

Stairway To Heaven

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Date: 01 March 2026

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[0:00] Please take your Bibles and open them up this morning to the book of Genesis. Book of Genesis, our passage this morning is chapter 28, verses 10 through 22.

We've been walking through the book of Genesis and continuing that series this morning as we make our way here in the section of Jacob and Esau and this famous passage of Jacob's ladder, stairway to heaven.

I promised our musicians there'd be no guitar solos this morning, but we will take a look at this glorious vision of the Lord. So if you would, when you found that Genesis 28, 10 through 22, let's stand in honor of the reading of God's word this morning.

Jacob left Beersheba and went toward Haran. And he came to a certain place and stayed there that night because the sun had set. And taking one of the stones of the place, he put it under his head and lay down in that place to sleep.

And he dreamed. And behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth and the top of it reached to heaven. And behold, angels of God were ascending and descending on it.

[1:12] And behold, the Lord stood above it and said, I am the Lord, the God of Abraham, your father and the God of Isaac. The land on which you lie, I will give to you and to your offspring.

Your offspring shall be like the dust of the earth and you shall spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south. And in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go and will bring you back to this land where I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you.

Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, surely the Lord is in this place and I did not know it. And he was afraid and said, how awesome is this place. This is none other than the house of God.

And this is the gate of heaven. So early in the morning, Jacob took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up for a pillar and poured oil on top of it. He called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of the city was Luz at the first.

[2:15] Then Jacob made a vow saying, if God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then the Lord shall be my God and this stone, which I have set up for a pillar shall be God's house.

And of all that you give me, I will give a full tenth to you. The grass withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord endures forever.

Would you pray with me? Father, we ask now as we open up your word that you would meet with us. And that you would speak to us.

And that you would reveal yourself to us. And you would assure us of all your promises to us in Christ. We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated.

Well, some of you know that I took a quick trip, very quick trip to New York last week. I'd been to upstate New York before. I had some family up there in upstate New York, but never been to the New York, to the city, New York City.

[3:21] Before. And we took just about every form of transportation known to man to arrive to the city. We drove to the airport here in Charleston. And then an airplane from Charleston over to JFK.

And then from JFK, we had to take an air train to the subway station where we got on a subway train, which took us to our stop. And finally, once we arrived there, we crawled up out of the underground with all of our luggage.

And we looked up and we were somewhere wandering in the streets of New York City. And from that point forward, for the rest of the day, we just started walking up and down the street, this street and that street, walking all over the place, soaking in as much as we could see.

We were on a mission because we had two days to see as much of New York City as we could possibly cram in. And my watch, my Fitbit, it said that we walked about 26,000 steps that day, which is highly unusual for us.

We're not used to that sort of walking. But even as we walked and saw all these different sites, we really only had just kind of this small perspective of where we were.

[4:31] We were locked in with buildings on either side. We couldn't see beyond those buildings to the next street over here. We really just had a ground level view of the city.

That is until that night, later that night. We went to the Rockefeller Center and we got into this elevator that took us up to the top of the tallest building in the Rockefeller Center.

It went up 70 floors to where we were now 850 feet above the street level down below. And from way up there, we had a view of the whole city.

And so now finally, we had a whole big picture perspective of the grand thing that we had been walking through that entire day. We had a much better, broader perspective than we had down at the ground level.

We were no longer walking on a mission, putting one foot in front of the next, trying to make it to the next stop. We were still, and we could see with a greater perspective the entire city.

[5:35] We could look and see, oh, there's that street that we walked down earlier this morning. And we got a bagel from over here. And oh, there's the Statue of Liberty. We rode past that on the ferry this morning. And oh, there's the Empire State Building.

We walked all around it all day long, and we never had a great view until now. We could finally pause and get perspective on our journey. And I thought this week, as I read this passage about Jacob's journey here to Haran, I thought, you know, sometimes our life can feel a bit like this, can't it?

You and I can get so busy. We live down on the ground level. And so week to week, day to day, we get so preoccupied with just putting one step in front of the next.

So busy and preoccupied with navigating to the next stop and making it to the next attraction. That we can lose sight of the big picture. Some of you, I know that your work is so difficult, you're just trying to survive and make it to the next day.

Others of you, I know, are raising children. And I know that between the practices and between the events and between the parties, just keeping the fridge stocked up, that is a battle every single week.

[6:49] Others of you maybe are past all that. You're retired, you're empty nesters, and maybe the slowness of your journey has left you feeling like you've lost a sense of purpose.

And what we all need more than anything is to pause and to have God give us a big picture perspective on our journey. And that's exactly what God does for Jacob here in our passage this morning.

Jacob, as far as he's concerned, you remember he is on a journey to go and find a wife. His head is down. He's on a mission. He's got one step in front of the next. He's on his way.

But on his way, God interrupts this journey and gives him this big picture reminder that puts everything in perspective. And so let's take a look this morning and what we'll see is three parts of the journey.

Three parts of the journey. This will be our outline this morning if you're taking notes. And what we'll see is that these three summaries of Jacob's journey, they overlap and they are also three parts of our journey in Christ.

[7:57] Our journey, like Jacob's, involves fleeing, meeting, and responding. Fleeing, fleeing, meeting, and responding first.

We see the journey involves fleeing. If you look there with me starting in verse 10. You remember Jacob is leaving Beersheba and he's heading towards Haran.

And do you remember why he's doing this in the first place? Do you remember why he's setting out on this journey? It's two main reasons why. For one thing, he's leaving because his brother Esau wants to kill him.

And that's a pretty good reason to get up and leave, isn't it? Now you remember what happened. Jacob has lied and cheated his way into this blessing that belonged to Esau. And so we saw this last week.

Jacob tricked his father Isaac and he inherited this blessing. And so now Esau is fed up with all this trickery. He's fed up with Jacob and his cheating and he wants him dead.

[9:00] So Jacob hits the road. That's one reason. But a second reason why Jacob's on this journey is because his parents, Isaac and Rebekah, they want Jacob to marry a nice young woman.

In other words, not a Hittite woman. Not a Canaanite woman. And they want him to go and find one of their kinsmen. They want him to go find Laban and marry one of Laban's daughters.

In other words, they don't want him to behave like Esau. You remember how Esau married these Hittite women and it made life miserable. It says it made life bitter for Isaac and for Rebekah.

And so second reason why Jacob's on his journey, he does not want to be like Esau. Now think about these two reasons here for a minute.

Flee your enemy for one thing and do not behave like him for another. Flee your enemy and do not behave like him.

[9:57] On the ground level, if we just stay here in the immediate context, Jacob is on the run from his brother. His brother's mad at him. We understand this. This is a dysfunctional family.

But you zoom out a little bit and you remember there is a bigger picture at play here, isn't there? There's a bigger conflict at play here than just this family drama.

If you remember all the way back from Genesis chapter 3, the Lord promised, he told the serpent, I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and her offspring.

And so we know there's going to be ongoing conflict, ongoing enmity between the offspring of that serpent, Satan, and the offspring of the Lord. But ultimately, God promises, he says, I will send one offspring who will crush the head of the serpent.

The enemy is at work here through Esau to try and snuff out this promise of a coming snake crusher. The enemy does not want the Messiah to come.

[11:07] He knows, of course, God has promised that this Messiah is going to come through Jacob. And so now he wants to try and snuff this out and destroy the coming Messiah before he even comes.

Jacob's not just on the run from his angry brother, is he? Jacob is on the run from all the powers of darkness. Jacob is on the run from the enemy Satan that not only wants to crush him, but wants to make sure that none of God's promises come true for him.

Christian, I wonder if you realize that the same is true for you. If you are in Christ, Do you realize that you, like Jacob, have been blessed by the Father?

That we haven't cheated and schemed our way into this blessing. By his grace, Ephesians 1 tells us that by his grace, God has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places. He says, In him we have redemption through his blood. In him we have the forgiveness of our trespasses according to the riches of his grace. He says, In him we have obtained an inheritance.

[12:22] And we were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. Here's the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory. We have been blessed in such incredible ways in Christ.

And do you realize that the enemy is not happy about this? Do you realize that the enemy makes it his personal mission to try to keep you from realizing the promises of God for you in Christ?

You know, we get so distracted with our heads down in the weeds of our life, just one step in front of the next, navigating to the next stop, making our way to the next thing, that we can forget we are being pursued by a spiritual enemy who wants us dead.

The enemy hates that you've been blessed by God. He hates that we have this beautiful inheritance ahead of us in Christ. Do you realize he hates you and wants to destroy you?

Are you fleeing from your enemy? Not only this, but are you pursuing righteousness? Are you fleeing from him?

[13:30] And are you by the grace of God working and laboring to be different than him? You remember Jacob's second reason. He's fleeing the danger, but he's also, he's distancing himself from the ways of Esau.

He's trying to not be like Esau. He wants to behave differently and have a different pursuit. The same is true of us, Christian. We're called to flee the enemy and we're called to not be like him. I've heard someone say before that no one naturally drifts towards holiness. Have you found that to be true in your own life? You take your foot off the gas pedal, where do you drift?

You don't drift towards Christ. You drift towards the ways of the world, don't you? We have to pursue holiness, pursue righteousness by the grace of God.

And so we're told in the pages of the New Testament, flee from sexual immorality, 1 Corinthians 6. Flee from idolatry, 1 Corinthians 10.

[14:34] Flee youthful passions, 2 Timothy 2. And not only that, it says, but also pursue righteousness, pursue faith, pursue love, pursue peace.

And not by yourself, but pursue this along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. Christian, we need to pause and be reminded and not get so down in the weeds of our life, putting one step in front of the next that we forget that there is an enemy to be resisted and there is righteousness to be pursued.

And we see here, first, our journey is marked by fleeing. Not only this, second, second, our journey is also marked by meeting. Our journey is marked by meeting.

Look there to verse 11. Jacob flees and on his way, verse 11 says, he came to a certain place and stayed there that night because the sun has set.

And he's just so tired from this journey, he lays down to rest. He gets a stone for a pillow. I don't know how tired you got to be, but apparently he was exhausted. He goes to sleep with a stone for his pillow.

[15:48] And it says, as he sleeps, he dreams. And what does he dream? Verse 12 says, behold, there was a ladder set up on the earth.

We could also call it a stairway. And at the top of the ladder, it reached all the way up from the bottom of the ground, all the way up to heaven. And behold, what does he see?

The angels of God are ascending and descending on the ladder. They're going up and down and up and down. This is much more than just a strange dream, isn't it?

This is a vision. Jacob gets this vision to see and perceive into the spiritual realm that exists all around us, but we don't always have this sight to see it, do we?

And he sees these angels, which Hebrews, the book of Hebrews tells us, angels are ministering spirits. It's sent out to minister, to serve those who are to inherit salvation.

[16:50] Angels are ministers and messengers of God. And here, Jacob, he sees these angelic beings just going up and down, up and down this stairway, and all the way at the top, Jacob sees the Lord.

He's standing above it all. And for this moment, whatever it is that Jacob was fleeing from, and whatever it is that Jacob is heading towards, I mean, he's fleeing from something dangerous. He's heading towards something good, a good thing. But right here in this moment, none of that matters. It's all blocked out. He is meeting with the Lord.

And at the top of the staircase, the Lord speaks to Jacob. And he does two important things here. He reveals and he reminds.

The Lord reveals himself in this meeting. He says, I am the Lord, the God of Abraham, your father, the God of Isaac.

[17:58] He reveals himself again to Jacob. And in this meeting, he reminds Jacob of all of his promises. And you notice, I mean, they're not new promises, are they?

This isn't really new information, is it? These are the same promises that we've heard over and over and over and over again since we first heard them back when God first gave them to Abraham.

It's this promise of prosperity, of posterity, and of place. We've seen this time and time again, haven't we? He says, Jacob, the land on which you lie, I will give this to your offspring. That's a promise of a future place. He says, your offspring will be like the dust of the earth. You will spread abroad to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south. And in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

That's a promise of posterity that's ultimately fulfilled in Christ and his people. And he says, in all of this, Jacob, behold, I am with you. And I will keep you wherever you go.

[19:01] I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you. That's a promise of prosperity, isn't it? God with him.

His presence will be with him. Can you imagine a greater blessing? Here, Jacob is running from his life on one end, trying to get married on the other.

He's left everything behind. And he is sleeping on rocks. And God quite literally parts the clouds to speak with him and remind him of the bigger picture.

He says, Jacob, who I am and what I have promised you are the most important things going on in your life right now. And notice, he doesn't tell him how he's going to protect him from Esau.

What does he say? He says, I will be with you, Jacob. I won't leave you. He doesn't tell him how he's going to marry his spouse. He doesn't tell him who he's going to marry.

[20:02] He doesn't tell him how he's going to find her. What does he say? Jacob, I promise your offspring are going to be more than the dust on the earth. This meeting with the Lord, it completely resets Jacob's perspective.

And Christian, what a gift it is to know. Whatever it is that you're running from, and whatever it is that you're heading to, we can set aside time to meet with the living God whenever we want.

We can set aside time to lift up our eyes out of the trials of this life, out of the pursuits of your life, and be reminded of who he is and what he's promised you in Christ.

Don't you need this perspective? Don't we need this holy interruption in our lives? When we're worried about the attacks from the enemy, we meet with God, and we remember God is with you.

The God of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob is also the God of Steve and Treg and James and Pete. The God who's promised us these glorious promises here to Jacob has also promised us incredible promises in Christ.

[21:21] And he will not leave us until he's fulfilled every word. Don't we need this reminder? But when we're unsure about what our next steps will be, how we'll make it to tomorrow, how we might pay our bills, how we might handle our children, how we might do everything that we've set out to do and accomplish in our life, friend, slow down, open up this book, meet with the Lord, and remember who he is and what he's promised you in Christ.

What comfort it is to meet with God and rest in the promises of the Lord. We need more than anything to meet with him and have this perspective that we're meant to see, that we're meant to see that Christ, Jesus, is infinitely more worthy of our praise and attention than anything else that's going on in our lives right now.

Now, it's interesting, you know, Jesus references this passage. We just read from it from John chapter one. John is the only writer that includes this story.

I don't know why. And he never even picks up on it later on. He doesn't even tell us how this ends up. He doesn't even give us Nathanael's reaction. John chapter one, Jesus says to Nathanael, he says, truly, truly, I say to you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.

What in the world is Jesus talking about? What in the world is Jesus saying? Well, for one thing, you notice Jesus is claiming that he is the Son of Man.

[23:02] As you recognize that title from Daniel chapter seven, it's this image of the Son of Man, one like the Son of Man coming and being presented before the ancient of days and to him was given dominion and glory and this everlasting kingdom.

Jesus says, I am the Son of Man. Nathanael, you're going to see that I am the one who reigns forever over the eternal kingdom of God. As kingdoms come and go and rise and fall, you will see me at the center of everything ruling over heaven and earth.

You will see it. But also, did you see the connection with our passage here in Genesis? Jesus says, Nathanael, you will see the angels ascending and descending on me.

Jesus says, Nathanael, you probably know the story, right? Of Jacob and this ladder, the stairway out in the wilderness. What you may not realize, but what you will, is that I am the ladder.

I am the stairway to heaven. I am the one who sends my angels to and from to accomplish all my will. I am the one who defends you from all the powers of darkness.

[24:23] I am the one who has come down from heaven to earth in order to bring sinners like you up to God. You will see it. In fact, let's go a little bit deeper.

If you stick with me just for a minute, I got to chase this rabbit trail here. When Jesus tells Nathanael, you will see me, the you there is not singular.

The you there is plural. He's talking to Nathanael, but he says, you all will see. If he was from Allendahl, he might say, y'all gonna see. Y'all all will see.

Not just you, but all y'all will see the angels ascending and descending on the Son of Man, Jesus Christ. Not just you, Nathan, but all who know Jesus by faith.

All y'all will see the angels descending and ascending on the Lord Jesus Christ. And again, John never picks back up on this in his gospel. He never tells us what this is gonna look like.

[25:24] When is this gonna happen? And so I wonder, when is this going to happen? I can think of at least two ways in one sense.

If you are a believer, you have seen this by faith, haven't you? If you have put your faith in Christ, what God has done in you is he has given you by his spirit in you, he has given you spiritual sight to see Christ for who he is.

He has given you eyes to see and a heart to comprehend this truth that Christ is God. That he is the centerpiece of human history.

That he alone is your savior. That he's king of the universe. So in one sense, we see this now by faith, don't we? But in another sense, this is just fascinating to me.

Stick with me here, please. I learned about this in an article from Dr. Warren Gage. When you look to the book of Revelation, which was written by, guess what?

[26:31] By John. You get this image of this vision of seven angels. And I want you just to try and visualize this in your mind because Revelation is a very visual book.

seven angels and all of these angels are positioned strategically. Each angel has a pair. They all have a counterpart. They all have a partner except for the fourth angel which makes him the centerpiece.

Okay? Are you tracking with me? And you look at where they are located. Picture this. The first and the seventh angel are positioned on earth. They're at the bottom. The second and the sixth angel are descending.

And so they're somewhere in the middle. They're between heaven and earth midway up. The third and the fifth angel where are they? They are in heaven. So do you have this image in your mind? What does it look like to you?

It's staggered a little bit like a staircase. Two on the bottom. Two a step up. Two up all the way at the top. And right there at the top what is in the middle?

[27:38] Where's the fourth angel? He's right there standing at the top. And what does John see with this vision of the fourth angel? He says, I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse.

The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True. And in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire and on his head are many diadems.

And he has a name written on it that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood in the name by which he is called is the word of God.

And the armies of heaven arrayed in fine linen white and pure were following him on white horses. And from his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron.

He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

[28:48] This is a vision of the risen Lord Jesus Christ. King of heaven and earth.

John looks and he sees a staircase. He sees angels ascending and descending and right at the top right at the center he sees the Lord Jesus Christ ruler of the world.

Jesus says y'all gonna see that. You will see. You will see me for who I am. Friend to know Jesus is to see him as the son of man to know him by faith is to know that he is the way and the truth and the life.

No one comes to the father. No one ascends the stairway except by him. To know him is to know that he is the centerpiece of all human history. The one who descended to live and to die and to rise so that by faith in him sinners like us might become heirs of all the promises of God.

is also to know that one day friend we will look up and we will see him with our very eyes coming in the clouds of heaven to judge the living and the dead.

[30:13] Friend as we navigate our journey here in this life we need to be constantly reminded that we need this spiritual sight don't we? We need to meet with the Lord and hear from his word and be reminded of his promises and see King Jesus for who he is.

Jacob saw this vision and he heard these promises and guess what? It absolutely shook him to his core. And in the rest of the passage what we see is Jacob responding to this meeting with the Lord. So third third and we see our journey is marked by responding. Verse 16 says that Jacob wakes up from his dream I would imagine his neck's got to be a little sore probably a big imprint of a rock somewhere on his face but he wakes up and immediately he says surely the Lord was in this place. I did not know it. He recognizes he has been in the presence of God. Now here's what's important for us to see.

Christian when we meet with God and when we hear from his word and when by his grace we see Christ for who he is we don't just get up and keep moving as if nothing has happened.

[31:45] We can't. With that meeting with the Lord that spiritual side of the glory of God that is meant to change us and we're meant to respond to these things.

It's not just information that we're gathering. This is transformative for our lives. You see Jacob's response here in the text. Jacob responds to this meeting with God in three key ways here.

For one he responds with reverence to the Lord. Verse 17 says he was afraid. Now why in the world would he be afraid? Everything that God just said was pretty positive wasn't it?

God just promised to be for him. He just promised all these wonderful things to Jacob that he's going to be in Jacob's corner. He's going to help Jacob. He's going to bless Jacob. Why is Jacob afraid?

Jacob has just peeked into the glory of heaven. He has just seen angels and more than that he has seen and heard the voice of almighty God.

[32:51] This is the same voice that God spoke and created all things. This is the same voice that thundered from the top of Mount Sinai. This is the same Lord, the same glorious God that hid Moses in the cleft of the rock as his glory passed by so that he wouldn't be destroyed at the sight of him.

Surely in this moment Jacob realizes his unworthiness holiness. He understands that this is not a God to treat casually and flippantly.

This is a God to be feared. Not only this but he also responds with worship. This is the second response here that Jacob does.

He says, how awesome is this place? This is none other than the house of God. This is the gate of heaven. And so what does he do? He takes his pillow and he turns it into a pillar.

Some of y'all with a thick country accent, that's how you pronounce pillow anyways, right? He takes his pillow and he turns it into a pillar. And he pours some oil on top of it and he renames this place from Luz to Bethel, which means the house of God.

[34:07] What is he doing? He is marking the place and marking the occasion as a holy moment of worship. This is where I have met with the

Lord.

This is no ordinary place. This is where I have been reminded of who God is. This is where I have heard his promises. This is where I have encountered him.

This is where I have been given the sight of the glory of God and the worth of Jesus. This is no ordinary occasion. We don't set up pillars anymore, but you know what we do have, Christian? We have the regular gathering of God's people on the Lord's Day each and every week. And what a tragedy it is that many Christians view this holy moment as optional or ordinary and just something that you do because you should, you come in, you sing the songs, you hear something, hopefully it motivates you, you go off and you live your life.

No, this is a moment of holy meeting with the risen Lord Jesus Christ. We come here to meet with the Lord.

[35:30] We come here to hear from his promises. We come here to be reminded of who he is and all that he's promised us together in Christ. We come here to meet with God.

Each of us comes from various trials, various stresses, various issues going on in your life. I don't know what all you've been through this week, but we put all of that aside and for this moment we're reminded of who the Lord is and to respond to him and worship.

you realize that when the church gathers we get a vision of heaven. This once a week gathering is an interruption of our normal rhythms of our life, yes, but truly in the span of eternity, what's the interruption?

It's all that out there that's the interruption. Heaven is filled with the gathering of the saints worshiping the risen Lord Christ. Christ, as we come together and as we worship together, we get this vision of what heaven will be like.

And we don't just leave it there, church. We go from here with renewed devotion. That's the last response here. Jacob responds to the Lord with renewed devotion.

[36:49] You can tell that this encounter has changed him, can't you? You can tell that this encounter has impacted him. verse 20, it says, Jacob makes this vow, saying, if God will be with me and will keep me in this way that I go and will give me bread to eat and clothing to wear so that I come again to my father's house in peace, the Lord shall be my God and this stone which I've set up for a pillar shall be God's house.

And of all that you give me, I will give a full tenth to you. Now this is one of the early foundations for what would become the tithe.

And that word tithe, it literally means a tenth. But Jacob gets very practical here, doesn't he? He doesn't just leave this in general terms. He gets very practical, very specific.

He says, I'm going to give the Lord a tenth of all that he gives me. He makes a plan of action for how he's going to respond to the Lord and what change this meeting is going to make in his life. some of you have asked me before, how do I know how much money I should give to the church? And let the record show, in three and a half, almost four years, I haven't preached much on tithing.

[38:06] But we do when it comes up in the text, don't we? Here it is, and so we talk about it. The Old Testament, it gives more of a quantitative principle.

Here we see 10%, but you add in the temple tax as you get later in the Old Testament. Some say that's 20%, even as high up as 30% that was required of the Israelites there in the Old Testament. The New Testament doesn't give us so much of a quantitative responsibility as it does a qualitative responsibility. What is it? God loves a what?

A cheerful giver. The principle of the New Testament is responding to all that God has done for us in Christ with a response of a generous heart and an open hand to say all that I have, including my money, but not just my money, my time, my talents, my treasures, my thoughts, my actions, my steps, my words, all of this belongs to you.

And so how can I then respond to you, respond to your worth, respond to this meeting with you in a life of worship? Jacob here devotes himself to the Lord all his life, all his actions, all his words, all his money, all his heart, all of it belongs to the Lord.

[39:34] And so he determines what he will do in response to the living God. I wonder if you have determined how you will respond to the Lord. I

wonder if you have put steps to your response to him.

I wonder if you will put this meeting into action this week. I wonder how this will change your life. We sometimes sing a song, we should have sung it today if I had planned a little bit better, maybe we would have.

take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to thee. Take my moments in my days, let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love. Take my feet, let them be swift and beautiful for thee. Take my voice, let me sing always only for my king.

Take my lips, let them be filled with messages from thee. Take my silver and my gold, not a mite would I withhold. Take my intellect and use every power as thou shalt choose.

[40:43] Take my will and make it thine. It shall be no longer mine. Take my heart, it is thine own. It shall be thy royal throne. Take my love, my Lord I pour.

At thy feet it's treasure store. Take myself and I will be ever only all for thee. Friend, this is the theme song of our journey.

Can you honestly say this morning that this is true for you? As you leave here this morning and go off to the week ahead, whatever it is that awaits you this week, don't get so distracted by putting one foot in front of the next and making your way to the next stop, navigating the streets of your life that you forget the big picture.

there is a God in heaven who loves you and is for you and has promised you such wonderful blessings in Christ. Let's pray.

Father, we pray that we would be reminded of your faithfulness, God, that we would be reminded of the glory of Christ.

[41:55] We pray that as we navigate whatever lies ahead this week, Father, that we would be constantly meeting with you in your word and in prayer and then responding to you with a transformed life that belongs to you.

We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Amen. Thank you.