

Message Transcript

STRONGER | I'VE GOT A WORD FOR YOU

SCOTT NICKELL | JUNE 13 & 14, 2026

What's up Traders? It's so good to be with you today. So good to be with you today. It's been an amazing weekend to hang with our church family up here in Indy. First things first, if you've got your Bibles, and I hope you do, let's go to 2 Timothy, chapter 2. Meet me there. We're going to be churning through the first seven verses there here in a few minutes.

I feel like I'm among family. I know we just met and all that kind of thing, but you just need to know that you've got a bunch of fans down in central Kentucky in the Lexington area. My church, Southland Christian Church, we pay a lot of attention to what you all are doing.

We think we're an old church because we're about to turn 70 next month. Y'all are like 200 years old. Most churches that are 200 are museums now. You all are not a museum because you are still taking ground for the Kingdom because you are searching to join Jesus in His mission to seek and save the lost. And you are staying firmly rooted in the Scriptures. So, we are big, big fans down in central Kentucky. So, thanks for all you are doing up here.

And beyond that, you just need to know that Aaron has been like a big brother to me, especially the last several years. Because while I've been in ministry for almost 30 years, I've been a lead pastor for precisely six months. So, I don't know what I'm doing. So, I just call Aaron all of the time, text him all of the time. He always responds. He always answers the phone. He always has time for me.

And I know that you all are very blessed by him, but you just need to understand he has a heartbeat to bless the big C church and he builds into a bunch of leaders around our country. And I am one of them who is better because of his investment. And because of that our church is better because of his investment.

Beyond that, Aaron and I resonate with one another because he is a pretty intense dude. You probably picked up on that. I am also an intense dude. He's into Jujitsu. I did the Jujitsu thing for a long time. I was deeply ingrained in the MMA world for a long time out in Colorado where my wife and I had a ministry out there for 11 years at a church that some of you all know, Flatirons Community Church. You all had Jim Burgen for the Men's Night. He and I did ministry together for 11 years out there.



Aaron has a Compound Bow. I've got a Compound Bow. Aaron loves to workout and train. I love to work out and train. In fact, when I was back at Flatirons just a few weeks ago I actually had to apologize to them because for about a decade of my ministry they had to endure what I refer to as my CrossFit phase. You know what I'm talking about? Nothing wrong with CrossFit, but I became the CrossFit guy. You know what I mean? Like, the old joke is: how do you know someone does CrossFit? They'll tell you.

And that's what I did. I just told everybody about it all of the time. I posted about it on social media all of the time. All of my sermon illustrations were all about it. I did it for a long time. And because of that, the other thing that comes along with CrossFit is injuries. So, I accumulated all kinds of injuries over time.

About 12 years ago, I was in my garage and I was trying to clean more weight than I had ever cleaned. It doesn't matter if you know what that means or not. It's just a weightlifting thing. When I got underneath of the barbell in what we call the front squat position, my elbow posted on my knee, which transferred all of the weight from the barbell into that arm.

And I don't know if you've had one of these painful experiences in your life where you immediately get nauseous. It's very disorienting. All of your peripheral vision starts to close in. You feel like you're going to pass out. But it was one of those moments. I mean, I thought I had broken my arm.

And the pain resided in my elbow immediately, but later it became clear that the real problem was my wrist because for about a year I couldn't flex my wrist forward or backward. I just had to keep it one position.

You might be wondering, "At what point did you go to the doctor and get an x-ray?" You just need to know this about me. I'm really dumb. So I never went. And I just kept thinking, "It's going to get better." And it eventually did. But it probably would have gotten better, had I addressed it, a little bit sooner.

Now, if I were to show up here today wearing a cast on my arm. And you were to walk over casually and go, "Hey, man. What did you do to your arm?" And I said, "Well, I had a weightlifting accident." Your next question would be, "Oh, when did you do that?" And if my answer was, "Twelve years ago." You'd be like, "Hey, man. That cast smells really bad," first of all. Secondly, "Why are you still wearing a cast for something that happened 12 years ago? Isn't it time to take the cast off?"



See, some of us are still walking around with casts on wounds that are really, really old. And there is a reason for that. I was reading an Ernest Hemingway novel that I would not recommend. But this quote is really, really awesome. He's overrated. That's a hot take for you today. Write that down. Tell your English teacher. But this quote is great. Look at this:

"The world breaks everyone, and afterward, many are strong at the broken places."

I read that and it just kind of floored me, "Yeah, that's true." The world breaks everyone. Isn't that true? How many of us today, show of hands, you can look back at your life and go, "I've got bruises, I've got bumps, I've got wounds, I've got scars." How many of us? The world breaks everyone. And afterward many, but not all, are stronger at the broken places. Why is that? Why do some people get stronger at the broken places and other people just keep the cast on? Why is that?

That's what we're going to explore today as Paul writes his second letter to this young understudy of his, Timothy, who is a young pastor at a wild place called Ephesus. And he paints three pictures of what it looks like to get stronger. And I'm going to assume today that you are here today because you would like to get stronger, not weaker. So, this is going to apply to all of us today as he paints this picture. Look at this. 2 Timothy, chapter 2, beginning in verse 1.

"You then, my child, be, here it is, "strengthened," that's what we want, "by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." "Share in suffering," here's picture number one, circle, highlight, underline this, "as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him.

Here's the second picture. "An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules."

"It is the hard-working," picture number three, "farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding in everything." 2 Timothy 2:1-7 (ESV)

Be strengthened, and he gives three pictures of strength: a soldier, an athlete, and a farmer. And I've got to believe that the apostle Paul felt like these three things at least have something in common with one another. And the thing that all three of these have in common is... You have to embrace two things in tandem if you want to be a good soldier, a good athlete, or a good farmer. You ready for them?



Resistance

Rest

Embrace resistance and rest. They work in contention with one another, but you better embrace both of those if you want to get stronger. Now, if you want to get weaker, very, very simple equation. Just embrace one but not the other. And pick which ever one you want. It doesn't matter. You get weaker.

If you only embrace resistance, if all you do is grind, if all you do is hustle, if you just burn yourself out, burn yourself to a crisp that will look like strength for a little while, but what it actually is is weakness. And eventually you will just burn out and your weakness will be in living color for everyone to see.

On the flip side, if you want to get weaker just embrace rest. Just sit on the sofa, watch Netflix, do a scroll, blame everybody, don't take responsibility for anything and you will get weaker.

But you don't want to get weaker. You want to get stronger. So you've got to embrace both of these things as we explore these pictures that Paul paints. Look at the first one. He says:

"Share in suffering as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him."

You know what a soldier is really good at? Picking up heavy things and carrying them for a long time. It's called marching. Everybody is all into Rucking now. We've all got weight vests and that kind of stuff. But that's what soldiers do.

Discipline

They have to have, here's the word, discipline to pick up something heavy and carry it for a long time until their authority tells them to put it down and then they can rest.

Jocko Willink, a former Navy Seal, an author, and podcaster is famous for saying:

"Discipline Equals Freedom"

Man, that's so true. And he expounds upon it when he writes this:



Discipline means taking the hard road—the uphill road. To do what is right. For you and for others, so often, the easy path calls us: to be weak for that moment. To break down another time. To give in to desire and short-term gratification. Discipline will not allow that. Discipline calls for [here we go] strength and fortitude...

Now, I know two things that are happening in this room. There are some people who are in the room who are like, "Jocko, let's go. Yeah." And some of us are like, "Man, I hate all of that stuff. I ain't into all of that self-help. I don't care if somebody was a Navy Seal or not. You can beat your chest and do the machismo thing all you want, but I'm not interested in the platitudes of an author."

Here's the good news. If you are a follower of the Lord Jesus, we don't take our cues from Jocko. We take our cues from Jesus. Here's the bad news. What Jesus says is way stronger than what Jocko just said. Look at what He says: "Whoever," this is Jesus, "wants to be my disciple," anybody want to be Jesus' disciple today? Yeah, yeah, yeah. Okay, cool.

"must," it doesn't say when you feel like it every now and then, it says must, "deny themselves," Yeah, it got real quiet last hour too.

You want to be Jesus' disciple? Okay, deny yourself. How about that for counter cultural?

"and take up their cross daily and follow me." Luke 9:23 (NIV)

And just a reminder, when Jesus talked about this 2,000 years ago, "Take up your cross daily and follow Me," no one had a tattoo of a cross on their shoulder like I do. Nobody had little dangly cross earrings 2,000 years ago. You understand? Nobody had one hanging around their neck. You know why? Because it was the most brutal instrument of death and torture the world had ever devised. That would be like you having an electric chair hanging from your ears.

So, all of His disciples are like, "Hold on a second. Deny yourself. Okay, whatever. We can talk about that a little bit. But pick up a cross? Jesus we spend all day everyday trying not to end up on one of those. And you are telling me to willingly go pick one up? What is that about?"



Jesus understands that we are all headed toward something, coming out of something, or in something that is very, very unique for the human condition. It's called suffering. How many of you would say, "Hey there have been seasons of my life marked by weeks, months, maybe years, maybe even decades," that if you had to describe that season you would pick the word suffering to describe it? Anybody. Yeah.

Now, here's the thing. If you didn't just raise your hand, I've got bad news. The day is coming. Do you see? No one gets out of this life without wounds. Nobody gets out of this life without suffering. We suffer, as humans, in a very unique way because we ask all of the existential questions when it happens. Dogs don't do that. We do. So, here's the question:

Will you be the kind of person who has practiced suffering daily when the day of suffering comes?

Will you know what it is like to have done hard things when the hard thing comes looking for you? Because all of the short cuts will not help you. The question on that day will be: Were you the kind of person who was immersed in Scripture before the day of suffering came? So that when the day of suffering comes, you are not just flipping through the Bible trying to figure out where to go. Are you practiced at suffering when it comes?

Now here's the apology that needs to be made. How many of you are like me and you're a tried and true Gen Xer. Anybody? How many of you are older than Gen Xers in the room? Okay. So all of you who didn't just raise your hand, we older folks owe you an apology. And here's what we need to apologize for. We have coddled the fire out of you. We've coddled you to death. Oh you want to clap now. Well, I mean, okay.

Here's what I'm talking about. Let me give you some examples. We've taught you this world revolves around your thoughts, your feelings, your desires, your wants.

So, I mentor a young man. He's headed into his sophomore year of high school this fall. I started mentoring him when he was in third grade. And when he was in fifth grade he called me and he was like, "Hey, Scott. I want you to come to something."



And the thing that he wanted me to come to I had never heard of in my whole life. Maybe you've heard of this, this phenomenon called a Fifth Grade Graduation. I'm like, "Your what?" Fifth grade graduation. Why are we celebrating that? That's just called going to sixth grade. Everybody goes to sixth grade, man. Well, you know how to do a little bit of long division. Great. Awesome. Let's keep going. What are we doing?

I was like, "Alright, I'll go." So, I go and I'm like, "This can't last long. I mean how long could a fifth grade graduation last?" Oh, it can last. It lasted an hour-and-a-half. And here's why it lasted an hour-and-a-half. Every fifth grader, they've got 150 of them, every single one got a specific and special award. Here's the problem. They are not all special.

And some of you are deeply offended right now. You're like, "Wait a second. I've been told my whole life that I am a unique, special snowflake." You are not. Okay? You are a unique image bearer of God and God sent His one and only Son to die for you, but some of you just aren't very good at math. Okay? And we're pretending like that's not true.

So, here's what I noticed about all of those 150 fifth graders. They all had their little certificate all that kind of a thing. Do you know what they did with those things? Most of them just left them laying because they are smarter than we give them credit for. They know that there is no value. If everybody gets a trophy, nobody should get a trophy. If we are all just passing out medals for participation it waters the whole thing down.

Now, I'm sure the school systems are awesome up here in Indiana. But they are not down in Kentucky. Let me just tell you. So, in case some of you are older and you don't know that this happens, in the school systems in some places like Kentucky, if you get a bad grade on a test, let me tell you what you can do now.

You can go to the teacher and go, "Can I take the test again?" And they'll go, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. You can take it again." "Oh, I still did it bad. Can I take it again?" "Yep." You can take it over and over and over again until you finally get the grade that you wanted to get that you think that is acceptable.

And here's the problem with that. There is a day coming when some of you young people will have something that resembles a job. And you'll have a person, they may have a creative title, but all it is is they are your boss. And they are going to march you into this thing called their office one day and they are going to go, "Hey, this isn't working out. You don't get to work here anymore."



And you're going to be shocked and dumbfounded and you are going to think, "Now, wait a second. I've graced you with my presence all these weeks and this place is better because I've been here. Why are you telling me I can't work here anymore?"

And that person called a boss is going to say, "Because you had a job description which was the description of the thing you were supposed to pick up and carry, and you haven't picked it up."

See, some tests in life are pass/fail. And when soldiers have a job to do if they don't do it, guess what happens? People die. And there are consequences for that.

And we have not served you well. So, we have raised probably three generations to think that the world revolves around your comforts and your feelings. And what I'm telling you is, it's our fault. We coddled you into it.

That's why we see these big temper tantrums being thrown on college campuses every time we watch the news, because we've got generations full of children, literally, who think that because the world won't conform to their feelings, the world needs to change. And it hasn't served you well.

And that's why, and that's why you are not offended by me. Who you are offended by is Jesus when He says, "Deny yourself." In an age of self-care and self-esteem Jesus says, "No, man. Deny yourself. Pick up your cross daily and follow Me." And what that should do is make you ask the question, "What are Jesus' intentions toward me in telling me to do that?"

Here are Jesus' intentions toward you. He wants you to have life and have it to the full, His words, not mine. An abundant life. Here's what the world wants for you. To join Satan and his initiatives to steal and kill and destroy you. That's what the world's intentions are toward you. That's what this culture's intentions are toward you.

So, if you ever question Jesus' intentions toward you, here's all you've got to do. Look to a day in history 2,000 years ago when Jesus, your Savior, took on your sin and went to what should have been your cross, absorbed the wrath of God, was the propitiation and the atoning sacrifice for your sin as He was butchered on a cross. They threw Him in a grave and then on the third day He conquered sin and Satan and death for you. That's His intention toward you. That's what he wants for you.

So when He says, "Be a good soldier. Pick up something heavy. Carry it. Take on responsibility, He wants good for you.



An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules

When Paul says, "An athlete is not crowned unless he competes according to the rules, he's painting a picture of something even more counter cultural. It's called:

Submission To Authority

How about that? Who wants to do that? Well athletes have to. If you are an athlete, you have to play the game the way it's meant to be played, in the parameters. You've got referees and umpires and all of those things.

You've also got a coach. And you can't come up to your coach one day when you have a game and say, "Coach, I'm going to follow my heart today. I'm going to go with my gut. I know I'm a catcher, but I feel like I should play center field. I know I'm left handed but I'm going to try out right handed and see the view from the right side of the batter's box today."

That coach is going to look at you and go, "You follow your heart right to the bench. I'll put someone in who will do what I say when I say it." Submission to authority. Proverbs says it this way:

"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death."
Proverbs 14:12 (ESV)

Following your heart, write this down, is dumb. Don't do that. Follow Jesus and lead your heart to Him. Show and tell. How many of us have followed our heart at some point in our life and it led us to a place that resembled hell on earth? Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's why. The way that seems right in its way, in its end leads to death.

There are parameters and boundaries that God has put in place and when we take short cuts it feels easier. And maybe it is. But it is not better. Embrace the resistance that comes our direction and over time you will get stronger.

There is this fascinating article that came out in 2021. Listen to the title:

"The Rocky Road to the top: why talent needs trauma."

Now we overuse words and it waters them down and diminishes their meaning. We use the word trauma for everything. And the problem with that is that it diminishes what real trauma actually is. The study was examining the tip of the spear, most elite professional and Olympic athletes and they all had one thing in common as they looked back at their childhood. And it was trauma.



That doesn't surprise any of us, does it? That just makes sense. It takes resistance to get stronger. You have to face adversity if you ever want to accomplish something. So, if all you ever do is play Daddy Ball, you are not going to get anywhere. Do you all use that phrase up here? Daddy Ball?

Okay, down in Kentucky let me tell you what happens. Because you all make a lot of money off of my people. Okay? You've got this place called Grant Park nearby. You know? Okay? We've got hundreds of summer ball teams from central Kentucky that travel up here and they play each other up here. And y'all cash the check. And your hotels make money.

Why? Because some daddy wanted to put his kid on a team because his kid wasn't playing for another coach, so he started a team. And they put the name Elite on the jersey and they travel up here and they pay thousands of dollars so they can all pretend they are elite, even though they are not very good. Good job. Good job. You all are killing it up here. Alright? But I've got to believe that that probably happens up here too. Adversity. Daddy ball will not help you.

And Paul seems to be leveraging Timothy's past pain.

UFC 250 is happening tonight. Let me just tell you... Yeah, yeah, yeah. Let me just tell you who will not be on the fight card. Someone who had an easy childhood. Not one. Every last one of those fighters will go, "Yeah, yeah, yeah. Let me tell you how hard it was for me growing up."

We know that adversity can be leveraged for our benefit to get stronger. That is what Paul is saying. And he's looking at Timothy, probably leveraging his past pain from being fatherless. "Hey, I know. You are in deep up there in Ephesus and it's a wild place. They do all kinds of wild things. And you can get stronger through this process like an athlete.

And then he says:

"It is the hard-working farmer who ought to have the first share of the crops."

Some of you all got country strong from throwing hay. You didn't have to go to a gym. You dealt with cattle and horses and sheep and pigs and you planted crops and you did all of the things that a hard-working farmer has to do. And you got stronger.

And here's what a hard-working farmer has to embrace. This thing called:

Patience



A farmer tills the soil, plants the seed. Then what do you do? Sit on the porch and pray for rain. You do all that you can do and then you plead with God to do what only He can do. That's what a good farmer does.

See, at some point this is true for the athlete and the soldier and the farmer, you have to rest. And this is the part of the sermon some of you all were hoping I would forget about. You're like, "Yeah, resistance. Let's be strong. Let's push."

Let's do all of the stuff and rest. The athlete has got to get out of the weight room, restore themselves with food, fuel, and sleep. Soldiers have got to put that pack down and lay down in the mud and sleep. The farmer has to get out of the field and go sit on the porch and pray.

See, the problem with work-a-holism is it will get you a golden watch if you do it well enough. We'll even put you on a podcast. And here's the weird part. You can tell everybody not to do the thing that you did, but when you're actually doing it you're subtly incentivizing the behavior that got you the thing that we all so want and desire. But nobody wants to talk about the bodies in the wake. The relationships. The marriages. The kids. All of the things that get lost because of work-a-holism.

Isn't it weird that the only Ten Commandment we all brag about breaking is that sabbath one. We like to think we're the exception to the rule. But here's a news flash. There is a God and you are not Him. You can put what you are doing down and He's got the whole world in His hands. You don't. You can rest.

See, the same Jesus who said, "Pick up your cross daily and follow Me," also gave you this beautiful invitation in Matthew 11 when He said:

"Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens,"

This is another sermon for another day. Here are the cliff notes. There are two kinds of tired. Did you know that? There is the kind of tired where you get, this is the word Jesus uses for it, weary. It's from doing the things that you want to do. Picking up and carrying the responsibilities that you love to carry. This is the leave-it-all-on-the-field kind of tired that you have when you accomplish a good day's work doing the good things that you want to do. But it still makes you tired and so you still need rest.

And then there is the heavy burden. This is the stuff that gets put on your shoulders you didn't want and you didn't ask for but now you're carrying it just the same. And most of the time we are two-kinds-of-tired at the same time. We are weary from doing the things we want to do and we are heavily burdened from the things that we didn't want.



And I'll bet there are a few people here today who can resonate with that. And I'm betting there are a few people here today who would go, "Oh, that's me. I'm weary and I'm heavily burdened." And the beautiful invitation is, come to Him and He will give you rest.

"Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls, for my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light." Matthew 11:28-30 (NLT)

And this circles all the way back to something I intentionally kind of skipped over at the beginning of this passage that we've been studying in 2 Timothy. Look at verse 1 again. It's so important.

"You then, my child, be strengthened," that's what we want, "by the," give me the word, "grace that is in Christ Jesus."

It's the grace of Jesus that ultimately strengthens us. Romans 5:6:

"For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly." (ESV)

In other words, Jesus looked right at you when you were at your worst, not when you were at your best. When you were in the middle of your deepest shame, your deepest regret, when you were in the middle of that thing that you remember still and you wish that you could erase from your memory, the tapes that Satan loves to replay and remind you of when you were in the middle of your worst moment. Jesus said, "I will become that moment. I will take on that sin. I will take on that shame."

And He pours out His grace. And grace has a lot of ramifications. Let me give you one of the big ones that leaves us with no excuses. If you have received the saving grace of Jesus you have no right to be still living in a cast for the thing that you dealt with all of those years ago, allowing Satan to remind you of what you once did as if that's who you still are. It's time for you to invite the healing, saving hand, the gracious hand of Jesus into that deep place of woundedness and weakness so that He can make you stronger in that broken place. You know this is how it works. If I have somebody who calls me and goes, "Hey, man. I've never told anybody this before but I'm really struggling with alcoholism." Who do I connect them with? Someone who has struggled with alcoholism. Someone who is stronger in that broken place.

Somebody comes to me and says, "Hey, I am wrapped up in an addiction to pornography and I've been in it for years." Guess who I connect them with? Someone who has been in that broken place but now they are stronger in that broken place.



The apostle Paul begged and pleaded for Jesus to take something away from him. Do you remember? Three times he pleaded. Three times he begged. And the response that came back from Jesus to him was this:

My grace is enough; it's all you need. My strength comes into its own in your weakness.

And so Paul says this:

"Once I heard that, I was glad to let it happen. I quit focusing on the handicap and began appreciating the gift. It was a case of Christ's strength moving in on my weakness. Now I take limitations in stride, and with good cheer, these limitations that cut me down to size—abuse, accidents, opposition, bad breaks." We say trauma, "I just let Christ take over! And so the weaker I get, the stronger I become." 2 Corinthians 12:8-10 (MSG)

Years ago I found out a friend of mine was cheating on his wife. And so I just decided I was going to sit him down and confront him. And you may have picked up on my intensity and truthful nature. So like, imagine what I had planned for this dude. And I had it planned.

"We're going to lunch at this place at this time." And I prepared a perfect sermon to fix him. I was so arrogant, so cocky. And I sat him down and I preached at him and I told him the truth. I said, "Hey, this is where you are headed. Let me tell you what is in your future. Not only are you going to leave your bride, the bride of your youth, on the side of the road like a piece of garbage, but your son is going to hate you, and your daughters, they ain't going to want you at their wedding much less walk them down the aisle. What are you doing, bro?"

I preached a heck of a sermon. And I sat back and waited for him to repent. And he looked right at me with these cold, dark eyes and he goes, "Scott, you think I don't know all of that?" This is the edited version. "You don't think I know all of the stuff I'd have to face, deal with, and walk through in order to get to where you're saying I ultimately want to be instead of going down this path that I'm currently on? I get it. I know all of that stuff. Scott, listen to me. I just don't want to do it."

What do you say to that? The young, cocky, arrogant preacher didn't have a sermon for that response. So, all I said was, "Check please." And we walked out to the parking lot and I looked at him and I said, "I guess I'll go help take care of your family while you go do your thing, bro." And from my perspective it was finished: over, done, dead.



Fast forward. Two years ago this July, July 5. I'm out in Colorado. I'm doing a wedding rehearsal. And everybody is happy. Everybody is joyful. Beautiful day outside. We get to the part where the father of the bride was to walk his daughter down the aisle, and there is my friend walking one of his daughters down the aisle.

I'm dumb and it hadn't caught up to me yet; he got to the front with her. And I said, "Hey, this is the part where I'll say, 'Who gives this woman to be married to this man?' And then he's supposed to say, 'Her mother and I.'"

And he couldn't get the words out. And then it hit me. I grabbed him by the back of the neck and pulled him in tight, "Can you believe that we are here? It's only by the grace of Jesus. And you can say these words now." Finally he said, "Her mother and I."

And he went and he sat down and he locked hands with the bride of his youth, still married and stronger where they were once weak. Not because of the great sermon I once preached to him but because of the saving, miraculous grace of our good Savior, Jesus, in his life, her life, their marriage, and in that family. I'm going to go do his second daughter's wedding in like a month-and-a-half from now and we're going to do it all again.

If you've got something you maybe never shared, never exposed, never invited the saving, healing work of Jesus into, today can be the day that you share that with one of our response team so they can shoulder that burden with you and take it before the throne of grace with confidence to receive mercy and find grace in your time of need.

That's what we celebrate every time we take communion. If you've got your communion cups with you go ahead and take those out. I'm going to read this passage to you. Again it's Paul, and he says this:

The Lord Jesus, on the night that he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks he broke it and said, "This is my body which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."

Take that bread and break it now. Remember Jesus' body was broken for you. Let's all take and eat together.

In the same way, also he took the cup after supper saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. I Corinthians 11:23-26 (Paraphrased)



Take and drink.

Pray with me.

Father, I come before You with my family here at Traders Point. I'm so grateful for who You are and what You've done, in awe of Your love and grace and Your mercy. That You could take our weakness and make us stronger. That You can bring healing for the places we thought were beyond repair, totally broken, and restore us and renew us and redeem us and, in many ways, resurrect us.

Father, we long for the day when we get to see You face to face. Until then, help us carry the burdens You would have us carry. Help us to rest when it's time to rest. And in all things may we worship You with all that we are for who You are and what You've done. In Jesus' beautiful name I pray. Amen.

