
Alright. What's up church family? How are you doing? So good to be with you. I want to welcome everyone across all of our campuses, wherever you may be joining us from. Maybe you're watching online. Maybe you're listening to a podcast later in the week. Really glad that you could be here. My name is Aaron and I get to be one of the pastors around here.

Today we're beginning a new series of messages and I want to kind of start off this way. This past week I was doing a little bit of reading about a guy by the name of George Stratton, who was a psychologist at the University of California in the 1890s. So—it was a slow week, alright?

So, I was doing a little reading about him and he specialized in the area of visual perception. Some of you probably remember learning this in your high school biology class. Everything that we see is upside down but by the time that those images get to our brain, our brain flips them right side up the way that we see it.

Stratton had discovered this, knew this, and so he developed a set of lenses that would flip everything upside down because he just wanted to know what it would be like to go throughout the day with everything upside down, apparently not a lot to do in the 1890s. So he puts these on, and he wears them for something like eight weeks. And he talks about how, at first, it's super disorienting to have everything upside down.

And if we were just to imagine, like trying to go through your day and the sky is at your feet and the trees are upside down and you pour your coffee and it goes up—I mean that just a little disorienting.

Since that time others have actually repeated the same experiment that Stratton pioneered. And they've all said something very, very similar. They said that after a while—at first, it's so disorienting—but after a while they begin to adapt. And they can begin to even function. One guy talked about how he could walk around his house and not stub his toe anymore. You can even read and write and ride a bicycle with everything looking upside down.

See, all of us see the world through a set of lenses. The technical term for is worldview, but really the idea is that the way in which you see the world affects what you think and what you say and the decisions that you make and how you spend your money. All of us are a product of our culture, but we're also a product of the way that we view the world. And the way that we view the world—those lenses—are informed by maybe our generation, maybe you're a Baby boomer, maybe you're a gen X'er like me. By the way, we're the smallest generation because our parents got freaked out about money and

didn't want to have a big family so... We're in therapy for it, alright? Maybe you're a Millennial.

None of those are bad. All of those are good, but it definitely informs the way you see the world and why you look at other generations and you go, "I don't understand you." And they are like, "Well, I don't understand you, because the way you live and the way you see kind of looks upside down."

Maybe the way in which we view the world is dependent upon personality, it's informed by your gender, your ethnicity and this all informs the way that we see the world. So, from our perspective... Like the way I see the world is totally normal to me because that's all I've ever known. But you might get up close to me and go, "Well, Aaron. You're weird. The way that you say things and the way that you think about things and the way you process things is sort of abnormal. It's flipped around."

How about this. Have you ever gotten song lyrics wrong? Like you were so convinced that the song said *that* and you're like belting it out and then your kids tell you that you're getting it wrong? Here are a few examples.

You thought that this song right here by Dire Straits that says:

"Money for nothin' and your chicks for free," but you thought it said;
"Money for nothin' and the **chips** are free..."

And you're totally convinced of that.

Or maybe this next song right here by Paul Young:

"Every time you go away, you take a piece of me with you," and you've been singing, "Every time you go away, you take a piece of **meat** with you..."

Like, why not? Like, put a hot dog in your pocket as you leave.

Maybe this next one:

"Sweet dreams are made of these," by the Eurythmics. But you thought it was
"Sweet dreams are made of **cheese**..."

This next one is my favorite. It's a great song by Starship:

"We built this city on rock and roll," but you were so convinced that it was
"We built this city on **sausage** rolls..." Yeah!

Why not build a city on sausage rolls? That sounds amazing.

Somebody pointed this out to me last service. They said, “Every single one of those had to do with food.” We just kind of fill in the blank with food.

What if what we thought was normal was really abnormal? What if the way that we saw the world was really upside down?

Today we’re beginning a new series of messages that is going to take us all the way up through Christmas and it’s just simply called *modgniK*, alright? modgniK. I want everybody across all of our campuses to say modgniK, modgniK.

Now, no this is not some random Greek word. This is not a name for one of Nasa’s space shuttles, you know modgniK III—kind of sounds like it could be. This is actually the word Kingdom flipped back around, because Jesus’ kingdom is a backwards, upside-down kind of kingdom.

So what we’re going to do over the next seven weeks together is we’re just going to take a letter out of this word modgniK, which is Kingdom flipped around, and we’re just going to look at some of the aspects of the backward kingdom of God:

More is less
Others first
Descend into greatness
Generosity flows
Not to us
Inclusive
King on a Cross

And I’ve been thinking about and praying about this series for a number of weeks and my prayer, my hope is that this series will reinforce some things that maybe a lot of us who have been following after Jesus for a while, maybe we’ve just simply forgotten.

But even more than that, my desire is that this series would maybe be eye opening and clarifying to many of us watching or listening to this right now, because maybe we’ve begun to think or believe some things about God that just really are not accurate.

So I think that this series is going to be helpful. And if you are here and maybe you have been gone from church for a while, you’ve been out of church for a while, maybe you left when you got into college, maybe you left when your marriage was falling apart, or there was a season of life that was super challenging, so you just sort of drifted out of church.

Maybe you didn’t even make a conscience decision to do so, you just kind of fell out of the habit of it. And now you’re in a season where you’re beginning to come back, but it feels like you’ve lost a lot of ground. It kind of feels like, “Man, I feel like I’ve been out for too long. It feels like I’ll never catch up to everyone else.”

It kind of feels like you're a high school senior trying out for the football team for the first time and everybody else has been playing since pee-wee league and you look around and your like, "I just don't know if I can get caught up." And you'll be tempted to quit again. I think this series is going to be really, really helpful and encouraging for you.

Maybe you're here today and you've had a bad church experience, maybe you've been disappointed, let down, hurt in some way. Maybe you unknowingly combined or confused the American dream with following after Jesus and so what you thought was that if you believed all of the right things and checked all of the right boxes and behaved in the right way, then God would give you what you wanted. He'd make life really easy.

But actually, you could make a viable case that it was just the opposite. You can mark your calendar with the day that you publicly made a decision for Jesus and that's when life began to fall apart. You were trying to leverage God to get what you wanted, and it didn't work. So you thought, "Well, I don't know that I believe in God anymore. And if that's you in any way, I think that this series is going to be really helpful and encouraging for you.

Maybe there are others of you and you're here and you're on the fence. You've been visiting for a while and you're like, "Man, I didn't know that church was like this. This is kind of interesting to me. I'm getting something out of the teaching. I'm spiritual and I believe in God, but I don't know that I would call myself a Christian just yet."

"In fact, what is a Christian anyway?" Maybe you're wrestling through those questions. Like, "What is it that gets you in? And every time I google evangelical Christian, or I watch the media outlets talk about evangelical Christianity, I've got to be honest—I don't know that I want to be one."

Or like, "How often does one need to pray to be a Christian?" And, "Does God grade on the curve, because if he does then I'm pretty sure that I'm good because I'm not as good as some but I'm not as bad as most, so I think I'm good. I think I'm good, right?" What if you believe in God and you love Jesus, but you cuss a little? Are you still in?

What about this? "What brand of Christian should I be? Let's say I decide to be a Christian, now what version because there's like Baptist, and Methodist, and non-denominational (I can't even say it) and there are like traditional and contemporary and those that are really formal and those that are just casual and those that are skinny jeans and V-necks. Which should you be?" And I think that if you're asking any of those questions, man, I'm so glad that you're here and I think that this series is going to be really helpful to you.

I want to say something that might surprise many of you. Some of you, this might get an emotional reaction out of you, but I just want you to let this statement sit on you for just a minute.

Jesus never invited us to be **Christians**

I think that that can be a little shocking. I think that for some of us that seems a little disorienting, “Aaron, did you fall and hit your head this week? Jesus is the one who started Christianity. Of course he wants us to be Christians.”

He never once used the word. The word Christian is actually never found in the New Testament. It actually came after Jesus. It was used to describe the small group of people who were seeking to follow after Jesus in a society that was somewhat hostile to the message that he came to bring. In fact, the word Christian simply means *little Christs*. It was a derogatory term. They were poking fun at them. They were going, “Hey, look at you little Christs; you imperfect little people trying to follow after Jesus.” No, Jesus never invited us to be Christians.

Jesus invited us to be part of His **Kingdom**

And that’s actually a very different thing. See the message of the Kingdom of God is something that is backwards from what we might even think. Jesus one time would pray this in Matthew, chapter 6, verse 33. He would say, “Seek the **Kingdom** of God **above all else**,” and that’s pretty significant, like above everything else in your life, like above your generational preferences, above your political persuasions, above your economic aspirations, above your particular style of religion, your religious upbringing.

“Seek the **Kingdom** above all else, and live righteously,” that just simply means live rightly, now notice this, “and he will give you everything you need.” Now, notice he didn’t say want—that’s different. He said he would give you everything that you need.

The Kingdom of God was central to the ministry and the mission of Jesus. He talked about it a lot and I think we probably should too. He talked about it approximately 126 times. In the four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John Jesus mentions the Kingdom of God.

I don’t know what comes into your mind when you hear the word *kingdom*. Maybe you think about the UK, the United Kingdom. Maybe you think about the television show *The Walking Dead* and King Ezekiel and his kingdom. Maybe you think about epic movies like *Lord of the Rings* or *Braveheart* or *Gladiator*. But the big idea is that when you hear the word *kingdom*—at least for me—is like medieval times. You’ve got a king sitting on a throne, you’ve got warriors around him, they are getting ready to go to battle to conquer the world so that they can be number one.

See the word *kingdom* could mean a sphere of influence. That’s really the big idea behind it. Kingdom is whatever is your domain. You control it. Your sphere of influence. So under that definition, we all have kingdoms.

Maybe your kingdom is your car. You've got all of the pre-settings set ahead of time. You've got your radio channels plugged in. You've got the temperature set to a perfect 71 degrees. The mirrors are all set to your height. Have you ever had somebody get into your kingdom—or your car—and mess all of that up? And you're like, "Who got into my kingdom and messed it up?"

Maybe your kingdom, guys, is your man-cave. You've got the leather couch and it's dark and you've got the big screen TV and a fridge full of drinks. Maybe your kingdom is your kitchen. It's your backyard. It's what ever it is where your sphere of influence is and what you say goes—it's where you control things.

And God actually has a kingdom but it's different than what we might think.

You see, the disciples could never fully grasp this. They thought that when Jesus came and he was a king and he began to talk about his kingdom, they thought, "Well, you're going to do this right now. You're going to conquer the world and we're going to be the ones in positions of power. And since we're the closest to you, we've got seats at the table. Jesus, let's do this. Let's kick some tail and take some names." And it was sort of self-seeking.

And Jesus was like: No, no, no, no—you guys don't get it. I've not come to be served. I've come to serve. I've not come to get life but have come to lay mine down. I've not come to be a king that sits on a throne. I've come to be a king who would hang on a cross and give up my life so that others might find it. And you know, that's just backwards from what most of us might think.

So, they wanted Jesus to usher in this kingdom with power, but Jesus says: No, I've come to do something very different. And it's counter-intuitive and counter-cultural. Jesus says things like this. He says: to receive, we must give; to achieve greatness, we must make ourselves less; to be first, we must be last; to be strong, we become weak; to become exalted, we humble ourselves; to be free, we become a servant; to find victory, we admit defeat; to find life, we lay ours down.

And in our world that is just not how things work. In our world you don't turn the other cheek, you lawyer up. You don't love your enemies; you defeat your enemies. If you want to be first, then you cut in line, you elbow your way to the front because the first are first. If you want to be exalted, then you make sure that other people are very well aware of your achievements and you make sure that you continue to be in the spotlight whenever possible, because the exalted are exalted. If you want to be strong then you never admit weakness, because the strong are strong.

So when Jesus comes with this more is less kind of kingdom, he knew that it was going to be super disorienting to us. It's like putting a set of lenses on that flips everything upside down. He would teach a number of stories and provide analogies and word

pictures to help us grasp his kingdom. So one time he described the kingdom of God this way. He described it as a:

Wedding reception. Matthew 22

Jesus essentially said this. He said that heaven is like a party. That should be really good news for a lot of you. Man, I grew up in church thinking that heaven was boring. I was not looking forward to it. I thought, "Well, when I get to heaven I'll check in at the pearly gates, and they'll hand me my standard, white choir robe and they will take a measurement for my halo, and then they'll say: That little cloud over there, that's where you live. And then every day at 9, 2, 6, and 8 come back together. We're going to have choir practice for eternity. Welcome to heaven.

Where did we get that idea? Jesus says it's a party. It's like a wedding reception where food and drink are going to flow and there's joy and there's dancing and there's music and the Kingdom of God is a party where everyone is invited, but few will RSVP.

He says the Kingdom of God is like this. It's like a:

Buried treasure hidden in a field. Matthew 13:44-46

And there was a guy who was looking for some land and the real-estate agent takes him out and he says. "That it's a little bit pricy." Then he finds some treasure buried in the back 40 and it's worth more than all of the land combined. So the guy is like, "I hope nobody finds out about this. I've got to do whatever I can to get this land."

So he goes home and he has an estate sale and he sells the Play Station and he sells his golf clubs and he gets rid of the Bo-flex (it's basically for him to hang his clothes on) and he clears out everything—he sells everything that he has. People think that he's crazy to give up all of that for a field. And he goes: Oh, no. It's worth it. Jesus says that the same is true when it comes to the Kingdom of God.

He describes it this way. It's like a:

Small mustard seed. Matthew 13:31-32

Man, you don't need to have it all figured out. You don't need to have the answers to all of your questions. You don't need to have established, mature faith to come to Jesus. You just need to have the faith the size of a mustard seed, that's it. And watch God take that thing and grow into this massive tree of faith.

He says that the Kingdom of God is like:

Seed on a path. Matthew 13:1-9

You've got some seed that fell on the rocks and some in the weeds and some of them had birds come and snatch them up and others fell on good soil. And basically what he says is that the seed is the gospel and the place where it falls is our hearts. Some of us, it is just super rocky, we're not receptive to it. Other's of us, we initially respond but then the worries of live come in like weeds and choke it out. Other's of us, birds of the air, like doubts, just come and pluck it away. And then other's, the soil of our hearts is ready for the gospel.

Jesus described the Kingdom of God like:

Yeast. Matthew 13:33

And just like in bread, when you bake with yeast, he says that the Kingdom of God causes hope to rise wherever it goes.

This is such a big deal to Jesus that one time he prayed this in Matthew 6, verse 10—it's part of the Lord's prayer. He says, "May your **kingdom** come soon. May your will be done **on earth** as it is **in heaven**." And that's a very different prayer than, "God, please save me and take me to heaven when I die. Jesus said: No, no, no, no. God, may what's going on in your kingdom right now go on right here right now. And may it be through your people.

See, one of the things that we need to understand is that our citizenship is not here on earth. We are citizens of the Kingdom of God, if you've placed your faith in Jesus, and that we are ambassadors living in a foreign land and we are representatives of God.

We're not here to fight the world, but we're not here to become isolated from the world and get into our holy huddles. You follow Jesus for more than six months—beware of the holy huddle where all you're listening to is people who think like you and act like you and talk like you. He's like I have not continued to keep you in the world just so that you can continue to get together and talk with other people who just agree with you. He says: No, no. I've come to send you as an ambassador into the world. You are representatives of the Kingdom of God.

So, therefore we have to be transformed not conformed. And that's where we need to keep coming back to the values of the Kingdom of God, because I don't know about you, I keep forgetting. Sometimes I think that I'm a citizen of the United States first and then the Kingdom of God. No, no. You're a citizen of heaven first and then the United States.

So here's the first letter "M":

More is less

And that just seems so backwards to us. In our society, more is more. You better look out for you. You better get what you want. I'm not even just talking about money and

tangible possessions. I'm talking about your thoughts. I'm talking about where your fears are. See, what you fear and what you're worried about is another way of controlling things. Controlling and coping—that's what we're doing. And Jesus says: I want you to get to this place where you can let go. I want you to get to this place where you realize that God's got this.

So, in order to illustrate this we find this going on in Luke, chapter 12. Jesus is going to have a conversation and tell a story. Now, let me set this up. Jesus is teaching. He's got a crowd of people around him and he's teaching and in the middle of his talk, somebody interrupts him. And he wants to bring Jesus into the middle of his family dispute.

So check this out. It says, "Someone in the crowd said to him, 'Teacher, tell my brother to **divide** the inheritance with me.' Jesus replied, 'Man,'" and I think he said it with emphasis: Man, you interrupted my talk. I was getting to the good part too. "...who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" Translation: Don't drag me into your feud.

You ever heard that phrase: Where there is a will there is a relative? That's what's going on. So, you've got this guy—my guess is he is the younger brother. And the reason why is because according to Levitical law the older brother was entitled to two-thirds of the inheritance the younger brother one-third—not exactly fair but that's the way it was.

So, I'm just guessing it was the younger brother complaining, not the older one. And you probably don't even have to imagine why. He's upset. He's like: I deserve more of the inheritance, so, Jesus, would you please get in the middle of our argument?

So verse 15, Jesus says, "...to them," so notice he's talking to the crowd of people around him. This is a teachable moment, because he's not the only who is wrestling through this. He says "Watch out! Be on your guard," meaning that we've got to always be aware that this can slip in this can creep in, "Be on your guard against" what? "**all kinds of greed;**"

Greed comes in a variety of ways. In fact, the most subtle, deadly forms of greed in my life come when all I'm trying to do is provide for my family. And then I suddenly slip into greed and I don't even know it.

He says, "...life does not consist in an **abundance of possessions.**' And he told them this parable:" It's just a story to help them understand. He said, "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an **abundant** harvest." So this guy had a really good year. He made lots of profit, and "He thought to himself, "What shall I do? I have no place to store **my crops.**"

So for us we would look at that and say, "Wow, this guy is a success. He's achieved it. He has made so much that he doesn't know what to do with his much." He's run out of places for all of his stuff. So he needs to upgrade.

And we do that too. Most of probably don't necessarily see ourselves as wealthy, but it's interesting that there's an industry in our country right now in which, when you get so much stuff accumulated and you run out of room to store it, you can actually pay rent to store your stuff. It's called a storage unit. And that's exactly what's happening here. The guy is like: Man, my barns are overflowing. I don't have enough space to put all my stuff.

So in verse 18 it says, ""Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns"" and upgrade, ""and **build bigger ones**, and there I will store my **surplus** grain. And I'll say to myself,"" this guy likes to talk to himself a lot, it's kind of weird, ""You have **plenty** of grain"" self ""laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.""

That sounds like the American dream. We start off with a little fixer upper, put some money into it, hopefully the economy is good then we get some equity out of it and we upgrade. Then we do it again, maybe a few more times before we get into our dream home, our forever home.

You know, we pay a financial advisor to help us to save with a 401K and an IRA and a savings accounts and the college funds so that way, one day—like one day, we can eat, drink, and be merry and take life easy in Florida somewhere.

Verse 20, ""But God said to him, 'You fool!"" that seems a little harsh, ""This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?"" "This is how it will be with whoever **stores up** things for themselves but is not rich **toward** God.""

And if you are anything like me you read that and you go, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, Jesus, are you saying that God is going to kill him for having a savings account?" That's not what he says. "Are you saying that God wants my money otherwise he's going to kill me?" Once again, that is not what he said.

He said that you and I are a fool if we're just living for today or maybe tomorrow, which will come sooner than we think, but really give no thought to eternity. How foolish can you be just to be saving and saving and saving and it's the nine to five grind Monday through Friday and you just work, and work, and work and somebody else is going to spend all of that.

And he's not saying that savings is bad, in fact in Proverbs it says that you need to save for your children's children. He's not saying that retirement is bad. He's not saying that you shouldn't enjoy the things that you have.

He just simply is saying this: Don't just live fixated on the here and now. Don't allow the worries or the pressures of this life to keep your eyes fixed upon the temporary, because it is temporary, without thinking about or without having an eye on the Kingdom of God.

See, God is not against money. Money is amoral, right? It's not moral. It's not immoral. What you do with it is what makes it moral or immoral. Money just simply makes you more of what you already are. So if I'm generous without money, I'll be generous with it. If I'm greedy without money, I'll be greedy with it.

This man lives in a big house, he's got big barns and yet for all of his achievement, for all of his business savvy, Jesus says that he's a fool in the sense that he's been trying to climb this ladder and the ladder is propped up against the wrong wall.

Author John Ortberg in his book *It All Goes Back in the Box* talks about this. He talks about life, that it's kind of like a board game, maybe Monopoly or whatever, and he says basically at the end of it, it all goes back in the box.

And let's just say that you achieve the thing that you think will give you financial peace. Let's just say that you get to that spot that you think will fulfill you—that promotion, that title, that position? And then here's maybe the best questions that you can anticipate: Then what?

Then what? Just play that out. And chances are it's not going to fulfill you as much as you thought that it was. Why? Well, because the only thing that can fulfill you is eternity. You were made for eternity. You were made for something more.

So then Jesus says to his disciples: "Therefore I tell you, do not **worry** about your life, what you will eat; or about your body, what you will wear. For **life is more than food**, and the **body more than clothes**." Luke 12:22-23 (NIV)

Jesus really hits it on the head here. He knows that it's not so much greed—it's worry, it's fear. And notice the compassion in his voice. He's like: I don't want you to be all wrapped up in these things.

Verse 29: "And do not **set your heart**," notice that, set your heart, "on what you will eat or drink; do not worry about it. For the pagan world runs after all such things," that's how the kingdom of the world operates, the Kingdom of God is very different, "and **your Father knows** that you need them."

See, setting your heart, that's another way of saying, "I'm trying to find my identity in this." Or, "I'm trying to control this set of circumstances." Or, "Whenever I get depressed," or, "Whenever I get lonely," or, "Whenever I'm really wrestling with significance that this is the way I cope. This is the way I control things. This is the way I manage."

Can I just say to you today that coping, all it is:

it's an agreement you've made with a lie

This is the way that we continue to try to deal with the emptiness that is inside of us and we just continue to keep coming back empty.

So Jesus says in verse 31, “But seek his **kingdom**, and these things will be given to you **as well**.” I love that. I think it’s in Proverbs where it says that God wants to give you the desires of your heart. This is not like a reductionist God. He’s going: Hey, just seek the kingdom, just watch me give you all of the desires of your heart.

And then he says in verse 32, “Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to **give you the kingdom**.” His sphere of domain, his control, he wants to give it to you, so, “Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide purses for yourselves that will **not wear out**, a treasure in heaven that will **never fail**, where **no thief** comes near and **no moth** destroys.” And then, I think one of the greatest verses in the New Testament, “For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

He just simply says: Listen. Wherever you want your heart to be, just send your treasure there and it will always follow. But, man, more than anything, I just want you to let go of those things that are gripping you and realize that the way to more is less. The way to more is to give up the control that you think that you have and let your heavenly Father guide you.

So, back in 2008, I don’t know if you remember or not, but the economy wasn’t so good. And we were in a pretty massive recession. That actually happened to be the same year that our family moved to Indianapolis. I accepted a role to come and serve here on the team at Traders Point.

We were living in Louisville. We had a house there. The economy was down. But as we were moving up here, we decided to take advantage of the down economy and buy a house at a good deal here, which meant that we had a house down there as well. And I thought, “Well, maybe it will be a couple of months for me to sell it. But it was so clear that God had called us here, he’ll work it out.”

So one month of having two houses turned into two and then three and then six months and then nine months and then a year of having a double mortgage payment. That was fun. Some of you have probably been in that season before. We were paying double utilities, watching our savings account dwindle, and I’m just like, “God, you called us here. Would you please get rid of this other house? I’m slowly watching things dwindle here.”

And I already knew that I was going to take a bath on the house. I was already like \$30 to \$35,000 underwater on it. We had just finished the basement right before we moved here, which was really bad timing.

I get a phone call from my real estate agent. She said, "Hey, we've got a potential buyer. They are really interested in it. They put a little bit of earnest money down." And we did a 30-day close to escrow thing.

And about a week before we closed escrow we sent an inspector in to do an inspection and that's when I got a phone call from the inspector saying, "Hey, you've got a bunch of raw sewage in your sump pump. And what had happened is that the guy who put in our basement had plumbed it wrong so in the last couple of weeks in the house, raw sewage was pumping into the sump pump. We didn't know it. We moved. We didn't know it. And it had been sitting there for a year.

And he said, "This is a big, big problem." And I said, "Can you fix it in five days?" And he was like, "It's going to be tight and it's going to be expensive, but I'll try." And so right down to the wire, like less than 24 hours, he gets it fixed. It cost me \$3,000 to fix all of that. He hands me all of the certification, all of the receipts, everything is on the up and up. It's working properly. I'm like, "Okay, we'll go to closing. We'll disclose all of this. God's on his throne. He's watching out for us. It will all be good."

And I won't ever forget. I was sitting in my office here at this campus and my real estate agent calls me. And you know it's not good when your real estate agent starts off like this, "Hey..... So, the buyer saw all of the stuff for the plumbing and he's not very happy and he thinks that you've been lying to him and he wants out. And he wants his earnest money."

I remember thinking to myself, "Okay, you're making double mortgage payments, watching the savings account dwindle, just spent three grand on a plumbing issue, I've been called a liar, and he wants out and he wants his earnest money."

I remember I just dropped my head on the desk, and I was like, "God, I'm freaking out here. Did I hear you wrong? Were we supposed to move here? What is happening here?" I just thought, "My family is going to be out on the streets." It was like worst case scenario was running through my mind. Panic and anxiety just came rushing in.

I don't think I'll ever forget sitting there at my desk and she goes, "Aaron, what do you want to do?" And I said, "What are my options?" And she goes, "Well, you could sue the guy who put in your basement," which by the way he went to the church I served in Louisville so that would have been awesome, "You can get the money back that way. You can sue to keep your earnest money, but we'd have to take the house off of the market and it'd be a thing for another six months or more."

I was just sitting there, and I'll never forget, it was just as if the Spirit of God spoke very softly to me, "He goes, Aaron, lay your weapons down. Aaron, stop trying to control what you can't control. I've got this." It was almost as if he was smiling at me, right? Which really annoyed me. I was just like, "Don't smile at me. This is painful."

And I'm just wondering if there are those here—maybe it's not a house, maybe it's something else that you're trying to control, and God might be saying to you: Would you lay your weapons down? Would you just trust that I've got this?

See, when I say more is less here's what I mean. We live through life thinking this. We just:

Fixate on all of the circumstances of life and all of the things that will keep us up at night and we glance occasionally at God

Maybe on Sundays once or twice a month. And God says: No, I want you to be a resident of my kingdom, which means that you:

Glance at the circumstances of life and keep your eyes on Jesus

So, today can I just acknowledge that it's super easy for me to put two nice little sentences up on a monitor, really difficult to live out in life. And I get it. So, today I just want to spend a couple of moments where you would just let the Spirit of God speak to you, just be quiet enough to let him talk. So much of the time our lives are so crazy, we're constantly looking at screens, we've constantly got thoughts going through our head, can we just be quiet enough? Because he's there and he wants to speak. So let's let him do it.

Father, we come to you right now and we want to be residents of your kingdom. And that's a backwards, upside down kind of kingdom and many of us have got to get re-oriented to it. So, today we just want to spend a few moments in your presence.

And we just ask that you bless this message series. That it would help us to understand what it is that you've really invited us into, especially in this political climate that we're in, especially in this divisive world that we live in, especially with the amount of anxiety and depression that is rampant throughout our society.

God we just need to quiet ourselves, lay our weapons down, keep our eyes fixed on you instead of being fixated on the circumstances of life. So, meet us in this space right now. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.