



# Message **Transcript**

## Our Call as the Church

Mark Guthrie

- Well, good morning BRAVE church. Hey, as well, can we just welcome our Broomfield campus and everyone who is visiting online with us this morning. Let's just welcome them in. And if you are listening online with us today we're gonna be taking communion at the end of the service, so I'd encourage you gather your elements together, so at the end of the service, we together as one body can take communion together.

With that said, I'm Pastor Mark, and I am excited because in the year of 2021, we are planting a brand new church community in Spokane, Washington, and it's exciting, but at the same time, it's absolutely terrifying, right? It's super exciting and absolutely terrifying, but I love it.

And I just wanna say Alex and I have been here for about five years now, and we have been just so grateful for our time at BRAVE church and in those five years, we got to really pour into the young adults community here of 18 to 35 year olds, and I am so thankful for the opportunity to pour into the young adults here but also the young adults that have poured into me and even my wife Alex in this season, we just thank you so much for that, for your love and support over the last five years and just like any other job, the last five years, there have been seasons of complete joy and seasons where I'm just like, man, I love what I get to do, but then there's also hard seasons, right where I'm just like texting my wife, Alex, I'm like, hey, honey, just pack the things come on, we gotta go to Idaho. We're gonna be potato farmers. We got at do, we gotta go, go on and pack it up, pack it up, right. It's like, I mean, people, you wanna be potato farmers too good, I'm glad to hear that. But I'm just so grateful for what I

get to do. That God is bringing me through this season, he's walking alongside of me in it. And we are super excited as a team to head out to Spokane to plant a church community for the glory of Jesus Christ, amen.

So would you join me in prayer today before we get into the word? Father, we love you and we thank you and this morning is for you. And so Lord, I pray that you would get the glory today that you would be praised that you would be high and lifted up and that through your word and through your spirit in our lives, you would soften our hearts, open up our eyes and open up our ears, to the will that you have in our lives. That Lord in ways that we're holding on to this earth would you help us just to release it to have more of you God that we would walk in alignment with you this morning. And Father as just a vessel today, I pray, Jesus, that I would not distract from you, or distract from your word. But I would only herald and champion the truth that is here in such a way that we could see more of your glory. And so Lord, we desire more of you. And so in this place, unify us through your spirit and do a mighty work. And it's all God's people that said, amen.

So I'm gonna be walking today through Matthew 22. So please open up your Bibles, turn on your cell phones get to Matthew 22 and we're looking at verses 36 to 40. Matthew 22 verses 36 to 40. And today in these five verses that I'm about to read for you the statement of Jesus Christ is the most central tenet of our Christian faith. And for seven years now, as the Lord has kind of been staring in me, this church planting process and a desire to plant this church community, I keep coming back to

these five verses. That this is the drive for the church that this is the mission that God has for his church. And what we're gonna read from Jesus Christ today, this statement in these five verses, is that from Genesis one all the way to Revelation 22, in these five verses, all of God's word and scriptures are held upon, depend upon and find its fulfillment in these five verses. And I believe that if we as a church community as believers in Jesus Christ, choose to step into these statements from Jesus, we will see the most fruitful life of ministry here on this earth. That we will see church communities transform for the gospel that we will see our neighborhoods transformed for the gospel, family members, coworkers, friends, that we live down the street, I mean anyone will be transformed by the work of the gospel if we choose to step into these things. So my goal this morning is this is to give you three statements of living. So that we can choose to walk into it, and see God's fruitfulness and glory in our lives.

And so let's read starting in verse 36. And what we're gonna see here, before we get in, is that Jesus has entered into Jerusalem, right. We see the triumphant entry that he is Hosanna that he is king that he is worshiped for who he is, the he is the Son of God, but there are some people who are pretty ticked off about that statement. There's the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and the scribes who do not wanna see this man glorified as King because he's a blasphemer. Or how can Jesus say that he's God, there's no way that this man, this son, this Jesus is actually the God. And so they're gonna try and call him out. And the Pharisees they know the law, right? They know the Old Testament, they know the first five books, they know it by heart. And so they're gonna ask a question here to Jesus to try and trip him up to show that he's

really not the Son of God. That you should not give your worship to him because he is a blasphemer, a liar and a fraud. And so they're gonna ask him, well, teacher, what is the great commandment in the law? Because in their minds, every commandment is great. And so whatever response Jesus gives here, is just gonna be a lie. And so we're gonna see Christ's response and how his response is actually the glory of all of Scripture.

And so let's read this. Verse 36, this is the lawyer asking him, one who knows the law, teacher, which is the great commandment in the law? And Jesus said to him, you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul, and with all your mind this is the great and foremost commandment. And now the second one is like it You shall love your neighbor as yourself and now listen to this verse 40, on these two commandments right here, depend the whole law and prophets. And so statement number one for you today is this. Love God, love God.

See, Christ makes this claim here to love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul and all your mind. But we, as people here on this earth have to ask the question, why? Why, why should I love the Lord my God, with all my heart, and with all my soul? And with all my mind, why? You know, for so long, I heard the gospel, but I think it was a cheap form of Christianity where I could have all of Jesus and he doesn't have to have all of me. Right and we hear the gospel, and we think that it's like, wow, this free gift of salvation is before me and now I can have salvation so I can live the rest of my life here on this earth for myself. That's what I thought. I thought that that was the salvation. I thought that was the gospel that I could have all of him, but he

doesn't have to have all of me. And I was never disciplined through that to see why I needed to give the Lord all of my life. And so for so long I lived with this Christian guilt game of, well, Jesus did this for me, so now I got to do some good things for him so that he loves me and cares for me, right. That is such a lie.

And so my hope this morning, what I wanna do, and Justin laid it out for us earlier is to pour this dump truck of concrete out for us to lay this huge foundation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, of our relationship for him because so many of us have just bits and pieces of this foundation, right? We don't actually have a whole solid foundation. What we try and do is we try and build upon this foundation and cares of the world, money, anxiety, circumstances, cancer, death, whatever it may be, comes in and crushes that foundation because we have a false sense of who our God is and who we are in him. So my hope is just to lay this foundation out in the beginning here.

So Jesus in this story in Matthew 22 was asked, all right, teacher, what's the great commandment? All in all let's hear it right? And Jesus being fully God, and knowing the whole word, and being the word in flesh, brought up a verse from Deuteronomy, chapter six, verse five, that you shall love the Lord your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. And so what Christ is saying here, is this is that all that you are, is for me. Right, Jesus is making the statement here that everything that you are you worship me with. That all of your personality, right, all of your flaws, your weaknesses, your strengths, all of that is to the glory of me. And here's the thing, is that Christ can make this claim this morning and in this text, because he is fully God, Jesus Christ was in glory, on the throne, came

to this earth as the fullness of man to show all of humanity his power, but also to show all of humanity his love and he took his precious life as a perfect sacrifice to the cross, right. The spotless lamb, this one who is perfect, went to the cross, because you and I, and everyone in this room and everyone listening in Broomfield and at online campuses, we have been born into sin and because of that sin, we have been born into death.

And here's the thing, here's what I struggled with for so long, right? It's because of our sin and our rebellion that we have created this chasm between us and God, and I thought for so long that there's some kind of ladder that I could toss across and make my way to God. All right that there's some kind of rope swing that I can just hop on and swing my way over like spider man and like here God, I'm here, right? I mean, it's I thought I could get to him. I thought there was some good deed or some homeless person that I could love or something that I can conjure up here on this earth in such a way that would remove the wrath of God off of my life, but God. But God and His love and kindness and mercy and strength and in His perfect holiness and justice, what he did for you and I and everyone listening in this morning is he took the wrath that was for us and placed it fully upon his son. And this perfect Jesus who knew no sin became sin. And this Jesus drank the fullness of my death, and my shame and my guilt so that I could have life. And so this Jesus, he became the bridge between us and God to the cross. That he was crucified on the cross that he was buried in the grave, that three days later he rose out of that grave, victorious, forever crushing the penalty of sin in our lives for the purpose that I would have great mercy in my life to see the fullness of

God and the fullness of who I am to call upon Jesus to be saved. And in that we find eternal life. I mean, you should be doing cartwheels right now with that statement.

And here's the thing, we've heard that, we've heard the gospel, right and so for a lot of us it's like okay, yeah Mark, I've surrendered my life to Christ and my eternal security is changed, I get that I'm gonna die here on this earth and when I die I'm gonna go to heaven, right. My eternal security is changed but why now? Why does Jesus want all my hearts and all my soul and all my mind now? Why can't I have these things now here on this earth and then because I'm gonna be an eternity with Jesus, He's gonna have everything then, right? Can't I just live this way now? Write down this verse, Colossians chapter three, verses three to four says for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. Now church, listen to this next line. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. When Christ who is your life. What those verses say is that when I have surrendered my life to Jesus Christ, I have been crucified on the cross with him, I've been buried in the grave with him and I've been raised up from the dead with him and so now here on this earth, here on this moment, what Colossians three says is Christ is your life. Not when I die and I breathe my final breath here then Christ will be my life, but Christ is the fullness of your life now, he is everything now.

I mean, do you hear that your job is not your life. Your spouse is not the fullness of your life. My 401k that I build up here on this earth is not my life. My physical shape is not my life. What my friends think about me or my friends in general, that's not my life, but Christ is everything. He is my all in all. He is my joy. He is my greatest



treasure. And so when he says to me in this text, love me with all your hearts and with all your soul and with all your mind you shouldn't go ah, really? Alright, I guess I gotta just give these things over to you, Lord. I mean, that's, legalism. I mean, do you hear that? It's just like, okay, I gotta give this to you Jesus. Here's the word that we should be using worship, right? We worship God with these things. It's not an act of legalism, but it's like Christ, you are my everything. And I thank you for giving me everything. And so here is everything. Take it because I know that you are everything.

And here's what I love, please don't miss this. Because I missed this for so long. That when we begin to surrender the things of this earth, our money, our relationships, what people think about me, my title and my job, when we surrender those here on this earth, and then begin to give Jesus more of our heart, and our soul and our mind what we get in return, is him. We get more of him. As we surrender us, we get him. I mean, do you hear the beauty in that? That's a mutual transaction here. And we went out always. What does Christ have? Everything, Christ has unconditional love for your life. In his presence, there's fullness of joy. Who needs more joy here? In his presence, there's perfect peace. Who needs some peace? Right, in his presence there's mercy and strength. Who needs mercy and strengthen their life? And so Christ is saying lay those down because the things of this world pale in comparison to my beauty and my grace and my mercy and my love for your life, just lay them down and come to me. Right, how's that for a foundation? That's what we build upon. That is where we start.

And now that we've started there, let's build. Let's get some walls up. Let's get

some windows going on, let's get some nice bathrooms happening, some Pinterest bedrooms. I mean, come on, let's work this thing up and get it going. And so church, Jesus wants all our heart, soul and mind. That's a massive statement. All right, that's a huge statement. And so all we gotta start doing here is some little holy, spiritual assessment, right. The Holy Spirit in our lives, calling upon him praying to Him and saying, Lord, show me, in me the treasures that I'm holding on to because if God is gonna be our greatest treasure, then we gotta let go the treasures of the earth. All right, Matthew says do not store up for yourselves treasures here on this earth where rust and moth destroy but store up treasures in heaven. Because listen, where your treasure is there's your heart. And so we gotta ask the spirit in our lives, Lord, show me. And that's a prayer the Lord loves to answer. Is God show me my sin. Show me where I'm going away from you. Show me in my life how I can come into alignment with you and He will.

And so I wanna give us a couple application points in the midst of this. Because this is such a big statement. All my heart, soul and mind. Okay, where do I start? Alright, let's start here. How about time? We love in North America our time, right? How we plan out our weeks and what we look like in our days. And each moment, each all right we plan out, we love our time. And if you're like me for so long, what I used to do was compartmentalize my faith, right? Here's when I go to church on Sunday mornings. And then here's my job. And then here's when I go to class in school, and then here's when I hang out with my friends. And then maybe I'll sprinkle a little more Jesus time in when I go to my small group. And then here's when I go to the

gym, and then oh, wait, there's a new show on Netflix, so that's gonna take up about another 30 hours in my week, right? And so we start compartmentalizing our faith. Listen to this. This just like, just rocked my world this week when I read this. A study was done on Christians in North America. There's 168 hours in a week, the average Christian devotes about three to five hours to Jesus Christ. Three to five. That should break our hearts. That when people look out, a Christian is averaging about three to five hours of just worshiping Him or being in the Bible or praying or seeking Him in that way. Now listen to this very carefully. Because in our minds, we think, well, this is when I go to church and this is when I go to Bible study, Jesus Christ and not give up his whole life on the cross for three to five hours of your week. Jesus Christ didn't die the cross so that you can go to church on Sunday morning, Jesus Christ died on the cross so that you could be the church 100% of the week. That we would be completely transformed. Blood bought Christians in such a way that we would live every second for the glory of God.

And I don't want you to hear me on this either. Because I'm not saying to you, that, well, now you're a surrendered Christian, so you got to sell everything. And you gotta cancel your Netflix subscription after church here today, right? I mean, and now you gotta go sell off your possessions go to the forest of Colorado, and just worship God, right? That's not what I'm saying. What I am saying to you, though, is that as Christians, we approach our week different. We approach our time in such a way that would bring glory to God, not self. We would approach each second, conversation, email, our neighbors, our co workers, our friends our family, in such a way to say,

God, how can you get the glory in this situation? How can I become less and you have more of my heart and soul and mind in such a way that brings you great glory. So we approach our weeks with intentionality so that our lives could be to the glory of God. When we also think about our heart, soul mind what we have to think about Jesus spoke on two things here on this earth, the most was Kingdom of God and money. Money, because our money has a direct tie to our heart, soul and mind amen, our money, I mean, if we love something we spend our money on it. Alright if you were to look in my garage without shame, I have about 10 camping backpacks, a closet full of camping gear, and I go about three times a year. I'm like, what am I doing here, I'm spending all my money on this thing and I use it for about 30 hours out of a year. All right, what I mean, what we love, we just dump our money towards. And then if your bank account is looking a little slim this week, it crushes your peace and your security. And Christ came to preach the message of money because he knows how easily money controls us. But he doesn't want money to control you he wants himself to control you. Because when money controls you, your peace and your security fly out the window. But when Jesus controls you, there's fullness of peace. And so he's looking for his church, to be one who manages money in such a way that gives him glory. And here's the beauty, because I still struggle with this, where I like to hold on to my money. But God is over all of it. His scripture says, if he closed the lilies of the fields and feeds the sparrows, how much more is gonna take care of and watch over his children. And so our God is over everything. And our God is over our finances so we can come humbly before the Father and lay down those finances because he's

trustworthy. And he cares.

And another aspect that I wanna talk on and this is huge, this is just the last application point in this, to love God with all your heart, soul and mind is God is looking for us to be kingdom seekers. Seek first the kingdom of God, and all of these things will be added to you right? Kingdom seekers and so what that means is to be kingdom seers and kingdom thinkers, kingdom, seers and thinkers. So write this verse down Matthew six 22, but it says, this is Jesus talking, the eye is the lamp of the body, so if your eye is healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light in you is darkness, how great is the darkness? See church, what we look at, affects our worship of God. And when we look at the cares of the world around us, it completely affects our worship of God. And so Jesus is saying, look to me, look to me, look to the things that are above of holy and pure and righteous and blameless and good and the gospel. And there we can be people full of light.

And the second aspect is be kingdom thinkers. Second Corinthians 10 five, please write this down. But it says to take every thought captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ. Listen, this is so crucial. What is the biggest weapon that the enemy has against us? Is to lie right? Is to come to us with lies, that when you mess up, it's like how could you do that? Right, you should be in so much shame and guilt. You're such a failure, you're not gonna God doesn't love you, are you even saved? Oh I mean, what are you thinking, right? And so the enemy floods in lies of fear and lust and temptation and entitlement and all these things. But listen, if you are a blood bought Christian, if

you have surrendered your life to Jesus Christ and claimed his lordship and his salvation, you're free, amen. We are free and free indeed. And in that we have a living hope, which is Jesus Christ. So even though we stand in this world, our citizenship is held in heaven, and it's being kept safe by the power of God. And so we are freed up Christians but we don't think like it. And so the enemy loves to get our thoughts misaligned with our identity in Jesus Christ. And then when that happens, Jesus ain't getting our heart and soul and mind. We've given it over to the enemy. Over to the cares of the world. When Christ is like, hold up, you're free already in me.

Listen, this played such a huge role in my life because I grew up with this legalistic mindset there that if I played the part, if I went to church on Sunday mornings, if I read my word, if I prayed in the week, then God would love me, right? And that thought process as a child still leaks into my adulthood that if I miss a quiet time in the morning, I'm like, I'm a pastor, I can't miss my quiet time. And then so much shame and guilt floods into my life. And it's like, how could you miss that? How can you even lead God's people, this is just gonna be a pattern that you're stuck in forever. God doesn't love you. And then what I do as fast as I can, is I try and get into that quiet time because that's a space where God loves me, right? That's such a lie from the pit of hell. To think that I'm strong enough that my actions can dictate the love of God for me? Listen, the only action that mattered was the one on the cross from Jesus Christ. And he paid it in full and said it is finished. And so we stand in that and no silly failure of missing my quiet time in the morning is ever gonna strip that love away.

And so we have lies from the enemy. And the best way to combat that is from

here. Is to be people of God's word. Is to know the truth that these scriptures hold in such a way that we can speak that truth over our lives. Then when the lies of the enemy come in we say, no, no, no, hold on, hold on, wait, wait, God's word says that I'm holy. God's word says that I'm blameless. God's word says I'm righteous that I'm a royal priesthood, that I'm a holy nation, that I'm a chosen one, that I'm already free that I'm more than a conqueror in Christ Jesus. So get those lies out of here, cause I'm free. So in all this as we abide with Jesus Christ, it's for a great purpose.

Let's get into our next point here. Verse 39, to 40. So, first, as you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul mind and now verse 39 says, the second commandment is like it that you shall love your neighbor as yourself. And on these two commandments depend the whole law and prophets. Now listen, this is a long point. So make sure you write it down, look closely, love others. Right, love others. I'll give you a few seconds write that down. Love others, that my abiding relationship with Jesus Christ, listen to this, that my abiding relationship with Jesus should result in a love for his people. It must, it's a commandment, that I should abide with Christ so that I can love. Do you know this? Listen, your faith, my faith, the faith of the people who are listening, your faith is not for yourself. It's for others.

And the issue is, is that we've grown into comfort of consumeristic ministry where it's like I just come on Sunday mornings and I come here to just fill up myself. And then the reason why we sit all warm and fuzzy and then walk in and never apply is cause we've isolated ourselves from God's community. That God is looking for our faith to be expressed in people. And we also sit in this consumeristic mindset, when we come to

Bible Sunday, it's like, well, I gotta consume. I gotta, I mean, I'm here for me, right? And so you, you just talk in your small group, and then you don't actually pour into those around you because it's about me. My faith is for me when Jesus Christ is like, hold up, actually, your faith is so that the gospel could be expressed through your life.

See my quiet time with Jesus, is so that I can love my wife and point her to Jesus. My quiet time of my life is so that I can point my family members who don't know him to him. My quiet time in the morning is so that I can love my coworker in such a way that I can't do on my own. All right, my quiet time in the morning is so that I can love around. Now just think about that. If I spend all of this great time with Jesus in the morning and it's just Jesus and I and we're just getting after it and I love Jesus and he loves me and we're just one big happy family, you know, that nice little song right there? And it's like I walk out of my quiet time, and I'm super harsh and bitter and angry towards my wife. What good does that do? I just think about that if I'm spending an hour in the morning, I'm just loving God and I'm just in communion with him. And then I walk out of there and five minutes later all the world sees is my selfishness and not a loving God. What good does that do? If they see how selfish I am in traffic, or the way that I approach food or the way that I get drunk on the weekends, or the way that I love slandering and cursing and gossiping towards others, it's like what good does that do? Because listen, church, our love for God should result in fruit and that fruit is for others. That fruit is joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self control. And that is for all of those around you.



And I also want you to hear me this morning too. Because it's easy just to sit there and go, well, gee, I'm not doing that. God's not looking for perfection. The joy and the fruit in your life, it's not gonna be produced perfectly, right? And I want you to get out of that mindset that you gotta come all dolled up to church and have the perfect game on because Jesus is expecting perfection and the community around me is expecting perfection because that's when the enemy brings in lies of shame and guilt and say, you're never gonna amount to anything as a Christian. Jesus is not looking for perfection, but he's looking for progression, for growth. That is there fruit in my life? Do people see you Lord? And if they don't, then just pray. Just say Lord, where's the disconnect in my abiding with you that I'm not able to stand in the fruit of your goodness and your love in these situations? And God's merciful. He'll give you strength in that. And so we're not achieving perfection here. Because listen, this world is dying apart from Jesus Christ and they need to see God's love and gospel expressed through your life. They need to. God has chosen us as his vehicles for his gospel message.

And so church the reason why we gather here on Sunday mornings, the reason why you're listening in online and at the Broomfield campus is so that we can abide in a relationship with Jesus to be poured out and pressed into community. God is desiring a John 10 community. What'd I mean by that? In John 10, it's a passage that probably a lot of you know, but Jesus is saying, I am the good shepherd. I know my sheep and my sheep know me in the same way I know my father and my father knows me. I mean, just think about that for a second. Him and the Father are in perfect unity. God

knows everything about Jesus. And Jesus knows everything about God. And he's saying that I know my sheep, and my sheep know me.

I have not been in a John 10 community until the last two years of being here at BRAVE. Alex and I are in a community of people where we know one another and are known. In a community where we have made God our prized treasure, to say that we love him and we're gonna press into community and see what happens. Because that's what God is desiring, this John 10 community where you know God and God knows you fully. And in that relationship, you get to pour that out to others and allow others into your life and you press into others. And the reason why it's so powerful, it's not because me and my friends we're just great people, and we just get all it together and we just know our scripture. No, that's not why it's powerful. It's powerful because we know that God is powerful, and we've made him our main mission to be in relationship with Him so that that can be poured out to others. And it's beautiful. It is so beautiful because as men and women, we see God and we see his holiness and his goodness and his love and his mercy. And we see his holiness in such a way that shows us our sinfulness in such a way that shows us our need for him. And what's beautiful about that is I can come to the group of guys in the week and just be like, boohoo. Alright, here's all my stuff. All right, here's my failures this week. Here's my sins this week. Here's my imperfections this week, and I'll tell you what, the response is not this. What, wait, hold on, you just said you did what? how, you're supposed to come here perfect, right. You're supposed to be all dolled up. All right, they don't drop their jaw when I share something with them. And I know that you've been in community before

where you have felt that rejection, and that persecution of man. How could you do that? But here's the thing as men and women of God, we see God for his holiness and our need for him, and in that we're able to love others with God's love, in such a way that when someone shares something, our jaws won't drop. But we'll say, man, I love you, and I wanna point you to Jesus Christ. And that's powerful, amen. That is a community that God is desiring for his church in such a way where we can be in unity where you let a community in, who knows you.

And now let me just say this. It's in frequency of community where we can fully know one another. I truly believe that it's hard to get to know one another in an hour small group time once a week. That in a time where it's kind of structured because listen if you're like me, I'm real good at faking it. All right, I can come in week to week to week to tell you kind of what I want you to hear. And then I'm really good at faking it. And some of you in this room are really good at faking it. But we hang out like two to three times a week, and sometimes I'm like, I don't wanna hang out with you. But I know that it's the best thing for me. And it's in that frequency of community where people get to see my struggles. Where people get to see me in situations where I can't hide it. And I lash out in anger, or I'm selfish or I'm self seeking, and they just see me in my flesh and the beautiful thing is, is that they point me to Jesus. Right, they don't condemn me, but they love me through it.

And so my question for you church is, this isn't a condemning question, but are you known? Right, who do you know? Do you know? Because if God's church is gonna be one, we gotta know one another. And some of you are like, I don't want anyone to

know me. I don't want anyone to know my past hurts or what I struggle with or what I'm going through. But listen, you cannot have a relationship with God and forfeit the community of God. You just can't. You cannot have a relationship with the Father and forfeit the community of God. And now listen, here's also where the power comes into play is that when a community chooses to make God the main thing, when it's like God, I just want you to have all the glory in this situation. I want you to have all the glory in this community, I want people around me to know you, you begin to build community up around the cross rather than your comfort. Which is huge. Because our comfort would say, well, I need to be in community with everyone that looks like me. I need to be in community with everyone my age who's struggling with the same thing so that we can kinda collaborate together and talk about our experiences. Or I need to be in community with people who share things like me and share the same habits and look like me and talk like me and think like me see, that's our comfort, cause we think that the cross came for our comfort in such a way where I can spend my time the way I want to, I can sin this week the way I want to because I'm saved, right? God has already saved me. And so I'm here to be comfortable. Where Jesus says hold up, the cross actually came to radically transform you in such a way where you can be in relationship to him and love one another. And because of that cross, and because of the spirit in my life and the spirit in your life, I can love you though you're totally different than me.

And when community begins to be built up around that there's no stopping that. Our biblical soul care pastor said this this weekend, I love it, and so I'm going to steal

it from him. But he says this, and I encourage you to write this down. But community is not designed so that you can experience more of each other but more of Christ.

Community is designed, not so that you can experience more of me but more of God. I mean let's just sit in that for a moment. If you're married, listen, your spouse isn't there so that you, that she or him can experience more of you, but more of Jesus, no matter how great you think you are. My wife just whispered amen over there, so. And listen, if you are not married, your desire should not be marriage, but it should be more of Jesus Christ. And I want you to hear this. If you are listening in online or at the Broomfield campus or here today and you aren't married, you have such a great purpose in the kingdom of God. Such a great purpose in the kingdom of God, that your earthly relationship status does not denounce you from ministry. That you're not a subpar Christian or a less than christian because you don't have a partner here on this earth because our main relationship is Jesus Christ. And so all of us should be championing one another, not because of our earthly relationships, but because of our identity in him. When we begin to do that, then we'll have small groups of single people and married people and single mothers and people from all different ages from five to 105, because it's built around the cross.

Yeah, one more point for us today. So I want us to turn to Matthew nine. We're gonna look just at a different part of scripture here. But so far, we've talked about our love for God and how that's poured out to our love for others. And this last thing I wanna talk about is out of Matthew nine. And in this story, what we see is that Jesus Christ has been traveling to every single city, right. He's healing all kinds of diseases,

he's going from synagogue to synagogue, and he's preaching the word of God, right. People are seeing miracles and signs of wonders, and the gospel is being proclaimed. And so all of this is happening. And I gotta imagine people are like, whoa, whoa, whoa like, we got to go and follow this Jesus, right? We gotta go. And so there's this huge crowd just following after him as he's been doing this earthly ministry and in these verses, what we see is Christ looks out onto this crowd with his disciples and says this verse 36, seeing the people, he felt compassion for them because they were distressed and dispirited, like sheep without a shepherd. Then Jesus says this, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers, the laborers are few. Therefore beseech, come to, pray to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

Now listen in the context of our relationship to God and our relationship to others. We need to labor in love for those relationships. We labor in love for those relationships, because nothing that I'm talking to you about this morning is easy. Our abiding with the Father and laying down the things of this world and pouring that out to community is not easy, because we are selfish, imperfect people. But the beautiful thing is that we have a Jesus, a Lord of the harvest, who wants to co labor with you in all of that. And the beautiful thing is that when co-labor with Jesus and I head out into the harvest, everyone around me sees Jesus. Everyone sees Jesus not Mark, they don't need more of Mark, they need more of him. And so what we get is this beautiful picture of an all encompassing love and strength and power of Jesus Christ where as you abide in him, he's before you, on your behalf, interceding to the Father. And he's going before you smoothing out those rough places, and cutting down the iron bars in

his way. And he's alongside of you, as your co-laborer stepping every single step of the way, giving you his yoke and saying, listen, it's gentle, and it's easy take it upon you and find rest. He's also behind you as your rear guard, protecting you from the enemy. He's above you watching over you sovereignly and listen, this is the best one of all. He is in you through his Holy Spirit giving you everything that you need for this life and godliness. And so when you abide in him, people see him. And people need to see him.

And so Jesus says, yo, you gotta go, you gotta go into the harvest, you gotta go labor and labor with me so that people can be brought to a saving knowledge of Him. And so I didn't know much about labor or the pregnancy process until the last 11 months of my life and to tell you the truth, I still know nothing about it, right? But my wife Alex actually gave birth to our beautiful girl, Willa she's right up here on the screen. Yep, super cute. Yeah and I know I might be biased cause I'm her dad. And I know like every parent's like oh my kid's just the cutest my kid is so stinking cute. You're all a bunch of liars cause that girl's the cutest right there, right? Well, listen this life right here didn't just appear on this earth. This life, this miracle of life did not just happen here on this earth. There was a process right, it was a process of of Alex changing and Willa just growing in her. Her expectations just being set aside. And her schedule being different and her laboring through this process of man, this child has to come into this world, but man, oh, everything's just changing, right? I mean it was hard. And she had to lay down those self expectations. And I truly believe, women, that if you didn't know what was on the other end of this thing, you would never go through

that process. But we do, we labor, right. And if you've gone through the adoption process, it's long, and it's stressful, and it's hard. But you know, that it's so worth it, to bring this miracle of life into the world to bring that child home into your house to love them and care for them and to bring them about and Christ is looking out at this harvest today with great compassion, saying, it's so worth it. It's so worth it. And the same thing for us. He's saying man if you just abide in me, and pour that out to others, it's so worth it. Yes, it's gonna be a laboring process but it will be worth it, it will be the best thing that you have ever experienced here on this earth.

And what we see in the gospel of Mark chapter two is this beautiful story of this paralytic man being brought to Jesus Christ. And what I love from the story is that there are four men who bring this paralytic to Jesus. And we don't know how long they've been walking, but they're carrying this paralytic man and everyone is in Jesus's home just wanting to consume, right, wanting to sit there and hear from Jesus and see Jesus and let Jesus see them. But these these men have a different mission that they want this paralytic man to be brought to Jesus. And so they do, they bring him to Jesus and we have no idea how long they walked, but they tried to get to the front door but it was such a crowd and so they walk along the side and they find a ladder and they head up onto the roof and they open up the roof and I want you to hear this, this isn't like some piece of sheet metal where they're like, well alright, hey Jesus, we're here with the paralytic man. All right it's like they had to claw their way through clay and mud, vandalizing the home of Jesus Christ, hoping that he would not be offended by what they did so that they could bring this paralytic man to the presence of Christ. And



here's what I love. He saw the faith of those men. And he said, son, your sins are forgiven. Not only that, but the miracles kept happening. He restored the body of the paralytic and told him to pick up your palate and walk and he did. And not only that, but everyone that was around were amazed and gave great glory to God. Now Jesus saw the labor in the faith of those men to get that paralytic man to Jesus Christ.

And here's what I'm telling you is that that's the calling that Jesus has on our lives, that we would be faithful men and women to bring the brokenhearted, to bring the abused, to bring the neglected, to bring those who are suffering from strongholds of addictions, to bring those who have gone through abuse or abortion or just rough family situations. And God is calling us to go co labor with him to bring him to the presence of Jesus so that we would see restoration happen. That we would see new life sprout up and the beautiful thing is God's calling out for this church here but he's also calling out for the church that we plant in Spokane. And right now, God is building up that team It has about 12 faithful men and women already on this team to head out into Spokane to co-labor with Jesus for a harvest to see new life happen.

And it's in those beautiful communities of knowing one another and being known that we will see reconciliation and healings and miracles and restoration happen. All right, that we'll see people who have been struggling with abuse from the past just be covered with love. That we will see adulterous relationships actually stopped in their tracks because people are in a knowing relationship with one another. That we'll see reconciliation from race happening. And we'll see new life sprout up and we'll see people healed and restored, all of these things will begin to take place because this is

the community of God that God is calling on. And so I wanna ask of you today, all of you have a role to pray for this community that's being sent out, to pray for your community here, to press into community here. But also God might be stirring on some of your hearts to head to this crazy city of Spokane with us. And if he's stirring in that in you press into that, but also talk to me. Talk to Alex, my wife, we would love to talk to you about that. And you can also partner with us financially. All three of those modes are great for partnership that we would love. But us as a team, were praying through that God would send out this community to Spokane to see a harvest come for the glory of Jesus's name, amen.

But also, the gospel has been said many times here today, the gospel has been displayed in the songs that we've been singing, what Pastor Justin said, what we said in this message today, so I don't want to go past this without thinking that God has been stirring in you to have an abiding relationship with Him. That you've been walking in this world and you've been trying to muster it on your own and you've been trying to strength it on your own strength, but Jesus Christ, is saying surrender to me, come to me and I can give you the fullness of everything. And so I wanna give you the opportunity to pray into that. If you would love to surrender your life to Christ, because scripture says that if you believe in your heart that Jesus is Lord, and that Christ God has raised him from the grave, you will be saved. But also for us who have been sitting here, we've been Christians for five, 10, 15, 20,30, 70 years, whatever it may be, and the Lord is just saying, hey, you're holding on to some treasures right now here on this earth. You're holding on to some things that's actually causing you to not fully devote

yourself to me. Right, let's surrender those. Let's lay those down at Jesus feet, not an act of legalism, but to know that it's this beautiful mutual transaction as I lay down things God pours in and I get more of him.

So join me in prayer. Jesus, thank you for dying on the cross. I know that I'm a sinner. I know that I'm dead in my sins, but Jesus right now, I claim your salvation and your love in my life and I ask you to be the Lord of my life. Jesus have all of me. I surrender all of me, to you. Father, I just pray as we're sitting here, and things are stirring about in our hearts that we're holding on to, whether it's finances, or our relationships, or our anger, or our bitterness from the past, or whatever it may be that that's keeping us from having our full heart and our mind and our soul devoted to you, oh, Lord, I pray that we would surrender right now. That we just open up our hands and lay it down at your feet, knowing that you're a good father, a faithful father who wants those things and to love us through it. And so God I pray that we would be a community that is fully devoted to you, Lord Jesus, and fully devoted to loving one another. That your church is the main vehicle of love and truth and gospel and grace and Lord that we would be that vehicle. So, Lord, do a mighty work in our lives and help us to surrender those things to you. And so all these things I pray amen, amen.