

# MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

WHEN THE PAST HAUNTS YOU | REBEL'S GUIDE TO JOY

RYAN BRAMLETT | MARCH 19, 2023

Video

Chris

I think I just kind of sat in a lot of disbelief. I was angry. I was angry at God, "The life that I thought You were going to redeem, to restore, like is just sitting in ruins." It really had me wrestling with the question, if God said, "No," to my prayers for restoration, would my faith remain the same? I never envisioned being in this place. Never envisioned going through divorce. It was a loss of time with Hudson. It was a loss of memories that you had of the future—kind of died. And then you're living in this new reality and everything is kind of changing and you don't know where to get your footing.

I had to wrestle through bitterness. I was angry with God, no question, "I'm pouring out to You. I'm chasing after You for the first time authentically and genuinely in my life and You say, 'No,' to something I know You're for." I was really challenged. You need to serve. You need to be serving. And I think in that I started to be able to get outside of my own trial and it shifted the perspective from, this is about restoration of something that I really wanted to, "No, this is about restoration of your relationship with Jesus." I started to realize that it was going to make me a better father and friend. It was really going to return me exactly to the identity that Christ had for me. It's led me into a lot of amazing opportunities to walk alongside people who were walking through things, quite frankly, that were deeper than the things I was walking through.

Jermain

"I'm finally getting somewhere."

Chris

"Oh, that's good."



Jermain

“I praise God for this place.”

Chris

“Amen.”

Jermain

“I praise God for you. For real.”

Chris

“Me too, brother.”

Jermain

“Had you not been with Jermain.”

Chris

“You’re flourishing. You know you’ve just been willing in conversation. Both of us. Both ways. Encouraged both ways. And you just see so much fruit in your walk. You know what I mean? God is just going to continue to affirm all of these steps of obedience. You take it in and you’ll see it in the fruit that surrounds your life. And I think that is really cool man.”

Sitting with people like Jermain who has just become an impactful person in my life, to see the brokenness that he’s walking in his own right—to realize the commonality between the two of us—we both need each other to encourage each other.

I think I used to vary a lot in belief. Belief would be if something happens in my life and I like it, then it’s from God. And the big change for me is like it’s moved from belief to faith. And it’s like, if it’s in my life it’s good and it’s from God even if I can’t see it.

What God did in my story is He redeemed my heart. He let me walk in my own desert, my own wilderness, so that I could walk with people out of their own. And that is where I have so much joy about this story. I don’t have shame about it, I don’t wear the identity of a divorced man. I’m a child of God who went through a trial of divorce. I was redeemed from that.

## End Video

Ryan

Can we just take a moment and celebrate and honor Chris for sharing this story? It's beautiful and it's real and it's honest. There is a line that he said at the beginning of that video that I've been thinking about all week. He said, "What do you do when the thing you thought God was going to redeem and restore lies in ruins?"

How do you find joy in that place? That's what we're going to be looking at today. If you have your Bibles go ahead and flip open to Philippians, chapter 3. We're going to start in verse 12 today.

As you make your way there I'll go ahead and give you the title just to get this out in front of you. The title for today is *When the Past Haunts You*. Some of you are like, "Come on man. I'm trying to enjoy spring break. It's snowing outside. And you want to lay this on me." But I promise you, it is a heavy one, but it's one that will end in hope. I hope it brings you to this space of knowing that no matter what has happened in your past, that God has a future for you.

We're just going to go ahead and jump right into it today. And what we've been reading in this series is really Paul writing this short letter to this church. And what we've said is that he's managed to find joy in every circumstance.

No matter what we're going through, no matter if the way that it kind of shakes out, isn't the way that we thought it would, God has something for us. And today is no different. And it's powerful. So take a look at verse 12. Paul says:

*"I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But 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 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.”*  
Philippians 3:12-14

I love that. The first thing that I just want to acknowledge is how refreshing it is to hear from a leader—he starts this thing off by saying, “I haven’t arrived. I’m not perfect.” And I hope, as a leader—I know a lot of us are, all of us are, that you can kind of sit with that today and know that leadership does not mean that you have to be perfect. And pretending to be a perfect leader really does more harm than good.

So Paul starts off my saying, “I haven’t arrived yet. But that doesn’t stop me from pressing on. That doesn’t stop me from wanting more.” And the *why* that he gives, the *why* that Paul gives here at the beginning is what separates Christianity from everything else.

A lot of things in your life will call you to more, will continue to ask you to push forward. But why does Paul push forward? He says, “I press on because Jesus has already pressed into me. I reach out because Jesus has already reached out to me.” This is 1 John, “We love because He first loved us.”

So any movement we make, any reason we have, it is not out of obligation but it’s out of love. It is a response to what has already been done for me and you. That’s our *why*. And that really sets the table for what freedom can look like, this future that we are pressing on toward.

The other thing in this phrase that I really want to push in on, he says, “This one thing, this one thing,” and most of our time today is going to be breaking down this one thing.

But before we do, I just want to push on the myth of priorities. The myth of priorities. And there is this incredible book, *Essentialism*. It’s one of my favorite books. It really kind of helped shape my life. And he talks about this myth of priorities. Take a look at what he says. He says:

The word priority came into the English language in the 1400s. It was singular. It meant that very first or prior thing. It stayed singular for the next 500 years. Only in the 1900s did we pluralize the term and start talking about priorities. Illogically, we reason that by changing the word we could bend reality. —Greg McKeown

*Right? We love the idea that we don't have one thing. We have multiple of number one things. But it's just not true. One thing has to take the number one spot. And this one thing, it's a biblical phrase that is used over and over again in different circumstances.*

*As I was studying this week one that came to mind was this situation with these two sisters, Mary and Martha. Jesus comes to them and they approach the situation very, very differently. And look at what Jesus says to them:*

*"But the Lord said to her, 'My dear Martha, you are worried and upset over all these details! There is only one thing worth being concerned about. Mary has discovered it, and it will not be taken away from her.'" Luke 10:41*

And if you read this account you know that Martha went running around doing everything that she could, all of these details. But Mary just went and she sat at Jesus' feet. And she listened to every word that He said. And she was with Jesus. That's the one thing. That's the prize. And Jesus said, "She has found it and nothing is going to take that from her.

So what we're going to do today is really dial in on this one thing that Paul says that in the midst of everything we have going on, if we can boil it down to this one thing, we'll be able to move past our past and step into the future that God has for us.

One thing, but we're going to break it into two sections. The first line that he says is:

## **Forgetting the Past**

Forgetting the past. And I think that it is important to note here that Paul had a past. Some of you guys know this, but he was not always the billboard child for Christianity. He was not always the guy who was planting churches and writing letters.

He was the guy who was trying to destroy the church. He persecuted it. He was throwing men, women, everyone into prison for their belief. He was there and authorized the death of the first Christian martyr.

He had this idea that the life that God has for him—he thought he was going to be the next great Jewish leader. And as he's going to the next city believing, his plan for his life is going to be redeemed and restored. It was on this road to Damascus, his life laid in ruins. And God grabs ahold of his heart and reshapes him and brings him alive to this new idea of who he really is and the life that He has for him.

So we've got to acknowledge that. We all have a past, myself included. We have things that we have done, we have things that were done to us, we have things that we wish we would have done differently.

### **Are you still haunted by your past?**

I just want to ask you today, when you came in, are you still haunted by your past? Does it just keep coming up? Does it keep pulling you back? To forgive your past, this is what you are saying. You are saying, "I'm no longer going to allow my past to negatively influence my present and my future.

I'm just going to put it out there to you. And if you're wondering, "How do I do that? How do I step into that," here's what you have to wrestle with and to believe:

### **God has forgiven me.**

God has forgiven me. And maybe you're sitting there thinking, "I don't know." And I just want to put this out in front of you. I know it can almost sound virtuous and almost like there is some weight behind it. Like you really understand your sin so it's really hard for you to wrestle with it—what happened in the past.

But there are two sides to that coin. When you say, "I don't know if I can be forgiven," what you are saying is, "I don't know if God's grace is that big." And I want to stand here today, in all of the confidence that I have, to assure you that God's grace is bigger than your greatest sin. The sin from the 1960s, the sin from last night. And because of your faith in Jesus, you are forgiven.

Here me when I say this. There are no asterisks by the cross. Do you know what I mean? There are no exceptions. It says that Jesus died once for all, every bit of sin, the whole penalty, all of it, was crucified with Him. You are forgiven.

You are forgiven from your past, but it's not even just the bad things that we have to get out of, that we have to be able to walk out of; it's also the good things. Some of us are being held up right now, plagued by a checkered past and things that happened. But others of us are being held back because we're content with the good things that once happened. We are living in a previous decade. We are content because of what we once did. Have you ever met people like that? You get into a conversation with them. You start talking and it doesn't matter, this conversation is going to shift about 10 or 15 years. They are going to get you back to their glory days of high school or whenever that thing was, "Did I tell you about the time when I was the quarterback?" It's like, "No, I was just asking if they have any specials at the restaurant today. What are you talking about man?" But it's this constant drive of looking back and believing my best days are behind me. Either way, if we hold on to that past, we're never going to be able to press on. We are never going to be able to have what God has for us. Because, that's actually the second part of it. Right? He says, "Forget the past." And then look at this second part, this one thing. He says:

### **Press On**

*"I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us."*

So you see this picture of how to let go of my past. I've forgotten about it. I'm no longer allowing it to negatively influence me. And now I'm pressing on. I'm pushing on. I'm moving ahead. I'm running this race.

Now the thing that I found fascinating, I always say that I find things fascinating because you might not find it fascinating. But Paul uses two different words here, but they are actually the same word. The words *press* and *persecute*.

So earlier he said, "Hey, I used to persecute the church. And now he says, "I press on to run the race." Now, what word could be translated two different ways like this? From persecute to press?

### **Pressing & Pounding**

Well, it's this idea of pressing or pounding or forging into shape. So what Paul is saying is, "I used to persecute the church. I spent my life, I inserted all of my energy to press the church into destruction. I was trying to submit them."

And now he says on the other side, "Because of what God has done in my life, I take that same energy and I apply it over here. And instead of gathering up the church, I'm gathering up myself. And through the work of the Spirit I'm pressing and pounding and I'm shaping myself into the image of Jesus so that I can run this one race that He's called me to."

I want you to think about that picture, that shaping, that forging, that molding into place. The first thing that comes to mind is blacksmiths. You know what I mean? They heat up the metal and then then they start banging and banging and slowly shaping this thing into shape.

Or maybe you're thinking about a body builder. Right? Have you ever seen one of these guys? I've never seen one in the mirror, but I've seen one on TV and stuff. But, you know what I mean? That didn't just happen. He wasn't just born and woke up like that. That is days and weeks and years of training and pressing and forging into shape.



But I'll tell you the real thing that came to my mind when I started thinking about this, and it was kind of fascinating because I've never done anything with bread before, but it's kneading bread. Right? I've never kneaded bread before. I've needed bread, you know like garlic bread with pasta. But I've never kneaded bread.

And as I just began to kind of look through it and research it, I learned that there is actually a lot that happens when you're kneading and pushing and forging the bread into shape. It's more than that. More than what is going on on the surface.

Underneath it, there is a chemical process that is happening between the gluten and the proteins. Now, I don't know what happens if you eat gluten free bread, I didn't have enough time to research all of that. You know what I mean? God just gave me a little picture.

But what happens through this, as you begin to knead the bread and forcefully push it and flip it and mold it, this gluten matrix happens. And it allows air to get on the inside. And then as the air comes in, this is what is going to allow the bread to rise. Without the kneading, the bread will not be able to hold its shape. It won't have the strength needed to go through the baking process. You know what I mean?

What Paul is saying in this is he's saying, "Hey, I've submitted myself to this one thing, to train for this one thing. And God, the Master Creator and Forger, by hand, is pressing me and shaping me and folding me and molding me into the image of Jesus. And I'm doing all of this for this one thing, because I'm going to place myself in this position. And when I do, through this shaping and molding, it's going to create the space needed so air can come in, so the Holy Spirit can come in and do the work that's needed. So that I can have the strength and the shape needed to run this race."

And this race, this is a concept that Paul talks about in several different places. Here in Philippians, but he also talks about it in Corinthians. Look at what he says. He says:

*“Don’t you realize that in a race everyone runs, but only one person gets the prize? So run to win! All athletes are disciplined in their training. They do it to win a prize that will fade away, but we do it for an eternal prize. So I run with purpose in every step. I am not just shadowboxing. I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.” 1 Corinthians 9:24-27*

So Paul takes it a step further and gives us more of this race illustration. He says, “Every single step is with a purpose. And I train my body to bring it under control so that I can offer more and more of it to Jesus.”

Have you ever seen a runner when he is just getting after it? It takes every part of him to run. Right? Even his face. Right? You can just look at this guy and you know that he’s running faster than you will ever run.

If your faith doesn’t look like this man’s face, I don’t want it. This is what faith looks like. I’m training my body. I’m shaping it. I’m placing myself in these environments so that God can mold me into the shape that He has for me. So that He can have more and more possession of me to do and to run this race.

It should be clear that the hands of God are on us and shaping us. Right? Just as easy as it is if you saw a sword lying there, you would know that it didn’t just appear. A blacksmith had to shape and bring this thing into this place. If you see a body builder you know that it took lots and lots of time. The same thing should be true of us.

Because of our faith, because of the shaping that is happening, because of what God is doing in us there should be no mistake. That is not natural. That is super-natural. That person, something is happening to him. Something is being forged in him, “He has been pressed and shaped into something that is very different than most of the people I interact with.” But I say that’s not always the case. And I’ll tell you something that I’ve heard before and maybe you’ve heard it too. And I get where it comes from, but when you really think about it, it’s pretty disrespectful. Maybe you’ve

heard something like this before, “They aren’t Christians, but they act more like a Christian than a lot of Christians I know.” What?

Imagine applying that logic to any other discipline. He’s not a body builder, but he looks better than most body builders that I know. How? She doesn’t dance ballet, but she’s a better ballet dancer than most professionals. Not a chance. He doesn’t really run, but he’s probably faster than most Olympians. No.

It should be the same for us. If I’ve given my life to training for this one race and my trainer is the actual God of the universe, who has also given me His Spirit, there is no way that we are showing up to this race and we’re running at the same clip. There’s no way you’re going as far as I’m going. There’s no way that we are the same.

But I get it. Because, unfortunately, Christians have become synonymous with average—just not bad people, maybe even morally good. But there is so much more that God has for us than just average or just morally good, but not bad.

This is actually one of Paul’s big problems with the early church. I was kind of split into two camps. Right? We talked about this last week. But there were the:

### **Judaizers**

These were the people who were Jews before Jesus, before His ministry, and then they believed in Jesus but they still held on to all of their tradition and all of their religion and all of their ceremonies. And it’s not just that they held on to them, they said, “Hey, you need to believe in Jesus and also do these things to be saved.” And Paul says, “No. That’s wrong.”

But then on the other side there was this group, and we’ll just call them:

### **Casual Christians**

They too believed in Jesus, but they believe that He was all done. Jesus came. Jesus lived. Jesus died. He resurrected, “And now I’m just waiting,

biding my time until I get to go to heaven.” Paul, again, says, “No, no, no. There’s more that God has for you.”

You know this week I got to be with our residents here. Some of you guys know this, but we have a resident class that comes in every year. A lot are recent graduates. So people who are thinking about going into full-time ministry. They spend a year here, like a residency that you would see at a hospital, and they get to apprentice under different ministry programs and departments.

I got to sit down with them this week and do training on how to write a sermon. And we used the Scriptures that we’re looking at today. And we got to this part and we talked about the difference and why being a casual Christian is not okay.

And Mary, one of the residents had this incredible line. She said, “*You can’t chill your way into glory,*”—Mary Dziwlik. I’ve never felt older in a moment. But I was like, “Yeah. Yeah, That’s good.”

They did tell me that you can flay your way in. But I need at least another week to do some research on what exactly what that means. It sounded provocative and I liked it.

Usually when we come down to this part, when we talk about the straining and the pressing and the forging, this is really where the grace alert comes up. Right? What about grace? Let’s talk about it. I’m not arguing for less grace. I’m for more grace. I love the way Dallas Willard talked about it. He said, “Grace is not opposed to effort, it’s opposed to earning.”

And that’s very different. We established that from the beginning. The reason we’re doing any of this isn’t to be accepted, it’s because we already are, it’s because we are already loved. And grace is so much bigger than I think we kind of boil it down to sometimes. Like:

**God’s grace is just as much for my sanctification as it was for my forgiveness**



I need God's grace just as much as I did on that day that I gave my life to Jesus that I do today. God's grace wasn't done with me when He paid for my sins. God's grace is for every step of this race.  
Got one. I'll take one. [clap]

Sanctification, here's all that means. God, through His Spirit is making you holy. He's setting you apart for a very specific purpose. That's what His grace is doing in your life. Now that you have this holy discontentment. That's what God is producing in your life. No longer do you grieve the past. No longer do you just look back on all of the things that happened. You now have this ache for the future. You believe that God just got going in your life. That He still has more for you. So you press on.

Do you have a holy discontentment? Do you know what I mean? Do you have that ache for the future? Do you believe that your best days truly are ahead of you? Do you believe that God has more in store for you? That there is more of God's love, and there is more of God's grace and there's more of His freedom that you can step into? But do you believe that? Do you have that holy discontentment?

Do you have that mamba mentality. Do you know what I mean? Some of you guys don't and that's fine. But Kobe Bryant—no matter what you think about Kobe Bryant, I'm just talking about his mentality. You would see him who was the best at what he did. He would give one of the best performances of his career, then you would see him in the gym afterward getting more shots up—always believing that there was another better version of him to be found. Do you have that?

Do you have what Paul was talking about? That idea that, "I haven't arrived, so I press on because I believe that God has more for me. And maybe you're here and you're like, "Yeah, I want that." But how do we stir up a holy discontentment? You know what I mean? How do we stir that up within our lives?

Well, Paul says exactly what we need to do in verse 17. That's why I love the Bible. Take a look at this. He says:

*“Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example.”*

*He says, “Pattern your lives after mine and follow those who are living the same way that I’m living.” In 1 Corinthians he says, “You should imitate me just as I imitate Christ.” This was Paul’s whole motif.*

*Where did he get it from? He got it from Jesus. This is the Jesus model, where Jesus began His ministry and he selected 12. And He says, “Hey, I know what you guys were doing before. Drop it. Here’s what I want you to do. Follow Me. When I move, you move. Listen to what I say, watch how I interact with people, learn the rhythms of My life. And then at the end of these three years you’re going to be like Me.” That’s what they were called to. They were called little Christs because they literally reflected Jesus more than anything else.*

*That’s what a disciple is. It’s a learner. Or a better word for it may be:  
Apprentice*

I love the word *apprentice* because it really ties the two together, from not just knowledge but experience. Right? Like if I was going to apprentice under a blacksmith, at the end of my residency, who would I become? Guys, I promise you, my goal is to get you to talk more not less. I will never give you a trick question. Like, “I’ve got this.” You thought it was blacksmith, not a ballerina.

If I’m apprenticing under a blacksmith, what am I hoping to become? A blacksmith. If I’m apprenticing under a body builder, who do I hope to become? A body builder.

Thank you.

And here’s the question that I was wrestling with this week. And because I’ve been wrestling with it, I want to give you the opportunity to wrestle as well. If someone spends his time imitating me, who would they become? Yeah. If someone spends his time—fantastic. Or a body builder.

And I'm not saying if he spent his time imitating that he would turn into something bad. Maybe he would become a great doctor or lawyer or plumber. Maybe he would become a great leader or entrepreneur. Maybe she would become a great mom or he would become a great dad. But at the end of the time patterning their life after yours, would they become a better follower of Jesus? Because there is this tie between knowledge and experience. Not only just knowing the things, but doing them.

And I think, honestly, the best group right now that still holds onto this ancient practice of apprenticeship are the trades: your plumbers, your electricians.

Maybe you guys don't know this about me, but my dad is a plumber by trade and I did a short stint in that field. Very short. I did it for a summer. And I'm usually the guy who is holding the pipe or cleaning up the mess. That was my speed.

But there was one day I was apprenticing under him and we're cutting this pipe from the ceiling. And I'm holding onto this side of the pipe and he's cutting on the other end. And I'm holding onto it really tight, but after the other side gets cut, it's so heavy that it drops a little bit. Right? And I'm telling you, it falls just enough to shake up whatever liquid from hell that came bursting out of this thing. And it touched my lips. And I knew then, it was like God told me, those lips are going to be used to preach the gospel. Lay down this pipe. I've got something different for you. And I did. Oh, I'm an idiot.

But maybe you're in that spot right now. And you're wondering, "How do I stir up that holy discontentment in my life? I don't even have people who I can pattern my life after if I wanted to." And I just want to point you and I want to encourage you to sign up for:

**Rooted**



If that's you, if you're looking to stir up that holy discontentment in your life, if you're looking to take your training seriously, your discipline, to place yourself in an environment where you are going to be pressed and molded into the image of Jesus, I can't think of a better place than Rooted where you get the knowledge and you get the experience.

It introduces you to these seven rhythms of what it looks like to live on mission and to run this race. And they are incredible. You have everything from daily devotion—what it looks like to spend time with God daily—to developing a prayer life, to a life of repentance. What does it mean to be generous? To serve? To share your story? To really worship? And what I love about all seven of these is that they are knowledge and experience. Right? Because it is one thing to read it in a book and understand it. I can read in a book how to get out of a headlock. But until I'm in the middle of being put in a headlock, it really doesn't matter. I can't go, "Okay, what did page 37, paragraph 2 say?" No. I need that experience to go along with it.

And I think Rooted does a better job than anything else bridging those two together—really rich content, but also the experience to go with it. So if that's you, here's the link:  
[tpcc.org/rooted](http://tpcc.org/rooted).

Get signed up today. We have the next session starting. It's something you can do every single day. You join together once a week surrounded by like-minded people. People who you can imitate and look to them as they imitate Jesus.

Here's the question that I want to leave you with today. I hope you join Rooted, but maybe you don't. But here's the thing. Here's the question:

### **Is my faith forging me into the likeness of Jesus?**

That's really what it comes down to. Is my faith forging me into the image and likeness of Jesus? Am I placing myself in that space where I'm



allowing God's hand to shape me, to shake me, and mold me and to push me? Even if it's uncomfortable I know that is best for me.

Is my faith forging me? Does it really feel like I'm training? I mean, imagine an Olympian who only trains once a week. You want me to get a little bit more real? What about one who only trains once a month?

I was just reading this article about *Creed III*. Michael B. Jordan and Jonathan Majors, who were staring in this film, trained two to three times a day to be fake boxers. Think about that.

So I think that we've got some space and God wants to do something with that holy discontentment that He puts into our lives. But He's also given us free will, so we can choose what we give our time to. What's our one thing? I just want to ask you, what's your one thing? You can be great at one thing and you get to choose it. But what are you going to choose? A lot of us, we get to be great at one thing. Right? Like Shack. Right? What's Shack's one thing. Basketball. Right? Nobody said actor. Or rapper. Right? No. Basketball.

What would happen if you made Jesus your one thing? Your priority. Not one of many but *the thing*? That following Him was the most important thing. And then you allowed yourself to go through the training and the pressing and the forging, what would God do? What would God stir up in our church in our lives in our city if we would take Him seriously and allow ourselves to be placed into that position?

I just want to encourage you today, don't grow weary, don't get tired, run the race, fight the good fight. Because this life that God has called us to, it is beautiful and there is a mystery to it.

Here's the thing that differentiates between this race and every other race that you'll see in the world. There is no in season and out of season. You're constantly in this race. You're constantly running toward Jesus.

Maybe you are like, “How am I not going to get tired? How am I not going to burn out?” It reminds me of what God says in Isaiah. He says, “Even young men grow weary. They get tired and exhausted. But those who trust in the Lord, they will run and not get tired, they will soar like eagles, they will walk and not faint because of the Spirit of God that is in them.”

This is what He wants to do. We should be excited, not dwelling on the past but looking ahead to what God has for us, in eager anticipation. I love what he said in verse 20. Take a look at this. He says:

*“But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. He will take,” look at this, “our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.”*

Philippians 3:15-21

We have these mortal bodies today and we press and we forge and we become more and more like Him in this race, but we run and we know that one day there is going to be this beautiful exchange where we go from these mortal bodies to this glorious body, like His.

And there will be this beautiful exchange where we realize that that race, even as hard as it was, it was worth it. And we know that what happened then does not compare to the glory that awaits us when we receive our prize, when we get to be with Jesus for all of eternity.

You see, when we think about the past, we don't think about what was done to us or even necessarily what we did. We think about what has already been done for us through the body of Jesus. That's what happens when we take communion, which is what we are about to do right now.

We take the elements and we remember what was done. That's what communion is. It's a moment to be with God, to commune with Him. Just like Mary, where she was just sitting at the feet of Jesus soaking in everything He had to say, that's what we're going to do now.



And as we remember I just want you to take a little bit of that bread and I want you to remember what it symbolizes. It symbolizes Jesus' body which is broken on our behalf. And we take this piece of bread and we remember. And we take the juice which represents Jesus' blood which was spilled for us, paying the debt, forgiving us of our sins so then we can live a life not haunted by our past by pressing on to the future. So take the juice which represents His blood and we remember.

And what we're going to do now is we're just going to have a longer time of reflection. A time to respond. Because I believe that God is doing something new in this season. There is this holy discontentment, not just in a few but in many. And, really, all I'm going to do is give you some time to be with God, to commune with Him, to sit with Him and hear what He has for you, what He is calling you to do, what is He calling you to start or to stop?

So go ahead and just take a few moments and reflect and ask the question, "What is God saying to me?"