

Reviving a Passion For the Presence of God

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[0 : 00] Welcome. Again, if this is your first time, my name is Chris. I'm one of the elders here at Watermark. We're going through a new series, and we're going to unpack this over the next four weeks together.

But before we do, many of you know that my wife and I are expecting a baby in October. That wasn't our response, but hey, that's good.

But one of the things as you've been reading kind of parenting advice and books is a lot of these books, they tell you that one of the most important things that you can give your child is your own marriage relationship.

Your children will be grown up and brought up if your own relationship is healthy between you and your wife. And as I've looked and I've observed many couples over the years, what I've noticed is that before you have children as couples, often many couples, they spend lots of time communicating together, hanging out, going on dates, all kinds of things.

And then the kids arrive. And when the kids arrive, suddenly life goes crazy. And in the craziness, they never intend to, but actually the focus becomes all on the kids.

[1 : 20] And so every conversation is just about the kids. Everything, the whole schedule, the whole world revolves around the kids. And what actually happens over time is the couple themselves just drift apart and their marriage relationship becomes functional rather than intimate.

And actually, that is what the book of Haggai is really all about. Because, actually does anyone know where the book of Haggai is in the Bible?

Because it's one of those books, if you actually look through your Bible and you read your Bible regularly, you have kind of brown marks on the bits you read a lot. And then there's a kind of big white section here, which is kind of completely untouched, which are called the minor prophets. Haggai is one of these. And we've looked at one of them, Habakkuk, in the last three weeks. And we're looking at this one called Haggai. And the first time I said to my wife a while ago that we were looking at Haggai, she thought I was saying hanggai, which is the word for shopping.

So we're going to do four weeks on shopping. If you don't speak Cantonese, that is a Cantonese word for shopping. So, Haggai is a story about busyness and neglect.

[2 : 35] It's a story about asking the question, which is a very relevant question for us in one of the busiest cities in the world, of what does it really mean for us to be part of God's people, the church, in a busy time.

And as we're going to look through this, what we need to know is the story of the Bible, the story of humanity is that humans are only at home, only in a truly blessed place, when we are living in the presence of our Creator God in life-giving relationship with Him.

And so, the Bible story goes on that actually that's what we were made for, but we walked out of the relationship, we walked out of home, we decided to go our own way, doing our own things.

And the whole Bible story is how a God who doesn't need us, but out of great love, has been pursuing us to call us back home to Himself. And if you go through the Bible story, you'll see He takes this people, the Israelites, takes them out of Egypt. By His grace, He brings them to Himself, He gives them His law, even though they're a complaining, messy, rebellious people.

And He says to Moses, He says, I, though I'm a holy God, I want to dwell with you. I want to be with you. I don't want a functional relationship with you.

[3 : 59] I want this intimacy with you and my people together. And the only way that Scripture shows is that a messy, unholy people, for this gloriously beautiful God can spend time with them, is if He creates a space.

A space which first of all was called the tabernacle, a tent of meeting, which then becomes the temple. And it's the place where heaven and earth were meant to meet together. It's kind of like the hot spot of God's presence on earth.

And that place is where an unholy, unclean people, through sacrifice and the forgiveness of their sins, could come and enter into this place with God and worship Him as a community.

And so this temple became the symbol of what it meant to have God right at the center of your community. This is some of the background to the Book of Haggai.

Because fast forward a few hundred years, it's 586 BC. And the most traumatic event in Israel's history has taken place a few years earlier.

[5 : 13] 66 years earlier. Sorry, in 586, the temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. Do you remember Habakkuk mentioned about the Babylonians?

Well, they've come. They've been, they came, they went, they left nothing. They destroyed the city. Israel's whole identity, their top leaders were taken away to Babylon and their whole identity was gone.

The temple, it felt like everything that they should be was gone. What was their God up to? And then what you see is moving on in history, 50 years later, this new empire comes in, the Persians. They come in and they're kind of, they've got a different political strategy. They're not smash and burn. They're kind of, if we make you guys happy, so we send your people back to where you belong, then actually you'll be happy with us and everyone will be fine and we can rule over you. And so that was the Persian thing. They sent the Jews back and many of these Jews came back with visions of rebuilding this temple. They were keen. They were excited. They wanted to rebuild worship in their homeland.

[6 : 22] And they start building and then you read in the book of Ezra, where they get some opposition, things get hard and they stop building. And because they were living in temporary accommodation, you know, they've got kids, they've got to get into schools.

You know, they've got work, they've got to get done. And there's so much else to do that actually it's fine not having to build a temple for a little while. So like one year goes by, two years goes by, three years goes by, 15 years goes by.

And the temple, which was just a pile of ruins, is still there. And they don't even notice it. Because they've been walking past every single day, getting on with their busyness, getting on with their lives.

And they've forgotten who they were made for, and what they were really made to be living for. And you know, this I think, is one of the reasons why this book is a very challenging one for us.

Because in Hong Kong, isn't it a place where we have so many distractions, so much to do? And Boko Haggai is going to challenge us.

[7 : 31] Who's at the center of our lives? Who's at the center of this church? And so we get to 29th of August, 520 BC.

It's one of the most specific dates we absolutely know for definite because of archaeology. And four months, over four months until December, Haggai comes on the scene.

God raises him up and another prophet called Zechariah to speak to these people who are very busy. And he brings them God's word. To first of all, the political leader, Zerubbabel.

Then to the religious leader, Joshua. And then to the whole community. And that's what the book of Haggai is all about. This is his message. Okay? So are you with us?

Good. Five people are. Great. Let's go. So I've got three things that I want to talk about. The first thing is you build what your heart loves.

[8 : 32] Okay? Do you know in TST, there is a building called The One. Has anyone been in The One? Yeah? Do you know like the tycoon who built it, do you know he gifted it to his wife?

And he called it The One because he wanted it to be for the one love of his life, his wife. There is another building in Chunwan which is called the Nina Tower.

Has anyone, do you know the Nina Tower? It's like tall. Like most buildings in Hong Kong. Frankly. Frankly. Yeah. Don't go for identification on that basis.

But I don't know actually. I don't want to judge her character. I don't want to judge any of those things. But it's called the Nina Tower. And just judging by her name, by the name of the building, who do you think it's built for?

Nina. Well, that's very interesting. Interesting. Because this is the story that the people are back in the land of promise.

[9 : 35] They're in the right place. They're here together with community, with the right people. They've got all this kind of some religious practices going on because they have priests and offering. They seem to have some of the right religion, but they're missing something.

They're building the wrong building. Here's what Haggai says. Thus says the Lord of hosts. These people say the time has not yet come to rebuild the house of the Lord.

Then the word of the Lord came by the hand of Haggai, the prophet. And I like this because he's quite sarcastic. It's quite British. He says, is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses while this house lies in ruins?

You see, what Haggai is saying is you are really busy. You are building something with your life. But you are building a house for yourself and you are not building my house.

And notice what's the fundamental thing about a house. It's actually who lives there. And the house of God, it's not just primarily about a building. It's actually primarily that actually your heart was meant to be in this place where God was manifesting his presence.

[10 : 47] But actually you are going, yeah, okay, not now. Maybe in a little while we will get around to that. But man, don't you know we have a whole load of other stuff going on in our lives right now.

And it's not like they don't care about the temple. They are going, we care. We care. It's just like, hey, do you know how much homework my kids have got at the moment? It's like, do you know that I've got a deadline next week?

Do you know this is just a crazy time at the moment? Come back in a little while and then I'll just kind of really pursue God. Like, but just not in this season right now. And Haggai goes, okay.

Yeah, I know it doesn't seem to be a good season for you because you are really busy. And you don't seem to have time for me, but you've got plenty of time to panel your houses.

And what he means by that is he's not just saying, hey, you need a place to shelter and place to live. No, paneling was actually, it was expensive decoration that they're putting around their house. So they're not just going to Ikea for their basic furniture.

[11 : 50] These guys are looking through every online store they can to get the best mahogany teak wood and get all the matching designs going on so that they can make their place the most beautiful flat in the entire of Jerusalem.

And Haggai goes, yeah, you don't have a lot of time, do you? Because you're actually building your own little tower, your own little house for your own little comforts.

And you've neglected me. You don't have time for me. And you know, I think this is really challenging.

Because to neglect the temple was to say to God, your presence, your glory, the worship of you is not a priority for mine now.

I've got things which are more important than you, thank you very much. That's what they're really saying. But it's really interesting.

[12 : 51] I don't know when you go to, in Hong Kong, when someone asks you, how are you doing? What does everyone answer? I'm busy. Right? They say I'm busy.

And we are busy. We've got a whole load of stuff going on. But I've also discovered something. Someone once said, what the heart loves, the will chooses, the mind justifies.

What I mean by that is this. We ultimately always do what our heart loves most. And then, because we love something, we choose to do it. And then, because we choose to do it, then we find reasons to justify why we did it.

Okay? So, for example, you know, you have a friend who maybe is lonely on a Friday night, but they ask, hey, can you hang out on Friday night?

And you just say, hey, listen, I'm really busy at the moment. I'm really sorry. But then someone comes along and offers you tickets to the favorite band of all time, and they're doing a one-off gig in Hong Kong.

[13 : 55] And it's incredible. Suddenly, you've got amazing amounts of time. You clear heaven and earth to be able to get to that concert. Right? Because we do what our heart loves.

Or, it's also very interesting. One thing I've noticed is also, you know, I sometimes ask people, how are you doing with reading scripture and praying and things? People say, yeah, I'm just so busy at the moment.

I just don't have time. And then it's really interesting. Like, a few weeks later, I suddenly find out they've enrolled in an MBA course, or they're CFA, or they're doing a master's, where they've now created 15 hours more time per week.

And you go, how did you find time? And the reason wasn't because there wasn't time. It's the reason because their heart wanted something. And so you'll readjust, you'll shape your schedule according to what your heart loves.

Now, we're all busy. We all have a lot of stuff to do. But what's interesting is, I think, for many of us, we pack our schedules with so much things that we have no margins. This is Hong Kong.

[14:59] Right? Don't we all do that? We just got to, you know, seize the day. And we make all kinds of decisions, whether it's studying, extra sporting events, all kinds of things.

And then often it means that actually, certain things which could be really important, whether it's connecting with CG, or whether it's coming on a Sunday to worship, or whether it's having someone in your life that you can just walk alongside.

Those kind of, we shove them aside, and we just make decisions to say, oh, I've got to do this. But we don't invite other people into our lives to say, hey, have you just checked how your heart's doing with worship?

You can do all of those things and worship God, but you can also do all of those things and worship yourself. We, as a community, need to be people who are willing to just go, hey, can you just check that my heart's okay as I'm making this decision?

That this is not about me, but this is actually about him. How often do we do that? Normally what we do is we make decisions, and then we just inform everybody else of our decision. But if we're a community of worship, then our love for Christ means help me to worship God, because I know my heart is likely to stray.

[16:14] You know, we did a spiritual health survey. I don't know if you filled it in. And it's really encouraging about the health of the church. But one of the things that a lot of you said was actually, I feel spiritually dry in many ways.

And I wonder whether actually many of us are spiritually dry because we're busy doing a lot of stuff. But actually, even busy doing stuff in church. But it can be that we've lost something that is crucial. We've lost the sense of wanting the presence of God in our lives. You see, you know Moses, when he comes out of Egypt and he's going into the Promised Land, God says to him, I'm going to send an angel before you into the Promised Land.

And the Promised Land is like the most amazing place of blessing you can imagine. I mean, it's got every Ferrari you want. It's incredible. But Moses says, if your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here.

What he's saying is, as a church, we could be packed with people. We could have hundreds of baptisms. We could have everything you want.

[17:32] The greatest discussions. The greatest speakers. The greatest music. You could have all of that. But if God is not in our midst. If we are not seeking him.

If we're seeking just his hand, not his face, then it's worthless. Because his presence is what defines us as a people. Not all the stuff we do for him. And so, in our craziness.

You know, Paul, he said, I consider everything rubbish. Compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

And I sometimes look at my heart and go, oh, that's not my prayer actually often. My prayer is often, God help me to know some blessing in my life for this area and that area.

But he wants us to be a church which is hungry for the presence of God. Do you know John Wesley? Do you know John Wesley? That is an English preacher.

[18:31] Do you know his mom gave birth to 19 children. She was a busy woman. I mean, it was a crazy household.

She homeschooled them all. Okay? But this mom, she knew within all her craziness that she needed the presence of God. And do you know what she did?

She would, at a specific time of the day, she would sit down on a chair in their living room. And she would put her kitchen apron over her head. And she would pray.

And when she did that, all the other kids knew she's praying. Because in her craziness, and we don't all have the amount of time. Yes, we have limited capacity. But she did that because she desired, she wanted the presence of God.

And when you want the presence of God, you just get creative. Right? You just get creative. So let's be a people who are getting creative in our business about how we're going to seek God.

[19 : 34] Because that's what it means to worship Him. That's the first point. We build what we love. Second point.

Does your building leak? Okay. Verse 5 and 6. Now, therefore, thus says the Lord, consider your ways.

You have sown much and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough. You drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

Many of us know we should be investing our lives in God's kingdom. But just knowing it doesn't make you do it, does it? Because you invest in what you think you're going to get a good return from.

Right? Don't you sink all your time and money into what you think is going to work in your life. So what Haggai is saying is, he says, okay, let's just do a little appraisal.

[20 : 37] Where's all your activity and busyness got you? He says, you've sown much. That's work in an agricultural community. They've been overworking to get promotion.

You eat and drink. That's enjoying comforts and pleasures. You clothe yourselves. That's shopping. Are you now content, he says? Have you got, you know, as you're scrolling through all your online shopping, have you got enough clothes now?

Are you like, I never need to buy anything else? As you think, he says, you put wages, you earn wages, and you put them into a bag of holes. And he says, that's your pay slip at the end of the day, end of the month.

And so at the end of the month, do you always come back and go, you look at it and go, wow, I'm so content. I have all the money I need. I never need to earn any more.

Because I'm satisfied with what I have. What we tend to do is we tend to look over and we go, see if this works.

[21 : 45] We go, okay, I've got to fill my life with all this stuff. I've got to fill my life with my salary, with my work, with my kids, with everything else.

This is where my hope is found. And suddenly what you find is your NPF rises, the rent rises, your school fees rises, and the things that you thought you got in your salary start going. And you go, oh no, I need to earn more.

And you go, okay, let me just get a better job. And you're just going, okay, if I can just get a bit more money, if I can just get a bit more time, if I can just get a few more clothes, if I can just get a bit more.

And what happens is, after a while, do you get the point? Isn't that actually much of our lives in Hong Kong? Don't we actually live our lives building a building with holes in, with a leaky roof, chasing, chasing, chasing, chasing, chasing, then look over the next person who seems to have a bag, which has got a little bit more than we have.

And then we think we've got to put more in ours. And what Haggai is saying, he's saying, just look at your life.

[22 : 58] Where are you chasing after? Is it working? Are you really satisfied and content if you're chasing after all those other things? And he says this, verse 9, he says, Look for much, behold it came to little.

And when you brought it home, I blew it away. Do you know what he's saying? He's saying, for some of us, our work feels meaningless. We feel dissatisfied with our work.

Some of us feel dissatisfied with our studies. Some of us feel like we're just frustrated all the time in our relationships. And he's saying that maybe that could be because you've been chasing after the wrong thing.

And maybe God may be gracious enough to you to allow you to live with dissatisfaction with areas in your life because he's doing it to show you grace to bring you back to a building that's going to really stand.

Not a bag that's got holes in it in your life. Sometimes he's bringing you to a place where he wants to show you if you chase after money, that's never going to be your hope.

[24 : 15] You chase after your family to be everything for you, it's always going to let you down. You chase after me, you've got something that's sustainable and will last. You know, I know of

someone who was totally consumed by his work.

And his father kept calling him and saying, Hey son, I haven't seen you for a while. Can you come round? And the guy goes, Sorry dad, I'm just really busy at the moment.

Really busy, I'll call you next week. Father calls him up next week and says, Hey son, I really want to talk to you. I've got some stuff I need to share with you. The son says, Hey listen, I've got a project deadline the end of this week.

Sorry, I can't do it. Another time, next week, the father calls him up and says, Listen, it's really urgent. I really need to talk to you. The son says, Hey listen, just give me a little bit more time and I'll come round and I'll kind of chat to you.

But I'll call you. Don't you call me. A week goes by. A month goes by. The son is actually feeling pretty content because he's now able to focus on what he needs to focus on.

[25 : 21] At the end of the month, he gets a call from the hospital. They say, Hey, I'm really sorry to tell you, but your dad's just died. He had cancer.

He's been trying to call you, but he just couldn't seem to get through to you. Doesn't your perspective change your view of what's important when you see life in the light of what really counts?

For some of us, God wants to break and change the things in your life so that you can see that he is more important than anything else you're chasing after.

And what he says, that actually, because anything else is sinking sand, only Christ is solid ground. Because you know where history is heading?

History is heading to a place where if you're part of God's people, it will be us as his people and Christ dwelling together in perfect relationship. That's where the goal of life is.

[26 : 26] That's perspective. And do we want to live for that now in our lives? He says, What we should be doing as a church, go up to the hills, bring wood, build the house that I may take pleasure in it, and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

Do you know what that means? He says, Will you live for my eyes and my pleasure? Like, there are some things that will scare you, that he will call you to do.

Because actually, if you're going to start building his house, sometimes that will mean your house will not have so much time on it. And sometimes that's scary. It's scary when he calls you to share your faith with somebody else.

And you're like, My house of my reputation could die here. But he says, Will you invest in it? Will you invest in it? Because, do you live for the pleasure of God?

I don't know if you've thought about that. Do I live for the pleasure of God? It's not like, I've got to do a whole lot of things to make him feel like he's happy with me. No, he's already chased after us. But do we go, Oh, I know God you're calling me to hang out with my community group right now, but they just suck.

[27 : 51] So, I'd rather not. I'd rather do my own thing. Or do I go, Oh yeah, they may suck, but actually I know that it pleases you. So I'll do it anyway. Even though I know, that's not the first thing I want to do.

But I want to do what you want me to do. Because I want to worship you. And I want you to be pleased. When your boss calls you to do something which you know that maybe you shouldn't be doing, but you're afraid.

Because you want to please him. Will you at that point go, Actually, God, I'm going to live for your eyes. I'm going to live for what you say. I want to live for your glory.

And I'll trust you with the rest. Do you see what that means? Does your building leak? Are you building, you build what you love. Last thing.

The power to build. It says, Zerubbabel and Joshua, the high priest with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the God.

[28 : 53] They're going, they're listening to this message and they're going, I know that that's me. I've neglected my time with God. I've neglected worshipping him. I've neglected the community of his presence where he dwells.

And they're going, what do we do? And it says, The people feared the Lord. Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's message and said, I am with you, declares the Lord.

And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, Joshua, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came and worked. Are we a people who are open and listening to what God wants to call us to?

These people they're seeing, they've neglected the glory and honour and the worship of him in their lives. But it's not enough to go, okay, I haven't done all that I should have done, like Ed was saying earlier.

It says, The Lord stirred up their spirits. Do you know what that word means? The word stir up means to wake someone from sleep. To wake someone from sleep.

[29 : 59] They didn't just resolve in their minds, I'm going to be a more faithful person. They didn't just say, okay, let's get inspired and now we're going to go, like we've heard a great TED talk and now we're going to go and build this thing. They're going, God is the one who stirs up his people.

I don't know, are you a sleepy Christian? I don't know if you thought about that. Are you a sleepy Christian? Are you a tired Christian? You feel like you've just been working and working and working.

Are you a dead to God person? That actually you're not even engaged with him at all? Are we a sleepy, comfortable church? We're happy to have our own little bit of religion, but actually, ultimately we're really building our own houses.

Most religions, God sends prophets like Haggai to just tell them what they should do and then the gods kind of sit back and expect the people to just get on and do it.

And if they don't, they kind of slap them around the head and punish them for not doing enough. That's what most religions are like. But that's not what the God of the Bible is like. Because the God of Christianity is the one who saw that we are asleep in many, many parts of our lives.

[31 : 16] That we're tired in many parts. But he comes to wake us up, to have relationship with him. Do you know, the book of John tells us the word of God became flesh and dwelt amongst us.

The word dwelt, that's the same word as the tabernacle, that thing which became the temple. In other words, Jesus is the word. He is the place where heaven and earth meet.

And we are called to come to him, to his presence. Do you know, he left the glory of heaven to come to you and to me. You know, when he chose 12 disciples, do you know, he says, He chose them and he was going to send them out to preach and to teach and to do a lot of stuff.

Do you know what he says before he does that? He says, he appointed 12 people that they might be with him. Then he sends them out afterwards.

But first he wants us not just to be doers of everything. He wants us to be beers with him. Are you being with him? Are you enjoying his presence? Are you walking and longing for him?

[32 : 27] Will you move heaven and earth so that he might be the center part of our lives? You know, the night before Jesus dies, he's in agony. He's in the Garden of Gethsemane.

He's got his best friends there, those 12 that he chose to be with him. And he says, hey, could you just stay with me a little while? Pray with me. And he goes off in agony. What do they do?

They fall asleep. I find this encouraging. The people who are closest to Jesus, who Jesus has told them, he's told them that he's going to use them in mighty ways.

They fall asleep right at the main point. That's like the ultimate anticlimax. And what Jesus does, he comes up to them and he doesn't say, you stupid idiots.

Can't you get your act together? Come on. He says, the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. I know that we struggle.

[33 : 25] I know that it's hard. But do you know what's going to happen? The reason I'm going to the cross, the reason I'm going to leave my glory in heaven to come down to die on a cross, is so that I can do what you cannot do with any of your religion, with any of you coming on a Sunday, with any of your activity.

I'm going to do the very thing that you need more than anything. I'm going to bring you home to myself. And what I'm going to do, he says, I will not leave you as orphans when I go back to heaven.

I will be with you and I will come to you and I will bring the Holy Spirit to you. Do you know what? The whole of history is heading towards Jesus and the church in this beautiful marriage of intimacy. But right now, he wants us to stir up in our hearts with the Holy Spirit's power to awaken us so that we're willing to sacrifice and say, I'm willing not to build my house so that I can build your house.

A friend of mine once took me out sailing. I'd never sailed before. And I did what most men do when they have no idea what they're doing.

[34 : 53] I pretended to know what I was doing. And so we got out into the middle of the sea and suddenly there was no wind. And we were just stuck there.

I don't know if you've ever been stuck in the middle of the sea and you're not moving. For 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 20 minutes. It gets a little annoying. A little scary after a while.

And so what I thought I would do is I thought I'd kind of do a little bit of paddling myself with my hands. Because hey, that's the kind of thing that if you want to move things on. And I'm getting increasingly frustrated. And my friend turns to me and he says, What on earth are you doing? What you need is wind. What we need is wind. In this church, we can have a thousand programs. We can be busy paddling all the things we want to do. Do you know what we need? We need the wind of God's Holy Spirit to stir us up so that we see how beautiful Jesus is in our lives.

[35 : 57] So that we're actually willing to recenter our whole schedules, our whole lives around him. Because he is worthy of all of that. And he wants to give us his spirit. He's died to give us his spirit.

So will we ask him and invite him to change our hearts so that he would become the center of this church. The center of our lives. That we would worship him and build his temple.

The community that wants his presence more than anything else. Let's stop for a minute. I want us to take a minute in silence.

Maybe the band can come up. I want you just to examine your own heart. As you look at your life, what is driving you?

God is not after a whole busy kind of people who just get busier for him. He's after people whose hearts, in the whole of life, want to move heaven and earth so that he might be pleased and he might be delighted.

[37 : 11] Not because we have to earn it because he's already done everything for us. But because we delight in his presence. Just come before him right now.

And if you know that that's not your heart's desire. But you want that. Just call out to him right now. Ask him to help you.

To fill you with the wind of his spirit. That he would revive us. He would awaken us. We who so often fall asleep. Come stir our hearts, Lord.

Come stir our hearts. Just do business with God right now. Come stir our hearts. There are some of us here who we think we're Christians.

Because we do a lot of the right external things. We come to church. We give money. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve.

[38 : 43] We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve.

We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. We serve. God.

God may be challenging you right now. Will you turn to me? Will you lay down trying to find your security, trying to find your identity in anything other than me?

Some of us have been making lots of excuses about why we can't spend time with God. Some of us are making excuses why we're not sharing our faith. Some of us have been making excuses that God has been talking to you and speaking to you, but you've been going, not now, another time. And God wants to say, get life in perspective. Now is the time. Come to me because I am gentle. I am gracious.

[39 : 49] I'm drawing you to myself. I want you to come home. If you know that there are some things you just need to kind of work through and you want someone to pray with you, I want to invite you to be bold and to come forward and just to the side, there's going to be some people who will be willing to pray for you.

Do not live for the pleasure of humans and man around you. Live for the pleasure of God. Let's just respond to him now in worship.