

Okay, so Valley Creek, hope is on the move. You could feel it as it starts in here, it goes through your life, through your family, out into the city and beyond. The hope of Jesus is on the move and I'm so excited about what's happening among us right now. My name is Jason. For those of you that haven't got a chance to meet yet, this weekend, all the Campus Pastors are going to get a chance to talk to their respective campuses. I'm going to be talking to you, Flower Mound, and those that are joining us online because God is so good and He's doing so many good things among us. And so, you just saw there, we're getting ready for an amazing summer at Valley Creek. I want to encourage you about a few of those things you just heard about. Kids Summer – do not miss it. All of our kids' spaces are going to be epic because there's going to be theme days, chances to have some fun in the room that they don't usually-- that's a little bit different than normal. They're going to learn about God. They're going to discover more about Jesus. Student Summer is happening. That's the beginning of June. You do not want to miss that on Wednesdays. They do all kinds of crazy stuff, like color wars and they do, they do color wars. They do water wars. They do something called silent disco. I don't even know what that is, but that's going to be amazing. So it's a great chance to make some friends. They're going to have worship and a message every single Wednesday. I personally would love to invite you to Join the Movement coming up next weekend, right after service for those that have not yet had a chance to raise their hand and say, "I want to be a part of Valley Creek. This is my church." We'd love to have you in that class, 70 minutes, after services. I'll be in there with you and we'll talk about what life is like here at Valley Creek, what we believe, how to really have the best experience possible. So come and join us for that; you can register online. Also, we got Serve the City in June. That's a great thing to do as a family. If you're looking for a great family activity, Serve the City is how we are a movement of hope for the city and beyond. It's tangible for us. We're going to try to serve the area of government. We're going to serve first responders. That's special because we're going to serve those who serve us. And so that's on June 15. And then you just heard about something brand new for us "Life As A Disciple" classes. There's going to be classes in practical areas of life, like marriage, and parenting, and finances, and Bible. We're going to talk about how to do the things that Jesus did in those areas. They're going to be in June on Tuesdays, kind of one-night-only, first come, first serve. You can register for all those online, but we'd love to have you at those for the three different weeks that we have them in June. You can learn all about that at the QR code in front of you. But there's so many good things. My encouragement to you is don't miss all the God has for us as we come into 60 days of summer.

We just came out of Season 2 of A Different Way, learning to walk a different way with Jesus. Learning to do the things that Jesus did. And we are headed into an amazing 60 days of summer. So today, I'm going to act a little bit like a tour guide. I'm going to take you from here to there, so that we can have an amazing summer together. So I want to start by just saying this, we just got started on this practicing the way of Jesus. We're just now learning how to-- how to practice for this life that He's placed us into. And some of us have just learned to get up to doing stuff like run about three miles, you know, at a time. We're kind of-- we're kind of getting going on our training plans. So this summer, do not go back to huffing and puffing.

When you're going to the mailbox, we got to keep going. We got an invitation to keep learning to live like Jesus. And so, continue your practice plans, keep on going, because there's so many good things that God is doing. And I am excited to tell you about some of those stories as we get started here. So let me just tell you this, we're hearing about so many people that are arranging and rearranging their life. We're hearing everything from dads that are saying, "Ok, I'm going to cancel my Netflix account, I'm going to cancel watching TV, so I can memorize Scripture. And until I memorize Scripture, I won't be able to do those things and I'm stepping into that." And so many dads are really taking, so many parents are-- tend to take responsibility for their family and say, "I'm going to lead my family in a different way." I loved this quote. I heard one dad say, "I want to teach my kids to memorize God's Word. So they're being parented by God's words, not just mine." That's like, that's smart. So, like, I just loved-- I loved that quote when I heard that one. I heard a story of a woman in a delivery room that started to-- she started to speak out Psalm 23 as she was having a baby so that she could bring some peace to the space and some calm in her heart and just declaring God's Word over the space. That baby is going to come out knowing he's got a good shepherd. And so I was so excited about that story. That's awesome. Here's a fun one for you. I heard a story of two students that went into a restaurant the other day and they saw a men's Circle in the space and they recognized the Different Way journals, the red Different Way journals. And so they started a conversation with them and the guys got to encourage them. And this men's Circle, you know, just prayed for them and encouraged them. And had a conversation and it seemed like, "Oh, that was a nice conversation. Like, I'm glad we got to meet those guys and I'm glad we got to say hi to them." And then we got an email from one of the students' moms. It said he isn't sure what he thinks about God right now. "My son has not shown much interest until recently through the series, A Different Way. He shared a little bit more of his thoughts and feelings with us, and he seems a little bit more open." So the Lord used that Circle to speak. "And this morning when he left for school, I noticed that he had his Bible open to Psalm 23. I praise God for the obedience of those men to speak to two not-so-random teenage boys in a restaurant." That's last night. That's awesome. That's super cool. So there you go. A movement of hope even for us and the city and beyond.

Another great Circle story. There is a Circle connected to the Flower Mound campus that they affectionately call themselves "The Golden Girls." This is a Circle of amazing women that are 70-plus years old. Man, they love the Lord. I really believe they just-- they just keep on going glory to glory, man. They just know the best is yet to come. And they have been super involved in praying for, and speaking into, and cheering on the next generation. So they decided to take up a collection for the Valley Creek Leadership Academy Scholarship Fund. So think of one of those like, Costco cheese puff containers, like the big like, plastic containers. And so they had that and they put the little, you know, like VCLA scholarship fund on the front of it and they would collect little ones and five dollar bills throughout the semester. Well, I just found out that, last week, they turned in the donation for the scholarship fund of twelve hundred dollars. And so, yeah. Yeah, that's amazing. Because they're not just thinking about themselves. They're thinking about a whole different generation coming up behind them. They really, really believe

that the highest thing they're seeing will be the floor of the next generation. That's awesome, man. So we cheer you guys on. Thanks for loving the next generation. That is so great. And probably my favorite of all the stories to share with you today. I'm going to have to get myself together for this one. Alright. So there's a guy named Joe that's been coming here to Valley Creek since the beginning of the year. And I got to meet Joe at the last Serve the City. He now introduced himself as Joe, the disciple. And the reason he introduced himself that way is because he's basically never gone to church in his entire life. And he started coming here and he started noticing what God was doing. And following and being around people. And so we would notice that Joe would just come and do the things that everybody else was doing. Like on a Tuesday Night of Prayer, we had a time where we were walking around and we were just praying in the space. We were activating our faith by physically walking. And we noticed that Joe didn't know what was going on, but he was just looking at the person in front of him. And he was just following them exactly where they walked. And so he was doing that by faith. Not really knowing what all was happening and what God was doing in him. And so in April, he decided to make Jesus Lord and start to follow Him. In May, he became-- you know, he started with Serve the City. He's joining us in that. He's in a men's Circle. And here's my favorite part, Joe's 83 years old. And he told us, ready? He told us he bought his black shorts, so he could be baptized during the next baptism weekend. So that's awesome. Because God's in the move across all kinds of generations and all different generations. And so here's the question, as we're going down this different way journey, as God is on the move, as people are seeing breakthrough, as generations of our church are being impacted by the love of Jesus, how do we keep going? How do we not get stuck? And you say, "Stuck? What do you mean?" Well, stuck in things like offense. Stuck in bitterness. Stuck in unforgiveness. And the reason I'm bringing this up is because I think that this season is ripe for offense and bitterness and unforgiveness. And those are really one of the most dangerous things that can happen when you're trying to blaze a trail, going a different way.

Imagine going down an actual trail. You know, out in the forest somewhere. There's a really good chance, if it's brand new to you, you have to look out for things like roots, rocks, curves in the road, or if you're going a different way, even in your own home, alright. So think of the path that you take. Like go to the kitchen, or at nighttime, if you have to go to the restroom. Or if you have to carve a path that's a different way. There's a really high probability you could stub your toe or face death by a thousand Legos. So something like that can happen when you're trying to go a different direction and that's true for us also. This season means that we cannot get stuck in offense, bitterness, and unforgiveness. Check this out in Hebrews 12. This is really what I want to share from my heart with you guys today. "See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many." "See to it," we have to actually take stock that we don't miss the grace of God and that bitter roots don't grow up in our heart. They don't pop up from the path we're trying to walk on. And that it doesn't cause us trouble and defile the many. The many what? The many people that we love in our life. The many coworkers. The many people we interact with. It's amazing how bitterness and offense can carry into every area. So here's my question for you. Is it possible that you have

a place in your heart that you may be carrying an offense? And before you say, "Oh, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no," which I think is usually how we usually respond. "No man, I'm not offended. I don't have anything against anybody. I'm good." Right? I think we respond that way quickly sometimes. And we fail to remember that many times words like, "Oh, I'm just hurt, I'm just disappointed, I've just been kind of frustrated." Those will often cover up the word, "I'm offended." We use those words. And we'll say things like that. But way down deep, it's possible there's a bitter root. And so, if you found yourself maybe saying some of those phrases, let's just go on a little heart journey right now. And the reason we want to take this journey is because we don't want to go from here to there and carry any of the baggage with us. That can't come with us. So is it possible that you might have had any kind of offenses in this last season that has sprung up in your heart, a bitter root that might just be taking root somewhere? Like, as we've been in a different way in the Season 2, are you sure that there's no offense about things like having to memorize John 15? Or being called out on parenting? Or being held accountable for what you were asked to do? Is there any place that--that may have rubbed you the wrong way? Okay. Or even in life. Is it possible that you have something relational in your life? "I can't believe my spouse said that to me." "My boss at work never gives me the benefit of the doubt." "My sister always tries to one-up me." That thing they said, that thing that happened, that thing that occurred, it's worth taking stock to see to it that a bitter root doesn't grow up inside of us.

One day, Peter was having a conversation with Jesus and he's like, "Hey, let's just talk about forgiveness for a second." And here's what it says. It says, Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often should I forgive someone who sins against me? Seven times? Like, I probably have enough energy in me to do seven times." And Jesus' response is, "No, not seven times, actually, but 70 times seven." Like-- like a lot. Like all the time, forgive and release, forgive and release. Take stock of the areas in my life that may try to cause an offense, may try to create bitterness inside of me, and then release that. Why? Well, because if you're traveling a path and you're picking up those rocks and you're putting them in your backpack, then you're going to find yourself really, really heavy, really fast. Sometimes, it's a big old rock and it just stops you in your tracks completely, you are stuck. And sometimes, it's the little ones that you wouldn't necessarily notice by themselves. But if enough of those started to go into the backpack, you certainly couldn't go any further in a different way. You couldn't keep moving forward. And so Jesus says, "Yeah, you have to keep doing this over and over and over, 70 times seven." And He goes on and continues to tell the story, the rest of the story goes like this. There was a man that owed money to a king, a huge sum of money. He couldn't pay it. The king's like, "Great, no problem, I'll just have to throw you and your family in jail." The guy's like, "No, please don't do that." King releases the debt. He's like, "Okay, I'll have mercy on you. Go ahead and go. You're good. I'll cancel the debt." The same guy that gets the debt canceled comes back to somebody who owes him money and he's like, "Hey, man, you owe me money." "Oh, no, I can't pay it." And it says he begins to choke that guy out. "Give me my money, give me my money." The king hears about this, and he's like, "That's not okay, that's a horrible response." So then he takes the man that he previously was like, "You're good. Your

debt was canceled." He says, "Throw him into prison and have him tortured." Now, that's a pretty heavy way to end that part of the story, but it reminds us of something. It reminds us that forgiveness and unforgiveness is the difference between whether we live free or we live in a self-imprisonment. Unforgiveness is literally torture to our souls and our relationships and our life. Bitterness is torture; it's a poisonous root inside of us. Offense is torture; it's a poison that starts to hurt us on the inside. So in the case of that story, that man was forgiven the debt, the debt he had to pay was forgiveness of the other guy. The debt he had to pay was to not live in this self-imposed bondage, this self-imposed torture, to be willing to say, "Yeah, I forgive. I release the offense. I'm going to let go of the bitterness. I'm going to let that stay back here, and I'm going to travel forward easy and light in Jesus' name." And I think that's the invitation for all of us. We must choose to drop the rocks from our backpack by dropping the rocks from our heart. We must understand that the words "offense" and "bitterness" are a lesser version of the word "unforgiveness." Unforgiveness is a form of hate, but forgiveness is a form of love. Offense and bitterness are a lesser form of the word unforgiveness. Unforgiveness is a form of hate. "I hate you." Forgiveness is a form of love. Check out what Peter says towards the end of his life. After learning this from Jesus, he says, "Above all, love each other deeply because love covers over a multitude of sins." So really, the way forward is love. And the way forward is to say, "Man, I'm going to choose to cover that over through the grace that Jesus has given me." It does not mean that the thing didn't hurt, the pin didn't prick, the wound didn't occur. It does mean that, in Jesus' name, I'm going to cover that over and say, "I forgive it, I release it, I'm not going to hold on to it, no more rocks in the backpack." And so here's the invite I'd like to extend to us before we keep moving forward. I want to just take a second and just ask the question, is there any chance that I'm holding on to something from a season back here as I go into the season here as I go back into the past and I try to go forward into 60 days of summer, is there anything at all, any offense that I need to release, any bitterness I need to let go of, or any forgiveness I need to extend? So can I ask you, would you close your eyes with me for a second? And I know as I'm bringing up this particular area, this particular topic, I get it. This is one of those that feels uncomfortable. But would you just go with me for a second? Would you just ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you anything at all that may be an offense, a bitterness, or an area of unforgiveness in your heart, anything at all that you need to hold on to? I'm sorry, anything at all that you need to release and not hold on to.

I'm going to share with you a few specific areas that I know that the Lord has placed in my heart, and I'm going to say one very specifically. I think that I'm hearing a lot of stories of women who've carried, for years, damage that was spoken over them, specifically by their moms. This one's very-- so if that's you, and if that has been part of your history, I would even like to take a moment and point that one out and say, words that are spoken, they carry weight, and they hurt, and they're real. But so is the love of Jesus. So is His grace over your life. And so is the freedom that He wants you to walk in. So specifically if that's you, if you've had lies spoken over you, this is so deep in my heart, I actually said it during Mother's Day, that any lies that have been spoken over would be replaced with the truth of Jesus. And so over you, I just speak the truth of Jesus. I speak the grace of the kingdom. And for anybody else that's

been hurt in any way, or anybody that's been-- that's had any kind of wounding, words, actions, or otherwise, as a pastor, as a minister of the gospel, I speak over you. I'm so sorry for that moment, for those words, for that thing. But I believe that Jesus wants to offer a different way. I believe He wants to-- I believe He wants to heal us, even right now, as we just ask the Holy Spirit, is there anything I need to release? Anything at all that I'm carrying with me from this season that can't go with me into the next season, to release the rocks from the backpack, to look for the roots on the trail, and to ask the Lord to help us travel forward. Holy Spirit, would You show us right now, over the next minute or so, anything at all that we need to choose not to take with us? When we forgive something in Jesus' name, it doesn't change what happened. It doesn't say that what happened is right. And it doesn't even say that what we felt wasn't real. It just says, "I'm moving forward by faith. By faith, I'm moving forward in the grace of Jesus." And so, a great way that we want to experience that now is by even transitioning over to taking communion together. And so I'll go ahead and have our teams come forward to get ready to pass out communion, because communion is a reminder that there's always fresh grace to receive. There's always fresh forgiveness to live in. We take communion as a reminder of what Jesus has done and who He is. Everybody who has followed Jesus as Lord is welcome to take here at Valley Creek. And as that begins to get passed out, I know you probably didn't see today's conversation coming. We feel so strongly about leaving that back here, like leaving the offenses, the bitterness, the hurt back here, that we knew that we had to, we knew we had to have this conversation. And honestly, it's a conversation that I think we should all be willing to have, like, on a really regular basis, to search me, O Lord, to see what's inside of me, and to say anything that's out of alignment, any offensive way, I want to leave that back here, and I want to go forward by faith. And so communion is truly fresh grace, and it's a reminder of fresh forgiveness. Jesus was amazing at not picking up an offense, and amazing at being able to dodge bitterness, and amazing at being able to extend forgiveness. And even as He took communion that first night with His disciples, He told them, like, this is it. "This is what you're going to do in remembrance of Me. This is how you're going to be reminded of the forgiveness I'm giving you, so you can always be confident to give that to others, to pass it back out." In the communion story, the cup is called "the cup of the new promise," the new covenant. He says it's poured out for the forgiveness of sins. So every time we have that cup and every time we know of that and take that, we're reminded, man, it's fresh forgiveness from Jesus. He was able to travel the lightest and the easiest of anybody who's ever lived because all He did was extend forgiveness. Jesus was saying, "In love, Judas, I forgive you before you even do what you're going to do." And to us, He said, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." And that happened way before-- it happened way before I was alive and had anything to even ask for forgiveness for. He extended the whole thing. That's amazing. That's beautiful. That's how he traveled a different way. That's how Jesus went season to season as a heart open and full of forgiveness. So that's what communion offers us as this reminder of the finished work of Jesus. The reason I wanted you to take a second to just ask the Lord, is there anything at all, any offense, any bitterness, any unforgiveness that I'm being invited to release because I'm going to-- in just a second, I'm going to have you activate that faith. See, as you're holding the elements in your hands here, and just a moment, if you have anything the Lord brought to

mind, as a sign of faith, I'm going to invite you to actually stand with the elements in your hand. And we're going to take it with you standing up. Now, I know that not the whole room is going to stand. I invite you to do this by faith if you know the Lord has laid some in your heart where you're like, "I'm letting go of that one, that offense, that bitterness, that unforgiveness." As an activation of your faith, honestly, a little bit like Joe just walking behind the people when he didn't even fully know what it was going to mean, as an activation of faith, I'm going to invite you to stand up on the count of three. So whoever wants to release that offense, release that bitterness, and give that forgiveness, I'm going to invite you to stand. And quite frankly, if I wasn't already standing, I would be standing with you. On the count of three. One, two, three.

So the night He was betrayed, Jesus took this bread and He said, "This is the bread, it's like My body. It's going to be broken for you. I'm going to be broken so that you could be made whole." Let's take it together. In the same way, He held up the cup and He said, "This cup is going to be a new promise between God and man. Our relationship's not going to be based on what you have done or what you haven't done, it's going to be based on the forgiveness that I'm extending to you, this poured out for the forgiveness of sins." Let's take the cup together. So thank You Jesus for even-- for the activation in this space right now, the people that by faith said, "I'm not going to carry it with me. It can't go into the next season. It's not going to have a place." I pray blessing over each one of us, as we move forward into 60 days of summer and as we move forward into this freedom-- this freedom that You're offering us for the rest of our lives, for every person that activated even now in standing and choosing to live a different way and saying "I'm just-- I'm letting it go." Would You just pour so much of Your goodness upon them right now? Would they feel a deep measure of the love of the Father pouring over them and over their family and over that situation. Would they know that You see them, You know them, You love them, and You are-- You are with them, You are carrying them, You are leading them forward into this next season. They're going to travel easy and light because they're going to lay down those burdens. They're going to hand them to You and they're going to know that they follow by faith where church is following by faith. So I know that You've seen this faith today Jesus, would You just respond to it with all Your goodness and let it just pour out on the Valley Creek? Thank You God for what You are doing. Thank You for what You're going to continue to do. Thank You for how You are moving. Thank You for Your goodness to us and thank You that we can release any and all things in the name of Jesus and know that the best is yet to come in our life. That we can cover over anything in the love of the Father. It's covered us over and we receive it by faith in Your name, Amen. Amen, all right. Thanks guys. Thanks for going on the journey. A little bit different today.

Thanks for being here. If you want to give, you can. Giving is just a response to the goodness of God. I want to just bring that up to you, because God is so good. And so you can do that at the boxes you go or online at valleycreek.org. Yes, this is our weekend where we're in-between one season to another season. Man, I'm looking forward to the season to come and we're going to travel it together. So I'm so glad you're with us. We'll get ready for 60 days of summer. It's going to be outstanding all summer long, starts next weekend. As you go, know that God is

good. Jesus has forgiven me. I'm loved and everything is possible. We'll see you back next weekend.