



Let's Talk (Part 5) – Sanctification

Matt Chandler – July 23, 2017

Good morning! It's good to see you. Thank you, Daniel. Be praying for Bleecker. He is on an airplane with his four little boys to Taiwan right now. I love him, and I am grateful to *not* be on said plane. They're heading over there for a week and a half or so to just do some work with our missionaries there on the ground in Taiwan. Be praying for Michael.

If you have your Bibles, go ahead and grab those. We're going to be in Colossians, chapter 3. In fact, for the next three weeks, we're going to be in Colossians, chapter 3, verses 1 through 17. That's kind of our plan over the next three weeks. Then at the end of those three weeks, we'll start our fall series. It's kind of hard to believe summer is just about over.

Last month, the family and I spent a week in Northern Ireland. An organization called and wanted me to come over and do some teaching and, I guess to sweeten the pot for me, just said, "Hey, we'll fly the family over. You guys see Ireland, and then we'll just jam you up on one day. We'll wring you out on that one day. Bring the whole family, and have a good time."

I prayed, and by "prayed" I mean just said, "Yes!" We headed to Northern Ireland (the entire Chandler clan). We spent about six days in Belfast and just kind of hopped down to Dublin for a day. We saw the Book of Kells and those kind of nerd things my kids put up with. Then from there, we went to Glenarm, Northern Ireland. Glenarm is this tiny, little community that is on the beach there in Northern Ireland.

There were some things I was unaware of in regard to how Northern Ireland is positioned in the world. Here's what I mean by that. I was not aware that it would still be daylight at eleven o'clock at night. I was unaware that it would be bright as noon around 4:00 a.m. In fact, my first day, I thought, "Oh my gosh! I must be exhausted. I slept till 9:00." No, I slept till 4:15. Right? I had to get used to kind of all of that.

One of the cool things was I did my kind of full day of teaching. I taught four or five times that day. Then I walked offstage at 9:30 at night. Then the kids and I walked down to this beach. I'm a Navy brat, but I had never quite seen a beach quite like this. It was full of stones, like really smooth, round stones that were black and white. Then we would find these things that looked like frosted marble in them. We would pick them up, and that became a game to pick it up.

My personality type is one of input, which means if I discover something that piques my curiosity, I need to know *everything* about it, all the way back to the first person who ever saw it and named it. It's *awful* and *awesome* simultaneously. My wife could just watch me just drift. She is like, "I'll talk to him in a couple of days" because I need to get to the bottom of this.

What those little frosted marble things were is something called *sea glass*. Then the next morning when we got up to catch our flight back to Heathrow to head back to Dallas, we went out that morning again. We were looking for sea glass.

As I was picking it up after having, you know, stayed up for about three hours and kind of figured out what this was that we were collecting... Sea glass is broken shards of glass either from a shipwreck, through a bottle that's been broken, or even plates and things that can somehow end up in the ocean that over a period of 30 to 40 years is immersed in saltwater and shaped by the sea.

What you end up with is this very smooth piece of stone. I'll show you a picture of sea glass. This is what sea glass looks like. This is what we were collecting. On that morning when I was picking it up, I was struck by how this is such a good picture of what God is up to in our lives. When you and I became Christians, we were broken. There were sharp edges. There were pointy things. We were broken people.

Over a period of time, immersed in the Holy Spirit (if we were to stay true to the analogy), through rough seas and calm seas, God is shaping. He is changing. He is changing our outside from the inside. Really that's what Colossians 3:1 through 17 is all about. *Progressive sanctification* is what it's called if we were using theological terminology. Over a period of time, God transforms us.

What I want to do is I want to start with verse 17, because it's kind of the summary of verses 1 through 17. Then that will not stop me from going back up and starting again in verse 1. Let me summarize it, and then we'll dive in for the next three weeks.

Let's look at this. Colossians 3:17: "**And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.**" I think what you're seeing in verse 17 is God's kind of vision for your life. I think it's two-fold as we see the summary of verses 1 through 17. Here's the first thing.

1. *Greater integration.* God's vision for your life is for you to be more integrated than you are when you're converted. Here's what I mean. There is a gap in your life and in mine between word and deed, between head and heart. There is a gap there. God's vision for your life is that that gap over time closes. Your hypocrisy that you are living in now, that I am living in now, over a period of time shrinks.

Now look. Just to make everybody breathe out, how many of you (just by means of God already knows so you can't lie) would just say, "I know there is a gap in my life between word and deed"? Okay, so there are hands up, and then there are liars. That's all there is in this room. There's not another category. There is that gap, or you are lying or you are so narcissistic you can't see. There's not another category.

Every one of us is wrought with inconsistency and a gap between word and deed. What he says here is the Spirit is at work in us closing the gap. God's vision for our lives is greater integration. He smooths. He takes off hard edges. He gets the head and the heart closer to one another. But that's not the only thing we see in this text. I think the second vision we see here is not just greater integration but...

2. *Greater gratitude and gladness.* I meet very few people who have the desire to be bitter, angry, and volatile people. I've met very few people who want that for their lives. They're like, "What do you want in your life?" "I'd just like to be really resentful." Now let me create this caveat. I do know people who have been seriously sinned against who really struggle forgiving and letting go because it feels like they're letting the other person off the hook. In that way, they do choose and do want to be bitter and resentful.

Although this has nothing to do with the text, I would like to appeal to you that you are not harming the one who sinned against you. You are harming yourself. You are allowing whatever they did to you to perpetrate in your life greater harm, greater robbing of healing and joy. I want to encourage you that to forgive them does not let them off the hook but lets you off the hook. Are you tracking? Forgiving, letting go, helps *you* be restored into what God has for you.

The vision God has for your life is not just greater integration, a closing of the gap of hypocrisy but a life marked by gratitude, gladness, and awareness of what we have over and above what we don't have. Now I think there will not be a greater apologetic in our day than grateful people who live out of a sense of gladness in a world that's always looking for a reason to be offended. Right?

If we, rooted in Christ, were out of our relationship with God in this closing gap of heart and head to live grateful lives marked by gratitude, not constantly complaining, giving the benefit of the doubt, think of how brightly that would shine in 2017. Most people live with a near constant awareness of what they don't have, what they wish they had, and how they wish it would go.

What would it be like to just be blown away at how God good has been, about how kind God has been, about how generous God has been? What would it be like to really live out of that place where it's really hard to take from you that gratitude and gladness because you're so aware of the generosity of God in your life? This is God's vision. It's a good vision for your life, right? Integration. Gratitude. Gladness. Yes, and amen. So how then do we get on this path? Let's look here. Colossians 3, starting in verse 1.

"If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."

Now it's important that we start at the beginning and we answer a very significant question. Colossians 3:1 through 17 is a transition couple of paragraphs in the book of Colossians. The first part of Colossians is about the preeminence of Jesus Christ, the grandeur of Jesus Christ, the beauty of Jesus Christ, the power of Jesus Christ, that Jesus is our treasure. He is our hope. He is the giver of salvation. It's all about Jesus and what Jesus has done.

One of the things I've loved about these services... I was in Nashville this past week with the Acts 29 Global Gathering. I didn't get to talk with Daniel at all about where I was going or what I was preaching on. Then I don't know if you know it or not, but earlier today in worship, you guys read Colossians 1:15 through 22, which is about the preeminence of Christ. That was just the Lord going, "Yeah, I have something for my people today." Right? I just love when the Lord does that.

You started talking about the preeminence of Christ in our reading during worship, but here's what's important to know. The transition goes like this: "**If then you have been raised with Christ...**" Now we have a qualifier on everything that's been said. If you've been raised with Christ, then the rest is available to you. But if you have not been raised with Christ, you need to go back and read Colossians 1 and 2 again.

Our position with God in Christ matters for the rest of the things we're going to talk about today. If you have not been raised in Christ, if you have not been born again, if you have not laid your yes down, if you have not surrendered to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, this vision God has for you and the things we're about to read next...look at me; I love you...do not apply to you because you have to get Colossians 1 and 2 down first.

My question before we dive in that *you* have to answer (I can't answer it for you) is...*Have you been raised with Christ?* Are you a Christian? Is Jesus the Lord of your life? There are some things I want to make you aware of. I did not just ask if you have been baptized. I did not ask if you were a social conservative. I didn't ask anything about your political party. I didn't ask where you were born. I didn't ask about your parents.

Have you laid your yes down, repented of your sins? Are you following Jesus as your Lord and Savior? Because if you are, you have been raised with Christ, which we'll talk more about that in a moment. If you have been raised with Christ, look at what he says next. "**...seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.**" What is our pursuit? If we have been raised with Christ, then what really is the driving emphasis of our lives?

Well, the text says. I just love the Bible. It's not hanging us up in any real way. It's just kind of clear as can be. If you have been raised with Christ, seek where Christ is. The pursuit of your life and my life as Christians is Christ as our greatest treasure. He is our goal. He is our pursuit. He is our treasure. It is that relationship that is nurtured. It is *that* we are most serious about. That is the emphasis of our life. We are Jesus people. Christians. Christ-ins. Disciples. Followers of Jesus Christ. That's who we are.

Our Guy is Jesus. He is the point. He is the emphasis. He is the goal. He is the hope. All our chips are in Jesus Christ. I'm banking my eternity on it. I'm banking my life here and now on it. I'm banking everything on Jesus. "How are you going to approach marriage, Pastor?" I'm banking it all on Jesus Christ. "What about parenting?" I'm all in on Jesus Christ. "What about your money?" Yeah, yeah,

yeah. All in on Jesus Christ. "How do you approach rest?" All in on Jesus Christ. "What about work ethic?" All in on Jesus Christ.

You ask me. My answer is Jesus. You want to talk even about kind of cultural issues. My bet is Jesus. That certainly has implications, but we are Jesus people. Why? Well, you already read why. Jesus is the image of the invisible God. You want to know what God is like? Look to Jesus Christ. You want to know how God responds to sinners?

Look to Jesus, but don't make the mistake of not paying attention to *all* of how Jesus interacts with sinners, because I think those who kind of land more in the progressive theology world would love to have you stare at Jesus compassionately engaging Zacchaeus, compassionately engaging the woman at the well, compassionately engaging the woman caught in adultery.

Yes and amen, but let's not *not* look at his body torn hanging on the cross for sin. You want to know what God is like? Look at Jesus. He is the image of the invisible God, but he is also the firstborn of all creation. That does not mean he has been created but rather all things have been created through him, by him, and for him.

I don't know if you were here last week, but I thought JT English just crushed that sermon on the Trinity. He just did such an incredible job. We see Jesus is the kind of power in creation. We see that in the book of Colossians. We see he is head of the church. Our org chart is like Jesus...elders. We have to answer to someone, and he loves you far more than we do.

We have to kind of nervously try to love you well in our understanding of the Word of God, apply it over our lives, and plead with you to be serious about Jesus, because the book of Hebrews says we have to give an account for that. We have to give an account for that! He is the firstborn among the dead. I love that he is preeminent. He is preeminent. He is ultimate authority.

I love just the idea of preeminence. It's like you can't say Jesus is unfair, because what you think about Jesus does not affect who Jesus actually is. Did you follow me there? Your opinion about who Jesus is does nothing to who Jesus actually is. He is preeminent. Then all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell in him. Then I love this. He reconciles to himself all things.

When I say no one has out-sinned the grace of God, this is what I have in view. He grabs all the broken glass and immerses it in the Spirit. Over a period of 20-30 years, he smoothes it out more

and more and more. Then how do we then seek the things that are above? How do we seek Jesus? How do we make Jesus our treasure, our goal, our plan? How do we actually do that? Well, again, this is another reason I love the Bible.

He keeps telling us. **"Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth."** Now Romans 6 says there are two mindsets one can possess: a mindset on the Spirit and a mindset on the flesh. We're going to talk more about that next week and the week after that, but for now, here's what the apostle Paul would say about how to kind of fix our mind on the things that are above. Philippians 4:8 says,

"Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

Look. Look right at me. No one talks to you as much as you talk to you. You never shut up to yourself. You are constantly in your own self. When you lay down at night, you are talking to yourself. The first thing you do when you wake up in the morning is talk to yourself. You're talking to yourself when you drive. You're talking to yourself right now. Even if you're like, "I don't think I talk to myself," you are talking to yourself.

There is never a moment where you are not talking to yourself. You are always in your head, always saying things. Many are true. Most are lies. Part of what it means to have your mind set on the things that are above is to be aware of what you are saying to you. If no one talks to you like you do, it becomes imperative that you're paying attention to what you're saying.

The idea in the Bible of spiritual strongholds is the idea of believing what is false and, in that belief of what is false, building what becomes a stronghold from keeping you from enjoying all that Christ has died to bring you. What are you saying to yourself that's not true? Well, the first thing you have to do is pay attention to what you actually are saying to yourself. Then the second thing (and this is huge) is you have to actually know what's true.

There's a way that seems right to us, and in the end, it gets everybody killed. That's the Bible. I didn't make that up. You don't need to email me. I don't need to know you. That's what the Bible says. **"There is a way which seems right to a man, but in the end it leads to death."** If we're going to set our minds on the things that are above and this ends with us seeking, treasuring, loving,

and following Jesus more seriously, then what are some kind of key components that help us kind of have our minds transformed?

Well, let me lay out some of them. I think first and foremost (and this should not surprise you) is the Scriptures, is the Word of God. The Bible is God's self-disclosure of himself to us. The Bible is serious. Prayer as we read the Bible is serious, because you can read the Bible poorly and wrongly. Listen. We see this all over the Bible that people use the Bible poorly.

Read John 6 some time. In John, chapter 6, Jesus accuses the Pharisees who, by the way, know the Bible better than most of us. He says to them, "**You study the Scriptures [in vain] because you think that in them you have eternal life...yet you refuse to come to me that you may have life.**" What do the Scriptures do? They get us nearer to Christ. They help us understand Jesus. They help us marvel at the beauty of Jesus.

Where the Scriptures do not do that, Jesus says, "You study them in vain." We know the Scriptures. We're prayerful over the Scriptures. We meditate on them, which means we don't blow through it. You're not reading a blog. You're reading the very words of God to us as he reveals himself most fully to us.

There will be some confrontations in that. He is the Alpha and Omega. He has always been. He will always be. You're here, according to the Bible, like dew on the grass in the morning: here today, gone today. I mean, on the timeline of eternity, you don't even show up on the line. I mean, you're there, but you're like the ink blends with the other ink on the timeline. That's just how brief your time is.

Of course the Bible is going to confront you, because you have been shaped by your day and age. I have been shaped by my day and age. The Word of God is going to bear its weight on us for our good. That must be submitted to.

By the way, if you're like, "I have no idea where to begin," you can go to our site. We have I think about a two-hour deal called "Know Your Bible." Jen Wilkin and I taught that. It's everything from how *not* to do it to, "Hey, we're just going to do this together now." I think it's really helpful for you. If you want to grab that and download it, it would be super helpful.

A fourth thing is not just the Word of God, not just prayer, not just meditation on the Word of God, but then I think being in a community that is serious about Jesus helps with your mind. If kind of the Christian friends you run with aren't really Jesus people... I mean, they're good folk, but Jesus isn't like a topic of conversation, not what Jesus is up to, what Jesus is doing in their heart, what they're hoping Jesus does in the lives of others...

If you're in a shallow community of faith, then you need to be the one who kind of turns up the temperature on that. Are you tracking with me? Just be the weird Jesus guy. How strange is it that at church you can be the weird Jesus guy? Is that not an indictment on what's happened to American evangelicalism that even at church like, "Man, that guy is on fire! He is like always about Jesus! We're just trying to talk about football in the fall, and he is like, 'Well, Jesus is my neighbor'"?

What an indictment on us. Just be that guy. In your community, if no one is being that, be that person because when the water rises, all the ships rise with it. What would it be like? I mean, can you imagine your mindset if every time you were at your Home Group or every time people were together they were just talking about Jesus and what Jesus had done in their heart.

Or if they were talking about what they saw in the Word of God and how they got to pray with their barista and how they met this waitress and begin to pray with her and now she is coming to church this weekend and how, "My mom finally asked a question about *this*," and how, "This coworker whose marriage started to disintegrate actually approached me and said, 'I know you're religious. Will you pray for my marriage...?'" What if these conversations became like these short accounts of what Jesus is up to?

Can you imagine what it would be like if we were just kind of Jesus people? This helps with mindset. I also think intentional living does this. Intentional living does this! I just am going to keep saying to you that Christians should never be bored. All right? We should never be bored because our understanding of the world we're walking in is that everywhere we go is an opportunity to see the kingdom of God more visible, darkness pushed back further, and worshipers of Jesus born before our very eyes.

If you saw your neighborhood that way, if you saw where you got your cup of coffee that way, if you saw the restaurants you eat at that way, if you began to see that the people around you are made in the image of God and are eternal creatures who have a very serious end, I just wonder if your

mindset wouldn't significantly shift, and we would see the eradication of boredom among the people of God because there is always plenty of adventure in which to participate.

Now let's be really honest. I love... The next part of this text is so necessary. He says, **"For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God."** Now why that's good news is because we go back up. It's a mindset on Jesus that shapes every way we live. How many of you would go, "Man, I fail at that constantly"? Anybody?

Okay, now I again think this is universal. All of us fall short of this, and we want to be better than we are. I love that the Bible kind of meets us where we are and reminds us in the middle of this moment where we're like, "Oh my gosh! I have so far to go." Yeah, but here's the good news. You have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

This past week, I was in Nashville, Tennessee, for the Acts 29 Global Gathering. I don't know if you know this. We're dually affiliated. We're a Southern Baptist church, but we also are an Acts 29 church. Acts 29 is a network of church planting churches with 12 global networks. We're in the south-central region. I've been the president of that for about five years.

We had our Global Gathering this past week in Nashville...38 countries, 25 different languages. In fact, we taught through the Lord's Prayer in all of the main sessions. It was read in Japanese, and it was read in Portuguese. It was read in French, and it was read in Spanish. Then we got just a little sense of Revelation 7. We got a little sense of what is coming for us.

As I preached Thursday morning, grabbed my bag, and headed to the airport, I want to be straight with you. I was done. I'm normally an extrovert. Even my extrovert was like, "Get us out of here." When I got to the airport (just full confession), the Nashville airport is not huge. There were a lot of Acts 29 guys there. I know some of them will hear this. Forgive me, brothers. I truly value and love you.

I was like fake talking on the phone to not have any more conversations. I was like, "Yeah. No, man. I don't know. Let's just see. I'll get home, and we can work through it." I'm just like fake talking to somebody. I had it on silent. I was aware of how dangerous that would be to like, "Oh gosh! Agh! What?" Man, I didn't want to talk to anybody. I was just spent. The thought of someone sitting next to me and going, "Tell me again how you guys do Home Groups? How are you guys structured in your multisite model? What do you think the future...?" I just didn't... I was done.

In fact, my plane was at *this* gate, and I sat at *this* gate facing the wall with headphones on. Then it came time to board, and I went and boarded. I was just like, "Please let me sit by someone who doesn't want to talk." I don't know if you've flown a lot, but there are just clear indicators at times that this person in this seat is not interested in you or anything you have to say. If you wanted to give them \$1,000, they'd rather you just hand it to them and shut up.

I'm literally going, "Please, Lord. Let someone sit next to me who just wants to stare out the window. Let me just maybe take a nap to get home in time to see my family before I have to get up to The Village and preach Colossians 3." I'm headed to my seat, and I sit down. The guy immediately was like, "Hey, are you heading home or work?" I was like, "Oh gosh! No!"

I just want to be straight with you. Here's what I did, to my shame. I said, "I'm headed home." Then I put my headphones in. I don't know. I began to feel kind of the sweet pull of conviction, because here I have been saying to you for a long time, "Take advantage of these moments." I felt conviction. "Look! He is looking at you right now out of the side of his eye. Just talk to him."

I mean, I could feel him. I was like, "I don't want to. I'm so tired. I don't want to talk." To my shame, I just turned up the music, like you can somehow drown out the Spirit with louder music. Then when I walked off the plane, I thought, "Dang it, man! What an opportunity, and I just blew it." I'm a happy Calvinist. God will get him, right? I just missed out on *my* blessing to participate. That's all that happened. I had an opportunity to participate, and now it will be someone else's blessing.

When I got home after clearly being disobedient to the pull of the Holy Spirit and to what I have preached to you ferociously, I did not open up my laptop and email the chairman of our elder board, "Brian, I am a hypocrite who is inconsistent with what he preaches and lives. Will you please accept my resignation effective immediately? Pastor Matt." I didn't send the email. Why? Because my life is hidden with Christ in God, and there are new mercies for me daily. There are new mercies for me daily!

Now I think one of the lies we're prone to believe that I think is straight from the depths of hell is that it somehow 3, 5, 7, 8 years in, we're just going to be perfect, and we're not going to struggle, and we're not going to fall. Yet the Scriptures are clear. The apostle Paul was really honest that for all the grace, God, and power of the Holy Spirit, he uses words like *strain, toil, strive, pursue*. Maybe

you're in here, and maybe you would say, "Matt, I have not been serious about following Jesus. I've tried for a while, and I just kept failing."

That's why I want to just kind of get back to the sea glass and let you know, man, God is at work in you for 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70 years! He has not given up on you, so you need to get up and get back after him. He has not abandoned you. He is not disappointed. I say this. He doesn't want a mulligan. He is not looking at you in the present and going, "Man, 2,000 years ago, this seemed so wise. I am so full of regret. Will you look at this clown?"

That's not the heart of the Father. We know this because we can look at the Son. You will be perfect one day. You are positionally perfect now in the sight of God and immersed in the Holy Spirit through rough seas and calm seas. Your edges are being smoothed out. You're maturing in holiness. The pursuit of holiness, grace-driven, is necessary and good, but you will have to learn to get up after you fail.

See, I think you can tell whether or not you actually understand the gospel by what you do *not* when you're doing great but when you fall, when you blow it. Do you run *to* him, or do you run *from* him? See, this is one of the things that once again sets Christianity apart from all the other world religions. What Christianity says is when you blow it and when you offend the Holy God of the universe, the one true Creator of all things, come to him.

When you come to him, you will find grace. You will find mercy. You will find love not built on your ability but on his provision alone. We rest in that. Then the text ends with this (at least the part I'm covering today). I love this. **"When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory."**

This is a reminder of what is to come. We are at this point an hour and four minutes and eight seconds closer to the appearance of Christ and all things being made new. That's how much closer we are (an hour and four minutes and 22 seconds) right now than we were when we walked in. What we're seeing happen... Again, I'll go back to this past week for me. This past week, Acts 29 launched Acts 29 Middle East.

Listen. I just want to keep pleading with you to please not believe the news you're watching. There is a great revival among Muslims across the Middle East. I know that because we're planting churches we'll never be able to talk about because this refugee crisis is horrific as it is. As much as

we need to as Christians be a part of alleviating the suffering of millions of people, we have seen tens of thousands of men and women surrender to Jesus Christ in refugee camps, go back in to their countries, and plant churches.

I know the ones I *can* announce. I know we have one going online in Beirut, Lebanon, and I know we have four scheduled to head into Iran and Iraq over the next couple of years. God is pulling from every tribe, tongue, and nation those who are his! We're getting closer to all things being made new. Since we will appear with him in glory, our pursuit of holiness, our pursuit of righteousness in the form of external righteousness not internal positional righteousness, should be a serious one.

All the more, Jesus is our guy. All the more, our life is built on him. All the more, all our chips are bet on Jesus. So when he appears (he who is our life), we will join him. The toil, the striving, and the pursuit will melt away into ever-increasing joy in the Godhead. Again, this takes us full circle. To whom does this apply? For those who have been raised with Christ. Let's pray.

Father, I thank you for these men and women. I thank you for the truth of your Word. We do just declare as those who love Jesus that he is the image of the invisible God. He is preeminent in all things. We bless the name of Jesus. We ask all the more, Spirit of God, that you would captivate us with Jesus Christ, that you would help us treasure Jesus Christ, that Jesus would be our pursuit, our declaration, our answer, our King.

I thank you for how you shape and mold us over a period of time, how you reveal things, and then once we handle that and you handle that in us, you move on to revealing the next thing. God, I thank you that you are at work in the mess of our lives, not just the mess of this world. You are gracious and kind, and we praise you. Help us now. It's for your beautiful name I pray, amen.