 1, he's been excited about the partnership he's got in the gospel.

He's been celebrating how they've been sharing with him. And then, in verse 27 of chapter 1, he challenges them to live a life worthy of the gospel. And then he begins with this.

Chapter 2, verse 1. If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, do you kind of feel how pointed that is?

See, I think Paul's more loving than maybe we give him credit for. But it almost feels like a slap in the face. I mean, if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, every encouragement we have is because we are united with Christ.

Because we are united with Christ, we're forgiven. Because we are united with Christ, we have a future hope of one day being in heaven. And because we are united with Christ, we have the encouragement that God loves us unconditionally and incredibly and walks with us every day.

[ 3 : 45 ] The next bit. If we have any comfort, of course we have comfort. We're forgiven completely. We've got a clean slate, a fresh start. God is with us. If we have any fellowship with the Spirit, God has given us his Spirit so that we have fellowship.

The whole reason he's given it is to mark us with a seal. It brings weird people who would otherwise never be anywhere near each other into the same place for the same reason and for the same purpose and connects all of us to God. The fellowship we have is because he gave us his Holy Spirit.

And then lastly, if any tenderness and compassion, that's exactly what God gives us. Even though we're sinners, even though we don't deserve it, what God gives us is tenderness and compassion and ultimately his son Jesus.

If we have any benefits from being Christians, the grace that God has shown us in sending Jesus has transformed us completely.

We are defined by what we get out of Jesus dying on the cross. It's who we are. And he says, in light of all that stuff. Then, verse 2.

[ 4 : 50 ] Make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. Paul says, be unified.

He says, because of everything that's been done for you, because of what Jesus has achieved, because of all the blessings and benefits, be unified. Be like-minded. Have one purpose.

Be partners in the gospel that he's been talking about in chapter 1. I think sometimes we get the idea that we're partners because we sit in the same building in the same block of about an hour on a Sunday night.

But partnership has nothing to do with proximity. It has nothing to do with what pew you're sitting on or how many names you know in this room. Partnership is about being like-minded in purpose.

It's about sharing the vision that Paul had in 127 when he called them to live a life worthy. It's about sharing the vision that Paul has when he speaks in 121 of living is Christ and dying is gain.

[ 5 : 49 ] It's sharing the gospel ministry that he talked about in chapter 1, verse 7 of defending and confirming the gospel. Partnership is not about proximity. It's about purpose.

But partnership's not an easy thing, is it? Even in a room like this, surrounded by probably what you would mostly call friends, partnership in the gospel is not always easy.

I remember the church that I used to be a part of, I was in a similar role to what I'm going to be here next year. So I was up the front a lot. And so it meant that sometimes people would come up and talk to me.

And there was one guy in particular that just used to drive me crazy. I'd be having a conversation with someone and the way he'd let me know that he was there is he'd wander up behind me and just as hard as he could slap me on the back.

But not trying to hurt me. That was just how he thought you say hello. And he'd just belt me and then stand next to me as if, you know, I'd be excited that he was here. And he'd be ready to have a conversation. Or he'd come running up and jump on my shoulders.

[ 6 : 48 ] And, you know, I'd be sitting there going, oh, why is this guy here? And I'd just be, you know, sometimes I'd find myself walking into church hoping that he wouldn't notice me so that I could kind of be at church and not have him there and walk away.

And I thought church would just be a more positive experience if this guy wasn't there. And look, if we're honest, people are the most annoying part about being in a church. If there was no people, it would be so much easier.

I could do the songs I wanted with the instruments that I wanted. I could have the sermon as long as was convenient for me. I could start and finish at my own time. But people can be frustrating. And you might not be as sinful as me.

You might not walk into church going, I hope that person doesn't come and talk to me. But if you're honest, there's probably some people in St. Paul's. There's probably some people maybe even in this room that sometimes just irritate you.

And somewhere in there you wish that maybe they weren't here. Not that they weren't a Christian, but just maybe they could go to another church so that your church experience could be more fun. So that they wouldn't irritate you or distract you from talking to the people that you actually like.

[ 7 : 51 ] The people that you get on with. Well, in my eyes, I convinced myself that this guy at my church was actually getting in the way of the gospel purpose.

I thought, where about the gospel? You know, I need to love people and encourage people. But when he's there, I'm less encouraging and I'm less loving. So we're going to be able to achieve the mission of sharing the gospel better if he's not around.

That was kind of what I talked myself into. And maybe somewhere in there you think church would be more effective if a few people weren't here. We don't want to mention any names, but maybe if a few people just had less input into the way we do stuff.

They can have their wacky opinions as long as no one listens to them and it doesn't change the way we do church. But that's not the gospel. The gospel is not about the people that I like who do things the way I like, at the times that I like, in the style that I like.

You know, I had well-intentioned ideas about getting rid of this guy so that the gospel would go forward. But I was kind of missing the point. And maybe if sometimes you sit here frustrated and just thinking it would be better if you could get rid of a few people.

[ 9 : 10 ] Maybe you need to hear Paul's words. It's not about you. Church is not about you.

It's never about you. Have a look at verse 3. See, this community is made up of people that God chose.

This is a room full of people who don't deserve to be here at all, but are forgiven by God. And what that means is, you have no claim on what we do here and how we do it.

You have no more rights than anyone else. Because the only reason you're here is Jesus. The only reason you're part of this community is because you were forgiven by the same Jesus that everyone else here was forgiven by.

And so when you get frustrated and wish they would do it your way, you need to remember that it's not about you. It's about the one who forgave you.

[ 10 : 22 ] See, the key to partnership for us is humility. The key to unity is humility. It's the putting the needs of other people first. It's saying it's not about me, but it's about why the church exists.

It's about living in a life, living in a manner worthy of the gospel. I remember, I'm just coming to the end of my third year at Bible College. And in the first year, me and Sal were looking for a new church.

And we thought, we want to be a part of a church that's exciting, that's doing stuff, that's seeing people come to know Jesus. And I heard about a friend of mine who was only young, he was only 28 at the time, and God had just excited him to start a new church.

He had all these ideas about how he was going to do it. He was passionate about preaching the gospel. He was passionate about telling people about Jesus. And so he gathered up a group of young people, a group of young adults, and we were meeting together and praying and getting excited.

But the problem was, a new church doesn't have a building. And a building's a fairly important part of being a church. You need somewhere to meet. And so we're looking around trying to figure out, okay, where do we meet?

[ 11 : 25 ] Where do we go? Where's the right place to do it? And along the line, we found out about a church in Coggera, Coggera Presbyterian Church. And Coggera Presbyterian Church, in its day, was like absolute powerhouse of ministry.

There was a time they had four, five hundred young people in Sunday school every Sunday. Like every kid just about south of the Hubbard Bridge would go to this Sunday school because they loved it and it was the place to be.

And the church was like bursting at the seams. But when we found out about them, there was ten people, all of them over 70, and no minister. They didn't have music most weeks because no one could play the organ.

But occasionally they could get someone to come and play it for them. Or they could get a CD that would play some hymns that they could sing along to. But they found out about my friend who was looking to plant a church.

And they contacted him and they said, look, we love the way we do church. We love the tradition. We love our history. We love our building. We love our hymns.

[ 12 : 28 ] We love so much about what we do, but we love Jesus more. And this church is dying and we want to see the kingdom grow. So we want you to come here with some young people and we want you to help us reach out to the community in Coggera.

And the resulting sort of conversations and chats afterwards meant about 20 of us turned up and joined this church. And after we'd been there, I was only there for 12 months.

And by the time we got to the end of the 12 months, basically we'd knocked down their historical old building. We'd moved into just a rented hall around the corner as they tried to build a slightly funkier facility for us to use for church.

We hadn't done a hymn in months as far as I can remember. There was nobody in robes up the front, which is what they were used to. They didn't have all the usual things. They didn't have pews anymore.

They were sitting on chairs that were brought out. It was just unrecognisable for them. And I remember sitting down with a really godly old man named John Burgess. He was one of the key elders in the church.

[ 13 : 29 ] And just before I was leaving, I was sitting down chatting to him. And I said, how are you finding church at the moment? Kind of thinking, he must be really frustrated. We've pulled the rug out from him on what church looks like. And he said, you know what?

This is like the most exciting time I've ever had in this church. And I said, you know, don't you miss your hymns and don't you miss other things? And he said, yeah, I do.

But then I was important as seeing people come to know Jesus. He said, this is so much better. Because for him, he understood what the purpose of the church was.

He understood that the church existed not to suit him, but to defend and confirm the gospel. He understood that the whole point of this community is that we become more like Jesus so that we can share Jesus with the world out there.

And he said, it's not about me. It's not about my needs. It's about the purpose that God has given us. For the Philippians, their purpose was the gospel of Jesus.

[ 14 : 30 ] They sacrificed. They gave to help Paul's ministry. And for us here, if we are to be a church of Jesus Christ, our purpose must be the gospel of Jesus Christ.

It must be the purpose that Jesus died and rose again to give us. It must be a gospel purpose. The mission statement for our church here, which hopefully you know from your studies during the week, is that we exist to know Jesus, treasure Jesus, and represent Jesus for the glory of God and the joy of all people.

That is the only thing that we should argue about. That is the grid that we should put every disagreement through now. It's not whether I like it.

It's not whether it suits me. It's not whether they kind of fit in my friendship group. It's not whether I get on with them. It's not whether I want them here. But in regards to the resources we've got, the people we've got, the opportunities we've got, the question has always got to be, does this help all of us know Jesus, treasure Jesus, and represent Jesus?

Because that is why we exist. The rest of it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter if it's the song I like. It doesn't matter if it's the singer I like.

[ 15 : 46 ] It doesn't matter if it's the preacher I like. It doesn't matter if it's the chairs I like. What matters is, does this help us know, treasure, and represent Jesus?

Because that's the gospel we received. That's the good news we received. That's the good news we're called to proclaim. It's a gospel of a humble, selfless, servant, saviour king.

Look at me at verse 5. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus, who being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness, and being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death, even death on a cross.

We are the community of that king. We are the community of the God-man. The one who came from heaven to earth, even though he didn't have to.

The one who was already there before time began. The one who created us, but became a creature. The one who humbled himself and walked around amongst pathetic human beings that he sustains by his very will.

[ 17 : 00 ] The one who created life, yet submitted to death. The one who denied his rights for our sake.

I mean, do you understand the gravity of those three verses? Jesus didn't have to do any of that. He was already God. He was already glorious.

He was already majestic. It doesn't change his character that he came to earth, but for our sake he did. He didn't need to come to earth so that he could be in heaven with God.

He was there already. He came to earth so that we could be in heaven with God. I mean, at any point in his life, Jesus could have turned around and gone, look, this is too hard. He could have been just frustrated by disobedient people.

He could still be frustrated by disobedient people. He could have turned around and said, look, I just don't want to go through this death on the cross. For these people who are spitting on me and mocking me, I'm out. But he didn't.

[18:00] He was powerful enough. He could have done it. But he chose not to. It's his name that we bear.

We're Christians. Followers of Christ. Imitators of Jesus. We are his community. I mean, this should be the most humble group of people there is.

I mean, we should have trouble making decisions because we're so obsessed with other people's needs. We should be tripping over each other, denying ourselves and so not getting anywhere.

I remember at school, I was in about year seven or year eight and a clever English teacher wanted to teach us some manners. So she invented a system of doorway decorum. And basically, the theory was that, I guess doorway decorum was supposed to be catchy enough to remember, but we'd get to the door and if two people were trying to get through, doorway decorum meant, you know, you did the polite thing and step back and let the other person through.

The result for year eight boys was we walked to the door and never walked through. We just insisted that the other person go first and that went back and forth until we were about an hour late for class and explained that it was because we were so polite.

[19:09] That's really the kind of humility that should mark us. As we try to make decisions about what we're going to do with our church, what ministries are going to matter to us, you know, the way that this is going to look, we should be tripping over each other to say, not what I want, what you want.

But yet, so often that's not the case. So often it's, I've been here longer than you, let's do it my way. I'm older than you, let's do it my way. Or I'm younger, I know what's new and what people are going to respond to, let's do it my way.

We should look just like Jesus. I remember when I became a Christian, I was 14 years old and I was on a camp and I honestly don't remember what the sermon was about.

I'm sure it was about Jesus, but I couldn't tell you what the passage was. I couldn't tell you specific details. But I could tell you that the thing I remember more than anything else on that week was the community.

I was a 14-year-old kid. I was an annoying 14-year-old kid. We had an excursion to the beach one day and I spent the entire return bus trip on the back seat singing this is the song that doesn't end as loud as I possibly could.

[20:19] And, you know, a few people probably thought about the possibility of coming down and punching me so that I wouldn't sing, but no one did. A few people asked me to be quiet, but even in spite of my best attempts to annoy people and be that kid that no one would run around, I remember that even at the end of the week, there was like kids who were older than me coming and just asking if I was having a good week.

I went away knowing about three people and then I remember the first morning after camp I woke up and I was devastated because, you know, all these 150 new friends weren't there anymore. I was just blown away that teenagers who are like the most selfish people there are were actually looking out for me when they didn't have to.

They were actually looking out for my needs as the new kid who just rocked up on camp. They were just making sure I was having a good time. I remember seeing that and going, I want to be a part of that.

I don't know what they've got, but I want to find out. And then God showed me what they have. I pray that we can be that kind of community. I pray that when a non-Christian walks in here, the first thing they see is people who serve one another.

People who are humble, people who say it's not about me, it's about other people and I'll do anything for their needs first. Because that's what Jesus did for us. I mean, it's kind of embarrassing when you think about the kind of stuff that we hold on to.

[ 21 : 44 ] When you think about what Jesus forgives us for. We've been forgiven for willfully and actively rejecting God. For repeatedly disobeying him.

For ignoring things that he obviously says are wrong. And yet when somebody hurts us, we remember that. When somebody annoys us a little bit, I shouldn't have to put up with that.

When somebody mistreats me, I have a right to be treated better than that. And you know what the hard thing is? You do have a right to be treated better than that. God has made you in his image.

It means every person in this room has a dignity just by virtue of the fact that God made you with dignity. But the one that we follow denied his own rights.

He had every right to stay in heaven. He had every right to sit there and destroy his enemies on earth. To forcefully be the king that he is. But he denied himself that right and suffered for us.

[ 22 : 53 ] That's the one we follow. One who calls us to forgive the failings of people who mistreat us. One who calls us to humbly not look down on other people but consider others better than ourselves.

One who calls us to imitate his humility. To deny our rights and to seek the good of other people. Humbly. That's basically what it means to be humble.

Humility is saying it's not about what I need. It's about what you need. It's about the purpose that God has given us to see the gospel go out. Regardless of what I need.

I remember when I just started coming here. It was a while ago. I don't know exactly how many months. But I was sitting in 10am church. And I remember having seen Judy Green with this massive pregnant belly for weeks leading up to it.

And I remember hearing that she'd had the baby on the Friday. And you know I was thinking it'd be fair enough for her to have a Sunday off and just relax at home. She's got a newborn. She was standing up the front leading singing that morning in church with the baby strapped to her.

[ 24 : 02 ] And I remember looking at that and going no one would have thought any worse of you. It would be so within her rights to stay home and relax. But she said no it's not my rights I want to serve.

You know what people need? They need someone to lead. I'm on the roster and I want to do it. I want to bless other people. That's what humility is. Humility is saying not what I need but what other people need.

Denying your rights for the sake of other people and for the sake of the gospel. For Jesus humbling himself was the path that he chose to glory. Instead of putting his feet up in heaven and just kind of waiting for the world to destroy itself.

He chose to come to earth as a person. Instead of arriving with an army and just kind of laying the smack down and taking over. And putting himself as king. He chose to be a carpenter.

He chose to be opposed. And he even submitted to unjust punishment and death. For him humility was a choice.

[ 25 : 03 ] And you know why? Verse 9.

He didn't have to come and lay the smack down because he knew that God would raise him up. And he would get his position of honour and glory.

He would get his position of ultimate authority. See the path of glory for Jesus involved denying himself. Humbling himself until God raised him up. And the path for us is the same.

It's not a path to the cross. But as we look forward to heaven. As we look forward to the day when we're godly enough to not be annoyed by other people. When we're godly enough to not be frustrated by trivial things like song choice or seat choice or carpet colour or time of service or whatever else it is that annoys us about our church.

We look forward to that. But first we're called to humble service. First we're told to deny our rights.

[ 26 : 35 ] To seek the good of others. To imitate Jesus. See selfish ambition is born out of fear. The thing that makes us pursue our own good first is the fear that no one else will do it if we don't.

It's the fear that everyone else is getting looked after but I might miss out. But when we trust a faithful God to provide for us then we're released from that fear.

We don't have to worry about being looked after. We don't have to worry about our rights because God has promised to protect us. He's promised that one day we get to go to heaven. He's promised that every day between now and then he is with us.

And so when we trust him like Jesus did we're released. And instead of worrying about yourself you can pour your energy. You can pour your effort. You can pour your attention into serving other people.

Into humility. Because of the example Jesus sets for us. Because he has been exalted by God to heaven. Therefore, verse 12. Trusting God doesn't mean being lazy.

[ 27 : 57 ] Trusting God doesn't mean step back and go, he'll do it. There's two dangers for us. One is to kind of think that grace is cheap. That God's done it so I can just sit back and everything will happen.

God has done it but that's not how grace works. The other danger is that we think grace isn't enough and we have to serve one another. You know, we have to do enough to stay saved.

But this verse says, work hard. It says there, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. Continue to put effort into serving other people.

Continue to pursue humility actively. You won't just stumble into humility. Work at it. But it also says, it's God who works in you to will and to act.

Both the desire to be humble and the ability to carry it out is God working in you. It's not either you or God. It's God working and you working out your salvation as he empowers you to do it.

[ 29 : 02 ] So as we pursue humility, we need to make sure we do it in the strength he provides. We need to make sure we do this in light of the forgiveness he has won for us.

And we need to do it with grace and patience because we won't always get it right. I remember just before I got married, I started trying to figure out what the Bible teaches about marriage.

A bit of wisdom for you guys ahead of time. I started looking through the Bible for what the Bible says I'm supposed to do. What the Bible says Sal is supposed to do. What the Bible says I'm supposed to tell Sal to do.

There's none of those in case you're wondering. But I remember reading passages like Ephesians 5 that talk about the husband must love the wife and the wife must submit to the husband.



And I'm going, okay, I've got to make sure my wife submits. And I was lucky enough to have a godly older Christian man who sat me down and said, actually, that's not how it works. He said, my responsibility is to love my wife.

[ 30 : 03 ] As I love her, she will want to submit to me. And her responsibility is not to make me love her. It's to submit to me. And then I'll just want to love her even more. It's kind of the same with humility.

It's kind of the same with serving one another. As you stop worrying about your own needs and work really hard to serve others, all of a sudden you release someone else from worrying about their needs so that they can be serving you as well.

If I'm worrying about me, then I stop serving you. But if you're worrying about me, then I get to serve you. See, as each of us humbly serves one another, we breed that kind of humble service in each other.

We give each other license because we don't have to worry about ourselves anymore. And when it comes to serving in church, it's not about asking, what do I want to do?

It's not about asking, what do I want? What do I need? But it's about coming to the church and going, what do you need? Not what I want. Not even what I want to do.

[ 31 : 06 ] What do you need? Because it's never about you. And humble service like that stands out. Have a look at verse 14. It says, Do everything without complaining or arguing.

Criticism is the ultimate enemy of humility. Because to criticize, you assume that you are above someone and that you can comment on them. It says, Do everything without complaining or arguing so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life.

Humility and unity and service stands out in the world that we live in. Nobody outside of church likes to say they're selfish, but the reality is they are.

The reality is we struggle with it as well, that the world tells us we need to look after number one. The world tells us to work hard and then, you know, maybe if we're really nice, once we've kind of looked after ourselves, then we can worry about being generous to other people.

And so when people find a community that is all about serving and all about the other person, that stands out. As we start to look like Jesus, as we know him, as we treasure him, as we represent him, the lives we live and the relationships we have in this community will either adorn the gospel that we preach or veil it.

[ 32 : 30 ] It will either make it easy to see or it will make it muffled and confusing. If people come here and see a community of selfless, humble, servant-hearted, unified people, they see Jesus.

Even before we open our mouths from the word, they hear the gospel preached because we're living like Jesus. God has placed you in this community at this time for the purpose of knowing, treasuring and representing Jesus to Chatswood, Sydney, Australia and the world.

So the question I want you to ask yourself, and not even just for the next 30 seconds and then forget about it, but for this week, for this month and for as long as you're a part of this community, is what ambition, what desire, what need, what insecurity do you need to let go of so that you can start serving?

So that we can actually partner together so that I can worry about your needs and you can worry about the needs of other people? What is there in you that is just stopping you from being able to pour yourself into service?

What is there stopping you from being able to be humble like Jesus for the sake of the gospel? In 127, Paul calls them to live a life worthy of the gospel.

[ 33 : 59 ] A life worthy of the gospel is a gospel that's driven by gospel purpose. It's a life of humble service just like Jesus. It's a life that trusts God instead of looking after your own rights.

It's a life of working hard that will shine like a star in the universe. What do you need to let go of so that you can humbly serve like Jesus?

So that this community can know, treasure and represent Jesus in a way that will transform the world that we're a part of. Let's pray.

Father God, we want to admit that the first inclination of our heart is so often to care about ourselves. So often to worry about our own rights.

Lord, I want to thank you for Jesus. I want to thank you for his humility. I want to thank you for his willingness to lower himself and humble himself for our sake.

[ 35 : 07 ] Lord, keep us from arrogance and pride. Keep us from demanding our rights and instead fill us with love for one another. Fill us with love for you. And fill us with a humility that just loves to serve one another.

Lord, I ask that as people come into this community that they will see you through the way that we treat one another. Father, for those of us who do fear that we will not be cared for or looked after, that our needs won't be met, I pray that you give us a peace to trust our brothers and sisters around us, to love us as you are calling them to love us.

I pray that we would actively and enthusiastically pursue the good of other people before ourselves so that this community can achieve the purpose that you have given it, can represent you to the community that you've placed us in, and can see your kingdom grow through this ministry.

Father, thank you so much for Jesus. Please make us more like him. Amen.