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Everyone, welcome. So glad that you are with us today. Everyone at the campuses and everyone watching online—you guys doing alright today? Hey me too.

I'm loving the series that we are in *Rally Cry*. And here's what a rally cry is. A rally cry is:

A word, phrase, or idea that brings people together in support of something important or worthwhile.

The rally cry is what you hear, it's that flag in the ground, it's that moment where from here on out everything else changes. And the way that we've been looking at it in this series is to say, "Hey, this past year our lives got hit really hard, personally, but then collectively in individual areas."

So we said, "How do we rally around those areas in our lives?" And over the past few weeks we've looked at what it looks like to rally around the next generation and to influence them. What does it look like to rally around our marriages?

And today we want to rally around:

Community

Relationships got hit really, really hard this past year. We were disconnected. We were removed from one another. We physically couldn't meet and be together if we wanted to. So we said, "This is that moment, this is the time where we rally, this is the time that we protect what matters most." And we believe by doing that that in this moment, infusing Jesus into our communities, they can be stronger than ever.

I love community and I love a good rally cry. And you put those two things together; the first thing that comes to my mind is a little movie. Maybe you've heard of it, *Remember the Titans*. Anybody? Anybody Titans fans in here?

But you know the moment I'm talking about, where the rally cry happened. Things were not going well. They were disconnected. This community was just not coming together until one night, it's late. The sun is down, the lights are out there, and they are just going through the motions and they've got no heart in it, until they have this moment where Gary (one of the guys) calls out and then they all begin playing together.

Do you remember the rally cry that started right there on that field? “Left side, strong side.” Y’all are just saying stuff. No, in this moment we’re going to relive it right now here. And if you haven’t seen it, go home today—homework number one, watch *Remember the Titans*. But listen. It’s this moment where Gary and Julius come together and they say, “Left side, strong side, left side, strong side, left side, strong side”—and they smash heads. We’re not going to do that part. COVID protocol, it’s frowned upon.

But it’s this moment, right? They join together and so much was going on during that time when that movie was shot. Things like segregation. People coming together and I think that when we see that, the unlikely coming together, our hearts are drawn to that.

Here’s what it is:

We want friends who become family.

Friends that have every reason not to be but then there is something common, there is something that unites them that they become family. And that’s the kind of community that Jesus talks about. That’s the kind of community that God offers everyone.

It was this community that came through and it took this crazy broken world that was segmented with all of these different people and it brought them all together as one.

I mean, look at the way Galatians talks about it. It says:

*“There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus.”* Galatians 3:28 (NLT)

Come on. Can we celebrate? What Jesus has done and what he continues to do is what we strive after. And to do that, to look at that idea of community, that togetherness, we’re going to look at the first community, the community that was birthed right after Jesus came. His first followers—what did that community look like?

That community shook up the world. That community changed the way we do life. That community is why we are a community talking about community 2,000 years later.

To do that, we’re going to be in Acts, chapter 2. Alright? Acts, chapter 2... Just a fun fact. I didn’t grow up in church. When I first came here, I was sitting to the left of the stage, Aaron was preaching on the book of Acts. He said turn in your Bibles to the book of Acts.

I thought it was the book of Axe, which I was pretty excited about. I’ll be honest with you. I was like, “I’m in. I don’t know what we’re chopping up, but let’s do it.” Not an axe it’s the acts of—the acts of the apostles or maybe even better said, the acts of the Holy Spirit.

And where we’re going to pick up is with the followers of Jesus, right after Jesus’ ministry on earth, after he went to a cross. These people saw him get murdered, thrown into a tomb. They

saw that same guy come out and start living and talking and teaching. And then he said, “Hey, it’s not over. We’re only just beginning. Wait here until the Holy Spirit comes.”

And I’m sure they were sitting around, because after he said this, he just kind of ascended into heaven. And they were like, “Well, there’s that. How are we going to know? Keep our eyes open, guys. Alright? We’re not going to miss the Holy Spirit. You look this way; I’ll look this way. You let me know if you hear anything.” Yeah, they couldn’t have missed it if they tried.

Look at this in Acts, chapter 2. It says:

*“On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting.*

*“Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.*

*“At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. When they heard the loud noise, everyone came running,” sounds like a rally cry, “and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers”.*

*This is why. So, in this moment there are people who are traveling from all over, they speak different languages. Think about this. When the power of God, when His Spirit is released, the first thing that he does is unite people together. The first thing that he does is offer a supernatural ability to be able to speak in a way that other people can understand.*

*Why? Because the message could not be missed. It needed to be heard. So God made a way. And Peter steps up and he begins to preach the gospel. He begins to tell all of these people who have come in, “Here’s what happened. The God that you know, the God that you worship—he became a man. Jesus wasn’t just some ordinary guy who was crucified. That was God’s Son.*

*“And God went to that cross to pay the penalty for our sins, to remove the separation so that now, and moving forward for all of eternity, we could have this relationship with God. We could have community with God.”*

Come on!

Peter is preaching. He’s preaching the lights out. And people asked the only thing that they could ask, “Okay. What can we do?” It said their hearts were pierced, “What do we do?”

Look at what Peter says. It says:

*“Peter replied, ‘Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away,’ aka this one is for*

everybody, “—all who have been called by the Lord our God.’ Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, ‘Save yourselves from this crooked generation!’”

Come on!

He’s laying it out there telling them, “This is what you need to do.” And it’s amazing. Thousands of people were saved. Thousands of people got baptized. Thousands of people joined in on what God was doing.

But I do want to highlight one line here. It said, “Then Peter continued preaching for a long time.” The Bible endorses long sermons. That’s what I read. It’s biblical. And if you’re ever wondering, “Hey, this sermon feels a little bit long,” I’d love to talk about the duration of sermons. I would love to hear from you. Right now, take this down. Email me. You can email me at [abrocket@tpcc.org](mailto:abrocket@tpcc.org). Let’s have a conversation, okay?

No, but really. God is at work. The Holy Spirit comes. Preaching the lights out. Thousands of people are gathering together. They’re all rallying saying, “What do we do now? What do we do now?” People are getting baptized left and right. What next?

What would be the craziest thing that could happen? What would they do now that God had individually pierced their hearts and cut them wide open? In the translation I’m reading, in the NLT, the next heading that comes over that says:

#### The Believers Form a Community

The believers form a community. And you can look at this from across this whole book. When God moves, when there is an act of God, it does start with individuals, their hearts being pierced, their eyes being opened, but it always leads to community. It always leads to togetherness. Our God is a creative God. He is a multiplying God. He is a unifying God, forming communities from now to forever. Okay? And it said that they formed a community.

So what we want to do now for the rest of our time is just to look at that community to see what they were focused on to answer this question:

How do we rally around our communities?

How do we rally around them? How do we breathe life into them? What does it look like to gather together, to be united in one voice? What did they do? Can we know? We can. I love this book. It tells us exactly what they did. It tells us that they formed a community, and then look in verse 42:

*“All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer.”*

And what we want to do is to say that we want to rally around our communities, we want them to be stronger than ever—let's get to this. Let's talk about what each one of those are and what they look like showing up in our lives in this season.

The first one I want to focus on is devote. They devoted themselves. And we need to:

Devote ourselves.

In the idea of community—a lot of times community is one of those after the fact things like the cherry on top. If the season allows for it, then I will have community and I'll invite some people over. Or, when my kids get a little bit older then, I'll have community. Or, when I graduate from school, then I'll have time to focus on community.

But community is not extra. Community is essential. And we can't make the hard things optional, or we will never do them. So we have to say, "No, no. We're devoted to this. We want to see this thing through."

And then the next thing it says is that they devoted themselves:

To the apostles' teachings.

And maybe you're like, "What teachings are those?" And it probably would have been broken up into three big categories. Right? They were devoted to this; they had a hunger for this:

- The Gospel

Meaning Jesus saves. This is what Peter was just preaching on. That that guy who you crucified, that was God. And he wasn't here just by coincidence, he was here to do a very important thing, to save the world, to remove the sins, and to purify and cleanse us so that we can have an eternal relationship with God. That's what they were focused on.

- The Bible

You see this after Jesus resurrected and he comes back, he's showing people: Hey, this whole thing, it's one unified story that points over and over and over again to me. I am the fulfillment of all of this. And because of that you now have to read this book differently. They devoted themselves to that.

And then the final thing is they devoted themselves to:

- The Kingdom of God

All that means is, how I live as a result of the first two things being true. If the gospel is true, if Jesus is who he said he is, and if this Bible is now one overarching, unified story all pointing to Jesus, then how I live is different.

And if you look at Jesus' ministry, he was constantly talking about this—this idea of repent, stop, turn, walk in a different direction because a new day has come, a new kingdom is being

ushered in, a new community is now here. And the way we live in this community is very, very different.

They had a hunger for this. They were looking out for this. They were talking to one another and hearing the teachings from the apostles to know—how can we do this more and better and more often? How can our lives align with these things now, more than ever? They were devoted to it.

And that's the same thing that we need. If we're going to look at starting strong communities, rallying around them, we have to come to this spot of, "I devote myself to the teaching of God. I devote myself to growing to closer to him, looking more like him. I devote myself to it." That's the first thing.

And then the second thing, and maybe this doesn't mean much to you because you don't even know what it means, but it says that they devoted themselves:

To Fellowship.

And no harm no foul if you don't know what fellowship is. I didn't know what fellowship is. I was hanging out one day and some guy was like, "Hey, do you want some fellowship?"

"Me?" I said, "No sir. I'm a vegetarian. You got any plant-based products? I don't do fellowship, I don't think." But fellowship isn't a food. Fellowship, here's what it is:

When the focus of our friendship is discipleship, that's fellowship.

It's a very unique kind of relationship. But I know you're reading this and you're like, "Well, bud. You just used one word to describe another word that I don't know what it means." Give me time.

Discipleship, what that is that is just a disciple. A disciple is someone who:

Follows Jesus, is being transformed by Jesus, and is committed to the mission of Jesus.

So, what is fellowship? It is the shared process of this, the shared process of discipleship. Meaning, "We're going to lock arms. We're going to come together and I'm going to walk with you every step of the way as you follow Jesus. I'm going to be there every step of the way and I'm going to get see you transformed into what only God to do.

"I'm going to be with you every single step of the way as we are both committed to the mission. And as I lock arms with God, and he pulls me along and leads me through, I'm bringing you with me. And every good thing that God gives, you're going to be a recipient of the love, and grace, and the newness that God is creating in my life. And we get to walk together in this."

That is fellowship. And one of the phrases that the Bible uses to show what fellowship looks like, it's so big and it's so vague. It's actually filled with all of these different things that we can do, and we should do to share in this with one another.

But it's really found in one phrase over and over and over and over again. And it's this phrase:  
One Another.

One another—you see this come up over and over and over again. This is how we fellowship. And I just wanted to grab a handful of them, just a handful of them. You can take a screen shot of this. This is a menu, just a slight picture of what it looks like for fellowship. We do all of these things with one another.

Romans 12:10: We honor one another.

Fellowship looks like this. I honor you with my words and with my life.

Galatians 6:2: We share each other's burdens.

Meaning you don't have a problem anymore. We have a problem.

Hebrews 10:24: We Stir one another up towards to acts of love and good works.

We have people in our lives who are living in such a way that it motivates us, it encourages us, when we're down and we're low and we need something, we've got people in our lives who are calling it out of us, challenging us to do a little bit more and just get this thing going—stirring one another up.

James 5:16: *“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”*

And then Galatians, this is kind of summarizing all of it:

Galatians 5:13: Serve one another.

Serve one another. These one anothers have framed up what it looks like for us to be a church—our values. I mean, it's even found in them. This is the way we say it around here:

We will always look for ways to contribute rather than consume.

When we show up, it doesn't matter the party, it doesn't matter the setting, the place, “I'm showing up and I'm looking for who can I serve? How can I help? I'm a part of this community, but I'm not just here to take and consume. I'm here to contribute.”

But I do want to make a distinction and it's going to sound a little bit different, because it's different than what we say a lot of times. Both are true and we need both, okay? We need Christian friends. We need Christian friends.

And you can show up, most of the time we talk about the importance of having non-Christian friends and we do. We need non-Christian friends in our communities: living with them, loving them—not as some ploy, not as some project, but to seriously love them no strings attached.

But we also need Christian friends, because of this aspect of fellowship. You cannot have fellowship with people who don't know Jesus. They are not going to be able to go there with you.

Think about this list of one anothers. How can you pray for me if you don't pray? But I need you to pray for me. It's unfair for me to place that kind of devotion on you when you haven't signed up for it. I can't give that to you because you're not going.

It's like, for me—if you came up to me after service and said, “Hey, here's 20 bucks. When you go to the hardware store, pick this up for me.” I'm not going. I have no reason to go there. There is nothing in my life that is going to take me to that spot. I'm going to hold your 20 dollars forever, until I spend it.

There are things that we need brothers and sisters in Christ for that only they can do. When we talk about praying for one another, I need someone who actually prays.

We talk about carrying our burdens, the idea that you get is that you are carrying your burdens to the cross. We need people in our lives who are daily going to the cross with us and for us.

So, this week, let's make that shift. Because I know over the past year a lot of our lives have been hit, relationships are different and strained and maybe they have drifted. Maybe they once were fellowship, or maybe you've never had fellowship. Here's the question. Here's the DTR—define the relationship—question that we're going to ask this week? Can this relationship be focused on discipleship? Can it be focused on discipleship?

Community can be built around so many things, but this one? These relationships? Can they be focused on discipleship and becoming and looking more like Jesus? Because we gauge their health differently.

This is the question we're always coming back to. Are we becoming more like Jesus? “What am I doing that is helping you to do that? What can I do more of? What am I doing that is hurting you from doing that? What can I stop doing? How can I serve you in this season so that we can have fellowship together?”

Those are big ones: apostles' teaching, fellowship. And then maybe the next one is going to sound surprising to you, like it's out of place, almost. Alright? Take a look at this. They were devoted to:

Sharing meals together.

Some of you are like, “I didn't know that was a spiritual gift, because I can eat with the best of them. And if they would put that as an opportunity around here, I would be eating all of the time. Does that even fit? I mean, spiritual community, Christians, right? Teaching, Bible—with it. I get it. That makes sense. Fellowship. Growing to be more like Jesus. But sharing meals together?”

But think about this. It's actually one of the most spiritual things we can do ever. Think back to this past year and how your relationships were strained. What was missing? When was the last time you were able to share a meal at your table with someone who wasn't in your family? What would it look like this week to share a meal at your table?



I'm telling you; this makes a whole lot more sense when you start looking at how the Bible talks about food and tables and shared experiences. The only thing it can link into is heaven and feasts and banquets.

When you look at the life and ministry of Jesus, where did most of it occur? Around a table eating and drinking with other people, because there is something that happens around the table that is incredible.

And if we're going to have strong community, it starts with strong kitchen tables where we invite people in and we are curious. We prepare a feast for them. And then we sit down, and we ask questions, and we listen, and we learn about other people, about their experiences, about their life, about what they went through, about what they are going through, about their hopes.

And what does that do? That brings me in in a way that I can love so much differently now. We need more and more people around our tables, filling our kitchen tables, our dining room tables.

They say that it takes a village to raise a kid. It takes a village to raise a Christian. Have a community of people. But you're not just keeping them at bay, no they're in my house, they see the fruit punch stain on my wall, they see all of it. I'm inviting them in to that:

Share a meal at your table.

If we want to rally, we've got to be able to invite people into the most intimate spaces in our lives.

And that brings me to the next one. They were:

Devoted to Prayer.

They were devoted to prayer. What does it look like to be devoted to prayer? Because a lot of times I think we miss it—a lot of times prayer gets short-changed, a really quick transaction. A lot of times prayer is reduced to you share something and somebody says, "Hey, I'll be praying for you." That was the prayer.

Now, what does it look like to pray—to be devoted to prayer? The Bible talks about prayer in a very unique way. It even goes as far as to say, "Hey, pray without ceasing, that my day is just one continuous prayer, that I'm constantly in connection with God.

Our executive pastor, Greg, he probably lives this out better than anyone I have ever met. You will be with him, talking with him, in a meeting and my man can go from here to heaven really quick.

I asked him about it. He was like, "Hey, I'm always praying, sometimes I bring other people along with me," which is unbelievable. If you've ever been around him...

One time it was scary. He picked us up and we were going to the airport. We were on the interstate and we were talking, laughing, having a good time. And then, boom, my man just jumps into prayer—starts praying, “Lord, thank you so much...” And I do default prayer, put my head down, praying. And then my heart skips, he’s driving and I’m like, “Is this brother’s eyes open? I’ve never prayed with my eyes open before.” They were and we made it there safely.

But it’s this idea that we’re going to be devoted to prayer. I’ll tell you what it looks like. I met with a volunteer a while back Downtown. And she wanted to be on the prayer team, the team that comes up to the front of the stage right after service and meets with people.

And I just asked her, “A lot of places you could serve. Why do you want this space?” And she said, “My default response to life is prayer.” And I said, “Talk slower so I can write that down and use it in a sermon.” I said, “Tell me what that means?”

She said, “I wake up and before I get out of bed, I’m already praying asking for God to take me out of bed. When I get ready, I’m praying for God to set my day before me. When I get my daughter ready for school, I’m preparing her and praying over as we go. As she walks into school, I’m praying that God would lead her through that whole day. When I’m driving down the street and I hear an ambulance I begin to pray for whatever is going on, that God would be with them.”

And I thought, “That’s what it is like to be devoted to prayer.” That’s the kind of community that we want to be. No matter what comes up, when it comes up, our first move is, “I’m taking it to God.”

You know, this past week a part of our community got hit really, really hard and we want to pray for them right now, in this moment—the murders in Atlanta, in an Asian community, an API community.

And what we want to do right now is to see them, to be with them, to pray with them, to stay with them in this moment. One of the most important things we can do is to devote ourselves to prayer. And we’re going to do all of those things.

But before I pray, I do want to make a few things clear. The first one being: until we begin to see the world differently nothing will change. As long as we see this as an event that happened to the Asian community, it will never get better. Until we see this through God’s eyes, to see this for what it is, until we can say these words, “Our sisters were murdered this week...”

God talks about community in the sense of family, in the sense of a body, in the sense of all together—until we can see that things won’t get better. This is our family. This is our community. This is our body. We’re coming in alongside. It’s not optional.

The second thing is: God has given us the Holy Spirit, a unifying Spirit, an empowering and strengthening Spirit. This Spirit was not just given so that we could be polite and have good table manners and smile when times are hard.

This Spirit was given to go against evil. This Spirit was given to push back darkness, that we would go head first into all of it and we would bring with us a light that the darkness cannot extinguish. When we step into this, we are praying, and we are weeping those who weep. But we are coming with the power of God to dismantle it in all of its forms.

So, right now, I'm going to lead us in this prayer. But we are going to pray together—one voice, all campuses, all people pray with me.

God, we pray right now, and we pray for our Asian brothers and sisters. And we pray for you to be with them, for you to lead them. And, God, I pray that your Spirit would rest on them.

And, God, I pray that you would send us. God, they need people to weep with. Let us weep with them. God, they need people to fight for them. Let us fight for them. God, allow us to see us for who you've made us to be: brothers and sisters in Christ.

When we see what was spilled, we know that that was someone who was made in your image and someone who Jesus died for. Let us respond accordingly. Give us everything that we need to come along side and to help bring healing to a part of our body that has been hurt. We all hurt. It is in your name, Jesus, that we pray. Amen.

To rally around our communities—this is the question:

How can I pray for you this week?

There is only one rule. No “they” prayers. They have to be real. You get into these prayer circles and you say, “Alright, we’re going to pray for each other. How can I pray for you?”

“Okay, thank you for asking. Um, so my second cousin’s neighbor his dog is having a surgery tomorrow.”

“Oh, what’s the dog’s name?”

“I don’t know.”

“I’m not praying for that dog.”

How can I pray for you this week? This is such a personal question. And for growth to happen, for us to rally around, it has to be honest answers. “How can I pray for you?”

“You can pray for me for my anger. I lost it. I was so rude and mean to my kids and my wife. I need help. Can you pray for me?”

“I don’t know how this thing is going to shake out at the end of the month. The money is not adding up. Would you pray for me?”

Then we offer these real and honest, vulnerable prayers and we invite someone in to share that with us. And what happens when you pray for someone, you get to take them by the hand

and go into the presence of God with them. As you're standing there with them, they feel that you are there in that moment.

And what it does for you is it gives you such empathy. You begin to see what they see and hear what they hear and you begin to experience so that you can serve them better. Shared prayers—that we're going to go through life praying for one another, devoted to it. And one thing that he mentions in there, it ties all of them together. It takes not only the teachings, it takes the prayer, it takes the sharing meals together, it takes the fellowship and puts it into one specific thing. It's called:

### The Lord's Supper.

Communion is the way that we talk about it. I know I've gone through different ways I've looked at this. And I've had different thoughts. But what communion is it's so beautiful and so powerful and so essential to rallying around our communities, because it brings fellowship with God and fellowship with one another all together in one place.

Here's what this is. Here's what meal represents, what it embodies. It comes straight from Jesus. Look at this. It says:

*“As they were eating, Jesus took some bread and blessed it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, ‘Take this and eat it, for this is my body.’ And he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. He gave it to them and said, ‘Each of you drink from it, for this is my blood, which confirms the covenant between God and his people.’” Matthew 26: 26-28*

This is what communion is. It's this moment when we come before God and we are reminded that it was his body that was broken, it was his blood that was spilled. And it wasn't for nothing. There was a great cost to bring us to this space that we're in today, where we have fellowship with God the Father, we have fellowship with Jesus Christ, we have fellowship with the Holy Spirit and then we have fellowship with one another.

So as we sit and we share in this meal, it pulls all of that together into one concentration. This week, if we want to rally around our communities, share communion with other people. Find a day this week to take communion with other people. We have it. You can grab it on the way out. There are little pre-packaged things you can take with you.

Or make a feast about it. Share a big meal. Bake some bread. Pour the finest juice or wine that you have and take a moment, gather around a table in fellowship and toast to the God who made all of this possible. Sit in community realizing how far our God had to go to create it. You will walk out with a new gratitude, a new appreciation, not only for God but for the people you were sitting with. We're going to share communion together.

I love this book. It tells us exactly what happened. They lived out those things. They were devoted to them, devoted to the apostles' teachings. They were devoted to fellowship, devoted to prayer, devoted to sharing meals together and then look at what happened. It says:

*"A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need.*

*"They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved." Acts 2:43-47 (NLT)*

Is this not a community that you would want to be a part of? A community that gathered together and shared everything, they truly did life together. And maybe the most fascinating thing here is that as a result of this, of us and our community, the result is each day the Lord added to the fellowship those who were being saved. More people were saved.

"What is that? How are they living like that? Why do you love the way that you do? You're not supposed to be in this room together. You guys have never been here together. How can you differ so much on so many things but come together? Tell me." And over and over and over again they got the opportunity to tell people what was so different. It was that God was so different.

I just want to put it out there right now for all those who are with us today looking to be added to the fellowship. I just want you to know:

You are worthy of community.

This is a message for all. No matter your background, no matter where you come from, no matter how you've made yourself up until this point, there is a God who moves heaven and earth. There is a God who speaks universes into existence. There is a God who said you are worth dying for.

And in this moment, I just want to create a space in community. That right now... You may have come in here alone or you're watching online alone—you are not alone. You are will a fellowship of people meeting all over this city and all around this world unified by the Spirit of God.

I just want to create a place for you where you can respond to that message, that you can walk in this community because you belong—not on the fringes, not as a maybe, not as come back next time. Right now. God uses language like, "My son and my daughter." He uses language like, "I am your Father."

You didn't barely make the cut. You are loved more than you will ever know. You can spend a lifetime in all of eternity trying to comprehend how big and how wide and how long God's love is for you.

I want to create a space to respond. So once again, I'm going to pray. We're all praying right now.

Praying together as one voice. Pray with me.

God, we thank you so much for today. God, we thank you for your word. God, we thank you for this community that you have laid out before us, that you have unified community in your Spirit, bound us together with one another, living in such a way, sharing with one another, caring for one another, serving one another—this is the fellowship. And, God, we pray right now for those who are looking for community, those who are looking for fellowship, those who are seeing you for who you are, and they want in. God, let this be the moment. God, you draw them in.

And if that is you today and you're looking for that, you're looking for fellowship; you're looking for a relationship with your Creator, a life that cannot be found elsewhere, right now, in this moment, I just want to lead you through a prayer.

You don't have to raise your hand or move, just slide your hand up and place it over your heart. And as you hear your heart beat, know that there is a God who put it there, a God who knows you, a God who knows how many beats per minute it goes, how many hairs are on your head, who knows your deepest and darkest secrets.

In this moment, from now until eternity he says, "I love you. You are worthy. All the things that you have done that have separated you from God and from others, in this moment God can restore. God can clean it. God can heal.

God, in this moment we ask that you draw all people unto yourself. God, we pray that your word, your gospel, Jesus, the One who came, the one who died on the cross, the One who was thrown in the grave, God you resurrected him and because of that we too can resurrect in new life.

God, as you died for the whole world, use us to bring this world back together in fellowship, unified in your Spirit. God, we pray that today could be that day that more are added to the fellowship. Jesus, it's in your name we pray. Amen.

Can we celebrate all of those who were added to the fellowship? And I just want to ask you, right now, all across our campuses everywhere to stand with us in this moment.

You know, you can find community anywhere. It's fascinating to me this new talk on community. It's everywhere. You look at the gaming scene, playing video games, which was once one of the most isolated events you could do in your parents' basement for far too long. Now there is a whole community around it, people joining together. Why? Because they are filling that need. They know that they can't do this alone.

Peloton, this whole idea of working out together, building a community. That's what is selling it. And I'm telling you, you can go anywhere now and find community, but you can't find what Jesus is offering anywhere else but here through his church, connected to a body of believers. And every day we come in, after a week of stirring one another up, encouraging one another, loving one another, we come in here and we can hear about it.

We get to hear about the miraculous that God is doing. And the unifying work that he is doing bringing all people together and it's unbelievable. But we keep going because what we get to see is community perfected. God gives us a glance, but do you want to know how this thing shakes out? We rally around these communities now. You want to see what it looks like to rally in heaven? Look at this in Revelation 7. It says:

*"After this I saw a vast crowd, too great to count, from every nation and tribe and people and language, standing in front of the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed in white robes and held palm branches in their hands. And they were shouting with a great roar, 'Salvation comes from our God who sits on the throne and from the Lamb!'"*

This is our rally cry as we join in with heaven:  
NEVER STAND ALONE

We never have to stand alone. We will always have Jesus. Jesus defeated sin, sin and death, and resurrected over all of it proving that there is nothing we have to fear, proving there is nothing that can steal us from him.

We will never stand alone, because we are a church, and we know that not even the gates of hell can prevail against what God has created. So we roar. Let the roar of this room match heaven.

We roar because we stand in confidence knowing that what God has brought together nothing can separate. There is no power in hell, there is no scheme of the Devil that can remove, that can break, what God has purified, what God is bringing together now in this moment. We sing worthy. Now in this moment we come together looking to the One—the One who was and is and is to come. Worthy is your name, Jesus.