

Hey, hey, okay just hey it's so good to see you here. Thank you for making an effort to be here. First of all, welcome, welcome to West End Community Church. I am a member here, our family goes here, it's our church home. We love it! So many of you are church family to us but for those of you who are not, we want you to feel welcome as though you were. We're so thankful for you, we're so thankful you're here, we're so thankful for the churches from once you come and for all of the sister churches and for the Lord's work in Nashville. So, it's great to always be together and just be together and celebrate that as we look together at His word.

We will be here for the next eight weeks with a week break. As you can tell by the amount of content this is going to be a little bit of a flying through; we'll talk more about that, of Joshua and Judges. One time I think a couple of years ago somebody said, "I went to this thing and it was a Bible study". They said, "What did you do?" They're like, "It was crazy we only studied the Bible, right? There were like no snacks and no fun and no anything, right? This is like the Allegiant Airlines of Bible studies; okay we will get you there, okay we will get you there, but I mean no perks, right? We are just going to study the Bible that's what we're doing. Okay, this is a Bible study, let me say again with the inclusive pronoun here we are studying the Bible. Okay, I am only studying ahead of you. This is not Paige said, this is let's look together at what God said in Joshua and God said in Judges. And I am always trying to synthesize and summarize what other people have taught me and the commentary on these books are big and they're thick but they are so good. So, David Howard, David Furth, David Jackman, Richard Pratt, Sinclair Ferguson, Ralph Davis all these commentators are teaching this to me so let's study together. That's what we're doing. I can read all these commentaries, I could tell you every word that they said, but if the Lord does not meet us here and teach us His word we learn absolutely what? Nothing! So, we're going to pray and that's not because what gets everybody quiet and like focused, it's because if we don't ask Him to teach us and if he had not promised that he would do so this would all be for naught.

So, let's pray; Father we come to you now from so many places, from so many situations, Lord, and you know us all. You know everything about us from the inside to the outside and it's crazy to think Lord, that you could make a promise to this many people, from this many stages and this many situations and this many needs and this many joys and this many pains, that you will accomplish something in our lives and in our hearts because we all come together to this same word from you. Thank you, Holy Spirit, that that's what you can do. And so, we look to you expectantly and we ask you humbly to teach us this word from our Father, Lord, that it might do in us what you've promised that it will always do; that we might see Jesus more clearly that we might love him more dearly that we might follow him more nearly because we are learning even in this very strange and very ancient text how much you have first loved us in Him. And we ask it boldly in Jesus' name. Amen.

Take out your Bibles. If you need to move over a seat, if you want to wear more comfortable clothes next week this is like get comfortable keep your Bibles open, okay, we are going to keep looking through the Bibles and keep looking through the Bibles and keep looking through the Bibles you know I like to see the tops of your heads more than I like to see your faces because I want you looking down and seeing that this is true and I want you searching afterwards to see that it is. When my oldest child was starting 8th grade, I went to pick him up from a friend's house, from one of his best friend's house and I asked the friend, I said, "Hey bud are you so excited to start school tomorrow?" He goes, "Absolutely not! He said, "School is totally pointless!" That's what all parents want to hear, right? School is totally pointless, and I said, "Okay, tell me more about that." And he said, "Well think about it, math we have calculators, right? Latin is a dead language, history has already happened, science is not even on the SAT and English, I already speak it, okay?" That was like his take on all of school. I was like, "Okay." He said, "Listen," he goes, "I know at some point this all mattered, like, to get us where we are; but now we're here and we no longer need it."

If we were really honest this morning, really the reason that we don't study God's word, really the reason that we fail to read God's word, really the reason that we fail to meditate on God's word is that for us it's

kind of pointless. It's not that we think it's not true, it's not that we think that it doesn't say good things and at some point, what? It mattered to kind of get us where we are, but now we're here and we just don't need it. So, for some of us all of the Bible seems pointless, let's be honest. But, for all of us some of the Bible seems pointless, especially the parts like Joshua and Judges. They are great for little kids Sunday School; they're action-packed, they are all the things, but as far as me living in the information age in 2024 and all of the things going on this cannot have anything to do with the crazy politically charged, social media, every kind of world that that we live in. And all that means if we think that is that, we do not know what God has said about his own word and we do not understand Jesus's relationship to that word and the fact that Jesus says we cannot have any relationship with him apart from his word, all of it, even these parts. And so, I want you to hear me clearly as we begin. My goal is not that you have this great massive like, you know, grid like grasp on the books of Joshua and Judges. My goal is that you would know Jesus, my goal is that you know Jesus and what that means is that you know how much you are loved by the Father in and through him. And that he has life for you now and eternally in that love. That's the point of the Bible study and it's Jesus himself that lets us know throughout the New Testament that we cannot do that or understand that apart from all parts the Bible even this one.

When we come to study the Bible there are different ways to study just like there are different ways to study anything. There are survey classes you took like a freshman history class that was a survey from the founding of Jamestown all the way till the Civil War and then you took a constitutional convention class that only covered May to September of 1787, right? You zoom out you zoom in. Obviously, this is going to be a zoom out. We are not going to be able to cover all this. This why I will let you know the reading each week at the end so you can read ahead for the next week. I am not teaching over these and studying with you over these to make your reading of them unnecessary, I'm doing it so that your reading of them can be more accessible, hopefully, and more fruitful. So, I hope to give you a road map of the content and a road map of the meaning so then you can go back and enjoy digging in the details and finding out all of the implications for your own lives. I really encourage you to get a good study Bible, not the biggest one they make, but a good study Bible that just has book introductions and notes on the page for quick reference for those things. So, we are going to for the next three weeks do a very aerial view of the Book of Joshua. This is the 40,000-foot fly over before we go a little deeper not super deep but deeper into the nitty gritty, emphasis on gritty, of Judges, okay? And so, we'll do one but you really cannot understand anything in Judges without the background here of Joshua.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the Earth and it was all so very good and it was perfect and wonderful for about five and a half seconds and then Adam and Eve did not believe God; they wanted to be God, and so they rebelled against him. They did the one thing he told them not to do and not only did they wreck their own hearts and their own lives and their own family, they wrecked all of it. They wrecked all of us and the whole world is broken and we are all born broken in those ways from the inside out and the Lord told them that they would die. And then you have these generations, these people that live a long time but guess what happens at the end of their long life? Every time at the beginning of Genesis they do what? They die! Just like he said that they would. And you're only to Genesis chapter 6 in this long Bible before the whole world was covered with wickedness every inclination of man's heart was only evil all the time. And the Lord showed up to show what judgment is and what judgment looks like through the flood, okay? And then he begins again not perfectly at all if you know the story of like drunk naked Noah but he starts over with Noah and his family and they begin to populate the Earth and then it's just a couple of more chapters until the whole world is wicked again and they come together at the Tower of Babel. They're going to build this tower, make a name for themselves and reach heaven and make themselves god. There's not one good person on the earth, there's not one God believing person, submissive person on the earth and you think the whole story is going to be over. And what is God going to do in the face of universal terrible? He's going to call this elderly Idol worshipping man and his barren wife and say you I'm going to change the whole world through promises I making to you and to your family and to your generations and I will make you into a great nation. I will bring you into a Promised Land. I will plant you there so that through you all nations of the earth will be blessed. I will be your God and you will be my people. And so, the call of Abram later Abraham is the beginning of the Redemptive story, okay? And then

you follow through Genesis and you can't even read it to your children because it's X-rated and you read all the way through Genesis and you're like, "Still really where are the good guys?" These are supposedly God's guys and they are still not good guys and then you take this 400-year gap after they've gone to Egypt to survive and Joseph was kind of the savior figure and all of that and you wake up in the in the book of Exodus 400 years later. They're enslaved in Egypt, they're moaning they're groaning, they've not heard from God in 400 years. He made crazy promises to their ancient ancestors and the Lord raises up Moses, most unlikely person in the earth at that point, and raises him up and says through you I'm going to fulfill all of those promises. And so, Moses goes to Pharaoh. Pharaoh will not let them go. The Lord shows his power and judgment against Egypt through the plagues. He picks them up through the Passover, the death angel comes and visits all the Egyptians but not the Israelites. Not because they're better but because they have blood of another, of a substitute, on their doorpost, the Passover. They come out, the Egyptians chase them. They come through the parted sea and into the wilderness and into Mount Sinai. And the Lord makes this family, they're thousands and thousands, thousands of people now into a nation. They're not, no longer just a covenant family they are a covenant nation and at Sinai he constitutes them as a nation and gives them The Covenant after he has redeemed them, not so that they will be redeemed. "As my redeemed people here is the covenant by which you shall live in loyalty to me" and they say "Yes of course we will" and that lasts less than 5 and ½ seconds and they leave from the mountain. And going to the promised land, I think people think it was a really long trip and it took them 40 years to get to the promised land. It did not, it took them a couple of months to get to the promised land. They send the spies in. "How does it look?" "It looks great, but we can't take it. God is a big joke. Why did he do this? We cannot take this land." And the Lord says because you don't want it, guess what? You don't get it! You will wander around in this wilderness until every adult every adult is gone and your children will receive my promises. So, you've got all the wilderness wanderings and all water coming from the rocks and snake bites and all the crazy things, okay? And then after this time they come to the plains of Moab on the other side from Canaan of the Jordan River and the Book of Deuteronomy takes place there. Deuteronomy is the preamble to the Book of Joshua. If we really, really wanted, we'd be doing Deuteronomy, Joshua and Judges but, somewhere the mindness has got to stop, okay?

So, just know that Deuteronomy is the preamble theologically and historically. Three great sermons of Moses, he recounts the mighty saving acts of God, he re-gives them the law and the stipulations of the covenant and then he gives them all the kind of marching orders and the preparations for going in and taking the promised land. The reason you need to understand what a preamble it is is because Joshua does have a lot of explanation for the crazy things the Lord tells him to do. It's like, wait what? It's because they've already been told, these exact people this generation have already been told, with purpose and with explanation. So, it's just stated for us here in Joshua. The Book of Joshua is a book of promises fulfilled; that's what it is. It is the book of promises fulfilled. The promise particularly of the land, the promise of posterity of the sea is already being fulfilled. Israel is big, lots and lots and lots and lots of people, but what about the land? The promises are fulfilled but the people participate. God makes promises and we participate in those promises. And so, our three weeks in Joshua are crossing and then and then conquest and then commitment. So, we're looking at the crossing this morning.

In our English Bibles Joshua is part of what is known as the historical books, okay, that go from Joshua all the way through Esther. But, in the Hebrew Bible the division in which Joshua and those books find themselves are actually called the former prophets. The former prophets, this is actually according to the Hebrew Bible the prophecy of Joshua, not a forthtelling. Not a forthtelling but, it's never less than history. This is history, but it is always more than history. Alec Motyer said, "History in the Old Testament is a declaration from God about God," that's what the history in the Old Testament is for. History in the Old Testament is a declaration from God about God; it's God's interpretation of what happened and why. So, the point of the Book of Joshua is that it's God's perspective on one of the most important transitions in the history of his people, okay? What is happening here is a fulcrum, it's a pivot, it is a critical juncture, it is the end of something in Joshua it is the beginning of something. And if you were doing a cursory reading you would be, like, everything seems different; everything is about to be different. The emphasis is on what is going to be different. No! No, if you read it as the prophecy of Joshua on God's own terms it

does not focus on what's different, it focuses on what or rather who is the same. Everything, especially in these first chapters, is focusing on who is the same.

Keep your Bibles open take a stretch, stand up if you need to and we are going and I can read fast and I know you can too, okay? Chapter 1, verse one,

After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord, the Lord said to Joshua the son of nun, Moses' assistant, "Moses my servant is dead. Now therefore arise, go over this Jordan, (the Jordan River) you and all this people, into the land that I am giving to them, to the people of Israel. Every place that the sole of your foot will tread upon I have given to you, just as I promised Moses. From the wilderness and this Lebanon as far as the great river, the river Euphrates, all the land of the Hittites to the Great Sea toward the going down of the sun shall be your territory. No man shall be able to stand before you all the days of your life. Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous, for you shall cause this people to inherit the land that I swore to their fathers to give to them. Only be strong and very courageous, being careful to do according to all the law that Moses my servant commanded you. Do not turn from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may have good success wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous and then you will have good success. Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." Joshua commanded the officers of the people, "Pass through the midst of the camp command the people, 'Prepare your provisions, for within three days you are to pass over this Jordan to go in to take possession of the land that the Lord your God is giving you to possess.'"

First thing, the most important like pivot here, different guy! If you've been reading the Bible here to fore it is the big Moses show, okay? This is a different guy but it is the same God. Joshua is familiar in the Bible by this point. If you have been reading from the beginning, he has been mentioned seven or 27 times in the Pentateuch, in the first five books. He's introduced to us in Exodus 17 after they've come through the sea the Amalekites attack them, okay? And Moses goes up to hold up his staff over the battle. His arms get tired. Aaron and Hur hold up Moses's hands because as long as the Moses's hands are up to the Lord they are winning. Joshua is the general. He's leading the battle down below and from there, from that forward, Joshua is very visible. He is the one that goes up as Moses's aid, the only other one up on the mountain. He, when Moses goes in and out of the Tabernacle it's Joshua that stays at the Tabernacle. He is one of the 12 spies to spy out the land and one of only two that were faithful to know that the Lord could take it. Yes, he's a known quantity. He is always serving in the shadow of Moses, right? Actually, all of Israel lived in the shadow of Moses. There is no one more important to the history of God's people until Jesus himself comes. And now if you look down those first couple verses we've got no Small Talk. "Hey Joshua, Moses is dead." It's like okay warm me up a little bit, I mean, "Moses is dead" let's just start right there, okay, says the Lord. And you would think so now here is what we're going to do and he doesn't come and say this is what we're going to do he stops and says and so let me remind you who I am. Let me remind you who I am, let me remind you what I've said, let me let me remind you what I have promised. I have come to show you my sameness. And so it starts in the confidence of that Moses has to be anchored there okay he has to be anchored in the confidence in God look at verses 3 to 5 you get all the promises all the what the same promises the exact same promise from the exact same God the promised land the same boundaries that are spoken of from Genesis and Exodus and Deuteronomy are just repeated here to Joshua. It is so sure that these promises are going to be fulfilled that in verse three *have given* is in the past tense. He's talking about already having given them the land and they're not even in it yet because that's how sure his promises are. And all of those promises are based in the one grand promise in verse 5 and repeated it in verse 9: *I am the Lord your God and I will never leave you and I will never forsake you I will be with you wherever you go*, okay? What do you mean by that God? He says I am the same God what in the same way because I can't be any other way and so what does he want to know just at, look down, *"Just as I was with Moses I will be with you."* Who in Israel knew better how the Lord was with Moses? Nobody but Joshua, nobody but Joshua knew what that meant as *I was with Moses* that

is not some mystical experience of God that is the actual active presence of the Lord passing in front of Moses, fire on the mountain, bringing down the plagues, healing the people, opening up the Earth, *as I was with Moses just in that way, I will be with you*. Listen, his promise is not that he is never going to let Joshua down, according to Joshua, his promise is he will never let him go. Understand what God promises to him and what he promises to us. It's not that he's never going to let us down, according to us, right? But that he is never going to let us go. And is always the biblical pattern this is true therefore you do, okay? There is always indicative and imperative. There is confidence and there are promises followed by commands. And that's the same thing you see here is this confidence followed by a commission. You can never reverse that order. You never ever have your commission and your commands that can be followed by confidence of God's love for you. We never ever for a single millisecond live for the love of God we live because of it. We only live because of it. We start with the confidence. We start with being told how important we are, how valued we are, how loved we are and the fact that the Lord will never let us go and then there is a therefore.

So, then Joshua, then the Lord takes Joshua immediately into the therefore and it's this kind of double-edged commission. A commission to be and to do because God is and God does. But it is a commission of response because of who I am and because of what I have done and have promised to do, therefore you will be this way and you will do these things. In the first place be strong and courageous it's just the way you are called here to be. Joshua must not have naturally been this way or the Lord would not repeat it all the time. And why would he be strong and courageous at this point? Moses is gone and he is one of two living people that has ever seen what's on the other side of that river. Even Moses had not seen what was on the other side of that river, right? And so, I mean, so it's like he keeps repeating it, you must be strong and you must be courageous. And why is he willing to repeat it? Because Joshua needs to hear it, so he'll say it. He'll say it again and again and again in his love, three times repeated here and repeated again and again. *Do not be afraid, do not despair*. And it's like how? And then it seems like it's this big U-turn, but it's not. It's this weaving together because his instructions next are not about military matters even though Joshua is facing all of these imminent battles you expect his next word to be military instruction. Instead, the priority of your life Joshua is to be spiritual. The priority of your life is wholehearted devotion to me. How am I supposed to be strong and courageous? Follow the Torah. What, right? Follow the law. That is actually the secret okay of being strong and courageous. It's not up to you. You plant yourself deeply in the very things that I have told you. We say law and that word is kind of monolithic to us. We think that it means regulations and rules that condemn, that's what we think of when we hear the word law. That's not what the word Torah means, it means instruction. It is instruction in the way you should live in relationship to God. It's closer to wisdom really than it is to rules in that way they're based in rules and in boundaries but it is much, much broader than that and is much more relational than that. And what does he say about the law? He says, "meditate on it" and then it says, "it should not depart from your mouth." And it's like, wait, so is he meditating or is he teaching and preaching? Meditation was an out loud activity in this culture. It wasn't all this internal "I'm going to get there," you know? There was, there was none of them there was none of that, okay? You said it out loud because so little was written down.

I have a lot of verbal processors in my home. We have no one quiet in our home, everyone is a verbal processor, okay? He is being called on here to be a verbal mediator. This is what you talk about, repeat it to yourself. Repeat it to yourself again and again and again. It's like the refrain coming out of your mouth. You're not just taking it in you are breathing it out. How often? Look down, day and night. This is a Hebraism, okay, for the fullness of time. One commentator says, "this means there is never a moment when whatever decision has to be made that the word of God is not in the driver's seat," okay? "There's never a moment no matter what decision is being made that the word of God is not in the driver seat." That's what it means to meditate on it both day and night. There is, and then you obey it be careful to obey. There is a part for Joshua to play, we all participate in the promises of God. Unconditional promises whose blessing for us is conditioned on our obedience and our participation. David Jackman points out somebody can write you a billion dollar check and you can frame it and look at it and it does you no good. All the money is there. You have nothing to do with providing it, but you do have to what? You've got to

deposit it, you've got to cash it, okay? We don't just look at the promises of God like we're encouraged by them; you act on them, you cash them in, you respond here accordingly. So, he is being called to full obedience, down, okay? It says, "all of it." "All of it." But it's not just full obedience, it's careful obedience. *Do not turn to the right or to the left.* This is not general, I mean, this is golf this is putting and golf, right? I mean it matters whether you're to the right or to the left, there's only one thing that counts, when it goes in the cup, okay? And so, that's what the careful obedience here is being talked about. You're staying anchored in God's promises and in his instruction and you're staying active according to God promises and his instruction. This is how you're strong and courageous. This is not a matter of fearlessness, in this way, this is a matter of faithful obedience.

The interesting thing here is Joshua is the first of God's leaders in his word to be led by his word. The rest of them waited for Moses to tell them because Moses was the one through whom God spoke because there was, this is the first leader to be led by the written word God is saying Joshua I'm not going to come to you in every way that I'm going to come to Moses because it's all written down for you. There is a difference for us in believing in God, many of us on a Wednesday morning about we believe in God and believing God. And we show that we believe God, what he has said and what he has promised, when we obey. When we obey what we know when there's so much that we don't. That's how we show we believe him. That's how we show that we believe him. This begins with Abram later Abraham, no road map, no details, *take up your family and go. Go to the land that I will show you.* It is the, it is the priority of faith to believe and to act on the promises of God. And this is not Abraham anymore and it's not Moses anymore it's a different guy and his name is Joshua, and it's the same God. That's the point of chapter one and it is the same God. It seems so radical, it's like, what do you mean he's going to launch out? It is not radical, it's sensible. What is the only guarantee in this life? The promises of God to you. We can be certain of nothing else. This is the most sensible thing for him to do. J Jackman, "We want to wait for further light rather than acting on the light that he has given us but what I must know is that all I need for my heart to harden is to do nothing." "All I need for my heart to harden is to do nothing."

I remember years ago at Vanderbilt in in RUF a young friend who was a brand new Christian, like a weeks old Christian, and we were trying to get kids to sign up to go and do the soup kitchen, the rescue mission. And at the end of the night she was like the only one that had signed up and I'm thinking, "I wonder why?" And I went and I said, "Hey, thank you so much! I'll be going, I'd love for you to go with me. Why'd you sign up? And she looked at me like I was crazy. She said, "We just talked two weeks ago on caring for the poor" and that was her response. It's like somebody read for me from God's word that we were supposed to care for the poor and then somebody asked me to go care for the poor, like what am I supposed to say, right? That's what it means! That's what it means, it's a little bit like Simon Says, he says it, you do it. And so that is Joshua's mentality and his attitude here. There's language here of prosperity and success those words in the Old Testament, both of those words in the Old Testament are not ever used for financial success they are used for success in a given endeavor, okay? They're used for success and prosperity in a given endeavor that the Lord puts in front of us. Trust and Obey, okay? We sing it. That's what this means.

In the second place, here, there is a different symbol but it is the same God turn to chapter three begin in verse one. Okay, *Joshua rose*, hey, do not scowl at me we are going to do Rahab. Everybody where's Joshua two? It's coming, it's coming, it's coming, okay? So, Joshua 3; everybody smile at me, okay?

Then Joshua rose early in the morning and they set out from Shittim. And they came to the Jordan, he and all the people of Israel, and lodged there before they passed over. At the end of three days the officers went through the camp and commanded the people, "As soon as you see the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God being carried by the Levitical priests, then you shall set out from your place and follow it. Yet there shall be a distance between you and it, about 2,000 cubits in length. Do not come near it, in order that you may know the way you shall go, for you have not passed this way before." Then Joshua said to the people, "Consecrate yourselves, for tomorrow the Lord will do wonders among you." And Joshua

said to the priests, "Take up the ark of the covenant and pass on before the people." They took up the ark of the covenant and went before the people. The Lord said to Joshua, "Today I will begin to exalt you in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. And as for you, command the priests who bear the ark of the covenant when you come to the brink of the waters of the Jordan, you shall stand still in the Jordan." And Joshua said to the people of Israel, "Come here and listen to the words of the Lord your God. And Joshua said, "Here is how you shall know that the living God is among you he will without fail drive out from before you all the ITES (We'll talk about them next week). Behold the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth is passing before you into the Jordan. Now therefore take 12 men from the tribes of Israel, from each tribe a man. And when the soles of the feet of the priests bearing the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off from flowing, and the waters coming down from above shall stand up in one heap."

Let's stop right there. Different symbol, okay? Different symbol and same God. The Lord led them out through water before; we'll talk about that, and for the Exodus generation that came through the Red Sea the Lord led them through the Red Sea. He led them in the wilderness and in the picture of a pillar of cloud and a pillar of fire it showed his majesty and it showed his power. And now it's this box, this gold overlaid box, three and 3/4 feet long, two and 1/4 high, two and 1/4 wide. If you've ever seen Spielberg that's actually looks like it, okay? He did a very accurate picture. It's not, it's not very, very big. You went from a pillar of fire to this and yet this picture is fuller, okay? This picture is clearer for them now according to Exodus chapter 25 it was constructed just as the Lord commanded it to be. And you are missing the point of the passage, we are missing the point of this passage if we do not see the centrality of the ark here. Everything here is about the ark; the text will not let you lose sight of it. 17 times in two chapters the ark, the ark, the ark, the ark, the ark, okay? And so, it's repeated all the way through. Why? For two reasons and the first, it is the visible symbol, okay, it's not only a symbol, but it is a symbol of the Lord's reign. Look back verse chapter verses 10 and 11 in chapter 3, who is he? He is the living God. Who is he? He is the Lord of what? Not Just Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, not just the Holy One of Israel, he is what? The Lord of all the earth! This is the ark of the Lord of all the earth. This is the cosmic universal throne of God. Psalm 99: *The Lord reigns; let the Nations tremble! He sits enthroned upon the cherubim*; which is a picture of the top of the ark. *He sits enthroned upon the cherubim; let the earth quake!* Note the definite article 'the', he is the Lord, he is the king! What does this mean? He is not only the God of Israel, of course he is the God of Israel. He is not only the God of Israel and that is so important for them to know as they come into this land that does not belong to them yet. He's Lord on that side of the river just like he's Lord on our side of the river. And he's not becoming Lord as we get there, okay? And he's Lord on all the parts, on all the rivers, in all the places and all the nations and all the people. This is the God that created the world, this is the God that upholds the world, this is the God that rules over the world, this is the God who is the God over Egypt and he will be the God over Canaan as well. His reign is his place in the universe, it is not his place in their hearts. We talk about our little thrones on our little hearts and that's all cute and everything, but, there is a cosmic throne and he is on it, okay? So that's what he is assuring them with, of not, he's reigning in your hearts he should reign in your heart because he does reign in all of the universe. in the first place it is a picture of his Reign his uncontested and uncontestable reign in the second place here the ark is this picture is the symbol for them of their relationship with him. On the one hand it's the ark of the living God, of the Lord of all the earth and it's also the ark of the covenant of the Lord, what, your God. All of a sudden, he goes from the universal to the specific to them. It is the covenant! It is his promised relationship to them, "I will be your God you will be my people I will live among you. I will hold you close to my heart." It is the covenant that is the storyline of the entire Old Testament that is still celebrated in communion every week with us, is that the Lord is keeping his covenant. But it's the covenant that changes the definite article into the personal pronoun. God changes, we don't get to, we don't get to ask the Lord to be anything for us. He gives himself to us and it's his covenant,

totally from him, that makes the definite article now into a personal pronoun. And why does he do that? Not because of his place in their hearts, because of what? Their place in his heart. Everything comes from his heart, he's the one that makes it personal, he's the one that has come into relationship, he is the one that has promised and sworn and it all comes from him because of their place in his heart. The same God with the same promise to Abraham, *I will be your God and you will be my people. I will live among you I will bless you and I will use you to be a blessing throughout the whole earth*, the same God that through Moses called now this whole nation to be his treasured possession. You know what you mean when you say these are my people and these are not my people, right? I mean, we know God means the same thing. These are my people. These are my people! And if you've read the scripture up to this point, you're like, how in the world can these people be his people? I mean, if you have read this stuff, you know, it's crazy how wicked so many of them, how unbelieving, how defiant and how rebellious. How is it possible that these people can be his people? Because, guess what sits on top of his throne? A mercy seat. The law is in it, but we can't meet him at the law, those people could not meet him at the law. They would be destroyed. And the law is covered on the top with, the Mercy Seat is the covering of the ark that once a year on the day of atonement the blood of a substitute is brought in by only the high priest into the holy of holies to be spread on that Mercy Seat so that God may look on them through the merit and through the substitution of another. We can't meet him in the contents, we have to meet him at the seat, we have to meet him at the seat and that's where the relationship is formed. The ark shows not only that he reigned, but that he receives his own. But he can only receive them there, and he can only receive them in that way. Which them? Whom is the ark for? All of them, all of them! It's not any one person's ark any more than the Lord's table is any one believer's table, I mean, if we all come in common need we are all coming together. That's why this is so cool, it has to be at a distance. Read carefully when it says hey you got to be like 2,000 cubits away and the reason is because he's going to lash out and he's like, why? He gives an explanation. Why does it need to be so far away from them? Why do they lead by such a margin? What? It says it, don't look at me, it says it! What does it say? So that you can see it. It has to be that far away so all of these throngs of thousands of people, so that they can all equally see it. What does he say, "I want you all to have a front row seat." I want you all to have a front row seat for what I'm doing for you on this very day. It's not so that it's far away from you, it's so that it's equally visible to all. It has to be in the foreground!

When the lights would go out, when the electricity would go off and my youngest was in her crib she has a lot of, she had so many fears, she would start screaming and screaming I would grab the flashlight and go in there and shine it all around her room. Look baby you are fine, there is nothing in here, there's nothing in here. And what? She would just keep screaming and screaming and screaming. And when would she stop screaming? When I put the light on my face. She didn't care what else was in there, as long as I was in there, okay? What is this whole scene with the ark? The Lord is not shining a big flood light across the river and say, "Let me tell you how this is going to go, let me tell you how this is going to happen." He shines the flashlight on his very own face. Look at the ark and not the river, that's the point, okay? You've got to look at the ark and not at the river. God wants them to see and God wants them to know I am the same covenant making and same covenant keeping God. And now, we're like, where's our ark? Oh, now we don't have a symbol we have a historic reality and we do what? We all have a front row seat as we fix our eyes on Jesus, and we fix our eyes on that mercy seat, on that cross which is the only place that God can meet us and it is the place he will meet anyone who comes to him through the merit of his son. And we are received there, because of the once for all substitution and sacrifice of the king who gave himself to give me personal pronouns. I mean, the King of Kings and Lord of lords now belongs to me in personal pronouns because of what was accomplished at his mercy seat and at his cross. Lift High the Cross, we sing it, why? The love of Christ proclaimed. Why? Till all the world adores his sacred name. Lift it high so that all may see. He is to be in the foreground to bring everything else into focus. He is always, "Look at the cross and not the situation, look at

only the situation through the cross, through the love of God for you there." A different symbol same God.

Number three, different water, okay? Different water here and same God. Pick up in verse 14 in chapter 3:

So when the people set out from their tents to pass over the Jordan with the priests bearing the ark of the covenant before the people, and as soon as those bearing the ark had come as far as the Jordan, and the feet of the priests bearing the ark were dipped into the brink of the water, and it stops, (the Jordan overflows all of its banks, okay, throughout this time, throughout this time of harvest) the waters coming down stood and rose up in a heap very far away, at Adam, the city that is beside Zarethan, and those flowing down toward the Sea of the Arabah, the Salt Sea, were completely cut off. And the people passed over opposite Jericho. Now the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firmly on dry ground in the midst of the Jordan, and all Israel was passing over on dry ground until all the nation finished passing over the Jordan.

And then they talk about picking up the stones that one man from each of the 12 tribes is to pick up a stone from the very place that the priest stood and carry it to the other side. And that is described so that it will be a memorial for their children to know, which is explained to us. And they all come through the Jordan. It kind of keeps repeating this because it's so hard to believe. So, it tells us a lot, that they all came through the Jordan.

When all the people, verse 4:11, when all the people had finished passing over the ark of the Lord and the priest passed over before the people. The tribes that were going to live on the other side, they sent their fighting men, as was agreed to come over and fight and be ready. On that day, verse 14, On that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel they stood in awe of him just as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life. And the Lord said to Joshua, "Command the priest bearing the ark of the testimony to come up out of the Jordan." So, Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan." And when the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord came up from the midst of the Jordan and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up on dry ground the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all the banks, as before. The people came up out of the Jordan on the 10th day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. And those 12 stones, which they took up out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. And he said to the people, "When your children ask their fathers in time to come, 'What do these stones mean?' then you shall let your children know, Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground. For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, so that all peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever."

Good stuff, okay? Different water, different water here and same God. This is like 2.0, right? You've got the people of Israel, God's people, that are back at impassible water, 40 years later, okay? And there's the details here of the water and the locations so to emphasize the miraculous. At this point the Jordan River is a mile wide, it is over 12 feet deep, it is a rushing torrent. It's not like, "Let's all swim over with our livestock and our children and our clothes on," I mean, this is all a miracle. Nothing, that's why the stuff here is pointed out and yet they're passing this time not to be brought out through the Red Sea they're being brought in, okay? It's not 2.0. It's the book end, it's the completion. They are now being brought in. But, where are they? They are back at another place of helplessness with the same God. They're back in another place of helplessness with the same God and so, in the first place, they respond, okay? They're helpless but they do respond. What are they told to do? It's really simple here. Not to figure, not to straddle, but to follow. The only command is follow, watch the ark, watch the ark and then to follow. I mean, like physically get up and follow. Follow it into the water. That's as much as they know and as much as they can see right there, and Alexander McLaren says, "God often opens his hand one finger at a

time." Right? "And that we are launching out according to what we know we take the next step according to what he tells us knowing that we can trust him for what we cannot yet see," okay? "For what we cannot yet see."

There's this cool scene in in the third Indiana Jones movie when he's trying to get to the Grail, through all the things, because his dad is dying and he's got to get to the Grail to sell. And he comes to this chasm, that's like bigger than this room, I mean, it's you know, 50 yards across. He's like, "What am I supposed to do?" He starts saying a leap of faith and he puts his foot up and he steps and the bridge appears what as his foot goes down. And it keeps appearing as he walks across. It doesn't say, "Everybody watch the water's going to part and then you walk in as soon as the priests put their feet in the water. And so the four priests that are carrying this ark, don't you know they're all like, "I'll be in the back"" right? "I'll be in the back, I'll take, I'll take the back spot, I'll take the back." I mean, right? Because it's not until they do it, it's not until they're on the go, but that is exactly when he does it. They are going with God. God is not going with them, okay? They are going with God and he says this is what you are to do. Sounds very New Testament; the first call of Jesus is what? They set down their nets and he says what? Two words, "Follow me!" And at the end of John, after his resurrection, and he is telling Peter vaguely what kind of life and even what kind of death he is going to have and Peter has questions and he says Peter, two words, what? "Follow me." It's the beginning and the end, I mean, that that that's what he is calling us to is responsive relationship and then any child can understand it it's why we teach it to children all the time. Guess what? They cross the river! Okay, they cross the river on dry ground. Y'all that is not what they feel, that is what happened. Can you imagine them having a small group after this. I don't know, "How was it for you," I mean, "How did you experience that?" "What? I used to be over there and now I'm over here, that's how I experience that." What does the blind man say when they're asking them all these questions, the Pharisees? "I was blind and now I see." I used to be there and now I'm here. I used to be in that land and now I'm in this land. I used to be outside of Christ and now I'm receiving Christ. I mean, I don't, it happened! Nobody is discussing this, it actually happened. It's the crossing that they keep saying and saying and saying 22 times in chapters three and four, and they crossed the river, and they in case you forgot they crossed the river. What are we talking about here? They crossed the river, they crossed the river, they crossed the river, they crossed the river, and what? They must never forget it! They must never ever forget it, okay? The water parts when the priests' feet go in and it says as soon as the last priest's last foot comes out it all goes back. That's what it means that God hems us in behind and before, okay? It starts and it ends with him and they must never forget. They must remember. At any point probably the greatest enemy of our faith is forgetfulness and so if you've read through Deuteronomy before this underline the word 'remember', that's all Moses is telling them to do. Do not forget who you are, do not forget whose you are, do not forget what God has done for you. You do not forget how God loves you.

Ralph Davis says this, "It's like marriage, the real threat may not be infidelity, it is simply a slow process of forgetting and a gradual failure to remember the preciousness of your spouse." It's not some rank infidelity, it's just this slow, slow, decaying, forgetting. The gradual failure to remember the preciousness of your spouse. That's what eats away at our relationship and our marriage to the Lord. It is not some crazy rebellion going off the rails. It is a gradual forgetting. It is a failure to remember and therefore the structure of this passage and the reason it's so repetitive. And we didn't even read all of it! It emphasizes the stones, okay? The center of the centerpiece of this part is that it emphasizes the stones because they're the visual aids of remembrance. Chapter 4:19, already God is giving us a milestone to remember this is the 10th day. This is 40 years to the day after they chose their original Passover lambs, I mean, when God said 40 years he meant 40 years, okay, down to the day. So, there's already that milestone. So, they already realize God has done this, we have gone from slaves to heirs. He said we would go from slaves to heirs and we are going here from slaves to heirs. "And you set up these stones." It keeps saying these stones. Which stones? The stones that one man from each tribe took. And where did they take them from? If you look down at the details in the passage, you take them from the very place that the priests stood. "I want you to take those stones from that place and bring them across." Why 12 stones? Because there's 12 tribes. What does this mean? This is for all the people, all of this is always for all of the people so that they will all have something to see because they must all remember. They must all

remember, look back at verse at chapter 4 verse 22, that's the history, so *that you will know that the Lord your God brought you across this river*. My kids are always saying, "facts." Like if you tell them something they're like, "facts, facts" okay? Facts every that that's all he's saying if you want to know what we're talking about here we are talking about facts these stones are not symbols you know what they are they are God's signature they came from the middle of the river where nobody could have ever gotten them any other way, okay? They are his signature on this event. First it is the history, this actually happened in time and space verse 23 is the explanation, why did God do this? It's all God and he did this to deliver his people and who are his people? We are his people. It keeps saying for us, tell your children he has done this for you he, has done this for us. You've got the history and the explanation and then verse 24 gives us the purpose, okay? To show the definite article to the world to the whole world that the whole world may know that the Lord is God and to show the personal pronoun to his people. Which people? All the people. For how long? All through the generations. Tell your children in all the generations to come this is what your God did. It's facts for you. This is the same God, this is the same God, this is not the way we approach God, this God of history who has done things in time and history.

I went to most of my schooling in the 80s finished up in the 90s someone sent me this.

- A 1960's arithmetic test: A logger cuts and sells a truckload of lumber for \$100 his cost of production is four fifths of that amount. What is his profit?
- 1970's new math test: A logger exchanges set L of lumber for set M of money, the cardinality of set m is the set C of production cost contains 20 fewer points what is the cardinality of set P of profits?
- 1980s domed down version a logger cuts and sells a truckload of lumber for \$100 his cost is \$80 his profit is \$20, find and circle the number 20. Okay, that's me! Okay?
- 1990s version and forward an unenlightened logger cuts down a beautiful stand of 100 trees in order to make a \$20 profit write an essay explaining how the forest birds and squirrels feel about that, right?

What Joshua is commanding them to continue through their generations, it doesn't matter how you feel about this. God has done this. You will know it or you will forget it, but you cannot add to it you cannot subtract to it. You cannot change it. Just like the Red Sea, who made it through? The people that were all excited coming through, the people that were grumpy coming through, they all made it through. Their experience is not what determined this. The work of God is what determined this. I love it Peter is the exact same way when he preaches his sermon at Pentecost. He goes through the crucifixion, the death, the Resurrection, the exaltation, the present reign of Jesus at God's right hand. Know for certain that the Father has made him Lord and Christ and that's the end of a sermon. Where's the altar call? Where's the invitation? Where's the application? 3,000 people cut to the heart because he just said facts. This is what just happened; do something with it, don't do something with it. It does not change the fact that it happened. This is what is called theo-logic, okay? Logic is still the basis of the word, theological, God logic, okay?

Ralph Davis says this, "The rescue at the Red Sea, the crossing of the Jordan, the death and the resurrection of Christ are explosions of God's power that are meant to color the whole horizon of the believer's life in order to assure us that the God who so mightily handles great emergencies is surely adequate for the smaller crises and anxieties that beset us." Reason from the greater to the lesser, what kept you up last night? God brought thousands of people through the Jordan River, he promised he would and he did. He can handle it, he can handle it! He's made promises in it and through it, different water and same God. Listen, the implication of making this memorial of the stones is that this is a really unusual unique event. The fact that they are permanent stones means that this is God, it's always God, it's the same God those stones mean both of those same things, okay? This was a unique event but they are permanent stones because this is the same God.

Fourthly, different congregation and same God. Y'all hang with me, hang with me. we're getting there we're almost done.

As soon as all the kings of the Amorites who were beyond the Jordan to the west, and all the kings of the Canaanites who were by the sea, heard that the Lord had dried up the waters of the Jordan for the people of Israel until they had crossed over, their hearts melted there was no longer any spirit in them because of the people of Israel. At that time the Lord said to Joshua, "Make flint knives and circumcise the sons of Israel a second time. Joshua made flint knives and circumcised the sons of Israel at Gibeath-haaraloth. And this is the reason why Joshua circumcised them: all the males of the people had come out of Egypt, all the men of war, had died in the wilderness on their way after they had come out of Egypt. Though all the people who came out had been circumcised, all the people who were born on the way in the wilderness after they come out of Egypt had not been circumcised. For the people of Israel walked 40 years in the wilderness, until all the nation, the men of war who came out of Egypt, perished because they did not obey the voice of the Lord; the Lord swore to them they that he would not let them see the land that the Lord had sworn to their fathers to give us, a land flowing with milk and honey. So, it was their children, whom he raised up in their place, that Joshua circumcised. For they were uncircumcised because they had not been circumcised on the way.

Everybody got it, they only repeated it like a million times.

When the circumcising of the whole nation was finished, they remained in their places in the camp until they were healed. And the Lord said to Joshua, "Today I've rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you." And so, the name of that place is called Gilgal to this day while the people of Israel were encamped at Gilgal, they kept the Passover on the 14th day of the month in the evening on the plains of Jericho. And the day after the Passover, on that very day they ate of the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. And the manna ceased the day after they ate of the produce of the land. There was no longer manna for the people of Israel, they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.

Okay, you got all this momentum in the story and then and then chapter 5 slows it all down. Why? Because there are more important things than being militarily ready. There are more important things than a strategic quick strike. This is a new generation. This is a new congregation that must be called and respond in commitment to the Lord. So, in the first place, you have these sacraments, okay? In case you weren't listening, that circumcision was like a thing, okay, going on here. They have to fully tangibly signify themselves as belonging to God. This is a sign of his covenant given to Abraham to mark all of his posterity as belonging to the Lord. What is a Sacrament both then and now? It is an outward sign and a seal of an inward grace to us. And so, this ring is this sign that I am married to my husband and then in that ceremony you will tie, so often, they'll tie a scarf around your hands and your rings and tie you sealing you together. That, that's what, that's what sacraments here do. And so, circumcision is this physical tangible sign of identity as the Lord's. It doesn't guarantee anything. That's why he points out all the men that had been circumcised, they disobeyed and did not receive any of God's promises. Swear, swear, swore, swore is in on verse six there, I swore they would never come in but I did swear to give the land and I'm going to it's just not going to be them, right? It's just not going to be them.

And then you got all the men of war, every last one of them, now on this exposed side of the Jordan totally incapacitated. Not a smart strategy people, okay? All these, it tells us, all the kings know that they've come. All the kings of the Amorites, all the kings of the Canaanites know that they're there. And then they incapacitate themselves. For all these days they have to sit there until they're healed because they're not, it's not up to them, it's up to the Lord. This is not good military strategy. It is spiritually significant. And then they celebrate they celebrate the Passover, they celebrate the Passover, they feast! Because the Passover wasn't just about coming out of Egypt, life in the promised land will still require the blood of another, not just that one time your life there your rescue your restoration all the fulfilled promises living in the land will still require the blood of another. They were brought out with the Passover they are brought in with the Passover because this is what? The same God, okay, this is the same God and nothing about him has changed.

We have baptism and the Lord's Supper. Why are they the same thing and not the same thing? Why are they so different? Because Jesus changed everything. Baptism is not a bloody right all the blood has been done, it is men and it is women. Why aren't we killing Passover Lambs? Because Christ, our Passover has been sacrificed for us, hallelujah! Thank you! So, let what? Let us keep the feast. That's what the Liturgy says, that's why we keep the feast, because we are celebrating what he has done for us. "Now do this in remembrance of me," says the Lord Jesus. Not of the Exodus, you're not doing it in memory of that, you're doing it in memory of me, it is a different Sacrament, but it's the same God. We're just in a different place in the fulfillment of his promises.

The sustenance, the manna ceases, y'all, that day. How cool is that? They get there, they eat off the land and the manna, the wilderness wanderings are over, you are home. That's what this is saying you are here, there is much left to be done, but you are here. You eat from this land of milk and honey and this providing for them then is like a down payment on the abundance that is coming. It is a down payment on the abundance that is coming. God does not always tell us how he will sustain us he tells us that he will sustain us. My God shall supply all of your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. This is a different congregation and they are now marked by him and feasting with him and are sustained by him because it is the same God.

Number five, different what? What is different about us culturally than Israel in 1400 BC? Just about everything, I mean, two arms, two legs, that might be it, okay, I mean, like every single thing about our culture is different. And it is the same God, and he is not anymore tired today, he is not anymore old today. But the question is not how are we different culturally, how are we different personally? And perhaps, we're not. How many of us are in massive transitions? I sent a kid to college, look I'm about to start crying just think about it, I mean, we have different stages with our parents, we have different stages with our children. We wish we were married. We wish we weren't married. We're losing someone, we're in a different place with our health, we're in a different place with our finances. In a couple months we will have a different president. A lot of our world is at war, missionary friends, their city was bombed this morning in Ukraine. We are in crazy places of need and transition and uncertainty and we cannot see the next thing. What are the lines to be drawn from this passage to our lives? It is not that God is going to part the river, it is not that he is taking us to a physical Promise Land the purposes of that Promised Land have been fulfilled and God's people is now universal and cosmic. In that way, there's no more specific land, in that way. What are the lines that are to be drawn, if not from a unique event in Salvation history, directly to the events of our lives? The line is to the sameness of God. The line that has to be drawn from every one of these truths is to the sameness of God, and that is so much more important. That is what sustains us that is what guarantees his love for us.

Gladus Elward was a missionary in China. She was trying to get, she had been wounded, she was trying in 1938, she's trying to get 94 orphans over the mountains and out of war-torn Yang Chan before the Communists take over. They have literally hit a dead end she is completely scoured and completely done. And she is on her face weeping and one of the 13-year-old orphan comes in to check on her and she says, "Miss Gladus, Miss Gladus, what is wrong?" And she says, "I don't think we're going to make it." And the child said, "But remember, remember what you taught us about Moses in the wilderness? Gladus Elward said, "Yes, my love, but I am not Moses." And the little girl said, "But God is still God."

I am not Joshua, I got news for you and you are not either. And God is still God, and God is still God. And that is the answer to our fear. That is the answer to our helplessness, that is the answer to our sin and to our shame and to our guilt. Because everything he reveals to Joshua and to Israel through Joshua remains absolutely the same. We do not despair because of what we do not know. We fix our eyes on who we do know. And that realize to a far greater degree what we know to be true than they could ever, ever have known. We know how much God is for us, we know how much God is with us, all the way through the Pentateuch and through Joshua you know what it's going to say? God brings them out, he rescues them with an outstretched hand and a mighty arm. And you know what? That God, the God, he came in flesh and he stretched out his arms and nails were driven through those hands, those mighty

hands, that he might take care and take us through of all of the sin and the guilt and the shame that would keep us away from him forever. And now nothing can take us out of those hands for all who belong to him. Nothing can take us out of our hands it is that love that made makes the definite article the King of Kings and Lord of lords into my personal pronouns the king who is my Lord and my Savior, Jesus Christ. Nothing can separate us from that love, not what life nor death nor angels nor principalities nor rulers nor things present nor things to come nor powers nor height nor depth nor anything else in all creation can separate me from the love of God that he has for me in the Lord Jesus Christ. I mean, that that is the exact same thing that is promised and how do I know that's still true because it's not the Old Testament it's Hebrews it says, Jesus Christ is the what? Same when? Yesterday, today and forever. How can it still be true? How can it still be true? Because he is still the same and the implication of that is I don't want to be the same. It's the sameness of Jesus that makes me not want to be the same.

In the second Chronicle of Narnia in Prince Caspian that the four Pevensie children are pulled back into Narnia and they're there for like 112 pages and they still don't really even know why they're there. And it's Lucy, the youngest who always has the greatest faith, who is the first to see Aslan and he comes and he wakes her up in the night, the great lion. She goes tussling with him and wrestling with him and she just falls up, she's trying to wrap her arms around just bury her face in his mane and finally she sits back and looks at him and she says, "Aslan, you're so much bigger," and he says, "No my child I'm just the same." And she says, "Are you sure? You look bigger." And he says, "No, but every day you grow I seem bigger." It's our growth that grasps onto his sameness. It's our growth, because we too are bound for the promised land we are bound for the promised land, he is not done with us yet. He might be opening his hand one finger at a time in your life, but you know what his hands in his heart have already done for you in Christ. Rest in his sameness and be changed by his sameness, thank you for your patience.

Let's pray. Thank you for this account Lord, for these facts. They are facts. As we speak to you right now Lord you are the exact same God that Joshua spoke to that Moses spoke to that Abraham spoke to that Peter spoke to. Lord I pray that we would know that and I pray that our assurance in your sameness would be what changes us Lord the sameness of your promises the sameness of your purposes the sameness of your love for us the sameness of your Holiness and your character and your grace Lord I pray that we would be anchored there and I pray that we would be active there encourage our hearts Lord make us strong and courageous in your love even this day we ask it in Jesus name. Amen.

On the screen, that is for next week. Wear comfortable clothes, okay? We have got a lot to do next week. Thank you, thank you for being here.

[Music]

[Music]

English (auto-generated)