

Don't just sit there, make it happen.

Good to see such a great group here this morning. Man, look around. We got a great group of people this morning. Praise the Lord. I hope y'all have had a great week and, uh, everything and y'all ready to be encouraged this morning? Yes. Amen. Well, the message this morning, I pray, will be a, um, a great encouragement to all of you. That's what I want it to be. And, uh, I pray the Lord will use it in a great and mighty way in your life. Um, you know, the other day I was watching, uh, television, you know, I watch television once in a while, right? You gotta watch TV once in a while. Normally, normally watch sports programs and, uh, sports, because to me there's not much left on television anymore to watch. But, uh, anyway, I was watching it and an ad came on and, uh, the ad started with a fella going into a, uh, into a break shop.

And, uh, he asked the manager of the break shop, he says, uh, you guys, uh, do y'all do good break work here? And he said, yeah, we're, we're okay. We're okay at what we do. We're good. And then, uh, heard of another fellow that had another fell in the, in the, uh, advertisement. And he went to a restaurant, and he said to him, he says, well, how is, uh, how's the steak here? And the fellas said, uh, well, it, it is okay. It's okay. It, it is pretty good. And then I heard there was this guy also in the Aden, he was trying to get his, uh, girlfriend, a brand-new tattoo. And, um, he said to the tattoo artist, he said, well, how is your tattoos? Y'all do good work here? He said, well, well, we're okay. Well, the advertisement was for at, and t and they said, just okay is not okay, especially when it comes to your wireless network.

At and t is America's best, not just okay, <laugh>. And, you know, I listen to that a little bit. I normally don't look, listen to the ads. I mute 'em when they come on. But for some reason, that was on. And I thought to myself, you know, that's not only true in the secular world, but God wants that to be true in the spiritual world. He does not want you and I to settle for, okay? He doesn't want you and I to settle for just being average. God wants you and I to be the absolute best. So, this morning, let me just say to you that God says we don't need to accept defeat in our life. Defeat does not ever mean to be final in our life. Everybody here has encountered defeats. Amen. Amen. I've encountered defeats. You've encountered defeats. But what a lot of people do is they let the defeats in life just absolutely get 'em down, get 'em discouraged to the point that they don't ever wanna rise up again from their defeats.

They settle for, for average. But settling for average is not what God wants. Let me give you a verse as we begin here this morning, Isaiah chapter 43, verse two. So great verse. And I just, uh, encourage you to keep this verse very close to you. It's, uh, been one that I have looked at and I have kept close to me down through the years. And to me, it's a very, very encouraging verse. It says, when you pass through the waters, I will not be with you. Is that what it says? No. And if you've got a version of the Bible that says that you need to throw it out, <laugh>, when you pass through the waters, I will be with you. Now, we could just really just stop right there because that says it all. Because who is the I? The I is the great I am.

The great is the i, is the one, the true, the powerful Awesome, awesome God. So, we need to understand right off the bat this morning, it says, when you pass through the waters, when you pass through your challenges, when you pass through your issues, when you pass through things that Satan tells you that.

cannot be defeated in your life, I want you to know something. I am with you. False. We don't understand. Sometimes I believe that the same God that is in the Word of God, that did everything in the Word of God that we see him do. I mean, look at all the things he's done. He's a, in genesis, he is a great creator. He created this world. He created everything to do with this world. He's the one that keeps this earth in perfect axis. It doesn't tilt one way to the right or to the left.

He's the one that used the prophets down through the years to do so many miraculous miracles. And he's saying, listen, I want you to know that I am the same God as I've always have been. We need to get that this morning and we need to get it. Well, it says, and when you pastor the rivers, they will not sweep your way or over you. We may think we are drowning in our issues this morning, but we're not drowning. God is with us. He will not allow you and me to drown. It may look inescapable what you're in. I don't know, maybe what you're going through today. You say, pastor Branson, as I look at my situation in life, it seems very bleak. In fact, I'm going through some things right now that are absolutely crushing. I feel like I'm about ready to, to give up.

I feel like I'm about ready to at my wits end. I just can't take it anymore. God's saying, listen, I want you to understand that when things look insurmountable, when it looks like you're about ready to be flooded over, I've got news for you. I know where the waters are. I know where your issues are. I know where your challenges are. I know where your battles are. And look, I'm with you, and I'm not gonna allow those things to sweep over you. And then he goes on and says, when you walk through the fire, have we ever walked through fire? Yes, sure we have. We've walked through fire. Hey, we've walked through hell by the inch, have we not? He says, you will not be burned. I'm gonna protect you. The flames will not set you ablaze. Folks, I want to tell you something.

That verse right there is powerful. It is powerful. When you and I get discouraged when we feel like we're defeated, when we feel like we can't do it anymore, we need to turn to that verse and we need to say, you know what? The same God that was with all the prophets of the Bible, the same God that created all the same God that sent his son to die for me on the cross, he is with me by the authority of salvation in my heart. I've accepted him into my life. I have a great and mighty and powerful, awesome, awesome God in my life. And he is with me every single step of the way. I see so many people today, Christians that are just settling for, okay, God doesn't want us to settle for, okay, he doesn't want us to settle for average. Why?

Because he says, I am with you. The truth is this. Everybody in this room this morning, everybody watching our broadcast today has the potential to be what God has designed you and I to be. Amen. But it's what you and I do with that potential that matters. Here's the deal. We have been fashioned by God himself, uniquely fashioned. That's what the Bible says. We have been knit together perfectly. There are no mistakes in you. There's no mistakes in me. We have every single gift, talent, everything that God wants us to have. When he finished creating you, when he finished creating me, he held us in his hands. And he says, you know what? There is perfect masterpiece. You are designed, you are fashioned. You are talented, you are gifted like nobody else in this world. Nobody has been designed in fashion and knit together like you.

You are perfectly made of God. So, what does that tell us? That tell us that God had so much love for us, that he made us special, made us so special that we have been fashioned of God, talented of God, to do

something for God that nobody can do. Quite like you. There are other pastors in pulpits today that are preaching, but they don't preach like Pastor Branson. And thank God they're probably saying, I don't preach like Pastor Branson. Amen. Amen. But let me tell you something. I have a mission from God. I have been commissioned of God to do what I do. You have been commissioned of God to do what you do. It may not seem like a big deal, but it's a big deal. And Satan wants to make sure that you do not rise to the capacity that God wants you to rise to.

And there's things that come along our, our path in life that may knock us back a little bit. Maybe something has been devastating in our life, okay? It's knocked us back. Maybe it's knocked us down, whatever it might be. But folks, we need to understand that we don't need to settle for just settling. We do not need to settle for just being mediocre. No. God wants us, and He has created us to not be mediocre, to not be averaged, but to be great in his sight. But here's the problem. When we determine that we're gonna be great in God's sight, when we give to, when we say, God, I want to get ahold of all of your power and all the giftedness that you've given me, and I wanna be something special, it always, always comes with a price. Yes. You know what I've noticed today among our whole entire society, we have gotten to be a very, very, very soft society.

We don't want to pay the price. We don't want to do the work. We want everything just to come to us. Amen. Amen. There's a lot of people out there that want a paycheck. They want money, but they're not willing to work for it. Right? There are a lot of people out there that want to be good at their job, but you know what? They're not willing to pay the price to get good at their job. There are a lot of people out there, some Christians that want to have a good Christian, biblically based, founded marriage. But you know what? They're not willing to the price to be able to get there. There's a lot of others that have addictions. They've got different things in their life, and they say, I want to get rid of these things. Great, wonderful. And you know what? God's with you, like we said in that first verse, but you have got to pay a price in order to be able to get where you're going.

Amen. Amen. Folks. I had to pay a price 45 years ago. I said, hey, I want to be a pastor. Guess what that at that, uh, I'll try to look for the word here. That challenge that I wanted to face, that goal that I wanted to face in life came with a price. God didn't say, okay, bingo, here you are. No, I had to come with a price. Most of us here, we faced difficulties in all areas of our life. And what God wants us to understand is this. The circumstances and the challenges of the situations of life are the very things sometimes God wants to use to let us understand how he wants to make us overcomers in our life. Amen. In April, I was looking at this, this week in April 2007, there was a gunman that senselessly came into, uh, a school called Virginia Tech, and he killed 33 students back in 2007.

This gunman just came in there. He just opened up fire, killed 33 students. One of the students that was killed, and you can look it up, her name was Caitlin Hammer. Caitlin Hammer. She was a sophomore. She was the daughter of Marion and Chris hammering. And after the investigation of the shooting was over,

they gave both, uh, Marion and Chris Caitlin's laptop and taped to the screen on her laptop were these words. God, I know that today nothing can happen that you and I cannot handle together. What a thing to be taped to a laptop by a sophomore in college today. Lord, I know I don't question. I know in my heart, you know why? Because I'm close to you. I'm walking with you. I know that today, no matter what happens today, I know that there's nothing that's coming my way that you and I cannot handle.

You know, these words were difficult for the parents to, to stomach at that time, but they opened up for the parents and they should open up for us a whole new way of looking at God and looking at the adversities of life. And that means this, that sometimes when difficulties and situations come our way, they don't necessarily produce growth and strength if we are still in neutral in our life. God wants us to learn from difficulties. He wants us to learn from times that we have fallen down, that we have not done the things that God wants us to do. And maybe we're here this morning and maybe we're not where God wants us to be. We're struggling to get back to where we ought to be. We've been knocked off center. But you know something, the Lord's saying, listen, you've gotta understand this. You have got to get up.

You don't need to just sit there and wallow around at just a whole hum life. You need to understand that you need to get up and you need to fight your battles. And there is a price to pay for where you need to go. Amen. Look it a back of chapter three, verse 19. The Lord my God is what? My strength. My strength, my source of courage at my invincible army. He has made my feet steady and sure like HNS feet and makes me walk forward with spiritual confidence on my high places of challenge and responsibility. Isaiah chapter 40, verse 31. But those who hope, those that trust, those that have confidence in the Lord will renew their strength. Folks, we can renew our strength in the Lord this morning. Amen. We can get back to where we need to be. There has no circumstance, no situation that has defeated us to the point that we cannot rise again and the power of an almighty God.

Amen. Amen. God says, listen, if you have hope in me, confidence in me, if you lay your burdens and your cares before me at the cross, I am gonna give you strength to renew yourself and listen. We can fly again. You're gonna soar with wings like eagles. You'll run and you'll not grow weary, and you will walk, and you will not be faint. How many of y'all want to fly this morning? In Jesus' name, folks, listen. There's no fun in being grounded. Amen. Amen. I could tell you that Dean's here, he's a pilot today. He knows what it is to sit on the runway, and they say, you're number 20 in the flyoff pattern or whatever. They say, I've been there. I've gotten ready to fly. People say, oh man. And I look ahead of me, and I see all these planes lined up, and man, the heck I'm sitting there.

I'm about 15. I'm on the tarmac. I want to fly. I want to get to where I'm going, especially if I'm going to Atlanta because I want to go to Atlanta and I have got a date with Buckner's at 11 o'clock in the morning, <laugh>, I gotta go. It's very important that I get chicken and I get barbecue and coleslaw it. It is important. Amen. It's monumental. So, I don't like sitting on the tarmac, but the Lord says, you know what? Sometimes we sit, sometimes we learn, sometimes we renew our strength. And there's nothing wrong this morning about being still in our life and knowing that He is God. And I want us to understand that today we need to get this, that nothing in our life is there that we cannot conquer through God's.

strength. We read that the same God that was there in the old times is the same God that's here this morning.

Amen. I don't care what it is. I don't care what year we're living in. He is the same God. What do we do? We be, we're supposed to be still. We're supposed to get our lives right with God. That might be confession, that might be whatever it might be, but getting our lives right with God. And then we are supposed to get up and we are supposed to fly. Amen. Amen. Yes. Hey, it's like a baseball player being put on injured reserve baseball players. What do they do? They get hurt sometimes. What do they do? They get, they can't get out and play the next day because they're hurt. They have been thrown off schedule. Something's gone wrong. So, what do they do through those 15 days that they're on the IR they're recuperating. They're going through therapy. They're seeking out counsel about their injuries.

They're getting better and better and better every day. They're committing their selves to getting better. And you know what? 15 days comes and now they're ready to fly again. Why? Because their injury had forced them to be still. Sometimes things in our life comes to us that we don't like. Amen? Amen. I'm going through an issue right now that I don't like. The Lord has slowed me down a little bit. All right? I don't like to be slow. I've told you I have two speeds full born off. I got to admit to you, I am not taking this very well. I want to get up. I want to run. I want to soar. But right now, it's time in my life that I am, I need to be still and know that he is God. I've got to understand, right, right now, he's putting people in my path for a reason, for me to be able to talk to them about Jesus.

Amen. He's putting people in my path right now that would not be in my path had he not given me this situation and circumstance in my life. What are you saying, pastor? I'm saying, hey, I'm not trying to be super spiritual with you this morning, but I've got to understand this, and you've gotta understand this. Everything that comes your way comes to you, comes to me through the filtering of Jesus Christ. And we've got two ways of looking at it. When things come our way, either we're gonna sit there and we're gonna waller in it, or we're gonna look at it. We're gonna find out what God wants to say to us in those times. And we've not to need not to be discouraged because listen, we will fly again. But right now, he's got us on the tarmac for a reason, and he wants to talk to us, and he wants us maybe to talk to people on the plane during that time that we're in the tarmac that we can't talk to in the air, because they're gonna have their stupid earbuds in and we can't talk to 'em. Amen. Amen.

I told you, when I was in Morton Plant, my hospital room was like a revolving door. It really was. It was a mission field. I had nurses coming in there left and right. I had, I have, I had prayer, prayer time right there in my room. I'd have people knock on the door to take my vitals like they did. They'd look in there and I'd be holding somebody's hand. They'd be sitting there in the chair, and I'd be praying with him. They had to shut the door. Oh, he's praying again. We gotta shut the door. <laugh>. She'd come. She'd come back, knock on the door. Oh, my goodness, he's still praying with somebody else. I gotta shut the door. And finally, she comes in. She said, are you free now, and I say, yes, I'm free. How would you like me to pray with you while you're here? I had a wonderful time. People were texting me, what is wrong, pastor? I said, well, I got this stuff going on, but I'll tell you I'm having a ball. I can understand what Brian was had told me. I told him many times when he went to his dialysis. I said, Brian, you're going to your church, man. You're going to your church. That's the way you gotta look at it. I had nurses from other shifts coming in. They said, I'm on the first floor. I'm on the third floor. I'm on the fourth floor. But I heard about some guy in this room right here that prays for people and talks to people. I had nurses staying over after their shifts,

I had one lady that got so excited when I prayed for her. She brought me anything I wanted to eat, anything. I was on a diabetic menu about ready to die.

I've been two days without food. And this precious lady came in. She was on the night shift. She looked at me and she said, I heard you were a pastor. I said, yeah. She said, can I talk to you about something in my life? And I talked to her. I tried to give her some best, some best wisdom and some counsel. After I got done that precious lady looked at me and she said, you haven't had your supper yet, have you? And I said, no, ma'am. She said, you know, what do you want to eat?

I said, I said anything. And she said, yeah, anything. She said, I know you're on a diabetic menu. She said, but that's no fun, is it? And I said, no, that's no fun. <laugh>, what can I bring you? And I started laying off this list of stuff. She started putting in her computer and how she left. And boy, she came back. Folks, I wanna tell you something, <laugh>. I had double helped to everything. I wanted <laugh>. I had more stuff. I, that woman couldn't hardly put it on the tray. I had so much stuff. God bless me so much. You don't think God blesses you sometimes like that? Sure, he does. But what I'm saying, hey, I was having a ball. I really was. But I was having a ball because I realized what, where I was in life, but I also wasn't settling to be in the hospital.

Four days was enough. I was ready to move on. I was ready to fly. I was ready to get my wings back. I was ready to get going again. Amen. Amen. Amen. There's a price to pay if you want to rise above being average. Number two, we must discipline ourselves to make it happen. Got a price to pay. Then we also must discipline ourselves to make it happen. Look at Hebrews chapter 12, verse 11. No discipline seems pleasant at times when you were disciplined by your parents. It wasn't pleasant, was it at all? No. When you, if you guys were here, some of you can relate to this, others of you probably can't. If you ever lifted weights, all right, you didn't like the discipline, it takes a lot of discipline to lift weights. It takes a lot of discipline to lose weight. Amen. It takes a lot of discipline to read your Bible and to pray every day.

It takes a lot of discipline to raise your kids the way they need to be raised. It takes a lot of discipline to keep your marriage right. It keeps a, it takes a lot of discipline to keep your life right with Jesus. It takes discipline all the time. It just doesn't happen just because you're here on a Sunday morning and you come on a Wednesday night, that's not gonna get it. It's great that you're here, but you know what? You're gonna need to continually tune up your life every moment of every day. It takes discipline. Every single successful person that you've ever known can tell you that there's gonna be a price to pay for success. And it's also ha, it is gonna come with a lot of discipline. A great example of discipline and determination, and showing that adversity can build powerful confidence, is what I call the illustration to me of the greatest basketball player that ever lived.

And his was Michael Jordan. He was from the University of North Carolina. You may sit here today, and you may say, as LeBron James, well, I differ with you. I think it was Michael Jordan, but we're not gonna have that debate today. What we are going to say is this. Michael Jordan's a per perfect example of a person having discipline in his life. He was somebody that was cut from his basketball team in high school when he was a sophomore. His coach told him that he was not good enough. I imagine that, to play basketball. So, they cut him from the team. It must have been devastating the last two years though, that he was in high school. When he got back on the team, he was an absolute star. And the reason that he was, is because he had unbelievable discipline. Michael Jordan was somebody that practiced three to four times a day for six to seven days a week.

Not just one practice, two practices, but three to four practices, six to seven days a week. And he refused. He absolutely refused to quit no matter what came his way in life. And he settled for nothing less than his absolute best. And Michael Jordan would not let anything ever beat him. If he missed a shot, guess what? He would shoot again. If he missed another shot, guess what? He would shoot again. He was somebody that never, ever gave up. And he's got a famous saying, and here's the saying, here's his quote. Some people want it to happen. Some wish it would happen. Others make it happen. Did you get that? Some people want it to happen. We all want it to happen. Everybody wants it to happen. Some

wish that it would happen, but others are people that make it happen. Christians, today, everybody here that is walking with the Lord.

You're making it happen. You're making it happen. It's a tough world to make it happen, isn't it? It is a tough world to be a steadfast Christian. It is a tough world to be a steadfast mom and dad in the Bible. Amen. Amen. It's a tough world to have a biblical marriage. It's a tough world to have a biblical life with the Lord. It's tough. It's hard. You've gotta pay a price to be there. You've also got to have discipline to make it happen. And folks, that discipline needs to be like Michael Jordan. You've gotta refuse to quit. And if you're about quitting today, forget it. It's not a part of the Christian language. God didn't call you to be a quitter. He called you to be an overcomer. Amen. Amen. That's what he wants you to do. You know, as much as I don't like Mike Zeki that coached at Duke, he had something that I really loved.

He was somebody that was, uh, from West Point, and he graduated from West Point's, probably one of the most successful basketball coaches in, in high and uh, in college history. But he was somebody that invented this, and I love it. He told his team, and if you watched any Duke games, you saw this over and over and over, down through the years, that when things got tough in the game, when it looked like maybe that they weren't going to win, when it looked like that, the other team was just gonna be able to beat them. He gave them a focal point that he wanted them to understand every single time that situation came up. And here was what he told them to do. He told them that after they scored a basket, that everybody on that team would bend down and they would tap the floor.

Everybody. That's what they would do. You say, what does that mean? They would score a basket, and as soon as they scored a basket, they would reach down and they would tap the floor, and they would look at one another. What that meant was the game ain't over. What that meant was we're gonna play some defense. What that meant was we have refocused ourselves. You're not gonna score another basket, or you're not gonna beat us. We as a team, were coming together. We're focused. We're focused. We might not have been focused the first 10 minutes of the game, but right now, we have come back into focus. Well, I believe there's a lot of Christians today that need to do this.

You might not be able to touch the floor. I can't do it right now, but as far as you can get, as far as I can get, we need to symbolically touch the floor. We need to say, you know what? I am going to get disciplined again in my life. I've gotten off kilter. I've gotten off focus, but I know something. I have got to get back to where I need to be. And the same God that was with me in my big heyday when I was walking with the Lord, when I was happy with the Lord, when I was serving the Lord, when things were going right, it's the same God that's with me today. He's there with me. He hasn't left me. The Bible says, I'll never leave. You'll never forsake you. Let's place some defense and let's keep Satan out of our equation. Amen. Amen. He's to tell you and I that we'll never score points again when it comes to Jesus. False. That ain't true. I, we've got some senior adults in this church that are still dunking the basketball. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

They may not literally go up 10 feet and go, whoa. But I'm proud of them. You know why? Because they're still paying the price. Right? You know what they're doing? They're still disciplined. And some of our younger folks can take a lesson from a lot of our seniors. They're on more meds than you could take

than you understand. They drink more bottles of Geritol than you can understand. I even saw one of 'em this morning walking in with a monster drink. Praise God.

You know why I ain't done yet? Wait a minute. Hold on a minute. Hey, you got this going on. You got this going on. You got this going. I don't care. Bring it on. Come on, let's go. And you know what? You're so fired up. You gonna follow Jesus till you die. Amen. Amen. Right? When you take your last breath, hey, some of y'all might not even have teeth.

But you know what you're doing. You're gumming Satan to death,
I don't know. You never take your teeth out in front of me, thank God,
But you may get that polygraph stuff going on,
But you know what you're doing. You're still gumming Satan to death.
Amen.

You are not allowing Satan to keep you down and to keep you average. And praise God for the spiritual examples of that that we've got in our senior adult group. We got some of the best senior adults, spiritual senior adults in this church and I've ever had in my life. I've got some ladies that come into my office. I've got some ladies that text me. I've got some men sometimes that do something. I've got some ladies that send me cards and things, and I'll tell you what, they're some of the greatest encouragers to this pastor that I've ever had in my whole entire life. And I just wanna praise you and thank you for being people that are paying the price, and you're still disciplined. Amen. Amen.

Now, listen here, younger whipper snappers, y'all need to, y'all need to learn from their example, okay? Because you know what? Hey, they know what it is to walk in victory because they've walked in victory a lot longer than you have. And the younger folks, listen to me. You don't need to settle for what this world's telling you to settle for. No, you don't. You deserve better, okay? You deserve better. You need to get up and you to, to make it happen. But you've got to make it happen. It's not just gonna come to you. Amen. Amen. You want a paycheck, guess what? You gotta work. Amen. Amen.

I got my truck washed. Well, no, excuse me. I got Vicky's car washed a couple of days ago, and there's this young lady at the, at the car wash that I go to, and I, I recently sent in a review for her and her, uh, and her, uh, companion there that works with her, you know, her whatever, her best friend. Anyway, I, uh, sent in a review for them and, uh, it was a great review. I gave 'em great review. And, uh, she came to my door of my car. I rolled down the window and she said, Hey, I want to thank you for that review. And I said, hey, I, I want to ask you a question. I said, uh, what, what are you gonna do with your life? Are you gonna stay here and walk at the car wash all your life? What are you gonna do? She was about 23 years old. And she said, no, you know what I wanna do? I want to be an rn. And she said, you know what though? I I, I quit school. And, uh, I'm thinking about getting back in school.

You know what I said to her? I said, God has given you gifts and talents and abilities. He's also given you dreams. And you know what you need to do? Don't let anything keep you away from your destiny that God has called you to do. She said, it's gonna take years. I said, yes, and it's gonna cost you, you know what's gonna cost you, it's gonna cost you a lot of different things in life to do what you have to do. It's gonna cost you that. But you know what? You've gotta be disciplined. You've got to pay the price. You've

gotta do whatever it takes for you to get to the goal that you're going to, and you don't let anything stop you. Well, there's been people that have told me that I'm not smart enough. Don't let them stop you. There's been people that will say, you know, I don't have enough money. If it's God's will, he'll give you the money. I, hey, there's a lot of people that have dropped out. Don't look at the dropouts. Look at what you can do. Hey, what I'm saying is get up and make it happen. It's not gonna come to you. Nobody's just gonna pin an RN badge on your uniform. No, you have got to pay the price. You've gotta be disciplined, but you have got to get up and make it happen. Amen?

And nothing against working at a car wash, but folks, that was not God's destiny for that young lady. Yes. Amen.

It wasn't. And now all I've gotta do is winner to the Lord. Amen. So, the, somebody once said, if you want success, figure out the price and then pay it. That's true. Figure out the price and pay it. I'm looking at some individuals here. Listen, I asked Steve Berg over here to my right. That man right there owns a concrete business. Well, the hardest workers in this church, you know what he figured out? One day that God had called him to work in concrete, God had given a skill and ability, ability to work in concrete. Nobody can do it quite like he can do it. But you know something, it wasn't easy. You know, something, he'll tell you. There were failures along the way. Not every job went right. Sometimes equipment didn't get there. Sometimes equipment was broken. Sometimes people didn't call him when he wanted the cause. Sometimes he didn't make as much money as he thought he was gonna make. Sometimes it rained when it was getting ready to, uh, pour concrete. I'm trying to tell you that he had a price to pay. He's still paying the price, but he's disciplined to know that God has called him to do what he's doing. And he runs that business for the honoring glory of the Lord. And he talks to the people about Jesus every time that he pours concrete. Amen.

And you say, well, Steve, you have a successful business. Bless. You know why He does. He went out and he got it right. Right. Amen. Amen. He went out and he got it. Young people, listen to this, pastor. This is not a world of entitlement. Like you people say that it is. You're not entitled to zip.

Even as a Christian. You're not entitled to zip. God's not gonna bless you if you don't want it. God's not gonna give you things in life that you need if you're not willing to pay the price and be disciplined. Well, I thought God loved me. Well, he thought that you loved him too, <laugh>. Amen. Amen. He thought he loved you, thought you loved him enough to be able to talk to him once in a while when you just didn't want something. Or he thought that you loved him enough, that you'd be in the Bible, or you listened to Pod podcast, or you would listen to the word of God on Sunday mornings. Listen, everything in life has a price. 2000 years ago, Jesus paid a price. He paid a price. He was there in the garden of Gethsemane. He knew full well what God the father had called him to do.

He knew that there was a price, it had to be paid. You know what he did? He said, if there's any other way around this, I want you to show me. But if there isn't, I am gonna be the person that's gonna pay the price. I am gonna go to the cross. I'm gonna die on the cross for all those that need to find Jesus as Lord and Savior. He went to the cross and praised God. He was disciplined enough that he stayed on the cross. Praise God that he was disciplined enough for 33 years to stay the course for what God the Father wanted him to do. Folks, praise the Lord that some of us are disciplined enough. We are paying the price to be what God wants us to be today. Hey, we may have gotten off the track. We may have taken an exit, but we need to understand today, we need to get back to paying the price. We need to get back to being disciplined, and we need to get back to being the people of God that God wants us to be.

Amen. Yes.

Listen, to have a successful Christian home, you're gonna have to pay a price. Do you know that? Yes, you're gonna have to stay the course in this crazy old world, the Joneses aren't doing what the Joneses used to do. Whoever else down the road ain't doing what they used to do. It used to be when I was growing up, and some of y'all can relate with this, that, you know, neighbors talked and, and when they paddled little Johnny, guess what? You got paddled too for getting in trouble. Now, the parents go to the school and get on the teachers for discipline their kids, because they stay with their kids, even when the kids are wrong, because they don't want to face the music with their kids. The kids are running the home, the parents aren't.

That's what's happening. Amen. Amen. Hey, some of the, lemme tell you something. If you wanna be a spiritual parent, you call the shots in your house. The last time I checked you were the one that were paying the house payment. You're paying the rent, you're paying the water, the garbage. You're buying all the food that goes in the refrigerator. You're paying for the air conditioning or the heat. You're paying for everything that's going on. You're giving him money for different things in life. Don't you dare let them sit there and tell you how it's gonna be. You tell them how it's gonna be. Don't let kids call the shots. Well, pastor, I wanna be a good parent. Well, let's guess what, if you give them, if you give them the ability to call the shots, you're not a good parent. Amen.

You're enabling them. Amen. Amen. Well, they say, I don't want to go to church. Guess what? Guess what? You're living under my roof and you're going to church. Amen.

Amen. Amen. You're not gonna sit home and watch MTV and them other idiots walking around. Listen, you're going to church. As for me in my house, we're gonna serve the Lord. Thank. Amen. Now, listen, I've got kids. I've got kids. I know how it is when your kids turn 18.

They want to call the shots. Let 'em call it. That's right. But I'll tell you one thing. You know that when they turn 18, you've done the best you can under God's power and strength to raise him up in the nurture and admonition of the God. You know what? The rest is up to them, and the rest is up to their choices. But as they say in the country, by cracky, when they're, they're in your house, you lead them in godly ways. Amen. Amen. And that means watching what they're doing, watching what you're, what you're watching on, on, uh, TikTok or, or boom bang or whatever else they got out there today. Watch what they're doing on the computers. And folks, listen, you've got to make sure you're, you're doing what you need to be doing on the computer too, and what you're watching.

Don't, don't tell your kids to do something spiritual with God when you're not doing it. Amen. Amen. You need to be the example, but there's gonna be a price to pay. There's gonna be, have to be discipline in your home. That's gonna have to be respect for husband and wives. Men, you're gonna need to treat your wife like God, want you to treat her. Amen. Like a priceless treasure. Ladies, you're gonna want to treat your husband the way that God would have you to treat your husband. There's a price to pay, because sometimes you don't feel like doing that because of tension that's in the house. I get it. I understand it. But guess what? Hey. And if you get off kilter, get back on kilter defeating things in our life that are bad habits, there's gonna be a price to pay. You know, sometimes you gotta give up friendships. What? Cause they're pulling you the wrong way. Amen. Amen.

Sometimes people around you are walking in such a bad walk-in life, a sinful walk in life, that every time you're around them, they're pulling you down. And it might be that they're pulling you down to the point where you need to get rid of some of those friendships and things that you've got. You've got to be able to get yourself into a place where the environment around you will support what you're trying to do in life. Amen. Amen. Amen. Number three, amen. Don't you and I settle, we need to keep pressing. I'll just give you a few verses here as we close. One verse is found in Genesis chapter 11, and verse 31 says, Tara took his son, Abram, his grandson, lot of Heron and his daughter-in-law, Sarah, the wife of Son Abram. And together they set out from IR of the cows to go to Canaan.

But listen to this next sentence. But when they came to Heron, they what settled there? Tara was the one that led his family to Canaan. And when they got to Canaan, Tara was the one that stopped. Instead of going forward like God wanted him to do, he stopped. He settled. Instead of facing the difficulties that he knew were out there, and the giants that were out there, he stopped because he knew the going from that 0.4 was gonna be very, very hard. He was not willing to pay the price. He was not disciplined enough to go for the gold that God wanted him to go for in a spiritual sense. In other words, he fears, he forfeited the future blessings that God wanted him to have, and he wouldn't pay the price. So, what he did, if you look this up, he was one that lived for 205 years, and he died exactly where he settled.

He died in Heron. That's where he died. He died there exactly where he settled. If you and I settle, we might as well be dead. Amen? Amen. Some of us are sitting here, we don't dream anymore. We don't do nothing except go through the motions. Few reasons for that. Number one is you might not want to pay the price anymore. You might be tired. Number two, you may not be disciplined enough. And number three, you're at just to the point where you feel like that God can't use you anymore and God can't fire you up. And you're sitting there this morning and saying, well, pastor, it's easy for you to talk about flying. You don't know my airplane. I'm pretty messed up today. But what I'm saying to you this morning, and I want you to get this, God has made all of us this morning to fly in His name. He doesn't want us to be settled. Folks, the worst thing you and I could do is to stop. When we stop, we're like the 10 men in the Wizard of Oz. We rush. When I watched that movie, one of the favorite people that I had in that movie was a Tin Man, <laugh>. When I saw him first, I thought, that's a pretty cool guy right there, <laugh>. He's all silver. He's got this great big ax, great big funnel on his head, man, he looks pretty cool, but guess what? He was useless. Mm-hmm. He had stopped. He wasn't doing what he was supposed to do. He had an ax, but he wasn't swinging it. And look at his face.

You know why he was sad? You, you want to go back and watch the Wizard of Oz this afternoon? He wasn't smiling. He was sad. You know why? Because he needed refreshment. He needed a little, he needed a little a. And you know what happened when they started putting it on you? Do you remember? Remember

He didn't start moving all at once, but he started moving. And when he started moving, beep, beep, beep became all. Finally, he got to the point where he started raising an X. And guess what? Watch it is frown. Turn to a smile. Why? Because he was doing what he was created to do. Amen. <laugh>. Ooh.

Guess what? Some of us are like the 10 men. The 10 man was out in that field. It had rained on him so much. He got discouraged. I don't know what happened to him, but he thought, my days are over. I've gone off to the right or to the left. I'm pretty sad. I don't know what it is to smile anymore. I'm not doing what I used to do. I'm not happy.

But you know something, 10, man, God never gave up on you. And he's got the oil of the Holy Spirit. Yes. That he wants to bring his little oil can, and he wants to start squirting it on you. Folks, we need to say, God, I might be let 10 men in the Wizard of Oz. Been a long time since I've swung my ax the way you want me to swing my ax. It's been a long time since I've been the man that I should be the woman. That I should be the parent that ought to be the friend. I ought to be the servant of you. That I ought to be the witness of you. That I ought to be a long time.

I gotta admit I'm this way because I've allowed myself to be this way. It's not society. It's not anybody else. It's on me. Because you're the same God that you've always been. I ask you to forgive me right now for being useless, for feeling this way, for getting so discouraged. What I want you to do right now is I realize that I need to get back up. I need to get ready to pay the price. I need to get disciplined again. I need to get happy again. I need to get back in the fight. I need to start being like I used to be. Remember, I remember when I used to be that way. I'm tired of looking at people that are happy and wishing that I was that way. I'm tired of looking at moms and dads that seem like they got their houses all together. And I, I, I'm tired of looking at them and thinking that I can't raise my family that way. Again, I'm tired of being that example that I am. I want to change the example that I am Lord. Please, right now, right now, squirt some oil in me.

Bring your power. Bring your favor. Bring your blessings back on me. Lord,

Help me to start swinging at, at acts again. Help me to start moving. I may not move too good when I first start, but every day is gonna get better. Amen.

Because I'm gonna put the things behind, behind, and I'm gonna look to you for the author and the finish of my faith. And I'm gonna look to you for all the power and the direction in my life. And I refuse to let the waters of life swamp me. You are with me in the floods. You are with me right now, and you're gonna help me to be able to soar again. Amen.

Folks, I'm gonna tell you this morning, God wants you to know today that he is the same God that he was yesterday. He's the same yesterday, today and forever. I don't know where you're at today spiritually, but God knows. I don't know what you're facing today in your life, but God knows there are people in this room today that I know well and well that are hurting. You're hurting in a lot of different ways. You're given the great aura today of everything's thumbs up. But really everything thumbs down. And you're thinking today that my best's best days are behind me because of what I've done, because of what I've allowed in my life. I can never be what I was before. False. I wanna tell you, that's a lie from hell. That's a lie from hell. Michael Jordan kept on shooting when he missed the ball. This morning is in your hands. What are you gonna do with it? Are you gonna hold it and never shoot again? Or are you gonna start shooting in Jesus's name? Amen.

There's a lot of lives in here this morning that need to be repaired. There are families that need to be repaired. There're marriages that need to be repaired.

Maybe some relationships in this audience today that need to be repaired. I don't know what it is, but something has got you to the point of just settling, just being old, rusty tin man. But you need to come back to the Lord, and you need to be refreshed this morning. Let's stand please, as our heads are bow and as our eyes are closed.