

051621 PASTOR DAVE'S SERMON: "THE REAL LORD'S PRAYER."

>> Pastor Dave: WELL, GRACE AND PEACE TO YOU FROM GOD OUR FATHER AND OUR LORD AND SAVIOR JESUS CHRIST.

LET'S PRAY.

HEAVENLY FATHER, MAY THE WORDS OF MY LIPS AND THE MEDITATIONS OF OUR HEARTS BE PLEASING UNTO THEE, OUR LORD, OUR GOD, OUR ROCK, AND OUR SALVATION.

AMEN.

SO I TITLED MY SERMON TODAY "THE REAL LORD'S PRAYER."

IT HAS ALSO BEEN CALLED JESUS' PRIESTLY PRAYER.

THE PRAYER THAT WE SAY IN CHURCH EACH SUNDAY CALLED "THE LORD'S PRAYER," BECAUSE JESUS GAVE IT TO HIS DISCIPLES AS A MODEL PRAYER.

BUT THAT WASN'T THE PRAYER THAT JESUS HIMSELF WOULD HAVE SAID.

WHY?

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES?

JESUS HAD NO TRESPASSES.

NO TRESPASSES FOR JESUS.

SO HE GAVE THAT TO US AS A MODEL PRAYER.

HERE JESUS IS LESS THAN 24 HOURS AWAY FROM BEING DEAD AND IN A TOMB.

AND HE IS SHARING THESE WORDS IN THE UPPER ROOM WITH HIS DISCIPLES.

AND HE IS TELLING THEM THAT HE IS PRAYING FOR THEM.

AND BY EXTENSION, HE IS PRAYING FOR US.

BECAUSE IT IS NOT ONLY FOR THE DISCIPLES, BUT IT IS ALSO FOR THOSE WHO COME TO FAITH BECAUSE OF THE WORDS THEY SHARE AND THE PEOPLE THAT WILL COME TO FAITH BY THE WORDS THAT YOU SHARE.

YOU'RE PART OF THE CHAIN.

JESUS IS PRAYING FOR YOU.

ISN'T THAT AWESOME?

LAST WEEK WE TALKED ABOUT JESUS IS MY FRIEND, RIGHT?

THAT I AM THE ONE WHO JESUS LOVES.

AND NOW WE FIND THAT JESUS IS PRAYING FOR US.

HOW MANY OF YOU KNOW HOW POWERFUL THAT IS?

I GOT A CARD, AND SO DID OUR BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR -- THEY MUST HAVE SENT THEM FROM THE DISTRICT, THESE HANDWRITTEN, BEAUTIFUL CARDS.

IT WAS TINY PRINT.

THE WHOLE SECTION OF IT FROM RACHEL CLIPSING, WHO IS THE HEAD OF THE SCHOOLS FOR THE LUTHERAN CHURCH MISSOURI SYNOD PACIFIC SOUTHWEST DISTRICT --

NOW, THAT'S A MOUTHFUL -- IN IRVINE.

AND IT WAS TELLING ME HOW SHE WAS PRAYING FOR ME.

SPECIFICALLY HOW SHE WAS PRAYING FOR ME.

IT GAVE ME GOOSEBUMPS.

IT JUST STOPPED ME IN MY TRACKS.

AND NOT ONLY THAT, THERE WAS A \$5 GIFT CERTIFICATE FOR STARBUCKS.

CAN'T GO WRONG WITH THAT, EITHER, RIGHT?

BUT SHE IS PRAYING FOR ME.

I AM HERE TODAY AS YOUR PASTOR, SINNER THAT I AM, BECAUSE I HAVE A MOM THAT PRAYED FOR ME.
I HAD A GRANDMA THAT PRAYED FOR ME.
I HAD BROTHERS THAT PRAYED FOR ME.
I HAD A DAD THAT PRAYED FOR ME.
I HAD ALL OF THESE PEOPLE THAT PRAYED FOR ME.
I CAN'T EXPLAIN MY LIFE ANY BETTER THAN THAT.
I CAN'T EXPLAIN WHY I DID SO MANY STUPID THINGS, IT WOULD BE LIKE STEPPING OFF OF A CLIFF, BUT INSTEAD OF CRASHING AND BURNING, I LANDED ON A BIG MATTRESS FULL OF FEATHERS.
I CAN'T EXPLAIN IT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW ELSE TO EXPLAIN IT.
ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN THE TIMES THAT I STEPPED OFF THE CLIFF AND LANDED ON A HARD ROCK (laughing).
AND GUESS WHAT?
I THINK THAT CHANGED ME MORE THAN THE LANDING ON THE SOFT PILLOWY THING, TOO.
GOD ALLOWS THAT, TOO.
GOD WILL FIRST COME TO US WITH A STILL, SMALL VOICE.
AMEN?
BUT IF THAT DOESN'T GET YOUR ATTENTION, HE'LL START SHOUTING.
IF THAT DOESN'T GET YOUR ATTENTION, YOU'LL GET HIT WITH A ROCK.
IF THAT DOESN'T DO IT, HE'LL DROP A PIANO ON YOUR HEAD.
AND BY THEN, IT DOESN'T MATTER.
GOD WILL GET YOUR ATTENTION.
BUT JESUS IS PRAYING FOR US.
JUST A THOUGHT, SOMETIMES PEOPLE WILL SAY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO PRAY ABOUT.
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO PRAY.
WELL, THE BIBLE TELLS US THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS INTERCEDING FOR US IN GROANS AND UTTERINGS TOO DEEP FOR US TO UNDERSTAND.
WE HAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT WHO IS TEACHING US HOW TO PRAY.
AND WE HAVE JESUS AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD PRAYING FOR US AND INTERCEDING FOR US.
ISN'T THAT AWESOME?
I MEAN, WE HAVE FRIENDS IN HIGH PLACES.
SO JESUS IS TELLING HIS DISCIPLES HE IS GOING TO BE LEAVING THEM, HE IS GOING TO BE ASCENDING INTO HEAVEN, WHAT OUR STAINED GLASS WINDOW HERE DEPICTS.
JESUS IS ASCENDING INTO HEAVEN, THAT HE IS GOING BACK, BUT THEY ARE STAYING HERE.
AND NOT ONLY ARE THEY STAYING IN A HOSTILE, VIOLENT WORLD, BUT THEY'RE STAYING THERE WITHOUT HIM.
AND HE HAS ALREADY ADVISED THEM WHAT I'VE GIVEN YOU BY WORD, BUT THE WORLD HATES YOU BECAUSE YOU HOLD ON TO MY WORD.
SO NOT ONLY IS JESUS SAYING THAT I'M NOT GOING TO TAKE YOU OUT OF THE WORLD, BUT I'M GOING TO SEND YOU INTO THE WORLD.
HOW'S THAT?

I'M GOING TO SEND YOU INTO THE WORLD WITH MY WORD, BUT I'M GOING TO PROTECT YOU.
I'M GOING TO PRAY THAT GOD WILL BE PROTECTING YOU.
AND THAT IS WHAT THIS IS ABOUT: PRAYING PROTECTION ON US WHO CARRY OUT THE
MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST.
THROUGH UNITY -- HE WANTS US TO BE UNITED.
HOW CLOSELY DOES HE WANT US TO BE UNITED?
AS THE FATHER AND SON ARE UNITED, SO SHOULD WE BE.
THAT'S HOW TIGHT HE WANTS US TO BE.
SO DOES THAT MEAN WE NEED TO AGREE ON EVERYTHING?
NEVER.
IT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.
WE DON'T.
BUT WE CAN HAVE DIFFERENCES THAT DON'T CAUSE DIVISION.
AMEN?
WE CAN HAVE UNITY IN DIVERSITY.
AND THE WAY THAT WE DO THAT IS WE HOLD ON TO THE MAIN THING.
AND WHAT'S THE MAIN THING?
PAUL SAYS, I DON'T WANT TO KNOW ANYTHING ELSE EXCEPT CHRIST AND CHRIST CRUCIFIED.
THAT'S THE MAIN THING.
CHRIST DIED ON THE CROSS FOR OUR SIN.
HOW MUCH WATER -- HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU NEED TO SPLASH WATER ON A BABY OR
HOW DEEP DO YOU NEED TO BE IMMERSUED FOR BAPTISM?
IT DOESN'T MATTER.
GET BAPTIZED.
WHAT MATTERS IS THAT CHRIST DIED FOR US AND GOD RAISED HIM FROM THE DEAD.
STOP HAVING DIVISIONS.
THE WORLD SEES THAT AND LAUGHS AT US.
WE'RE JUST LIKE TWO POLITICAL PARTIES FIGHTING AT EACH OTHER'S THROATS.
WHEN PAUL WOULD WRITE HIS LETTERS, HE WOULD START OFF WITH "GRACE AND PEACE TO
YOU," AND THEN HE WOULD MAKE THE PROCLAMATION.
YOU KNOW, THE WORLD IS WAITING FOR US TO LIVE UNDER GOD'S GRACE AND PEACE WITH
ONE ANOTHER.
AMEN?
AND UNTIL THAT HAPPENS IN THE CHURCH, OUR PROCLAMATION IS GOING TO FALL ON DEAF
EARS.
THEY'RE NOT GOING TO WANT TO HEAR IT.
BECAUSE HOW ARE WE DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD?
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DIFFERENT.
WE'RE DUAL CITIZENS.
WE HAVE CITIZENSHIP IN THIS PLANET, AND WE HAVE CITIZENSHIP IN GOD'S HEAVENLY
KINGDOM.
BUT WE'RE NOT OF THIS WORLD.
THAT'S THE SECOND POINT I WANT TO MAKE.
WE'RE NOT OF THIS WORLD.

WE'RE SANCTIFIED BY THE WORD.
THE WORD SANCTIFIED IS "HAGIAZO," WHICH IS THE VERBAL FORM OF "HAGIOS," WHICH MEANS HOLY.
"HAGIOS NYMUS" IS HOLY SPIRIT.
SO HOLY -- WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
DOES THAT MEAN I SHOULD BE IN A PULPIT, ABOUT THIS HIGH, LOOKING DOWN ON ALL OF YOU?
THAT'S NOT WHAT IT MEANS.
DOES THAT MEAN WE SHOULD BE SELF-RIGHTEOUS?
NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT THAT MEANS.
DOES THAT MEAN I SHOULD BE JUDGING OTHER PEOPLE?
NO, THAT'S NOT WHAT THAT MEANS.
BEING HOLY MEANS BEING SET APART.
WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE THE WORLD.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DIFFERENT FROM THE WORLD.
AND "BY THE WORLD," I WANT TO DEFINE IT.
I DON'T MEAN THE PLANET THAT WE'RE WALKING ON.
I MEAN THE SECULAR HUMANISM PART OF IT.
THIS PART THAT HAS A FORM OF GODLINESS BUT YET DENIES ITS POWER.
DO YOU KNOW WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT?
I'M IN A 12-STEP GROUP CALLED ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS.
AND WE ALL HAVE THESE HIGHER POWERS.
AND IT'S ALWAYS HILARIOUS TO ME TO SEE HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE SO RESENTFUL TO THE NAME OF JESUS.
AND THEN WHEN THEY SHARE WITH ME WHAT THEIR HIGHER POWER IS, SOME OF THEM ARE DOORKNOBS, SOME OF THEM ARE LIGHTBULBS, SOME OF THEM ARE THE UNIVERSE.
LIKE PAUL SAID, HAVING A FORM OF GODLINESS BUT DENYING ITS POWER.
I JUST TELL THEM, WELL, DON'T HAVE HIGHER POWER ENVY, BUT MY HIGHER POWER CREATED ALL OF YOUR HIGHER POWERS.
[LAUGHTER]
>> Pastor Dave: THAT MAKES ME VERY POPULAR.
BUT IT IS NOT ABOUT BEING POPULAR; IT IS ABOUT SHARING THE WORD OF GOD.
YOU'VE GOT TO DO IT WITH LOVE IN YOUR HEART, TOO.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DIFFERENT.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE LOVING.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE KIND.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE FORGIVING.
IF THE CHURCH LOOKS JUST LIKE THE WORLD, WHY SPEND SOME TIME TO COME HERE TODAY, IF WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE SOME KIND OF DIFFERENT.
THIS IS WHAT PETER WROTE IN 1 PETER 2:9-12, AND I'M GOING TO START OFF ON THE KING JAMES VERSION BECAUSE IT MAKES THE TRANSLATION OF A WORD I'M VERY FOND OF.
AND IT GOES LIKE THIS: "BUT YEE ARE A CHOSEN GENERATION.
A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PECULIAR PEOPLE."
THE N.I.V. SAYS "GOD'S SPECIAL POSSESSION," BUT I LIKE "PECULIAR PEOPLE,"

BECAUSE WE'RE NOT LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD.
WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DISTINGUISHED BY OUR LOVE.
WE WILL KNOW THEY ARE DISCIPLES BY I'VE GOT A FISH ON MY BUMPER, BUT I GET SO ANGRY
WHEN SOMEBODY CUTS ME OFF, I FLIP THEM OFF AND HONK THE HORN?
NO.
THEY'LL KNOW WE ARE CHRISTIANS BY OUR LOVE,
OUR LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER.
WE ARE PECULIAR.
YOU KNOW, I HAVE PEOPLE TELL ME ALL THE TIME, DAVE, YOU'RE WEIRD.
[LAUGHTER]
>> Pastor Dave: AND I SAY THANK YOU.
AND THEY GO, YOU'RE WEIRDER THAN I THOUGHT.
IT HAPPENS ALL OF THE TIME.
IN FACT, BROTHER LEO, YEARS AGO, GAVE ME A BOOK CALLED "WEIRD."
YOU REMEMBER THAT, LEO?
IT IS ABOUT THIS VERY SAME THING.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DIFFERENT.
WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE LIKE THE WORLD.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE LIVING UNDER GRACE AND MERCY AND LOVE AND KINDNESS.
SO I'M GOING TO GO BACK TO THE N.I.V. NOW.
"CALLED GOD'S SPECIAL PROVISION, THAT YOU MADE IT CLEAR THE PRAISES OF HIM WHO
CALLED YOU OUT OF DARKNESS AND INTO HIS WONDERFUL LIGHT.
ONCE YOU WERE NOT A PEOPLE, BUT NOW YOU ARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD.
ONCE YOU HAD NOT RECEIVED MERCY, BUT NOW YOU HAVE RECEIVED MERCY.
DEAR FRIENDS, I URGE YOU AS FOREIGNERS AND EXILES TO ABSTAIN FROM SINFUL DESIRES
WHICH WAGE WAR AGAINST YOUR SOUL.
LIVE SUCH GOOD LIVES AMONG THE PAGANS, THAT THOUGH THEY ACCUSE YOU OF DOING
WRONG, THEY MAY SEE YOUR GOOD DEEDS AND GLORIFY GOD ON THE DAY THAT HE VISITS
US."
SO WE'RE CALLED.
WE'RE CALLED TO BE DIFFERENT.
BUT THE WORLD IS ALWAYS TRYING TO CREEP INTO THE CHURCH.
AMEN?
THE WORLD IS ALWAYS TRYING TO INFILTRATE US.
WE'VE GOT THESE SPIES THAT CREEP IN.
AND NOW THERE IS A LOT OF EXAMPLES THAT I COULD PICK TO USE FOR THIS, BUT I'M GOING
TO GO WITH THE ONE THAT BOTHERED JESUS THE MOST, THE ONE THAT JESUS TALKED THE
MOST ABOUT.
SO I THINK THAT IS THE MOST RELEVANT.
WELL, JESUS WAS AFRAID -- WHAT JESUS TALKED ABOUT IS THE INFLUENCE THAT MONEY HAS
IN OUR LIFE, THE INFLUENCE OF WEALTH.
THE INFLUENCE OF POSSESSIONS.
HOW SOMETHING LIKE THAT COULD COME BETWEEN GOD AND US.

AND WE GOT TO KNOW THAT ANYTHING THAT COMES BETWEEN YOU AND GOD IS WHAT?
SIN.

AND IF THAT IS WEALTH AND POSSESSIONS, WHEN POSSESSIONS START TO POSSESS US, IT
BECOMES A SIN.

AND HOW DOES IT WORK ITS WAY INTO THE CHURCH?

WELL, THANK YOU, I'M GLAD YOU ASKED.

YOU'VE HEARD OF THE PROSPERITY GOSPEL, YOU KNOW, TURN ON SOME OF THE RADIOS AND
YOU'LL HEAR THEM.

WHY SHOULD I TITHE?

WELL, YOU TITHE SO YOU CAN GET.

YOU WANT THAT NEW CAR? GIVE TO GOD, HE'LL GIVE YOU THE NEW CAR.

YOU WANT THAT NEW BOAT?

GIVE TO GOD, AND HE'LL GIVE YOU THE NEW BOAT.

IT IS CALLED: NAME IT, CLAIM IT.

THAT YOU JUST CLAIM THE BLESSING THAT YOU WANT, AND GOD IS GOING TO GIVE IT TO YOU.

AND IF GOD DOESN'T GIVE IT TO YOU, IT MEANS YOUR FAITH ISN'T STRONG ENOUGH.

GOD WANTS YOU TO BE RICH.

GOD WANTS YOU TO HAVE YOUR OWN JET AIRPLANE.

GOD WANTS YOU TO HAVE THIS NEW CAR.

I REMEMBER BACK IN THE '60s, A GUY NAMED REVEREND MIKE THAT CAME OUT OF WATTS,
AND HE WAS BLATENTLY LIKE THAT.

GOD WANTS ME TO DRIVE A CADILLAC, SO SEND IN YOUR MONEY TO REVEREND MIKE, P.O.
BOX, AND HE HAD A BUNCH OF CADILLACS.

I GUESS IT WORKED FOR HIM, BUT GOD IS NOT IMPRESSED WITH THAT.

HOW DO I KNOW THAT GOD IS NOT IMPRESSED WITH THAT?

BECAUSE JESUS TALKED ABOUT IT A LOT.

LET ME SHARE A FEW WORDS FROM THE LORD ABOUT THESE VERY SAME THINGS THAT THE
AMERICAN DREAM OF THINGS AND WEALTH IS NOT WHAT DEFINES A PERSON'S WORTH.

FIRST OF ALL IN LUKE 6 -- I'M GOING TO STICK WITH LUKE.

I'M GOING TO THREE OR FOUR OF THESE VERSES OUT OF LUKE.

LUKE 6:20 SAYS: "BLESSED ARE THE POOR."

IT DOESN'T SAY BLESSED ARE THE POOR IN SPIRIT, LIKE THEY DO IN MATTHEW.

IT SAYS, "BLESSED ARE THE POOR."

THIS REALLY TURNED THINGS UPSIDE DOWN BECAUSE IN JESUS' DAY IT WAS THOUGHT THAT
THOSE WHO WERE WEALTHY WERE BLESSED BY GOD, AND THAT THOSE WHO WERE NOT
WEALTHY WERE CURSED BY GOD.

THAT THOSE WHO WERE HEALTHY WERE BLESSED BY GOD, BUT THOSE WHO WERE SICK WERE
CURSED BY GOD.

BUT JESUS IS COMING OUT HERE AND SAYING "BLESSED ARE THE POOR."

YOU WANT MORE?

I'VE GOT MORE.

LUKE 12 TELLS A STORY, A PARABLE, ABOUT A FARMER WHO HAD A BUMPER CROP.

GOD REALLY PULLED OUT ALL THE STOPS.

HE HAD MORE HARVEST THAN HE HAD PLACES TO STORE IT.

SO HE SAYS, "I KNOW WHAT I WILL DO: I WILL TEAR DOWN MY BARNES AND I WILL BUILD BIGGER ONES.

AND I WILL HARVEST MY HARVEST" -- NOTICE IT IS ALL ABOUT HIM -- "I WILL HARVEST MY HARVEST AND FILL THE BARNES SO THAT I WILL BE ABLE TO SAY TO MYSELF: SELF, EAT, DRINK, AND BE MERRY; YOU'VE GOT IT MADE FOR THE REST OF YOUR LIFE."

HOW DOES THE PARABLE END?

GOD SAYS, YOU FOOL.

THIS VERY NIGHT YOUR LIFE WILL BE DEMANDED FROM YOU.

NOW WHO IS GOING TO ENJOY YOUR WEALTH?

GOT SOME MORE FOR YOU.

LUKE 16, THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS.

THIS ONE REALLY CUTS DEEP INTO ME.

AND IF SOME OF THESE ARE MAKING YOU A LITTLE UNCOMFORTABLE, THEN YOU'RE HEARING THE WORD RIGHT (laughing).

I HAD A GUY ONCE TELL ME, THE MORE I UNDERSTAND THE WORD OF GOD, THE EASIER IT GETS.

I THOUGHT, NOT ME.

THE MORE I UNDERSTAND GOD'S DEMAND AND CLAIM ON MY LIFE, THE MORE DIFFICULT IT IS. NOW THE MORE I UNDERSTAND HIS FORGIVENESS AND MERCY, IT BALANCES IT OFF.

ANYWAY, BACK TO THIS THING.

WHERE WAS I AT?

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS IN LUKE 16.

YOU PROBABLY KNOW THE STORY.

I'LL JUST HIGHLIGHT IT.

THERE WAS THIS POOR MAN NAMED LAZARUS THAT SAT AT THE DOORSTEP OF THIS RICH MAN.

AND HE WAS SORE -- HE WAS COVERED WITH SORES.

AND HE WAS SO WEAK THAT HE COULDN'T EVEN STOP THE DOG FROM LICKING HIS SORES.

AND EVERY DAY THE RICH MAN WOULD WALK IN, WALK RIGHT BY LAZARUS AND INTO HIS HOUSE, AND NEVER GAVE HIM ANYTHING.

NOW, THE BIBLE DOESN'T SAY THAT HE KICKED LAZARUS.

THE BIBLE DOESN'T SAY THAT HE SPIT ON LAZARUS.

THE BIBLE DOESN'T SAY THAT HE CURSED LAZARUS.

THE BIBLE SAYS THAT HE IGNORED LAZARUS.

HE JUST IGNORED HIM.

THAT WAS HIS SIN.

SO LAZARUS DIES.

HE GOES UP TO THE BOSOM OF ABRAHAM, AND THE RICH MAN DIES, AND HE GOES INTO THE FIRES OF HELL.

AND WHILE HE IS IN THE FIRES OF HELL, HE LOOKS UP AND HE SEES LAZARUS IN ABRAHAM'S BOSOM, AND HE SAYS, "FATHER ABRAHAM, SEND LAZARUS DOWN THAT HE MIGHT DIP HIS FINGER INTO THE WATER AND QUENCH MY TONGUE BECAUSE I AM IN AGONY HERE IN HELL."

AND ABRAHAM SAID, "MY SON, YOU HAD YOUR WEALTH WHILE YOU WERE HERE ON EARTH, AND HE HAD NOTHING.

NOW THE TABLES HAVE BEEN TURNED."

LUKE 18, THIS RICH YOUNG RULER COMES TO JESUS AND HE SAID, "GOOD TEACHER, WHAT MUST I DO TO HAVE ETERNAL LIFE?"

AND HE SAYS, "YOU KNOW THE COMMANDMENTS; OBEY THE COMMANDMENTS."

AND HE SAYS, "ALL OF THESE I HAVE KEPT FROM MY YOUTH."

AND HE SAYS, "ONE THING YOU DO LACK" -- HE SAID JESUS LOOKED AT HIM AND LOVED HIM. HE WASN'T TRYING TO PUT HIM DOWN.

HE CARED ABOUT HIS ETERNAL SOUL.

AND HE SAID TO HIM, "ONE THING THAT YOU LACK: SELL ALL OF YOUR GOODS AND GIVE THEM TO THE POOR.

THEN YOU'LL HAVE TREASURES IN HEAVEN."

AND THE RICH MAN WENT AWAY SAD BECAUSE HE WAS VERY WEALTHY.

AND JESUS TURNED TO HIS DISCIPLES AND SAID, "HOW DIFFICULT IT IS FOR A RICH MAN TO ENTER THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

IT IS EASIER FOR A CAMEL TO GET THROUGH THE EYE OF A NEEDLE THAN A RICH MAN TO GET INTO THE KINGDOM OF GOD."

AND THE DISCIPLES SAID, "WELL, LORD, WHO THEN CAN ENTER?"

AND JESUS SAID, "WITH MAN THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE: WITH GOD ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE."

SO WHAT'S THE POINT OF THAT STORY?

THIS IS NOT SOMETHING THAT SAYS WE ALL NEED TO SELL ALL OF OUR POSSESSIONS AND GIVE TO THE POOR.

THIS IS SAYING THAT THIS MAN HAD A PROBLEM.

AND HIS PROBLEM WAS THAT HE LET HIS POSSESSIONS COME BETWEEN HIM AND GOD.

NOW THAT'S THE PROBLEM.

THAT'S THE SIN.

GOD DOES NOT WANT ANYTHING BETWEEN YOU AND HIM.

I WANT TO MAKE IT CLEAR: THERE IS NOTHING WRONG WITH HAVING POSSESSIONS.

IT IS ONLY WRONG WHEN WE START PUTTING OUR TRUST IN THEM INSTEAD OF GOD.

AMEN?

ARE WE ON THE SAME PAGE?

1 TIMOTHY TELLS US THAT MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL?

NO, THE LOVE OF MONEY IS THE ROOT OF ALL EVIL.

IT IS OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH THAT THAT GOD FINDS DETESTABLE.

IN FACT, THIS IS WHAT IT SAYS PAUL WRITES IN ROMANS 12:2: "DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THIS WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND.

THEN YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TEST AND APPROVE WHAT IS THE GOOD, PLEASING, AND PERFECT WILL OF GOD."

DO NOT BE CONFORMED TO THE PATTERNS OF THE WORLD, BUT THE WORLD IS ALWAYS TRYING TO GET US TO CONFORM.

AND IT IS INSIDIOUS.

IT HAPPENS GRADUALLY.

BEFORE YOU KNOW IT, YOU FIND YOURSELF ON THIS PATH WHERE YOUR STUFF MEANS MORE TO YOU THAN GOD.

YOU WOULD RATHER STAY HOME AND WAX YOUR NEW CAR THAN YOU WOULD COME TO CHURCH.

YOU WOULD RATHER BUY THIS NEW SET OF DISHES THAN YOU WOULD GIVE TO STARVING CHILDREN ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE WORLD THROUGH "COMPASSION INTERNATIONAL." ANOTHER PLUG FOR THEM.

THANK YOU FOR ARRANGING THAT, JANE.

THE THIRD THING IS -- I MENTIONED THIS ALREADY -- THAT THE FATHER SENT ME SO I SEND YOU.

SO NOT ONLY IS HE NOT TAKING US OUT OF THIS HOSTILE WORLD, HE IS SENDING US INTO IT. NOW, WHY?

WHY WOULD HE DO THAT?

MATTHEW 28, JESUS TELLS US TO BE HIS WITNESSES.

THAT IS WHAT WE'RE TO BE.

IT DOESN'T SAY WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE HIS DEFENSE ATTORNEY.

HOW MANY OF YOU KNOW THAT YOU DEFEND GOD LIKE YOU DEFEND A LION?

YOU JUST GET OUT OF THE WAY.

GOD DOESN'T NEED US TO DEFEND HIM.

HE DIDN'T CALL US TO BE THE PROSECUTOR.

HE DOESN'T WANT US POINTING THINGS OUT TO PEOPLE.

HE DOESN'T CALL US TO BE THE JUDGE.

HE DIDN'T CALL US TO BE A SALES PERSON.

HE DIDN'T CALL US TO BE ON A DEBATE TEAM.

DON'T DEBATE; DON'T ARGUE.

HE CALLED US TO BE A WITNESS.

NOW WHAT DOES A WITNESS DO?

THEY DESCRIBE WHAT THEY HAVE SEEN, WHAT THEY HAVE HEARD, AND WHAT THEY HAVE EXPERIENCED.

THAT'S WHAT A WITNESS DOES.

THAT'S ALL A WITNESS DOES.

JESUS SENT US OUT -- FIRST OF ALL, JESUS LOVES US INTO RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.

HE IS THE VINE; WE ARE THE BRANCHES.

WE LEARNED LAST WEEK THAT JESUS CALLS US HIS FRIEND.

I AM A FRIEND OF JESUS.

YOU ARE A FRIEND OF JESUS.

WHY DO I GO TO CHURCH?

BECAUSE JESUS IS MY FRIEND.

WHY DO I GO TO CHURCH?

BECAUSE I AM THE ONE WHO JESUS LOVES.

YOU ARE THE ONE WHO JESUS LOVES.

WE HAVE A RELATIONSHIP THAT NEEDS TO BE NURTURED, LIKE ANY RELATIONSHIP.

HE SENDS US INTO THE WORLD BECAUSE THE MISSION IS CRUCIAL.

GOD HAS PUT PEOPLE IN YOUR LIVES THAT ONLY YOU CAN REACH.

I CAN'T REACH THEM.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE PERCENTAGE IS OF HOW MANY PEOPLE -- WHAT DO YOU THINK IS THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON THAT PEOPLE COME TO CHURCH?

IS IT BECAUSE OF THE PASTOR?

IS IT BECAUSE OF EVANGELISM PROGRAMS?

OR IS IT BECAUSE OF FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS?

FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS.

80% TO 90% OF THE PEOPLE THAT COME TO CHURCH COME BECAUSE THEY WERE INVITED BY A FRIEND OR A NEIGHBOR.

2% TO 4% COME BECAUSE OF THE PASTOR.

FIRE ME (laughing).

I'D BE HAPPY TO BE WITHOUT A JOB IF YOU WOULD DO YOUR JOB AND INVITE ALL OF YOUR FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS AND FILL THIS CHURCH UP WITH THEM.

THAT WOULD BE GREAT.

80% TO 90% OF THE PEOPLE WHO COME COME BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN INVITED BY A FRIEND OR A NEIGHBOR.

LET ME CLOSE WITH THIS STORY.

THERE WAS AN AIRPLANE THAT HAD FOUR PEOPLE ON IT, THERE WAS A PILOT, A BOY SCOUT, A PRIEST, AND THE WORLD'S SMARTEST MAN.

YOU PROBABLY HEARD THIS -- THIS IS AN OLD, OLD JOKE, BUT I'VE GOT A POINT I WANT TO MAKE WITH IT.

SO PRETTY SOON THE PILOT COMES BURSTING OUT OF THE COCKPIT AND HE GRABS A PARACHUTE AND SAYS, "I'VE GOT BAD NEWS: WE'RE CRASHING, AND THERE IS ONLY THREE PARACHUTES.

I GOT ONE," AND SO HE JUMPS OUT.

SO THAT LEAVES TWO FOR THREE PEOPLE.

THE WORLD'S SMARTEST MAN GOES, I'M THE WORLD'S SMARTEST MAN.

THE WORLD DESERVES TO HAVE ME LIVING BECAUSE I CAN BENEFIT IT GREATLY.

SO HE GRABS A BAG AND HE JUMPS OUT OF THE PLANE.

SO THE PRIEST, BEING A PRIEST -- PREACHERS, THEY WANT TO PREACH A SERMON EVERY CHANCE THEY GET.

SO HE SAYS TO THE BOY SCOUT, LISTEN, SON, I'VE BEEN WALKING WITH THE LORD MY WHOLE LIFE.

I'M JUSTIFIED, I AM SAVED BY JESUS CHRIST.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO OFFER YOURSELF TO JESUS AT THIS TIME?

AND THE BOY SCOUT GOES, RELAX, PREACHER.

WE EACH HAVE A PARACHUTE.

THE WORLD'S SMARTEST MAN GRABBED MY BACKPACK AND JUMPED OUT OF THE PLANE.

[LAUGHTER]

>> Pastor Dave: IT'S SUCH AN OLD JOKE.

DO YOU KNOW I JUST CHECKED THIS ON STATISTICS IN GOOGLE, SO YOU CAN TRUST IT, RIGHT?

34 MILLION PEOPLE IN THE UNITED STATES EVERY YEAR DIE -- EXCUSE ME, 3.4 MILLION PEOPLE, 55 MILLION PEOPLE THROUGHOUT THE WORLD DIE.

HOW MANY OF THEM KNOW CHRIST?

HOW MANY OF THEM ARE JUMPING OFF OF THE AIRPLANE HOLDING ON TO THIS BACKPACK OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY, OF SELF-VALUE, OF SELF-WORTH, BUT THEY DON'T KNOW CHRIST? HOW MANY OF THESE SMART PEOPLE -- THEY'RE NOT DUMMIES. THEY COULD BE THE WORLD'S SMARTEST PEOPLE, BUT THEY'VE BEEN FED A LIE. AND SOMETIMES THE CHURCH HAS BEEN INFILTRATED BY THIS LIE AND THEY'VE BEEN PUTTING IT OUT.

YOU HAVE THE TRUE PARACHUTE IN JESUS CHRIST.
YOU HAVE THAT WHICH CAN SAVE THEM.

3.4 MILLION PEOPLE DYING IN THE U.S -- DON'T LET THEM DIE WITHOUT KNOWING JESUS.
TALK TO THEM.

IT'S SIMPLE.

IF THEY -- WHEN YOU START TALKING TO THEM AND THEY START GETTING ON YOUR CASE, JUST ASK THEM, WELL, TELL ME WHAT YOU BELIEVE.
WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENS WHEN YOU DIE?
JUST KIND OF TURN IT AROUND A LITTLE BIT.
WHY DO YOU GO TO CHURCH?
BECAUSE I'M A FRIEND OF JESUS.
WHY?
BECAUSE I HAVE A RELATIONSHIP.
LET ME TELL YOU WHAT THIS RELATIONSHIP DOES FOR ME.
AND THEN EXPLAIN IT TO THEM.
BUT PUT IT OUT THERE.

IT IS NOT UP TO YOU WHETHER THEY ACCEPT CHRIST OR NOT, BUT IT IS UP TO YOU TO PUT THE WORD OUT THERE.
BECAUSE APART FROM THAT, THE HOLY SPIRIT WON'T WORK IN THEIR LIVES UNLESS YOU PUT THE WORD OF GOD INTO THEIR HEARTS.
I'M TROUBLED BY THIS, FOLKS.
I REALLY AM TROUBLED.
I SEE THIS WORLD GOING MORE AND MORE INTO THE SECULAR, HUMANISTIC SLIDE, AND WE HAVE THE TRUTH.
WE NEED TO STAND FIRM.
LET NOTHING MOVE YOU, FOR YOU KNOW THAT YOUR LABOR IN THE LORD IS NOT IN VAIN.
AND MAY THE PEACE OF GOD THAT SURPASSES ALL HUMAN UNDERSTANDING GUARD YOUR HEARTS AND MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.
AMEN.