
What's up, everybody? Oh boy. It's been 28 weeks, 196 days, but who is counting, since we last gathered physically as a church. Can I just say you all have never looked so good?

It is so good to see all of you. I want to welcome those of you here at the Northwest campus, all of our campuses around the city, those of you in watch parties whether in our city or around the nation. I know we have overflow at just about every campus. I want to say hello to the people sitting in overflow. Thank you for your grace and your understanding. I'm so glad to have all of you join us.

I want to give a great big shout out to anybody who cannot, or maybe just is not ready, to join us physically for any number of reasons. Maybe you're just not comfortable with the idea of it yet. Maybe you're in a high risk category and it wouldn't be wise for you to do so. I just want you to know that we totally understand that. We love you, support you, and miss you and we can't wait for you to join us when the time is right.

I was thinking this week about if you would have said to me way back in 2019... Remember that year? Don't you miss 2019? We didn't even know what we had! But, if you would have said to me, "In 2020 there is going to be a global pandemic. It's going to result in us not being able to physically gather as a church for six months," after I would have regained consciousness, I would have brushed up my resume.

I would have thought, "I don't know how we can weather something like that." I want you to know I would have been so wrong, because not only are we weathering this, but in the last six months our church has actually grown in influence, and in impact.

We have seen thousands more people engage with us online than what we've had prior. We've seen people get into groups. We've had all kinds of baptisms. We've met all kinds of tangible needs throughout our community. I really, honestly think that what this season has done is it has sped up the direction God was already taking us.

I just want to take a quick second and thank you as a church family. I've read every single email, card, DM that you have sent me, and you all are the most encouraging church on the planet. I appreciate your grace and your understanding. Thank you for what God has done in and through you during this particular time.

I also know that here in the last several week's I've been out and about. I'll be in a restaurant somewhere, and maybe somebody will come up to me and do a little bit of a double take. They'll go, "You're that guy. You're the guy on my phone. You're the guy on the screen in my living room."

And it's just confirmed my worst nightmare—that this pandemic has turned me into a televangelist. I'm just like, "Yeah, I'm the guy."

"We've never been to your church physically, but during the last six months we've joined you online. We can't wait to rejoin you in person when you regather."

So, I just know at every campus there may be a whole bunch of people with us for the very first time, physically. So, can we just put our hands together and welcome everybody who may be here. We're glad to have you.

And thank you for your grace and understanding as we try to navigate this whole distancing thing. It's such an encouragement to my soul to see people in this room.

Well, we are pausing the series in Luke we've currently been in to launch into a short three-week series that I believe God has laid on my heart during this time as we regather as a church called *Behind the Mask*.

It goes without saying that 2020 has been a challenging year for every single one of us, but these are some of my favorite 2020 memes. A picture communicates so well.

"If 2020 was a bag of chips, it would be the flavor of orange juice and toothpaste."

This is my favorite one right here. "If 2020 was a scented candle," it's just a bunch of flaming port-a-potties. That's what this year is.

If we could describe 2020 with a grouping of words, we might say this.

crazy...
stressful...
anxious...
depressing...
overwhelming...
divisive...

2020 has been a divisive year, for all kinds of reasons—the global pandemic, which has led to a stressed out economy, which has led to political tension and social justice issues. We might even say 2020 has become the year of being offended.

Can I maybe ask you today, at all of our campuses and anybody joining us online, how many of you are willing to say you've been offended multiple times this year? I'd be right there with you. How many of you have been offended this week? How many of you have been offended today?

How many of you are offended that I'm suggesting you might have been offended? This just kind of goes right along with the year we are having. I've thought a lot about this over the past several weeks.

I think part of the reason why we are so offended right now is that the emotional shock absorbers, if we could call them that, that we have under more normal circumstances—the shock absorbers that are there to help us sort of overlook something that hits us the wrong way, or maybe absorb an offense of some kind—those shock absorbers that were there in 2019, they are not there this year because of the stress, the anxiety, and the pressure we are under. They cause us to get set off when someone says the wrong thing.

Or maybe we are fearful or agitated when we see a post on social media. Fear is the fuel that ignites all of that, and the media knows it. So, we get hung up on an offense that we maybe could have overlooked last year. Magnifying all of this is the fact that we've got to keep our distance, six feet apart. We're zoomed out, we're constantly communicating with people via a screen or over a keyboard.

When we do get together physically, we're in a mask. One of the things I've learned is there is so much that we communicate from our eyeballs down that just gets missed when we're covered up with a mask. It creates this sort of barrier of connection and communication with others.

All of this is the perfect storm for division and disunity, which is the norm in society. Society does this without even trying.

But when it comes to Jesus' church, it should be different. When it comes to the church we should actually be the model of what unity looks and sounds like, but sadly we're often not.

Tragically we oftentimes just end up mirroring, or in some cases even magnifying that division we see everywhere else. When that happens, it holds back or even blocks the message we've been entrusted with, the message of God's love and grace that is available to anyone and everyone through Jesus Christ.

So... I know we've been out of practice for six months. If you're going to clap, sell out. None of this golf clap stuff. There we are.

So, here is where we're going the next three weeks in this series, Behind the mask, or we might even say across the screen, we need to be reminded there is a real person who has been created in the image of God, who Jesus died for, and deserves to be loved unconditionally even if they happen to see things differently or disagree with us on secondary issues.

If I could say this, a secondary issue is anything that may be very important, I'm not saying that it's not, but it's not mission critical. Here's the churchy way to say it: a secondary issue is something that is non-essential to salvation.

If it's not essential to salvation, we can have the freedom to have a difference of opinion on them and still stay unified as we look to Jesus. The church in Corinth was a hot mess of division, which is what prompted Paul to write these words to them in chapter 1:

"I appeal to you," and that's a strong word. He did not say, "I'm suggesting to you, you might give that some thought." No, he says, "I appeal." This is an, "I'm begging you. I'm facedown on the ground eating pavement, asking you.

"I appeal to you, dear brothers and sisters, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, to live in harmony with each other. Let there be no divisions in the church." It's in the plural, because he knew there was more than one thing dividing them. *"Rather, be of one mind, united in thought and purpose."*

Now, I don't know how those words hit you. Maybe at first you think to yourself, "That's a nice thought, but that's impossible." Maybe some of you look at that and go, "What does that even mean? How do we stay united in thought and purpose? Does that mean that we just need to keep our mouths shut, our opinions to ourselves, and hold hands around the campfire and sing Kumbaya? Is that what that means?"

And I would say very clearly, "No, that is not what that means." Paul is not suggesting uniformity. Uniformity is where we all look alike, sound alike, talk alike, act alike, think alike. Uniformity: No.

He is saying, "I want you to have unity," and unity implies diversity. Unity says, "You look different, and you talk different and act different, and you think different. You have different

perspectives on things, but you can still stay unified. Don't allow your differences of opinion over secondary issues to bring division into the church."

Why? And here are the two things we are really driving down on in the next two weeks:

The mission of the Church is far too critical!

I want to be super-clear as we regather why we do what we do. As much as I'm so grateful for online digital capabilities, the last thing I want to be is Christian Netflix, where people just take in spiritual content on the weekend, and then don't do anything with it.

The last thing I want is for you to show up at a physical gathering and just get some spiritual content. I hope that happens, but that's not the primary reason why we are here. I'm not just hoping I give you a little bit of an encouragement to get through another week. I certainly hope it happens, if you get that it's not a bad thing.

That's not why we're here. We are here to remove unnecessary barriers that can get people to Jesus because he is the only one who can change anyone. We just want to clear the path to get as many people to Jesus as possible.

Here is the second reason, and this has everything to do with you and me:

God's plans for your future are too big for you to hold on to an offense!

I'm talking to you. Not to your neighbor, not to your spouse or kids, not to the person sitting beside you. I'm talking to you.

We're going to unpack this more next week. Because when you hold on to an offense, it inevitably turns into bitterness, and bitterness is the cancer of your soul. And it has killed far more people than a virus ever will. Countless people derail their lives because they've held onto bitterness over offenses from their past. God wants us to let go of that.

So, this has been a wild year. I was thinking about it this last week. I remember going whitewater rafting in Colorado years ago. I don't know if any of you have ever done that.

You get into this rubber boat. There is a river guide in the back. He or she calls out orders, and the job is to keep everybody in the boat. The job is to get everybody down the river safely, and have a good time while doing it.

I remember getting in the boat. I was in the front right, and our guide said to us, "Listen, for about half the ride it's just going to be enjoyable. We're going to go with the current. It's going to be peaceful. Enjoy the view. But there are a handful of places in the river that are going to get pretty technical. It's going to get pretty dangerous.

"You can have fun riding through them, but it's going to be critical that you listen to me because I need all of us in the raft to work together to get through it. So, when I tell you to paddle I need you to paddle as hard as you can. When I tell you to stop I need you to stop. If I tell you to put the paddle in the water put the paddle in the water. Everything is for a reason. If we're going to navigate through the technical parts, we've got to work together."

He even used the word. "We need to stay unified." He goes, "It's because there is one part in the river that I'm particularly nervous about, and it's flipped a lot of boats. It's called Satan's Cesspool. If we're going to get through Satan's Cesspool, then we're going to have to work together."

It's a pretty good analogy for the year that we're in. You see, this raft is our church. And in 2019 we enjoyed the view. We were just riding down the river enjoying the current. And then we hit Satan's Cesspool, which is 2020.

And can I just say, as one of your river guides, your imperfect river guide, "Let's just stay together. I'm going to need you to row. I'm going to need you to look out for your neighbor."

If we're going to get through this as a church, we're going to have to stay unified in thought and in purpose. Here's the thing:

Jesus saw all of this division coming.

He's not surprised by any of this. The reason I can say that so confidently is because of the final thing he prayed on the night before his crucifixion. It's found in John 17. If you want to turn there, I want to invite you to do that.

This is the night before Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion. He gathers his disciples, his closest followers, together and he's going to pray. He doesn't ask them to necessarily pray for him. He wants to pray for them. What he prays is so crucially important:

"Now I am departing from the world; they are staying in this world, but I am coming to you. Holy Father, you have given me your name; now protect them by the power of your name so that they will be united just as we are."

That's a pretty incredible thing for Jesus to say. He's like, "God, just as you and I are connected in unity, Father and Son, may they be connected to each other."

And he goes on and says this:

"Now I am coming to you. I told them many things while I was with them in this world so they would be filled with my joy. I have given them your word. And the world hates them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one. They do not belong to this world any more than I do."

"Make them holy by your truth; teach them your word, which is truth. Just as you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. And I give myself as a holy sacrifice for them so they can be made holy by your truth."

At the very end of Jesus' life, the thing that he was the most concerned about was our unity and our oneness. The thing he was most concerned about for the disciples was their unity because he knew that as long as they could stay in sync with each other, and in sync with their heavenly Father, there was a chance the world could change. But if they ever got divided, if they ever got at each other's throats over secondary issues, then the wheels would come off.

Why is Jesus praying this over his disciples? Well, have you ever noticed how divided they were? They were constantly arguing with each other. They were constantly bickering about who was going to have the greatest seat next to Jesus.

I think oftentimes we think the disciples were alike, that they all looked alike, sounded alike, and talked alike. And that they were from the same region, had the same convictions on everything. That's just not the case. Some of them were fishermen, and some of them were tax collectors, very different in their perspective.

Matthew's politics would have been very different from Peter's. And I bet you there were plenty of nights around the campfire when the conversation got heated.

So, now Jesus is praying and he is saying, "God, please help them, because I haven't been able to do anything with them in the last three years and now I'm getting ready to leave. I don't know how all of this is going to go down. God, they need to stay unified because the message has been entrusted to them and through them."

And next, he prays for you. Did you know that? That on Jesus' final night on this earth, you were on his mind. And our church was on his mind. The church of Jesus all over the world was on his mind. And he prayed, and said these words:

"I am praying not only for these disciples but also for all who will ever believe," and if you believe today, that's you, *"in me through their message. I pray that they will all be one, just as you and I are one—as you are in me, Father, and I am in you. And may they be in us,"* and here is the reason, *"so that the world will believe you sent me."*

That was the reason. This is absolutely remarkable. Of all the things that Jesus could have chosen to pray for in his final prayer, unity was the thing. He didn't say, "God, they are going to have a rough time in 2020. Could you just help them to stay sane? God, would you protect them from the virus?"

Not a bad thing to pray, but he didn't pray it. He just said, "Could you please help them to stay unified, because divisive times are coming." He didn't say, "Hey God, would you give them the power and position in society to convince the world, to prove to the world that they are right and everyone else is wrong?" He didn't say that.

He also doesn't offer any qualifiers. He didn't say, "Hey God, could they be unified just as long as that other group is right. If the other group agrees with them, help them to stay unified. But if they disagree, then game over."

He didn't say, "God, help them to be unified just in the event that maybe somebody else is being a big jerk-face. If they're being a big jerk-face, then light them up." That's not what he prays. He says, "May they be one. May they be unified, because that message is more powerful than anything else."

So, here's what's been personally convicting to me over the past couple of days. And I found that when I've been personally convicted, it's much more powerful when we walk through it together as a church. And it's a question that maybe you might ask of yourself.

How often has what Jesus prayed for in his final prayer, made it into my daily prayers?

And I've thought about that a lot lately. "Aaron, how often have I prayed for this?" And I've got to tell you, not enough. It oftentimes does not come to mind. I often pray things like, "God, please protect us, please help us, and get us through this," and I've not prayed for unity enough. I haven't longed for it. I haven't appealed for it. I haven't been flat on my face asking God to do what only he can.

I'm just wondering if even just a portion of our church would begin to pray this, and to act upon it, what God might do.

May they be one.

And I'll give this to you. It sounds impossible especially in the cultural climate in which we live, but Jesus was convinced that not only was this possible, it is absolutely imperative. This is not an add-on. This is not extra credit. This is not a, "Golly, wouldn't it be nice if we could just all get along?"

He says, "No, this is actually the very thing I've called you to do and be in this world." Which means, if this is going to happen, we've got to be intentional about it. We've got to be intentional about ensuring unity within the church because this was Jesus' dying prayer.

And it doesn't come naturally, does it? It doesn't come naturally because you only know what you know. And you didn't necessarily get a say as far as what ethnicity you are, what part of the country you grew up in, or the family you grew up in.

And all of our experiences, many of which are sort of out of our control from childhood all the way up, these sort of lenses that pop in front of us, become the way we see the world. The technical word for this is a worldview, the way we view the world. And all of us come at it from different angles.

So, when we are under stress, afraid, when we get anxious or depressed, we have a tendency, very naturally, to run to our corners, the ones we are familiar with. We turn around, put up our dukes, and protect our turf.

Jesus is like, "Listen, my church is going to be so diverse and so international." He wasn't kidding. Christianity started in the middle east, and then it's migrated all over the world. From the center of it, it went over to Europe, it's been to Asia, North America, and now the primary place where Christianity is growing is in the southern hemisphere.

Every other world religion, wherever it got started, that's where the hub has remained. Jesus is saying, "Listen, my message is international. And it's going to have so many languages, colors, and cultures. It's going to be such a beautiful thing. But because of that diversity, it's also going to be messy. So, you're going to have to love each other. And, you're going to have to be intentional about unity. You're going to have to fight for it, pray for it, long for it, appeal for it, sacrifice for it in order to be one." And then he wraps up the prayer by saying this in verse 22:

"I have given them the glory you gave me, so they may be one as we are one. I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such perfect unity," and that just stopped me right in my tracks when I read that. Perfect unity? Jesus, can you lower the bar a little? Why don't we start with, I don't know, mediocre unity? How about unity that's just good enough?

It reminds me of something else Jesus said one time. He said, "Be perfect as I am perfect." You don't expect much. Perfection? I just want you to know, every time Jesus says perfect, what he is referring to is, "You can't do that without the power of the Holy Spirit. That's what that means.

Perfect unity means Jesus is going, "This is far outside your ability, and I'm trying to make a point that the only way you stay unified is by my Spirit." *"That the world will know,"* and there it is again. These two thoughts are always connected. We say unified, not because it's just nice. We say unified so the world will know. The mission is far too critical *"that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me."*

Are you beginning to see why Jesus prayed for unity? This is the shocker. The reason he prayed for us doesn't really have anything to do with us. He prayed for oneness because of

what he wanted to do through us. And if there is a lack of unity in the church, Jesus will remove his presence and the Spirit of God will leave.

That's not a hypothetical. I see it all the time. The pandemic has sped up where God was already leading many churches. The pandemic is also speeding up the death of many churches.

It's pretty common that I'll get phone calls from leaderships or elderships from other churches throughout the country. "Hey, could you spend a half hour with us on the phone? Could you help us navigate this issue?"

And I see it regularly. There are churches all over the nation where the Spirit of God left them months ago, years ago, and the tragic thing is they haven't even noticed because they are too busy trying to be right or protect what they had. My fear, as your pastor, is this might happen to us. I never want to get to this place where the Spirit of God left and we didn't even notice.

Yet, when the world looks at the church and sees incredible unity, not uniformity, but unity and diversity, it would sit up and take notice, and just might come to the conclusion that this Jesus stuff is real, powerful, and life-changing.

And they would go, "Whoa, how are you doing that? Because we don't see an example of that kind of unity anywhere else in the world. How do you love each other that much, even though you disagree on so much?" And that's our moment to shine. To say, "Let me tell you why. Let me tell you about this man named Jesus who gave up his life so we can have hope."

Jesus says, "This is not an add-on. This is mission critical." And the way the world is going to sit up and take notice of this beautiful, diverse thing we call the local church is when we stay unified even though we might disagree about certain issues, and even though we may be raised in different ways that influence the way we see the world.

And Jesus says, "I'm telling you. This is it. This is the very thing that will turn the Roman Empire on its' head. There has never been anything like it. And you cannot sacrifice unity for anything."

And it's so important and mission critical for us to remember this as a church family, especially a few weeks out from what is shaping up to be an incredibly divisive and emotionally charged election.

And I just want you to know that as your pastor I have never, and will never push or promote any sort of political agenda from this platform. I am here to unpack the truth of God's Word and point people to Jesus. That's all I'm trying to do.

I'll say this. Come November, be involved, do your research, pray like crazy, do your best to vote in such a way that honors God and respects people. But let's not be divided over temporary, limited, manmade political systems.

Government has its place, but it is not our savior, Jesus is. And Jesus' church has not only survived the last 2,000 years of history, it has thrived even when, especially when, the governing authorities of its day opposed it.

So, we don't need to be panicked or fearful about the results of this election, or any election. And here is why. In the short history of this nation, and I think we forget this, America is really young—in our short history as a nation, both political parties have gotten some things right and

some things wrong. We just have to consider that. Both political parties have produced some great leaders, and both have produced some not-so-great leaders.

In our short history as a nation, we have a few political parties that no longer even exist. Any Whigs in the room today? Any Federalists joining us online? Welcome. They were around, not all that long ago. They had strong opinions about things. Now they don't even exist. Why? Because they are temporary and manmade.

And so, why in the world would we ever, as followers of the eternal King, allow ourselves to be divided over temporary political system, or temporary political leaders of temporary political platforms? Why would we allow ourselves to be divided by lesser kings?

I would even go so far as to say this. This is what is truly tragic. Why would we allow ourselves to be divided over fear when Jesus' most often command in Scripture is, "Fear not."

You know what? That's what is at the core when we lash out at someone. Whether it is in social media or otherwise. It is fear. It's fear of something we will lose. It's fear of something that will change.

And Jesus knew something the media has not figured out, and I'm praying that they do:

Hope is a far better motivator than fear!

Hope is exactly what Jesus died to give to us. He went to a cross to give us hope, and he secured it when he walked out of a grave. So, why would we ever trade on that? Why would we ever lash out in fear?

You see, the hope we have in Jesus gives us the ability to fulfill something else he prayed earlier in John 13. He said this:

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other."

One time he was like, "All the commandments can be summed up in these two—love God and love People." If you do that, you've got yourself covered.

Listen, you love each other, not just the people you agree with. That's not love. You love people, not just the ones you are related to, not just the ones who see things the way you see them. Love is when you can do that with people who don't see things the way you do. Then he goes on and says this:

"Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

And fear doesn't love, fear lashes out. Fear doesn't love. It attacks and accuses. Fear doesn't love, it just wants to be right.

I want to be super-clear at this point in the message just so you don't misunderstand me. Let me save you an email. It is okay to have political convictions. It is okay to have strong opinions about certain issues. It is okay to voice what those opinions and perspectives are.

Listen to me. It is never okay to mistreat, verbally attack, or dismiss someone made in the image of God. And the world is going to try to divide you. Society is going to lure you into a destructive argument. Not just an expression of a difference of opinion or perspective, I'm talking a full-on knife fight. It's a trap. Don't walk into it. Don't take the bait, both for the mission of the church and for God's purpose and plan for your life.

So, as I wrap up and give you a little bit of application I want to push you a little bit. I don't want to push you away, I just want to push you across your comfort zone. I want to ask you in the coming weeks to look for an opportunity to love someone unconditionally who you might disagree with politically. I know. That sounds about as fun as a root canal. But you are up for it.

Some of you might be thinking, "I don't know if I know somebody who disagrees with me politically." And, that might be a problem. That might be where we need to start.

Others of you may be going, "I know plenty of people who disagree with me politically. I'm related to them. And every time we sit around the dinner table, and that subject comes up we start throwing food at each other. It's just a nightmare. And I don't know. I've tried to sit down with people I disagree with, and it just doesn't ever go well."

Listen, I understand that. Try again. Except this time pray before you go. Except this time fall on your face before God and ask him to change your mind and your heart. Except this time why don't you ask more questions and make fewer statements? Except this time why don't you lean in and try to learn something instead of trying to tell somebody else what you know?

How about this time, the next time, try to do it without winning a debate? Just love the person. You're not convincing them anyway. Just love on them. And when we're able to do that, your light is going to shine a little bit brighter, and the message of Jesus is going to be even more attractive because things are so divided right now. I bet you if you do that, you'll earn a hearing with them.

And I know what some of you are thinking right now. Some of you are like, "Okay Aaron, good sermon. You know, valiant effort, appreciate it. Don't you think it's a little naïve? Do you really believe that can happen?"

That's a valid point. I guess I would say it's not more naïve than a first century Rabbi who gathered a ragtag group of disciples together who were all younger than him, who had no political clout, who couldn't agree on where to sit around the table.

And he looked at those fearful guys with low self esteems and said, "Hey guys, I'm going to change the world through you. I'm going to build my church, my movement, that will give hope not only for today but for 2,000 years into the future. I'm going to build my church and, listen to me, the gates of hell will not prevail against it."

And I would imagine that those 12 fearful disciples, shaking in their sandals, would have looked at each other and back at Jesus and said, "You're going to do what?"

"You heard me. I'm going to build my church through you. And listen, no government, not the temple, nor any sort of crisis, no pandemic is going to be able to stop it or slow it down."

Now listen, that's naïve. But he did it. And if he hadn't have done it, we wouldn't be here today. So, here is the deal. It's our watch. This is our leg of the race. The baton of the gospel is in your hand.

I've got to tell you. Over the last six months, I'm probably like many of you. I've had some dark days. There were some days I was huddled up in the corner in a fetal position saying, "God, I don't know what to do. Everything is out of my control. I don't have a say in any of this. I can't do anything about it."

I was having a pity party for myself in the corner, and it was like the Spirit of God just came over and just did one of those loving bumps. "Brockett, would you get up? Stop feeling sorry

for yourself and realize I've chosen you, and I've chosen the people of Traders Point to live at this unprecedented time in history for a reason."

It should actually be a compliment that God thinks you've got the shoulders to handle this. It's been 100 years since we've experienced any sort of pandemic like this. And God says, "My people in this generation, watch out."

I've had a number of you reach out to me in the past several months and say, "Aaron, do you think we're on the verge of a spiritual reawakening? Do you think there might be a revival in this land?"

I don't know. I hope so. I pray that it will happen. I don't think it will be because of any pandemic. I don't think that it's because of a struggling economy. I don't think it's because of fear or depression. I think if we experience a spiritual awakening in this land, it will be because of unity.

Here's the deal. If the church can demonstrate what unity looks like to a watching world, that will be enough to spark a spiritual reawakening. But if we miss it, if we miss it we miss the opportunity of a lifetime.

So, don't engage in the knife fight. Love people unconditionally where they are. Stand and say, "God, will you just speak to us and move through us? Help us to realize what is really, truly important here—getting as many people to Jesus as we possibly can.

So, when you read something on social media that makes your blood boil, when somebody says something to you that strikes fear into your heart, don't take the bait. Remember, we have an enemy who is an accuser and a deceiver. Satan's Cesspool, and we're going to navigate through this. Here is why.

The mission of the Church is far too critical!

God's plans for your future are too big for you to hold on to an offense!

I want to invite you back next week, whether in person or online as we unpack this together. I'm excited to see what God is going to do through this.

Today, if you are ready to give your life to Jesus, we want to help you take the next steps. You can just text Jesus to 87221, and our team would love to help you walk through that.

Hey, would you at all of our campuses and online, stand to your feet wherever you may be? I just want to pray before we sing together today.

Father, we come to you right now, and I thank you for your final prayer on your final night on this earth. That you didn't pray for our safety, you didn't pray for our protection, you prayed God that we would stay unified in the midst of diversity.

So, now it's our watch. And the last six months have knocked the emotional and spiritual wind out of us. But God, we know you are doing a new thing. We know you are at work, and we want to be in with you on it.

So, God help us by your Spirit to live out perfect unity so that the world will know where their sense of hope and help really comes from. We ask this together in Jesus' name. Amen.

