

Lord of Reality

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[0 : 0 0] All right, good morning. How are you guys? Yeah, great to be here. I'm going to continue with a little extra just announcement, little family business before we kind of jump into the passage for today in Colossians. And yeah, so we've been looking for a long, long time since we've been here for a building. This has always been a temporary stopping point for us to get started.

And Cherry Point Baptist has been so amazing and generous to open up this space and let us use it. But that time is going to be drawing to an end at some point. And we've been, like I said, looking for a ton at different spaces. I feel like right now, if this doesn't work out, I could become a real estate agent in Havelock and probably do really well. I know just about every building that is available and not available to us. And so the way we approach these things, we think about, okay, where are we at right now as a church, our current size, and then what do we need for growth?

We want to be wise as to what we get into for the next step. And so there have been, you know, nothing really happening until recently. There's a couple of good opportunities and ways forward for us. And we're just really looking to those things. They check out, they check off a lot of the boxes that are like base needs, not even like wants, just like basic needs for what we need to do to meet as a church. And so just want to say that, hey, nothing is final in any of those things. We're real, we're still like gathering info, getting data, all that kind of stuff. But we do have these good opportunities in front of us. So how can you help us? And please be praying for us. We want to make the right move. We want to move forward with wisdom and prudence and also obviously be where God wants us to be. And also know in these decisions, me and Alan don't make them in a vacuum. We also have a broader team of pastors from all the various sites where we talk these things through. There's a lot of good businessmen and financially sound people that speak into it as well. And so just want to let you know that. If you have any questions about any of this stuff, man, we have an open door policy. We want to know. Don't keep those, don't keep questions or comments to yourself. Just come to us. We'd love to talk and hear what you have as far as perspective or if you've got a free building to give to us as well. That'd be great. All right. You can speak to myself or Alan about that, okay? All right. That's some family business out of the way. Guys, it is great to be back. We went on vacation for a couple weeks.

We did our Swiss Family Robinson thing out in Florida. Nobody got that reference. You guys need to go back to some like old Disney films and just like, you know, get some adventure into you. I even like grew a big white beard out. It was awesome. But we're back. We missed you all. It's great to be here. And just want to say, man, resting is such an important thing. Genesis 1 reminds us that man's first day after God created him was a day of rest. He didn't jump right into work. He actually rested on the seventh day and then got to it. And so we rest for the mission. That's what we do. We rest so that God can use us and sustain us. And rest also reminds us that we're human beings. We're not machines. And we kind of live in a day where rest challenges our pride, that notion. We think that, hey, you know, people can't do it without me. So we overwork ourselves. We overcommit ourselves.

And we have a hard time pulling away. And rest, what it does, it makes us face our limitations as people. We have limited time, limited energy, limited resources. And God made us that way on purpose, right? We need each other. We need community. We need all of that. And so I'm saying all this because we live in a culture where rest isn't valued. Being a workaholic is often praised and more highly valued. And it's just not a healthy thing. The Bible doesn't give us a picture of that.

[3 : 36] It gives us a picture of having a good work ethic. But it also gives us a picture of having good rhythms of rest. And so I just want to encourage you in that as we come back from our own little bit of resting, just as you think of, especially during these summer months, a lot of people do take vacation. Man, take an opportunity to really rest well. All right. So back to Colossians. We are continuing on. We're going to be in Colossians 2, verses 16. And we're going to read those verses right now. They should be up on the screen behind me. All right. It says this, Therefore, let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one disqualify you insisting on asceticism and worship of angels, going on in detail about visions puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind and not holding fast to the head from whom the whole body nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments grows with a growth that is from God. So this passage and the passages that we're going to look at over the next few weeks, what they do is they answer this question based on what

Jesus has done. Now that I'm a Christian, right? Alan did a great job in packaging that last week with a victory we have in Jesus. Now that I'm a Christian, what does it look like? What does it mean to follow Jesus as a disciple, right? Last week, you learned all of that, what Jesus is dead, stuff we could never do, only he could do, amazing stuff, right? New Christians, man, we realize this when we're saved by Jesus and our eyes are open to see like, oh my goodness, all this victory, all the grace, all the love, all the goodness of God that floods into us. Man, new Christians, you are so fun to be around, right? Because everything is so fresh and real and raw. You guys are so passionate, ready to live for Jesus and ready to die for him. You're ready to take the gospel to your friends and to all the world and share the good news with anybody that will listen, and that's awesome. And this happens with all of us, right? We all go through that. And this happens with church as well. Like, you know, we started a year and some change ago, and it's fun and it's exciting, it's intoxicating, and it's real and it's raw, and there's so much energy. And everything seems possible at that point. This desire for more of Jesus, this desire and this faith and belief that, man, God can do anything. It's palpable. We realize when we're saved, there's so much more.

There's so much more of Jesus, right? There's so much more of him to grow into. And that, when this, the end of this passage, it talks about the growth that comes from God. That's what it's talking about. This more of Jesus, right? We get saved, and then there's more of him. We see there's more and more and more, this endless growing in him. But the question here is how? How do we do that? How do we grow with the growth that comes from God? And again, that's what these next few weeks are going to answer. How does God grow you personally and us as a church? Jesus said the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, right? He likens the kingdom of God in many different areas, but one of the ways he said is it was a mustard seed. It grows from this tiny little speck, this tiny, tiny, tiny little seed into one of the biggest trees in the garden. And that's a good picture and metaphor of what it looks like to follow Jesus, right? God puts the kingdom inside of us, inside of our hearts. He puts, brings us into his kingdom, and his kingdom gets into us, and it grows, and it grows, and it flourishes.

So that means we don't get saved, and then nothing changes. Actually, man, God is changing us. He's changing us from the inside out. And we want to be changed, right? We don't want to stay the same.

We intrinsically know that there is a lot left in us that does need to change, and also in our churches. There's a lot left in our churches, man, that we just don't get right, and that God needs to work out in us, right? Addiction folks, those people that are in AA or Narcotics Anonymous, whatever it is, they understand this best, and they have this really cool, simple axiom that is so true.

[7 : 38] They say, if nothing changes, nothing changes. And that's what it is about following Jesus. God is changing us from one degree of glory to the next. He's doing it all the time. You and I are being changed. God is at work in us in this church. We are being changed. God the Holy Spirit is at work making us more like Jesus, and he does this as we yield more and more to his will. But in this particular passage of following Jesus, we aren't given just positive instructions on how to yield to the Holy Spirit's work and what that looks like that's going to come in subsequent weeks. Actually, he starts out with giving us warnings about things that could actually disrupt God's work, that work of change, that change he's on about doing in our lives. See, anything that we pursue, whether it be following Jesus or just a hobby we have, right? Anything we pursue with a passion has pitfalls.

Why? Because, well, you and me are you and me, right? We are imperfect people. We don't get things right all the time. Here's a funny example. I'm not a golfer, but, you know, I wanted to learn golf. So when I bought, well, I didn't buy clubs. Somebody gave me clubs. So I went out and I just started swinging. You go to a driving, how do you learn to golf? Well, you just start swinging, right? You go to a driving range. Most people, that's how they learn to golf. They just pick up a club and start swinging away. But what often happens, actually what typically happens, is that as you swing away, you don't realize what you're doing, but you're like galvanizing just bad form into your swing because you don't have anyone else around you telling, actually, you shouldn't do this or you shouldn't do that. And so what happens is, as that happens, we never reach, many of these golfers never reach their full potential as a golfer, right? Their game gets stuck and they start getting frustrated. We start throwing our clubs or we just stop playing altogether, like is my case, right? And similarly, there's pitfalls along the way in following Jesus. And that is what this passage is telling us to watch out for. And it's like Tiger Woods, like old school Tiger Woods when he was like winning everything, coming to us and looking at our golf swing and saying, hey, you know what? You need to adjust here. You need to like in your back swing, you need to make this shift or that shift or you need to stop doing that. And this passage is the Holy Spirit speak to us and saying, hey, watch out for this. You know, stop doing that because, man, it's going to cause so many problems down the road.

And so he's here to gently and kindly, as a wise counselor, come alongside us and help us make the necessary adjustments. And we should be listening. We'd be foolish not to listen. Why? Because these pitfalls can make us so cynical. It can turn us into just cynical people, cynical Christians. It can turn us into frustrated Christians. We can get so angry at God for things that we think he should be doing, but he's not doing. And that's the best that could happen to us. At worst, it can cause us just to tap out and walk away from our faith altogether. So one of the big pitfalls that we first see in this passage is that we is that we shouldn't let people judge our Christianity, right? And that's often what happens.

We let people judge our Christianity by a false standard. So what's the alternative to that? Well, we should let Jesus be our judge. Colossians 2.16, it says, therefore, therefore, based on everything that we had just talked about, therefore, because Jesus won the victory because he did everything, let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath. So here's an example of like how that would work out today. This is a true story that happened years ago, not in this church, another church I was attending. A man hit me up in the lobby, and he started going into how we weren't doing communion right because the bread we were using wasn't unleavened bread, which is the bread Jesus used. And he was like, man, we got to get leavened bread. We got to do that. That's so important. We're not doing it right. And it was just really, really important to him, so much so that because we didn't change to unleavened bread, he actually went and started attending another church. I'm assuming that used unleavened bread. So for him, we weren't following some rules that were so important to him. We weren't following things that probably should have been secondary things. He made them primary things. And so he went to another church, and this wasn't like a new follower of Jesus that had got sucked into something. Man, he had been following Jesus for a long time, and that became like the big deal for him. And in the 70s and the 80s,

I grew up in church, and so I kind of remember those times and the cultural climate of those days. It was a sign of spiritual maturity in certain Christian circles to not have a TV or watch certain shows and movies. And I remember this, and I'm scarred because, you know, those He-Man and G.I. Joe that I missed out on. I'm still really bummed about that. But here's the thing, guys. Christians pass judgment on stupid stuff all the time, right? I mean, this passage just talks about like, man, don't let people judge you on food or drink that you eat or, you know, how you follow Sabbath or some festivals you attend or these new moon things you may celebrate. We can make the wrong things the most important things. You know, we might think, I can't believe so-and-so would watch a show like that. Or I can't believe that church doesn't serve coffee. Actually, that's a big deal. Let's not use that example. That would be me passing judgment on a church if that was happening, right? That would be good. For example, we went to church on vacation, and it was great. I mean, the worship was awesome.

[13 : 36] The message was good. It was Christ-centered. It was Christ-focused. But I found myself wrestling to keep Jesus as the main thing, as the focus as I worshiped at this church we were visiting because they did some things a little bit differently to us, right? They didn't do announcements the same way. They didn't do a call to worship the same way. They didn't close the same way. And at the end of the day, those things are like, man, they're not really that important. They're not big deal stuff. And the problem, it wasn't their problem. The problem was in my heart. See, I like to put myself in the place of being the judge. And we all have that in us, guys. We all have that in us. We also are so susceptible not only to putting ourself in the place of being the judge, we're susceptible to letting other people that we're in awe of be the ones who judge us and place judgment over us.

Because really what we're looking for is control and approval. That's the two things that are happening there. That's the two things these things are addressing at the center of our hearts. We are people that are always looking to be in control, but we're also looking for approval.

And both of those things, to try and be, put ourselves in the place of Jesus and either of those things, we never end up in a good place. We never do. We either become part of the in crowd who are the moral superior jerks, right? The controlling people. Or we become the slavish outsiders who are trying to earn the acceptance of man. We're seeking approval from other people.

And the problem here is, is that we diminish Jesus when we do this. We stop believing that his judgments over us are the best judgments. What he says about us is the best thing to receive.

So we look outside of him. We look to ourselves or we look to others. And we don't believe his approval. What he says over us is all we need. So we seek that approval elsewhere. And really what's happening inside of us is our own insecurity in God's promises, right? We don't believe that God is as good as he says he is, that his promises aren't going to be followed through by him.

[15 : 46] So, and the other part of that is deep down, we really don't want to relinquish all the control to him as well. See, every one of us, you, me, everyone, we all wrestle with finding and staying secure in Jesus and all he did for us. But our growth from God means we grow in letting go of that desire to earn our salvation. And so growth in God means letting Jesus be the one who qualifies us.

Verse 18, it says, let no one disqualify you. Let no one disqualify you. No one. Not me. Not some angel. Not some prophet. Let no one disqualify you. Insisting on asceticism, which is a form of false humility, the self-abasement. It's like navel-gazing, hyper-puritanism.

Or worship of angels. Going on in detail about visions. Puffed up without reason by his sensuous mind or carnal mind. Literally, it means an unspiritual mind, a mind that hasn't been affected by the Holy Spirit. Man, it doesn't matter how spiritual you may seem or how spiritual a person seems, how devoutly rigid you or anyone else may be in their religious practice. Their works and their words don't add or change any part of your salvation. Okay? Go back and listen again to Alan's sermon last week. It was about Jesus winning the victory. All of it. Not some of it. We don't say, yeah, Jesus, you won the victory. Now I need to add a little bit onto it as I continue following you. No, Jesus won the victory. He qualified us. That's it. The Bible says there is now no more condemnation, which means there is nobody that can disqualify you. There's no word that somebody could say to you and I that say, hey, you are disqualified from salvation in Jesus Christ. There is not a person or a power in the universe that can adjust what Jesus has done. Now, there are earnest people who are sincere in what they're saying when they do this. They're just sincerely wrong. And you know what? There's also just devilish people out there too who want to convince you otherwise. The beginning of that verse, when that phrase, it says, let no one disqualify you. It's kind of a Greek idiom. It's an odd phrase that doesn't translate too well. But the best picture we get is this idea of being a sportsman.

Think of like a batter in baseball, right? And he's being cheated out of victory, the team is, by the umpire, which is always the case when our team loses, right? It's because the refs cheated. The refs were like paid off. But that's what it means when it's saying, let no one disqualify you. It's literally, man, if we're letting this happen, we're being robbed of the victory we have in Christ. And we're letting that happen because we're believing them. It's like an umpire that keeps calling a ball a strike. That is what is happening here. They're trying to snatch you out of Jesus's victory. And it's not done in the most obvious ways. It's done in very clever, subtle ways. It's not people saying, you know what? It doesn't matter what you do. Go out, steal, and cheat, and kill, and commit adultery.

God doesn't care. That's not the messages we buy in for and fall for at all. It's the subtle, slippery slope of trusting in the outward appearance. And it can also not only be that, but also making the unimportant things the most important things. You know, instead of, you know, if or when you entertain an angel, like Hebrews says, being like, cool, if that happens, that's awesome.

[19 : 33] You know what I'm going to do? I'm not going to worry about that. I'm just going to live my life hospitably. And if I happen to entertain an angel, cool. But what happens is we read verses like that, and then like, man, people just like run the other direction with it, and they just become angel hunters, right? Let's find an angel. We got to look for an angel. We have to have an angel experience wherever possible so that we could tell other people. And then it makes us feel so righteous and superior to everyone else. The irony is here is that the more we pursue these things, these outward things, that the further we actually move from Jesus. Those things don't bring us closer to Jesus. It actually moves us further away from Jesus. And that's the real danger here. These things can surpass Jesus as our ultimate pursuit. And that's what we got to watch out. Growth in God, God's growth that comes from him. Man, we have to let Jesus be our ultimate aim for everything we do, okay? That's what he's getting at when he says in verse 17, those other things, man, the food and the drink and the festivals and the Sabbath, man, those are the shadow of things to come. But the substance, the reality, the fulfillment belongs to Christ, right? Think of it this way. What is more beautiful?

The shade of an apple tree or the apple tree itself? Which do we get nourishment from? The apple tree shadow or the apple tree, right? And here's the thing, guys. What this verse is saying, to stop at the shadow is to miss the source. It's to miss the substance, the reality of the thing, where all the life-giving is. And we can do that with anything. We can do that with coming to church. We can do that with reading our Bible. We can do that with fasting and prayer. Now, all those things are good, but they are shadows that are meant to bring us and point us to the true substance, which is Jesus Christ.

Jesus said this to the people that were the greatest Bible readers and students of the Bible at his time. In John 5, verse 38, he's talking to the Pharisees. And he says, you do not have his, God's word, abiding in you. Which is a funny thing to say, because to be a Pharisee meant you had Genesis, Exodus, Deuteronomy, Numbers. Did I say those right? Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Numbers.

Numbers, Deuteronomy. That's right. I'm your pastor. You should be ashamed. You should be ashamed right now. They had these things memorized. You had to know every word of these things and quote them from memory.

And Jesus said to these guys, you know what? You don't have the word of God abiding in you, which is kind of a head-scratcher. But he goes on to explain it. For you do not believe the one whom he has sent. You search the scriptures. You go to the Bible and you study the Bible because you think that in them, you have eternal life. He's saying, you guys stop at the shadow. But Jesus goes on to say this, it is they, the Bible, the scriptures that bear witness about me. And you go to the Bible, you don't look at it to find eternal life just because you go to the Bible. That's the shadow.

[22 : 52] It's meant to point us to the substance. It's meant to point us to the reality, which is Jesus Christ and bring him there. We can do the same thing with prayer. And Jesus is saying this to us in everything. Guys, your aim is me. Why do you come on a Sunday?

Man, because Jesus, we want to see you. Jesus, we want to come and we want to enjoy you. Why do you go to the Bible? It isn't so that you put God in your favor or in your debt and he has to respond to you like some weird equation. But that's what we think, right? Why do we come to church? Why do we do things like that? Why do we tithe? A long time ago, I was talking to a businessman at the church.

And he was, it wasn't this church, it was another church. And you keep, Jesse, you keep saying that. I'm not believing you anymore. Trust me, it was another church. All right. He was upset, right? Because his business wasn't going well at the time. And he said this to me and it stuck.

It's just, something's always stuck with me. I was like, oof. He said he was mad at God because he had always tithed faithfully. He had always given God 10% of his income.

And now his business wasn't doing so well. And he was saying, God, how can you do that? Where's my protection? See, we can look to those things and do them for all the wrong reasons so that God has to respond to our wants and our needs how we want them to. See, that man wasn't tithing to God. He was tithing to himself. Let's be honest. He was giving to God for what he could get back from God, right?

[24 : 22] He was using tithe as an insurance so that, man, nothing can go wrong in his life. Guys, we could do this with prayer. We could do this with the Bible. We could do this with going to church. And then things hit in our lives and we're like, whoa, whoa, God, how dare you do that? No, no, no, no. I've been faithful. I've been faithful. You got to back me up here. You got to fix this.

Anything that we can have it. We can use good spiritual habits to get more from Jesus instead of using them for what they're meant to be, which is to get more of Jesus, guys. The measure of growth from God isn't how prosperous our lives and our churches look. Guys, faithless men can have fruitful ministries and fancy lives. It's so true. God looks for faithfulness, not fruitfulness.

And the faithfulness that God cares about is keeping Jesus our ultimate aim, putting his kingdom first, seeking him above all things, holding fast to him, which means the growth that comes from God comes because we remain in Jesus and let him bring the growth. So what 219 says, he talks about those guys that are not holding fast to the head. So what's our job? It's to hold fast to the head from whom the whole body, when he's talking about the head, he's not talking about some floating, bloating head out there in the universe, right? He's talking about Jesus Christ and his authority from whom the whole body nourished and knit together through its joints and ligaments grows with the growth that is from God.

We hold fast to Jesus. We hold fast to the head. That means we remain in him. It's what the apostle John was so fond of calling abiding in Christ, abiding in Jesus. That's what we're called to do.

This remaining, this abiding in Jesus involves this continual act of surrender. Faithfulness to God will produce in us an ever-growing surrender of our will to his.

[26 : 25] And it isn't a reluctant surrender. Not a surrender out of being afraid of reprisal from God. No, it's a surrender of love. It's a surrender of what happens when two people, when they fall in love, coming together and say, you know what? I'm not the most important person in my life. In person in my life, you are. And we surrender to each other's wills. Now that happens at first. And then along the way, we start to let our other will start creeping in. And that could be a bad thing. But all the same, it's an act of yielding to God. It's an act of yielding our will and our desires and our demands and our expectations to him because he is good and he is trustworthy. And this just doesn't happen in the moment of salvation. It happens over a lifetime of following Jesus. And it looks different. It's a process. It's a slow, steady surrendering of our will. And here's an interesting picture of how we grow and surrender to God over time. Right? So when we start out with, you know, we start out with faith in Jesus, this great picture that we have, it says this. You know, the first stage looks like, man,

Lord, I'm a bow in your hands. Lord, draw me lest I rot. Right? That's what we're like when we first start following Jesus. Man, Lord, pick me up and use me. Bend my bow. Do something great with me.

And then as life goes on and we move on to this next stage, we experience some hardship, some suffering, some difficulty in lives, in our lives. Man, we switch to this. Lord, do not overdraw me, Lord, lest I break. Right? We feel that sometimes. We're just like, oh my goodness, Lord. Sometimes it is really hard to follow Jesus and stay and surrender to him. And then, man, as the goodness of God, as he, he, he draws us further into our lives and following him, we reach a phase in maturity. And this typically happens toward the end of our lives where it's, it changes to, you know what, Lord, overdraw me.

Who cares if I break? Jesus, the most spiritual, complete, perfect man, the son of God himself, he prayed this, not my will, but yours be done. Overdraw me, Father. Who cares if I break?

But here's the thing. None of us start at that final stage. Man, we want to get there. We look to the people that are there and we're like, oh my goodness, that would be awesome. God doesn't leapfrog us there. We got to go through those other stages first, guys. It's a process. And you know, oftentimes it's long and it's slow. As God brings us along the path of that increased surrender, and we don't get to dictate to God the terms and the timing of that. We simply take it as it comes and we respond accordingly, right? See, these, these stages of surrender, of increased surrender, they happen in various areas of our life. That's all good. We love little babies here. That's all good.

[29 : 25] See, these stages of increased surrender happen in various areas of our life and at different times. For example, when God started working on my heart afresh and he brought me back, I kind of just went crazy and then he brought me back and he started working on me. And I grew in surrender in relinquishing my area, the area of my life of sexual purity. And that's one of the big areas God worked on first, right? But that, that surrender outpaced another area of my life of generosity, right? I, God had a lot more work to do in my heart on that generosity thing, right? And so it's not that like he comes and he fixes us all at the same time, all in one moment. There's different aspects of us that he's just bringing along and working on all the time. And trust me, for myself, God didn't just stop with those two things. I have a whole lot of problems that he's still working on, right?

And now I wish God would fix me all at once, but that doesn't seem to be his way. That's not how he works. You know, some of us, we're kind of in that phase of our Christianity where the soundtrack of our walk with Jesus is probably more like B.B. King's The Thrill Is Gone, right? Where it's like, we remember the days when we were super excited and passionate for Jesus and everything was fresh and fun and new and we were just, man, I just want to go out and just live my life in full surrender to him. But now it just seems a little bit different, you know? It feels like that thrill is gone, that excitement is gone. It's not so, it's hard to get revved up for Jesus. The passion for him and his church, it's diminished a little bit. It's not totally gone, but it's diminished. Guys, we all go through that. If you're there, I just want to say, hey, welcome to the club. We all go through seasons of life like that. That's okay. But here's the thing. We don't live by those emotions. We don't live by those feelings. And here's the other side of that. We also don't manufacture fake ones either, right? What we do is we continue to live by faithfulness and trust in God. Trust him to bring the growth. Trust him that, you know what, even this season of life where it feels like the thrill is gone, that's a season God has placed me in for a reason. And he's doing something unique in my discipleship and following Jesus and growing in surrender to him. And he can only do that with that season of life.

Nothing's wasted for God. Some of that deep heart stuff, that deep heart stuff happens in those difficult moments, right? Those difficult seasons where we're suffering and we're going through hard stuff. It's where we actually find an identity is secured and not how we are feeling inside, but it's just secured in the reality that what God has said is true and he is faithful and his promises are not going to return to him null and void. That what he has spoken over us and said over us, regardless of how we're feeling, is always true.

We can't, you and I, we would like to, but we can't force quick change through spiritual systems or structures. There's no magical incantation that we get to make to just suddenly leapfrog ahead in our sanctification. We're called to be faithful, faithful to push into more of Jesus, whether the thrill is gone or not. We push into more of him, keeping him our ultimate aim, letting him be our judge and our qualifier. And this is the quiet fruitfulness that men rarely see and very rarely gets applauded, but God sees and he delights in it. So I got to have the band come up.

If you're here and you're not a Christian, man, your first step I want to invite you into today is surrendering to Jesus as Lord and Savior. He's a Savior who saved you from your sins in grace.

[33 : 22] You don't have to earn it and you come to him as both Savior, but you also recognize he is the King sitting on the throne. He is the one to be surrendered to you, to bow before and to give your life to you and surrender to you in that moment, but also for the rest of your life. And I want to invite you to start that journey today. You start by putting your faith in him and say, you know what? I believe.

I'm going to confess. I believe that Jesus died for my sins and he is my Lord and my Savior. For those of us who hear and are Christians, we're already following Jesus. I want to ask you to ask yourself this question. What is the surrender Jesus is calling you to today?

Is there an area in your life that you're like, you know what? This has just been confirming something in my heart. I haven't been surrendering to that and God's been tapping on that for a while. And today, you know what? I need to follow and I need to surrender my will in that area of my life.

Before we come and take communion as something we do as Christians, let's think about that. Let's respond to that. Because it's the Holy Spirit doing a work in your heart. That's not me. It's the Holy Spirit highlighting those things.

And before you come and take communion, think about those things. Communion is how we remember the ultimate surrender Jesus made on the cross for our sins. And it would be hypocritical to take it in the face of refusing to follow Jesus' call that he's speaking to you this moment to follow his example of surrender. You know, before we come and confess that area that God is leading you to surrender to him. Confess it to him. If you're next to a trusted person in your life and consider confessing that to them, to whatever that person is. Maybe it's a good friend or a spouse or a community group leader, whatever it may be. And here's the thing, guys. Pray for God's grace. He will always forgive you.

[35 : 28] When we come to him and repent, he will always forgive you. And he's going to empower you to live in more and more surrender. We're not trying to earn salvation. We're reminded that Jesus did it all.

He won the victory. He's the judge over us. He's the one who qualifies us. When you finish doing business with God, when you're ready, come and get communion.