

Every Member a Minister

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[0 : 00] have a Bible, and I hope that you do, will you turn with me to the book of Exodus, chapter number 14. As you're turning there, I want to tell you a quick story about Greg and I being in New York City a couple of years ago, and we were walking down the street, and we saw a sign that caused us to start whistling or singing. It's a wonderful world. I see trees of green, red roses too. I see them blue for me and for you, and I think to myself, what a wonderful world. And I've shared this with some of you before, because as we were walking, a man on the other side of the fence said, hey guys, and they started talking to us, and normally you kind of walk faster when somebody does that in a big city, and they said, hey do you want to, I heard you singing that song, would you like to come visit this house? And he began to explain to us that that was Louis Armstrong's house that he grew up in in New York City. And so we had a chance to go in and tour his house and to see it, and that was a neat opportunity to do that. And we were standing up on his porch and looking out of our city, and I pulled up on Spotify some different songs that he had, and some of you would know more than me, but one of them that I remembered was Go Down Moses, and it has this refrain, let my people go, all right? And I thought about that song, and you think about the story of the Ten Commandments with Charlton Heston on television, and that famous line of let my people go.

It's common in pop culture, people understand this phrase, let my people go. But what is often ignored is the fact that those were not Moses' words, and those were not his people, that was Moses saying what God had told him to say. It is God's people, and he is saying, let my people go.

And that's an important thing to know, not just for knowing the song, but the teaching here in scriptures. Exodus chapter number 5 and verse 1, it says, And afterward Moses and Aaron went in and told Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go, that they may hold a feast unto me in the wilderness. Those that are walking together through the Bible, the group of ladies that are doing that, you're in the book of Exodus, and seven times in four chapters, you're going to see this phrase, let my people go. And it gets repeated. Israel was God's chosen people, not to the neglect of the other nations. God loves all people. His son died for all mankind. But the children of Israel had a special responsibility and a privilege to reflect his character and nature to the entire world. And so he called for, Let my people go, that they would serve me. And we see a bunch of synonyms. Sometimes it's, Let my people go, so that they will go and prepare a feast for me. Or let my people go, so that they may serve me. Or let my people go, so that they will worship me. And all of those expressions are synonyms for freedom. Come out of Egypt unto the Lord. That's what was asked of Moses. Can my people go out and prepare a feast? Can the people go out and can they prepare a sacrifice? Can the people go out and they will have freedom? No, Christianity is not a list of things that you no longer do or places that you no longer go. It's not about bondage, but it's about freedom. Freedom from the bondage of sin to be reconciled to our Creator. Service to the Creator is the only freedom from bondage of this world.

So in Exodus chapter 14, verse 5, that's what I'd like you to look at today as we get started into these. See, these are the words of Pharaoh when he finally agreed to let Moses and the children of Israel go. You remember the story of the plagues and he kept changing his mind.

He would say he was going to, but he wouldn't. And here in Exodus 14, 5, he says this, And it was told that the king of Egypt, that the people fled and the heart of Pharaoh and of his servants were turned against the people. And they said, why have we done this? That we have let Israel go from serving us. See, everyone is fighting for allegiance in this world, but there's only one king that deserves our allegiance. That's King Jesus. And so when the children of Israel were going to leave, that Egypt knew they would no longer serve us, that they're going to serve the God of heaven.

[4 : 16] And so there was a fight to keep them. That's the only two options any of us in there have today, is either we're going to live for ourselves, we're either going to live for this world, we're going to live for sin, and we're going to stay in bondage and be a servant to it, or we can find the liberty that is available to us through Jesus Christ to serve the God of heaven.

And so God would say, let my people go. That's my prayer for you here today, that you would recognize the freedom that is found in serving the Lord. He needs nothing of us. If he was hungry or wanted to drink, would he come to us? No. He was not lonely before he created this world, but he gives us the incredible privilege that we can live a life in service to him.

The first thing we look at here today, number one, is every Christian has priestly responsibilities. Every Christian has priestly responsibilities. You know, the word Baptist is not an acrostic, all right? It's just, it's a word, but it's not an acrostic. But we often use the word Baptist to help understand some of the distinctive natures of what it means to be Baptist. You've probably seen this before, and I could bring somebody from the training center up here, Grant, and quiz them on it real quick, all right? Have them turn their back to it. And we won't go through all of these, but the Bible's authority, autonomy of the local church, that we as a church decide how we are going to function and act according to God's word. But this one right here is the priesthood of the believer. And so this is one I would like us to look at for now. We say every member a minister.

We could also say every person a priest or every believing person a priest. And that may sound shocking to you. If you come from a religious background where there's a certain group of people that were priests, or maybe you didn't grow up in church. And so the idea of what a priest is, is you can only imagine a certain type of person from a certain religious group. But what I want to see here, 1 Peter chapter number 2 and verse number 5, that our ministry comes from our priestly identity. Our ministry comes from our priestly identity. Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

The Bible refers to us as saints, and as ministers, and as disciples. The world called us Christians, little Christ imitators. And here we are called priest, holy priest. Two weeks ago, we looked at it a new and living way, a better way that Hebrews showed us that we have when it comes, that we have access. We can be, we are given access to God. That was Hebrews chapter number 10, verse 19 through 22, where we're told to have brethren, believers. We have boldness to enter into the holiest place, the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which has been set aside for us, consecrated for us through the veil that is the flesh, his flesh, and having a high priest over the house. Now let us draw near with a true heart. There was a time where we were to step back at one mountain, and somebody would go in our place. But now, through Jesus Christ, that his flesh being torn, and we now have full access to him. We rejoice in the fact that the veil was torn from the top down to the bottom. It wasn't our doing. It was his. It isn't folded up to be put back, but we now have access to him. It's an incredible privilege to go to the Lord in prayer. We've done that today, and I pray we never take it for granted. We go to the God of heaven, and we pray to him.

[7 : 43] In that time, there was one, the high priest, that was able to go into that place, but now Jesus is our high priest. He is our mediator between God and man. He is the one who has died in our place, and that tabernacle is now inside of us. The Holy Spirit has come to indwell each and every one of us as believers, and this is a new and is a living way, and it's wonderful. And so as Israel had a priesthood, now Christians are a holy priesthood. As much as Israel had sacrifices, now Christians offer up spiritual sacrifices that are acceptable to God. God has not abandoned Israel. He still has a place for them in his redemptive plan, but New Testament Christianity is no way inferior to Old Testament Judaism. There is no way that we're inferior. We have full access now to the Father. And so each of us, we now stand in this, and we have a responsibility to reach out. Romans 5, 1 and 2 says, Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith unto this grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. We have access now by faith. We thank the Lord for that. But with our rights, we are given a new responsibility. You know, the word responsibility isn't one that people typically like. It's just not a fun word. It's hard for us to say sometimes, like Judaism is a hard one for me to say this morning, all right? And responsibility. Nobody has, you know, at Hobby Lobby, you have this live, laugh, and love, and some of you have this all over your house. Well, you've never seen a picture like this one that says, rules, regulation, responsibilities. It'll be so pretty, you know?

You never see anybody sew anything like that and put it on a pillow or on a sign. It's just not fun. But there are responsibilities that come in life with a new role in life. There's responsibilities that come as being a husband, but I'd much certainly rather be a husband than not be a husband. I'm grateful for that. There are responsibilities in being a dad. There are responsibilities that come with the role of being a grandparent or even being a car owner. You now have a new responsibility based upon your new role, and it's wonderful. You see, work is part of God's good design in this world. Before the fall of man in the garden, God had given mankind, Adam and Eve, a work to do. Work, service, and ministry to our God is a gift, not as a result of the curse, but it's a gift. One of the screensavers on my desk says this, God's gifts us with incredibly gracious dignity of real responsibility. When you get tired of responsibilities in any of those God-given roles, you ought to think, I am so grateful that this is a gift from God, that he has given me the dignity of real responsibility. So Adam and Eve, they had purpose, they had access to God, the presence of God. He came to them in the cool of the day. Now through

Jesus Christ, our relationship can be reconciled, and we have the ability to serve him because that has been restored. An expression here in 1 Peter 2, 5, it says, to offer up spiritual sacrifices. Just like the Old Testament priest offered sacrifices, now the New Testament believer, we can offer up spiritual sacrifices. I believe this is a great definition for what ministry is. If I was to ask all of you in here today to write the definition of ministry, they would be quite similar, but they would be separate, maybe based upon your experience and what you have seen. Here, I think, is a good starting place for us all. Offering a spiritual sacrifice unto the Lord. The book of Philippians, it talks about how they offered up, they gave money, which was a sacrifice there for the church at Philippi. In Hebrews, it talks about being praising, giving praise unto the Lord as a sacrifice that's acceptable. Romans 12, 1 through 3 there at the beginning tells us that we are to give our bodies in holy living. It doesn't belong to ourselves, but it belongs unto the Lord, and so I want to live in a holy manner because my life is to be given to him as a sacrifice. 1 Peter 2 and verse 1, it tells us to lay aside malice and guile and hypocrisy and all these different things and live in a certain way, and that holy life given to the Lord is a sacrifice unto him. Another thing it tells us as a priesthood of believers is that we now have this ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians chapter number 5 and verse 18, as believers and as priests, we have been given a ministry, we have been given a ministry, and that ministry has a title that it's called. And all things are of God who has reconciled us, brought us back together, has atoned, made us one unto himself by Jesus Christ, and has given to us the ministry of reconciliation. Every believer in here is a priest. Every member in here, every believer in here has a ministry of reconciliation. And then how are we to go about doing that? What are we to do? What can I do in regards to reconciling sinful man to a perfect God?

And it tells us in verse number 19, what is the role that we place here as believing priests? It says, to wit, verse 19, which is the witness that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation.

That we are to be a witness of the fact that God, through Jesus Christ, has reconciled the world unto himself. And now this word, this message that we have of reconciliation, has been committed to every one of you in here as a believer. And so let me just do that here for a moment. Let me fill my priestly function as a believer, not because I'm a pastor, but because I'm a believer, to let you, let me witness to you about this fact, that every one of us, myself included, were born into a world of sin, and my relationship with God was broken, that I needed forgiveness of my sin. But because of Jesus Christ dying on the cross, my sins can be forgiven. So I turn to him. I repent of my sin and say, I don't want that way. I want the way of Jesus. I want forgiveness of my sins. And I receive that gift of salvation by faith and by believing in him. And I can be reconciled unto God. I am now a believer of the day because another believer took their ministry of reconciliation seriously and shared with me the word of reconciliation. And I'm so grateful that they were doing that.

[14:18] And so now the question is, we can do all that we are to do to bring people to a saving knowledge of Jesus. We can please God by coming to him and being built into a spiritual house with other believers to offer these sacrifices. The next one we have here is a congregation is not an audience.

A congregation is not an audience. My childhood pastor, Larry Lockston, used to tell me that all the time. He would say, the church is an organism and not an organization. And as a middle schooler, I didn't know the definition of either of the words, so it didn't matter much to me, all right?

And we were an organism and not an organization. And he would go on to explain to me is that an organism is living. There's the distinction there. We are living. We've been established by a living God.

We're connected to a living Savior. And we're led by the living Holy Spirit, that the body of Christ is a living organism. It is a body. And it's not an audience of people here that watches somebody else do something. But we are fitly connected together. 2 Corinthians 3, verse 5 and 6 tells us that the Spirit gives us life. Now that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any things as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God, who has also made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit. For the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Because we're alive in Christ Jesus, we are now part of a living organism that is this church. And I love seeing what only the Holy Spirit can do in and through and among us. Sitting with somebody who says, as I read Genesis 1 through 3, that it just, my heart was going to beat out of my chest because I knew that there was a God and that He was very much alive. That is the work of the Holy Spirit. The greatest aspects of any ministry that you'll ever do is when you look back and say, I know I could have never moved that. I know I could have never done that. That is the Holy Spirit working in and among us.

Bible teaches us Christ is a living stone and that we are living stones as we are connected to Him. In 1 Peter chapter 2 and verse 4, it says, To whom coming as unto a living stone disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious.

[16 : 28] Jesus is that living stone. And that's a passage that's being quoted from Isaiah chapter number 28 and also Psalm 118. Jesus tells this parable about how He was disallowed or He was rejected of men, that He was a stone that was rejected of them. And now Peter in 1 Peter chapter 2 verse 5, when He is speaking to them, inspired by the Holy Spirit, He's telling them that your living stones are built upon a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, offering up spiritual sacrifices.

Peter is addressing a group of people that were rejected. 1 Peter 4, 4 just says it so clearly that this group of people were rejected. It says in 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 4, it says that they no longer walked with them. It says, Wherein they think it strange that you run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you, that you run not with them. This group of believers are now people that nobody's running with, that they're not walking with, that they have been rejected.

And they said that us as a rejected people connected to the living stones are now making a spiritual house. And we now participate in the life of the one who has come to us. And so the body functions are not at all. As some of you in here getting older, you know that when one member of your body has a problem, it affects all of your body. You know, you cannot continue and just ignore that.

And you have to pay attention to it. That's the example that the Bible gives us. 1 Corinthians chapter 12 verse 13 through 16, For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and having been all made to drink in the one Spirit. Verse 14, For the body is not one member, but many. It's not one, but it is many.

Let me step back here just for a moment to my storage of props. And let me tell you a story here, okay? There was once a time that a young man named Grant, and a not as young man, if you come up here, Grant, you always come. That's why nobody ever sits on the front row, all right?

[18 : 34] There was once a time that a man named Grant, and a man named Josh, and a man named Ty decided that they were going to go, come on up here if you will, that they were going to go to the new pickleball courts at Denmark Park, which is projected in the future. And they're going to go, and they're going to play pickleball, all right? And so they show up, they, Grant had a racket, and Ty had a racket, and Josh, he was responsible for bringing the ball here, okay? All right, Josh, and so the three of them, this is the way that they did it. Give me a stand right here. These three men, they would come, and they would play pickleball together, and this is the way they did it. Josh would, Ty would always bring his racket, and Grant would always bring his racket, and Josh was the one responsible for bringing the ball, all right? It's a silly way they did it, but this is the way they chose to do it, all right? And they kept everything separate, so, you know, if their cars got broken into, they wouldn't lose it all, all right?

And so they're going to play pickleball here, and, but now we decided that one of them is not going to come. One of them has decided that, you know, I just don't think I'm going to make it today.

Who are we going to get rid of up here, all right? Point to somebody. Who are we getting rid of? Who are you going to get rid of to play pickleball today? Who are we getting rid of? We're getting rid of Grant, all right? I don't know. I think that was just personal. Grant, you take the right, no, you got to take it with you, all right? And so now we have one racket, and we have pickleball.

What are we going to play today? I don't know, but it won't be pickleball, all right? It's going to be something different, and so there is no part of this that would not be important, needed, right? Everyone needs to show up, and if not, it changes the way the game is going to be played. Everyone is a member, is a minister. There was a pickleball in the Bible, so what we have here is a picture. You can be seated. Take that with you, okay? I got to get it back there. It belongs to the ministers, all right? And so what we have here is you would say, well, it's silly.

And you're like, why did I need to see that? How silly would it be to have an argument over which one of them would be needed and which one wouldn't be needed? There's an argument for each one of them to be made because they're all needed. There's not a single one of them that wasn't needed for that.

[20 : 38] Every one of them is needed, and that's what the Bible would teach us here. And so the third point is, every Christian has been given gifts by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of ministry. Every one of you has been given gifts by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of ministry. And so when members of the body, you and I, we either feel useless or when we feel self-sufficient, we as a church family do not function as we should. So let me confront those in here that feel that maybe you're useless. The first thing that I would say is the Bible says that's not true. And as the young people would say, full stop, no cap. All right? That means that it's just not true. All right? If you're in here and say, I feel like I'm useless and I don't have anything to do. Well, here's my argument. That's not true.

All right? That's what the Bible would say is that every one of you, full true story, that's what, that it means that this is what the Bible would teach. There is a need for us all to not be the same. First Corinthians 12, 17. If the whole body were an eye, where were the, where were the hearing?

If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? You see that every member and every part has a part that is a place to serve. God's designed for the church that it's good and it's wise. The next verse, in verse number 18, it says, but now hath God set the members, every one of them in the body, as it has pleased him. This is pleasing to the Lord. It is by his design that he did not sin, Ty home with all the things needed for pickleball. Ty has one part to play, but he doesn't get to have all of them in the pickleball set. All right? They have to be shared. And so here's a confrontation.

If you say that you're not needed, the Bible says that's not true. That's not his design and his design is good. It pleases him. Secondly here, if you don't think that you need others, you need to be confronted as well. Stated negatively, it says, how can the eye say to the hand, I have no need of thee, nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. 1 Corinthians 12, 21. How can one part of the body say to another, I have no need of you? Positively stated, it says it like this, verse 22, nay, much more of those members of the body would seem to be more feeble are necessary. They are necessary. The relationships that you're developing as a family of God are necessary for you. And everyone has received the gift in which we are to use. That's 1 Peter 4, 10. And every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another. How many? Every man. Every man and woman has been given a gift to be used to serve others. And so the gift that you've been given is to serve other people. And as we serve one another, we do it through the strength which God provides and the ability in which he supplies for us for his glory. And so 1 Peter 4, 11 tells us that if any of us speak, as I'm doing right now, we should do it as the oracles of God. We should say what God has said from his word. But if any man is the minister, if any member is going to minister, if they're going to serve, let him do it as the ability which God hath giveth, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom we pray as a dominion forever and ever. Amen. You might say, well, I don't want to preach as you're doing. Well, that's okay. I'll continue doing this. And you can find something else to be done, but there's certainly more to be done. And the passage here says, if you have a ministry given, you should do it as it's been provided to you as to the Lord. Every ministry that you have can receive should be done for the honor of the Lord and enabled by him. You have a God-enabled gift that you are to be developing and sharing with this church. And in Romans 12, 6 tells us that having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us. So the question is, how do I know what my gifts are that God has given me? And you have to come back at five o'clock tonight. And if you don't come back, you will live the rest of your life aimlessly wandering around, wondering what they are. Godspeed. All right, just kidding. All right. You can watch it online, but I would hope you would come. And I think I have learned something of this matter in studying it this week that I think will be an encouragement to you when you think about what is it, how has God equipped me to serve this church family and one another. Number four, lastly here, God placed people in the church to help equip you for ministry. And I believe this is part of the argument to say that every member is a minister. The notion that only the pastor or clergy do ministry and that the members or lay people are consumers, it's wrong and it's unbiblical, even though it's common. And it's just a trade-off.

I thought about writing an open letter from pastors, church members, and say, how did we get to this place? It's nice if I pretend like what I do is so mystical that none of you can do it. It's nice if I act like I'm some kind of spiritual Jedi and that you can't do anything without me. And so you pretend like I'm special and you fund my ministry and I'll let you off the hook of not doing anything.

[25 : 36] That is the relationship that is found so commonly among so many places is that there's a group of people that say, hey, we don't want to serve. We'll pay you to do it. And we'll say, well, that's fine with us. We'll do it. We'll be the professionals. And you can just watch us do it as long as you fund it.

That isn't God's plan. That isn't God's design. That is an insult to what he has created to be. And so not just looking at who he gave, and we could study that. He gave pastors and teachers evangelists. And though all of us should be involved in evangelism, there's people that God has gifted in this area. But I don't want us to look at the who. I want us to look at why he did it.

It says in verse number 12 that he did it for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ. So God gave leaders to equip the church, not to supplant them, because ministry belongs to the members. Ministry belongs to the members.

And so this is God's plan. You know, it's through ministry that you're going to best understand God's word. In our Bible Institute, we have methods of Bible study, or you might hear the big word hermeneutics that is used that just talks about what is the science and what is the understanding of how to know the Bible. How do we compare Scripture with itself? And that's all so important to understanding the Bible. You know what is also an important hermeneutic? Obedience. Obedience to God's word. This is how it's said in John 7, 17. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself. Doing the word of God or obeying the word of God is vital to understanding it. We have to live it out. You come and you receive and you learn, but you have to live it out. And that living out is walking in the manner in which we're told to do.

It's also the ministry that we are supposed to do, is living out the Scriptures. And so as we put the word of God, the practice in our lives, the Lord brings his purposes and his will and his word and the focus. I'll end with this Bible story in here today before I give you a summary. Remember when Jesus goes and he's at a wedding there with the disciples and his mother says, hey, this family that's hosted this party, there's many people who've come and there's more people than they have provision for. And so they're asked that he's going to make a miracle here to turn water into wine. And that's what's going to take place. And so that's what Jesus does. And in John chapter number two, verse number nine, it says, when the ruler of the feast has tasted the water that was made wine and knew not whence it was, but the servants which drew the water knew. The governor of the feast is called the bridegroom. This story illustrates a point that there was people that were involved there that saw it, that had understanding that other people didn't. I don't know if this is your story here today, but maybe for a long time in your life, you've shown up and you've said, I'm going to try to receive and learn all that I can on Sunday and I'm going to receive the Bible. But then you go and you just live your week and then you come back and you decide, now I'm ready to check in and to learn some more. Until you take what you've learned and you put it in the practice, you will never learn all that God has for you. That ministry is necessary for understanding God's word. And so God placed people in your life that can help you better understand and equip you to serve. And so you should consider throughout the week what it is that God would have you. And so let me review here before we pray together. For biblical reasons, we believe that every member is a minister. First of all, if you're a believer in here, you have priestly responsibilities. You have the ministry of reconciliation. It's not just for our missionaries, not just for the staff of this church. Every member in here has the ministry of reconciliation of giving your life and doing all you can to bring unbelieving people to be reconciled with the Father. We're witnesses of this. And what do you need that?

[29 : 28] You need a testimony. It needs to happen in your life. And now you witness to that and you share that with people and you study the Bible so that you can share more with other people. Next in here is we're a congregation. We're a body and we're not an audience. We're not just to be watching and giving commentary when other people do is that every one of us in here have been given gifts by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of ministry. Every one of us have been given gifts by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of ministry. And that ministry will serve one another. It'll bring glory to God and it'll help more people come to know Him. Then lastly, God has placed people in the church to help equip you in ministry. And so let me encourage you this week. Here's an application I would make if you would say, I feel like an outsider in Christianity or I feel an outsider in church where I'm watching other people do, but I've never really felt like I found my place in serving in ministry. I give you a personal invitation this week. We'll get together for coffee. We'll get together for ice cream. We'll even play pickleball if that's what you want to do. But I would love nothing more than the opportunity to help you find a place for service and how that God could be using you. And before we pray in here today, if you're among us today and you've never put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, can I tell you that there's nothing greater in all the world than serving King Jesus?

That this world offers and promises that it will give you freedom and liberty and you feel like, and maybe if I was, I have to ignore the things of God because it sounds like He's asking stuff of me, but He will ask of you, but He will give, He'll ask more of you than you think you could ever be willing to give, but He will give far more than you could ever imagine. Full surrender to Him brings great liberty. Living life as He designed it. He is the creator. And so He says today, let my people go so that they may serve me. I want you to consider, what is this Egyptian bondage that's holding you back? Why is it that you are holding back the gifts and talents, ability, and all that you've been having and say, I'm going to live it for myself? We're like the children of Israel when they're murmuring and saying, oh, we had it so good in this place. We don't have it so good in this world. We only have it good when we give our lives fully to Him and surrender.

God has wonderful plans for us all this week. He has already laid out, He has made us into good works. And let us all decide in here that we don't want to be on the outside looking again. We want to joyfully submit ourselves to what God says about every member being a minister. Would you bow your head with me and we'll pray together here. And believer in here, I speak to you first today.

I believe it's an encouragement. These values that we're going through aren't things that are being introduced that are new. This is something that's very true about us as a church. As a church, we have a reputation of being people that are high committed volunteers, that we're people that are heavily involved. But I want to ask you individually, where are you at? Has the Holy Spirit worked in your life today and says, you know what? I've gifted you with talents and abilities and you're not using them in the way in which I would want you to use them. And I would like for you to speak to Him today. Surrender to the Holy Spirit's working in your life. Accept the responsibilities that come with this role of having full access unto the Lord. Believer, you know how to speak to the Lord and that's what you should do.

I'm going to leave you to that. But if you're in here today or you're watching online and you would say, I'm not part of that. And that's true. That's what the Bible would teach. That you're not a part of that body. You're not part of that spiritual house. You truly are on the outside looking in. And let me tell you that you could be forgiven the day of your sins. That your relationship that's been broken with the God of heaven can be reconciled the day. And you should cry out to Him in prayer. And you should pray to Him and ask Him for forgiveness of sins and put your faith and trust in Him. That's what you should do right now at this moment. Don't put it off another day. The day is the day of salvation.

[33 : 31] If you pray that to Him, we'd love for you to stop by at the four-year next steps table. Not only give you booklets, but to give you a person that would walk with you in the Bible to know God's Word and help you find your place of service on the hymn. It is so wonderful that we can serve the God of heaven.

Heavenly Father, I pray the day for my brothers and sisters, Lord. May they find the wonderful joy of sharing in ministry together. Father, I pray that the Holy Spirit will do only what He can do.

I do know the hearts of your children, Father, and you know, you certainly know this. Lord, I am so grateful that you would allow me to serve you. Lord, I found freedom in serving you. And I want to say thank you. Lord, I pray that all my brothers and sisters in here, Lord, that they will stay encouraged, Lord, knowing that we're living life as you have designed it for us. And Father, I pray that no one would leave here today without a saving knowledge of you. I want to thank you for the gospel, how plain and simple it is. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.