

# Responding with Obedience to God's Mercy

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[ 0 : 00 ] rebuilding their lives and rebuilding their community around the Word of God and seeing how God is rebuilding them after a season of failure, really, but giving them hope and direction for the future.

This morning we're looking at chapter 10, and I'm going to read the second half of chapter 10. I'm going to start at verse 28. The first half is a long list of names, and I won't read that, but let me read the second half of chapter 10, starting at verse 28.

If you're looking in the Pew Bible, it's page 377, Nehemiah 10. Let's read beginning at verse 28. The rest of the people, the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, and all who have separated themselves from the peoples of the lands to the law of God, their wives, their sons, their daughters, all who have knowledge and understanding, join with their brothers, their nobles, and enter into a curse and an oath to walk in God's law that was given by Moses, the servant of God, and to observe and do all the commandments of the Lord, our Lord, and His rules and His statutes.

We will not give our daughters to the peoples of the land or take their daughters for our sons, and if the peoples of the land bring in goods or any grain on the Sabbath day to sell, we will not buy from them on the Sabbath or on a holy day.

And we will forgo the crops of the seventh year and the exaction of every debt. We also take on ourselves the obligation to give yearly a third part of the shekel for the service of the house of our God, for the showbread, the regular grain offering, the regular burnt offering, the Sabbaths, the new moons, the appointed feasts, the holy things, and the sin offerings to make atonement for Israel and for all the work of the house of our God.

[ 1 : 41 ] We, the priests, the Levites, and the people have likewise cast lots for the wood offering to bring it into the house of our God according to our Father's houses, at times appointed year by year to burn on the altar of the Lord our God as it is written in the law.

We obligate ourselves to bring the first fruits of our ground and the first fruits of all fruit of every tree year by year to the house of the Lord, also to bring to the house of our God to the priests who minister in the house of our God the firstborn of our sons and our cattle as is written in the law and the firstborn of our herds and our flocks.

And to bring the first of our dough and our contributions, the first of every tree, the wine and the oil, to the priests, to the chambers of the house of our God, and to bring to the Levites the tithes from our ground, for it is the Levites who collect the tithes in all our towns where we labor.

And the priest, the son of Aaron, shall be with the Levites when the Levites receive the tithes. And the Levites shall bring up the tithes to the house of our God, to the chambers of the storehouse, for the people of Israel and the sons of Levi shall bring the contribution of grain, wine, and oil to the chambers where the vessels of the sanctuary are, as well as the priests who minister and the gatekeepers and the singers.

We will not neglect the house of our God. In the winter of 1723, the 19-year-old Jonathan Edwards drew up a list of resolutions, personal commitments to living a God-centered life in harmony with others.

[ 3 : 07 ] And he began by stating his general goal, resolved, to do whatever I think to be most to God's glory and my own good, whatever I think to be my duty and most for the good of mankind in general.

Whatever difficulties I meet with, how many and how great whatsoever, to live with all my might while I do live. But he didn't just commit himself to sort of lofty general ideals.

He went on to detail what such a life would look like. So here are some of his more specific commitments. He resolved not to do certain things, never to do anything out of revenge, never to do anything which I should be afraid to do if it were the last hour of my life.

Not to give way to that listlessness or complacency which unbends and relaxes my mind from being fully and fixedly set on God.

He actually wrote that in July, right? That's sort of how you feel on a summer day, listless, right? No energy. And he says, I don't want to give into that state spiritually. I want to be vigorously pursuing God.

[ 4 : 20 ] Then he says, never to speak anything but the pure and simple truth. And then positively, here are some things that he resolved to do positively, to study the scriptures steadily, constantly, and frequently.

When I feel pain, to think of the pains of martyrdom and of hell. You can avoid self-pity that way. After afflictions have passed, to ask, how am I the better for them?

And what should I have learned from them? To let the knowledge of others' failings prove only an occasion of confessing my own sins to God.

To examine carefully and constantly what one thing causes me to doubt God's love and to direct all my forces against it. To read over these resolutions once a week.

He developed these over the course of his life. He eventually had 70 of these resolutions, which he intended to read over once a week and sort of gradually added to and refined over the course of his life.

[ 5 : 23 ] Now, I wonder what's your reaction to a list like this? Now, my guess is most of us don't have a list like this, that we read through every week and refine over the course of our lives.

Maybe we do New Year's resolutions, but, you know, if it's July, or sorry, it's August now, and if you're still on your New Year's resolution, boy, you're doing pretty well. Right?

Most of us have forgotten what our New Year's resolutions were this year if we even made them. Or maybe we've tried diets and exercise regimes and self-help books and goal setting, and they might be helpful for a time.

They're not always particularly God-centered, but, you know, eventually we get restless, right?

We're sort of on the lookout for the next new system, right?

The keto diet, or whatever is the next new thing that can help us become the person that we want to be. Now, maybe we've tried these things, and we've sort of recognized that our own willpower and resolve is insufficient.

[ 6 : 27 ] And maybe we've found a real relief in knowing that Jesus has done for us what we could not do for ourselves. We rejoice that it's by the obedience of Christ and not by our own that we're made right with God, and that is a glorious truth.

You know, if you're not a Christian, this is absolutely key to understanding Christianity. Many people think that Christianity is a list of rules and tasks and requirements that we need to check off or at least prove that we're trying our hardest, and if we're really trying our hardest all of the time, then God will forgive us because we're not going to be perfect, but Christianity is really about trying your hardest to be a good person.

That's actually not true. Christianity says that Jesus Christ has come to earth to do what we could not do for ourselves as corrupt and flawed human beings.

He has lived a life of faithful obedience to God. And then on the cross, He died the death that sinners like us deserve. He died in our place and He rose from the dead so that we could be connected with Him and made right with God through Him.

That's what it means to be a Christian is to trust in Jesus' work on our behalf and to rest in Him exclusively and completely. But, you know, if you have come to rest and trust in Jesus and find our deepest identity in Him, how do we live united with Christ day by day?

[ 8 : 02 ] Now, the passage I just read from Nehemiah is a list of resolutions that God's people in the Old Testament made and entered into as a community.

And, you know, these resolutions were not just an exercise of their own willpower to say, we're going to just do this. They're not a misguided attempt to earn God's favor.

No, these resolutions were and are part of a proper response to God's Word. As we've seen over the last two weeks, chapters 8 through 10 of Nehemiah are a unit focusing on the people's response to the Word of God.

In chapter 8, we saw they responded with joy because God's Word tells us about His grace and mercy and power and mighty deeds on our behalf.

And so, they have joy in chapter 8. And then in chapter 9, we saw they responded with sorrow because God's Word revealed their sin and their failures. And yet, in the midst of their sin and failures, they saw even more clearly God's mercy.

[ 9 : 05 ] And so, God's mercy in chapter 9 leads them to do what they do in chapter 10, which is recommit themselves, resolve to walk in obedience to God's commands.

Now, you can see this if you read the last verse of chapter 9, verse... Chapter 9, verse 38, which says, because of all this... In other words, because of God's mercy, which is the main theme of chapter 9, as we heard last week, we make a firm covenant.

That is, a firm agreement in writing. And we're signing our names to it. So, everything we're looking at today in chapter 10 is because of God's mercy that we saw last week so beautifully in chapter 9. And what we'll see this morning is above all else, this. Because of God's mercy, God's people resolve to obey His commands. And I want us to look at this in two parts.

I want us to look at the resolutions of God's people in the Old Testament here in Nehemiah 10, and then we're going to look at the resolutions of God's people in the New Testament in Romans 12, which we read earlier in the service.

[ 10 : 15 ] So, here's the resolutions of God's people here in the Old Testament in Nehemiah's time when they were resettling the land, they had rebuilt the city and the temple, and they were resolving to go forward together, right?

They gathered, they heard God's word, and they were reminded of God's mercy. But they didn't just say, hey, that's really nice. Our God is a merciful God.

Now we can go back home and feel good inside. And we can each sort of float along and do whatever we feel like doing or whatever seems right to each of us in our own eyes. No. They said, we need to take decisive action together.

This is serious business. We need to write down exactly what we're committing to and sign our names to it, just like we would do with any other definite plan, with any other binding agreement, with any other important thing in life.

Make it official. Now, verse 1 to 27, we see the people who sign their names. I won't read through all of them. Let me just make a few brief comments. It starts with the civil authorities in verse 1, Nehemiah, the governor, and Zedekiah, who is probably his assistant.

[ 11 : 23 ] Then we have the priests in chapter...in verse 2 through 8. Most of those are the names of priestly families. So Ezra is not listed there by name. Some people have said, well, why isn't Ezra there since he's such an important figure in chapter 8?

Well, he's part of Sarai's household, the first priest listed in chapter 2. So he would have been included in that household. Verse 9 to 13, we see the Levites who were sort of the assistants to the priests, several of whom had interpreted and explained God's word to the people in chapter 8. And then verse 14 to 27, we see the chiefs or the leaders of the people. Most of those names appear in Ezra 2 in the list of exiles who returned at the beginning, or in Nehemiah 3, the list of those who were rebuilding the walls.

So that list sort of comes from those two places. And then in verse 28, we see it wasn't just the leaders, wasn't just the religious leaders, wasn't just the civil authorities, wasn't just the chiefs of the people.

It was the whole community was behind this. Now that last phrase is an interesting phrase because in Ezra 6, chapter 20... Ezra chapter 6, verse 21, an almost identical phrase appears.

[ 12 : 39 ] And there, it clearly refers to people who were not originally Israelites, but they were from the surrounding nations, but they had left behind their idols, and they had committed to obey the law of God and worship the one true God.

And so they had been included with the people of Israel. So it's possible, I think, quite likely that verse 28 refers to such people as well.

And then verse 29, we see their general overarching commitment to walk in God's law that was given by Moses and observe and do all the commandments of the Lord.

So they commit themselves to obey not just some of God's commands, but all of them. That's their big commitment to obey everything God has said to us.

But then verse 30 to 39, they make some very specific commitments in three areas. First, in the area of family, in verse 30, they commit to building their families on a common spiritual foundation where husband and wife share a primary spiritual loyalty.

[13:46] Their time, in verse 31, they commit to orient their time around the Sabbath rhythms that God had commanded His people to observe in the Old Testament. And then their money, in verse 32 to 39, they commit to financially support the ongoing operations of the temple.

Verse 39 concludes, we will not neglect the house of our God. But you know, you might ask, why these three areas in particular?

Like, why are they specifically getting into all this detail, especially about all the offerings and everything else? I think they're basically doing three things in this list.

First, they're correcting past failures. So, at the end of Ezra, we saw how some of the returned exiles had married people who were loyal to other gods, who were worshiping idols.

And Nick preached a sermon on that passage, Ezra 9 and 10, and we saw that. Or in Nehemiah 5, we saw how some of the Israelite leaders had been exacting interest on debts, even to the point of forcing others in the community to sell themselves and their children into slavery.

[14:59] And Nehemiah was outraged when he saw that happening and said, no, this is wrong.

So, in some ways, the commitments we see here are corrective measures in response to past and even recent failures.

But they're also not just correcting past failures, but resisting present temptations. These habits were costly and countercultural habits.

They were areas where obeying God would set them apart from the surrounding world. And they were areas where they would have felt some pressure to conform to the prevailing norms.

You know, for example, take these, verse 31, the commands about the Sabbath. The peoples around them did not observe the weekly Sabbath, the weekly day of rest, or the annual holy days. But God had commanded His people in the Old Testament to observe those days and set them apart. You might say, why? Why were they so important? The reason was so that every week and every year, they'd remember and show to the world the story of God's salvation.

[16:11] So, there were three annual feasts. The first one was the Passover. And the Passover is all about God has saved us. He rescued us from slavery in Egypt.

The second one was Pentecost. And on Pentecost, they remembered God has spoken to us and given us His instructions in the law. And the third one was tabernacles.

And they celebrated God has come to stay with us. And so, by setting apart those days and not doing their regular business on those days, they were communicating to the world what God has done for us, saving us, speaking to us, and staying with us.

That is more important than anything else in the whole world. And so, they were... That was God's intention that they would show the world that everything God has done for us is the most important thing in life.

But, you know, if they took those days and just went about their normal business and pretended the day didn't really matter, what would they be saying to the world?

[17:14] They'd be saying everything God has done for us is no more important than getting a good deal on some food and clothes. All right?

The other thing you see is that every seventh year, they were also supposed to give their fields a break to let them be freely available for the poor and sojourners to glean from. They were also supposed to give a break to anyone in the community who had fallen into debt.

Every seventh year, the debts among fellow Israelites would be canceled. It was sort of a reset button to give people an opportunity for a new start. But, you know, all these things were costly and countercultural practices.

Nobody else did them. Nobody else observed these feasts. Nobody else canceled debts every seventh year. They were costly and they were countercultural. And there was all kinds of pressure on these returned exiles to just blend in with everybody else around them.

So, they're correcting past failures. They're resisting present temptations. And the third thing they do is they're addressing future uncertainties. So, in Nehemiah's time, God's people were facing some new challenges as they were sort of heading into uncharted territory.

[18:28] Now, you might say, how? Well, prior to the exile, the kings of Israel and Judah had taken an active role in supporting the work of the temple both financially and administratively.

So, if you read Chronicles, you'll see that King Solomon got the temple built. King Joash and King Hezekiah repaired the temple when it had fallen into disrepair. Asa and Jehoshaphat and Josiah provided offerings, initiated capital campaigns when money was needed, and organized the Levites.

So, the kings had taken leadership in seeing that the temple work was funded and organized and supported. Then the exile happened.

The temple's destroyed. Then they returned to the land. They rebuild the temple. We've just seen that in Ezra and Nehemiah and the city. But there's no king. So, who's going to support the temple? Right? The way it used to happen ain't going to happen anymore. And Nehemiah the governor doesn't have enough, doesn't have all the revenue that King Solomon had to take care of it on his own.

[ 19 : 35 ] So, what do they do? They say, we are going to commit to do this together. And they spell out the details in verses 32 to 39. That long list of offerings that I read.

So, they make an annual offering. They say, we're all going to make an annual offering. Now, that was a new thing. It wasn't required in the law of Moses. Moses talked about the tax whenever a census would happen, but didn't specify how often the census would happen.

Then they say, well, we need wood, right? Because we need to keep the fire burning. So, we've got to figure out a way that we make sure we've got enough wood there. Because otherwise, the fire is going to go out and then can't offer any sacrifices and can't do our thing.

So, they make a rotation. Everybody has to sign up for a week, right? And then verse 35 to 39, they spell out the details of all the offerings.

Who they're for, when they get collected, where they get collected, who takes them to the temple, etc., etc. So, they're taking the principles found in the law of Moses and then they're applying them to new challenges and new circumstances that they're facing.

[ 20 : 45 ] So, they're correcting past failures. They're resisting present temptations and they're addressing future uncertainties. Those are the three things that they are doing and they're doing it all because of God's mercy to them.

Now, the question you're probably asking is, so what? What does this mean for us? Right?

In many ways, our situation is very different from the people in Nehemiah's day. We're not living in Jerusalem after the exile. We don't have a physical temple where God has specifically promised to meet with us.

We don't have the same rules about Sabbath days, holy days, Sabbath years, grain offerings, burnt offerings, sin offerings, wood offerings, first fruits, etc., etc., etc. We're not bound to obey everything in the law of Moses.

Now, why? Because Jesus Christ has come. And Jesus came as the fulfillment of the law. He is our true temple.

[ 21 : 48 ] What was the temple? The temple is the place where God and humanity meet and are reconciled. Now, Jesus is the one in whom God and humanity meet and are reconciled.

Through Him, we're reconciled with God. He's our high priest, our representative and advocate before God, and He has given us a new covenant, a better way for us to approach God with freedom and confidence because of His own blood shed on the cross.

A sacrifice for the forgiveness of our sins. So, in Jesus, we see God's mercy so much more clearly, so much more fully and gloriously than anyone ever did in the Old Testament.

And so, the mercy of God that we see in Jesus doesn't lead us to obey God less than the people did in the Old Testament. No, God's mercy in Jesus empowers us for deeper, more wholehearted, more lasting obedience to God, all in light of who Jesus is and what He has done.

So, what we see is God's people in the New Testament also make resolutions. That's our second point I want to look at this morning. Turn with me to Romans 12 because I want to camp out there what we read earlier for the rest of our time this morning.

[ 23 : 09 ] Romans 12, verses 1 and 2. I want to focus on these verses as an example of the New Testament Christians resolving to obey God.

So, Paul begins, I appeal to you, therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God. Note how Paul starts with the mercies of God. Everything Paul says in Romans 12, 1 and 2 and the rest of the book all starts with the amazing, unending mercies of God.

That's the first 11 chapters of Romans. If you read Romans 1 to 11, it's all about the bondage and futility and hopelessness of our sin and the majesty and mercy and salvation of God in Jesus Christ. So, everything Paul says here is because of God's mercy. Then he goes on. Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

And in that phrase, Paul is correcting past failures. He's actually, what we're going to see is Paul's doing the same three things that Nehemiah did. Correcting past failures, resisting present temptations, and addressing future uncertainties.

[ 24 : 32 ] Now, how is he correcting past failures? Well, if you look back in Romans 6, verse 19, Paul says this. You once presented your members, that is the parts of your body, as slaves to impurity and to lawlessness leading to more lawlessness.

And now, what does Paul say? Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God. Paul says, present the same body, which was once an instrument of sin, to God, so that it would be an instrument of holiness.

You know, this is one reason why Christian baptism is such an amazing gift. Because what happens when you get baptized? When you get baptized, your whole body gets dunked in the water.

Or maybe you got sprinkled. That's all right. But the dunking is a great image, right? Because you're immersed. God is saying to you, your very own body, that may have been an instrument of all kinds of sin, that may have been the recipient of all kinds of shame, is now joined to the body of Jesus, your Savior.

He's saying, I have washed you clean by the blood of Christ. I have set you apart. I've called you my child. Beloved, I have covered your shame and clothed you with honor and glory.

[ 26 : 04 ] You are mine, and your very own body is a temple in which my Holy Spirit dwells. Paul says, your bodies are members of Christ himself.

As holy as the temple was in the Old Testament, our bodies are today. Isn't that an amazing gift? I mean, in one sense, you could say that the whole of the Christian life is living into the truth of what your baptism represents.

You're a new creation in Christ Jesus, so live that way. Now, along these lines, let me ask this question. Are there old habits that you need to resolve to put to death by the power of Christ Jesus? Compulsive behaviors, downward thought spirals, emotions that go out of control. You know, change doesn't always come quickly in these areas.

Sometimes we can do better for a while, then we slip back into the same old patterns. Matt Spith's teaching Sunday school about restoring damaged relationships, and this morning he was saying, restoring damaged relationships is almost always a process.

[ 27 : 34 ] It doesn't happen all at once, normally. One of Jonathan Edwards' resolutions was this, never to give up, nor to relax my fight with my corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

Isn't that interesting? You know, some of us think about Jonathan Edwards and Christians like him in the past as these spiritual giants, these heroes, and we think, I could never attain to their level. Sometimes people write books about them as if they were, living at levels unattainable. But you know, Jonathan Edwards didn't see himself that way. He knew that he had flaws and failures, like every Christian does.

But what he said is, I'm going to keep on fighting. I'm going to keep on repenting. And keep on trying to change humbly, depending on God for the grace I need each day.

And isn't that what we all need to do? To not give up the fight. You know what? It doesn't usually work well to fight those battles by yourself.

[ 29 : 01 ] That's why God has called us into the body of Christ. The first thing Paul talks about after Romans 12, 1-2, is he talks about the body of Christ.

You're part of something bigger than yourself. The way that you live out a Christian life is in the context of the community of faith. So, find at least one or two other Christians who you trust. Share your struggle with them so they can be praying and encouraging you and walking with you. So, correcting past failures. Second, Paul is urging us to resist present temptations.

Don't be conformed to this world or to the pattern of this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. One paraphrase puts it this way. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mold, but let God remold your minds from the inside out.

And again, later on in Romans, Paul gets more specific about what this looks like. So, I just want to take two examples of what Paul says in the rest of chapter 12 that I think are notable.

[ 30 : 13 ] First, notice what Paul says in verse 9. He says, Abhor or hate what is evil. Cling to what is good. Hold fast to what is good. In other words, Paul wants Christians to see right and wrong clearly, to have clear and distinct moral standards, not to be wishy-washy, not to join in celebrating everything that the world currently promotes, but to recognize things for what they really are, to embrace what is good and true and beautiful, and to resist what's distorted and deceptive and harmful.

In other words, Christians are to be committed to holiness. But then look at what he says in verse 13. Seek to show hospitality.

What's hospitality? It's being welcoming and generous and open-hearted. Now, at first you might think, well, Paul means we should show hospitality to fellow Christians.

Doesn't the first half of verse 13 say, contribute to the needs of the saints? But we can't limit it that way. Let's go on to verse 17.

Paul keeps going, and he says, Repay no one evil for evil. Then verse 19, he says, Never avenge yourselves. And verse 20, sort of the climax, To the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him.

[ 31 : 41 ] If he's thirsty, give him something to drink. For by so doing, you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

You see, Christians are to be committed to holiness more than anyone else in the world, and hospitality more than anyone else in the world.

That's what Paul's saying. And you know, the world has a category for people who are committed to holiness, who are moral sticklers, and who avoid and despise everyone who doesn't live up to their standards.

And the world also has a category for people who are just open, always accepting, always affirming, always approving of whoever you define yourself to be, whatever path you choose to follow.

But you know, the world doesn't have a category for people who are deeply committed to holiness and disarmingly hospitable and humble. When you see a person like that, who knows what is right and wrong, who isn't afraid to call a spade a spade, who doesn't compromise, who lives a distinct life, and yet who is open-hearted and generous and meets people where they are.

[ 32 : 58 ] When you see someone like that, you're seeing the Holy Spirit of God at work in them. You know, that kind of attitude doesn't just come naturally or through willpower.

It comes through the renewal of our minds, letting God shape our attitudes and perspectives according to Jesus himself. So, correcting past failures, resisting present temptations, and third, Paul's urging us to address future uncertainties.

Look at the end of verse 2. So that by testing, you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Now, notice those words, testing and discerning.

Every time and place presents different challenges and different opportunities for God's people.

And so, there needs to be a process of testing and discerning together.

What does it look like here and now to reflect God's unchanging character and His good and perfect will? One of the areas where I think we need to be actively testing and discerning together what is God's good and pleasing will is in how we use technology.

[ 34 : 17 ] When I was in college, not that long ago, I didn't have a cell phone for the first two years. And I wasn't weird. At least I wasn't weird because of that. Now, today, right, it's almost unthinkable to not have a smartphone and to not have it with you and on 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The world is changing fast. Yes, I'm starting to sound like an old person. Right? We're facing opportunities and challenges that previous generations of Christians did not face.

And so, we need to ask ourselves, what are the goods that we should embrace and what are the evils that we should resist? Now, technology brings plenty of benefits that we can gladly embrace, the opportunity to stay connected with friends and family who are geographically far away, the volume of information readily available to us, even the ability to read the Bible on your phone or have it read aloud to you, easily, anywhere, for free.

Some, you know, we hardly even notice how remarkable those things are. But there are benefits and there are pitfalls. You can access pornography on your phone just as easily as you can access the Bible.

And even if you're not looking at anything inappropriate, the phone can become an escape mechanism. Whenever you feel stressed or bored or annoyed at real people, you go to the phone. [ 35 : 46 ] It can work just like any other addiction. And as we're staying connected with people who are far away and with news from around the world, what about the person sitting right next to you?

Did you not even notice them? We need to ask ourselves these questions and discern together what does it look like to live faithfully in this present world?

I want to recommend two books that can help us that can stimulate our conversation and our thinking in these areas. So one is called The Tech Wise Family by Andy Crouch. So especially if you're a parent, that one is really worth reading.

And then the second one is called The Common Rule, Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction. It's a, these are both really good books.

This is sort of like spiritual disciplines for a technological age. Like how do you cultivate habits that help you love God and love your neighbor in this world that we live in?

[ 36 : 56 ] So I have a copy of each. If you really want to read it, then come up to me and if you're first, you'll get it. And if you're not, you can buy it down on the bookstall. This one isn't here today, but it'll be here next week.

So Paul, like Nehemiah, urges us to correct past failures, to resist present temptations, to address future uncertainties. And as we conclude this morning, we want to come back to the basis of it all is the mercy of God.

Let me close with the prayer that Jonathan Edwards begins his resolutions with. being sensible that we are unable to do anything without God's help.

We do humbly entreat him by his grace to enable us to keep these resolutions so far as they are agreeable to his will for Christ's sake.

Amen. Well, we're going to continue this morning by celebrating the Lord's Supper. Um, and,