

All we're doing today is taking time to start the year by acting like God is real and that He's here and that He's good to you. There's nothing more than that. It's just actually acting out the things we say we believe. Will you just go ahead and grab your seat wherever you are.

There's something about starting a year with a posture of humility and surrender before the Lord. In fact, Jesus even says, "Seek first His Kingdom and His righteousness and everything else will be added unto you." Seek first His rule and reign, believe and receive, submit and surrender to the Lord Jesus, and anything and everything and He will add everything else unto you. Wherever you are right now, would you just close your eyes with me for a moment, and maybe just open up your hands as a sign of surrender. I just want to invite you to surrender some things to the Lord as we get started. Because there is no better place for the things you love and care about than to be in the Lord's hands.

So can you just start this year by surrendering your family to the Lord? Maybe just in your own way, you just say, "God, I give You my family. I give You my marriage and my children. I give You my parents and my home. God, I give You the people I love the most. God, I give You my pets, that mean everything to me. God, I invite You into my family." And say, "Would You come? Would You restore and heal? Would You reconcile and guide and lead? Jesus, would You just be Lord of my family and do that which only You can do? I give You my family, Lord."

Now, would you have the courage to surrender your finances to the Lord? The reason the Bible talks about money so much is because it's such an idol in our heart, and we weren't created to live in this poverty mindset or with the spirit of greed. We were meant to be free as beloved sons and daughters, with the spirit of abundance, so maybe just even say, "God, I surrender my finances to You, my bank account, my possessions, my resources, my work, my investments. God, I don't want to love money and I don't want to serve the God of money. Lord, I want to be free, and so I say, everything I have is Yours, Lord, and I trust it to You."

Now, maybe surrender your body to the Lord. Just say, "God, as we start this year, I give You my body as a temple of the Holy Spirit. God, I give You my eyes and my ears and my mouth. May the things I look at and listen to and say be glorifying to You. God, I give You my mind and I say I need Your rulership in my mind. Because I don't want to live with depression and anxiety and condemnation and fear. I want Your righteousness, Your peace, and Your joy. I can't make that happen, and so, I surrender it to You. God, I give You my whole body and I ask that Your spirit brings healing and wholeness within it and everywhere my body goes and everything my body does, may it glorify You."

Now, maybe you submit your work or school or your daily life to the Lord. Say, "God, I give You my work. I give You my school. I give You my daily life and the routines and the rhythms of which I am a part of. Lord, help me not grumble and be critical and be downcast, but God, may Your life and Your presence be in the midst of my daily realities in every way, shape, and form.

Would You be the Lord of this area of my life?" Come on, now, what's that circumstance or situation that weighs heavy on your heart? Surrender that to the Lord.

"God, You know that thing that's just heavy in my life, that storm, that season, that situation, that circumstance. God, I ask You to be Lord to rule and reign, to come bring Your goodness and Your graciousness and Your glory because I need You, Jesus." Maybe you just say, "God, I start this year by submitting and surrendering all of my life to Jesus, His rule and reign, his goodness and grace." There is something about starting your year with humility before the Lord. Jesus can 'RE' anything that has been surrendered to Him.

Remember, 'RE' those two little letters that you've put in front of any word. It just simply means to go back - restore, revive, redeem, renew, restoration, reconciliation, repent. God can 'RE' anything that has been surrendered to Him. As we start this year, surrendering to Him, what we're saying is, "Jesus, You come and do that which only You can do." You see, if you've been with us over these last few months for most of the fall, we were in this extended series which was really an extended season, called Kingdom Culture 101. We were just talking about how the values of our heart determine the culture of our life. That as people of the kingdom, we're supposed to have radically different values and culture than the world does. Because the things God loves the world detests, and the things the world loves God detests. We went through these kingdom values that really are the values of our church, but more importantly, they're the values of the kingdom.

We slowed down and we responded to God and we practiced our faith. In fact, when you came in, they even gave you one of the cards, so it'll remind you these are the values of our church because they're the values of the kingdom. There was one more that we didn't get to, but I think it's a perfect one to start the new year with. That one is simply this, that there is always more. The kingdom value is that there is always more, that there is no end to the kingdom of God, that this is not as good as it gets, that your best days are not behind you, that the best is yet to come. The Bible says, "Call to me, and I will show you great and mighty things which you do not yet know." "My God will do immeasurably more than you can even ask or imagine." Yes, the kingdom has come, but more of it is coming. There is always more in Jesus' name.

Come on, there's more grace to receive. There's more presence to experience. There's more kingdom to release. There's more faith to step into. There's more next steps to take. There's new friends to make. There's new songs to write. There's new books to read. There's new places to go. There's new businesses to build. There's new things to create. There's new life to discover. There's new revelations to find. There's new mysteries to uncover. There's new of the spirit of the living God in your life to find. There is more in Jesus' name. The problem is, like the people of God have always struggled with, we always get stuck in the past. You can see it all throughout scripture. In fact, even the way that God meets with people, you can watch as they get stuck. It's like the first thing God gives them is the Tabernacle. Remember that? It's

this moving tent, they would pick it up and take it wherever they would go, and God was with them and it was amazing and they met with God and it was incredible for a season.

But then God said the season of The Tabernacle is done and now we're going to build a temple. This Temple was going to be amazing, but don't you know that there were a whole bunch of people that were like, "But God, we love the Tabernacle. It's so good here. It can't get better than this." Then God said, "I know it was great, but now I'm going to be in the Temple. Come and meet with me in the Temple." Then, for hundreds of years they met with God in the Temple, and it was beautiful and it was ornate, and it was in Jerusalem, and it represented the epicenter of the world; the kingdom of God on earth. It was absolutely heaven on earth, if you will. It was absolutely incredible. Then God said, "That was amazing, but I've got something better and His name is Jesus." And Jesus came. But don't you know there were a whole bunch of people that were like, "We don't want Jesus, we've got the Temple. In fact, you're messing everything up here God, because we've got a good thing going. So, I don't know where you came from, but go back to wherever it was because we got the Temple."

God said, "No, the Temple was good, but I've got something better, and his name is Jesus; God in flesh, grace and truth in our neighborhood walking around, walking among us, showing what it was like to be fully human and fully alive, absolutely incredible." People started to figure out who this Jesus was and what He was all about and just about the time they got excited that Jesus was there, He says, "Hey, it's better for you if I go because if I go the Holy Spirit can come." He says, "Yes, me on the earth is good, but the Holy Spirit in everyone, everywhere who believes in me is even better." But don't you know there were a whole bunch of disciples that were like, "Heaven forbid it Lord, we will not allow it." Peter even says, "This is good," and God says, "I know it's good, but I've got something better." Then, He poured out his Holy Spirit that is now available to anyone everywhere who believes in Jesus. The presence of God released throughout the world. That's what we have now.

Don't you know that one day when Jesus returns, a whole bunch of believers are going to say, "No, no, no, no, stop Lord; we've got the Holy Spirit in us. We've got a good thing going. Go back to where you came from." Do you catch what I'm saying? There is always more in Jesus' name. God is always doing a new thing, and He is moving us into new seasons. But new wine needs new wine skin, and so this is a new season that God wants to pour out new things into your life because there is always more. In fact, Isaiah 43:18-19 says, "Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I'm doing a new thing! Now, it springs up; do you not perceive it? I'm making a way in the desert and streams in the wasteland." God says, "I'm doing a new thing, but you've got to forget the old thing." The reason you can't see the new thing is because you're so busy focused on the old thing.

You see, when we focus on what was, we can't see what can be. When we focus on who was, we can't see who can be. When we focus on how it was, we can't see how it can be. When we focus on where it was, we can't see where it can be. When we focus on why it was, we can't see

why it can be, and we get so lost in what was that we miss what God wants to do right here, right now. He wants to bring streams in the desert and a way in the wasteland in your life. I started, this year, declaring over your life that there is more in Jesus' name. But you got to let go of the old, so you can step into the new. There are three things, in particular, that I just feel led to tell you that I am praying for you this year as we get started.

These are really simple, but the Lord just put them on my heart for you. The first one is this, I'm just praying that this year you would more clearly hear the voice of God in your life. That you would have ears to hear and a heart to receive that which God wants to say to you. "Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." "The words I speak to you are spirit and they are life." "All scripture is God breathed." Jesus says His sheep know His voice, and I'm just praying that this year you will hear God's voice more clearly than ever before - through His word, through His people, through that still small whisper of the Holy Spirit. I'm praying that God will stir up prophetic in our church, that we will be able to speak the very words of God to each other; but I'm believing that this is a year you're going to more clearly hear God in your life.

Second thing I'm praying for you is just simply this, that you would be clay on the Potter's wheel. That you would be willing to just surrender and submit yourself to Jesus. The Bible tells us that God is like a potter and we are like clay. He takes us and He shapes us and molds us in exactly who He wants us to be. I'm praying that, this year, you would be clay in the Potter's hand, and let Him shape and mold you into the image and likeness of Jesus. Because what happens when we don't let Him shape and mold us, what happens is we dry, and we break, and we become sharp and edgy to those around us. But when we put ourselves back in His hands, He softens us and shapes and molds us into who He has created us to be. I'm believing this year, if you will surrender yourself, God's going to mold you into the likeness of Jesus.

Then, the third thing I'm praying for you, is that this year you would see your daily life as a part of the very mission of God. That you would not separate sacred and secular. That you would not see church as this one hour a week experience you come to, but that you have a faith and you've been sent by Jesus for such a time as this and He has placed you with authority, wherever you go and whatever your life looks like, to be a part of making disciples on this earth, the very mission of God. Here's what I want to say, one of the reasons you should want to be a part and committed and rooted in a local church is because you have people praying and contending for you like that. Look, I'm not praying that stuff for our city, I'm praying that for you. There's something about having people in our corner, maybe that we don't even have relationship with, but that we're connected to through the Spirit going to battle for us and saying, by faith I believe, God, and I declare and I fight for them because you are fighting for them.

Here's what I want to invite you to do. Will you just grab that little RE card we gave you when you came in? Just for a moment, can we just sit here, and can you just ask the Holy Spirit what

He wants to say to you? The beginning of a new year, God is moving. The last couple of days, so many of us, we've been praying and fasting, contending, seeking God. Maybe the Holy Spirit just wants to give you a 'RE' word. It's just a word for a year - restore. Maybe He's saying, "This is the year I want to redeem some things in your life." Maybe He's saying, "Reconcile; there's some people I want you to work some things out with."

Maybe He's saying "Revive," because He's going to light a new light in your life. Maybe He wants to tell you something totally different. Just for a moment, just by faith, will you just listen to His voice and just jot it down. Maybe it's a word, maybe it's a phrase, but I know this, the Holy Spirit is speaking. He wants to whisper to you. This is just between you and God. Maybe He just wants to tell you, "I love you," and that's what you write down. Maybe He just wants to tell some of you, "I miss you and I'm so glad you're here."

Maybe for some of you He's just inviting you to write down that there is more. As you write that down and sit on that, at all our campuses, our teams are going to begin to pass out the elements of communion. At every campus, our teams, right now, they're going to start distributing that and this is for anyone and everyone who has put their faith in Jesus. Because, see, by partaking in communion, what you're saying is, the four core truths of the universe.

You're saying, God is good, Jesus has forgiven me, I am loved, and that everything is possible. It's literally what communion declares. If you've been here, we kind of declare these as a benediction, if you will, at the end of every one of our services. Because these are the four core truths of the universe. Every problem you and I have in our life can be traced back to our unbelief in one of these four things. In fact, at every campus, right now, would you just declare these out with me? Can we just say it together? God is good. Jesus has forgiven me. I am loved. And everything is possible. Come on, say it again like you believe it. God is good. Jesus has forgiven me. I am loved. And everything is possible.

Come on God is good. That's His character. That's His nature. He's good at being good. He's not just good, He's good to you. In fact, Psalm 23, tells us, "Goodness and mercy will follow Me all the days of my life." You know what that means? The only picture the Lord gave me this week of that, it's like a mom chasing a toddler around the house, and as the toddler destroys everything the mom is cleaning it all up. Goodness and mercy follow you all the days of your life, so even if you trashed last year, goodness came behind you and mercy cleaned it up. That's how good God is to you. Because He's good, He sent Jesus to forgive you. It is finished. As far as the east is from the west, so far have your sins been removed from you. He has forgiven your wickedness and remembers your sins no more. God made Him Jesus who knew no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we would become the righteousness of God. You are forgiven. You are free. There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Not only that, but you are loved, man. You are loved. God says, "I have loved you with an everlasting love. I have drawn you with loving kindness." You are His beloved son or daughter

in whom He is well pleased. You are fully known, fully loved, with no fear of rejection in Jesus' name. Everything is possible. All authority on Heaven and earth has been given unto Jesus. Nothing is impossible with God. Jesus defeated sin, death, and the grave, and that resurrection power lives in you. If He can defeat the grave, He can do anything and that power lives in you. Do you catch how these things work together? Because God is good, He sent Jesus, His one and only Son to forgive you. Because Jesus was willing to forgive you and lay down His life, you can be confident that you are loved because God demonstrated His love for us in this, while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Because we're loved, we can have this boldness, this confidence, this courage. We don't have to live in fear, because we now know if He could do that, everything is possible. If God could love me, and save me, and resurrect me, anything and everything is possible in His name. You see, on the night the Lord Jesus was betrayed, He took the bread and He broke it and He gave thanks. He said, "This is my body which is broken for you. As often as you do this, do this in remembrance of Me." Can we by faith remember who Jesus is and what He did and receive His wholeness together.

In the same way, after the supper, He took the cup. He said, "This is the cup of the new covenant. My blood which is poured out for you; as often as you do this, do it in remembrance of Me." He says, "Hey, when you do this, stop and remember that I am good, and that I have forgiven you, and that you are loved and that everything is possible." Can we just receive the freedom that there is more in Jesus at the beginning of this new year together? Thank you Jesus. We say, Your kingdom come, Your will be done in our lives as it is in heaven. In Your name, there is always more.