

Affirmation!

Overview

Last Sunday I spoke about heaven, and I still got heaven ringing in my head. The message this morning I prepared is not about heaven. And, but I've got this song in my head going, can you find it up there? When we all get to heaven, it starts up sing the, sing the wonders, sing the wondrous love of Jesus, sing his mercy.

And yeah, that's it. I just got that ringing in my head. You can't sing this one sitting down. You know that, right? Would you stand with me? Sing the wondrous love of Jesus, sing his mercy and his grace in the mansions. Bright.

You'll prepare for us a place
When we all get to heaven.
What a Day of rejoicing that will be
When we all see Jesus we'll sing and shout the victory.

While we walk the pilgrim pathway
clouds will over spread the sky.
But when traveling days are over,
not a shadow, not a sigh.

When we all get to heaven,
what a day of rejoicing that will be
when we all see Jesus.
We'll sing one more.

Next verse, shall we?
Let us then be true and faithful,
trusting, serving every day.
Just one glimpse. Yes.
When we all get to heaven, I pray joy. When we all see Jesus and shout the victory.

Turn to somebody right now and say, I'm ready to go. All right, that's enough. You can sit down. Ha ha ha ha ha ha. Hallelujah. Hallelujah. God is so good. You're probably familiar with the word affirmation. I looked it up in the dictionary. Affirmation means to say something or sometimes affirmation comes across as you do something that encourages a situation predominantly encourages someone or some others.

It can always be it should always be a word of affirmation and expression of affirmation is very uplifting.

It can be a moment of congratulations. It can embellish your already happy feelings. It gives a sense of approval. It gives a sense of appreciation and we all need it. We know that Jesus needed it. That makes no sense to us. Really when we think about it, well, he was the Lord, but he was the Lord in the flesh. He was very man as he was very God. And after River Jordan, when he came up out of the water and the dust, the love had descended upon him and a voice came from heaven. I suggest to you that was the first time he heard the voice of the Father since, since Mary's womb, since he came into the world.

I believe in that moment that the heavenly Father was so overjoyed. When Jesus went down in the water, he was making a confirmation. He was affirming to the Father and to the world. I won't back away from the cross. I'm going down. But he was also telling us by your dramatic mobiness, as John the Baptist lifted him up out of the water, he was saying, but I will only be down for three days and I'm coming up greater than ever. And the Father broke the silence and said, You are my beloved son. And today, I'm so well pleased with you. Have you had someone say something to you that just,

it just helped me, helped you so much, just lived here. Somebody told me today, they said something to the effect of, I would never guess that you're 80. And I said to him, you know, he, I think he said he was 82. And I said, you don't look a day over 86. It's nice when we say something to lift somebody up. I thought this one over and I was thinking that April would be sitting here, but she's downstairs or somewhere else in the building with the little kids. And this little story is somewhat about her. So we were pastoring out in Vancouver. By the way, I was in Vancouver last week and I was affirmed.

I was out there to minister to some people that are in a very, very difficult situation. I conducted a communion service and minister to people. It was a joyous time. And in the middle of all that, in the middle of the week, a phone call came. And it was from an elder in the church that I used to pastor. And this elder said, our pastor shot, as his name, has just learned that you're in the city. And if you've got nothing on Wednesday night, he insists that you be in the church service. And he said, he insists the same. I had no idea what to expect. I, I went. I thought he just wanted to take me out for a coffee or something after.

But he actually crafted his sermon. And all of a sudden it began to realize he's talking about me. And I, I won't, I won't go into any length to tell you what it was all about. But he was saying, there's somebody in this church service here tonight who made a difference in this church. It was going down. And with his leadership, it got lifted up. And all of a sudden he said, and that's the man right there, David Forrest. And the people broke into applause. Most of the people that were in that service, they had heard about me, I guess, but they didn't know who I was. They're all new people. And so he said, even though you never knew him, he said, it's time to thank him because he said, this auditorium, he said, he had it all fixed up. He fixed up the whole building.

He salvaged this place. And we're here tonight because of the work of this man. Forrest, get up here. And he made me come and stand at the front. He had the people all lined up. And he said, even though you don't know him, you thank him. Well, people came up and threw their arms around me. Of course, the people who did know me were weeping. It's hard. You weren't there. You had to be there. But it was such a moment.

I almost completely lost it. I stood there weeping, weeping. I was so embarrassed by all of this kindness. I was so euphoric. And then he said, at the end of the service, he said, Forrest, you're upstairs. And so I went up to this special lounge that we crafted years ago. It was up on the third floor. And I got up there. And he was all these people waiting to hug me and to make such a fuss. And every one of them gave a little testimony about what God had done. And it was absolutely breathtaking for me. I was affirmed.

I was affirmed. And so as I've just been kind of experiencing the afterglow of that experience, I remembered a time when April and I were the guests of Jimmy Patterson. Jimmy and Mary Patterson, Jimmy is worth billions of dollars. And he was very, very kind to us all along the way. Members of our church out there invited us on to his yacht, along with some other people. And at one point, he got the two of us aside. And then he ignored me. And he looked at April and he said, you know, April? I am so impressed with you. Now we said, you know, he said that I own the Frank Sinatra estate down in Palm something.

Desert, springs, whatever. He said, I own the whole place. And he said, it's got something like 37 bedrooms. And I forget how many bathrooms. And he said, I need somebody down there to manage that entire thing. I mean, he said, I invite my vice presidents there. And he said, we'll spend a whole week because we're planning, organizing things. He owns everything. He owns the Gray Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls. He owns Tissatz, you know, the Wax Museum, Ripley's Believe It or not. He owns all that stuff worldwide. It's just incredible.

And he said, so I have all my people come together and he said, I need to have somebody over the chef and over the meals and over the prep, over the grounds. He said, it's a huge estate. He said, you're the one that comes to my mind. And I sit there and I'm thinking, so I'm the pastor of this church and it's a rescue operation. And he's inviting my wife to go and live in California. And I'm thinking, this is a joke. But the more he went on, I'm thinking, this was kind of like a Donald Trump moment when he says, I'm going to eat Canada for breakfast. You know, do you think it's for real, mama? And so I turned to him and I said, Jim, that's a very kind thing you're offering to my wife. I said, where do I fit?

And he said, oh, I don't want you. So I didn't know if he was trying to make her feel good. He wasn't making my day. And the story ended there. Well, he did say, now April, if I did take you to California, I know your husband would follow you. I thought, oh, now I feel important. And he said, but Mary would kill me. That's his wife. So I thought, thank you, Mary. I'll buy you roses or like I'll pretend it's valentines and I'll bring you some fresh vegetables.

If you weren't here last Sunday, you missed that one. I was not affirmed that day. It's not about that. I'm talking now about what we would say to people. And the Word of God is all about lifting people up and encouraging them and helping them. And to me, it began when the Father broke the silence and spoke and said, you are my beloved son. With you, I'm well pleased. Jesus acted out this affirming principle throughout his whole ministry. We read in 2 Corinthians chapter 5. Therefore, he said, we regard, this is Paul speaking, we regard no one according to the flesh.

We don't think of each other as being in the flesh. So he's talking about us as Christians and how we ought to look upon one another. He's saying, from now on, we don't see each other according to our carnal state. We all know that when Adam fell in the garden because of disobedience and sin, that we all fell into that cradle. We all fell into that state. And we have this natural state which is prone to sin. Paul wrestled with it and said, I want to do good, but evil is always tugging at me. I want to do what's right, but there's something else in my members that's holding me back. And so I find it difficult to do that which is good, but that which is evil I don't want to do, I find myself doing. He said, there's a war going on inside me.

It's a troubling thing. So then we would say, aha, Paul has a weak side to him, doesn't he? And the challenge is we all do. I know this is going to be earthshaking to you, but I lived through the earthquake in Vancouver life. Did you hear about it? I was sitting with these people at a table and all of a sudden they started bouncing on their chairs. The light overtopping was swinging like this, the dishes were rattling. And I looked at Jim, the owner of the house. He wasn't running away, so I stayed put. I thought, do you run outside?

What do you get away from here? The place is going to crash. So I live, that's my second earthquake. Now I'm looking forward to the next one, but maybe what I'm about to say right now is going to shatter you. It's going to be an earthquake to you. I'm not as perfect as you think I am. I still am wrestling with what's called my Adamic nature. Adam gave us a nature, a fallen nature. And just like you, I wrestle with that which is considered to be my fallen nature. I do not believe that when I gave my heart to Jesus, I became angelic. I struggled just like you do.

Lots of problems. We all go through it. Attitudes and all the rest of it. The challenge is, the closer we get to each other, the more we can recognize the more we perceive each other's weaknesses. Somebody said that to me just this last week. He said, well, the more we get to know each other, the more we get to recognize our weaknesses. This one's got a short fuse. This one's got an attitude. This one's got this. This one's got that. We all see it.

And the apostle Paul is saying, look, there's nobody perfect in the house of the Lord. But he said, from now on, I'm asking you, don't look for the Adamic nature in each of us. You look at me, don't consider my failures, but endeavor as best you can to acknowledge that which Jesus has done in me and prop that up and feed it. Feed the good guy in me and leave the negative stuff that I'm wrestling with, leave that with the Lord. You can't fix it anyhow. Christians are no different than anybody else. We all struggle with seeing things that we are disappointed with, things that we don't like, and how to deal with that and how to keep our mouths shut when we need to. I'm very good at opening my mouth.

I love the taste of leather, so I put both feet in at this same time. I get myself into trouble all the time. I need to tame my tongue and slow down and talk. No, slow down in my talk. We wrestle. We wrestle with that Adamic nature. It's always with us. And it won't be gone until we are perfect like him. So what we need to do, the apostle Paul, is stop looking at each other, according to the flesh. Book in each other what God's doing. I've watched you people.

Some of you are fairly new around here, and I've noticed your growth. I see it. And even as a church as a congregation, I've seen growth here. I see new liberty. I see people stepping out. I see growth and maturity. And I always want to encourage that. So when I get upset with you and I tell you a bunch of dirty rotten brats, it's only for a moment, then I figure it all out and give you some peanut butter and tell you how wonderful you are. We need to leave out the negativism and we need to show approval. We need to encourage one another.

And encouragement is actually a ministry. And some people are better at that than others. And some people go overboard. And they're always telling you how wonderful you are and you're thinking, what are they after? In John chapter 1, Jesus meets the man Simon. He says, I know you're Simon, Peter. And I know everybody calls you Simon. But I'm going to call you Peter. Simon in its original meaning means unbreakable, not dependable, like a reed growing in the Nile. The wind hits it hard and it breaks.

It falls over. He said, I know people love to call you Simon. I know people look upon you as a flunky, as kind of like a wasteling. But I'm telling you, Peter from now on, and what I believe is that Peter would have said to all the other disciples, he calls me Peter, you call me Peter. Because whatever he sees, that's what I want to be. I think I told you a story at some time in the past. I read this story about an artist who was in his little, he had a storefront where he would be painting. And every day he had this beautiful canvas and as he was painting on it, across the road was a homeless individual, a person who was unshaven, unkept, clothes worn out, really a lost person.

This artist was using this fellow who was across the street as his focus. And one day he went across the street to this gentleman who was sitting on the curb begging for a few coins. And he said, I'd like to invite you to my play. I live right across there. I'm an artist and he said, I have some food and I'd like to share it with you. Well, the man was very, very happy to accept the same and went into the studio of where this painter's been a lot of time. The painter, by the way, left the picture front and center so that this man from across the street couldn't miss it. The man chewing on across the bread and maybe holding a cup of tea in his hand, walked over and looked at the picture and he said, boy, you're good.

He said, that's a fantastic picture. He said, there's something about it that's quite magnetic to me. He said, who is that guy in that picture? Well, that's you. No, no, no, that's not me. Look at me. I'm in such a mess. And the painter said, you know, given a second chance, nice suit of clothes, a good meal. Viewers accept some approval, receive a little bit of a step up. You could be that man. And that homeless man turned and looked at the painter and said, if that's the man you see, then that's the man I want to be.

When Jesus looks at you, he does not see a loser. Amazing grace. How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. And when Jesus looks upon you, he looks upon you as accomplished because he's not looking at where you are. He's looking where he plans for you to be. He looks upon you as a person who is almost complete. A few more little touches. A little more sandpaper here and there. A little blush on the cheek. For the late old ladies, for the ladies, a little lipstick, for the man, hold the lipstick. But he knows how he's going to, he knows how by his Holy Spirit, he's going to complete us and he calls us saints. In fact, he sees us as saints now. He says, we're not saints. No, no, no, no. Remember about the picture. He's calling you by what he plans for you to be. So in light of that, we need to see each other as Jesus sees us. When you see my failures and my faults, my fault, if you're not sure about them, check with April. She's run out of paper writing about it. If you want to know Bob my failures, she can tell you. But I beg of you, don't see the failures.

But look at the picture that's in this word here, saints age. He's affirming you. If the Apostle Paul says, my prayer is that you will see the height from the depth and the breadth of his love and his power that he's extending toward you. He said, I has not seen and ear has not heard. He said, it's not even entered into your heart. The things that God has prepared for a wonderful you. It's an incredible love story. Jesus does not look for the Adam in you. He looks for what he's going to approve in you. I don't see you as a Simon. I see you as a Peter.

And Peter played a huge role. He's the first guy to preach under a Pentecostal anointing, an Acts chapter 2 and thousands were swept into the kingdom of God. The stories have it, and we can't prove this. But on his sacrificial death when he died for the faith, the story, and we have to, we want to believe that the story is accurate, that he refused to be hung upside down on a cross like Jesus. He refused to be hung like Jesus and insisted he be hung upside down. And so here's the balance. I love that little piece. I want to believe it's accurate because if it's true, then here's Jesus saying, I'm going to use you Peter.

You're going to be a dynamo for me. You're going to learn how to feed my sheep. You're going to be a hero of the faith. And when the real test of life came, that approval that Jesus had given him had not gone to his head as we would put it. He wasn't arrogant. He carried that approval that God had him, him, with sincerity and humility. You've all met people who were better than you. If you weren't sure, spend five more minutes with them and they'll let you know. They're always wiser than you. They know the answer to every question and they're never wrong and you're intimidated by them.

Over the years people have come to recognize that the spiritual giants in the local church, spiritual giants often have very big clumsy feet and they tend to step on some and it can be very troubling. A truly spiritual person who walks in the spirit does not hurt others on the journey. A truly spiritual person does not look down upon those that they consider to be amateurs or very young, not mature in the Lord. A person who's close to Jesus is an adult in the room but they're prepared to be treated like a child. He wants to be known as a powerful son of Abraham but nobody wants to live an attempt with him. So we need to be careful when we come to recognize, he loves me. He loves me.

I was watching a TV advertisement years ago. My dad was sitting with me in our house and as soon as these little boys are sitting at a table and there's a new cereal, I bet this is going to ring a bell with some of you. It was a brand new cereal and there were three boys at the table. So two of them were a little bit older and then there was one at the end of the table and he was the very young one. Is it ringing a bell? And they didn't want to test the cereal. They kind of wanted their old regular cereal but they're going to watch and see how Mikey would respond. You remember it, you're laughing already. It was one of the most clever advertisements I ever saw when little Mikey put his spoon

in and whoever had these kids trained. It was unbelievable. These two little rascals were looking over and almost stretching to watch to think he's going to hate it. He's going to spit it out and the kid put his spoon in his mouth and he put his spoon in again and the other kid said he likes it. He likes it. And then of course they dove in. That gave me a sermon the following Sunday. I preached on this. Oh, I've lost some of you now. You're almost under the chair laughing.

I got a sermon out of it. This guy can get a sermon out of a washcloth. He likes it. He likes it. And what I heard was that he likes me. I've met a lot of people in my ministry journey. It just occurred to me the other day. I sat, I read out of my fingers. I had to use a pen and paper. I counted up how many years I've been in the ministry and then I started thinking about how many sermons I have preached and it got ridiculous, like thousands. And it occurred to me that I've passed the 60 year mark of being a pulpitier.

I'm not bragging. I posted that little one holding in my arms. I posted it on Facebook. I'm not a major Facebooker. But I've got that little picture of me holding that little baby and there's room for a comment and I put it. I can't believe that I've lived to experience this moment. I feel so kindly dealt with that I got to hold another grandbaby, a product of April in my life. Their mother, a sweet darling, many of you know her as shell ray. Her mother, our wonderful daughter who led in worship in another church this morning.

I won't tell you where it is. You don't want to go there. I've been so blessed all along the way but I have to confess with you that in my journey I've met some people who kind of grated me the wrong way. There were things about them that just drove me nuts and you may not have met the same ones but I'm probably describing a few people you've run into along the way. It took a lot of grace for you to kind of tolerate them and not give them a piece of your mind. For people like me I can't afford to give away a piece, not even a little bit of my mind. I have to love them. The book says to love one another.

It's talking about a whole world but especially love the brethren, love the sisters. There are people who can gray you and I have to tell you there are Christians. There were board members years ago that broke my heart. I got an ulcer over it. I was bleeding. I was hurting. The church was full. God was doing so many things. Young people were getting the baptism. I was getting calls from my parents at midnight. Get over here pastor. We're having a permitting of an over and found five of our teenagers on their faces in their bedroom crying out to God and speaking in tongues filled with the Holy Spirit. What a blessing. And I had some deacons who said, you're not doing a good job. Why don't you pack up and get out of here?

And it broke my heart. But I had to love them. I had to love those who at least we're acting like my enemies. I had to love them but I didn't like them. Makes sense. But on that Sunday morning in London, Ontario after I saw that there was a serial called Maple. I think it was. He likes it. He likes it. And listen to this. I got so excited. You got to know as nuts as I get in this pulpit. No, I used to be a complete idiot. I jump up on the front pew and shout, behold, I'm coming and somebody yells, not now. I had people afraid that the place was going to come on glue. And that morning as I preached on, he loved me. I ran up and down the aisles and across the back screaming at the top of my lungs. And he likes me. He likes me. And the people began to applaud.

They got it. They got it. We have to love everybody. We struggle to like everybody. But he loves you. And he likes you to the extent where he died for you. Not that you were worthy of such a sacrifice. Back to the portrait. He loved you and he liked you to the place where he paid the supreme sacrifice that you could become what the master had put on his canvas. God has a picture of the future for you. He has a picture.

And when he's done, he'll come forth as pure gold. I have not seen it. No matter how loud I shout it, you have never heard it. It's never even occurred to you as wild an imagination as you have. It's yet to occur to you what God has prepared for you. Now you're changing and in heaven tomorrow, maybe today. Absent from the body, present with the Lord. Or he descends with his shout and the trumpet of the archangel. Come home, the bridegroom cometh. It's yet to occur. John chapter 8, at dawn he appeared in the temple courts where all the people were gathered around him.

He sat down to teach them. The teachers of the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group. And then they turned to Jesus. We caught her in the very act of adultery. Now the law of Moses says, now you've got to stone a woman like this. Now what do you say? Here was a woman downtrodden. Jesus identifying with the drunks, with the harlots, with everybody and saying, come on to me all you who are weary and have her laid now give you rest. So they brought him on and said, here, give her rest. Well we stone her to death.

That's what the law says you've got to do. They were using this question. It tells us in verse 6 to trap him. They want to accuse him. But you know the story Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his finger. How many ideas have been put forth about what did he write on the ground? I won't waste your time. Whatever he wrote shook those guys down to the bottom of their sandals. He said, whichever one of you is without sin, there are those who believe that he wrote, whichever one of you is without this sin. How many of you hire harlots? If you were to go to the city of Ephesus today, I was there years ago.

The markings along the street of Ephesus to where to go to the brothels are in no short supply. So much of Ephesus has been destroyed by armies and then by the by white weather, the blistering winds and the sand. So many things are missing. But not the markings along the major streets of Ephesus. The harlots turn right here. The symbols are everywhere. Harlotry was a common thing in places like Ephesus and all over the world.

There were women who tried to themselves for some kind of societal acceptance. There were all kinds of reasons why even women of high degree and seen as having wonderful morals and having been successful in life would do some pretty wicked things for some awkward reasons. Well, here was one of them right now. What are you going to do, Jesus? And Jesus wrote on the ground. Maybe he wrote, which one of you has not gone and followed that little sign and taken advantage of a harlot? Doesn't matter what he wrote, as he stooped down a road on the ground, they all disappeared one by one. They started walking away, the older ones first, until Jesus was left with the woman, still standing. Jesus straightened up from having been stooped on the ground. And he said, well, where are your accusers now?

And to me, this is one of the most beautiful stories in the whole book. Where'd your accusers go? She said, they're gone. He says, yes. The condemnation has been lifted. The judgment has passed away. Then he said, and I don't accuse you. I don't condemn you. Did she really know who he really was? He was a great teacher, but he's the judge of all men. Every person, dead and living alive now and everyone going for will all stand before Jesus and will be judged for their sin.

The greatest judge of all said to her, I'm not passing judgment on you, but then he added one more line. Now, where do you go? And oh, by the way, don't you sin anymore. I have a suggestion and I want to drop it like a heavy anchor, not just a light suggestion. I believe that moment when he said, I don't judge you. Now go and sin no, or I believe her life changed like that. I believe it was a tremendous transformation. He affirmed her at that moment. He didn't affirm her on the basis of what she had been. He was affirming her on the basis of what she could become. He was saying, I believe in you.

And we don't know why she had been doing what she was doing. You know why in Acts 6 the church had to figure something out. Redemption, salvation, righteousness, and post upon thousands of people and the widows had no way, the widows, husbands, they now had no way to earn a living. You know what Acts 6 is all about. They lost their trade. They would go and sell themselves for some. And to you and I, that's just, that's impossible. No, it was the way of life. But now that they had Jesus in their hearts and they'd been redeemed from sin and judgment, righteousness had come in their hearts, they could no longer earn a living. And the church had to make a difference.

And so they came up with the deacons. Look after the tables. Feed the widows. I don't condemn you now. You run along and don't you sin anymore. John 15 verse 15, I no longer call you servants because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I call you my friends. For everything that I've learned from my father, I've given it to you. Moses was a servant. Joshua was a servant. David was a servant.

I never called them friends. But this is the new covenant. This is the new day. This is the day of grace. This is the day of glory and of majesty. And I've shown it to you. I've told you about heaven. I've told you I've shown you and best I can the Father. Nobody ever knew the Father like you know him right now. Moses never knew the Father like you know him. Nobody in the Old Testament ever knew salvation and grace and mercy like you do.

If they were servants, I call you friend and I'm treating you like a friend. Like Jim Patterson treated me like his friend. No. When we say that person is my friend, that's a huge statement. Is it not? I'm careful about who I say, oh, that's my friend. I would not tell you today. I'm friends with Jim Patterson. It's been a long time since he phoned me. Who knows why? I really did know him. I spent a lot of time with him. He poured things into my heart that really touched me.

We were friends a little bit when I passed that church in Vancouver. I used to say in those days, yes, he's my friend. And don't ask me if I can get you an appointment with him. Because that's what people tried to do. Take advantage of our friendship. But I can't tell you any longer he's my friend. But Jesus has said, you are my friends and he's getting not further away but he's getting closer. And as he gets closer, the Adam in you will be depleted and the Jesus in you is going to grow. And when we look upon each other, we look for Jesus and we delicately with improvement, ignore the endemic nature in you.

Don't look for Adam in me. He's there in clear sight. Forget about that and deal with the Jesus in me. We talked about this little baby that was coming to our house yesterday. And I said, April, what are we going to say about this baby? I can't talk about kids like I talk about smarties and chocolate cake. I don't know how to handle all this stuff. And I told April about sister Adam, now brother and sister to her pastor at this church, how many years ago, doesn't matter. And she was one of my teachers when I was in college. And she said, now, and she was teaching us how to be a good pastor. And so these are the words.

I shouldn't tell you this because this could get me in trouble down the road. And you'll understand what I mean in a moment. She said, when somebody brings you a baby and they will, all excited, they'll bring a baby and they'll pull back the little blankets and let you look at them. And she said, to be quite honest, they're not all cute. Some of them are just, oh, she said I, and she didn't use any bad words. But she said, they're just not cute. They say, that's a beautiful baby. That's not what you believe. That's not what you're looking at. You're just, you know, you're. And she said, so here's what you remember, pastor.

When you see that baby that kind of falls below the acceptable line to you, here's the words that you will say, that's some baby. So a little grandchild showed up at my house yesterday and I was ready. I just said, well, that's some baby, all right. You keep it over there. I watched the kids struggling. I've seen a few of these, right? Some of them, I saw this one struggling. A little fists were going like this. She's down there. Her face went red. She's so excited to see her great grandpa.

She's filling her pants in her way. Get her. I'm not going to change her diaper either. My time has gone. I love this pulpit too much. We're going to serve you a communion and we're going to do it rather swiftly and you'll forgive us for that, won't you? Go like this. Well the other half can just leave then. Can the servers please come even just now? And I'm going to read the scriptures and you'll forgive me. Communion should never be a half-hearted thing in a service.

It should be done with dignity and poise. We should render communion with the respect that it deserves. And I invite these people to just please go ahead and serve these people. I want to introduce these people to you here. Tom, look at these people. They are the friends of God. Now you'd be nice to them. Isn't it wonderful like the love, the friendship that God's house provides to us? This morning there's a fellow over here with a big baritone voice and he threw his arms around me this morning and said something nice to me. It's wonderful to be loved. It's wonderful to be approved.

And if there's anybody in this house who doesn't receive a regular dose of love and appreciation from some of us, please forgive us. We're going to try and do better. Everybody in this house should feel love not only by the Father but by the Father's friends. You should feel that love and that love should be making a difference in you. And you know what? I'm told of faith. It makes it difficult for you to fail God. There's not only do you owe it to the Lord, you owe it to me and you owe it to yourselves, to be faithful to the Word, to be careful for the feelings of one another, to express love and appreciation. And if you look up those words one another in the New Testament, the list is as long as you're left to arm. It's huge. Bear one another's burdens. Support one another. Love one another. Wait for one another. Teach one another. It goes on. The list is huge. That's called affirmation, affirming one another, propping each other up, putting some air in my tires, helping me on my journey as I help you on your journey. Oh, God is good.

Oh, God is good. Oh, God is good. He's so good to me. You go to any service in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, and in every service they will sing that song. They've caught on. They're poor by our standards. They have limited knowledge of the Bible. Some of them don't even know how to read and they've never handled a Bible. They live in squalor, but when they come together with the body, with the friends of Jesus, they sing.

Oh, God is good.
 Oh, God is good.
 Oh, God is good.
 He's so good to me.
 And that's why I love him so

sing it directly to him.
 I love you so. I love you so.
 You're so good to me.
 God is so good.
 God is so good.
 God is so good.
 He's so good. Before you eat the bread and before you drink the wine, sing this with me.

I love you so.
 Sing it to him now.
 I love you so. I love you so.
 You're so good. Good to me.

We are betrothed as a bride to a groom who before he left to go back to his father's house to finish the house preparing it for us. He broke bread with us, the few of us that were present with him in that upper room. And there he sealed the marriage vows with us. They ate bread together and they drank wine. The drinking of the wine on the evening of the families coming together and the betrothed was sealed. The promises were made. Our kids are getting married. They sealed that promise by drinking the cup. That's why we have this cup. When you drink the cup, you're celebrating. He made a promise. He said, don't forget the promise. As you often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, do so remembering me. It's written right there. So Heavenly Father, we're unworthy of the broken body of your son. Let me celebrate what He did for us in Jesus' name, amen.

Four cups were drunk that night in the upper room. The fourth cup He said, this cup. This cup is like my blood. He said these words, drink all of it. Let's do it. Here's a good one. How I love Jesus. Go how I love Jesus. How I love Jesus. Because He first loved me. After all that nonsense I did about babies a little while ago, there's a little one in the back row.

I'm getting all bubbly now. Now that one is a beauty. And you deserve to see that beautiful child. So Nadine, would you do us an honor, you and your hubby? This is, you never have to come back here again if you hate this. Nobody can send her people out like that. Would you come on up here? And I think we need a grandma along to just maybe steady things. Would you come grandma? No, that really is some baby. Hey, hello? Does this one look like, oh, we won't go down that road.

Oh, this one loves Dave. I think that we ought to just, I'm not overstepping privilege here. They'll do the dedication of this child however they wish. This is your little pride and joy. So get down here, grandpa. And so I hope this is acceptable. I'd like to pray. See, I believe that blessing word, right? I believe that. And so I want to pray a blessing over the three of you and in particular over this. And when you hear me pray the word bless, that word means my prayer is to do. And that God will kneel down and take a hold of all of you and hold you in His arms. That's what the word bless means. It means for Him to kneel before you and embrace you. And I want to pray a blessing over this. Oh, I love you too, buddy. Oh, yes. Heavenly Father, what a delight. What a delight. We've got to know the Teppers and we love them with such deep love. But now when we see this little one with its mom and dad, Lord, that just, that just lifts us up to the higher heights. And Lord, I pray that you will bless this mom and dad and I pray especially a blessing upon this little one.

May your joy be experienced by this little one. May this little person come to love and cherish the name of Jesus. Lord, bless this family. I ask it in the name above all names, the name of Jesus. Amen. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. God bless you. See I do love babies. I do. I ask them to dance with them. I just don't like diapers. Well, it's 17 minutes after 12.

I was hoping to be done by 15 after, but I go on and on and on. All right, the Lord bless you. Help me. The Lord keep you, cause his face to shine upon you, and gives you his peace.