



# Message **Transcript**

## Pause to Praise

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When I was growing up, if there was a television program that started at 7:00 PM and you missed the time at 7:00 PM, guess what that meant? You never saw that program. You couldn't watch it on YouTube after it was done, you couldn't pull it up on your phone, you couldn't see it. I mean, my kids, when I tell them about what technology was like when I was a kid, they can't believe it. They can't believe that when I was in college, email didn't exist. They can't believe there were no cell phones. They wonder how I even survived.

But now when it comes to watching a movie or watching a television program, not only can you record it, but even when you're watching it back, you get to watch it at your time because there's a button that you can push that's called a pause button. When you hit the pause button, what you're really saying is, "Something more important's come up than I need to tend to. I'll come back to this later." It's something that all of us use from time to time. Today, we're going to hit the pause button. The reason we're going to hit the pause button is there's something more important to do than just continuing to plod along.

We're going to pause to praise. We're going to pause to praise the Lord. Now, I love teaching through the word of God and I am enjoying the book of Hebrew so much. Every time I'm in a book, I think this may be my new favorite book in the entire Bible. Lord willing, next weekend we'll be in Hebrews chapter seven talking about the order of Melchizedek and what all that means. But I think as a church we've been really good over the years for the last 11 and a half years at vision and stepping on the faith pedal and going where we need to go.

But oftentimes, when God has done some great things, we haven't hit the pause button long enough to say, "God, thank you so much and we want to give you praise." And here's why we want to praise, because God inhabits the praises of his people. Did you know that? When we praise, we experience God's presence. Whether you know it or not, whatever you're dealing with in life today, maybe you're going through a challenging time, maybe you're going through an exciting time and you want to share that, praise is really what you're looking for because praise brings the presence of God and God's presence is deeply what you're yearning for.

When you experience God's presence, I can tell you what happens. Every time you experience God's presence, transformation, more conformity into the image of Christ. And so today, we wanted to pause to praise, where we're gearing our service in such a way today that we can have a response at the end, that we'll have testimony. Some of you that are sitting in this section, in this section over here, and some up in the balcony, two-sentence testimonies that you're going to get to share. I thank God for... You're going to get to fill in the blanks. We got to hear from several people in last service who were such a blessing.

So hear how the Lord's going to speak to you this morning. For some of you, you may be like me when I was growing up. "Praise, why would I want to do that? I mean, that's kind of boring. That's kind of routine. That's kind of religious. I don't like singing all that much." All I cared about when I went to church was, let's get through the singing part quick, hope the pastor is short so I can get home and watch the NFL, and

let's get out of here. But praise is really what we want, because when we praise, we experience the presence of God.

So today, I wanted to look at a section of scripture we don't often look at. It's in 1 Chronicles chapter 29. While you're turning to 1 Chronicles chapter 29, I think it's appropriate, because what was going on there, you'll remember your history that Saul was the first king of Israel. David was the next king of Israel and his son, Solomon, became the third king. David wanted to build a temple for the Lord, but the Lord told David that he couldn't build the temple because his hands had shed too much blood and that his son, Solomon, was going to be the one that built the temple.

So David, because of who he was, he wanted to help raise all the money to get the temple built so that his son, Solomon, could walk in the righteous ways of God and that the nation of Israel could experience the presence of God there. What we have in 1 Chronicles chapter 29 is David has now assembled all the people. If you look at 1 Chronicles 28:1, you'll see all the people that were there. Every notable was there. Everybody politically that was known anything was there, everybody religiously was there, anybody who was kind of a who's who of Israel meeting.

They all gathered there and David began to give praise to the Lord and then willingly gave a bunch of money, gave a bunch of gold, gave a bunch of different things, and the people all willingly gave as well. And after he gave, David began to praise the Lord. In this section of scripture, as we look in 1 Chronicles 29:10-20, we're going to look at seven attributes of God, seven reasons why today we should praise the Lord. We're going to go through these rather quickly. For those of you that are tuning on

already, just come back for the last point. Okay?

The last point will take me about 30 seconds and I'll give you one word that will tie all this stuff together, one word that you can remember. But I want to look at these seven attributes of God for why we should pause to praise today. And today, we should pause to praise because first and foremost, our God is supreme. He's supreme. 1 Chronicles 29:10 says, "So David blessed the Lord in the sight of all the assembly. And David said, 'Blessed are you, O Lord God of Israel our Father, forever and ever. Yours, O God, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty.

Indeed, everything that is in the heavens and on the Earth, yours is the dominion, O Lord, and you exalt yourself as head over all.'" Who's head? Who's in charge? Who's the king of kings? Who's the Lord of Lords? God answers, "I am. That's who I am." Supreme means highest rank. It means all authority. It means paramount. It means chief. The reason we praise God is because when we praise God, many people think praise is about, that's just what God wants. God wants me to praise Him, that's what I have to do. And why does God want praise?

Because He's the only one that's worthy of it. He's the only one that can handle it. But when we praise and we experience God's presence, there's great joy in the praise that we bring to God. So there's personal benefit in our praise. And in each of these attributes, as you get to know the Lord and you get to know Him in each of these ways, as you get to know the Lord as supreme, as chief, as first in rank, and you get

to see Him as that, that will transform your life. All of us, whether you know it or not, we praise. Did you know we all praise?

We just praise different things because we were designed to praise. It's so natural to praise. Praise is really just drawing our attention to something and getting other people to do the same. Some people praise athletes, some people praise musicians, some people praise their home, their cars, their workout routine, their foods, their relationships. When you praise those things, it's like being in a sporting event where you stand up out of your seat and you start pointing. You're amazed and you clap or you raise your hands and then you draw other people, "Did you see that?"

It got your attention and you're grabbing other people to see if it got their attention as well. Some of you worship your car. You get a new car and it draws all your attention and you want to call all your neighbors, "Look at my car." Some of us do that with a house. Some of us do that as we get to know influential people. "Yeah, I know him. I know her. I'd love to have lunch, introduce you." Something that draws our attention where we're giving our time, attention, and praise, where we're drawing other people.

And God says, "You know what? That should be Me. That you should seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, that you should put Me as first place." And notice all these words that he uses. Not only does he talk about our Father... I mean, as we think about this, think about our Father. First of all, God's relational. He's not just a stoic being sitting in the distance that doesn't want to relate to you. He wants to be your father. He wants to have relationship with you. He literally knows everything about

you and He wants you to get to know Him.

And by praising, He begins to work in your heart so that you are transformed. Think about all these words, just listening a few. It says that He's forever and ever. That means our God is eternal. He's always existed and He'll always exist and He invites you to praise Him, because when you praise Him, you'll experience His eternity, you'll experience who He is that's greater than anyone else. Or His greatness, there's no one greater than God. No one. He's matchless. He's powerful, which we'll talk about in a second. He's all-glorious. He's victorious. In Christ, we already have the victory over everything.

He's majestic. That's His splendor and His beauty and He has dominion over all. Our God is supreme. I mean, here's just a few verses to highlight it. Think about this, Psalm 103:19 says, "The Lord has established His throne in heaven and His sovereignty rules over all." Psalm 115:3 says, "But our God is in the heavens and He does whatever He pleases." You ever thought about that for a second? God doesn't call you on the phone and tell you what He's intending to do to get your opinion on it. God has a way of doing things. Proverbs 19:21 says, "Many are the plans in a man's heart, but the counsel of the Lord will stand."

How many of you know that as you love the Lord and you have a plan and we're going to go this way, but you're seeking the Lord, God has a way of redirecting that way and getting His will done in and through you. That's who our God is. He's perfectly sovereign. Or how about this, Proverbs 21:1, "The king's heart is like channels of water

in the Lord's hands. He turns it wherever He wishes." He's more powerful than any political leader, administrator, teacher, pastor, businessman. The Lord can turn the heart of a person. You ever seen Him do that? God can do whatever He wants whenever He wants to do it.

Jeremiah 32:27, "Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too difficult for Me?" A rhetorical answer is no. Now, you may have come in here with some challenges, some problems, some baggage, some thoughts, and you might say, "I don't see how I'm going to get through." And God would look at you and say, "Yeah, but that's not hard for Me. As you praise Me, I can give you wisdom, I can give you counsel, I can give you clarity, I can give you knowledge, I can give you understanding because I know everything. It's not hard for Me." That's why in 1 Chronicles 16:25 at the beginning, it says, "For great is the Lord and greatly to be praised."

Who else is worthy of worship? There's no being, there's no one, there's no person that can do all of that. If we really knew the presence of God and who He was, we would worship Him more frequently, we would praise Him more often. Instead of talking about our problems, we would praise God that He's sovereign over them. Our God is supreme. Notice what else? Number two, our God is strong. Our God is strong. Notice verses 12 and 13, "Both riches and honor come from You, and You rule over all. In Your hand as power and might and in it lies Your hand to make great and strengthen everyone.

Now, therefore our God, we thank You and praise Your glorious name." I'm praising You, Lord, for your strength. And when I praise You, Lord, Your strength gets



transferred into me, that You're able to strengthen me through tough times. This is where we ask questions sometimes like, where am I going to get the strength I need to get through this? How am I going to make it through this health crisis, this financial crisis? How am I going to make it through this relationship? How am I going to endure my parents? How am I going to help my kids grow and be who they are?

I don't know where I'm going to get the strength that I need. And the answer is, "I'll give you the strength." The name of the Lord, it's His reputation. You say, "Well, what's His name?" He says, "I Am who I Am. Everything you've ever seen me do in the Bible, that's the God that you serve. I'm able to do all things. Nothing is too hard for Me. I give strength." I used to have this scripture, Psalm 121, in my locker when I was a college football player. It starts off by saying, "I lift my eyes to the hills, where does my help come from?" Answer, "My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and Earth."

The one that created the entire universe in six days out of nothing is the same God that is able to extend power to your situation. 2 Corinthians 12:9 says His power is perfected in our weakness. When you say, "God, I can't endure this anymore. I don't have the strength to endure." God says, "Great, now I can show up." Psalm 18:32 says, "The Lord guides me with strength and makes my way blameless." Psalm 46:1, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in time of trouble." Psalm 138:3, "You made me bold with strength in my soul." Isaiah 40:31, "They that wait upon the Lord will renew their strength."

They'll mount up with wings as eagles. They'll walk and not be weary. They'll run and not faint." Or what about when we get to the New Testament? Philippians 4:13, "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength." God is willing to release His strength for your situation and for what you're enduring and for what you're going through, and to give you contentment even in the most difficult and trying of times. That's why in Ephesians 6:10 before He talks about all the pieces of armor, the six different pieces, including prayer at the end, many Christians will say, "I don't remember all the pieces."

He says finally in Ephesians 6:10, "Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might." If you forget all six pieces, just put on Christ. He's strong enough. He is the pieces of armor. He is the one that wants to give you strength. Sometimes even when we come to church, we're on our last fumes and God says, "I can help you physically. I can help you spiritually. I can help you emotionally. I can help you mentally. I'm your God, praise Me, worship Me. My strength can be transferred into your life. I'm what you're looking for. I have the answers for you." Our God is supreme. O, our God is strong.

Let me tell you something else about our God. Our God is good. Our God is good. Notice what it says in verse 14 to 16, "But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to offer as generously as this? For all things come from You, and from Your hand we have given You. For we are sojourners before You, and tenants, as all our fathers were. Our days on the Earth are like a shadow and there is no hope. O Lord our God, in all this abundance that we have provided to build You a house for

Your holy name, it is from Your hand and all is Yours."

Now, when I say that God is good, we don't fully understand it. Now, we did this back and forth with the pastor when I was growing up. Some of you may have heard it, where the pastor would say, "God is good," and the congregation would say-

All- [inaudible 00:14:55]

"All the time." And then I would say, "All the time," and the congregation would say-

[inaudible 00:15:00]

I said that about every single week, but I never understood what good meant. I mean, we think of good as maybe a little bit above average. If you go to a restaurant and somebody says, "Hey, how was the food or the service?" "It was good." If you go watch a sporting event, "How was the game?" "It was good." You go to a concert and ask somebody, "Hey, how was it? How was the theater? How was that show?" "It was good." It tends to mean in our language just a little bit better than average. We'd use superlative words if it was fantastic or splendid or great or never better or something like that.

But when God uses the word good, that's exactly what He means. Our God is good and He's good all the time. It means He's lavish in His goodness towards us. It means He is always able to provide everything we need. I mean, Jeremiah 20:11. After Israel had sinned against the Lord and rebelled over and over and over again and God punished them by taking them into captivity and they're with the Babylonians, in

Jeremiah 29:11 and following, He begins to tell them his heart and how good He is.

Some of us have that plaque in our house somewhere.

Says, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not harm you, plans for hope and a good future. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." What was he saying? "I am so good that even though you've been so rebellious, that I'm still willing to be so good to you." That's who our God is. Some people ask a question, "How could you be a Christian? If God is so good, why are all these problems in the world? Why is it so bad down here? Why are people sick and dying?" I think a better question is this, because we've sinned and rebelled against a holy God, how is it that God allows anything good to happen down here?

I mean, everything that you enjoy is the goodness of God. If you have a good meal, that's God's gift to you. If you have a good relationship, that's God's gift to you. If you've been able to get pregnant and have a child, that's God's gift to you. If you've been able to get married, that's God's gift to you. If you've had other kinds of favor in your life, maybe financially or your health's been good, that's God's favor to you. He's good. He's good all the time. And when we praise Him for His goodness, we're not just praising Him for provision, that He's lavish.

We're praising Him for all the attributes that He gives us that we don't even think about. Like He lavishes us with mercy and grace and healing and forgiveness and deliverance and wisdom and knowledge and understanding. Every good thing we have

comes from God. Sometimes we think, "Man, I got really lucky. They accepted my job application, or, "So fortunate and I met this person," or, "I can't believe I'm getting paid like this." That's God's goodness to you. He's good and He's good all the time.

Philippians 4:19 says, "My God will meet all of your needs according to His glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

He's good. He's lavish. That's who our God is. We're going to sing a song later in the service that really comes out of Psalm 26. I'm sorry, Psalm 23:6, "Surely, goodness and mercy will follow me all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever." I mean, here's the picture of God. Even when you go your own way and even when you're not doing what He wants you to do, He's chasing you down with goodness and loving kindness. He's chasing you down with goodness and mercy. Even though He sees you heading for the cliff, He's coming right behind you saying, "I have better for you."

While the enemy's lying in your ear and saying, "You're no good. God doesn't care for you, God doesn't love you, God doesn't want you," God is right there saying, "I sent my Son to die for you so that you could have life with Me. I love you with an unconditional love and I'm trying to show you that every single day of your life." This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Amen.

Amen.

Our God is supreme. Amen. We can give God praise for His goodness. Our God is supreme. Our God is strong. Our God is good. Let me tell you about this one. We

don't think about this one as a good thing, but it's a really good thing. Our God is holy. He is holy. He is set apart. He's unlike any other being or any other human that you've ever met. Listen to verse 17. "Since I know, O my God, that you try the heart and delight in uprightness. I, in the integrity of my heart, have willingly offered all these things so that now with joy I have seen your people who are present here make their offerings willingly to you."

Our God is holy. He says, "God, I know what you like. You like uprightness of heart. You like things to work out well." When I say God is holy, what I'm talking about is He is set apart, He's matchless, He's perfect, He's pure, He's principled, He's unchanging. That's what God's holiness means. He's unlike anyone else. Sometimes when we hear the word, holy, here's what we begin to think, especially in church. Here come all the don'ts. He's holy, so don't do this. Don't play cards, don't drink, don't date, don't watch movies, don't listen to secular music. Don't, don't, don't, don't, don't.

And we can keep adding to that list. "Yeah, I hate holiness. I can't do anything." Holiness is what you were created to be. Transformed in the image of Christ is where you'll experience the greatest joy. And when you get to praise the being that created all things that gave you the life in your lungs, that has a perfect plan for you, and He begins to change you from the inside out, God's holiness in you will bring you the greatest joy and you'll realize, "It's not me that changed myself."

We can discipline ourselves to make a lot of changes in our life without God, but total lasting changes that come from the heart of God change us from the inside out, changes the way we think, changes the way we view God, which changes the way we

view people, which gives us a love for God and a love for people that we wouldn't otherwise have. And then we want God to be holy. We love that He's righteous. Do you know why? Even non-Christians want justice. When somebody is murdered in cold blood, even non-Christians want somebody to pay for that.

We want a God who's righteous and holy, we just don't often want Him to be righteous and holy with us, right? But as you get to know the heart of God and you get to know this holy, set-apart God that's perfect, that's unlike you in every way beckons you and says, "Come. Come on. Let's fellowship together. You give me praise and I'll put My holiness in your life." Holiness is not a set of rules, but it's knowing and loving the God who is and it's about craving Him. He lives in an approachable light, and when we walk in integrity, we have great joy.

In Philippians 4:8, it says that whatever you think about, whatever's pure, whatever's noble, whatever's right, whatever's excellent, think about these things. It's not just things in this world, think about God. He's all those things. Dwell on the riches of who Christ is. He's supreme, He's strong, He's good, He's holy. Let me give you a fifth one. I'm going to pause here for the longest today. Today, we pause to praise God because our God is faithful. He is so faithful. That means He's always true to His promises. That means He always does what He says. From the time in the garden, God has always been true to His promise and will always be true to His promises all the way to the end.

We're we're not the first generation that it's experienced the faithfulness of God.

He's been faithful to all generations. Notice what David writes, verse 18 and 19. He says, "O Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our fathers, preserve this forever in the intentions of the heart of Your people and direct their heart to You. And give my son, Solomon, a perfect heart to keep Your commandments, Your testimonies, and your statutes, and to do them all and to build the temple for which I have made provision." He says, "You're the God of Abraham, You're the God of Isaac, You're the God of Jacob. You said you've always been faithful to the nation of Israel."

Do you know, guys, the God we serve is the same God we read about on every page of God's Word. The same God that was able to do everything we read about in the Bible is the same God we serve. The same God that was faithful to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob is the same God we serve. The same God that was faithful to all the apostles and prophets that went before us is the same God we serve. The same God that was faithful to the generation that went before us is the same God that's faithful now, who'll be the same God that's faithful to all generations after us until Jesus comes back because our God is faithful. He's true. Amen.

I mean, when we're going through a tough time, we don't often like to hear that. When we're going through challenge, we don't like to hear He's faithful, that if He's so faithful, then why am I going through hard times? He's faithful in your hard times. After Israel went off in captivity to Babylon, the author of Lamentations writes this, you'll be familiar with the text. In the deepest, darkest time of despair, here's what he writes. In Lamentations 3:21, this book that's all about lamenting how they had done everything wrong. He finally says this, Lamentations 3:21, "This I recall to mind and therefore I



have hope."

Some of you need more hope today. This is what God says you need. "The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning. Great is your faithfulness." He's always been faithful. He's never left you, He'll never leave you, He'll never forsake you, He's never failed you, He never will fail you. All of the promises in God are yes and amen. God loves it when we pray. God hears our prayers. When we align our prayers with the Word of God, God promises He'll answer those prayers in the way that's best for Him, brings us the greatest joy.

John 15:7-8 says, "If you abide in me and my Words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you, for My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be My disciples." In verse 11, He says, "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you and your joy may be complete." When we understand God's faithfulness and we trust that God's going to be faithful and we walk by faith and not by sight, God does amazing things that we couldn't even imagine He was going to do. So I want to pause here and talk about that a little bit today.

My wife and I moved out our three and our one-year-old in 2010 in August. On November 7th, 2010, we launched the church. But before we launched the church, I want to show you a couple pictures. In our apartment complex, we had a theater room that sat 19 seats. This was them. We could not fill them. That's how our church got started. Do you think we prayed? Yeah, we prayed because God gave me a vision to reach our city, nation, and world. We can't even fill 19 chairs. So we prayed and we

told the Lord, "Hey Lord, we know you want to get glory in Denver and beyond.

So if there's any way you can possibly use us, we're just praying to be a church that's faithful to you." Then there's some pictures here where you see our launch team. That was our last meeting, I think, at Cherry Creek High School there. When we were there, that was our launch team in front of our trailer. We had about 125 people there. We prayed that day. We launched with 208 people on November 7th, 2010. About 75 of those people were family members and friends that didn't want us to feel embarrassed who showed up. We promptly grew the church from 208 to 113.

I remember calling back home and talking to my coach and saying, "What am I doing wrong? My youth group in Dallas was three or four times this size. I can't get anybody to even come. The only people that are coming are the people that are on our teams." He said, "I wouldn't worry about that. It's not about how big you get, it's about the quality of people that come. Continue to be faithful and preach the word and worship and pray and share the gospel and God will bring the right people at the right time." And amen He has, has he not? Our God's been incredibly, incredibly faithful.

I praise God for the launch team we have and that we had and what God did through that team of people. I remember we filled those 19 seats and then we started bringing in extra chairs. I remember one night we had like 35 people that came to our meeting and I remember thinking, "This is incredible. God, you're doing amazing work. You're blowing us away." And God grew our church to about four or 500 people at Cherry Creek High School. We took that group of 35 people over to Cherry Creek High

School to show them the space, they're like, "This is way too big, but we'll pray over every chair."

And God began to fill that. Then we had an opportunity to buy the building that we've been meeting in since 2013. In order to buy that building, we were told by the owner, because he had to pay down a debt and there were other people bidding on the building, that, "Hey, if they don't come through, I'll allow you to purchase the building. But I'm not able to tell you until October 1st." And I need by October 13th \$1.73 million to buy that building, to which we said, "No problem. Our God can provide." But we didn't have that.

I remember I preached my socks off on a Sunday, told our people if everybody gives their best I know we're going to get there. I had great faith when I preach. And I drove home that day thinking, "That is the dumbest thing you ever did. Not only are you going to miss it, you're going to miss it by a mile and everybody's going to leave the church. You don't even have that many people there and it's going to be bad." But God rekindled my faith by reading Psalm 27 and showed me that He was going to be the one that was going to show up.

Six days later, I don't know if we have the picture of it, we had that group of people, you see that little box in the front, that group of people in those two sections of our church all came. Little kids came, dumped their piggy banks, people come and give amounts. I didn't count any of the money. The elders at the time said, "We'll count it, you go to bed." Well, I couldn't sleep. They finally called me at about 10:30 that night and said, "You need to go to bed. You're going to be fine." But I didn't know what

happened. I didn't know until the next day.

While we needed to raise \$1.73 million, in six days, we raised \$1.93 million and were able to buy the building next door. Then when we moved into that building, that's what it looked like. We had pews and there were no risers in the back. Everybody was coming to me saying, "We need to go back to one service, make everybody feel good together because we only have about 250 people for each service." And I said, "No, our mission is to reach the city. Our mission is to reach everybody. We're going to keep both services open and ask God to grow it."

And there were people telling me, "There's no way you're ever going to fill that building." Friends, we've been full for two years in that building. We've had limited parking and limited children's space for two years in that building. I was asked the question when we did Q&A the other day, "Hey, are you going to open up the balcony when we move in here?" Y'all, aren't we glad we opened up the balcony since we've been here. I mean, we're at a place now that if every single one of you brought one friend here, we're already in overflow and we're only going to be in week two. Isn't that awesome?

We're not done buying buildings because buildings are just space where we can house more of the glory of God and build greater disciples to go reach more people with the gospel and the time is short. Amen. So we've been praying for a long, long time. Different elders and our teams have been praying for it. Different staff and our people have been praying for it. All of a sudden, God gave us an opportunity in

Broomfield about five years ago. People were asking, "Well, why would you want to be on a screen? That will never work." That was the Broomfield Campus when we saw it for the first time.

You talk about taking a step of faith, that was a step of faith. We melted down in that dusty room and I was like, "How are we going to do that?" And it turned into this. We started with about 30 people up there and then it started growing and then there were 200 and then there were 300. And then over the last two years, there were over 500 people. Then by God's grace, we had an opportunity to meet with another church up in Westminster that was going through a financial struggle and an attendance struggle.

We began to talk about how might God want us to work together as two churches to accommodate the growth that each of us is experiencing. By God's grace, He worked it out. In the first week of February, we moved into a brand new campus up in Westminster and went from 550 to way over 1,000 people now that call that church their home. God is doing an incredible work in Westminster. Amen. I can hear you clapping up in Westminster. I hear you. It's special. Then we've been praying for this building for almost a decade.

Some of you may not know that the two-acre plot of grass out in front of our old building did not belong to us. It belonged to Denver First Church of the Nazarene. And that west parking lot, the parking lot on the west side that has about 250 spots, that belonged to Denver First Church of the Nazarene. While we were negotiating with them, we kept telling Life Fellowship and Denver First Church of the Nazarene, "If this

is not a win for you, it's not a win for us because Jesus cares about His church and you're a pastor in the church and we love your people and we love you. So it's got to be a win."

So we had lots of conversations back and forth with both these pastors and both these churches and God worked it all out in such a way through negotiating, and I'll tell you more stories over time, with just some of the people that were negotiating, how God restored relationships and did incredible things, because whether you know me or not, I'm urgent in my temperament. I remember standing up there walking through this building with Pastor Darren a year ago, February, and he told me these words, "Jeff, it's no longer a matter of if, it's a matter of when."

When he said that, I'm like, "Cool, we're ready to go next week." It's taken a little longer than that because God wanted to do something special for them like he has for us. So let me tell you just a little bit about this and then we'll talk about the fact as we move on how God is going to help us. You'll notice in this passage when David gave all the money, he was like, "God, it's silly for us to celebrate what we're giving you because everything we have, You gave to us anyway." Did you know that? Everybody, your financial resources, who gave that to you? God.

I mean, if you peel back what you have, God gave you everything, especially for those of you like, "No way, I worked hard for it. Academic, all American and high school and college, got my PhD, I've been working." Who gave you the brain for that? Not everybody can do that. Who gave you the relationships to allow you to be seen for

the gifts that you had? Who is it that provided your provision? I mean, you peel it all back, no matter what you have, whether it's time, resources, energy, giftedness, it all came from God. So anytime we give God anything, we shouldn't be patting ourselves on the back.

We should be saying, "God, I'm giving you what you already gave me and I'm so thankful for you." We'll talk about fundraising as we go into the fall and what it's going to look like. But I just want to give you a little snippet of what Life Fellowship and Denver First Church of the Nazarene benefited and what we ended up benefiting from this. Life Fellowship, what did they get out of the deal? They gave us an incredible property of 13 acres with a super nice building, incredible worship center that even has a gym. Here's what they got. They got financial relief. They were really, really struggling.

They were in a 2,000 seat auditorium and had 100 to 300 people coming and it just felt like everybody was spread out and they never could connect. So as we talked with them, we said, "Well, what do you need?" They needed some cash up front. So over the course of this next year, we're giving them \$1 million so that they can have cash to do what they need to do. We paid for a year in our Broomfield Campus so that they can meet rent free for the next year on that campus. Amen. Then we said this, "You guys can't go out and buy all the equipment we have. Here's what we're going to do.

We're going to give you all the equipment we have. All of our AV equipment, all of our chairs, everything we put into that building. It'd probably cost you \$350,000 to go

get, we're just giving that to you. That's our gift to you as a church." They met there for their first time a couple months ago and called me afterwards and were ecstatic.

Everybody had come together, their fellowship was back. They were able to rightsize their church, they're thinking about their vision. We have a deep love for them, they have a deep love for us. What did we benefit? We got a 2,000 seat auditorium so that our church can grow.

We got an incredible property for \$8.3 million in a beautiful location and we believe it's just the first of many things to come. It's a great campus and God is doing some amazing things up there. Here's the beauty of this. I happened to be home in Illinois a couple weeks ago. My pastor retired and is moving on. He's overseen elder of our church now and I was there to watch him retire. He had a quartet there, was singing there, a nationally known quartet. One of the guys in that quartet came up to me and he said, "Are you Pastor Jeff from BRAVE Church in Denver? I said, "Yeah."

He goes, "Well, we sing every year at Life Fellowship." I said, "Well, are you coming? Do you need a place to perform?" He goes, "No, we were just there. We sang in that Broomfield Campus you used to be in." I said, "Well, that's pretty cool." He's like, "Yeah. I wanted to tell you something. We travel all over the whole country, and the way Life Fellowship talks about BRAVE Church is one of the most heartwarming things I've ever had. Thank you so much for being generous to another church and genuinely loving them the way God wants you to love them. They're accelerating and that's a model for what the church should be." Amen. It's awesome.



I've received a letter from a pastor in Boulder when we did that fire relief up in the area, writing me a letter personally thanking me for all of those who have helped out with fire relief, the money, the people, the time, saying, "BRAVE Church was every single place we went. There were people from BRAVE demonstrating the gospel." God's doing an amazing thing. When it comes to First Church of the Nazarene, what does that mean? Well, I want you to take a look around for a minute. Do you know this building was completed in 1973? I was three years old in 1973.

Who do you know that had a vision to build a church this size in 1973? Dr. Wellman, who was the pastor at the time here, was his vision. His vision was to be a hub for all of Denver for people to be able to come and then take the gospel all across the nation. Do you know what I believe? I believe God started the vision with Dr. Wellman, He's going to continue that vision with BRAVE Church. This is not my vision. This is God's vision for a city and we're able to step in and do what God wants us to do. You say, "Well, how does Denver First Church of the Nazarene benefit from this?"

Well, one, we've grown our friendship with them. We love them. Pastor Darren and I have become buddies. They needed to get out of debt by selling that west parking lot and that two-acre lot, which we had under contract and tried to get it done. I could tell you for the next six hours about how rezoning issues work. I'm really skilled at that now. But unfortunately, it got rezoned in a way we couldn't purchase that anymore and the only way we could purchase those two plots was to buy this building. So we said, "Okay, we'll buy everything." So what does DFC get?

We assumed their loan on those two properties for \$3.6 million. We gave them another million and a half up front so they can look for a building because they're wanting to be in a different place, they're trying to regroup. And think about how hard this is, for a pastor to come into a church at year 112, and in year 113, tell a group of people that have been sitting in the same seats for 50 years, "We're moving." Pastor Darren's done an incredible job of navigating what God's doing as we've been talking together.

Then the way we worked out this deal, he said, "Well, Jeff, that leaves like over \$10 million left. Where do we get the money for that?" Here's the beauty of it. Denver First Church of the Nazarene has agreed to carry back that loan for us, meaning we don't have to pay on that \$10 million right away. We're going to have time to pay that off. We're going to have time for all of us to do fundraising and give our best. And if each of us gives our best, God will meet all of our needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus. What we said to them is, "You need a place to meet."

And we said, "We can help you with that. So whatever you charge us for interest, we're going to charge you for rent." And they said, "Well, then we're not charging you interest." We said, "Great, it's free." Amen. So they started meeting in our building last week and I was hearing back from staff and different people that attended there and it was great because everybody felt close together. There were some people that got saved last week and God is still doing a ministry in their church and we're praying for them to find a spot and we want them to find a spot and we want to help them get to the right place.

So they have time to meet and we have time to raise money and God's getting all the glory in two churches. Isn't that awesome? Only God could do that. He's faithful to us. He's faithful to us. Now, what do we get in return? Well, we get a building that can house more people. I mean, we're not going to overflow for probably another week or two, but we got a spot, we have a gym. By the way, can I just say this? I know you're excited about this building, I know you're excited about this space. I've had more calls this week from people inside and even pastors outside our church, "Hey, can we borrow your space for this? Hey, can we do this?"

And the answer's, "Just not now. We're having a hard enough time just putting on one service on the weekend, give us a couple chances to get our feet wet." We also gain an additional 700 parking spaces because we can still park in our old building on the north side and behind as well as all these spaces. We're working with Cherry Hills Police Department, we're going to have room for Iglesia BRAVE, we're going to be able to do BRAVE Academy someday. We're going to do BRAVE sports someday. Friends, we're going to run out of space here. And it's not about the building. It's about the glory of God.

Friends, our time is short. Some people have said to me, "Well, what if Jesus comes back in the next six months?" Great, then we need to step on the gas in the next six months and reach as many people as we can for Jesus to the glory of God. And you should give all your money because if he's coming back in six months you don't need it anyway, right? So we'll talk about how we're going to raise funds going

forward. If you want to give to it now and you're already a regular giver, you can give to Kingdom Advancement online in addition to your regular giving. But we'll have some strategies.

I mean, you talk about the \$24 million that we just incurred as debt for what we need. It's going to be a bigger fundraiser than that. And here's what that means. Most of us, me included, I don't think in numbers like 24 million. Kim and I haven't been thinking about, "How are we going to fund that?" Here's what God is going to want us to do. Everybody just give your best and God will take care of all the rest. He will. There's no pressure. If God's blessed you and you want to give willingly, give. He'll take it. If everybody does their part, we'll get that and more, because this isn't our last hub.

What's going on in Westminster is just the first fruits of many that are going to go on in Denver. Who knows where else God's going to take us. But I believe God's entrusted to us some very unique things about how we're making disciples and he's going to continue to grow that and we want to give him every opportunity to use every effort from every person to the glory of God. Amen. Amen. Our God is faithful. He's so faithful. And like I say all the time, our best days are ahead. And I say all the time, we're just getting started.

And I look forward to the day that we're in heaven and God can take all of us as BRAVE Church and tap us on the shoulder and say, "Okay, now turn around. I want to show you what I accomplished through you." And we see hundreds of millions of people that are in heaven because of what God did through us. I mean, God always

uses the faithfulness and generosity of the few to secure the blessing for the many.

There was faithfulness in the 19 people that started coming to our church initially.

There were faithfulness in the few hundred that moved us into the other building when that was a stretch.

There's going to be faithfulness of you that are going to help us fund this so we can move on. God uses those faithfulness to grow what he's doing. You're here because of 19 people, all of us 19 people at the beginning. We're here because of Jesus and what His apostles did. And all we're saying to the Lord is, "Lord, because your faithful, let us be faithful to You. We want to walk in up rightness and holiness and truth and we want to trust You for all you're doing." Amen. Can we just give God praise for His faithfulness to us?

That was number five. Let me give you six and seven. They're going to go really fast. Number six is our God is worthy. He's worthy. Notice how David prays at the end of this prayer. Then David said to all the assembly, that's all the leaders, he said, "Now, bless the Lord your God. And all the assembly blessed the Lord, the God of their fathers, and bowed down and did homage to the Lord and to the king." Worthy means this. Deserving of our praise, great merit, great character, great value, commendable excellence, totally deserving. Who else is worthy of your praise?

Who else is worthy of your time and attention? Who else is worthy of all God wants? Nobody. He alone is worthy. So it's not about, "Well, I don't know if I like singing, I don't know if I like raising my hand, I don't know if I..." You were created to

worship and praise the living God of the universe. Amen. And He's worthy and there's no one else worthy. And when you begin to draw your attention to Him and you begin to think about Him and you begin to put Him first, He has a way of changing you because our God is supreme, He's strong, He's good, He's holy, He's faithful, and He's worthy.

That's why for us we're doing services a little bit different starting next week. We've always said here that good worship is not just to set up good preaching. Worship is not a warmup for a good preacher so we can hear a good message and go home. In reality, good preaching sets our heart and attention on the Lord Jesus Christ so that we have this part of us that wants to come out and worship Him.

So what you're going to see in services going forward, both here and on our campuses, which will help us, is I'm going to start speaking a little sooner in the services so that we can come out of the services and we have space up here and at our Westminster campus to do ministry, to worship God, at times to give testimonies, because not only does God want you to hear His word, He wants you to be faithful to doing what he shows you. Today, what that means is, if you've heard the Lord's voice, some of you when we stand here in a minute are going to get up during the singing of the song and you're going to make your way across like 12 people and come down because there's a burden on your heart just to thank God for something he's done in your life.

We want to respond to him in worship if God is really that good. He's worthy. He's worthy. I not only want you to hear the word and worship. I want you to hear the

word and respond to God in a way that your life is transformed by being a member of this congregation. Then finally, if you haven't got any of this, like, "How am I going to remember all six?" You don't have to. I did this one for you, because seven's the number of completions so I added this one. If you want to know what verse 10 through 20 are, in 1 Chronicles 29, it says, "Our God is awesome." He's awesome.

We throw that word around, but from creation to the cross, to the culmination of all world history, our God is awesome. He's been perfect, He will always be perfect. He's faithful, He'll always be faithful. He's unlike anybody else. He's awesome. When you get around the awesomeness of God, there's a desire in your heart to tell God how awesome he is and to praise his name. So as our worship team comes back out today, we're going to set up our testimonies with a song. I'm going to encourage you during the singing of the song, no matter which campus you're on, to make your way down front.

We're going to form a line up here going that way and a line up here going back that way, going to have a couple of our elders up here holding microphones. It's a two-sentence testimony, y'all, two sentence. I thank God because... You get one or two sentences. These guys have been instructed to pull the microphone and will go to the next person. This is not thanking God for what ministry you're a part of, it's not an invitation, it's not an advertisement. It's God I thank you because... And we're telling something of a story that God's done.

So let's stand on both campuses. Let me pray for you and let's give God glory

today as we testify to His goodness among us. Father in heaven, we give You all the glory, honor, and praise. We thank You for this day. Lord, hear our testimonies. Every testimony is a testimony to how awesome and good You are, how faithful, how supreme. Lord, do your work in and through us. We celebrate You, the king of kings and the Lord of Lord's. In Jesus name, amen. Can we give God praise this morning for who He is? Amen.