

# Devoted to the Body

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Preacher: Jesse Kincer

[ 0 : 00 ] Thanks, Andrew. Appreciate that, man. Good job. If you didn't notice, little shout out to our youth always serve on the fourth Sunday of every month.

And so you probably saw a good representation of young people and smiling faces. So they come early. They help with the setup. They're out there greeting.

They help with, you know, announcements, call to worship, different stuff like that. And so just, and Kyla, who's in the youth, she was leading worship today, which was just fabulous. Yeah, so just go all around to see that.

And good morning again. And as Andrew said, my name is Jesse. Some of you I've met and you're new to the church. So glad that you're here. Some of you I know. Some of you I don't know and hope to meet you soon.

But we're so glad that you are here with us. And also for those that might be listening to this online, thank you for doing that. If you have your Bible, go ahead and turn in your Bible or turn your screen on and go to your Bible app.

[ 1 : 01 ] Acts 2 is where we're going to be. And we're going to start in verse 40. We're continuing our series on the book of Acts. This is the second installment. So again, if you're new with us, this is a great time.

You didn't miss much. And what we're going to do in this particular sermon series is, instead of going through like every chapter verse by verse, which is what we typically do as a church, we're going to pick out certain moments and work through the book that way and press in to really seeing this picture of the early church being the body of Christ, but the body of Christ in motion, which is why we called the series Body in Motion.

And the book of Acts, what it does, it's this history of the early church, actually the first few decades of the church. And it's a chronicling of it by Luke, who was a disciple of Jesus.

And what he gives us, he gives us this like detailed walkthrough of how Christianity started in Jerusalem with this little huddle of 120 people praying after Jesus had risen and ascended into heaven.

And then it follows the spreading of the gospel through the church and through people all across the Roman Empire. And even beyond that into parts unknown.

[ 2 : 21 ] And so I begin as a little 120 person prayer huddle becomes thousands upon thousands upon thousands of people across the known world. And we have to ask ourselves, like, how did they do that?

How were they so successful? And of course, the Sunday school answer is, well, God, duh, you know. God has the power to make anything happen. And I totally get that and I totally agree. Without God's power and the Holy Spirit transforming them and moving them on and empowering them and causing them to be successful in their mission, none of that would have happened. But still, what we want to do is we want to go and we say, man, this first generation of Jesus disciples, man, what made them so effective?

How did that happen? Because God is an ultimate authority and he is the one who gets all the glory. And without him moving and working through us, nothing is going to happen. But we have to cooperate with that, right?

And so what does that look like? And we're asking this question. We want to dive into that because our desire, and I hope yours too, if you're a part of the church, is to relive a bit of this.

[ 3 : 27 ] Man, we want to see the book of Acts happening in our generation, don't we? We want to see the gospel moving forward. We want to see these things happen. We don't want to say like, oh, that was for back then. We kind of just drudge along in existence.

And you can say like, man, just that sounds a bit too high-handed, a little bit too lofty. But man, it did happen. And it's happened many times throughout church history since the book of Acts.

And here's the thing. You can step back and say like, well, we're just waiting for that big, like kind of like important spiritual leader, like a sanctified Genghis Khan to kind of rise up in the ranks.

And he's going to like, man, lead us on and the church on into taking over for Christ. But actually, when you look at the book of Acts, and in a lot of places throughout church history where there was renewal and revival, what we see is, yes, there are some leaders that God used.

But what you see is the devotion of a multitude of faceless, nameless folks that helped to make the gospel spread like wildfire. That's literally what happens.

[ 4 : 30 ] And that's exactly what we're going to see in today's passage. And it is what is the title of the sermon that we're talking about the body of Christ and what we do is just a bunch of nameless, faceless folks, but who are known to God and loved by God and what it means to be devoted to the body.

That's the sermon's title today, being devoted to the body. So verse 40, let's jump into it. It says this. And with many other words, he, Peter, bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, Now, this is Peter at the very end of the first sermon that ever happened.

He has like three, he has a lot of people, thousands of people looking on listening to him. And he said this. Save yourselves from this crooked generation. So those who received his word were baptized.

And there were added that day about 3,000 souls. And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul.

And many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributed the proceeds to all as any had need.

[ 5 : 42 ] And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people.

And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. This is God's word. So right off the bat, you see something, I would say, pretty remarkable in those first couple of verses.

And even predating that. So in the context of what's happening here, the Holy Spirit has fallen on a crowd of believers, that 120, during this major Jewish festival called Pentecost.

And so the Holy Spirit creates this spectacle of wind and fire and people speaking in many languages about the glory of God and what he has done. And all this activity and excitement grabs the crowd's attention.

Right? And they're coming to check it out. And they're saying like, man, what the heck is going on here? Have these people been like hitting the bottle already? It's like, it's early in the morning and they seem drunk.

[ 6 : 47 ] And Peter gets up and he capitalizes on the crowd's curiosity and he preaches the first gospel message. And that's why you and I got to know the gospel in the first place so that we can share it.

Right? But you never know what might happen when you got the gospel and the Holy Spirit. And in this case, Peter capitalizes and 3,000 people get saved and baptized, which means they showed up believing Jesus wasn't just another religious quack that got crucified.

Now they totally changed. They believe that he was the long-awaited Messiah Savior, that if you were Jewish, you had been dreaming and praying and wanting this guy to show up forever and ever and ever.

They're saying, wow, this is the promise of God fulfilled in this man, Jesus, who came. And guess what? We crucified him. But now we're being told the good news is that even though you crucified him, guess what?

You can believe in him and God purposed for that to happen so that through his death you may have life and your sins may be forgiven. So save yourselves from this crooked generation. Right? And so they're receiving this and they're saying yes and amen.

[ 7 : 50 ] 3,000 people did. 3,000 people responded to that. And that's amazing because they're saying like, wow, God, he showed up.

He's promised us eternal life. But here's the thing. Yes, he does. But the power of the Holy Spirit through the gospel is more than just you and I getting into heaven. It's God getting heaven into us as well.

See, the gospel massively changes your life's priorities. And we see that in this passage. You can stop and you can marvel at the 3,000 people getting saved off of this one-off sermon.

And we should and we should stop and be amazed. And I can be jealous as a preacher. How come that never happens to me? And I can say, you know, thankfully that happened one time in the book of Acts. But our astonishment shouldn't end there.

Our astonishment shouldn't end at, wow, 3,000 got saved at the preaching of one sermon because there's more. What is described after the period in verse 41 is arguably just as miraculous.

[ 8 : 51 ] It says this, verse 42, and they, that 3,000 people, that went from Jesus is a religious quack and he's dead to, you know what? No, he's the long-awaited Messiah Savior who died and rose again.

They devoted themselves, right? Now, before I read the rest of this again, I want us to listen to all the ands, right? Because you and I are tempted when we read this, it goes through a filter in our souls that says, like, they change these ands to ors.

So it's kind of like, sweet, okay, let me take this but not that. Let me do this but not that. And really what we're trying to do is we're trying to get Jesus into our lives without any interruptions or changing how we live.

But unfortunately, that's not the reality because what this passage shows us is that what you're devoted to sets your priorities. And so in verse 42, it says, and they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship.

And you could easily say, and to the breaking of bread and the prayers and all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all as any had need.

[ 10 : 09 ] And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts. It's a lot of ands, right? And you can read that list and just start to feel the exhaustion set in all over you.

Like, oh my goodness, is that really what God expects of us? Didn't these people have jobs? Didn't they have families? Didn't they have hobbies?

Yeah, they did. They were fishermen. They were farmers. They were tradesmen. They were shepherds. They were teachers. They were lawyers. They were craftsmen. And you know what? They also didn't have cars. They didn't have dishwashers. They didn't have washing machines and dryers. They didn't have microwave ovens. It's tempting to look back on this and assume that somehow we, you know what?

I know how they pulled it off. Their lives were just a lot easier than ours are today. They just had more margin. But I think if we examined their lives more closely and considered that, we would actually find the opposite.

[ 11 : 12 ] In many respects, their lives were harder than ours. And I want to say this. Perhaps that explains the difference between their devotion and ours. It's not that our lives are tougher, but that they're easier.

In many respects, we have more resources that afford us more leisure time. In many respects. I'm not saying that's always true. But here's the thing.

Devotion doesn't rise and fall on my circumstance. It's all about priorities. I've got a wife and four kids. We all have varying interests between sports and music and video games and TV shows.

And on top of that, I've got my own interests that I would like to pursue. And if we lived in our family life and let our family, like everybody's priority has equal value and we're just going to all pursue our own priorities to the fullest extent, we would have to say no to some stuff.

We would have to say no to a lot of other things. Something would have to be put on the chopping block and cut off. So here's an example of how our family, Jesse and Haley and our crew, we make those decisions.

[ 12 : 23 ] So Asher was 12 and he loved to play soccer. And there was this little tryout that somebody invited us to and it was for travel ball. And so he went out and he did really well.

So much so is that like, I mean, there was about 40 kids there, but the coach who was kind of leading the thing ran after us as we were getting into our car. And he said, hey, I would really, really,

really like your son to play for my team.

And then we said, okay, we're considering it. We went and researched it and we realized like for Asher to play for that team would mean like us traveling a ton, being away a ton, our family being scattered to so many different places, and we'd have to miss out on a lot of church community. So we had to step back and we had to say, okay, us as the Kinzer family, what are our priorities? Because if we said yes to that, we were going to have to say no to a lot of good stuff. What was our priority? And Asher, to his dismay, it was a no. We had to say, sorry, bud. You cannot do that.

[ 13 : 26 ] This is not for you right now. Because our family is, we're devoted to some other things and we do that as a family together. Now, we could have lived that way.

We could have said yes. And we could have still been followers of Jesus. Absolutely. Jesus would have still loved us the same. Absolutely. I'm not saying any of that. Right?

But those aren't the questions this passage is asking and answering. The question this passage is begging of us is what are your priorities at the end of the day?

Because your priorities show where your devotion lies. And for those 3,000 people, there's lives drastically changed from verse 41 to 42. Drastically. And the Holy Spirit, he chose to include this story.

He said to Luke, man, Luke, remember this part. You're going to write this down in this account. It's going to be put in the book of Acts. And it's going to become a part of the Bible for my people for all time to read and know.

[ 14 : 26 ] And he did that because the Holy Spirit wants us to know and realize that you can't just add Jesus to your life as an accessory. He has to become the center of it. I was counseling a young man recently who confessed this ache in his heart, this longing to grow as a spiritual leader.

And this is what I'm talking about when Jesus gets in your life and he invades and he becomes the center. These are the things, these are the passions and the zeals that start to stir up inside you.

And he's like, man, Jesse, my faith right now is basically just going to church on Sundays and saying grace at dinner. And I know there is more. And I know that I want it.

Please help me. I love that, man. And I'm just like, bro, that is not Satan putting that desire in your heart. That is the Holy Spirit at work in you, stirring these things up.

And that's the instinct. That becomes the instinct of our hearts when Jesus is at the center. We want more. We know there is more.

[ 15 : 26 ] It's not ands. Sorry, it is ands, right, in his kingdom, not ors. And one of the ands that the Holy Spirit leads us into is community. And that's how these 3,000 people responded, which I think is absolutely amazing.

Because you know what they didn't have? They didn't have a 12-step course of how to be the church or a bunch of books to buy from Amazon. It's like this is what it means to like when you're saved, what you're supposed to do and get it into community.

They just naturally knew I'm saved. I believe in Jesus. For some reason, I need to be together with other believers. Right? It was spirit-led. It became this like spirit-led instinct to fellowship with other Christians.

Verse 44, the very beginning of that verse, it says, And all who believed were together. And they were connected. And this is really too straightforward to misinterpret, right?

There's no like Greek way of jumping around this and like, well, this word can also mean. No, they were together. Being devoted to Jesus means being a faithful presence in the church.

[ 16 : 32 ] In many places, the Bible likens the church to Jesus' body. And as his body, we bear witness to Jesus here on earth, right? That's what we do. We take the invisible God, Jesus, who's in heaven, ruling and reigning, and us as a body together in our togetherness, and our love for one another, and our movement together, and we make the invisible God visible.

That's what we do. We bear witness to him. Like, that's the essence of discipleship, actually. The essence of discipleship is bearing witness. That's what we get to do.

And here's the thing. When you think about bodies, one of the practical things, the body is made up of many interconnected parts, right? And the church is made up of many interconnected people, interconnected relationships.

We have to be together by necessity, by church's very nature. And not from a sense of, like, just dogged religious obligation that we have to do this.

You don't get a sense in these verses of that at all, that the disciples were, like, dragging themselves to each other's house. Like, here we go again, another night. Oh, they weren't dragging themselves to the temple like, oh, my gosh, I think Peter's preaching again this time, and you know he's going to share that fishing story again, you know?

[ 17 : 52 ] When you read this passage, it is so hard to miss the joy that is among them. And even with all the ands, you can look at them and it's like, my goodness, these people were crazy.

Even with all the ands that marked the rhythms of their life, you pick up on the mutual love flowing within this body of believers. And if the gospel is true, it only makes sense that this is their response.

See, the good news for you and me is that we're saved, but it's not just that you're saved. Jesus, he also pours his heart into yours. That's what happens, which means what he finds joy in, you now find joy in.

What he loves, you now love. His heart, all those things, they become your heart. And when you are filled with Jesus' joy and love, spending time with him and his people, his body, his church, looks like that devoted life of ands and not oars.

It's devoted to Bible study and fellowship, right? Not Bible study or fellowship. And we know, let's be honest, if that was an or, we know where all the introverts and the extroverts would be, right?

[ 19 : 01 ] We know where they would be camping out. It's devoted to eating together and prayers. Praise God for that, right? Right? Devotion to the body means a lot of good hands are added to the rhythms of our life that move you toward community.

But it's not all addition. There is some subtraction too. You do get to get rid of some stuff as well. Verse 45 says, They were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all as any had need.

Right? This can be a tough one. We like our stuff. You might be thinking, man, I was, I was just, you had me. I was just starting to warm up to this fellowshiping and eating thing.

I was like, mm, that was like, I could get behind that groove. That's cool. I was just thinking, man, Bible study and prayer? Yeah, yeah, yeah. I'm all for that. But now, what's this, what's you doing? You're coming after my money.

You're coming after my stuff. Like, where, where does this end? Where does this end, buddy? But here's the thing. This isn't me saying this. This is the Bible that said this. All right? This is God speaking to us.

[ 20 : 07 ] Because Jesus isn't satisfied with anything less than being a priority in every area of your life. Which means he also wants priority in your finances. And that is worked out throughout the Bible.

That has been worked out in giving to the church. Church, devotion to the body means being a generous giver. That's what it looks like. Now, one of the common practices of church goes throughout history.

Old Testament people, God's people, they gave. And it's been financial contributions. In the Old Testament, God commanded Israel to tithe. And back then, they were agrarian society, right?

They were farmers and they had livestock and they would bring 10% of their harvest. And then they would give God the firstborn of their flocks. And this giving, it was both an act of faith.

It was an act of worship. But it was also a practical support of God's ministers whose job it was to be priests in the temple. And it wasn't like the Old Testament folks back then didn't need the 10% like we do now, right?

[ 21 : 10 ] I mean, if you think about it, back then there was a lot more instability. Their harvests had a lot more threats. There were famines. There were, sometimes there wasn't enough rain.

And the harvest took a hit. Or could take a hit. Locusts apparently could just show up in that area of the world and just eat all your plants. You thought like, oh, look at my beautiful fields.

And then suddenly locusts come through and you got nothing. And they didn't have things like irrigation and fertilizer and insecticides to like keep those harvests protected.

So think about that. Giving that first 10% back then, man, that was a huge act of faith in God. Huge act of faith. And they had to be like, man, God, I'm giving this to you. That 10%, that's a big percent.

But, you know, when I do this, what I'm saying is like, God, you are my provider, right? And I'm saying to this, man, I can't get my security from my stuff. I can't get my security from my money.

[ 22 : 10 ] That can only come from God. That's what we're doing when we give. And we give faithfully and regularly, generously to God and to his church. But on top of that, when we give to God in that way, what we're doing is we're giving him stuff and he can put it to work for his kingdom.

And if you look at what it said here, it says, man, when they were doing this, people's needs were being met. I love that. God cares about some of the practical stuff of our lives.

And Acts 4 testifies to the same generosity in the church. In verse 34, it says, there was not a needy person among them. Why? Because for as many as there were owners of lands or houses, they sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold and laid it at the apostles' feet.

And it was distributed to each as any had need. I mean, that is radical generosity. People are literally selling homes and real estate and giving the equity to the church, which is, that's amazing. But the results speak for themselves. It says there was not a needy person among them. And I think there is an important truth here that we can easily miss. God, he's a God who cares about the spiritual aspect of our lives, but also the natural material aspect of our lives as well.

[ 23 : 25 ] He's a God who cares for our stomachs as much as our souls. I love that about God. When Jesus taught his disciples to pray, he included the line, give us today our daily bread.

You know what? It's okay to ask God for just simple things like daily bread, for your needs, your practical needs. The writer of Psalm 37, he's seen a lot in his life and he reflects back over it on God's practical care for his children.

In verse 25, it says, I have been young and now am old. Some of you are saying, that's me. Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his, God's children begging for bread.

And when you believe that God is not only your provider, but he is a generous father toward you, it makes you generous. When that sinks down into your soul, you become a generous person.

And when you, here's the other thing, guys, what I love about the response to that is when you give generously, what we do is we begin to see God's generous provisions come through for us, true, but also for others.

[ 24 : 38 ] You see that happen. And when that happens, it's like you experience these little faith boosts. You're just like, oh my gosh, Lord, you came through again. Here's a little story. So there was a, it's a recent one, a pretty wealthy businessman was driving, just driving down the road.

And like, as he's driving, God just drops into his heart, hey, you need to give a sizable amount of money to an employee in your company. Doesn't say the name or anything. And he's got hundreds of employees in his company.

So he's like, he's like, was that just a passing thought? I don't know. Kind of came out of nowhere.

And so he just like, he didn't do anything about it. Just like, okay. Then a couple weeks later, same thing, he's driving and God drops that same thought in him, but with a lot more intensity.

A lot more intensity. So this guy's like, well, maybe God's really serious about this. I don't know what that looks like. What's going on? So he calls his son who happens to work for his business. And he tells him, he's like, man, I'm driving down the road.

This happened twice. So this is what's going on. And I don't know, I feel like God's wanting to give an employee in our company like \$50,000. And I don't know why. What do you think? And his son's like, dad, this is crazy.

[ 25 : 43 ] You're not going to believe this. Someone at my branch. I've just been speaking to them. They have been talking to me about like, man, how they just stepped out in faith and decided to ask God like, man, Lord, I would love to go to college.

No one in my family has ever gone to college. They were super poor. And they said, you know what, I'm going to step out of faith and just ask God for \$50,000. It's crazy.

And you can step back and say like, oh, that's a weird coincidence. God can't work that way. But he's a God who meets our needs. He gives us our daily bread. And sometimes he is lavishly generous to you.

Do you know him as a generous father? Do you believe that he is a generous father? He is. And that isn't a story that happened 200 years ago.

That was a recent story from a guy at One Harbor Church. Man. I don't know how your heart responded when you heard that at the end.

[ 26 : 49 ] Did you get a little joy bump? Or are you like, oh, my goodness. Did you feel like your faith increased in God just a little bit? Like maybe he is as generous as his word says he is.

But that's what happens when we live generously and we allow God's generosity to flow through us. Verse 46. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they receive their food with glad and generous hearts.

Their devotion. Their devotion. Their being generous was not a burden. It built them up. That's what being devoted to the body does. Being devoted to the body builds us all up in joy.

A devoted and generous church will be marked by gladness. It will be marked by joy. Why?

Because generosity is an outflow of God's faithful love toward us.

Toward you and me. And God's love, right? His redemptive love, that is the soil in which true joy grows. And that is the kind of church communities God is about building.

[ 27 : 59 ] That's what he's about building. It's a community of his faithful love filled with his generosity and his joy. And, you know, when I think back to, like, One Harbor's, like, early days, beginning days, we didn't have a clue what we were doing as a church.

And we didn't have much in the way of buildings and pastors and staff and money and all the accoutrements that come with, like, as you go on as a church and grow, these things can happen. But you know what we did have? We loved God. And we loved each other. We did have that. And there was a contagious joy in that. We loved being together on Sundays, and we loved being together between Sundays.

And when we were together, we laughed. We cried together. We talked about the gospel. We did life together. We held each other's prayers in prayer, and we cared for each other's burdens.

We did all those practical things. And all that happened in the midst of jobs and growing families.

But it wasn't a burden because there was so much joy. And for good reason.

[ 29 : 04 ] See, you can't separate joy from strong relational attachments. And without knowing what was happening, that's what God was building in those early days.

That's what he was doing. God, friends, God has created us for community. Like, he is a community in and of himself, right? Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

He's been the eternal community. And he said, I'm going to make man in my image. What he was doing, he was making man. He didn't make man just man. It says in the beginning, he made them male and female. He started out with a community.

We were created as relational beings, which means you and I can't be healthy and avoid attachments with others. We can't be healthy and disconnected.

We can't be healthy and live in isolation. And now it's tempting to wonder that way because sin comes in and it ruins community for us, right? It's like, man, the ideal that we have and the ideal that we want, man, it just gets hammered away at and it gets ruined and we get cut up in our souls inside and we start distrusting community because the community is the one that is hurting us.

[ 30 : 13 ] And it can hurt us. Look at Adam and Eve. When they sinned, they went from having great perfect harmony to dissonance because of that. They no longer had trust between themselves.

They didn't feel safe and secure with each other. And when God even confronted them, they started blaming each other. And instead of contending for one another, they contended against each other. But Jesus, our Savior, he came and he came to break sin's power. The sin that caused community to be a dangerous place, Jesus came in and said, you know what? I'm going to come and I'm going to redeem that.

I'm going to break sin's power. And now I'm recreating a new redeemed community that is getting back to the place where love is flowing. Trust is flowing.

People will love to be together. There can be honesty and there can be confession. We could be real. That's the community Jesus died for and he's recreating. It's a place where we can confess our faults.

[ 31 : 12 ] We can confess our wins and we can confess our wounds. We can confess our success and we can confess our sins. And it's important that we know the difference between sins and wounds as a church and that we treat them accordingly.

And always with love and truth. Darren Patrick, he's an American pastor. He just recently took his life. Unfortunately, it's very much a tragedy. But he says this, we often get sins and wounds confused.

Sins are rebellious places in our hearts that need repenting. And wounds are tender places in our hearts that need healing. And you cannot repent of wounds.

And you cannot go to therapy for sins. So people can get hurt. And we often do when, especially in the church, when we treat wounds like sins.

We're applying the wrong thing. And church can get really toxic too when sins and wounds just go ignored and undealt with. And what it does, it creates the opposite of this redeemed community that Jesus is on about building.

[ 32 : 21 ] And instead of having those close attachments, when we're wounded from community, we don't have glad and generous hearts.

We can grow more detached with suspicion and contention. And I remember hearing a pastor tell a story about him and his wife.

Heard it on a podcast. Him and his wife were out on the porch and they were doing a little fun, you know, just spending time together. And she's like, hey, let's do a little word association.

So you kind of like word association. I'm going to say a word. Tell me the first thing that pops into your brain. And so she says to his husband, she says to her husband, who's a pastor, he says people. He says dangerous.

When it comes to church, when it comes to God's people, man, for some of us we get that. Our word associations are not positive. And for some of us, it can be positive.

[ 33 : 27 ] But, man, if you're there and you think of that word association and you're just like, man, church dangerous. Church hurtful. Church can't trust him. I just want to say, man, I'm so sorry.

The church is full of people who are in process. We've been saved and we're being sanctified and we're far from perfect. And this isn't excusing bad behavior at all.

We're complicated. We're sinful. We're insecure. And a lot of times that leaks out in very unhealthy and toxic ways. I'm one of those people.

I'm in process. If you've been hurt by the church, I want to applaud you for even being here today. But God knows why you're here.

He made you for deeply connected, generous, loving, joyful community of deep attachment to others. I heard Philip Davis say this, and I think it's true.

[ 34 : 34 ] If you've been hurt by community, you can't heal in isolation. You may not be in the place right now of saying yes and amen to everything I'm saying.

You may be thinking like, yeah, it's true, but Jesse, you just don't know how much I've been hurt. But Jesus does. You may be far from stepping into being a devoted member at a church, and that's okay.

But I want to ask you today, what do you think Jesus is calling you to take your next step? Just a small little step. It doesn't have to be big.

Maybe it's just that you just keep showing up here for a season. You expose yourself to loving community of glad and generous hearts.

Maybe it's opening up to someone you know and trust about your wounds from the past. Only Jesus can heal those wounds.

[ 35 : 42 ] Wounds aren't like sin. My friend Alan Fraus said, when sin is like a tumor, you've got to go after it and cut it out. Wounds are like a burn.

You just have to apply healing balm to it, and it takes time. Only Jesus can heal those wounds, but he always does that through community.

He does that in his body, the church. And I want to encourage you, if that's you today, we have a lot of people here that understand how to tend to wounds according to Jesus' love and grace, and we would love to come alongside you and walk alongside you very patiently, and we'd love to take that journey with you.

As the band comes up, how can we respond? Well, whether you're a Christian or not, open your hearts to Jesus. And for some of you, you may be doing that for the first time.

I want to say to you, if you're not a Christian yet, most of the things we devote ourselves to aren't devoted to us. But with Jesus, that's the difference. Jesus, he's devoted to you before you're ever devoted to him.

[ 36 : 57 ] And he came and died for your sins to prove that. And through his death, the promise is you can be reconciled to God. Jesus came to die to close the gap between you and him. And the invitation to you today is come.

Be reconciled to God. Be reconciled to that generous father that I spoke about by faith in his son, Jesus Christ. Make him your Lord and Savior. Be brought into his church, his family of glad and

generous hearts.

And I want to say, if you're already a Christian, open your heart again and afresh to Jesus. And open it by being devoted to his body.

And for some, that will require changing some priorities in life. Just being more present in community. For others, it's taking that small but very difficult step of confessing your need for church and healing of the wounds the church has caused.

And that might be enough for today. It might be enough for the next few months. It might be enough for a year. That's what God, you and God know. Just follow the Spirit's calling.

[ 38 : 11 ] I'm going to give us all 30 seconds to just close our eyes and respond appropriately. Let's go for it. In this meal, these elements, the bread we eat, even though it's a pathetic version of bread, the bread we eat, the cup we drink.

It represents Jesus, his body broken and his blood shed for us. But it says, this is how he created his community. This is how he did it.

His death and his resurrection. And we are here and we gather because Jesus is at the center. He draws us together. He is the glue that keeps us together.

And as we take communion, we take it in faith, we're proclaiming our commitment to Jesus. And we're proclaiming our commitment to being devoted to his body.

We are both remembering his sacrifice for us and we are membering ourselves to the church. And so let's eat and let's drink together, friends.

[ 39 : 25 ] Amen. Amen. Amen.