

# MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

**RUN FROM COMPLACENCY | ASLEEP**

**RYAN BRAMLETT | OCTOBER 1, 2023**

Traders Point, how are we doing? It's so good to be with you today.

And I just want to hit this one more time. Tonight is our last Vision Night here at our Northwest campus from 6 to 8. We would love to see you there. These have been powerful nights of worship and also looking ahead as Pastor Aaron shared the vision for where our church is going. I just want to encourage you, no matter if you missed yours at your campus or if you are a part of the Northwest campus, get to this one.

If you are in that space where you want to move from Traders Point is a church that I attend or go to, to, "I'm on mission here, I'm a part of what is happening," get here. I will see you at 6 p.m. tonight at the Northwest campus.

As far as today goes we are continuing in our series *Asleep*. Asleep. And we've been using this as a metaphor of sorts of what it looks like to be going through life and to be half awake and half asleep. Not fully awake and not completely asleep.

I was reminded of this space this past week. My wife and I were taking a nap. And I just want you to know how much of a blessing it is from God that you get to take a nap. You have four children but the stars align and you get to take a nap. And I'm excited. I fall right to sleep. But I'm in that space where you're not fully asleep yet but your dream has already started.

You ever been in a dream and you go to do something in your dream, but then you wake up in the real world and you're just like embarrassed like, "Did anyone see? Am I just like flailing my hands?" I was in that space. I'm in my dream and I'm playing disc golf. Listen. I've never played disc golf in my life. I don't even like frisbees.

But here I am in the dream and I go to throw this thing and I throw it beautifully. And I follow all the way through and my hand goes all of the way through from the dream world into the real world and I hit my wife on the forehead. Pop.

She's quick. She catches my hand and throws it back into my face, hits me. I'm fully awake at this time, "What are you doing." She was like, "What are you doing?" It's that space. Not exactly. You know what I mean?

But it's that time that we go through and a lot of times maybe we feel it on Monday. It's just kind of foggy. We walk in and there is no energy there. People are moving. There is busyness but there is no passion, there is no fire, we are just going through the motions.



How do we get out of that space? That's what we've been looking at in this series. And to do that we've been studying these letters from Jesus to the churches in the book of Revelation.

And what we've said is that these are real letters to real churches and people in a time of history. We even have a map here. We know where these churches were. They were in Asia Minor or modern day Turkey.

But there is also something unique about these letters. The book of Revelation makes it clear that He chooses seven. And seven isn't just a number, it's a number in the Bible that represents completeness or wholeness. So we've said that these words that Jesus penned are for these churches but at the same time they are for all churches at all times.

So what does Jesus have for us? What does Jesus have for our church? This is more than a Bible study. Right? This is God shaking us out of our complacency, waking us up to a greater purpose in our lives.

Today we're going to cover the last letter that Jesus writes. It's a letter to the church in Laodicea. It's in chapter 3, starting in verse 14. If you have a Bible you can get there. If not, don't worry. Everything will be on this giant screen behind me.

We're going to read it in its entirety. Read it as it would have been written and delivered. And then we're just going to go line by line and ask, "Jesus, what do you have for us?" So these are the words of Jesus, starting in verse 14. Jesus says:

*"Write this letter to the angel of the church in Laodicea. This is the message from the one who is the Amen—the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God's new creation: I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth!*

*"You say, 'I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!' And you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked. So I advise you to buy gold from me—gold that has been purified by fire. Then you will be rich. Also buy white garments from me so you will not be shamed by your nakedness, and ointment for your eyes so you will be able to see.*

*"I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference. Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends. Those who are victorious will sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat with my Father on his throne. Anyone with ears to hear must listen to the Spirit and understand what he is saying to the churches." Revelation 3:14-22 (NLT)*

It's a very different letter than the one we read last week. Last week, to the church in Philadelphia, God had nothing bad to say about that church. This time He has nothing

good to say about the church in Laodicea. Think about how big of a deal that is. He says, “I see everything, I know everything,” but He doesn’t say one good thing.

So what we’re going to do is we’re going to start right here at the top of this letter and kind of work our way through it and say, “Jesus, what are You saying to them and what do you have for us?” So starting right here in verse 14 it says:

*“Write this letter to the angel of the church in Laodicea. This is the message from the one who is the Amen—the faithful and true witness, the beginning of God’s new creation.”* Revelation 3:14 (NLT)

If you’ve been with us, you know that there is a pattern that Jesus has been using in every letter. Before He gets to the words that he has for them, whether it’s to comfort or to challenge, He starts by saying who these words are coming from. He says, “This is who I am and why you should take these words seriously.

Here He gives us three new ones. It says Jesus is:

### **The AMEN**

Jesus is:

The faithful and true witness

And Jesus is:

The beginning

What does that mean?

### **THE AMEN**

Well Jesus says, “I am The Amen.” Now Amen is a very churchy word. Right? Chances are that you don’t hear it a lot outside of these spaces. You’re not going to be making an order this week like, “Okay.” You place your order. Then he is like, “Okay, I want to repeat that back to you. That’s a number one with cheese, pickle, large fry, large Coke. Amen.” What is this? Chick-fil-A?

No, but Amen is a real word. It’s not just a cue to let you know you can open your eyes and we’re done with the prayer. Amen—here’s what it means.

### **SO BE IT, IT IS DONE, TRULY**

It means so be it. It means it is done. It means truly. It’s a verbal guarantee that what I just said is true. It comes from a Hebrew word to confirm. And Jesus says, “I am The Amen. I am the It is Finished.”

I love the way 2 Corinthians 1:20 talks about this. It says:

*“For all of God’s promises have been fulfilled in Christ with a resounding ‘Yes!’ And through Christ, our ‘Amen’ (which means ‘Yes’) ascends to God for his glory. 2* Corinthians 1:20 (NLT)



This is what He is saying. Jesus is saying everything in God's Word, everything that has ever happened from the beginning to the end is finished in My name, in My life and My resurrection. Every plan that God ever put forward, every prophecy that was ever given, every promise extended has been fulfilled in the name of Jesus.

God said from the beginning, "I'm going to find a way to get my people back. And when Jesus came, lived a perfect life, died on a cross for our sins, and resurrected defeating sin and death, it says, "Now a resounding 'Yes' comes through that it is finished." That is Jesus. This is the One who is speaking here.

And then He says, "I am:"

## **THE FAITHFUL AND TRUE WITNESS**

Now what is a witness? A witness is someone who is called upon; he saw something and now he is being asked to testify to it. And Jesus is saying, "I am the One who has seen it all and you can trust My words because I was there from the beginning and I'm going to be there at the end as well. And that leads us to the last descriptor that Jesus gave us. He says, "I am:"

## **THE BEGINNING**

Chances are you've never described yourself that way. He says, "I am the beginning." He's saying, "I am the source of it all." I love the way that Colossians talks about this. It says:

*"...for through him God created everything in the heavenly realms and on earth. He made the things we can see and the things we can't see—such as thrones, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities in the unseen world. Everything was created through him and for him."* 1 Colossians 1:16 (NLT)

This is the One who is speaking now. The hope is that they would have read this and everyone would have leaned in to say, "What is He going to say to us?" And that's the posture I want for all of us today, leaning in, "Jesus, what do you have for us? Because You are The Amen. You are The Faithful and True. You are the source of all of It." Now, look at what Jesus says.

*"I know all the things you do, that you are neither hot nor cold. I wish that you were one or the other! But since you are like lukewarm water, neither hot nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth!"* Revelation 3:15-16 (NLT)

Now context has been key for us in understanding this letter. Lukewarm isn't, once again, a phrase that we use all of the time. But it would have made sense to the people in Laodicea.

You see this is an incredible city, but it had no water source of its own. You had the Acropolis to the north, which was known for its hot springs, hot water. It was used for healing. And then to the east you had Colossae and it had these refreshing springs, cold water. But Laodicea had nothing. They had this aqueduct system that would bring the

water all the way in but by the time it got to them there was no use for it. It was lukewarm. So they understood this word.

I want you to think about it like this. Maybe it's easier. Anybody at all of our campuses love coffee? Anybody love coffee? Yes. Raising hands. I'm a big fan. And I love coffee in all of its forms. I love hot coffee on a crisp fall morning, an Americano, just a warm hug that just goes over your body. It's incredible. I love iced coffee in the summer. It's hot outside. It's Indiana humidity, about 300 percent, but you get this iced coffee and it's refreshing.

But as all coffee lovers know, there is one coffee that no one loves. It's lukewarm coffee. You know that cup that you poured in the morning and you sat it down but you get busy and you're running around and then you come back to it and you know it's been too long. You know what is in this cup and you pick it up and you look at it disgusted and you're like, "I've got to try." And as soon as it touches your lips you're like, "I wish I wouldn't have tried."

When Jesus says, "I want to spit you out of my mouth," it's much more violent than that. I love the way Dr. Tony Evans translates this. He says, "Y'all make me want to throw up."

*Think about that. What is it that makes Jesus want to throw up when it comes to His church? What is it that causes Jesus to reject His church? And what we're going to see may be surprising to you. I think a lot of times we think, "Well, good people get to go to God and bad people are rejected by God." But what we're going to see in this letter is that is not the case. That's not the most important thing. That's not what bothers God more than anything.*

*We're going to see that Jesus spoke about this during His ministry here on earth and He continues it from heaven. Look at what His problem is with this church. He says:*

*"You say, 'I am rich. I have everything I want. I don't need a thing!' And you don't realize that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked." Revelation 3:17 (NLT)*

He's saying, "You could not be more wrong. You think you have it all." And they did. It was an incredible city. It was a rich city. Like Richie Rich. Like all kinds of money. So much money that one time the city got hit by an earthquake in AD 60. Demolished the whole thing. The Roman Empire came and said, "Hey, let us help you put this thing back together." They said, "We're good. We don't need your money. We've got enough. We have plenty." And then they did it.

And we see that this mindset, this, "I have enough. I'm good. I don't need anything," begins to bleed over to their relationship with God. It was one thing to believe that they didn't need anything from this world or from anyone, but now it's kind of drifted to now they don't even think that they need anything from God. They're good.

And this was Jesus' biggest problem. Think about this. He got into so much trouble for who He was hanging out with. They were like, "You shouldn't be with those people." And you remember what Jesus said when they questioned Him? It says:

*"When Jesus heard this, he told them, 'Healthy people don't need a doctor—sick people do. I have come to call not those who think they are righteous,'" not those who think they are self-sufficient, not those who think they are okay without Me, but to those "who know they are sinners."* Mark 2:17 (NLT)

That's who He is here for. And anytime we pretend like it's not that, He's offended. Anytime it is that, then He rejects us completely. And that's where this church was.

### **Self-sufficient**

They were in this place and this is how they were known, they were self-sufficient, "I don't need anything from anyone." And this self-sufficiency had brought them to this place of complacency. I just want to read the definition of what it means to be complacent to bring this to life for us.

Complacent: pleased, especially with oneself or one's merits, advantages, situation, etc., often without awareness of some potential danger or defect.

To be complacent is to be pleased, especially with oneself or one's merits, advantages, situations, etc., often without awareness of some potential danger or defect. That's where this church is. They are facing danger and they are oblivious to it. They are blind to all of the things that are around them. They can't see how desperate they are for the things of God.

Maybe you can relate to that. I know that was my response when I got invited to church for the first time, "Would you like to come to church with me on Sunday?" My response was, "I'm good. I'm a good person. Church really isn't my thing." Do you hear what I was saying? "I've got it figured out. I don't need anyone, anything, anyplace, or any God."

And I'm thankful that in that moment she didn't just say, "Well, okay then. Audios." She said, "Church is not about that. Church is about Jesus, what He has done on our behalf, what He has saved us from, rescued us for. It's this beautiful life." And it intrigued me to the point that I did change my answer. And I got to see that God was very different than I thought He was.

If you're in that same spot today, self-sufficient, "I think I've got it. I'm okay." I just want to encourage you to hear the words of Jesus. We're not as good as we think we are. Look at what He says to the church:

*"So I advise you to buy gold from me—gold that has been purified by fire. Then you will be rich. Also buy white garments from me so you will not be shamed by your nakedness, and ointment for your eyes so you will be able to see."* Revelation 3:18 (NLT)

Once again, Jesus looks at them and He says, “I know you think you have arrived. I know you think you’ve made it. I know you’ve amassed all of this wealth,” and that’s what He used here.

## **BANKING**

## **GARMENTS**

## **EYE OINTMENT**

There were three symbols that the church in Laodicea, that the city of Laodicea, was known for. And the symbols are this banking industry, they were just printing this stuff—lots of money. Alright?

The cloth, they had this wool that had become known and was being exported around the world. Black wool—beautiful.

And then this eye medicine. People would travel from all around to get to this place for this ointment that would bring healing to the eyes.

And Jesus looks at them and says, “I know you have all of this. But what if I told you it useless?” He said, “Yeah. You have all of this money but what can you really buy with it? It’s just for this world. Soon it will be no more. And I want to encourage you instead to buy gold from Me.”

And then He says, “These garments,” He says, “I don’t want you to just live your life thinking that you can cover up the darkness and the wretchedness with some new shirts, or to look better and then somehow that’s going to cure things.” He says, “I want you to buy this white fabric from me.”

And this is a different kind of white. This isn’t like Larry Bird white. You know what I mean? This is like a dazzling white. A radiant white. This is of a spotlight. He says, “I want you to buy this from Me. This is the only thing. My righteousness that you can lay upon yourself is really going to deal with the spiritual needs that you have.”

And He says, “Instead of using this eye ointment, which is useful for some things but is completely useless when it comes to Me, instead I want to offer you true healing so that you can see things for the way that they are, starting with yourself, and then to see the kingdom that is coming, and that I want you to be a part of.”

So as I was reading through this, I get it. I like being self-sufficient. I like having power. I like having control.

## **What makes you feel self-sufficient?**

For them it was these three things. And they had these and it felt like they were independent. They didn’t need anyone or anything. But here’s the thing. A self-sufficient church is an oxymoron. There is no way. We can’t build this thing. We can’t make this thing come alive. We can’t bring God... It comes from a space, it’s literally built out of a



place of dependency. We can't do it alone. "God, You saved us. Now we want to be on mission with You to bring Your kingdom here." And it brings us to this question of:

### **How do you buy something from God?**

What does that even look like? What's the exchange rate on that? How do I purchase this gold? How do I purchase this cloth? How do I purchase this medicine that only He has that I can't earn and I can't pay for?

### **Faith is my currency**

Faith is our currency. It's to believe. It's to let go of everything else. All of the things that I've been dependent upon. All of the things that I've been looking to for my identity and to say, "It will never do it. My only hope, my only shot is to be completely dependent on Him. And to get the spiritual riches, and to get the spiritual righteousness and to get the spiritual healing that I so desperately need." It can only come from God.

Where are you at with that?

I love that Jesus doesn't leave them there. He comes to this place. He exposes them. He shows them who they really are. But then He comes back with some hope. Look at this. Look at what He says:

*"I correct and discipline everyone I love. So be diligent and turn from your indifference."*  
Revelation 3:19 (NLT)

### **Indifference**

Think about this. "I correct and discipline everyone I love." He says, "I love you. This is the same guy that just said, "You make Me throw up." And if you have ever had a sibling, you understand this. You can love him and he can make you want to be sick.

And then He says, "Be diligent. I've just exposed you. I've just showed you all of the things that you need, that you should be desperate for, that you're pretending that you don't need." He says, "I want you to turn from your indifference."

What does indifference look like? Indifference looks like being asleep. Indifference looks like, "I could take it or I could leave it. I could read my Bible. I could pray. I could go to church, I could not. I could go through my life and kind of manage it myself or I could make a prayer or a Hail Mary here or there and maybe God will step in."

But here's the thing. I don't want to live like that. And it's not the plan that God has for us either. It's not what He is desiring. He wants us to lean in to trust that He is on the other side, to look to Him to provide for us as a heavenly Father.

So the question that we're going to look at for the rest of our time is:

How do we develop a dependency on God?

How do we develop a dependency on God? Because, listen. We can pretend. We can pretend like we don't need God. We can pretend like we have it under control.



I can pretend a lot of things. I can pretend I don't have to pay my mortgage. And they will let me pretend for a while. I can pretend like I don't need to breathe. But the moment I go to hold my breath, I'm exposed. Almost immediately.

We can pretend like we are not dependent on God. And this is our lives. As we go, we're either moving toward God or away from Him, either toward dependence upon Him, or to self-sufficiency.

I just want to give you...

Do you know what that looks like played all the way out? Independence played all of the way out. The Bible has a word for that. It's called hell. Hell is not a place that God sends people to. It's decisions every day that we make to become independent, to choose what we want. You play that out long enough, it gets exposed.

When you take away God's general grace, you know bringing the sun up, allowing us to live, waking us up—you take Him away completely, which is what happens at the end of time, then you are left completely alone and by yourself and in darkness.

And I don't know about you, but I don't want to know that place. I don't want to live like that. So that one day when I'm forced... There will come a day at the end when we are completely dependent on Him. Either He did it all, and we get to go or we acknowledge Him as just another person who we avoided, another thing that we looked past, another thing that was in the way from us getting what we really want.

So, how do we develop a dependency on Him now? To not live a day pretending like it's not all on Him and for Him.

Prayer

I'm telling you, if the space that we're so concerned about, the space that we find ourselves in is that space where we are half in, half asleep, half awake—just busy, filled with motion and empty of heart, the opposite of that is to be in prayer.

To be in prayer, to be in God's presence is to be fully awakened to who He is and who we are. To be awakened to what He has for us. What He wants. It's a chance to be reminded of how dependent we are on Him. And there is a perfect example, if you're looking for a way to pray, "How do I pray every single morning?" Jesus has got you. It's something that is called the:

### **LORD'S PRAYER**

And I know it takes up this whole screen and I know it's kind of overwhelming to look at, but can I just tell you this? This prayer is not just one that you recite. It's not just one that you memorize. It's one that you live by. It's one that you fill in the space with. And if we can start our days with this prayer, we will start our days with a dependence on God. Look at this. It's all built in.



*“Pray like this: Our Father in heaven,”* there is a heavenly Father above us who loves us and we acknowledge that He wants good things for us, even if they are different than what we think.

*“...may your name be kept holy.”* You are separate. You are different than me in every single way. Yet, You have chosen to interact with me, so I want everything that You have. I want Your holiness. And I can’t get it alone.

*“May your Kingdom come soon.”* How do we usher in a spiritual kingdom? How do we usher in God’s kingdom without Him? We can’t.

*“May your will be done,”* I’m great, sometimes, at making sure my will gets done, but how do I bring in God’s will unless I’m dependent on hearing from Him and knowing what it is that He wants? I’m reminded of my dependency on God.

*“Give us today the food we need,”* remind me that when I eat breakfast, lunch, or dinner—pizza rolls, cake pop, whatever I bring in, I’m reminded that I didn’t earn this. In the grand scheme of things, all gifts come from heaven. God gave me this. I am dependent on His gifts even for me to survive. He provides.

*“...and forgive us our sins,”* who else can forgive our sins except for God? I’m dependent on Him for that.

*“...as we have forgiven those who sin against us.”* I’m dependent on Him now that I have to forgive those who have hurt me. How do I do that? That’s supernatural. I need Your help to do just that, to forgive those who have hurt me.

And then look at this last line:

*“And don’t let us yield to temptation, but rescue us from the evil one.”* Matthew 6:9-13 (NLT)

If we pray this prayer at the base we’re saying at the beginning of every day, “God I need to be saved, I need to be rescued. Left alone, who knows? I’m going to be lost. I’m going to be out in the middle of nowhere, naked, lost, confused. God bring me with You. God, let me follow You. God, cover me. God, save me. I don’t know what I’m going to face, but You do. So, God, lead me. I just want to be close to You.”

### **Questions to ask ourselves about our prayer lives:**

So here are some questions to ask ourselves about our prayer lives, because I’m guessing a lot of us have prayer lives. Very different. Even if you don’t believe in Jesus, chances are you have a prayer life. And here’s just the question to ask. “What am I praying for?”

What would be different if all my prayers last week were answered?

What would be different if all my prayers last week were answered? Think about that. What if God came to you today and said, “I just want you to know, I’ve got a log, everything you prayed for last night: amen. Let it be true.”

What would change in your world? Would anything change? Would anyone else notice? Or would there just be a bunch of food that was blessed. Would it just be that all of the plans that you already had that you asked God to bless, even without His power? Would anything really change? Because that's the place where we get to when we get dependent on God and we realize, "I can't do this in the life that I have, in the life that I yearn for. It's only possible if He shows up. Do our prayers reflect that kind of dependency?"

Here's one:

What are you praying for that you believe is impossible without God?

You want to know where I come to the end of myself? It's not just asking for God to bless the things that I'm already doing, the things that I'm pretty sure I could do if it just kind of goes my way. No. I want to pray for the impossible. I want to pray for the big thing. I want to pray for things that I know that unless He shows up, this thing isn't happening.

A couple of weeks ago my son turned nine. It was his birthday and we have a birthday tradition in our family where he gets to go to Target and pick out a toy. Why do we go to Target? Because we're raising them up right in our house. You know what I mean? If you can't find it there, you don't need it.

But we're there. And there is one rule with the birthday gift. You get one gift. And this is really hard for my little fellow because he's just like me. So he's walking through this toy aisle and he's looking at all of the options.

He's enamored with Ninja Turtles. You remember being young and having a thing that you loved more than anything and your world revolved around that thing? That is Ninja Turtles for him.

They have this new toy section. And he grabs one and he's looking at it and he's like, "This is incredible. I think I want this one." And then he sees another one. And now he's really in trouble. So now he's holding both of them and he's standing there and he's just walking back and forth in the aisle.

And I'm watching him. I'm just looking at him and I'm just like, "Ask me. Ask me for both of them. Ask me for both of them." But he knows the rules and he's so sweet and he's so kind and he's so pure he can't bring himself to ask for something like that. So he's just looking at them. And he's looking at them.

I finally just go over to him, "Hey, bud. What if I got both of them for you?" His eyes about popped out of his head. And he said, "Can you do that?" I said, "Buddy, I can buy Michael Angelo, Donatello, Raphael, master Splinter, Leonardo..." I said, "Yeah, buddy. I think we can do that today." And it was so emotional for me. I was like, "Why is this...?" I was almost crying thinking about this.

And I'm sitting with God the next week and God is like, "Do you want to know why it is bothering you so much? It's because that's how you are with Me. You come to Me

believing that this is possible; this is what I'm worth. This is what the rules say that I can get and I don't want to ask for anything more." And God is like, "I'm begging you. Ask Me. Go big. I want it more than you do."

The next thing we can do to develop dependency on God is:

## FASTING

Fasting—literally what it is, it's taking something that I'm dependent upon, like food, and I'm skipping that meal, I'm fasting from it, and now I'm spending that time devoted to God. I'm feasting on Him instead of this meal.

Or maybe it's fasting from something you've become dependent on. Maybe it's something that started out as a good thing, but now, as it has gotten going, you're kind of convicted. You're like, "I think I need this thing more than I should."

So what would it look like this week if you either fast from a meal or fast from alcohol or fast from Netflix or whatever that thing is that you're looking to for more than you should? It's an immediate way to be reminded of your dependency on God.

And the final thing I would say is:

## Sabbath + Rest

Sabbath is something that happens once a week. It's a 24 hour period where, literally, I stop. I cease from working. And I realize that this world, my world, is not dependent upon me. Because when I stop working, the world keeps spinning. And I get to sit in God's grace and be reminded that He is God and I am not.

When I sleep well at night, get a good sleep, I'm going to sleep trusting that even though my eyes are closing, God's aren't. Even though I'm unconscious, He's not. He sees it all. He's the faithful and true witness and I give my life to Him.

Maybe I need to step into a season of good rest and sabbath.

Can I ask you:

What do you need from God?

I'm telling you, if there weren't 100 things spilling out of your mouth right now this would be a good time to go back and to redo it, to turn from your indifference and to believe, "God, I need You more than anything else. I want You in my life. I want You to provide for me. I want You to give me what I don't even know that I want or need and I'm going to trust You that in Your hands this life can be more than I could ever make it on my own. I don't want to pretend."

And if we lean into Him... Listen. We already know His response. We already know where He is. Look at what He says in verse 20. He says:

*"Look! I stand at the door and knock. If you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in, and we will share a meal together as friends."* Revelation 3:20 (NLT)

That is a beautiful line. If you really start thinking about this, Jesus is writing to this church and He's on the outside of it. They don't even realize that He's not there. They are just going through the motions. They've got all of the money. They've got all of the power. They've got all of the buildings. They are making this thing go. And Jesus is like, "You are forgetting one thing. It's Me. Let Me in. And I will come in and I will share a meal with you and I will give you more than you can ever attain on this planet. I'll share a meal with you." This is an intimate moment. A chance to sit down and to be with God.

For followers of Jesus, for those who have opened that door and received Him, we have a word for what we call this meal. It's called communion. And communion is a moment where we sit down at the table and we are reminded we did nothing to get this. His body, His blood—we can't earn this. There is no amount we can pay for this. It's too rich. It's too good. The only way that we got it was to receive it. And we are reminded by this new covenant between us and God that we are completely dependent upon Him.

So today, as a church, we're going to take this meal together and we're going to be reminded of our dependency on God and how we don't want to live without Him.

As you take the bread which represents the body of Jesus that was broken on our behalf, take it and remember all that He has done. And as you take the juice, which represents the blood of Jesus, which was poured out for all of us, do it and remember Him.

And for all of you who are here and you've never let Jesus in, you never began that relationship with Him, whether you've rejected Him or just been oblivious to your need for Him, I just want you to know He's at the door knocking. He wants a relationship with you—a relationship that can begin today. His harshest words were to this church, but also His sweetest promise was for them as well. He said, "If you do this, if you let Me in, I will share My Father's throne with you, I will save a seat for you."

I love the way *The Message* translates this verse. It says:

*"Conquerors will sit alongside me at the head table, just as I, having conquered, took the place of honor at the side of my Father. That's my gift to the conquerors!"*

Revelation 3:20-21 (MSG)

## **THE TABLE**

It's a gift. We have a seat at the head table with God. We spend so much of our lives wondering if we're going to have a spot at that table. And maybe if we can do enough or acquire enough or be good enough, then we'll be invited to sit there.

I think it starts in school when you get your lunch and you have that tray and you're walking out into the cafeteria looking, praying someone will wave you over to sit down at their table.

And then we get a little bit older and we start to think, "Well, maybe if I could just do this or do that then I will be accepted at that table. If I can give enough, if I can bring enough to that table and I can be there."



Jesus is the only One who is inviting us. Not on our merit, not on what we've done, but on what He has done. And here's the only thing you need to bring to the table. It's an acknowledgement of dependency:

### **I NEED GOD**

That's really the only thing that you can bring to the table, it's yourself. Jesus has saved a seat for you.

And what I want to do right now, if you are in that space where you want that relationship, you want to begin that today, you want to be awakened fully to the life He has for you, I'm just going to read a prayer. I'm going to read it over you, over everyone, but if that's you, repeat these words after me. Okay? So at all of our campuses, close your eyes, bow your head, and pray with us.

Father, I need you. I'm turning from my indifference, I'm turning from my sin, I want to move from independence to dependence on You. I believe Jesus fulfilled everything on my behalf. I believe Jesus went to a cross, died and resurrected. Jesus, You are my Savior. I will spend the rest of my days following You. You are my Lord.

Father, fill me with Your Holy Spirit.

And the church said: Amen.

Hey, can we celebrate everyone at all of our campuses who prayed that prayer for the first time?

And what we're going to do is right now is we're going to stand together. At all of our campuses, I'm going to ask you to stand to your feet as we go into a time of worship.

Prayer is one of those spaces where we are fully awakened to the presence of God. Worship is another one. And we stand today reminded of our dependence on God, reminded that it's not what we bring to the table but Who invited us to the table. It's not decided because of what we've done or what was done to us or by our family tree. It's been decided because of who He says we are. We are chosen, not forsaken. We are children of God. We worship together today under that umbrella. Let's go.

