

All right. Hey everybody, welcome to Valley Creek. We are so glad that you are here with us today. Wherever you are, whatever's going on in your life, I am so glad you are here. What a gift it is to be together. See, every time you come, you're not coming into a building, you're not coming into an institution, you're not coming into a religious organization. You're coming into a people, a family on mission, a community of faith, hope and love, of people who are saying, "I'm learning how to be a disciple of Jesus and it is a gift to be together."

I am so glad you are here. I am so glad to be here. What a great summer it's been at Valley Creek. Come on, 60 Days of Summer. Our Kids Team did an amazing job putting together the Kids Summer. Our Student Team had an amazing Student Summer with an incredible Gen Hope night. Our Young Adults had great gatherings and activities and Young Adult Internship all around the city. Serve the City, we served thousands of people who are in need. We are reading through the New Testament and we are getting closer and further on that journey. Then, I thought our team did an amazing job teaching us 60 Days of Healthy Family. I've been praying for you and your family that you're experiencing healing and redemption and movement and life.

I've been thinking about how each one of our individual families that makes up this family. See, never forget that the church is the family God is building for Himself. In fact, that's why it says, "God's household, which is the church." It's not a building or an institution or an organization. This is God's family that He's building for Himself. If we want to have a healthy family, if we want to be a part of God's family, we've got to apply those same principles to this that we do to our own family. If you really want to be a part of this, you've got to surrender; submission and surrender and dying to yourself and picking up your cross. You've got to have a vision to say, "As for me and my family, we will be a part of God's family." You've got to be present. Like, you've actually got to show up not only physically, but emotionally and relationally. Then, you've got to build relationships where you can have people to communicate with. Then, you've got to be okay being disciplined and disciplining others.

Then, you've got to be okay serving, washing other people's feet, loving them, picking up your cross, and dying to yourself. Then, you've got to be really good at forgiveness because it's a messy family with all kinds of brokenness and nonsense that happens. Yet, God's grace can redeem it all. Can I just ask you this question? Have you decided in your life to just say, "As for me and my family, we're going to be a part of God's family"? No matter what, no matter where I am, no matter what's going on, if the church is the thing Jesus is building, then I want my family to be a part of that which God is building, because that's the best way I can lead my family into a healthy future. In fact, I love it, it says, "Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish." It doesn't say, "Those who are planted in the world, in sports, in activities, in busyness, in all kinds of other things." It says, "Those who are planted in God's family will flourish" in Jesus' name.

It's good to be back with you. I missed you. I love you. I was thinking about that in my own life. I have no idea how you do life without God's family. I was thinking about that this summer, and just thinking like, I don't know that I could be a disciple of Jesus the way that I'm trying to be and live the life I'm trying to live and love my wife and raise my kids and all those things without this. Like, I really believe that it's that important and that significant. Every summer, I take some time and I take some time away to just study and pray and seek the Lord and ask God what He's doing and what He wants to do. This summer, I'm coming back just with a lot of gratitude. Like, I have gratitude in my heart that I get to be a part of this. Gratitude in my heart for you, gratitude for Valley Creek, gratitude for what God is doing.

Like, what a privilege it really is to be a part of God's family in a lost, lonely and broken world. When I take this time in the summer, I'm always praying for you, and seeking God and asking Him, what He wants to do. Here is this sense. Okay. We're just going to go, ready. We're just going to jump right in. You're like, "You already jumped in." I know, you know. Here's the sense that I have from the Lord of what He wants to do in the days to come. It's that it's time for an awakening. God, turn my heart to you. It's time for an awakening. That I believe God wants to bring an awakening into our lives. That He wants to turn our hearts to Him. That it's time to awaken, to awaken to His goodness, awaken to His love. Awaken to His grace and His forgiveness and His mercy.

Awaken to His Kingdom, awaken to what is true, awaken to what is good, awaken to the life that He has for us. This passage that's really grabbed me this summer, that I've been thinking about a lot, is just when the apostle Paul is talking to the Corinthian church, and he says, "When I came to you brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaim to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the spirit's power, so that your faith might not rest on man's wisdom, but on God's power." I'm thinking about this for me, and I just keep thinking, I want to resolve to know nothing but Jesus and Him crucified. The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, the finished work of Jesus.

I don't want all of this to just be vision and motivation and inspiration and encouragement and eloquence, which rarely is that up here ever, logic and reason and all that stuff. I want it to be a demonstration of the Spirit's power. I want us to have this sense of weakness and fear and trembling like, God, if you don't do it, we got nothing. Yet we believe You want to do it. That He and His grace and His Spirit has to be the one to do the work. I've been thinking that what if this is not just a verse like for me, what if this was a verse that we all said? We resolve to know nothing, but Jesus Christ and Him crucified. We don't want this to be man's wisdom or man's ideas or man's ways. No, we are going to come with weakness and fear and trembling to say, God, we want a demonstration of Your Spirit's power.

We need Your grace and Your Spirit to do the works in our hearts, so turn our hearts to You. You see, when you think awakening, I think a lot of you probably sit here, and you're like, yeah, let's do it. Awakening, signs, wonders, miracles, healing, deliverance, supernatural power. Let's go. We've been waiting for this. But don't forget that an awakening also means holiness, surrender, death to self, the Fruit of the Spirit, submission to God. I mean, we think about the apostle Paul and we know that he had a demonstration of the Spirit's power wherever he went. We read the Book of Acts and we watch all these things that he did – signs, wonders, healings, miracles. In fact, it says of Paul that he did extraordinary miracles. Apparently, there's miracles and then there's extraordinary miracles. There was some Spirit's power in his life. But the more I thought about this, the more I thought, I don't think that's what he's talking about here.

I think he's talking about the demonstration of living crucified with Christ, of living with the Fruit of the Spirit in his life, of living with holiness and submission and surrender, dying to himself and being raised to new life with God. That is a demonstration of the Spirit's power. That is what an awakening looks like. In fact, this verse that I've been praying for us is just simply this, "May He turn our hearts to Him." That's why it's the only thing highlighted, because it's the only thing I want you to see, "May He turn our hearts to Him," because we can't turn our own hearts to God. He has to turn them for us. Then, "we will walk in His ways and keep His commands and His decrees and His regulations." You see, whatever your heart is turned towards, that's what you're awakened to. Whatever your heart is turned towards, that's what you are awakened to. That's what you're aware of.

That's what you're conscious of. That's what you focus on. Whatever your heart is awakened to, you start to absorb the qualities and characteristics of that thing. When we say, "May He turn our hearts to Him," what we're saying is, God, turn our hearts to You. Awaken us to You that You might become the thing we're conscious of and focused on and aware of. Then, we will naturally and effortlessly start to do the things that You say, because we will absorb them in our life. Whatever your heart is turned to is what you are awakened to. This is true, because think of how many things are real in this world and yet they are dead to you because you're not even aware that they exist. Your heart is turned away from them. Like, Japanese cuisine, the Arabic language, whales in Antarctica, poverty in Nepal, the state of your child's heart in the room upstairs.

Those are all real things. But because your heart is turned away from them, in a sense, you are dead to them. They can be revealed to you. Your heart turns to them. You now see it. You have an awakening and now you get a choice to move forward by faith into those things or to look at them and turn right back away from them and be dead to them once again. Make sense? COVID is a great example. You realize COVID was real and was out there long before you were awakened to it. Then your heart got awakened to it and then we kind of went after it and it became all consuming in our lives. Or how about those of you that are married? Before you met your spouse, you were dead to your spouse, right? You didn't know they exist. But the moment you saw them and met them, oh my gosh, you had an awakening in Jesus' name.

But they had always been there. But now your heart saw them and now you moved forward and you wanted to spend time and connect together. Whatever your heart is turned towards is what you are awakened to. Our problem is we are often awake to the wrong things and dead to the right things. We are often awake to the world, but dead to God. I don't want any part of my heart to be awake to the world, and I want all of my heart to be awake to God. I want to be dead to the world and awake to God in Jesus' name. You realize you can't wake yourself up. This is why you set an alarm. Even, physically, God is showing us that you need someone else to wake you up so you don't miss that which is important. We need God to wake us up so we don't miss that which is important. We don't need an awakening because things are bad. We need an awakening because there is so much more of God to find. Come on.

Do you remember when Jesus says, "You will be ever hearing, but never understanding. You will be ever seeing, but never perceiving. For this people's heart has become calloused. They hardly hear with their ears and they have closed their eyes." He says they are ever hearing, but they don't understand. They are ever seeing, but they don't perceive. In front of Jesus is all the Pharisees, the religious leaders, the disciples, lost, lonely and broken people, people who have waited hundreds of years for the Messiah. He is standing right in front of them. The kingdom is in front of them. Life is in front of them. Truth is in front of them. Jesus says they hear, but they don't get it. They see, but they don't perceive it. Why? Because their heart was already turned away from God. You will hear and you will see whatever your heart is turned towards. The reason they couldn't hear and couldn't see is because their heart was already turned away from God. It was dead to God, but it was awake to the world.

They couldn't hear and see even though Jesus is right there in front of them. There was no amount of inspiration or wow or woo or charisma that was going to break through. It needed God and only God. I wonder how many times are you and I sitting there and we hear, but we don't understand; and we see, but we don't perceive. How many messages? How many books? How many Bible studies? How many quotes? How many encouragements from a friend? How many Instagram reels of Christian living and Bible verses? We see it, but we don't hear it. We get it, but we don't understand it. Maybe it's because we are seeing and hearing exactly that which our heart wants to see and hear, which is the things of the world. I mean this is how I think Jesus is teaching us this passage. Here's how I think it goes in a lot of people's lives. Like, two people are having a conversation.

They're friends, whatever, and they're talking and it's like, "Oh man, are you excited for the Cowboy season?" "Oh my gosh, this is our year. I've been watching practice, Dax throwing dimes, CeeDee's going to, like, get a thousand and 1500 yards. Parsons is amazing. Oh, it's incredible." "Oh yeah, me too, man. The Cowboys, this is our year." "Hey, this week I was reading in my Bible, and Jesus says, wah-wah-wah-wah. Where do you want to go for lunch?" "Or have you seen the news? Can you believe the politics?" "I can't believe it. Are they going to arrest him? Is that guy going to get in trouble? It's a conspiracy man. I guess it's got to be a

conspiracy and I'm so afraid and what's going to happen on this and all that stuff." "Oh, yeah. I know that's terrible, but you know what I figured out, that God's word says about that is, wah-wah-wah-wah. Have you seen that new Netflix series?"

Jesus is saying, you're going to hear whatever your heart is turned towards. If your heart is not turned to God, you're always going to hear the things of the world. Every person that's in this room that has a loved one whose heart is turned away from God knows exactly what I'm saying. Because there's no amount of logic or reason or convincing or pleading or begging that gets through. Why? Because, spiritually, their heart is turned away from God. All they get is wah-wah-wah-wah. We need God to turn our hearts to Him. Here's the good news. "Ears that hear and eyes that see – the Lord has made them both." God has made our ears to hear Him. He's made our ears to hear Him, our eyes to see Him, and He's made our heart to turn towards Him.

In fact, do you know when Jesus shows up on the scene in Luke 4 and He declares His mission statement; He says, "The Spirit of the Lord has anointed Me to..." Do what? "Preach good news to the poor, open the eyes of the blind and heal the brokenhearted." Jesus flat out says, "I came to turn your heart to Me so that you would have eyes to see and ears to hear." Only He can do that. Are you with me on this? You see, "The heart is deceitful. Above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it?" Your heart without God is deceitful and wicked and every inclination of your heart is evil is what the Bible says. This is what your life looks like when you are dead to God, but awake to the world. When your attention, when you're turned, when you're focused on the things of the world, your heart is deceitful above all things. You say, "No, that person, they might not believe in Jesus, but they're a good person." No, the Bible says, their heart is deceitful and wicked, that there is no one who is good, no one who is righteous, no one who seeks God.

This is life without an awakening; but in Jesus, "I will give you a new heart and put a new Spirit in you. I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh and I will put My Spirit in you and I will move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." In other words, He says, "I will remove your old heart. I will give you a new heart that is turned to Me, that is awakened to life and dead to this world, and you will naturally and effortlessly start doing the things that are important to Me." Why? Because you become like that whichever your heart is focused on – an awakening. Many of you here today, you've had an awakening in Jesus' name. You've got a new heart. The Spirit is in you. He's moving you. Yet, as we walk through life, sometimes it's amazing how it's like we become dead again to God and awake once again to the world. I'll never forget.

When my son was in middle school, there was a season of time he would just come home every day and he just wasn't himself. We couldn't figure out what's going on. We kept trying to talk to him and get a breakthrough, and we just – he just couldn't figure out what's going on. He just wasn't himself. Then, finally, one day we were talking to him, and he said, "Dad, it's like

God has given me this multicolored, multifaceted heart. I go out to school and into the world, and it's like people put the black darkness of the world on it all day long, so that my heart doesn't shine anymore." I remember just looking at him, and being like, "You just taught me more about God in that one statement than I've taught you in your entire life." The kingdom of heaven belongs to little children, and He's given you a new heart. Yet, sometimes the blackness of this world darkens it again. We need a reawakening where we become dead again to the things of this world. We don't go back to them, but we've reawakened to God and who He is, but we can't do it ourselves.

In fact, this is why it says, "But because of His great love for us, God who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions – it is by grace you have been saved." Catch it. You can't create yourself. You can't save yourself. You can't awaken yourself, and you can't reawaken yourself. Be real clear. It is by grace, undeserved favor, supernatural power of God. When you were dead to God and alive to this world, He reached into your life, interrupted you, turned your heart to Him. If you responded by faith, you moved forward and everything changed. You can't awaken yourself and you can't reawaken yourself. Jesus says over and over again, things like, "No one can come to Me unless the father who sent Me draws Him. When I am lifted up, I will draw all men unto Myself. I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have drawn you with loving kindness."

"You didn't choose Me, but I chose you. The god of this age," Satan, "has blinded the mind of unbelievers so they can't believe there's a veil over their heart. But when God draws them and they turn, the veil is removed." The question then is, does God turn your heart to Him or do you turn your heart to Him? Yes. Does God choose you or do you come to Him? Yes. Does He reveal himself to you or do you seek Him? Yes. You can't do it without God, and He won't do it without you. But, make no mistake about it, it's God's kindness that leads to repentance. It always starts with God turning our heart. What is repentance? It's turning. God's kindness is always the initiatory movement that turns us. If we turn and we look to God and by faith we move forward, we turn then from dead things and of faith towards God.

You're with me on this? We need an awakening. You see it all throughout the Bible. Think of the woman at the well. She's lived with six guys. Her life is full of shame. She's a mess. Here's my question. Who could logic and reason with that woman to leave her old way of life behind? Nobody. Jesus shows up, completely interrupts her life, and gives her an awakening to grace and truth, springs of living water and she runs back to the town and says, "Come meet the Messiah for I've had an awakening." How about Zacchaeus? The guy loved money. Money was his God. It was all about money, money, money. Who is going to sit with Zacchaeus over a cup of coffee, and say, "Your love of money is ruining your life?" Who's going to break through on that? Zacchaeus is going to laugh and say, "You just say that because I have more money than you."

But, then one day Jesus and His grace says, "Zacchaeus, I want to hang out with you today." Zacchaeus is awakened by the grace and truth of God, gives half of what he has away, stops loving money, starts loving God. Jesus says, "Today salvation and awakening has come to this house." "How about the ten lepers?" "Jesus, have mercy on us, Son of David." He says, "Okay, go show yourselves to the priests." As they went, they were healed. Only one of the ten came back, hit his knees before Jesus to give thanks. Ten guys got a healing, only one guy got an awakening. How many times are we healed, but not awakened? "God, if You would just heal my marriage. I need You to heal my marriage. God, if You would just heal my child, I need this child. God, if You would just give me a job, I need this job. God, if You would just provide in this situation, I need you. God, if You would just help me with this anxiety and this depression." He does, but we never have the awakening because we wanted the healing or the provision more than we wanted God.

When our heart turned to Him and saw, we then focused on what He gave us. Then, our heart turned right back away from Him, right back to the things of this world. We became dead to God and awake again to the world until the next time of crisis. Or, how about Saul? A guy who's got passion and zeal. He's doing the best he can with what he knows, destroying the church because he is a religious dude. One day, on the road, "As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?' 'Who are you, Lord?' Saul asked." That's an awakening. A light from heaven. The life of God flashing into your life, interrupting you on your journey, so you fall to the ground.

It says scales fell from his eyes because God made the eyes to see and the ears to hear him. "Who are you, Lord?" It's not a confusion. It's a, "Who are you, Lord? Who is like my God?" An awakening. Are you with me on this? I mean, do you remember when Jesus says, "Be careful, be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees... and that of Herod." He's just multiplied the bread and the fish, fed thousands of people. The disciples are in the boat with Him, and Jesus says this to them and they think among themselves are like, "He's upset that we forgot to bring bread." He's like, "Are you for real people? What have you seen me do? Okay, let's just stop there. Let me say it again," He says, "Be on your guard against the yeast." What is yeast? Yeast is an influencing agent. You put it into dough. It multiplies. It grows.

It starts to infiltrate everything there to the point that you can't even tell where the dough was and where the yeast was. It all becomes one thing, and it is completely influenced by the yeast, and you can't get it back out again. Who are the Pharisees? They were religious leaders. Who are the Sadducees? They were religious people who didn't believe in the resurrection. Who is Herod? He was a worldly king. What Jesus was saying to His disciples, us, is "Beware of the yeast of religion, hopelessness, and the world," because it will get into your life and into your thought and into your heart and affect you in ways that you are not even aware of. The yeast of the world, this is me, myself, and I. It's all about me. I do what I want, when I want, how I want.

I'm the most important part. I am the focus. This is the lust of the eyes, cravings of the flesh, the pride of life.

This is, every decision I make is with this question, is this good for me? Instead of, is this going to glorify God and be good for others? Is it comfortable and convenient? This is the path of personal happiness and least resistance. The yeast of the Sadducees is the yeast of hopelessness. This is the person that thinks this is as good as it gets. Things will never be better. They will always be bad. We will never move forward. This is the person that is always focused on the problem of their circumstances instead of the goodness of God. They see the facts of the situation instead of the truth of God's Word. This is the anxiety. This is the depression. This is the fear of the future. The fear of the unknown, because if there is no resurrection, then what hope do we have? Life is hopeless. This is hard. Everything is impossible and it's just going to keep getting worse. There is the yeast of the Pharisees, religion.

Religion is all about performing, doing, earning, achieving. It's this outward veneer that doesn't align with the internal reality. It's a form of godliness, but a denial of His power. Oh sure, we do all the right things on the outside, but our heart is far from God. We feel like we've been appointed by God to judge and shame and control the rest of the world around us, because they're not living up to His standards. My question for you is, over this past season, has the yeast of religion, hopelessness or the world gotten into your life? Is there any yeast in your thinking and in your heart and in the behaviors of your normal life that really are of the world, hopelessness and religion?

Because Jesus says, "The kingdom of heaven is also like a yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked through all the dough." The kingdom of heaven is a yeast that brings righteousness, peace and joy. Is righteousness, peace and joy the pervasive reality of your life and is it working through all the elements of your life? If not, then maybe it's time for an awakening in Jesus' name. Come on. Jesus says, "These people honor Me with their lips, but their hearts are far from Me." He says, "They do all the things on the outward, but their heart is dead to Me and it's awake to the world." Now, we read this and we think shame, condemnation. That there is this guilt over this. I think this is a verse of sorrow. I think Jesus is saying, "These people try so hard on the outside, when all I want is to turn their heart on the inside." If you're here and you feel like, "Man, I've been trying. I've been doing all the right things. I've been giving and praying and serving and all this, but I feel like God is so far from me."

Maybe it's not that He's so far, maybe it's just your heart has been turned to the world. He's right here and He wants to turn your heart back to Him. "When I awake, I will see you... and be satisfied." Do you realize that your heart will only ever be satisfied when it's awake to God because your heart was made with an infinite desire? Think about this for a second. Your heart was made with an infinite desire and only God is infinite, therefore, your heart will never be



satisfied by sex and money and possessions and performance and achievements and awards and all that stuff and you know it, because every time you get it, it almost leaves you feeling worse than you did before. Why? Because your heart was craving for the infinite, for God; and all those things are finite.

They will never satisfy the desire in your heart until you become dead to the world and become awake to God, in Jesus' name. Now, my heart can start being satisfied, because this infinite desire within me is finally met by the infinite God who has created me. Does that make sense? Here's what happens. By the way, it is really hot. I know our room is cool today, but it is. Anyone else ready? I'm done. I'm trying. I know you're like, "It's gross, bro. You're dripping." I know. I'm doing the best I can. Here's what happens when there's an awakening. People will start growing in worship, they will start growing in holiness, and they will grow in love. Every awakening, every spiritual revival, every renewal you can find in the Old Testament or in the New Testament or in history since then, these are the three elements that you see. You will see people growing in worship.

When I become awake to God, I can't help but worship Him. In song, in my life, I want my body to be a living sacrifice, in generosity, in time, in effort, everything in my life, I've seen God. Now, I want to worship Him with my entire life, with everything that I've got. "Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given unto you." This becomes natural and normal, and no one has to tell you to do it, and you don't even care about all the things that will be given to you as well anymore. A lot of us seek God to get the things. Once you are awakened to God, you seek God to get God. You're like, "If He wants to give me this, that's great, but this is what I really want." That's how you know you're having an awakening. Second thing is, you grow in holiness. When you become awake to God, you become dead to the world. It's like Paul says, "I have died." You have died. Your life is now hidden with Christ and God, so put to death therefore whatever belongs to your earthly nature and put on the new self-created to be in the image and likeness of God.

There is this sense of confession and repentance and genuine sense of holiness because my heart is now captured by God and I want to be like God. Whatever my heart is turned towards is what I become like. In fact, when there was an awakening in the city of Ephesus, right. The Gospel was preached, and there was an awakening to God. Look at this verse, "Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to 50,000 drachmas." I long for the day we openly confess our sins to one another. I long for the day when pride has so fallen to the ground that there's nothing to protect anymore, because He is in the light and therefore I want to be in the light.

If I live in the light, then I can have fellowship with you, because I'm done with the darkness, because I've had an awakening to God, I'm dead to the darkness. I refuse to live there. What would that look like? When was the last time you confessed a sin to anyone? To anyone? Use

the words like, "Hey, I was wrong, I sinned there." Not like, "Hey, sorry, your feelings got hurt because I did that, that's not really what I meant." Just so we're clear, that's not this, you know. Like, "I'm sorry that bothered you when I said that." You're sorry that bothered me. Maybe we need to redo the family series. But look at this, "They brought their scrolls and they burned them publicly, 50,000 drachmas." You know what a drachma is? A drachma is a silver coin that's worth one day's wage.

The average person works 10,000 days in their life. It's five lifetimes of finances. Five lifetimes of work, they burned. They didn't say, "Oh, you know what, we don't need this anymore. Let's go sell it to some other people because I got a lot vested into this." They were like, "No, no, there's a holiness now in my life and I don't want this and I don't want anyone else to have it either." All of a sudden, sorcerers became saints. All of a sudden, wizards who were full of demons became disciples full of the Spirit of the living God. Is there a growing sense of holiness in your life? That's how you know you're becoming dead to the world and awake to God. If there's no growing holiness in your life, you can't sit there. "I'm awake to God. Ah, I'm not so sure. I'm not so sure." Then, there's a growth in love. "We ought always to thank God for you brothers, and rightly so, because your faith is growing," you're having an awakening, "more and more and the love every one of you has for each other is increasing." Here's what happens. This church at Thessalonica, they're having an awakening, their faith is growing. What's the result?

Love. Love. When I become awake to God, all of a sudden I start to love God. I start to be loving. Why? Because God is love, so I'm awake to Him. I start to become like the very thing my heart is now turned towards. I start to love other people. I start to meet their needs and serve through generosity and time. Why? Because I no longer want the yeast of Herod in my life, that is this good for me and my time and my comfort and my convenience. I don't even think about that anymore because I'm awake to God. I want to love you and I want to grow in love. Are you with me on this? Here's what we're going to do. Next week, I am calling our entire church to a week of prayer and fasting to ask God for an awakening. Normally. Normally, I would do one of these. I would be like, "Hey, I want to invite you. I want to encourage you. If you've never done it before, that's okay. That would be all these beach entries for everyone." Nope.

I'm calling every family in our entire church to a week of prayer and fasting. If you're sitting here and you're like, "Does that include me?" Yes, that includes you. You say, "But I've never done that before." That's okay. We need to cry out to God and say, "God, turn my heart to You," because I can't turn it. I can't turn it for you and you can't turn it for yourself. Only God, only God can do that. We're going to take a week of prayer and fasting. You say, what is that? I don't know how to do it. I'm going to help you next week. Every day for the following week, there will be a 15 minute experience that you can do if you want. Fasting is simply giving up food, a lunch, a full-day meal, a dinner, a breakfast to use that time to seek God. To say, "God, I want to hunger and thirst for You. I may not feel it and I may not have the emotions for it."

Don't worry if the feelings and emotions are there. Once you start having an awakening, the feelings and the emotions will come.

This starts by faith, just saying, God, the fact that I..., and here's the deal, the fact that it's even being presented to you is God already starting to turn your heart. You're like, "No, that's just what you're preaching." Where do you think this comes from? It's God saying, "I want to awaken your heart." Will you take a little baby step of faith with me? This is the week that matters because see, this is the week I'm giving you a full week to prepare. You can't do one of those, "We didn't know when it was and it was too much. I missed, I didn't know." Listen, "Set yourselves apart to the Lord for tomorrow he'll do amazing things among you." This is the week. Listen, this is the week to just decide I'm going to do it. I'm going to do it. I don't care if it's back to school week. I don't care if it's work. I don't care if you're traveling. You can decide right now that I'm going to figure out here's the 15 minutes every day I'm going to set aside to say, "God, turn my heart to You." Here's how I'm going to fast. Here's what I'm going to fast. Here's where it looks like. It's okay.

I'm not asking you to not eat for a week. Don't worry about that. I'll tell you next week, some ideas and some things. This is the week though, to say, "God, I want you to turn my heart to You, because if I'm really honest right now, it is full of the yeast of religion and hopelessness and the world. I'm not so sure I want that anymore." Come on. He'll do amazing things. Yesterday, I was in the Flower Mound Worship Center, just praying for a couple of hours for you and for this new thing, just walking around and just praying. I just felt like the Lord was like, "What an adventure lies before us." What amazing things does God want to do in your life and in my life when all of a sudden we start to become dead to the world and awake to God. Listen, there's three types of people here. Some of you, you straight up, you're dead to God and awake to the world. You're like, "I don't even know that I believe in God." What would it hurt to ask a God you don't even believe in to say, "If You're real, will You turn my heart to You?" It's great.

A bunch of us, we're like teenagers, right. Teenagers think they know everything, but teenagers don't realize how much they don't know. Some of us are like, "What's this bro talking about? I'm awake to God." If your mindset is, "I'm awake to God," you don't know how much you don't know, and we need God to awaken us. Then, some of us are like, "I'm awake to God, but I know there's a whole lot more in my heart to be awakened. I want to be dead to the world and alive to God. God, turn my heart to You." Come on. This is the prayer. "May He turn our hearts to Him, and then, "we will start naturally walking in His ways keeping His commands and His degrees and His regulations," because we have died to the world and become alive to God with a heart that is becoming like Him because it's turned towards Him. It's focused on Him. It's set on Him. Then, He starts to move among us.

Last verse, "I revealed myself to those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek me. To a nation or a people that did not call on Me, I said, here am I, here am I." I

believe the Lord is about to reveal Himself to those who aren't asking. He's about to be found by those who aren't seeking. Because I think the Lord is turning people's hearts to Him. "Here am I. Here am I." We can't make God move, but boy, we can be ready for when He does. We can't make God speak, but boy, we can position ourselves to listen. We can't create an awakening, but we can cry out and say, "God, turn my heart, turn my heart to You, in Jesus name."

Close your eyes. Come on, what's the Holy Spirit saying to you today? What's God stirring up in your soul? What kind of goodness in life is right there in front of you? What would it look like if even right now you started by just saying, "God, I've been so busy thinking about back to school and work, this crisis, my frustration with the news cycle, and the things that are happening in the world, my hobby, the finances, that project that honestly, Lord, I just, I haven't even thought much about You. Would You turn my heart to You?"

What if you just even started praying that right now? Like, "God, turn my heart to You." Word for some of you. Some of you have been so busy trying to fight for the lost people in your life that you have forgotten to turn your heart to Him. The yeast of hopelessness has gotten into your life, and it's almost like you forgot that God is there first for you. The beauty of an awakening is it is the grace and the mercy and the love of God that comes to knock on the door of our hearts to say, "Hey, you want to play?" That's the word, "You want to play?" God's not asking you knock on the door and say, "Hey, you want to be religious?"

Not knocking on the door of your heart, and saying, "Hey, you want to give up everything you like?" Not knocking on the door of your heart to say, "Hey, I'm going to make your life really hard." He's knocking on the door, and He's saying, "You want to come out and play in the kingdom because it's really good here, it's righteous, it's peaceful and it's joyful." Maybe, this week, you can decide, "Do you want to come out and play with God?" If so, make your decision this week to say, "I don't know how to do it, so I'm going to need some coaching next week," I got you, "But I want to do it and I want to cry out to God to turn my heart to Him because I know I can't do it myself." Jesus, thank You for Your Word. Holy Spirit, thank You that You are here.

God, thank You that when even we are dead to You and awake to this world, You, by grace, interrupt our lives. I just believe this is a time of interruption in the best possible way because You're saying there is so much more of You available. Lord, I start here and now, the beginning of this fall, just crying out to You, saying, turn my heart and turn our hearts to You. That the infinite desires of our heart would be satisfied in the infinite goodness of our God. I love you, Jesus. We're ready for You to do amazing things in us, among us and through us. In Your name we pray, amen.