

Alright. Hey, everybody. Welcome to Valley Creek. Wherever you are and whatever is going on in your life, I am so glad that you are here with us today. And we are in a series called The Ancient Future: Practicing the Way of Jesus. And what we've been doing is looking back on how the followers of Jesus who have gone before us have lived their lives. Because there is an ancient wisdom, an ancient word, an ancient way that is the path through this modern world. In every generation, and every situation, and every circumstance, Jesus invites us to follow him, to be his disciples, to be learners, students, followers, one who becomes like the one that they are following.

In other words, to practice the way of Jesus. To learn it, to try it and to grow it. And what I love about Jesus is that his grace enables us whatever he commands. His grace empowers us to do whatever he has asked us to do. And we've been looking at these verses. In fact, Jesus says, "Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it." Jesus says there is a wide road, a broad gate, the modern path of this world and it leads to destruction. He says, but then there is a narrow road with a small gate, an ancient path, a good way, and it leads to life.

And what this whole series is about is about stirring the coals of revival. It's about trying to awaken us to life, to get off this modern road of this world, to be done with the compromise and the drift and the complacency and the apathy, to turn our hearts to God, to awaken to who He is, to turn our attention and our affection and our devotion to Him, to have a faith to follow Him into life. And I know when you're walking the ancient path, if we're honest, it can often feel really lonely, can it? Because the ancient path is radical. It's countercultural. God's wisdom is foolishness to this world. And so it can often feel like you're the only one. Like you're the only one in your family walking this way. You're the only one at work going in this direction. You're the only one at school.

You're the only one in your circle or in your team that really wants to walk in the ancient path. And it can often feel lonely. That's how Elisha the prophet felt. He was a guy who was walking the ancient path, the narrow road, and he had this amazing victory with God. He called down fire from heaven and defeated 450 false prophets. Talk about an epic victory moment, demonstrating and declaring the kingdom of God. And then the queen of Israel decides that she wants to kill him. And so Elisha is terrified and he runs for his life. And it's a great reminder that in one moment we can be so secure and so strong and the very next moment, we can completely fall apart. And he runs off into the desert and he lays down and he has a pity party for himself, and he kind of is crying and whining about how bad life is. And he literally like says, God, like I want to die. I don't even want to live anymore. And while God is ministering to him, Elisha is like, Lord, I'm the only one left.

It's literally what he says, I'm the only one that's walking down the narrow road or the ancient path. And God kind of pats Elisha on the shoulder and says, hey bud, you're not the only one.

There are 7,000 other prophets who are also walking down the narrow road and the ancient path. And so what I want to say to you today is you are not the only one. There are thousands of Valley Creekers and there are thousands of followers of Jesus all over this world practicing the way of Jesus. Together, we are learning, we are trying, we are growing. And his grace is empowering us to walk this path. See, what I love about Jesus is that he is the ancient path. He is the narrow road. He is the way of life. And so when we look at how Jesus lived, that tells us what walking the ancient path or the narrow road look like. Like everything Jesus did is what it looks like to walk down the ancient path.

And when we look at Jesus' life, one of the things that we see all over the gospels, all over his life is that Jesus was a man of prayer. He lived a lifestyle of prayer. In fact, it says, "But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed." If you read the gospels, you're going to discover that Jesus was constantly pulling away to pray, which is really interesting because it's like in the least convenient, least comfortable times, Jesus would draw away from everyone to just go pray. Like when the crowd loved him or when the crowd hated him, when they were celebrating victories or when they had all kinds of challenges, Jesus was constantly pulling away to pray. This is Jesus, the Son of God, the savior of the world.

The creator of all of the universe, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. And he was constantly pulling away to pray. Not because he had to, not because he was obligated to, not because he felt this duty to or was desperate or full of all this thing. No, he pulled away to pray because he loved the Father and because the Father loved him. And if Jesus pulled away to pray, then to pray is what it means to be fully human and fully alive because that's the path of life. Now, the moment I start talking about prayer, I know a lot of us, we start getting real uncomfortable really fast. Like if I came to you and asked you how your prayer life was, like almost of us to a tee, because I've done this for years and this is how it goes. As soon as we like ask like, hey, like tell me about your prayer life, we quickly look down at the ground and we kick in the dirt and like, oh man, I know -- I know I should pray more.

And it's like instinctive within us that we know we should pray more. Why? Because it's to be fully human and fully alive. It's what it looks like to walk down the path of life. And while we're looking down and feeling bad and kicking the dirt, we start saying things like this, we're like, I would pray more, I just don't know how. I don't know how to pray, I don't know how to do it, I don't know how to make it happen or I don't know what to pray. I don't know what words I can and can't say, and what God will hear and what He won't. I don't know when to pray. I don't know if there's like a time. If it has to be 5 in the morning, I'm a night person, I can't get up at 5 in the morning. And we start going through all these things. We say, I'm unqualified. Like if you knew who I was, God wouldn't hear prayers from me. And we go through all this whole litany of why we don't pray. But I don't think those are the real reasons. See, I think the real reason that we often don't pray as much is we even say we would like to is because I think we don't believe that prayer works.

I think somewhere along the way in our life in moments of desperation, in moment of great need, in moments of want and desire, we prayed and God didn't do what we wanted when we want it, how we want it. So we have drawn up a conclusion within our own subconscious that prayer doesn't prayer. But it's not that prayer doesn't work, it's that we don't understand it. And you will always misjudge that which you don't understand. You see, prayer is not about getting things from God, it's about connecting to God. This is so important. The primary point of prayer is not about getting something from God, it's about connecting to God. It's about enjoying God. And if you don't understand it you will always think it doesn't work. I mean, think about it, God invites us into relationship with Him. To be in relationship means we relate to one another.

It means we talk and we listen and share and we converse. He invites us into community with one another. To be in community means we commune with another. Talk and listen and share. It's an invitation to be connected to God to enjoy Him. Think of your best friend or your spouse or that person that you are deeply connected at a heart level with, that's what prayer is supposed to be. The mouth speaks out of the overflow of the heart. So when we talk to God, we're sharing our heart with Him. And when He talks to us, He's sharing His heart with us. Prayer is about talking to God and giving Him our desires, and our pains, and our burdens, and our concerns and our worries. And then God gives us His burdens, and His passions, and His desires and His life. It's in prayer where His ways become our ways, and His thoughts become our thoughts, and His passions become our passions and His life becomes our life.

Prayer is primarily about enjoying God. Think about it like this. Like I have a really good dad, okay? My dad loves me, he's an amazing dad. I have nothing but great things to say about my dad. And yet, growing up there were a whole lot of things that my dad didn't give, wouldn't do for me or wouldn't let me have. Now, if I want to judge my dad by the things he didn't give me or didn't do for me and judge our relationship, I'm going to completely misjudge him and misjudge the whole point of our relationship. Because now as a man, I can look back and say, all those things that I wanted back then, yeah, yeah, he didn't give them to me out of wisdom, out of protection, out of love because he was trying to raise me as his son. And there are a whole lot more things that he did give me and did do for me and did let me have than ever the things he didn't let me do or have. So I should be a whole lot more focused on these. Same is true with God.

If we over focus on the things He didn't do, didn't give us, didn't let us have, we will completely misjudge Him and we will misjudge the entire point of our relationship, the point of prayer, when we should really be focused on all the amazing things that God already has done for us. I mean, think about it like this. Jesus says, "This is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent." Jesus says, this is the point of life. If you're ever looking for a verse that says, what is the point of life, it's right here. This is life: that they may know you. The whole point of life is that you would know God, experience Him, walk with Him, enjoy Him. Eternal life is not about heaven someday, it's not just about

salvation. No, it's through Jesus that we can now enjoy and experience and walk with God. This is why we walk the narrow path. Why? Because when we walk, we can have conversation. We can talk and we can listen.

But when we run on this road of this world, we are so overwhelmed that we can't have any conversation which is the whole point of life. Come on, how do you follow someone you never listened to? How do you have a relationship with someone you never talked to? How do you have community with someone you don't ever have a conversation with? It's about enjoying God. In fact, Psalm says, "Let all the nations burst forth with praise; let everyone everywhere love and enjoy you." Come on, that's a great verse. Everyone everywhere including you enjoy God. This is the point of life, to enjoy God, to walk with Him, to know and be known, love and be loved, connect and be connected. And not just you, everyone everywhere including the nations. Like God has given us the authority to disciple nations. Not just to create behavior modification within them so they call themselves a Christian conservative or whatever it might be.

No, no, no, to disciple nations to do what? To enjoy God because that's what they were created for. So here's the question. When was the last time you enjoyed God? When was the last time you just sat and enjoyed God, enjoyed His presence, His company, listened to His voice, shared your heart with Him, connected in a deep way? Like when was the last you just enjoyed God for who He was? A few weeks ago in my circle, we were sitting there, we were talking about the two paths. And I asked the guys, I said, why does it feel like it's so hard sometimes for us to walk down the narrow road? And we spend so much time on this road of life. And they said, oh, it's because we run so fast. Because we get so busy with life and so overwhelmed with so many things that this the path that just draws us down there.

And as we started talking, we said that it's prayer that slows things down and allows me to recalibrate what actually matters. And as we were talking about that, I said, well, let's just do that right now. And so I invited them to this little experience that I want to invite you to. So just close your eyes with me for a moment. Can you just enjoy God right now? Like thank you Lord that you are right here. That right now God you are above me and below me. You are to the left of me and to the right of me. You are within me and upon me. You are the very air that I breathe.

And your grace, and your mercy and your love are all around me. See how fast it is to get into God's presence? See how easy it is to just slow down and become aware of Him? You are qualified to meet with God, to pray, to enjoy Him, to talk to Him. In fact, look at his verse, "In Him and through faith in Him, we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Because of Jesus, you can boldly approach the throne of grace."

With confidence, with freedom, why? Because Jesus has forgiven you. He's made you right with God. You can now walk right into the throne room. And when you pray, the reason we

pray in Jesus' name, it's because as if we're praying it through Jesus that the Father hears it as if Jesus himself were praying it. And the Father talks back to us as if He was talking to Jesus himself. You are more than qualified. Sometimes you just have to slow it all down and realize he's not way out there. He's right here. And I know some of you are like, well, that was so nice. Can we just be done and stay right here? The cool part is you can do that anytime anywhere because of what Jesus has done.

The illustration is to show you how fast we can get off the road of this world and get back onto the narrow path with Him. And what I think is so cool is that the disciples, they watched Jesus pray so much that eventually they realized if we're a student and he's the master and we're supposed to become like him and he prays like all the time, then we need to figure out how to pray. So they asked Jesus to teach them to pray. It's one of the only few times throughout the gospels that the disciples reached out and proactively asked Jesus to teach them something. Because like us there were all kinds of religious barriers and obligations and burdens that prevented them from praying because religion always creates barriers between God and people, but grace and truth always knocks them down. So they asked Jesus, Jesus, would you teach us how to pray? And Jesus is like, man, great. Okay, you guys are learning. Absolutely I will. Here's how you pray.

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts as we have also forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. The Lord's Prayer, right? It's way simpler than you think it is. Just break it down with me. Our Father. First thing is our Father. Jesus literally says he is not a distant God someday out there, he is our Father. And He is just as much now your Father as He is my Father. So who you're praying to is far more than how you pray. If you talk to a good dad, a dad doesn't care what words you use, he cares about the heart that's trying to be communicating. And he's the best dad in the universe. So he doesn't care what words you use, there's not special formulas. It's just come and talk to your father. Our Father. Who you pray to is way more important than how you pray.

We get all confused. Did you ever hear people pray in church? It's always like the most disorienting thing to me sometimes. Like you are just like, oh Lord, we come before you today Lord to ask you to help us, your servants. Like why are you praying like an old Scottish woman? Why? Why do think God -- is that what you think He's looking for? Or how about when people pray like this? They're like, Lord God, Lord God, we come to you today, Lord God, Lord God, because you're Lord God. And Lord God, we -- Lord God, I need you today Lord God, Father God because you're a Father Lord God, God to me Father Lord. Hey Steve, Steve, Steve, what do you think today Steve, Steve? You want to hang out, Steve, Steve? How you doing Steve? You're Steve Steve. Like stop, bro. What? Or the King James version only person, right? Dearest Lordeth of heaveneth, we beseech of thee to come to thy -- bring your thy. I don't know even know how to use the words, but that's how we pray.

Stop. Let me free you from all of that. That is -- seriously, that is a religious fence to keep you from God. Tear it down in Jesus' name and just talk to your dad, okay?

Our Father in heaven. I got nothing else like that for you in the rest of it, so I hope you enjoyed it. Our Father in heaven. In heaven, which means He has the ultimate perspective on life. He lives from heaven to earth, from the invisible to the visible, from the superior to the inferior. So it's acknowledging that He has a better perspective than we do. Hallowed be your name. This is just simply telling God who He is. Worshipping Him, honoring Him, thanking Him for His goodness, and His grace, and His love, and His mercy and His compassion. And you say, well then, God's an egomaniac. That He tells us when we pray we should tell Him how awesome He is. No, God is a loving Father who wants to set you free.

He doesn't need to hear it, you need to believe it. So He invites you to pray it so you remind yourself of what's actually true in a world full of lies. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. This is the crux, this is the whole point of, God, I want your leadership in my life. I want to submit and surrender to your Lordship. I want to follow your plans and your purposes. I want your truth to come to life. I want your breakthrough to come to the brokenness of this world. This is about bringing all things into alignment with the finished work of Jesus. Give us today our daily bread. In other words, it's okay to ask God for the things you need because He already knows what you need before you ask Him. So go ahead and ask Him for what you need, what's important in your life. Forgive us our debts as we have also forgiven our debtors. Prayer is coming to God with confession and repentance, and acknowledging that we've messed up and we need His grace, and we need His mercy, and we need His kindness which He freely gives.

And then we ask Him to help us have the faith and the courage to forgive those who have hurt us. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one. In other words, God, would you give me victory in my mind and in my heart? And would you protect me from the kingdom of darkness? It's way simpler than you think it is. Come on, it's just simply like this. Let me put it in simple language for you. Hey Dad, you are a really good dad. And I'm glad you're my dad. And you have the best perspective in the universe. And so today I just tell you that I love you, and I'm grateful for you, and you're good, and you're full of grace and mercy. And I want your leadership in my life. I want your plans and your purposes for my life. And you already know the things that I need, so would you take care of me and provide for those needs? And thank you, no matter how many times I messed up, you forgive me. Would you help me forgive those who have hurt me? And Father, I just ask right now that you would protect me and help me find victory in this life.

Dad, you're a really good dad. Way simpler than we think it is. And when we pray, things start to change. More importantly, we start to change. It changes us. It's in prayer that God speaks to you and He gives you the direction you should go. I will instruct you and teach you in the

way you should go. I will council you and watch over you. Where does this happen? When does this happen? In prayer. When you start praying and talking to God, all of a sudden, He gives you divine solutions, heavenly wisdom, kingdom insight, supernatural thoughts. All of a sudden, you start to think like heaven and you have ideas and dreams and words and understandings and perspectives that you never had before. Why? Because he takes His realities and He imparts them into you. And not only does He start showing us where to go, He takes our burdens from us. Come on, one of those famous verses in the Bible, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

He says, don't be anxious about anything but pray about everything. If we're honest, we're anxious about everything and we pray about nothing. We are anxious about everything and we pray about almost nothing. Anxiety, stress, fear, worry, they are the way of the modern road of this world. Peace that surpasses understanding, rest for our souls, it's the ancient path. You see, to refuse to pray is to choose to be anxious. That's what it says. But to choose to pray is to refuse to be anxious.

And so when we start praying about all the things that are making us anxious and stressed and afraid and worried, what happens? Peace that surpasses understanding. Supernatural peace begins to guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Think about it, where is anxiety? Where is fear? Where is worry? Where is stress? It's all in here. So you know what this is saying? It's saying, stop thinking about it and start praying about it. Because the more I think about the anxiety and the stress and the worry and the fear, the bigger it becomes. It says, stop thinking about it. Stop. Pray about it. And peace that surpasses our understanding will guard your hearts and minds. Come on, where are you anxious? Where are you stressed out? Where are you overwhelmed? Where are you afraid? That is an invitation to practice the way of Jesus, which is to pray. Transfer our burden and receive his peace. This is how who have gone before us live. You read the Bible and you say, all this people didn't have anxiety and depression and stress like I do. Have you read the Bible?

It's all over the place. But here's what they did that's different from us, they didn't keep thinking about it. They stopped and they start to pray about it. This is why it says about them that they devoted themselves to prayer. Devoted, to continue to do something with intense effort despite difficulty. Listen, if you're ever going to pray and walk down that narrow path, you're going to have to continue to do it with intense effort despite difficulty because it's not convenient, it's not always comfortable, it doesn't always makes sense, you don't always get what you want when you want, how you want, but you keep doing it because you know that no matter how hard life is he can give me peace that surpasses understanding. It's prayer that keeps me anchored to the narrow road. In fact, even at the end of Jesus' life when he's about to go to the cross, he's in the Garden of Gethsemane and he's praying. And it's one of the only times we see in the gospels where the wide road of the world is calling out to Jesus.

He sees the pain of the cross in front of him. He knows the suffering and the agony down this narrow road. And then there is this comfort and this convenience of this wide, broad road of destruction calling out to him. And what does he do? He prays. And he says, "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me. But not my will but yours be done." And through an hour of prayer, he stayed anchored and walked down the narrow road. And he comes back to find the disciples sleeping while they were supposed to be praying. And so he says, "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation." In other words, Jesus says, prayer is the guardrails of life that keep you from drifting into this world. That prayer is the thing that keeps you anchored, tethered to the narrow road, the ancient path when the comfort and the convenience of the world is calling out to you.

That's why prayer is the way of the ancient path. And what I love is that when we watched those who have gone before us, after they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. Come on, when was the last time we experienced the shaking of God's kingdom? When was the last time God shook up your heart? Shook up your home? Shook up our church? Shook up our city? You know, when things get shaken when we pray-- when we pray? Because here's what happens, the more I enjoy God the more I become empowered by God. Intimacy leads to authority. Think about this in your own life. The more you enjoy someone and have a relationship with them, the more you feel empowered to do things for them, do things with them and use their stuff to accomplish their purposes.

If I have a really great relationship with you, I can come and use your stuff at any point in time, right? Right, because we're friends, we're deeply connected. So like we trust each other is true with God. The more I enjoy Him the more I'm empowered by Him, which is the secondary path of prayer, intimacy and authority. In fact, look at this verse, what Jesus says, "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be given to you." Just look at this, ask whatever you wish and it will be given to you. Talk about authority. Talk about empowerment. Talk about trust and belief. And I know some of you are like, yeah, yeah, but see, that's the problem right there. That goes back to why I don't pray because I've asked God for things and He hasn't given them to me. Okay, but before you bring your beliefs down to what you have experienced, let's just take Jesus straight up what he says. So what's true? Your experiences or what Jesus says. Because one of them has to submit to the other.

And if he says ask whatever you wish and it will be given to you, what is he doing? He's giving us authority. What is the point of authority? The point of authority is to build and strengthen, it's to protect and serve, it's to create and inspire. Authority is never about the individual getting the authority, the authority that we have is always about blessing those around us. And when you have authority you have a responsibility. You now have a responsibility with the authority that Jesus has given to you to bring God's kingdom to this world. We actually owe the world a lifestyle of prayer because it's through prayer that we get to bring God's kingdom



to their brokenness. So you've actually been empowered by God to do amazing things, and there is a responsibility and an authority that goes with it. And yet, you got to look at the first part of the verse, if you remain in me. In other words, if you enjoy me, you'll be empowered by me.

If you have intimacy with me, you have authority from me. And the authority you carry is directly connected to the intimacy that you cultivate. I mean think of who Jesus is saying this to, he's saying this to his disciples. This is the end of his life. They've walked with Jesus now for three years. For three years, every day, on the narrow road, the ancient path, learning from Jesus, walking from him. They have heard Jesus say, you need to be the greatest servant of all. They've heard Jesus say, pick up your cross. Come follow me and deny yourself. They've heard Jesus say, if you want to live, die. That, you know, Jesus called them to follow him so that they would become fishers of men, to seek and save the lost, to release the kingdom and to disciple the nations. So Peter isn't going to ask for a bigger boat and more fish, he's going to ask for a bigger faith and more of the Holy Spirit. Does that make sense to you? This is what happens, and when we -- another verse would say, "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart." If you enjoy God, you'll be empowered by Him.

Why? Because his desire start to become my desire. Does this make sense to you? Prayer is enjoyment of God, but it's also an authority to bring his kingdom to this earth. And if you don't know where to start, the way you start is by simply praying the prayers God's already told us to pray. You say, I get it, enjoy God, okay. But that authority stuff, how do I actually -- just pray the prayers he's already told us to pray. I don't think you're going to like this. Ready? "I urge them, first of all, that request prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for everyone, for kings and all those in authority that we may live peaceful and quite lives and all godliness and holiness." Oh Lord, I don't think I can do that one. He says, pray for the authority in your life.

So here's the question, did you pray for the last president and have you prayed for the current president. Have you prayed for your boss? Your teacher, your supervisor, that authority figure in your life. All of the politics and the passion and the frustration we have around it. Are you criticizing, complaining, tearing down or you're just practicing the way of Jesus which is to pray for them. Because here, it means really hard to criticize someone you're praying for. You can't find anywhere in Scripture where Jesus criticizes, tears down, cuts the authority in his life, he prays for them. So he invites us to practice that way. Do this as well. So you say, how do I -- how do I pray? Just pray for the people that are in authority of your life because all authority is from God. Or how about this one? I don't think you'll like this one either. "But I tell you love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you that you may be sons of your Father in heaven."

Pray for those who persecute you. When was the last time you prayed for someone who is offending you? In this last season where everyone has been offended about everything, do you gossip? Do you slander? Do you complain? Do you tear down? Or do you pray?

Because it's really hard to gossip about someone you're actively praying for. Can I tell you in my life, when I feel like I have people who are against me, once I can come to conclusion of what all is happening, I start praying for them, praying for them, praying for them? And eventually if you keep praying for them, you find God's compassion and His heart towards them. And it frees you from that offense. So prayer, Jesus tells us to pray. Or how about this, Jesus says, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, pray, therefore to send out workers into his harvest field." In other words, when was the last time you prayed for our church? This is what it's saying. Pray for your church. When was the last time you prayed for church leaders?

Prayed for me? Prayed for our campus pastors to be healthy, to be whole, to keep getting wisdom from God? When was the last time you prayed that I would raise up leaders to help us disciple the next generation? When was the last time you prayed that God would raise up people to go into the city to serve the city and be hope carriers? When was the last time you just prayed that unity would come in our church? That God's kingdom would come, that His Spirit would flow? Because hear me, it's really hard to sit on the sidelines when you're praying for your church. It's almost impossible to sit on the sidelines if you're actively asking God to move. One more, "Also seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I've carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it because if it prospers you too will prosper." He says, hey, pray for your city. When was the last time you prayed for your city? You actually have a responsibility. It's not just about heaven someday, it's about heaven here now today. You have a responsibility to this city to pray for it.

It's really hard to grumble about your city when you're praying for it. Are you with me on this? Just pray Scripture. Like that's the way to do it. You say, I don't know how to do it. Just find any verse and just start praying it. You'll be amazed at what God would do. If you've been tracking with us over these last two years, let me tip my hand here a little bit. Over these last two years, we've been intentionally working on building a culture of prayer in this church. We've not told you that, we've not rolled that out. But we've been doing it if you pay attention, right? Like Tuesday Night Prayer, we take an hour every month to just pray Scripture and meet with God and go deeper. In our weekend experiences, just about every week, maybe every week -- believe that you have been empowered by God. You actually pray for things that are not about you. If you've ever been in a serve team, our serve teams do their little huddle and then they all pray together at the same time. Everybody's praying, speaks out loud, closes the whole thing. Why? Because we're all praying and all raising our voices. If you've noticed in worship, we're giving more space in the midst of songs. Some of you probably are thinking like, did they forget the words?

Why are they just playing music and not saying anything? Because we're creating space for you to talk with God and hear from Him. And why are we doing this? Because we want to see revival come. Come on, guys. We're stirring the coals of revival of being done with compromise and mediocrity and apathy, tolerating sin, being normal according to the world.

Why do we want to be normal on a path that's leading to destruction? We want to turn our hearts to God and seek Him while He may be found, and ask His kingdom to come and His will to be done.

Come on. Come on, when Jesus ascends to heaven, he tells them, "Wait for the Holy Spirit that's going to come. They waited ten days. They all joined together, constantly -- say it with me -- in prayer for ten days.

Some of us are like, ten seconds feels too long. "Ten days they prayed and suddenly a sound like a blowing of a violent wind came from heaven, filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them. And 3,000 were added to their number that day." Because they were willing to pray, they enjoyed God, they became empowered by God. The wind and the fire of heaven blew into their lives, blew into that room, blew into their heart, blew into their mind, blew into their home and shook everything up. And the kingdom of God came and revival was released. This is what we're going for. We're not playing church. This is not about consumerism and comfortability and convenience. This is about saying how hungry are we for the things of God.

I want the wind of heaven and the fire of heaven to fall. And all revivals are always birthed in prayer. Why? Because prayer is primarily about enjoying God. And as we enjoy Him, we feel empowered by Him to take authority over the sickness and darkness, and brokenness and pain of this world and start calling His kingdom realities into those spaces and places and people. Are you with me on this? Last thing, you know, some of you are probably sitting there and you're like, but I can't get there because of the things that are so important to me in my life. I've got these prayers, these needs, this brokenness, this pain, I can't even think about anyone else or enjoying God until dot, dot, dot. Okay. Let me then just give you this. Jesus says, "I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, he who seeks finds and to him who knocks, the door will be opened."

In other words, Jesus says, you can ask, you can seek, you can knock all day long. Keep asking him, keep bringing it back to him. And if you're like, but I tried two times and it didn't happen. Hear me, I just want for some of you, you just need to hear this from me. There are three prayers in my life that I've been specifically praying for almost ten years. And I haven't got what I want, when I want, how I want. But I refuse to stop praying these prayers. I refuse to diminish this promise to my experience. I'm going to raise my experience to this promise. And so we keep asking, we keep knocking, we keep seeking. Look, this is the last verse, this is what he goes on to say because he says, "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish will give him a snake instead?"

"Or If he asks for an egg will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will you Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" In other words, even if you don't get what you want, when you want, how you want, you get more of Him, which is the whole point. We get to enjoy more of Him. That shakes us up and changes everything. You see, prayer is about accessing everything God has made available to us. To pray is to be fully human and fully alive. It's the enjoyment of God and the authority from God. And it is the way of the ancient path.

So close your eyes with me. Come on, what is the Holy Spirit want to say to you today? He is right here. And even when we don't enjoy Him, He enjoys us. So my prayer for you today is that the kingdom of God would shake you up. Lord, would you teach us how to pray? Would your kingdom come and would your will be done? And would you help us enjoy you and live empowered by you?

Would you start to create the coals of revival to come shake up our hearts, our families, our homes and our church, our cities, and all the places we go every single day. Teach us to pray. Teach us to pray, Lord. In your name we pray, amen.