
Can we give appreciation to the Sprinkle family for sharing their story and just the bigger connection of how God works and how He partners with His church to do what He wants to do? Unbelievable.

I also want to take a second right here just to let you in on the fact that Aaron is going to be back next weekend to preach his first sermon after sabbatical. And I was talking to him last night. He's a little too fired up, but I'm telling you it is one you do not want to miss. So make sure that you are back here next weekend for that, alright?

Well, it is so good for me to be back. It's good to see all of you, everyone at the campuses and everyone watching online. So glad that we are plugged in today. I do want to circle back to that film, and I want to hit on a few things. I want to keep celebration going. And I want to celebrate Lisa, the Kids Ministry team member who took the Sprinkles' baby for the first time, all of our Kids Ministry volunteers, and all of our team members in general.

I want you to hear that story and see that when that interaction happens, that's not just a transaction. Parents are not just handing you their baby, they are handing you thousands of prayers, they are handing you a part of themselves, and it is such a big thing that you are stewarding for them.

When you are in guest experience and you shake someone's hand out there, you're not just shaking someone's hand. You just shook the hand of someone who put the car in reverse three times and then back to park. They barely made it through the doors and you welcoming him, and comforting her, and just saying, "So glad that you are here"—that gave them the courage to keep coming in here so that they could hear about Jesus.

I just want to say this because a lot of times we don't get a film on the other side of it, but the Spirit of God within you makes things possible. Your presence alone removes barriers that keep people from Jesus and your mind can't even let you in on. So if you're here today and you're wondering, "I don't even know if it matters," can I please tell you right now that you are making a difference?

Can we celebrate all of our team members right now who show up and because of them we get to hear stories like the Sprinkles' and what God does when He gets ahold of people's heart?

But I also think that there is something in their story that a lot of us can relate to. You see, they had this idea of the way that their life was going to go, right? They had it mapped out. We're

going to get pregnant here, we're not even going to miss anything. We'll be ready to take pictures next summer.

And I think for all of us, we kind of have a plan, an idea, a vision of the way that our life is going to be. Some of us have more details, plans than others, but we all have an idea.

But I just want to see something right now. Show of hands. Whose life, right now, is going exactly the way that you planned it? Good. I didn't want to make fun of anybody here on a Sunday morning for lying. So that's good.

And I'm not even saying it's worse than you thought it would be. A lot of times for a lot of us, life is way better than we thought it was going to be. Anybody here today have a life that is going a little bit or a lot better than you thought it would be because of God stepping in?

But that doesn't take away from the fact that we do find ourselves on these scenic routes through life where we have this idea of, "Okay, we're going to go from A to B, there is nothing in the way, what could stop us?" And then we get up there and we find ourselves going in these roundabout ways to get to places that we never thought we would be. And it's like, "What is going on?"

You know, for the Sprinkle family it was the birth of their child. But maybe for you it was your career choice, maybe for you it was your family, or maybe for you it was school: middle school, high school, and college and it's going very, very differently than you thought it would.

What I want us to see today is that when we find ourselves on those scenic routes, when it seems like we are going in roundabout ways, I just want us to see that maybe we're not lost. Maybe there is a God who is sovereign, who is in control of it all and is actually taking us by the hand through this unique situation we call life.

And it's a path. It's not without pain. But, it's also not without purpose. God wants to do something in the midst of it, no matter where you are in that journey.

And at the same time, I don't know where you are in that journey, but I do want to read some Scripture over you today. And if this is the only thing you hear, but you hear this and you believe it and you live like it's true, I believe it's enough to meet you right where you are and to change your life. I believe that. Let's read this together. It says:

"For God has said, 'I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.'" So right now, wherever you are, even though it doesn't look like you thought it would look, hold on to that. "For God has said, 'I will never fail you. I will never abandon you.'" God is with you no matter where you are.

And this is our part:

"So we can say with confidence," we're going to say with confidence right now in this moment, say it with me, "The LORD is my helper, so I will have no fear. What can mere people do to me?" Hebrews 13:5-6 (NLT)

I just want that truth to rush over you today, that wherever you find yourself, please, without a doubt know that even when you can't see it, even when you can't feel it, even when you are going places that you never thought you would go, there is a God who is with you, there is a God who is fighting for you, and there is a God who wants to be with you every step of the way. Come on.

And to look at this, these scenic routes that we find ourselves in and to try to make sense of some of the reasons why, we're going to be looking at a book of the Bible called Exodus, Exodus. And we're going to start in chapter 13. But before we get there, I just want to kind of set the scene because we're walking in on the middle of a whole lot, alright?

So what we're stepping into is the Israelites, God's people, have been in Egypt for 430 years, a scenic route. No one planned that they would be here for that long. But generation after generation, they were there. And it was not like things were getting better. They were actually getting worse and worse.

The Egyptians began to change their view of how they saw the Israelites, mostly because of how many there were. They were taking the command of be fruitful and multiply super seriously, alright? Lots of kids all over the place. So to protect themselves they actually begin to enslave the Israelites and they began to put all of this work on them to push them down.

And it even gets darker than that. They actually put out a decree that said, "If any males are born from the Israelites, they need to be killed." It was this super dark time in the life of God's people. But then God showed up after 430 years. And God shows up in a huge way. He goes toe to toe with Pharaoh who is over the most powerful regime and empire on the earth.

And if you know this story, it's unbelievable. God goes at them with 10 plagues and ends up shaking the Israelites free. It is a moment that you just imagine if you were there that you couldn't unsee it, right? You've grown up in this. Family after family has been told that Egypt is the most powerful, it's okay.

They are so big and so powerful and then one day God says, "I'm going to show up." And then He does. And when you see God show up, honestly, He like flips Egypt upside down, bully style, and shakes the Israelite people out of Egypt.

And then there is this amazing moment where they walk out military style from Egypt. Like, "See you guys later. We're out." They walk out free and without being harmed. And they were like, "Now we're at it. This is what we were waiting on. Now there are not going to be any more hiccups." Now they are going to be able to go smoothly to where God has for them.

And what God had for them was this Promised Land, this place that He had called out for them; this place carved out just for them where they could come to know Him and where they could be His people. They are thinking, "It's all going to be good now. It's all going to be easy. Point A to point B—direct line.

But I'm telling you, this verse really shook me over these past few weeks, because that's not what happened. And it says:

"When Pharaoh finally let the people go, God did not lead them along the main road that runs through Philistine territory, even though that was the shortest route to the Promised Land."

Now this is a really hard thing, I think, for us especially, with our western minds living in 2021. To think that the right route wasn't the most efficient route. The right route in some way would not be the easiest route. But here we see that God actually, deliberately, takes them not on the main road that leads to exactly where they're going, He doesn't give them the shortest route. Right here He shares with us that by His grace that's exactly what He is doing, and it's not without purpose. It says:

"God said, 'If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt.' So God led them in a roundabout way through the wilderness toward the Red Sea." Exodus 13:17 (NLT)

There is a shorter way, but that's not the way God takes them. He says, "I'm going to take them on this roundabout way. I'm going to take them on this scenic route. And then He shares with them exactly why. He says:

"If the people are faced with a battle, they might change their minds and return to Egypt."

And we're beginning to see God's heart for things. God is not primarily concerned with efficiency or speed or just getting us from point A to point B, but God is really concerned with you and with me. And God shows His cards right here.

The most important thing to Him is that we stay with Him, that we stay in relationship with Him. And to Him, it's worth it to go the long, roundabout way. It's worth it to take the scenic route if it means that we get to stay with Him, if we don't run back to the way things used to be.

And I just want us to let that sit on us right now. Let Egypt represent your life, your old way of life, the life where you were doing it on your own, where you were about your own things.

And now you're going through life and maybe you're experiencing something where it's not going the way that you thought it would. You thought it would be an easy one, two, three but now you seem to be in this holding pattern or you're going around and around and you're thinking—the thought in your head is, "Why is God preventing this from happening?"

But what I want to say today, based on what Scripture says here is that maybe God is not preventing something from happening, maybe God is protecting you from something happening.

If we can be humble for a moment and say that maybe there is a battle on the other side of the thing that we think we want that we're not prepared for, could this be possible? Could it be possible that God is all about you and He's not trying to keep something good from you, but He's trying to keep this relationship as locked and loaded as possible.

I know that there are a lot of us right now who are almost mad at God, because He's not coming through the way that we thought He would, He's not showing up the way we thought He would. He's not giving us the things that we ask for and we're holding God accountable to promises that He never made.

Please hear me when I say this. God promised God. God is not putting His name on a job, on money, on power, on anything in this moment. God promises, "I will be there." God promises that no matter what you face, "I will not abandon you. I will be there with you every single step of the way." Come on.

We do not follow God to get the things that God leads us to. We follow God to get God. That is the end all be all. We don't get on this scenic route because we get what we want. We follow God on the scenic route so that God can get what He wants.

And the thing is, the most brilliant thing that your mind can ever fathom is that God wants you. You are His prized possession. You are the one that He is willing to move heaven and earth for and hell just so that He can be with you. This is the God we serve.

And I just want us to think about how that changes our lives. It's not an enemy keeping things from us, because no enemy has the power to do that. It's not Carol keeping you from that promotion. It's not Suzie down the street who is stopping something from happening. Because the One who is for you is stronger than anything or anyone who could ever withhold anything good from you.

And your God wants what's best for you. So maybe it's not that they are stopping you, but God is saying, "Be patient. I've got something even better. I've got something that you can't fathom. I've got something you couldn't ask for. But through My Spirit, I'm going to make it happen."

And that's what we see here. That is the first thing that God shows of why we end up on a route that we never planned in places that we never expected to be. If we could be humble and realize that it's not God keeping something from us, He's not preventing, but He's actually protecting us because He wants to do something that only He can do.

And as we keep reading here, we're going to get to the other reason which is over-arching in all of our lives and in all of history of why our lives don't go the way that we think they should. It's not because we're lost, it's not because God has forgotten about us. But God is doing something very unique that only God can do.

Because, you see, as they begin to walk around, it's not that they just take a roundabout way, it's not that they just go around the long way. God actually brings them back around all the way so that they sit right in front of Egypt, like He is setting a trap where they are the bait. He brings them out and says, "Alright, you're going to camp right here. Just sit here." And they are like, "Hey, Moses, does God know that they can see us? This is a horrible game of hide and seek. Yeah, they can see everything."

But God is doing something. Even when it doesn't make sense. Even when we can't comprehend. Even when it seems like we should be running a million miles in the other direction, God wants to do something. Look at what God wants to do. It says, "I'm doing all this because:"

“Then Pharaoh will think, ‘The Israelites are confused. They are trapped in the wilderness!’ And once again I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will chase after you. I have planned this in order to display my glory through Pharaoh and his whole army. After this the Egyptians will know that I am the Lord!’ So the Israelites camped there as they were told.” Exodus 14:3-4 (NLT)

So God breaks it down for us right here. He says that there is something that I am protecting you from because there’s a battle that you’re not ready to face. And then here’s the second part. We’re going to read that one more time so we don’t miss this. It says:

“Then Pharaoh will think, ‘The Israelites are confused. They are trapped in the wilderness!’ And once again I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and he will chase after you.” And here it is, “I have planned this in order to display my glory through Pharaoh and his whole army.”

This was God’s plan from the beginning. It’s God’s plan today. It will be God’s plan tomorrow. What He is after is displaying His glory making it so clear that He alone is God. What does that mean, that He wants to display His glory? Well, glory is kind of a big word. It’s used in a lot of different ways, but what it is is that it represents God. God is glorious. It represents His ways. It represents His reputation.

And you see, God created the whole earth, this whole planet to be a cosmic temple, a temple where everything living and breathing worships and praises God and God alone.

And within this creation, at the top of it, God actually had an image of Himself within this very specific part of the world, in this garden. And He made image bearers, Adam and Eve. And what they were supposed to do is to take this image that they had been given and take it all across the planet, to subdue it, to fill all the earth with God’s glory. But they failed. Being image bearers wasn’t quite enough so they actually reach out and they want to be God Himself. And this brings them to a whole bunch of problems including sin.

And as sin enters into the world, God’s glory is harder for me and you to see. We begin to think that we can actually take the place of God and when we do everything gets shaken up.

And because of their sin they are actually removed from this garden. They failed the mission of taking the glory across the earth. But what I want us to do today is to celebrate the fact that even when all of that happened, God’s original design and plan for this, it went off. And Adam and Eve had to take this scenic route around—all of humanity would have to go around.

But our God is a God of opportunity. Instead of when sin entered into the world God saying, “I’m going to remove My glory from this whole place, I’m going to remove Myself from this whole situation and you’re going to be helpless and hopeless,” that’s not what our God does.

Our God now says, “Okay, now My glory has a way to show itself in ways that it didn’t have before. Now My glory is going to show up in the darkness and bring light. Now My glory is

going to show up—even when there was no pain before, now there is pain, I’m going to bring healing.”

Now our God is going to show up, even when there was no death before, now there is, “I’m going to show you that by my power I can even bring dead things to life.”

Our God can find His glory in anything and everything. So I just want to put that out there for you today. If you feel like you are at the end of your rope, you feel like you’re at the end of your story, can I just tell you this? You are not at the end.

There is nothing God can’t use. There is nothing God won’t use to get His glory. To make it painfully clear that He alone should be worshiped. Is there anybody here today who has experienced what God has done in your life, the grace that He’s extended to you when He showed up in that moment? Is there anyone who has received and seen the glory of God? Who can attest to it this morning?

So we see that God does have a plan. That He’s either protecting us or it’s a set-up for Him to show out and to show off who He is and why He alone is God.

He’s ready. But the people, not so much, alright? Because people do what people do. And they don’t do the right thing. So look at this. God has just sent 10 plagues, God just shook Egypt, God is taking them by the hand through the wilderness but yet they are still afraid, they are still worried because it’s not looking like they thought it would. It says:

“As Pharaoh approached, the people of Israel looked up and panicked when they saw the Egyptians overtaking them. They cried out to the Lord, and they said to Moses, ‘Why did you bring us out here to die in the wilderness? Weren’t there enough graves for us in Egypt? What have you done to us?’” You animal. They didn’t say that part.

“Why did you make us leave Egypt? Didn’t we tell you this would happen while we were still in Egypt? We said, ‘Leave us alone! Let us be slaves to the Egyptians. It’s better to be a slave in Egypt than a corpse in the wilderness!’” Exodus 14:10-12 (NLT)

Now, if there was ever anybody who needed to be on one of those Snickers commercials it’s the Israelites. Like calm down. That’s not what you were saying at all.

This past week, I’m telling you, Steph called me, and she was telling me she picked the kids up from school. All of last year our kids were on online learning, right? They were there. And it was an experience, right?

It was an experience that we all had, but all parties involved agreed, “This is not best for us, because of who we are.” The kids were not fans. My teaching was questioned quite a bit, rightfully so. But this past week they were like, “You know, we could go back to online learning. We liked it. We loved it.”

And I was like, “You are bold-faced liars, you going to sit up here....” But how quickly we forget when we get into a new situation, when we’re surrounded by new things even if they are good or bad, they are not the same and they are not comfortable. So our gut response is, “Well, let’s just go back to the way things were.”

It made me think about all of the prayers that we pray and all of the things that we ask God to do. And I just want us to think about it. God is in the midst of answering their prayers right now, but that’s not what they say. They actually had a very different tune. That’s why God showed up in the first place. Look at this. It says:

“The Israelites continued to groan under their burden of slavery. They cried out for help, and their cry rose up to God. God heard their groaning, and he remembered his covenant promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. He looked down on the people of Israel and knew it was time to act.” Exodus 2:23-25 (NLT)

But because it didn’t look like they thought it would, their immediate response must be, “God’s not involved. He has left us.”

And can I propose that same thing to you today? If you’re in this spot of doubt, if you’re in this spot of, “I thought it was going to look like this,” when you stepped into that career, “I thought it was going to look like this when I stepped into my marriage,” “I thought it was going to look like this when I stepped into motherhood or fatherhood,” and now it’s going differently and you’re thinking, “Man, why am I going through this?”—can I say that God very rarely shows up exactly the way we thought He would?

God is not a transactional God. God a lot of times creates environments, creates situations, allows things to happen so that we can turn to Him, so that we can look to Him, so that we can become more and more like Him.

If you prayed for stability and security, He’s not just going to drop a bag of money on you. If that’s really what you wanted when you were praying for stability and security, that’s not going to bring it.

So maybe what He’ll do is He will urge you and His Spirit will guide you to get up in the mornings and read His Word. Maybe what He’ll do is He’ll put you in a group so that you can have community, so you can have a group of people all around you. But once you get three months into a group if people start holding you accountable to things, you’re like, “I don’t know if I need this in my life. This can’t be what God was talking about.” But this is exactly what God is talking about.

God is going to show up. And I just don’t want us to get lost in these prayers that we don’t think are being answered when God is actually doing it, but He’s doing it in a way that you can’t see.

Look at what happens. And this is for all of us. This is for anyone right now, you're in that spot where you are beginning to question, "Is God there? Is He really going to show up? Is He really for me?" Look at how He shows up:

"...Moses told the people, 'Don't be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.'" Exodus 14:13-14 (NLT)

"But Moses told the people, 'Don't be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.'" "

"The Lord himself will fight for you."

This is the first time that phrase shows up in the Bible. But soon it will become the theme, it will become the mantra of the people of God. Everywhere they go it will become the confidence that they walk in. They will know that there is nothing great going on about them, but they know that they have a mighty warrior God who fights for them. And He is going to display His glory through things that only He can do.

And look at what He asks us to do. Think back to this. This is how God is going to get the glory, by not being afraid, standing still, and being calm. And maybe for a lot of you, especially those who just want to run in and do something no matter what, we need a plan, we need to be moving—maybe that seems passive to you.

But I will remind you that when they were told this they actually had the faith to follow God out of Egypt, out of the only place that they had ever known. They left their homes. They were following day in and day out. They were doing stuff. But in this moment, before God was about to display His glory, before He was about to show it and make it really, really clear who He is, this is what He calls them to do.

And this is not a passive thing. This is not an inactive thing. Like look back to the Sprinkle story. I think when she was talking about it she just set it up perfectly. She said, "We believe God had healing in not running away. We believe that God had healing and we were not going to run away."

To me that is a clear picture of what it means because the easy thing is to be tempted to run away and to hide, to think, "No, I just don't want to do anything about this." But God is saying, "No, no, no. Don't you run. Don't you hide. I want you to stand here and I want you to see this"

And I just started thinking about it. Does that describe us? A culture, a church that is standing, that is calm, that is watching, that is trusting that God is fighting? And this is the question I want to put out there to you:

This week, what would it look like for you to live out these commands from God?
I just want to walk through them and let them roll over you.

Don't be afraid

I just want you to think about how much messaging goes toward the opposite of that. Very little do I see in news today: Don't be afraid, it's okay. It's run for the hills.
You should fear everything.

But God gives us this proposition where He says, "Either you can fear everything, or you can fear Me and fear nothing else." That's the proposition. "You can either fear everything this world throws at you, or you can step in here with Me, take this route through life with Me and you can fear nothing."

Paul would say over and over again in Romans that if God is for us who could be against us? That's what we read together earlier. What can mere mortals do to us? But we can be fearless before God.

Be still

This isn't the idea of doing nothing. It's to stop from the frantic activity where you're just like bouncing back and forth, turning yourself in circles. The only thing that you're doing is getting yourself dizzy and looking like a goofball.

But what would it look like, even when it's coming, even when you're in the storm, even when the thing is on the horizon and you're face to face with it, but instead looking up and to say this? "No, I fear God. I don't fear anything that is coming my way." And now you have a peace that you can walk into it with. So, "I'm not going to fear anything. Be still. I'm going to have peace.

And I'm going to:
Watch

"I'm going to stop trying to figure out how this thing is going to unfold. I'm going to stop watching, bracing for the next hit. But I'm going to watch my God do what only my God can do. I'm going to trust that my God is above all of this.

"And while everyone else is looking this way, I'm looking straight up and saying, 'God, this here is not a reflection of who You are. Jesus Christ is a reflection of who You are. And I know if you were willing to send Your only Son to die for me, then this is nothing. This is nothing you can't see. This is nothing you can't control. This is nothing You can't take on. There is nothing You're not willing to take on.' So I'm going to watch my God do what only My God can do."

And I'm going to:
Stay calm

Anybody feel like you are on a roller coaster sometimes? Where you have your 30 minutes of quiet time in the morning—you're reading, you're praying. You're listening to some worship music on the way to work. You walk through the doors, and somebody says something funny, and you're like, "Alright, I'm going to just take my knee, are we going to do this right now?" And then all of a sudden, you're like, "How did I go from this state of peace to this state of chaos? It's because I didn't take it with me. As I go, I'm not afraid. I'm still before anything and everything. I'm watching to see how God wants me to respond.

So now I can respond in a calm, loving, patient, graceful and loving way everywhere I go."

And I'm going to:
Trust that the Lord will fight for me.

"I'm going to trust that this is not on me. I'm going to trust that no one needs me to be the hero. I'm going to leave the miraculous to God and what He wants to do. And I'm going to show up and I'm going to be dependent on Him. And He is going to do some amazing things through me. But the incredible thing is that He is going to empower me to it. He is going to allow me to see things that I could have never seen before."

And when our God fights for us, it is clear to us and to everyone around us—this is of God.

I want us to look at this. To look at how God resolves this issue. Chapter 14, verse 19. It says:

"Then the angel of God, who had been leading the people of Israel, moved to the rear of the camp. The pillar of cloud also moved from the front and stood behind them. The cloud settled between the Egyptian and Israelite camps. As darkness fell, the cloud turned to fire, lighting up the night. But the Egyptians and Israelites did not approach each other all night." God kept them separated.

"Then Moses raised his hand over the sea, and the Lord opened up a path through the water with a strong east wind. The wind blew all that night, turning the seabed into dry land. So the people of Israel walked through the middle of the sea on dry ground, with walls of water on each side!"

I can tell you, following God will take you on a journey, on a route that you never would have planned, where Google Maps will never take you and you will come to places in your life where you do not see a way out, you do not see how this is going to work out. You do not know how this is going to be redeemed or restored. But God said, "I'm going to display My glory."

And then there will come a time whether that's today or years from now where you will walk through walls of water. God will display it perfectly for everyone to be able to see.

I just spent, after the first service, out in the lobby, time talking with person after person and how they said that they were going through life, they were faced with hits, and then God showed up. God cured them. God healed them. God carried them along the way.

What we call this is God's grace. Because of all that He's done, what He's after is His glory and He's displayed it through us by His grace that He extends us, by His forgiveness, by His patience that He has with us.

And I'm just saying to follow Him, making it all about Him, letting go of all of the ways that we wanted to live and all of the things that we were holding onto, all of the things that were keeping us in bondage and to say, "No, I'm going to live for God. I want Him to get the glory."

So no matter what we eat or what we drink or what we do, it is all for God's glory. That's where you get to walk through walls of water. So I'm going to ask you today: How can God get the glory?

There's a situation you're in, there's a season that you're in, there is an opportunity for God to get the glory. And it doesn't come after the circumstance changes. Glory can come any time.

Glory shows up when we least think it will. Glory can show up in dark places. Glory can show up in a diagnosis. Glory can show up in a divorce. Glory can show up in addiction. Glory can show up when you hit rock bottom, because there is a God who has made a promise that He will never abandon you and He will never leave you.

So I just want you to go with that this week. Instead of being bogged down by all of the things that you see, all of the fear that is trying to come after you, to remember who your God is. He is a mighty warrior who fights for you.

And when He could have walked away He decided to stay. And when darkness began to find its way here on earth, God made a plan to display His glory. And He displayed it perfectly in the person of Jesus Christ.

God would look out here and He would see that there is no way for us to make it across the chasm. There was no way for us to get across the barriers that were keeping us from God. So God said, "I will go. And I will display My glory. And the mission I had once given humanity to live perfectly, to show what it's like to point to Me in everything that I do, My Son will do that."

And as He went through His life doing miracles and serving others and being there, He would take a scenic route. No one saw it coming. No one would have planned it this way. Even the people who were closest to Him. He started walking. No one saw it coming because He was carrying a cross to be crucified.

The whole world thought this can't be how it's supposed to go. It's Egypt all over again. They're barreling down on us. Our Savior is about to be hung on a cross.

But God, in that moment, showed that God does what only God can do. And He would take the pain and the death on the cross, He would take it on to Himself. He would take your sin and my sin, and He would nail it there and He would bring it to God showing that God is not giving up

on His creation. And our God would show that there is nothing that can separate us. He would defeat sin and death itself coming out on the other side.

And like when God rescued them through the Red Sea to get them into the Promised Land, God held back every bit of sin that was keeping us from Him and He said, "Now you can come to Me. Now you can know that I will be your God. Now you can know, without a doubt. Look to My Son. I will never leave you. I will not. I can't. I'm already in all of the way. There is nothing more that I can do."

If there is anyone here today.... I just want you to see that your life or the struggle or the pain is not evidence that God is not there. Either He's protecting you, or He's about to show you that only He can take that spot that is causing pain, that has taken so much from you. He wants to fill that. He wants to be the gap.

And our response to this is living out of a life of grace. It's to give God the glory. So what I want us to do right now at all of our campuses, online, is just to stand. And I want you to think about this moment, these moments that we have together and why it feels the way that it does. Because there is something incredible that happens when we stand together, and we worship God.

Do you know why that is? It's because when we stand in this position, when we are still before God and we are looking up and seeing who He is, God's glory is brought back to the way that it's supposed to be. We are in the right position with God. And that's why in these moments you feel like you could fight a lion.

That's why in these moments all of the pain and everything you're going through seems to go down a little bit. And God's Spirit begins to well up within you. That's because you're in the spot that God wants you to be in. This is what it means to worship your God. And He's the only One who deserves it.

So right now I'm going to pray and then we are going to worship, worship the God who does it all, who opens up the sea so that we can walk through walls of water. Is there anyone here today who believes that when they leave, they're going to walk through walls of water? That God is going to take you where you never could have gone on your own. He will rescue His people.

Would you pray with me?

God, we thank You so much for today. God, we thank You for this story in Exodus that shares so much about who You are and Your heart. God, allow us to believe that. That You are not preventing but You are protecting. That we are Your most prized possession and that You've shown it through Jesus.

And, God, we pray that we come to these spots not just on Sundays but every single day we align ourselves with You by worship, that we stand and we're still and we're calm, and fear disperses, and Your Spirit increases, and we sing hallelujah, hallelujah. God alone is worthy of this praise.

And then we walk out of here. We walk through walls of water. We walk through darkness. We walk through demons. We walk through diagnosis knowing that You are with us always. Our God will fight for us.

God, we stand under You right now. It is in Jesus' name. Amen.