

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

I WILL DEVELOP GODLY GRIT | SET LIKE FLINT

RYAN BRAMLETT | FEBRUARY 23, 2025

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

I want to celebrate last week, Pastor Aaron and Pastor Kyle leading through these moments, praying with oil, healing—we've heard so many people come forward with their stories. Can we just celebrate all that God did last week through both of those nights? Celebrate those guys—their leadership, unbelievable.

And today we're closing up this series. We've been in Set Like Flint where every week there has been a declaration: I Will. These are the people God has called us to be. So, I Will Declare War on Temptation. I Will Choose Joy. I Will Seek Wisdom. Every one of them has been powerful.

Today we're going to close it out with this word Grit. Grit. Now, before we even get to a definition of what this word means, I think when you hear the word, you probably see a person in your mind. Right? Someone who is as tough as nails, you can't keep them down, they keep moving forward. And I'm just going to beat you to the punch. The person you have in your mind is someone who is not from my generation.

I can say it. The person I have in mind isn't someone I went to high school with. It's my grandpa, my Pop. I can see him now just sitting there, the steam from his coffee coming up to meet the smoke from his cigarette—just like a gritty kind of a guy.

And I loved being around him when I was younger. All I wanted to do is just follow him around because he was always doing something. I remember one day, I was probably five or six years old, and we were on the side of his house. I didn't know exactly what was going on, but he was stacking up these concrete slabs. And my five- or six-year-old self... It just kept going. It was so big. And he was about to lift it.

And I said, "Pop, that looks really heavy. Are you sure you can lift that?" And he just looked at me and smiled and he said, "I've got a pretty big limit." I said, "Okay." He's standing there and he gets down low, gets his fingers underneath the concrete slabs and he goes to pull, his hand slips, the rocks fall.

And I didn't miss a beat. I said, "Over your limit?" And he smiled at me again. And this time he dug his feet in even more and reached back down there again. Got his fingers underneath it and pulled with everything he had. It was like he was lifting the house himself. And he grabbed it and then moved away. That is grit.



This idea, we're going to dig down deep. We're going to go again. At first we fail. We're going to dust ourselves off and try again. Thanks Aaliyah. You guys can google that later. But it's this idea of perseverance, of pushing forward, of not stopping no matter the opposition.

Here's the thing. We need grit. We need grit. Because just like we just celebrated, people were healed last week. People moved forward in freedom, but people are going to be hurt again. We are going to be knocked down again. And we are going to need grit to get back up again.

We need grit because we are this small culture in the world. As Christians, we are going against opposition. The world is spinning in this direction and yet we're charging the other way. We are going to need grit.

We need to be honest. I think about the life of following Jesus, what it is and what it is not. Sometimes we set the bar too low. Not, "Come on in the water is great—super easy. No, no. It's going to be fun. You're going to love it."

If you've ever seen the movie Money Ball, these two guys are sitting down trying to convince a player to switch a position he's played his whole life and to move to first base. And look at the conversation of what they say, They say:

"It's not that hard, Scott. Tell him, Wash..." "It's incredibly hard. Hey, anything worth doing is!"

And that's what I would say about our faith. It is going to be extremely difficult, but at the same time, nothing will be more rewarding than chasing after Jesus and all that He has for us. God didn't promise an easy life. He actually made it very clear that this is going to be a hard life. Look at what He says in Matthew, chapter 7. Jesus says:

"Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few." Matthew, chapter 7: 13-14 (ESV)

This life that Jesus has called us to is filled with love and joy and grace, but at the same time it is narrow and hard, and we are going to need some grit to continue to move forward and to advance His kingdom.

But what is grit? Well, the best definition I've found was from Doctor Angela Lee Duckworth, who studied for years about this and actually came to the conclusion that grit is the determining factor. When you look at who is going to be successful, if they have grit it is far more likely for them to be successful. And this is the way she describes grit after all of her research. She says:

Grit is passion and perseverance for very long-term goals. Grit is having stamina. Grit is sticking with your future day in and day out, not just for the week, not just for the month,



but for years, and working really hard to make that future a reality. Grit is living life like it's a marathon, not a sprint.

Anybody need some of that? Anybody looking for a little bit more grit? Here's the thing. You don't see the word grit in the Bible, but I don't know if there is a better word to describe the people in the Bible. They were a gritty few who somehow kept going.

Our story is the David and Goliath story. The little shepherd boy who faces off against a war champion, a literal giant. And somehow at the end of it, David is walking away still standing.

The Jewish people, this small group of people amidst all of these giant empires should have been knocked down—still standing.

The church—this movement that we are a part of growing up within the Roman Empire should have been knocked down before it ever got a chance to start. And yet, within a few years' time the Christians had overturned the largest empire in the world because they partnered with God.

God used a faithful few. And He's still looking to grab a few faithful people today. How often, though, are we held back by discomfort, by fear? We feel this conviction to go and to be, but it's like, "Oh my gosh. I don't know if that's possible."

I just want to say this to people here today. Your life was meant for so much more than just waiting—waiting to go to heaven one day. God has a plan and a purpose for your life right now. It begins when you say yes to Him, and you develop some grit to go forward.

But what it's not... I also want to say this before we jump into it. There is a difference between worldly grit and godly grit. What I am talking about today is not just try harder. It's not white knuckling it. It's not pull yourself up by your own bootstraps, (I don't even know if they are putting bootstraps on boots anymore, you guys can look into that if you want). But it's this idea that we are going to partner with God. That's the difference between worldly grit and godly grit.

Today our declaration is:

I Will Develop Godly Grit

Now, the big difference between the two, between worldly grit and godly grit is the strength and the source behind it. It's the source behind the stamina and the perseverance and the resilience. And the source is a surprising source. Alright? So, I'm going to give it to you upfront and then we're going to unpack what it looks like. The difference between worldly grit and godly grit is:

Grace



It's grace. And I know that maybe that sounds surprising to you and we're going to unpack that. That's what we're going to do today. I just want to unpack how big grace is. It's bigger than we've been letting on. It's bigger than what we've connected to before. And then I just want to be practical and say:

How do we develop godly grit?

Sound good?

So, Scripture talks about grace a lot. There are 131 uses of grace—124 of those in the New Testament. Grace upon grace upon grace. But here's the thing. It talks about grace in two different ways.

I think a lot of times when we think about grace, we only think about it one way. It's the Ephesians 2, verse 8 kind of way. Look at this:

"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God." Here it is. "Salvation is not a reward for the good things that we have done, so that none of us can boast about it." (NLT)

When we think of grace, we think of the free, undeserved gift of salvation, which is true. That is grace. But there are two sides to the coin of grace. There is the salvation side, but then there is this other side over here that is for right now.

And to look at this, to get the full picture of grace, I want us to look at 1 Corinthians. 1 Corinthians, chapter 15. Paul is setting this up and we're going to learn about the other side of grace. And this is where the grit is. Okay? 1 Corinthians, chapter 15, Paul says:

"Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him." I saw Jesus. "For I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I'm not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God's church."

Why is Paul talking like this? Why is he the least of all of the apostles? Well, one: he was last in line to become an apostle. Two (kind of a big one): what was unique about him was he wasn't necessarily a follower of Jesus, he was kind of on the other team, the other side. His job was to hunt down, track, persecute, and even kill the first Christians. So, he's kind of downplaying it, at the least. Right?

But I think someone needs to hear that today too. When you think about the grace of God, and what is available to you, you need to know that if God used Paul after everything he did, God can use you too. There is no one who is too far, there is no one beyond the grace of God that God cannot use in this moment right now.

And then he says he has this moment with God where he sees Him on the road to Damascus and he falls and in a moment he receives salvation because he sees Jesus for who He truly is. It is by the grace of God that he has this. But here's what we learn in

Paul's story. Grace keeps going. Grace doesn't end. Look at what he says in the next verses, starting in verse 10. Paul says:

"But whatever I am now," and this is all of us. Whatever I am. Whatever you are, we are in process, "it is all because God poured out his special favor on me," that's another phrase for grace, "and not without results. For I have worked harder than any of the other apostles;" Dig—take that, Matthew. "yet it was not I but God who was working through me by his grace." (NLT)

It was grace that enabled him. It was grace that empowered him. In Paul's life, grace looked a lot like hard work. But I don't know if that is, a lot of times, how we view grace. Paul says it caused him to work harder than anyone else. But I think for a lot of us, we view grace like a blanket. Right? We place our faith in Jesus and it's like He comes down and lays a blanket on top of us, like, "Hey, just be really comfortable. Chill. Wait here. I'll be back. Here's My blanket of grace."

The problem with that is that it is not biblical. Grace is more like a cape than a blanket. Grace was meant to turn us from normal to supernatural. Grace was meant to empower us with the very Spirit of God to do the work of God now, in this moment.

But I want to prod a little bit. After you receive the grace of God, is it still showing up in your life. Is it causing you to work harder than anyone else? Are there results of God's grace in your life? If not, maybe there is more to be had. Maybe God is speaking to you in this moment.

A lot of times we get tied up with this word. Like, "No, no. I was saved by grace." I'm not saying that we work to be saved. One of my favorite authors says, "Grace is opposed to earning, not effort." So, it's this idea that when I realize all that God has done for me, the invitation He has extended to me, the only logical response is, "I want to give everything, every fiber of my being to becoming like Jesus."

It's this idea that God is for me and my salvation but also for my right now. In the presence of God, right now, grace is available to you. This is how we get to verses like Hebrews, chapter 4, verse 16 where the author says:

So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy and find grace." And, what's that grace for? "To help us when we need it most." (NLT)

And here's how this cycle goes. The more grace we receive, the more grit we have, the harder we work, the more results we see, the more fruitful we become, the more dependent we are upon God, over and over and over again.

If I could take all of this and bring it down into one sentence—maybe a new view for you to see grace, it would be this:

Grace is the power of God to fulfill what we lack

Grace is for my salvation, but grace is also for my sanctification, meaning grace saved me and grace is forming me into the image of Jesus. When we pray, we go to a throne of grace, to a gracious Father. He has saved us and now He's promising to help us when we need it most. This is the relationship we have.

But grace doesn't mean a complete takeover. It doesn't mean, "I was saved. I got baptized. I placed my faith in Jesus. Now I just sit here in this lazy river on my way to heaven." It's like, "No, I've given you this grace for a purpose." It's not a complete takeover. It's you being lowered and you saying, "Not my will but Your will be done. I want my life to be a partnership with You, God." Coming together. It's all of me and all of Him.

I love the way author Dallas Willard says it. He says, "God is greatly concerned with the quality of character we are building. The future He has planned for us when we build on the strength of character we forge by His grace." That's the partnership. We forge. We show up. We work harder than anybody else. But, at the same time, it's not us working, it is the grace of God empowering us. That's the life God wants for us. That partnership is how we develop godly grit.

And that's what I just want to spend the back half of our time with:

How do we develop godly grit?

If grace is for right now, what would it look like to develop it in my life?

You know, as a church, and even as a church staff, we talk a lot about this. We even have a staff behavior that is built around grit because we believe in it. It's called:

Cultivate a Growth Mindset

And here's what it is:

We are always adapting and learning as we seek and apply feedback

It's this idea that we are humbling ourselves. We are helping to lead a church in the midst of all of this craziness to expand over the powers of darkness, to reach more and more people. We know we don't have everything it takes. We know we're going to need to learn, to adapt, to seek feedback so that God will continue to push us forward. This is grit.

And our Scripture reference for it is Romans, chapter 12, verse 2 where he says:

"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect." (NLT)



Changing the way that you think. That's where it starts. The way we view grace. The way we view our lives. The way we view grit. The way we view our purpose and our mission on this earth begins to change us into a gritty church. Alright?

So, I just want to give you four things today. Four things that we can do, starting today, that will help develop godly grit within us. Okay? You ready? Alright. You guys—it's alright. You're getting warmed up. I can feel it. It's coming.

Number one:

Godly grit will develop as we pray, "Come Holy Spirit."

Now, I know this is kind of like, "What exactly does that mean? I thought God was everywhere. I thought the Holy Spirit, His presence, was always here." And it is. But when we pray this prayer, what we're saying is, "I want to be conscious of the fact that God is here in this moment ready to help me with the things that I need most."

Because we can live our lives without Him. God is not going to force His will, His Spirit, His ways upon us. We have to ask for it. We have to want it. So, when we pray, "Come, Holy Spirit," we are inviting the presence of God into everything that we do. Big things and little.

You know we are coming to an end today, actually, of 21 days of prayer and fasting. I hope these days have been doing as much for you as they have been for me. What we've been saying is, "Hey, when we pray, when we focus on The Lord's Prayer, our time with God doesn't end when we say, 'Amen.' We want to bring God with us in everything that we do."

That's what this prayer, this simple breath prayer of, "Come, Holy Spirit," is. It's, "Make me aware, empower me." And we're calling on just who the Holy Spirit is. And we get three words, really, to describe who the Holy Spirit is. So, when we pray, "Come, Holy Spirit," here's what we are praying for. We are praying for an:

Advocate

Because I don't know about you, but one of the things that holds me back from doing the things that I feel like God has called me to do is like, "It couldn't be me. I don't know if I can do that. I don't know, because of who I am, because of my weaknesses, I don't think that is going to work."

We have an Advocate, a legal representative who, when we're in that spot saying who we aren't, He reminds us of who we are, "No, no. You can. You are a son. You are a daughter of God. You are empowered by My Spirit." All authority has been given to Jesus and now He is partnering with you to do what you need to do. He reminds us of who we are, and our legal status of what grace has done in our lives. He's our Advocate.

And then He's also our:



Comforter

And a little riddle for you. If God felt that we needed a Comforter, don't you think it's because He thought that there was a good chance that we were going to be uncomfortable—a lot?

And that's what I would look at. There are days, weeks, seasons I go through and I'm like, "Actually, life is pretty good. I don't feel like I'm stressed at all. I don't feel like I need grit at all." And I would be praying, "Come, Holy Spirit. Remind me of what I'm doing here. Give me something that is bigger than myself. Challenge me. Because I know in that space where I'm outside of myself is where You show up and You lead me to what is next."

So, He comforts us as we go to do what we think is impossible. And then the final thing: He's our Advocate; He's our Comforter, and He's our:

Counselor

And I think a lot of times we use our definition of counselor for this. We're like, "Okay. That's just like we're going to lay down in the mornings on the couch with our head on a pillow and be like, 'Speak to me, God. Tell me how great I am. Comfort me and be my counselor.'"

The word here is actually more for a war strategist, like a general. He's counseling us on a war. He's telling us where to go and what He wants to do and how we are going to advance His kingdom, "Go here. Don't touch that. Move this way. The enemy is on this side." He is advising us on where to go and how to live out the mission.

That's what we mean when we say that He's the Counselor. He's giving us battle plans. That's why we talk so much about this battleship mentality, because He is our Counselor. That's what God is doing in this moment. He's revealing to us every single moment of the day that we are not alone. We are in this partnership with God. It's not all of me, it's not all of Him, it's us together.

And this really came to light for me in my early years of ministry. When I was first starting out, Pastor Howard Brammer was leading a pastor class—like a 101: Here's what you need to know to be a pastor at Traders Point.

Some of you know Pastor Howard Brammer. He was the lead pastor before Pastor Aaron. So, he's in this space in his life where he's just pouring into the next generation. There were a few of us. We showed up every week and he was in this spot in his life where he was retired and he's here to do one thing only. Speak truth. He was going to say what he thought we needed to hear and then he was moving on. And I loved him so much.

And one of those days he was teaching us about how to receive encouragement as a pastor. And he said, "I'll tell you what I don't like. I don't like these guys—don't be one of these guys that when someone gives you encouragement you're like, "Only God. Only God. That was God. That was completely God. That was not me at all."

He said, "Listen here. It was not that good. Whatever you did, it was not that good for it to be only God. You were there. You were there. It's okay to receive that. Of course, you know that wouldn't have happened without His grace and His gifts that He has given you. So, at the same time receive it and acknowledge that this me and God working together—this is partnership."

And we get a look into what this looks like lived out in ministry in 2 Samuel, chapter 23. These are David's last words. And look at the way he summarizes his ministry, this partnership with him and God. He says:

"The Spirit of the Lord speaks through me; his words are upon my tongue." (NLT)

He says, "It's like when I sit down, when I speak, when I write this poetry that has changed the world, it's like I'm not showing up alone. It's my tongue. I'm being available, but it's like God's words are speaking through me in this moment."

That is what it means when we say, "Come, Holy Spirit." That is what it means for this partnership between us and God to move forward in His grace. That's the first thing. The second thing is:

Godly grit will develop as we tell others about the grace of God

And I know that you don't like this one, because you're like, "No. I was with you. I was with you on the prayer, 'Come, Holy Spirit.' Now I've got to go talk to people? I don't even really like people like that."

This is why we are here. This is why grace was given to us. So that we could take it to people who haven't heard it yet. This is the Good News we are bringing to the world that brings great joy to all people.

We have to tell them about it. But we have to put ourselves in a spot that needs it. We need to put ourselves in a spot that needs the grace of God. And I don't know about you, but I never need the grace of God more, I'm never aware of how small and how few answers I have then when I'm telling others about the grace of God.

If you want to pray, "Come, Holy Spirit," start serving in Kids Ministry today. You sit down with a five-year-old who gives you a question you don't have the answer to, and you are like, "Oh, 'Come, Holy Spirit.'" Somebody come—somebody come and handle this situation.

You want to need the Holy Spirit, you need some grit, start serving in Youth Ministry. Sit down with a teenager who is going through so much and who is now bringing you in and



trusting you with her biggest questions and she lays them at your feet. See if you don't pray, "Come, Holy Spirit. How do I get the grace of God?"

You want to need the Holy Spirit. If you want to become painfully aware of your need, start leading Rooted, start serving as a group leader. You will sit down with someone who just lost their spouse. You'll sit down with someone who has lost their kid, and they are looking to you for the word of God. And you know the only thing you have to offer is, "Come, Holy Spirit. Help me."

This is what our life and our mission is. And this is when we'll begin to want, and not only want but need grace, it is when we live on mission. This is what Paul was all about. Look at what he says in Acts, chapter 20. He says:

"I don't know what awaits me, except that the Holy Spirit tells me in city after city that jail and suffering lie ahead." There is some good news. "But my life is worth nothing to me unless I use it for finishing the work assigned to me by the Lord Jesus—the work of telling others the Good News about the wonderful grace of God." (NLT)

He says, "I was filled with grace. The grittiest that you will ever know because I gave my life for this one thing. And it took everything out of me from jail, to prison, to beatings. But God carried me through. It was like I was showing up, but He was the One who was leading me in that moment."

You see, this is what the Bible says. The kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk. It's living by God's power. We can memorize Scripture and we can know what God says, but until we turn that corner and say, "The kingdom of God is not just a lot of talk, it is living by God's power, and Jesus I want your power, I want you to lead me in this moment, I want you to give me what I don't have, I want to live my life not pretending that I can do this alone, I want to be dependent on You."

And I'll tell you, God has really been speaking to me about this. Some of you know that (if you are in this room) every time before I preach, before I tell others about the message of grace that comes from God, there is a giant cross over here and I literally cling to the bottom of it asking God to help me. "I know I can't do it alone. Take away these fears and guide these words. God, show up. I'm dependent."

It was a few weeks ago, none of you guys know this, but as I was preparing to write my sermon I had the flu. And some of you are like, "No, we could tell. We could tell." But I woke up every morning just headachy, sick. I've never prayed like I prayed that week. Just so dependent, "God, if You don't show up, I have nothing. I have no wit. I have no cleverness. I need Your words. I need Your power." I've never prayed like that before. And God delivered.

And then I felt like, after I got through that it was like God came along side of me, not in a condemning way, not in a shameful way, but as a father who just puts his arms around



you, it was like, “Hey, I love how dependent you are upon Me for a sermon. And I love how dependent you were on Me this past week when you were sick.”

But He was like, “What if you didn’t need a sermon and what if you didn’t need sickness to call on My name like that? What if every day could be like. Because that’s what I want for you. I don’t just want you to show up occasionally looking for Me to show up. I want to be in the little things and the big things. I want to be at your kitchen table for breakfast. I want to be there at dinner.

“I want to be in the meetings that you think you already have figured out. I want you to pray, ‘Come, Holy Spirit.’ I want to be in the things that you think that you have graduated from. I want you to bring Me along so I can show you that there is more to be had here. I want you to do every moment with Me.”

And I think God, as a heavenly Father, has put His arm around all of us in this season saying, “You’re doing amazing. You’re doing so many things. And I want you to have more of Me, more of My grace.”

The third one is this: How are we going to develop godly grit?

We develop as we surround ourselves with a gritty crew

We talk a lot at this church about getting a crew. Find your crew. Surround yourself with people. But it’s not just enough to surround yourself with people. You can surround yourself with people and do nothing. You can surround yourself with people and have a good time. But that doesn’t mean that it’s a godly work. It doesn’t mean that it’s taking godly grit. When the Bible talks about us coming together, it’s like iron sharpening iron. Hard. Being forged into the image of God.

I don’t know, I think some of our groups don’t look as much like iron sharpening iron as they do like peanut butter and jelly. Right? It works. It goes together. It’s a great time. Everyone enjoys it. But, at the end of the week, at the end of the month, do we look more like Jesus? Cause, real talk. Maybe the only time you pray for your group is the day of when you pray that your group leader cancels. Too real, huh?

But what if we could shift that and what if we could pray real prayers, real prayers where we are saying, “God, use this group to forge me into Your image. God, I want to be a part of something that is bigger than myself.”

I’m going to be honest with you, I’ve come to this spot in my life where I don’t want to do anything alone. The only two places I go to alone are to be with God and to go to the restroom. Those are the only two places. And I am an introvert’s introvert. How introverted am I? I go to the movies by myself. Right?

But I’ve come to this space, in humility, to say, “I’m not as strong as I think that I am. I’m not as disciplined as I think I am. I need other people.” So, when I work out, I’ve got two



guys. When I read the Bible, I've got two guys. Everything that I am doing in my life, I'm surrounding myself with people who are helping me, and it reminds me that I'm a part of something bigger than myself.

I'm not just showing up for me, I know if I don't show up, they are not going to get what God gave me. I know if I don't show up, they are not going to have this celebration. If I don't show up, they are not going to have what God gave them to share with me. So, it empowers us and brings us into something that is bigger than ourselves.

And then the final one is this:

Godly grit develops as we set big goals that can only be achieved by the grace of God

You know, there is one thing of having faith that one day when you pass from this earth you will be with Jesus in eternity. That takes faith. But I'm talking about right now, about the grace of God empowering us to live life that we didn't even think was possible. I want to set goals so big that unless God shows up, it's going to fail. That's the kind of life that I want to live. The Bible says that God can do more than we could ever ask or imagine. The least we can do is bring Him what we can ask and what we can imagine.

This is how we function as a church. We're in the middle of this giant season called Awaken. Do you remember the goals for Awaken? One hundred percent engagement. That's 100 percent—that's all of the people, all of the people in the church would take steps closer to Jesus.

Listen. I'm a B student—85 percent would have been great for me, 90 percent, 95, 98—but no. We said 100 percent. Why? Because unless God shows up it's going to fail. We said 99 percent is failure. I've never even said that number out loud before we started this Awaken initiative. Numbers so big that unless God shows up, it's going to fail.

Twenty-one days of prayer and fasting—for a lot of us we were like, "I don't even know if I can do that. This is going to be unbelievably difficult." But you did it. You put yourself there and you created a place where there was a gap between where you were and where you wanted to be, and you filled that with God's grace and grit.

And today we are going to break that fast. Can we celebrate what God did in these 21 days? For leading us through what we didn't think we could do. That's a life of faith. And I want to help us. I know you can set your own goals, and I encourage you to do so, but I just want to give you something to make sure that what God did in those 21 days, and what God did in this series, doesn't just end when this week ends, but it continues to move forward to shape us into the image of God.

Every week has been an I Will statement, a declaration. So, what I just want to challenge you to do is look back and say, "Hey, we talked about a lot of things that we were going to be, but I will choose joy; I will be consistent; I will seek wisdom. What is it for you that you need to set a goal around? What is it that you need?"



Not just to set any goal, but to set a goal so big that unless the Spirit of God shows up—no way it's happening? To set a goal that is connected to the mission of God. How does this connect? Not just to benefit me, but how do I use it to tell people about the message of grace that only comes from God?

And then how do I take that goal and share it with my crew? That I'm not just showing up: How was my day? It was good. How was your day? Good. We're coming in to say, "Hey, God put this on my heart, this giant goal, and I know that only by the grace of God and only if we can forge together to make this happen will it happen." And that's when group becomes what it's about.

So, I just want to give you that. Because the grace of God is for right now. The grace of God is not just for heaven's gates one day. The grace of God is right now to push back the gates of hell. The grace of God is for right now for the light to push back the darkness, and it will never be able to extinguish it.

The grace of God right now is to be used to bring the Good News of the gospel to all people: every tribe, every tongue, every nation. Think about how big that is. Only possible by the Spirit and the grace of God. And the same Spirit lives within you.

We talk about this a lot because it's in the Bible and because it's true. But a lot of times we phrase it this way: The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the grave, is the same Spirit that lives in you. That is true.

But I want you to see that the same, gritty Spirit that lives in Jesus lives in you. Not just post resurrection. The it's the same Spirit that led Jesus through His ministry, the same Spirit that led Him to be arrested, to be beaten, to be mocked, to have His back ripped apart, to have a crown of thorns pressed on His head until blood came down His face.

The grit that kept Him moving. The grit that made Him carry His own cross. Jesus, after all of that beating would reach down and dig deep and get His hands underneath that beam and lift it up and walk His own cross to His own death. Why? Why? How? How, by the power of the Spirit. Why? To tell others about the grace of God.

That is the same message for us. That is the same purpose for us. How are we going to do it? By the grace of God. Why are we going to do it? So that others will come to know the grace of God.

And if you haven't received that, you don't know this gritty God who left heaven, came to earth, lived and died for you, defeated sin and death, He now offers a relationship to you. One that secures your eternity, but one that brings power right now. We just want you to know that that is available to you. Don't leave here without talking to somebody.

And the way that we want to close today is with Communion. This reminder, the Eucharist, to celebrate all that God has done over these 21 days of prayer and fasting.



We're breaking it with Communion. We're remembering that this is only possible because of Jesus.

So, right now, I just want to encourage you at all of our campuses take the bread, which represents Jesus' body that was broken on our behalf, and we remember. And we take the juice, which represents the blood that was poured out for us, and we remember.

And we don't just remember, we look ahead. We know that one day in eternity we are going to sit down at a table with much better juice and bread and share this meal with Jesus. And along the way, our mission is to get as many people to that table as possible.

So, right now, what I'm going to do is I'm going to pray. I'm going to pray for all of us at all of our campuses to join together and to pray that ancient prayer, "Come, Holy Spirit." Would you pray with us?

Father, we are grateful. God, we have seen You move. God, we believe that Your grace is more, more than we could have ever asked for, more than we could have ever imagined, grace that brings us into heaven, but grace that brings heaven to earth, grace that turns dead bodies to life, grace that empowers our work, our partnership with You.

So, Father, we pray, "Come, Holy Spirit." Bring Your Advocate. Bring Your Comforter. God, bring Your Counselor. All with Your words and Your ways and Your power. God, I pray in this moment that we would be a church that would be marked by Your grace, empowered by Your Spirit, a Spirit who is a gritty Spirit, a Spirit who cannot be taken down, a Spirit who says that if God is for us, who can be against us? A grit that doesn't give up.

God, I pray for that right now in the name of Jesus. Father, it is in Your perfect and holy name we pray. And the church says: Amen.

