
I want to welcome everybody joining us today at Traders Point Online, especially for those of you who may be tuning for the very first time. Maybe a friend shared a link, maybe he invited you to watch with him. So, wherever you may be joining us from around the world, we're really glad to have you joining us today.

One of the things that we're just really passionate about is to help you identify and then navigate the next steps in your spiritual journey. So, we're thrilled to have you join us today.

It's really good to be back with you. Our family has been out of town over the past several weeks. We spent several days in the mountains of Colorado, one of our favorite places, just developing some great memories with our kids and God really brought a lot of refreshment to our souls during those days.

But as good as it was to be there, it's even better to be back at home in Indiana and to be back with the church family that we know and love.

In fact, I just want to express my deep, deep appreciation to Ryan and Kyle and Anne for just doing an amazing job teaching over the past couple of months. Could we just put our hands together, both in the chat and in person for them? We appreciate them so much.

I'm joined by some of our staff and elders here in the room here at Northwest, just really, really good to be with you.

Before we get rolling today, I have just a brief update to share with you in regard to our regathering plan. Now, earlier in the summer I made an announcement that our aspiration was to regather physically as a church family for worship services on August the 2nd. And if you recall, in that announcement I said that those were our plans for now, knowing that situations can certainly change.

Over the past couple of weeks, we've just been talking to medical professionals, government officials, getting feedback from many of you and just watching the situation. And after a lot of prayer, a lot of discussion, we've come to the difficult, but we feel necessary, decision to hold off for right now.

As much as it grieves me to say it, we won't be physically regathering as a church just yet, on August the 2nd. We're just going to continue to monitor the situation on a regular basis. And I commit to communicating with you clearly and often, what our plans are as a church.

Now, with that said, can I just share with you today that I'm heart broken. When we had to make this decision a couple of days ago, it just deeply disappointed me. Ever since we set a date of August 2nd I've been praying toward that day, looking forward to that day, daydreaming about that day when we could physically regather together as a church family.

And I would imagine that a number of you are probably disappointed just like I am. Maybe a number of you are relieved, I don't know. Maybe you're like, "That's the right call." Maybe there are others of you who would maybe be upset by that. You don't really get it.

And I just want you to know that whatever your perspective is on this, I can understand it. So I just want to thank you for your understanding and for your grace, for your encouragement and support. You know, it's not necessarily an easy decision to make.

Now, with that said, let me say this. We've never been about a building. We are God's church. So now, more than ever, I want to encourage you as your pastor to lean in and engage.

I know that this is a long marathon that we're running. I know that it's the summer months and many of us have been traveling. I want to encourage you to reengage, to watch the services, share the link, invite someone, host a watch party, get together with your group and let's be the church together.

We're going to be updating the online experience in weeks and months ahead to make it better for kids and students and even in the worship service. We're going to try to host as many outdoor worship gatherings as we can as the weather allows.

And if you've drifted away from your group, I want to encourage you to get back in with your group. If you're not in a group, get in a group. We want to help you with that.

There are going to be lots of opportunities this fall for us to serve our city. And that's really kind of the whole reason behind this decision. We're here to serve. And I want to look out for your well-being and the well-being of our city. We want to be the hands and feet of Jesus. So let's do that during this time.

Thank you so much for your generosity and your encouragement as we navigate these days together.

Well, if you have a Bible would you meet me in Philippians, chapter 3 as we continue on in our summer message series called *Good News*. And I would imagine that I can speak for most of us when I say that we could use more good news in our lives right now. Can I get a good Amen? Right? We want good news—2020 hasn't exactly been the poster child for good news.

And yet, here's the thing about good news, it's that in order for good news to really be good, it needs to have some substance to it, right? It can't just be empty words or a bunch of hype, it's got to be legitimate, because any time you try to encourage somebody and it doesn't really have substance behind it, it doesn't really help.

For example, I know this is going to surprise a number of you, but I'm not very good at golf, alright? I know that's going to shock you. I look like a golfer, but I'm not. The problem is not that I don't enjoy it or enjoy the idea of it, it's just that I'm too competitive and I get in my head and I'll usually start off playing okay, but then it just all falls apart.

A few years ago I was playing golf with a friend of mine. He is really, really good, which just makes it worse. And so he would get up and just crush it—like just hit it long and straight down the fairway. And then I would get up and I would try so hard, but I would end up shanking it off to the left or the right or hitting it into the water.

Now, what made it worse was not only that my friend was so good, but that he was trying to encourage me, but there was really no substance behind the encouragement, because my golf game is so bad.

For example, I would get up and hit way off—I'd hook it off to the left. And my friend would say, "Hey, man. That's not so bad. You can play that." And I'm like, "Bro, it's three fairways over, that's as about as bad as it can get."

And it all came to a head at the 18th hole. We get up there. He crushes it like normal. And I'm hot and sweaty and hungry and annoyed and ready to go home. And I'm like, "Alright one more shot. I'm going to hit it straight."

And I get up there and I swung with everything that I had, and I'm not even exaggerating when I say that the ball went behind me, and it hit the golf cart and bounced into the water. That's about the worst-case scenario.

And my friend looked at me and he literally said this. He goes, "Hey, man. Don't be down on yourself. It's not that bad. Your swing actually looked pretty good." And I'm like, "Bro, you need to just stop right now. This isn't helping me at all."

Now, when we come to the book of Philippians, there are a lot of descriptions that we could give to Paul's words here and false encouragement and hype would not be terms that would make it onto this list.

Philippians contains some of the best news that you and I can really lean into and live our lives by. See, this Good News that Paul gives us, it really does have the power to settle our troubled hearts and to ease our turbulent thoughts.

Now, the reason why I can stand up here and say that so confidently is because Paul writes these words, this letter of encouragement, as he is going through one of the most challenging seasons of his life. A season that, from his perspective at the time, had to have felt like it never would have ended.

Paul, at this moment, had been kept in prison for two years in Caesarea, without trial, he had survived a massive storm on the Mediterranean Sea, he'd been deserted by most of his friends, betrayed by other leaders who were hoping to get him into more trouble with the government and he was facing the possibility of execution every day.

Sounds like pretty awful news. And yet, there is no book in the Bible that is filled with as much authentic joy as Philippians. Paul seemed to have a peace of mind and a settled spirit, which freed him up to write one of his warmest and most personal letters.

Some of Paul's greatest hits are found right here in Philippians. Let me just give you a couple of examples. First one out of chapter 1:

"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain."

In chapter 4 he says:

"For I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances."

That's pretty applicable to where we are at today.

Later in that chapter he says:

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength."

And I'll give you one more. He says:

"And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus."

All of this is found in Philippians. And please keep in mind that Paul did not write those words while he was sitting on a white, sandy beach in the Caribbean somewhere while he is sipping an umbrella drink. No, he writes these words awaiting execution, in a jail cell. That was Paul's normal.

And Paul doesn't just tell us that we can be joyful, or even how to be joyful—he is just simply and unmistakably joyful. He models it because of who Jesus is and what he has done. And as a result, his contentment and well-being, they were not tied to his turbulent circumstances, that he couldn't control anyway, but to the unchanging hope that can be found in and through Jesus.

I think that I can speak for most of us listening or watching this right now when I say that we need Paul's words now, more than ever, because we ourselves are in a season of waiting, alright?

So the initial crisis hit a few months ago and now we're just waiting. We are waiting for the pandemic to end. We're waiting for the day our kids can go back to school, waiting for the day we can regather physically as a church, waiting for things to feel normal once again.

And maybe, for you personally, you're in your own season of waiting. You're waiting for a job to return, you're waiting for the grief to end, you're waiting for the anxiety to subside, you're waiting for that relationship to mend. And seasons of waiting have a tendency to feel like they are never going to end.

Now, when you look back into the past, it seems like a small window, it seems like a small season—but when you are in the middle of it, it feels like it might never end. And it produces some questions. Mainly, how can I press on through this extended season of uncertainty, when I can't quite fully see to the other side? How do I press on and lean in while at the same time holding on to hope? And holding onto peace. And holding onto joy.

And Paul is going to lay this out for us in our passage today. Follow along with me beginning in verse 3 of chapter 3. He makes this true statement that everything else builds upon. He says:

"We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us. We put no confidence in human effort, though I could have confidence in my own effort if anyone could. Indeed, if others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more!"

So here's what Paul is doing here. He's basically saying that, for the vast majority of us, our sense of peace and hope is usually tied to our accomplishments and achievements. They are tied to the things that we think we might have control of.

And Paul is going to use himself as an example. He's going to say, "Listen, I'm the prime example of this. If anybody could have felt peace over their circumstances, it was me, because I have had all of these accomplishments and all of these achievements lined up." And then he's going to tell us what they are in verse 5. He says:

"I was circumcised when I was eight days old. I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one! I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church. And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault."

In other words, Paul is saying here that when it came to the Hebrew world, specifically the religious, professional, and political world that he was all wrapped up in he goes, "I was the GOAT." He was the greatest of all times. There was nobody who could touch Paul. And he's not bragging, he can back it up. But then he goes on to say this. Catch this:

"I once thought these things were valuable, but now," but now, "I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the

infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could gain Christ and become one with him. I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law; rather, I become righteous through faith in Christ.”

In that one sentence he completely dismantles works-based religion. And he says, “We become righteous through trust in Christ alone.” And he says, “I want to know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I want to suffer with him, sharing in his death so that one way or another, I will experience the resurrection from the dead.”

Alright, translation. Paul is saying this current set of difficult circumstances that he finds himself in as he writes this letter has simply revealed to him what is priceless and what was previously—worthless. It’s clarified his vision.

He’s basically said, “Here’s all of these things that I thought I could control, I couldn’t control them. Here’s all of these things that I thought gave me value, they didn’t give me value. Here’s all the things that I thought made me sure-footed, but they didn’t. And the crisis is actually a gift. It’s actually giving me greater clarity to see who Jesus really is and what I need.” And then he wraps up with these powerful words in verse 12:

*“I don’t mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I **press on**,” I press on “to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus,” this is where my eyes are, I focus “on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I **press on** to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.”*

You see. Listen. Whenever you’re in this season of waiting, where you are looking, the direction you are looking is everything.

Now, can I just speak from my heart for a minute? And tell you about six months ago at the beginning of 2020, this year was filled with so much hope and so much promise, for me personally. I was really excited about it.

I’m kind of a history guy. So, one of the eras that is my favorite in history is the decade of the 1920s. There was just so much architecture and art and industry and all of this stuff happened in sports—there are so many things that happened in the 20s that are just really fascinating to me.

So, as we were getting ready to roll around to the 2020s, I thought, “Man, this is so cool. We’re going to start the 20s decade all over again. And personally I had all of these goals lined up and our family had some things we were really excited about and some trips that we had planned.

And our church, it just really seemed like God has us in a sweet season as a church family—unity and growth and effectiveness. We launched two campuses at the beginning of the year. Those campuses were just electric. And we’ve seen more people coming to know Christ and lives being transformed—it was just amazing.

At the beginning of March, we brought all six campuses together under one roof—this room that I’m in right now. And it was just an amazing night of worship. Many of you were here for

that and hands down it's one of the top five favorite memories that I have in my time here at Traders Point. Just a sweet time of worship.

But it was right around that same time that we were beginning to hear more and more about this COVID thing, and it just hit us all of a sudden. And almost overnight, one of my worst nightmares came true. I became a televangelist, alright? I have no idea how this happened.

Now, please don't worry. I'm not going to bring out the gold throne to sit on and I assure you that my wife is not going to join me on stage with her long eyelashes and Pepto-Bismol hair, alright? That's not going to happen.

But all of us have had our lives take a turn in an unexpected way and we have been in this season that we never would have anticipated would last this long. And there's this phrase that I'm hearing more and more as I talk to people and I've actually even thought it to myself. And you can probably finish the sentence with me. The phrase just kind of goes like this, "I just can't wait until things get back to normal."

And listen. It's not a bad phrase. Like I totally get it. I even agree with it. I've said it. Can I just say this? I really do believe down to the core of my being that we are one day closer to being on the other side of this. And I can say that confidently, really because of two things.

Number one: history is a really good teacher and history shows us, listen to me, that one hundred percent of pandemics end. They just do. But even more than that, as I look to the promise of God's word and he says this is simply a season, this is just simply a scene in the movie, it's not the whole story. And he has given us hope for the future.

However, with that said. I don't want to just take the posture of just trying to hunker down and say, "Well, I just can't wait for this to all be over. I can't wait for this all to kind of go back to normal," because if I take that posture, I end up missing the things that God wants to say to me and to do in and through my life and the life of our church family.

We want to take the words of Paul here and press on. We want to push through to what it is that God has for us in this difficult season. So just follow the words of Paul and say, "I'm going to focus on this one thing, forgetting the past, look forward to what lies ahead. I'm going to press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling me."

Now, the problem with waiting for circumstances to change before we begin to experience any sort of peace is that it just keeps us...we just end up missing out on the deep soul work that God wants to do in every single one of us during this season.

See, we just don't want to wait around for some resemblance of normal, but we want to lean into this time as an opportunity for growth. You see, when the door gets open to struggle, it always leaves the door open for growth. And this season should cause you and me to re-evaluate some things. This is the time when we can dig our spiritual well deeper than at any other time.

See, what this has done is it's revealed to just about all of us that our life's circumstances are beyond our control. Not just in a year filled with pandemics, protests, and political division, but any time. And a season like this just brings that reality into focus a little clearer and with a little more urgency. And when fear and doubt and anxiety and uncertainty begin to knock on the door of your heart, what do you do?

In addition to Paul saying let's press on, we have the very words of Jesus. I'm reminded in John, chapter 16 he said, "In this world you're going to have trouble." But, two chapters before that, chapter 14, verse 1, Jesus says this:

"Don't let your hearts be troubled."

Now, why would he say that? Well, because he knew that there were going to be things that happen in life that would trouble our hearts. But then he says:

"Trust in God, and trust also in me."

I don't know how you feel about that verse there, but whenever I read it, it says don't let your heart be troubled and I could say, "Man, there are all kinds of things right now that have the potential to trouble our hearts."

You just read the news headlines and it's an opportunity for your heart to be troubled. You read about the number of new cases, it's an opportunity for your heart to be troubled. You just even think about the upcoming presidential election, I don't care what your politics are, and it's enough to trouble your heart. We hear about masks, and distancing, and the phrase consciously optimistic and all of that stuff is just an opportunity for our hearts to be troubled.

Jesus says in this world, you are going to have trouble, but don't be troubled. In other words, don't let trouble trouble you. You're going to have a lot of uncertainty, but don't let that make you uncertain.

Now, here's the push back in my own heart. I don't know if any of you can relate to me, but whenever I read that verse, I'm like, "Well, Jesus. I don't want my heart to be troubled. It sounds really amazing to live my life without a troubled heart, so I hear you, 'Don't let your hearts be troubled,' but how exactly am I supposed to do that?"

Kind of reminds me of that old Bob Newhart clip from *MADtv*. I don't know if any of you remember that. If you don't you can probably YouTube it later. But Bob Newhart, a comedian, is on the show and he's playing the role of a therapist. And this lady comes in and she explains to him that her life is just paralyzed because of all of these phobias she has.

She's afraid of spiders. She's afraid of heights. She's afraid of being buried alive. And he's like, "Well, you don't want to be afraid of heights, spiders, and being buried alive, do you?" And she's like, "No."

He's like, "You want to be able to live your life, don't you?" And she's like, "Yes." And he's like, "Alright. Here's what you need to do. Are you ready?" She's like, "OK." And he says, "Stop it! Just stop it." And she's like, "Well, that's not very helpful."

And if we're not careful, we read Jesus' words in John 14 like, "Don't let your hearts be troubled," you don't want to live your life with a troubled heart, do you?

"No."

"Well just stop it."

That's not what Jesus is saying. Jesus says at the end of that verse, He says, "Trust in God ... trust also in me." That's the whole idea of, "What am I looking to? What am I leaning my life against?"

That word *trust* is another word for *believe*. And believe isn't just believe in God, it's believing God. It isn't just this ideology that I subscribe to, it's this idea of, "What am I resting my weight upon?"

So, this summer when we were in Colorado, I got up early one morning to go for a run, and I did something to my ankle. I tweaked it. But it wasn't one of those things where I rolled it or sprained it in the run. I felt fine. I came back to the condo. But later in the day when I got up out of my chair, I couldn't put my full weight on it—for a couple of days. And I was just reminded that I can't rest my full weight on this injured ankle. This is the idea of what it is that we're resting our lives, or leaning our weight on.

So let me give you this definition of belief:

Belief is whatever you put your weight on, so you can move forward.

And what this crisis has revealed to many of us is that we have previously been putting our weight on something that could not hold us up. So, many of us, we've been resting our weight on money, or financial security. Many of us have been resting our weight on a relationship of some kind or maybe family connections of some kind, but it was too much for them to hold it up. They let you down or the weight became too much for them to carry.

Maybe right now we are resting our weight on scientific advancements or political solutions—they are not enough to hold our weight.

So, here's where I've been putting my trust. This is the control that I thought that I had. And now, as painful as these circumstances are, they are actually a gift because they are showing me that those things were not enough to carry my weight, so now I can transfer that weight upon the one who is worthy to hold it, Jesus Christ.

See, when you survey the entire Bible, you see that the people that God used in the most powerful ways are the ones who often waited the longest. You just go through and you see that Israel waited 40 years to get into the promise land. Jesus waited thirty years to begin his earthly ministry.

Paul waited 17 years after conversion to become a missionary. From the time that David becomes consecrated to become a future king of Israel, to the time that he was coronated to actually become king was 15 years.

Abraham and Sarah—there was 25 years between God's promise of a son and when they see him come.

God was doing something as they waited.

You know, last Friday night my son went to prom. And his date came over and my wife and I were out in front of our house and we pulled our phones out, and just like everybody does now, we use our phones to take pictures.

So we were taking pictures of them. And my wife, she took a bunch of pictures, and in a matter of three or four minutes, she edited them, put them all in a file, and then she airdropped them to me and a whole bunch of family and friends, within a matter of three or four minutes. And I couldn't help but think to myself, Wow—like times have really changed.

Photographs nowadays, I mean they are instant. That's why we have Instagram, right? But there was a day not too long ago, many of you will remember this, when photos were not that

automatic. In fact, you had a device called a camera. Its whole purpose was just to take pictures, alright?

And you would put the 35-millimeter film into it, and you would fill up the film. After you took a picture, you couldn't preview it or edit it, you just hoped that it would turn out ok.

You would fill up the film, by faith, then you would rewind it, you would take it to a Walgreen's, drop it into an envelop, fill out your information, put it in a slot, leave it with complete strangers for three to five days. That meant that you would come back later, pick up your pictures, you would go through them in the car just to see how many of them actually turned out. It was a whole process of faith, alright?

So what was happening to the film during those three to five days? Well many of you know this. They were in something called a dark room. And a dark room is a place where chemical processes happen to where the image can be developed from the negative. And in the darkroom, if there is any light that gets in, it short-circuited the process, the whole image could be destroyed.

See, the dark room is where the film was developed. And when God want to develop something within you and me, he'll often allow us to be in the darkroom a while. And when you're in the darkroom, you can't see anything happening, so that he can develop you by faith. He will form his image in you and upon you before he does a great work through you.

I'm reminded of what Soren Kierkegaard said one time, "Faith sees best in the dark."

And this is the process of waiting while God works. In Lamentations, chapter 3, verse 26 it says:

"It is good that one should wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD."

Isaiah 40: 31 says:

"...but they who wait for the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint."

So please hear me right now:

A waiting season is never a wasted season.

A waiting season is never a wasted season. Now, I know to us right now, when we're in the middle of it, we wonder how long is this going to be? How is God going to help us through this? But this is just a scene in the longer story. And God has already told us how the story ends.

The silence of God does not mean the absence of God. My God is not just Alpha, God who begins things, he is Omega. He is a God who finishes things. And when we understand that God works in our wait, it begins to change the definition of waiting.

And when I am in a season of waiting, I'm often tempted to ask questions. I question God. It's a question of wonder. I'm like, "God, when? When are you going to do something about this?" It's a question of worry, "How, Lord, are you going to get us through this?" It's a question of whining, "Why? Why, Lord?"

But we are called to change our question to: What. "What, Lord. What are you doing in the world? What are you doing in your church? What are you doing in me? What part of my

character are you trying to develop? What sin are you moving me to repent of? What wound are you trying to heal?"

See, faith isn't just a call to trust his *what* but it's a call to trust his *when*. And if you can be still, trusting in God's timing, eventually there will come a day when you can say with confidence, "It was good. It was good for me to wait quietly on the salvation of the Lord."

I don't want to get ahead of God. I don't want to be too far behind God. I want to be lock step with God. And it doesn't mean that I'll always understand his hand, but I trust his heart.

And even though I don't understand, God, what you're doing or what you are allowing, or why you're allowing it to go on this long, I know who you are and your steadfast love, your unending mercy, your faithfulness will not fail us. And even though I don't fully get it, I know that you do. And you are still on your throne.

So, a few weeks ago while we were in Colorado, we decided to go on a family bike ride one day. So we go and we rent bikes and we were going to take a whole half day to go on this bike ride. We were going to ride to the town next to us, about a twelve-mile ride, and we were going to have lunch there and then go back.

Now, our kids were really excited. But our youngest one, Kadence, she's eight years old, she was probably the one who had the least perspective on what we were getting ready to do.

For her, about the longest bike ride she'd ever gone on was like to the end of our driveway and back. And we're getting ready to go on this 12-mile bike ride. She had no idea what she was getting herself into. She was all excited. She thought this was going to be great.

But, man, we started off and it was very intimidating because there were all kinds of people out on the bike path, we were riding up right next to the road, we were next to some water, some trees and about 20 or 30 minutes into this ride she started to question. She was like, "Now, where are we going again?"

And I'm like, "Well, we're going to Frisco." Well, I might as well have told her we were going to the moon. She had no idea where that was. And she was like, "How long is it going to be?" And I'm like, "Well, it's a twelve-mile ride." Once again, she has no frame of perspective for how long that was.

And she started to get a little intimidated. She started to get a little anxious. She started to get tired. And it wasn't long before she started to complain, "Daddy, how much longer?"

"Well, honey, we've got a few more miles." That didn't do anything for her. As far as she was concerned, we're out in the middle of nowhere. As her father, I had to frame a perspective. I knew where we were going and when we would get there, and yet to her, right in the moment, it looked like I had led her out into the middle of a desert somewhere.

So, as her father, I had to keep reassuring her. As her father I had to keep pulling off the trail periodically and say, "Let's take a rest." "Hey, here's some water." "Hey, let's talk about something else for a minute. Let me get your mind off of this bike ride. Hey, we're going to get there, little by little, we're going to get there—you've just got to trust me."

And I would get behind her and I would encourage her up the hills. And you know what? Finally we pulled onto Main Street in Frisco, and it was just this gorgeous scene with the mountains in the background. And we sat down for lunch and her whole demeanor changed.

And I just realized that I'm sort of doing the same thing with God right now. Like, "God, how much longer? When are we going to get there?" And he keeps reassuring me by his Spirit and his word.

But I just have no frame of reference for this. I've never been here before. I've got to trust in the direction and the voice of my Heavenly Father, that he knows what he's doing.

And I'm going to forget what is behind and I'm going to press on toward the hope and the future that he has for me. I'm going to finish this race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.

And I really do believe that God goes before us and nothing surprises him. He has not been caught off guard by 2020. And things are unfolding according to his plan. And I know that there is trouble, but I'm not going to be troubled. And things are uncertain, but I can be certain that Jesus can be trusted.

And I'm reminded of this Proverb that I want to leave you with today out of chapter 23, verse 18. It says:

"Surely there is a future, and your hope will not be cut off."

So today, I want to pray a prayer over you, especially today, wherever you're watching from, if you've never fully placed your trust in Jesus Christ, or maybe you've drifted away from that, maybe you've gotten out of the habit of joining a church service online and you're just now coming back today and you just need to be renewed, maybe you just need to recommit, maybe this is the first time you've ever done it, but today you're going to say, "You know what, I'm going to change my focus.

"Instead of scrolling through my Facebook feed, instead of looking to the headlines, instead of looking to the economy or the government, I'm going to start looking to Jesus, who is the author and the finisher of my faith."

So today, if you're ready to place your trust in Jesus Christ, wherever you are, if you're in your car, your back yard, you're in your kitchen or your living room, I just want to lead you through this prayer. So just bow your head, just close your eyes, and let me just lead you through this prayer right now.

Father God, I just come to you right now and I'm just troubled. I don't want to be troubled, but I'm troubled. So I come to you and I'm just going to place my life in the care of your hands. And I admit that I've tried to go my own way, I've tried to do my own thing, I've let pride get too much of me, I've let anxiety have too much of me here lately.

So God, I confess my sins, I confess where I've gone astray and I'm just going to place my trust in you. I believe that you are God. I believe that Jesus is your Son, and I'm asking that, by your Spirit, you would save me and make me a new creation today, because I am made righteous through faith in Jesus alone. So I claim that for myself today. And I ask this in Jesus name. Amen.

Now, if you prayed that prayer today, wherever you happen to be joining us from around the world, can I just say congratulations? Welcome to the family. In fact, right now Traders Point church fam, in the chat and in person, could you just put your hands together and just celebrate anyone and everyone who claimed that promise for themselves, because it is for

everyone. And if that's you, please reach out to us. Let us know. We would love to get you connected in some way, get into a group.

You know the Bible says the very first act of obedience after you've prayed that prayer is just to be baptized. To just be lowered into the watery grave and come up as a new creation in Christ. We would love to schedule your baptism here in the immediate future, so please reach out to us to let us know.

I can't wait to have you join us next week as we finish up this summer message series out of Philippians called *Good News*. We're going to sing one more song of worship together. Let's lift up our voices to our Heavenly Father, who has our future. Let's sing together.