

When Home Is Not Home

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 31 October 2021

Preacher: Chris Thornton

[0 : 00] Over to you. The scripture reading comes from the book of Matthew, chapter 13. Please follow along on the bulletin or your own Bible.

Starting in verse 51, we read, Have you understood all these things? They said to him, Yes. And he said to them, Therefore, every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like a master of a house who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.

And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there. And coming to his hometown, he taught them in their synagogue so that they were astonished and said, Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works?

Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? And are not his brothers James and Joseph and Simon and Judas?

And are not all his sisters with us? Where then did this man get all these things? And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, A prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household.

[1 : 24] And he did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief. This is the word of God. Great. Thank you, Karen.

Good morning. Those of you who don't know me, my name is Chris. I'm one of the leaders here. And we're going to be continuing our series looking at Matthew this morning. Kevin is away preaching at another church, at Faith Community Church.

And one of the things we love to do as a church is we believe we're not just here for ourselves in the city, but actually God has placed us here to be a blessing and encouragement to other churches as well.

So I'd love us to just close our eyes and pray as we begin and ask God to just bless our time and bless that church as well. So Father, I just want to thank you that we get the privilege of gathering together this morning, of being in your presence this morning.

Lord, none of us have any merit, any right to come before you, and yet you have made a way for us to come to you. Lord, I thank you that it's pure grace that we're here. And so I pray, Lord, that we would not take for granted the privilege that it is to both be your children, but also to be able to gather this morning.

[2 : 41] Lord, I pray that you would speak to us because you're so gracious and you're so generous and you love to speak to us. I pray that you'd open our hearts to be good soil, that we'd be a people who are chasing after you and willing to sell everything, that we might buy that pearl of great price that we looked at last week.

And I pray the same, Father, for Faith Community Church, where Kevin's speaking this morning. Lord, we pray that they would be a community as well, which has you right at the center, that your presence would be there, that you would encourage them, that you would build them up, that you would grow them and strengthen them as a light in the southwest of Hong Kong.

Lord, we just pray that you would bless them. And Father, we just ask you, even as we go on a journey as a church in seeking your heart and seeking your will and seeking your ways over this next while, we pray even for the pastor search as we're looking for someone to come and take my position next year.

Father, I just pray that you would provide in that. Lord, we pray for just this process, that you would be at the center, that even those people who have sent in their CVs, Lord, you give us real discernment and wisdom in that.

But we pray as a church, Lord, open our ears to hear your voice. Let us be those who love you with all of our hearts. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. So yeah, just as I prayed, we're continuing the

pastor search process.

[4 : 10] So we'll be giving you some updates over the next little while, but we've had a few CVs sent in. And so we just encourage you to really be praying for the pastor search committee as well in this process.

That would be great. So we've been looking at the book of Matthew. And before we get into our passage, one of the things about me is that I used to be, in a former life, I was an English teacher. And so this morning, what I would like you to do is to do a little bit of a pronunciation lesson with you so that we just test your English this morning. Okay, are you up for that?

I need a bit of participation here. Okay, I'm going to put some words on the screen and I want you to pronounce them correctly. Okay? So, can we have the first word? No, not that one.

This one. Wow, you guys are good. Okay, next one. Okay, you guys have really got this. Okay, let's make it a little bit harder.

[5 : 14] Okay, let's... You're clearly above beginner standards. So let's make it even harder. You. Oh, this is good. Okay, so let's go for the next one. So.

Huh. What's going on with that? Like most of you, I can tell, have learned English quite well that you've actually begun to expand some of your categories.

But actually, isn't it bizarre that actually we have these expectations of how things should work, right? We have these patterns that we live with, as this example shows you.

Things that actually are shaped, shape our lives and shape our expectations in life, right? As like these words shape our expectations, and then sometimes life just throws you a curveball.

And as many of you, you seem to be able to incorporate that English curveball into your vocabulary, which has actually enriched your language. But what happens in our lives, it's actually, it's not just language, it's our culture, it's our families, it's a whole load of expectations that we live and we're shaped by media and by peers, and we live with these patterns in our lives, with these expectations of how we think life should work, don't we?

[6 : 40] Not just language. Every area of our lives. And sooner or later, God will come and he'll throw a curveball into your life. And at that moment, things won't seem to make sense.

Things will seem to be disoriented. And you go, what's that all about? But that is the moment, and what you do with that moment will shape the entire course of your life.

It will shape whether you go, no, words ending in E-W, they always pronounce ooh. Or whether actually you're willing, and you just kind of reject that kind of, you just say sue, that's what it is.

You know, and you get taken to court. But, you know, the thing in our lives is you either stick with everything that you know, or you allow your categories to expand and to get reshaped.

And you get a richer, deeper, more expansive view of life. And that's what this passage is actually all about. You see, this passage is about one of those categories in our lives, and it's the category of home.

[7 : 55] Because home is supposed to be a place of safety. It's supposed to be a place where you're known, where you're loved, where you're accepted, where you're secure.

It's supposed to be a place where you can just sit down, take your shoes off, put your feet up, and take off your masks, take off your pretenses, and feel totally safe.

With nothing to prove. It's supposed to be a place where you don't have to guess how things are going to work. Because you know. But if you've grown up in one place and gone away to another place, you will know that sometimes our expectations, sorry, so for example, if you've left home to go to university in another place, and then you come home to where your parents were, do you know, it's never quite the same thing as it was before.

Right? Anyone experience that? Because you see, they have not experienced what you've experienced. They've not seen what you've experienced, what you've seen. And so, their categories are still like this.

And often what they do is try and fit you into their expectations. But you're different. You're changed. And sometimes that can create tension. As many of us know. But that's a little bit like what's actually happening in this passage today.

[9 : 20] Because Jesus has been this itinerant rabbi. He's left home. He's been an itinerant rabbi preaching, teaching, performing miracles all over Israel.

And crowds have been flocking to him. And he's been preaching some of the parables that we've looked at over the last few weeks. You know, the parable of the sower, the parable of the mustard

seed, the parable of the leaven, the parable of the weeds and the wheat, the parable of the pearl of great price and the fish.

We've seen all of these different power, these parables. And he's been talking about the kingdom of God and how it's upside down. It's different from what you think it is. And now he is going to experience and embody that very principle of what he's been teaching.

Because he comes back to his hometown of Nazareth, which is a bit like the Shemshu Po or the Shemshu of Hong Kong. It was a place where people looked down on it in many ways.

There was about three to four hundred people lived there. It was a poor, peasant town. Nothing much going on. But everyone knew everyone in this town. If you worked in the village, you married in the village, you died in the village.

[10:33] And Jesus' family was no different. And everyone knew Jesus' family. You know, his dad was in the construction industry. And Jesus would have done, would have also followed suit and been in the same business as a carpenter.

And the thing is, life worked how it had always worked. And then one day, Jesus comes back home and he goes into the synagogue where he'd always grown up with, where he looks around and sees all the familiar faces of all the aunties and uncles and the kids that he'd played with and everyone's grown up.

And everyone's proud that their little Jesus has come home and he's got himself a respectable job as a rabbi. And it's wonderful. And Luke 4, which is a parallel passage, shows us that actually Jesus gets handed the scroll of Isaiah for him to read as the rabbis would always read.

And everyone's waiting for this nice, friendly message that they can all then go home and get on with their lives just as it had always been. But this day, Jesus opens the scroll.

He opens the scroll. And it's at Isaiah 61. And Isaiah 61 is all about a prophecy of the Messiah, of the great king, the deliverer who's going to come.

[12:01] It says this, The spirit of this Lord is upon me for he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He sent me to set the captives free. He sent me to open the eyes of the blind.

He sent me to be the deliverer who brings the year of the Lord's favor into Israel. this is the passage that everyone has been waiting for this figure.

And Jesus closes the scroll and says, This is all about me. I'm fulfilling this today in your presence. I'm here. And it says they were astonished. And in the Luke passage it says the words were gracious.

They heard something. Jesus is now blowing their categories apart of what they were to expect in their life. He's disrupting the whole way their operating and thinking system worked at that moment.

[13:07] You know, the same word astonished is actually used at the end of the Sermon of the Mount where it says Jesus finished teaching and the crowds were astonished because he taught as one who had authority not as the scribes.

In other words they're astonished because they can see something in Jesus. They can see Jesus is different from every other rabbi who has ever come and preached in their synagogue.

They can see that he has a depth of wisdom and understanding and he's got this power. They've seen they've heard about the miracles that he's been doing. They know he's got power over sickness power over demons power over nature itself like no one else.

He's got this authority and they can see it. They're astonished by him. But you know being astonished at Jesus is not the same as having faith in Jesus.

You can be astonished at him you can be amazed at him you can be impressed by him but not put your faith in him. Because right at this moment is a call to faith and faith in Jesus will always confront your categories.

[14:24] It will always turn upside down the way you think life should work. And it's a bit like a jigsaw puzzle which you know somebody's put in the wrong pieces but they think it looks fine.

Have you ever had that? I've seen that someone and they go look it's great and you're going hey it's all wrong. And so he will pick up the pieces put them back in the box shuffle them and then put them back together and say actually no this is the picture that your life is supposed to be and it's far richer far more beautiful than it ever was before but you cannot know Jesus.

You cannot walk by faith without his kingdom reordering your little kingdom. Without you stepping off the throne and allowing him to be on the throne of your life and that's challenging.

And so this at this moment where Jesus says this is about me these expectations instead of this hometown welcoming and saying Jesus yet we want to follow you that's amazing they turn around to him and they say who do you think you are?

They go where did this man get this wisdom and mighty works? Isn't he the carpenter's son? We know his mom we know his brothers and sisters in fact they live next door in fact my little Ricky played with him when he was a kid who does he think he is to try and be somebody when we know what he is.

[16:09] You know it's like John 1:11 says this it says Jesus came to his own but his own did not receive him. His own is both Nazareth his hometown but it's also us as humanity.

He came we are God's creation and Jesus comes down to us he moves into our neighborhood as we will celebrate at Christmas time by becoming human by becoming flesh and blood just like you and me who wears nappies and all that other stuff that we go through and he comes to join us in the very ordinariness of our existence though he is the creator God himself at that very miracle which is mind-blowing of every category that very mind-blowing miracle that he could become like us can be the very blinder that stops us from seeing who he really is because you see for the people of Nazareth he's just like them they cannot see that God has come into their midst for them the one who's got supreme authority the king of God's kingdom doesn't wear nappies he doesn't play with our kids he doesn't make

Ikea furniture for the Galilee store so even though they see his glory they see some power they see something different and unique about him the barriers in their minds their expectations prevent them from accepting him and seeing him for who he truly is you know we've seen this actually before with the Pharisees you know the Pharisees it wasn't his familiarity that was the issue it was that he didn't play along with their agenda do you remember they had all these system of laws and of ways of righteousness that they thought would bring in God's kingdom and so when Jesus came in and he ate with tax collectors and sinners it was like a godly person would never do that you see he's breaking their categories and so they rejected him do you see what it's telling us it's telling us that actually the kingdom of God can be so close and so present to us and yet we can miss it by the very expectations and habits and behaviors that we have grown up with that we don't think Jesus should act or work in a way that he really does so what happens they see but they don't see do you know if you are if you are not a Christian Jesus doesn't want Jesus doesn't want to just add you onto your life have a little bit of Jesus here kind of make your life a little better he actually wants to totally turn upside down your categories so that you see he's the one who calls the shots and you see actually his way of living life is way better than ours that's what he wants to do in your life that's what he wants to do in my life and it's scary it's scary because here the people they see but they don't see they hear but they don't hear and it says they took offense at him you know that's actually a Greek word which is the word scandalon which is actually where we get scandal from it's actually a word which means like an obstacle something in your path in your way which leads you to take the wrong path leads you to go away from where you should be going it's a bit like if you have some adventurer who gets lost in the jungle and then suddenly afterwards they come out of the jungle and they see this path over to where they know they should go but in between there's this rope bridge and they go no matter how much you say hey it's safe a thousand people have been over it listen this is the pathway you can trust it with your life they go

I don't do rope bridges like that doesn't fit my expectations of how life should work okay let me find an alternative route that I can go around and what happens is they go off and they try and find another route and they just stay lost in the jungle you see faith in Christ is a call to actually step onto the bridge and realize that he's stronger and safer and more secure than you ever realize he is and the tragedy in this passage is that Jesus has come home you know the place where he should be most welcome the place where he should be most accepted is the place where he's most resisted and Luke tells us they actually try and throw him off a cliff and he ends up quoting his hometown and in his own household he's home but he's not at home because people are not willing to see him for who he really is and you know that's heartbreaking isn't it if you're and some of you have experienced that actually you've experienced actually the pain of rejection at home you've experienced the place where it should be the safest but can be the greatest pain you know sometimes sharing the gospel in your household is actually one of the hardest places to share right and the thing is

[22 : 11] Jesus understands that if no one else does Jesus gets that because he's experienced it and he understands you which is why he calls to us to have faith in him and it says actually there's a terrifying statement that comes right at the end of this he says he did not do many mighty works there because of their unbelief just think think about God has turned up at your doorstep and the people of Nazareth turn him away because he isn't dressed right he's not fitting into their expectation he's not coming according to their schedule or their way of operating and that's the challenge of this passage the challenge is that if we're to walk by faith if we're to see Jesus and experience his power in our lives we need to like we talked about last week with the pearl of great price be willing to lay aside or allow him our preconceived notions the cultural and family even some of our religious expectations of how we think

God should work and begin to surrender those to him and trust him with our lives and to step on to that bridge because Jesus will not come to us as we want him to be he'll come to him as he really is and who he really is is better than we want him to be you see he's the God of power and authority but he's also humble ordinary and suffering and the question is will we welcome him as who he really is and what he's bringing into our lives and let him be Lord or do we leave him on the doorstep that's the challenge of this passage that's the unwelcome homecoming that he faces but the second thing is that question to trust or not to trust that is the question you see let me just kind of bring this down a little bit to us and

I think this is challenging but also I think encouraging because if we think what are some of the barriers what are some of the things which actually are like that rope bridge in our life or those obstacles that we look at and go I'm not sure whether I can really trust you I want to give you a couple for some of us it's because we've grown up here we've grown up in our families we've grown up with just the cultural ways of doing stuff we live according to the wisdom of Hong Kong not according to the wisdom of Christ some of us we're too afraid to step out and trust God whether it's with our finances whether it's with our kids whether it's with our relationships whatever area of your life we're too afraid to step out because it feels uncertain it feels scary it feels uncomfortable you know maybe you read about in the

Bible about the miracles of Jesus and you see dramatic answers of prayer in scripture and you go but that's not my experience and so I'm just going to stay in my little operating system kind of safe the way I know how to do things kind of self reliant and trusting in your own wisdom you know I was speaking at a church last week in New Long wonderful church and after the service this guy comes up to me and he says do you know the last time you came God really spoke to me and I was like wow that's great and he said every Sunday I'm normally super stressed because Monday morning I have to give the sales figures to my boss and sales are doing terribly at the moment and he says so actually the way everyone does things in the company and around me and what I've grown up with is we just kind of try and massage the figures to make them look better than they really are because you know like no one wants to come clean about the real deal and so he says

I've spent hours like stressing every Sunday I'm trying to find ways to make these figures work so God is a God who actually brings resurrection out of death God is a God who actually brings life right when you think there is the hardest situations and he said I was so convicted I got on my knees and I said God I need your help but he said I was super scared but I went to my boss next day and I just came clean about the figures and just said I didn't know what was going to hit me he said a couple of days later his big boss calls him up and says I want to have lunch with you and he goes no and so he comes and sits down and has lunch and he asks him hey what's going on in the company and he tells him and instead of firing him he says hey help me to brainstorm how we can fix this and he says and

[27 : 47] I'm going to give you a pay rise and he went out of that meeting going God you like I never thought that actually trusting you with just this thing would actually mean that actually you are better than I think you are I didn't realize that actually you had the power to turn around a situation when I thought my wisdom was the way things should work and you know what he said I have so much peace now like Sunday morning is a joy to me because I've seen that I can put my foot on that rope bridge and I can trust God because he is faithful and he said it's not about pay rise but I just see God's faithfulness so I think as a church one of the things that is really hard is when life we're competent at life when we're good at doing things

I'm not saying we should all be bad at doing things but when you're really competent things when you can be successful at things do you know what we can end up trusting in ourselves and this

passage is a passage which is telling us will you take Jesus for who he is not according to your expectations of how you want him to work which means when is the last time you felt scared doing something in obedience to Christ where you're going God if you don't come through I know what's going to happen because if it's a long time then maybe you've actually just been not stepping on the rope bridge of trusting Christ and maybe he's going to call you in an area to trust him so that you can see that he is more safe more good greater than you could ever have imagined because he says they did not do many mighty works because of their unbelief what do you think God might do when we choose to step out in faith because that's the place where we will experience the mighty works of God because Jesus is good that's the first thing of how our expectations the way we run can blind us to Christ and trusting him second thing is some of us it's not that we follow the wisdom of Hong Kong it's actually that we have good expectations of how we think life should work you know two chapters earlier in Matthew there's another character who also has this grid of how God operates there's this character who has this grid of how God should operate a grid that's actually shaped by him reading the Bible itself reading the Old Testament expectations of a God who's going to come and deliver his people from their enemies it's John the Baptist J the B as I call him and he's a good guy he's a faithful guy he's a godly guy and like the people of Nazareth he's seen Jesus amazing teaching he's seen Jesus amazing miracles and he said this is the guy this is the Messiah I'm going to trust him I'm going to put my faith in him this guy I baptize with water this guy is going to baptize you with the Holy Spirit he's the real deal good guy fast forward he's now in prison on death row about to be executed by the Romans and Jesus isn't fitting into his expectations now this isn't kind of how it was supposed to work he was supposed to deliver us all and we're supposed to go to Jerusalem have a great party I'm not supposed to be in prison it's not supposed to work like this is it you know your grid just gets disoriented but instead of rejecting

Jesus like the Pharisees and the people of Nazareth instead of saying no way that's not what you could do in his confusion in his doubt in his struggle he runs to Jesus and says hey Jesus are you who you really say you are and Jesus do you know what he does he points him back to Isaiah 61 he says listen listen see what I'm doing see what I'm doing can you put the verse up here he says go and tell John what you hear and what you see the blind receive the sight the deaf hear the poor have good news preach to them and blessed is the one who is not offended scandalized by me he says blessed happy is the one who doesn't let the confusing circumstances which you don't get what's going on lead you away from crossing the rope bridge and trusting me but let it lead you deeper into trusting me you see how many of us have seen

[33 : 13] God do extraordinary things in our lives you've seen answers to prayer you've seen him change people's lives dramatically I have I've seen healings I've seen incredible things in people's lives even in water mark just recently I've just heard story after story of God just doing mind blowing things in people's lives and we can see the power of Jesus and then we read some of the promises of scripture promises which say like no good thing will he withhold from those who fear him and we hold on to that because that's a true promise but then you look at your circumstances and you go but he seems to be withholding a whole load of good things that I think should happen maybe it's your kids they're not responding to you or they're not coming to Christ and you think hey this is a good thing or maybe it's parents or loved ones just haven't come to faith and you've prayed for year after year and you go God what's going on maybe it's areas of sin in your life that you still battle with and you struggle with and you think

God are you really powerful I thought you would deliver me from this thing but I don't get it maybe you're single and you know you've been faithful and you've been trusting Jesus and you look at everybody else getting married and you feel the loneliness you feel the hardship of it it's not a walk in the park and you go are you really that good Jesus can I really trust you and unbelief wants to come to you and say don't cross the rope bridge go another path because he's going to make life hard for you but the passage is calling us to and this whole section of Matthew is calling us to say just as in the parables remember the parable of the wheat and the weeds remember the parable of the mustard seed and the leaven that actually the kingdom of God works in both power but also in hiddenness and in confusion and in areas where you don't get what's going on you know it's what in theological language we call the now and the not yet it's like now

Jesus wants to show us in our fears in our doubts in our struggles he wants to show the real power that he has to change our lives he really does so I want us to be praying as a church with a new

expectancy that God will do things as we step out in faith as we go and share our faith as we go and step into waters where we go God I don't know whether this is what's going to happen but I'm trusting you I think we will see God come through in amazing ways maybe it's your finances maybe it's your work but I think he also wants to show us that actually in the not yet and some of us are experiencing that not yet right now that Jesus that let me step back that actually when we feel that this is our home and yet it doesn't feel like home when it feels like we don't feel the safety we don't feel the security we don't feel the acceptance we don't feel all the things that we wish we could feel Jesus says this is the moment for you to run into me and discover that I am where your home has always been because just as John the Baptist ran to Jesus right at the moment of greatest confusion and greatest struggle when God seems to blow open your categories and you don't get what he's doing is the moment when he actually wants to take you into a deeper revelation of who he truly is that he's bigger than you thought he was that his plans are far vaster than you could think they are that actually he looks over a cosmic view of life not just our little narrow view and actually as you enter in and you trust him you'll discover that Jesus is more safe is more the place where you can find acceptance approval love the place of greater security you will find that he is home and that will also make us long in those moments where we don't have what we want now for the home of when he returns and we see him face to face peace

I had a conversation a couple of weeks ago with a friend in Watermark who's a refugee in Hong Kong he can't go back home now because he's become a Christian and if he goes back home his family may kill him and here in Hong Kong he can't work he's stuck and yet as he's been talking about Jesus with his friends some of his friends have distanced themselves from him so he said at times I feel incredibly lonely it's really hard I experienced the not yet but then he said to me actually when he comes back to God's word in those moments he comes back to God's word he comes back to remember Christ that Christ has not just been away from home for him but he is away from home so that he can be with us in the midst of those struggles he discovers a profound peace a profound joy a profound hope that you cannot put your finger on unless you say that is the work of [38 : 57] God in my life you see Jesus has traveled the route for us he travels this road with us so that we might really come to see that he is better than we think he is he is bigger than we think he is he is more loving than we can imagine he is and he will work our lives through in a way that is more glorious than if we trusted in ourselves that is why in the Lord's prayer do you know what we pray we pray your kingdom come your will be done we are praying God come home bring us home with you let that be our prayer let's pray let me just take a minute to think where you are with Jesus

I know we do this a lot but this is what Matthew is calling us to of going where am I have I seen the power of God am I running to God maybe in the confusing circumstances maybe in the areas where I'm struggling am I running to him or running away from him what is he calling you to can you see that actually who he is he's the king with all authority and yet he's the king who will come to be close to us will you let him what are the expectations what are the things that actually leave you going no way Jesus and will you surrender those to him right now no matter how scary that feels and see that he is a better God a better plan for us■■■ but

Father, thank you.

Father, that I know that we don't need to be able to understand everything of how to fix all our world.

But we need to know that you are the one who does. I pray for us, Lord, that even right now, wherever we are, Lord, I pray that where there are areas which are choking our hearts, where there are areas where we need to learn to step out of the boat.

[42 : 21] We need to step out onto that rope bridge and go, God, I need to trust you in this area. Lord, give us the courage. And also give us just a sense of your love and your presence with us as we do that.

Even this week, maybe some of us actually need to share about an area of sin in our lives that we are so scared to share and what people will think. But God is calling you to share that with a friend or with someone who is godly.

Maybe there are people you know you're supposed to be reaching out to. Maybe there are people you're supposed to be forgiving. Maybe there are people you're supposed to invite into your home, but you don't even want to go there.

And God is calling you to step out onto that bridge and trust him. Lord, I pray that you give us the courage to do that. Show us that you are better than our own ways of thinking.

And Lord, I pray for those of us who are struggling. I pray that you come alongside us and show that you get us totally. That you're with us right now. And that we've been encouraged that you have already walked through this to the other side, into resurrection glory.

[43 : 36] And you're going to take us there too. So strengthen us in our faith, I pray as a church. In Jesus' name. Amen. We're going to come and take communion now.

And communion is that time where we go, God, I see areas in my life where I haven't trusted you. Where I haven't put my hope in you. But Father, I want to run back to you. I want to receive again the incredible welcome that you give to me.

It's a place that if you are not a Christian or if you know that actually you keep turning away from that rope bridge and you're not even at a place of saying, yeah, I want to cross.

I say stay where you are. And just pray to God. And just pray to God. And just be really real and honest with God where you are up to right now. But for the rest of us, I encourage you as you go, God, I want you to change my life.

[44 : 47] I want you to be the Lord of my life. To come up and to take the elements and we'll go back to our seats and take them together. But to do so with this sense that actually the ultimate place where Jesus was not at home was on the cross.

Because that's even the place where he said, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Home was with his father and yet he was rejected even there so that we might be accepted.

And so we come and receive the one who loves us more than we could imagine. And enjoy coming home with him.

So take your time. Respond as you need to. And then come up and take the elements and then we'll take them together afterwards.