

GLENWOOD COMMUNITY CHURCH

November 1, 2020

What the Gospel Grows

I Peter 2:11-20

Pastor Paul Jackson

[inaudible]

Pastor Nathan:

There was traffic on the way up, okay? Good morning and welcome to Glenwood Community Church. It's good to be here with you to worship the God of the Bible, and welcome to those of you who are joining us online. This morning we have the opportunity to respond together to the goodness of God, and I'm glad we're here to do it together.

We also have the opportunity as a church family to participate in His mission. And I hope you noticed on the way in, there's a way we're doing that out in the foyer with Operation Christmas Child boxes. It looks like most of you figured that out, you dropped them off on the way in. If you saw the piles of boxes there and you panicked this morning, remembering that you forgot yours, don't worry; we're still collecting boxes for the next two weeks. If you have any questions or would like to take a box still to fill, Scott and Molly Carlosn are in the foyer and would love to connect with you this morning. You can also go to our website at glenwoodcc.org/occ.

Another way to be together and participate in our church life, we have on November 15th, just in a couple weeks, an adult equipping seminar called "Think!" And the purpose of this seminar is to help us think biblically and theologically about the COVID-19 pandemic and how it affects our lives as citizens, as members of

church, and especially our relationships with others. This is going to be a great opportunity to examine this issue and dive in. So again, it's on November 15th. It will be in person, but also online. It will be in the evening, 6:00-7:15, and we'd love to see you there. You can find more information about it by going online to glenwoodcc.org/think.

In our study of I Peter, one of the things you may have noticed as we followed along and tracked is that Peter loves Psalm 34, and Psalm 34 has shown up. And so this morning as we begin our services, I want to read some verse from Psalm 34. David writes, *"Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the one who takes refuge in Him! Fear the Lord, you His holy people; for those who fear Him lack nothing. The lions may grow weak and hungry; but those who seek the Lord lack no good thing. Come, my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn from evil and do good; seek peace, and pursue it."*

What timely words for us. Will you pray with me?

Father, we have tasted and seen for ourselves that You are good. We've turned to You for refuge. You sent Your Son to die in our place that we might be forgiven, and You send Your Spirit to lead us that we might be transformed. Father, we look to You for all that we need, and in You we lack nothing for what You have called us to in this life. Thank You, Father, for Your peace, and for Your provision. And, Father, You know that our world right now is in turmoil. And You know that we, like David, long for good days. We long for peace. And so we ask You to bring it. And we trust that You can bring it through us as we seek Your will for our world, for our families, for our friends, and for our neighbors. Father, amidst this turmoil, help us keep our tongues from evil and our lips from telling lies. Help us turn from evil and instead do good that You might be glorified. Help us be people who, like You, seek peace and pursue it. Father, today we also remember our brothers and sisters around the world who are persecuted because of their loyalty to You. We pray that

You would strengthen them and protect them so that they might continue to bear witness to Your goodness and kindness to us in the Gospel. Father, we're in awe of the example You've set for us through Your Son Jesus Christ, and so together this morning we join our voices in praise and thanks to You alone. We pray these things in Christ's name. Amen.

Ben Rico:

Amen, and would you please stand as we sing together in praise and in thanks to the King who Himself leads us in love, and in doing so shines brightly so that we can be led closer to Him.

[music: "O Worship the King"]

[music: "All Glory be to Christ"]

Pastor Paul:

Please open your Bibles to I Peter 2. I Peter 2, going to look this morning at verses 11-20.

To the delight of some of you listening, this last week, the Los Angeles Dodgers won the World Series. There we go. I know that would be appreciated by some of you. Seven game series, best of four, last two states. Game six, Dodgers won the fourth game clinching the series. It was an unusual series; it was an unusual season; the season was shortened by COVID; the World Series was played in a cavernous stadium that was mostly empty of people.

But game six, though the building was empty, it was absolutely packed with drama. The game was close. The biggest surprise of game six was not that the Dodgers

won but that in the eighth inning, the Dodger manager pulled one of the star Dodger players off the field and no one knew why. He had been the heartbeat of the Dodgers. He had been one of their key integral leaders and then--his name is Justin Turner--and Justin explicably, he was pulled from the field, and later we found out why. The league office had called the Dodger front office who called the manager that Justin had been confirmed as contagious with COVID on his game-day test. So they confirmed it almost toward the end of the game.

He was pulled, he sat on the bench in the dugout, and then he went into the clubhouse, and he watched the rest of the game from the clubhouse. And then his team won. And if you've ever seen the world Series, the team that wins, they throw this big party, like, right now, all together, in a mob seen out on the field. And so Justin Turner, he came running out of the clubhouse, without a mask, and he went out right in the middle of everybody's jumping, and he's grabbing, and he's hugging, and he's celebrating. And all of the baseball fans that are watching the series, they see this happen. And then they find out that he had COVID, and it just blew up the sports world.

Every single kind of media, I mean radio, talk shows, television, online, even people who don't know anything about baseball, they're weighing their opinion. And you've got people in extreme positions, and some of them were saying "Way to go! Good job!" And others are condemning and judging, and it really turned into a major negative. This last Wednesday on ESPN a writer, interesting article-- here's what he said: "Baseball, the sport that nearly shut down early in the season due to outbreaks on two teams, was on the verge of crowning a champion with no complications. Then came the eighth inning, when Roberts removed Turner. It was curious; only once had Turner left the game this postseason before it's conclusion, and that was in a blowout. The revelation of why turned a moment that would have been so undeniably joyous into something more complicated -- a referendum on behaviors, choices, responsibility. A referendum on America and how it's response to the pandemic, more than nine months after it landed on these shores, remains the most divisive question in the most divisive of times."

And it's those times in which we live, on the cusp of an even greater division, on the cusp of Election Day, in the midst of a divided nation with divided states with divided communities with divided families. Eight months ago, I looked up a word online, because I wanted to make sure I could pronounce it correctly. I looked up the word "epidemiologist" - disease detectives. Eight months ago, I wasn't sure how to pronounce the word, and now they're everywhere. Everybody now knows something about epidemiology. And we have become familiar with science and statistics, and we interpret microbiological data. We're better at biology than we were in highschool, which is not hard for someone like me. We interpret data, and sometimes we filter the data to support our own opinion, and it can lead to two extremes. And when we separate into these two extremes--people looking at each other, half of them wearing a mask, half of them never going to wear a mask, they can't believe that the other group doesn't agree with them! They're absolutely incredulous. And sometimes angry.

Well, there's another world that is important to today. It's a long word. It also begins with an "e." It's the word epistemology. Epistemology is something that we do without even knowing that we do it. Epistemology is how we know what we know. We practice that on a regular basis whenever we hear somebody say something and we go, "How do you know that?" or "How are you so sure that you know that?" And there's much about life that we can't truly know, or we don't know, but epistemology tries to figure out whether or not this thing we believe actually has a basis, a foundation in something that is right and true.

There is much about life that we don't know, but all that we need to know about life God has communicated to us and He has disclosed to us in His Word. He is the ultimate Knower who has disclosed to us what we cannot know unless He speaks to it. He is Word that created this world. He is Word who knows, who has communicated with people who don't know. He is Word, who defines good and evil. He is Word who had always been and always will be, and He knows all truly. He is Word who discloses to us who He is, God's character who exposes, discloses to us

our character and our deficits and who we are, and invites us to Himself in and through the crucified Jesus of the Bible. And as Word, He then shapes the mind of the willing and transforms the heart. His Word informs our mind and all of life. His Word informs our private life, our personal choices, our public choices, our actions and attitudes toward others.

His Word informs us about everything, including our ballot, which I hope we all cast no later than Tuesday. God - His Word tells us what He loves. He loves life, He loves people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. He loves people beyond the boundaries of our nation. He loves the life He created in the womb. He hates injustice, and abortion is a grievous injustice to the most vulnerable among us. God's Word discloses who He is and what He loves to us.

What does He disclose to us? That He does justice perfectly, that God sums up righteousness, that God calls us to moral and ethical righteousness. How do we know that what we think about life is actually true? We know it's true if what we believe about life is based upon what God says about life and about who He is if we buy into Word of God as true truth. Jesus sums up truth; He is the Way and Truth and the Life, and He calls us to His life and to His truth through the Spirit of God and through God's Word. And that's why we have our Bibles open today to I Peter 2.

I am most settled internally in times of great chaos and difficult times--I am most settled when I humble myself before God's word and let Him quiet my soul. I Peter does that: an extraordinarily timely, decisive book for today. I Peter 1 and most of I Peter 2 affirms again and again who Jesus is and who we are, and that Jesus is alive, and because He is alive we have a living hope. That our time on earth is not for long, but that we should live it well and wisely and loving Him with all of our heart and our mind and soul. That we would, while we can, that we would really live.

And in I Peter 1:15-16, he tells us what God's vision is for the follower of Jesus Christ. Verse 15, "Like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves in all your behavior, because it is written: 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'" To be holy - this religious word - it's really simpler than it sounds. To be holy is to be set apart for God and to be becoming like God, like Jesus Christ. Holy is not natural to us; we are not born holy. The holy life that God calls us to is not normal to us; it goes against the grain of fallen humanity. The holy life that God calls us to is exemplified, personified, modeled by Jesus Christ. Next week, we see Jesus model holy and suffering. The week after that, we see Jesus or God's Word speak to holy matrimony, and then to how to be holy with each other, and then what it's life to be holy when others mistreat us. And on, in through chapter 5. An extraordinary book that is so timely in how we love and lean into who He is in times of turbulence.

He calls us to be holy in an unholy world. How do we do that? This morning, 11-20, chapter 2, three ways that we are to be holy in an unholy world. First, resist unholy desires, for our own good, for the good of others, and for the glory of God. Verse 11, "*Beloved, I urge you as aliens and strangers to abstain from fleshly lusts, which wage war against the soul.*" Verse 11 is a sharp pivot from the verse before it. Verse 10, "*Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*" As followers of Jesus Christ, we are recipients of God's mercy, so that God has chosen to be merciful with us, His people, in that He withholds from us what we rightfully deserve. And as His mercy captivates our heart, now we pivot toward Him as those who are loved by Him and love Him.

And that's the first word of verse 11, "Beloved." That means that you, in Christ, are loved by God. We are loved by God, to love God and others in return while we can in this life, which is not for long. We are, again--he uses this phrase--"*aliens and strangers.*" We are sojourners; we're pilgrims. That this is not our ultimate destiny or destination; it's very transitory; it passes so quickly. We were made for life with Him in the presence of God, in the presence of the person of Jesus Christ. And that is our future and that is our living hope. And that is our expectation that one day,

either He will return to gather us and gather the believers who are still living on earth, or, when we die, that we are instantly in His presence. To be absent from the body is to be at home where we belong, where we long for. And our ultimate longings cannot be met or satisfied in this temporary life. But this life is preparation for home, for the next life, for where we live in the presence of Jesus Christ.

So, while we're in this life, he says, "*I urge you.*" And that's not translated strongly enough. It's not, "I urge you to restrain your urges." It is an intense, personal, emotional appeal. For your own good, for the good of others, and for the glory of God, resist your fleshly impulses, your fleshly lusts. And we tend to think of fleshly lusts as a sensory category, this appetite, whether it's sensory or whether it's sexual, that it would be something you cave into in the physical biological world. That's part of it; it's much more complex. Lusts are like a kaleidoscope with a zillion pieces that composite this one picture. Lust has a thousand faces. Covetousness--to covet is lust. Greed is lust. To have this desire for control, to be arrogant, to be prideful. God tells us in I Peter 5 that we are to humble ourselves before God or He's going to humble us. We can lust for power and control. We can lust for anything that is in opposition to God.

And here he says lust wages war against the soul. And the soul is that spiritual immaterial part of who we are. That's who we are eternally. We have a soul. And lusts wage war against the soul, so that you can hear the bombs going off, hear the cannons going off. It is an intense assault on who we are at our core. And what he's saying is that, when we cave into anything opposite of God's intent, when we give into that which is opposite of His Word, when we willfully say "yes" to these desires, that we do damage to our soul; that we fracture that part of us that is non-physical, immaterial; that we hurt ourselves. So, one of the many reasons God hates sin is because sin hurts the center. Made in the image of God, and as we sin against God we become less like God. As followers of Jesus, willful pushback in sin means that we are less like Jesus than we would have been had we said "yes" to Him in that moment of temptation. And so, resist unholy desires for our own good because

when we cave to lusts of the flesh then we curve inward on ourselves. So resist unholy desires for our own good.

And in verse 12, he turns and he flips it into the positive. He says, keep doing what you're doing; *"Keep your behavior excellent amongst the Gentiles."* "Gentiles" here, he uses as someone who's not yet a follower of Jesus Christ, so that our behavior that he describes as excellent is now--it's for the good of people who are not yet followers of Jesus Christ. Mark Twain was not known for his Biblical theology, but he said of human behavior, "Always do right, it will gratify some people and astonish the rest." Partly true. Problem: humanity has rebelled against God and disagrees violently with God about what is right, and tried to redefine evil as good. Humanity has rebelled against God. Peter says, let's agree with God about unholy desires, and resist them, and live holy lives before the watching eyes of people who are not yet followers of Jesus.

You know in Romans 5? It's such an extraordinary chapter. While we were God's enemies, enemies of God, God sent His Son. So how do we look at other people who are not yet followers of Jesus? I hope we look at them through the lens and the filter that they desperately need Jesus, and that if they don't know Jesus then we don't need expect them to be like Jesus. But those of us who are followers of Jesus, say "yes" to Jesus before the watching eyes of those who are not yet followers of Jesus in the hopes that they would see the power of God working in us, and the love of God working in us, and that they then would come to know this Jesus that we already know, so that our behavior now translates to them as a great benefit, as the best benefit of them all. And what is that benefit? That they would glorify God with us when God shows up. The day of visitation, the "glorify God" is the praise of the goodness and the greatness of God.

So here, in this verse, verse 12, it's possible for us to silence those who malign us by the kind of life we live and the witness that we are and by the good we extend to others. *"Keep your behavior excellent among the Gentiles, so that in the thing in which they slander you as evildoers"* they'll be wrong. You're not an evildoer, but

you're a follower of Jesus. *"That they may because of your good deeds, as they observe them"*--they got a front-row seat; they're watching you--*"glorify God on the day of visitation."* So that when God shows up, they would have joined the chorus of those who are signing praises to the glory of God. It's voluntary praise of those who are now followers of Jesus Christ, so that our words can be used by God to wake up not-yet-followers of Jesus to the grace and goodness of God offered in and through faith in Jesus Christ the Son.

So how can we live or how can we be holy in an unholy world? Well, secondly, we can submit to authorities for the Lord's sake as set by God to restrain evil and promote good. I've known this passage is coming for months. And this passage is one of those passages that's a nonnegotiable for us for us to really rightly and truly understand. So, how to be holy in an unholy world? Submit to authorities for the Lord's sake as sent by him to restrain evil and pronounce what's good. Let's keep looking, let me start in 13, *"Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. For such is the will of God, that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond slaves for God. Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king."*

That word, *"submit,"* big word, we're going to see it three times, it's a command, insistence, non-negotiable; this is a part of what it looks like to follow Jesus. We're going to see it again in verse 18, we're going to see it again in I Peter 3:1 in regard to marriage. Peter knew something about submission. Peter's personality was so strong that only Jesus Christ could tame it. I mean, Peter was the one who acted just, like, right now, fearlessly. He was the one in the Garden: "Jesus, they're going to try to arrest you? No, they're not; I'm going to take them out." And so he pulls his sword and he starts fighting. He's a fighter. Then, he makes this promise that he's going to be loyal to Jesus, and then he denies Jesus three times in the dark. Then Jesus is raised from the dead, and He comes after Peter and He restores him.

He asks Peter; He gives Peter three opportunities to say you love Me, publicly. Peter, "Do you love me?" "I love you." Second time, "Do you love me?" "I love you." "Do you love me, Peter?" "I love you." Each time He reaffirms; He restores; He says, "Feed my sheep." So He puts Peter along with John and the other apostles in the lead.

And the book of Acts opens with the ascension of Jesus, and Peter hits the ground running. And he starts talking about Jesus. He gets to Acts 4, and the religious elites, they call Peter and John before them into their presence, and they say, "We command you, stop talking to people about Jesus." And they say, "You can tell us all you want not to talk to people about Jesus, but we are going to talk to people about Jesus. We're going to tell them about the Jesus that God sent to live our life, to die our death, to be raised to life. We're going to continue proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus. We're going to continue even when other people tell us to stop."

So, now, Peter says, "*Submit.*" And he submits to the Roman emperor, whose name was Nero, who ordered the execution of Peter a few years after he wrote I and II Peter, and who launched an all-out assault and persecution on believers. So clearly we already know from the life and teachings of the apostle Peter that submission is not blind submission. We are to submit unless the act of submission is defined by God as a defiance of God or a sin against God.

In a couple of weeks, we're going to have a seminar on thinking biblically about COVID, and this passage is one of several that has informed what we have done as a church. And that seminar--we'll talk about the issue in greater detail; we'll talk about "for the good of others"; we'll talk about respect for others; we'll talk about the reputation of Jesus. And I don't want this sermon this morning to be hijacked by opinions about COVID protocols. As a church, and the actions that we've taken - we want to be gentle and we want to be gracious--I have yet to talk to somebody who likes wearing a mask; I try to avoid it as often as I can. But, as a church, we've chosen that we're going to obey these verses, that we're going to yield; we're going to submit to our federal authorities and our state authorities and local

authorities while we can, knowing that if we are directed by authorities to sin, or knowing that there are lines that we will not cross, believing the Bible teaches the closer we get to the return of Jesus Christ the more chaotic things become, knowing that God says all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer, be persecuted, knowing the suffering passages that are in front of us - including next week, the supreme example of the suffering of Jesus who was without sin.

That's why 13 is so important. We don't submit to local authorities because they are of sterling character, because they are unfailingly wise or right, or because we resonate with their policies and their practices. If we are able to submit to them, our submission is, in verse 13, for the Lord's sake. For His reputation in our community, including the not-yet believing community. We don't want to spend our cultural capital in defiance of the state on this issue. We don't think that we're an exception; we don't think that we are singled out; nor do we think that we are sinning.

So then he gives for-instances, he gives examples of these authorities that we are to submit to. He says, "*to the king.*" That's his first example, verse 13, "*to the king as one in authority.*" Not to a group of vigilantes, but to an established authority. And we are to submit to that earthly king for the sake of our High King of heaven, for the Lord's sake. Next example, verse 14, "*or to governors.*" Same word used of Pilate, a governor. And the governor is described as one who is sent to restrain evil and praise good. So John 19, Jesus is standing before Pilate, and Jesus says to Pilate, "You would not have this authority over Me unless it had been given to you," and He's innocent. This we can know. It's not science, we don't have to do a study and put it under peer review. God has revealed who He is about what He says. And so, if we disobey this, then I hope we have good reason to disobey this. And if we have good reason to disobey this, we won't like the good reason that we have. This is God's will. Verse 15, "*Such is the will of God, that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men.*" So those of us who know and who can obey God may silence those who don't know.

Verse 16, *"Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bond slaves to God, so that in being a bond slave to God."* We are free. We are most free as followers of Jesus. When our heart, our mind, and our will align with the will of God. We are most free when we serve God before the eyes of a watching world as free willful voluntary servants of God, so that we use our freedom for God's will--that's where we are most free--and not, as he says in verse 16, as the right to do that which is wrong.

And then the finale for commands, one after another, verse 17, *"Honor all people,"* or some translations, *"Respect all people."* All people are created in the image of God. Created in the image of God, they have dignity bestowed on them by God. So we are to respect everyone, to respect those who are not yet followers of Jesus, to respect those who have different views on life, different worldviews than do we, different personal practices than do we. We are to honor all people.

And then he narrows the lens, or does a close up on the church, that we are to people who love our sisters and our brothers in Christ. And that is what brings us together in unity is Jesus Christ Himself. So, in a culture and a world split apart, a world divided at almost every layer of society, we are together when we are in Christ in obedience and submission and yielding to the Son of God and the person of Jesus. *"Love the brothers and sisters in Christ."*

Thirdly, *"Fear God."* A command. "Fear." This intense awareness of the awesome glory, purity, truth, person of God, who judges, who holds us to account, including those of us who are already forgiven of our sin because of our love for Jesus Christ. Hebrews 12 says that He is a Father who disciplines those that He loves, so that we could say an undisciplined child is an unloved child, because God wants us to turn back to Him for our own good and for the good of others.

And then, incredibly, *"Respect"* or *"honor the emperor"* In a day of emperor worship, Caesar Augustus. You know what his name meant? Literally: increase to the point of deity. Alright? So he named himself, that he is to be called "increase to

the point of deity." Then Roman emperors, they demanded ultimate allegiance. In a way, Peter puts the emperor in his place here. We are to fear God; the emperor's not God. "*Fear God, honor the emperor.*" Position, respect, honor him, because he is accountable to God for his actions; because God is sovereign and that God doesn't have to account for what he does to anybody or anything. He is the ultimate sovereign One who, in His sovereign grace, uses even people like Nero to accomplish His purposes. And it's Nero who would order, within a few years, the execution of Peter after the writing of this letter. It's truly extraordinary. The goodness of God--and that's where we find our trust and our rest, in that He's not ambushed by anything that's going to happen in the next weeks, ever. He's on the throne.

How do we be holy in an unholy world? Thirdly, "*Submit to your boss with patient endurance because it pleases God.*" So verse 18-20, they open with the favor of God and they close with the favor of God. "*Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect, not only to those who are good and gently, but also to those who are unreasonable. For this finds favor, if for the sake of conscience a person bears up under sorrows when suffering unjustly. For what credit is there if, when you sin and are harshly treated, you endure it with patience? But if when you do what is right and suffer for it, you patiently endure it, this finds favor with God.*" Servants, submit. Not blind submission, informed submission. Submit, unless you're asked or directed to sin. The most common relationship that we would have in the 21st century culture that is here described would be between an employee and an employer.

God tells us that he likes it that we keep a clean conscience, that we don't sin against others even though they may be harsh or cruel or sin against us. Same idea in I Peter 3:16, "*And keep a good conscience so that thing in which you were slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame.*" So that you and I, in obeying Christ and treating other people with dignity and respect - and our bosses and our employers, those who are wise and effective and that we like to be around, and the best boss that we ever had, and those who, "Wait, I

think I might find another job, because I don't know if I can work around this guy, or gal." God is pleased in a moment of suffering when we trust Him and when we do that which pleases Him, that we would endure with patience.

Do you know why that pleases God? When we suffer and we endure it with patience? That finds favor with God because that's when we're becoming like Jesus. That's what we look at next week, when, beginning with Verse 21, *"For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example to follow in His steps."* When we suffer for doing what God wants, and we patiently endure it, that is a sign of transformation, of becoming that which is unnatural to us, that which we don't want any part of; we want to do a run around it; we want to avoid it. But, in the patient endurance, we are becoming more like Jesus Christ.

In just a few minutes we are going to do a form of Communion. We're going to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I contrast what we're going to do this morning with what we will have done by Tuesday. What we will have done by Tuesday is have elected an administration at virtually every layer of our political system and our governance. But I contrast what we are about to do right now with what we're going to see unfold in the coming weeks.

Here is the contrast: Jesus Christ is our High King. Jesus Christ is the unelected King. Jesus Christ is not subject to term limits. Jesus Christ is eternal. Jesus Christ is ultimate righteousness, ultimate goodness, ultimate mercy, ultimate love, ultimate grace. Jesus Christ has made Himself known to us. Jesus Christ died for us. Jesus Christ is raised to life, and because He is alive, our hope is living, and in Him. And He invites us to life with Him right now for a short time, and then life forever with Him.

Amen. Will you bow with me please?

Dear Jesus, our High King. We thank You for Your rule and Your righteousness and for Your love and for Your mercy, for Your kindness that You have poured out on us. We thank You, Jesus, for loving the Father to the point of obedience. Thank You for Your sacrificial love for us, for saving us, for Your forgiveness, for the washing and cleansing of sin, for the future hope that we have, for the strength that we have right now. We thank You for sending Your Spirit, that we can experience Your power working alive in us, affecting us, transforming us, making us more like You. Thank You for Your word that discloses to us who You are, who we are, and how we become like You. Father, thank You that we can call You that name, that we can, in and through Your Son, approach into Your presence as Your daughters and as your sons, that we can be confident that You will always do that which is good and right in us, through us, for us. We thank You. In the name of Jesus, amen.

These next few moments, those of you who are online, if you could gather the elements of communion and join us. And those of us who are here, if you can very gently take that little cup, and as we have instructed and experienced in these past months, in just a moment I'm going to come back up from, and we will together obey Jesus in remembering His death and His life.

[music]

The night in which He was betrayed, Jesus took the bread, He broke it. He said, *"This is My body, broken for you. Take, eat; do this in remembrance of Me."*

Then He took the cup. He said, *"This is my life blood spilled out for the many for the forgiveness of sins."* Take; let's drink in remembrance of Jesus.

Ben Rico:

What a joy it is to go before our God together in humility, the very presence of our God and our Savior, through Jesus. Would you please stand with us, stand with

Toby as we sing our last song this morning, as we commit in humility to obedience to our great God in everything, so that the world around us would be directed to see Him in Christ. Let us sing together.

[music, "Jesus, Only Jesus"]

Amen. Go in peace.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R6hRH3avmYE&feature=emb_title