

Seeing our need for God

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Preacher: Kevin Murphy

[0 : 0 0] Okay, I want to just share something from God's Word for us this morning, and then we will have a bit of reflection, response song. We'll say farewell to the Tams a little later, and then the kids are going to come in and do a moment.

So that's what the next hour or so is going to look like. Okay, we've been talking this weekend about growing dependence. Obviously, that's our theme. We want to become more reliant, more God-dependent, actively confident in God.

We want to become less self-reliant, self-sufficient, self-confident as a church and as individuals. And if you are a Christian, that shouldn't sound too outrageous or new or groundbreaking.

In many ways, this is the heart of our faith. But the question is why? Why should we grapple with this? Why is it something that's worth talking about and thinking about and dedicating a whole weekend to growing in and thinking in and reflecting in?

And I think one of the reasons is this. I want to put it to us that the reason we need to constantly think about this is because of the cultural waters that we swim in. Partly, I guess, our human heart, but also the cultural waters that we swim in.

[1 : 1 3] I don't know if you remember recently the Paris Olympic Games. There was the Seine River. The triathletes, I think, we're going to swim in the Seine as part of the race, right?

The swimming leg. And there was all this controversy because the level of toxins, E. coli toxins in the Seine was too high. And it was dangerous for the swimmers. And so they kept on pushing it out a few days.

And they're pushing out this race, right? And the reason is even though the Seine looks very beautiful and lovely and in hot summer months, you feel like you just want to dive in there and cool off.

Actually, there are these invisible toxins that if you swallow them or the water gets inside you, it can make you quite sick. And in rare cases, you can even die, right? But we too live and swim in these cultural waters.

Every day, the waters around us are full of these little toxins that are telling us who knows whether there really is a God or a divine being. And if there is a God, He's probably uninvolved in your life.

[2 : 1 5] He probably doesn't care. He's hardly knowable. He's not very trustworthy. And so at the end of the day, all you can really do is trust in yourself. At the end of the day, if you're going to make your life work, you've got to depend on yourself.

There's no one else you can depend on. And these are the waters that we're swimming in. And so every day, this message is coming into us, whether it's in social media or through Netflix or the newspaper or our colleagues at work or wherever it is.

This anti-gospel false message is like these microtoxins that are getting into our hearts. And they're causing us to think, at the end of the day, I'm the only one I can rely on. And so we believe this anti-gospel and we become more self-dependent, self-reliant, self-confident.

And so somewhere deep in our hearts at a subconscious level, we start to believe, okay, I'll pay God my dues. I'll do the right things. I'll try not to sin too badly. I'll go to church and CG. I'll maybe put some money in the offering.

But at the end of the day, I'm going to depend on me. I'm going to rely on me. And so we become functional secularists. Functionally, we weaken Christians, but functionally, we live with a secular worldview.

[3 : 25] As if there is no God. As if He doesn't really matter. As if He doesn't really have any influence on our lives. And what that means is our relationship with God becomes like a mirage. You know, if you're walking and it's a hot day, you look ahead and it looks like there's a pool of water, right?

But actually, it's just a mirage. There's nothing. It's just the heat coming off the ground. Or it's like our faith becomes like a hologram. Hologram? Is that the right word? It looks like life, but when you go to touch it, there's nothing there.

It's just lifeless. And our faith with God can become like that. As we rely on ourselves and depend more on ourselves. And so, just two verses I want to read to us briefly before we get into our main passage.

Deuteronomy chapter 4. God is constantly warning His people throughout Scripture to rely on Him, depend on Him. And so, in Deuteronomy, Moses' final sermon before we go into the promised land.

He's constantly saying, remember God. Remember His faithfulness. Remember His promises. Remember how He's led us. Remember His covenants. Remember His statutes. Look at what He says in Deuteronomy 4.

[4 : 27] The Lord your God loved your fathers. This is verse 37. He brought you out of Egypt by His own presence, by His great power. Driving out the nations greater and mightier than you to bring you into this land as it is this day.

Therefore, know today, lay it onto your heart that the Lord your God is in heaven above and on earth beneath. There is no other. What we sang earlier. There's none above you, none before you.

Therefore, you shall keep His statutes and His commandments, which I command you today, that it may go well to you. He's saying, you've got to go into the promised land. And when you go in there, remember, lay it to heart that there is none other.

God in heaven, God on earth, He's the one that's carrying you and sustaining you. Take this to heart. Let this be the thing that's in your heart. And He goes on and He says, when you go into the promised land, which is not Singapore, when you go into the promised land and everything is going swimmingly for you and your job is amazing and life is amazing and things are going fantastically, don't forget who took you there.

Don't become self-reliant, self-confident. Deuteronomy 6 says, when the Lord your God brings you into the land that He swore to your forefathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, with good cities, great cities that you didn't build and houses full of good things that you didn't fill and cisterns that you did not dig and vineyards and olive trees that you did not plant.

[5 : 55] When you eat and are full and satisfied, take care lest you forget the Lord your God, the one who brought you out of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. It is the Lord your God you shall fear.

And so throughout the Bible, God's saying, don't forget, don't become self-reliant, self-dependent. Okay, so to help us think about this a bit more, I want us to look at a story in the Old Testament, which is one of my favorite stories.

It's in 2 Kings chapter 5. Okay, 2 Kings chapter 5. And so turn there, we're going to kind of work through it a bit together. If you want to remember where Kings is, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles.

Okay, those are the history books. It's in reverse order alphabetically. Okay, so it starts in Samuel, Kings, 1 Chronicles. That's how I always remember the order. So reverse order alphabetically.

So it's after Samuel, before Chronicles. 2 Kings chapter 5. And it's the story of this man and how God brings him to a place of dependence upon God.

[6 : 58] And what I love about the story is you see this wrestle in this guy's heart. He's wrestling with the inside of him. Shall I trust God or shall I trust myself? And because God loves him, God is going to bring him to a place of forsaking his self-reliance and trust in him.

Okay, so the story here is the story of this guy called Naaman the Syrian. Okay, and if you're reading the Watermark Bible reading plan, we're going to read 2 Kings 5 this week, I think.

So when you read it on Tuesday or Wednesday, hopefully you'll remember this. Now the context here is Israel and Syria have been at each other. Okay, the end of Kings, Syria is constantly a thorn in Israel's flesh.

They're attacking them. They are a real bother to Israel. And so in verse 1 we read this. Naaman is the commander of the army of the king of Syria.

He was a great man with his master and in high favor. Because by him the Lord had given victory to Syria. He was a mighty man of valor.

[8 : 02] Okay, so who is Naaman? Naaman is the commander of the army of Syria. Okay, he's a very powerful man. He's a very influential man. He's probably a wealthy man. He's attained high status in society.

He's a very important position of society. He has great authority, great influence. Maybe he's very feared. People, everybody knows. His number plate is number one in Syria.

Okay, what is that word? Yokgar, is that right? Yokgar. Okay, something like that. Sorry my pronunciation. Yokgar, is that right? Okay, he's the chief of police.

He's the commander of the armies of Syria. And it says he's a great man. He's in favor with the king. God gave them victory over Israel, which that's a whole other story.

He's respected not only by people but by the king. He's a man of courage. In other words, here's a man who's the most powerful man and probably the most powerful army in the modern world in that day and age.

[9 : 02] Right? But he has a problem. Look at the end of verse one. He's a mighty man of valor, but he is a leper. He suffers from leprosy. Leprosy in the old days, it could have been leprosy as we know.

It could have been any other skin disease. In other words, he's a very sick man. Things are not going well for him. Maybe it is leprosy as we know. His body is going to fall apart slowly, limb by limb.

There is no cure. His body is going to waste away until eventually his body gives up and he's going to die. So he's an unhealthy man. But God in his kindness has provided a way for him to get healed.

Look at verse two. Now the Syrians in one of their raids had carried a little girl from the land of Israel. And she worked in the service of Naaman's wife. She said to her mistress, Would that my lord Naaman were with the prophet who is in Samaria.

He would cure him of his leprosy. Okay, so that's amazing. Syria goes to attack Israel. They, I guess like happened a year ago, they take a whole lot of people as hostages.

[10 : 06] Here they take a little girl, a young girl, back to Syria as a, they traffic her, right? And now she's working in the house of Naaman's wife as a servant.

And she, rather than resenting Naaman and says, Oh, this is God getting back at him. She decides to help him. She offers a suggestion. She says, Naaman needs to go to Israel and find the prophet Elisha.

He will cure him of his sickness. I mean, that's amazing grace. I would not want to say anything like that, but that's amazing grace. But what's amazing here is, here is a young girl.

She's never commanded an army. She doesn't have the ear of the king as Naaman does. She's not powerful and influential. She's just a simple young girl. We don't even know her name.

She's never accomplished anything great in her life. Yet she knows something that Naaman, for all his education, all his status, all his prestige, all his success, she knows something that he doesn't know.

[11 : 06] She knows what really matters. Because she knows who the one true God is. She knows nothing's impossible for him. And most importantly, she knows how to find him.

She knows that you've got to go to Israel. If you go there, you will find him. And you will find grace. If only Naaman were with Elisha, he would be cured. And so Naaman makes a plan, right?

He goes to Israel to get his healing. By whatever means possible, he is going to sort himself out. And so look what happens. Verse 4. Naaman went in and he told his lord, the king, this is what the young girl from the land of Israel said.

And so the king says, go, I will send a letter to the king of Israel. Okay? What do you think that letter is going to say? So here's the superpower, the powerful ones. They have like conquered and attacked and they're constantly attacking Israel.

He's going to send a letter. The letter is not going to be a polite letter, right? It's going to be a threatening one. Sort out my man. Otherwise, you're a dead man. Okay? So he comes with his threats.

[12 : 08] Look at verse 6. He brought the letter to the king of Israel, which read, When this letter reaches you, know that I have sent Naaman my servant to you, that you may cure him of his leprosy. When the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his clothes.

He said, Am I God? Am I able to kill or make alive that this man sends words to me to cure him of his leprosy? Consider how this man is seeking a quarrel with me. Okay?

So what's he done? Naaman's gone with his letter and essentially the letter said, Sort out my commander, otherwise we're going to attack you. Right? It's a threat. But if that doesn't work, Naaman's got another option.

Look at verse 5. He says, So he went, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold, and ten changes of clothing. So in other words, if he can't threaten him, he's going to bribe him.

Okay? If the stick doesn't work, he has a carrot. He has six thousand shekels of gold. Right? You see what Naaman's doing here? He has a need.

[13 : 08] Right? He is sick. He's unwell. He's dying. He's told there's a way to sort out his need. There's a man of God in Samaria. So he utilizes all his resources.

He taps the king on the shoulder. He brings his money and his wealth. He brings his army. He utilizes all his resources. He threatens. He coerces. He tries to bribe. Whatever means possible, if there's a problem, he's going to fix it.

He's going to solve it. But there is a problem. The problem that Naaman has, no human being can fix. No one can solve his problem. No one can give Naaman what he needs.

Verse 7. The king says, Am I God that I can kill this man or heal him or make him alive? See friends, the storyline of the Bible is that from beginning to end, God tells us that life and flourishing and wholeness, the things that we truly need are always, always, only found in him.

They're found in living in true and genuine dependence, reliance upon him. No human being, no amount of money, no career progression, no boyfriend or girlfriend or husband or wife, no children.

[14 : 20] Nothing in this world will give you the flourishing, the wholeness, the satisfaction, the life that we long for and need. And those things can be great blessings.

We praise God for those things. Even our enemies, right? We can praise God for them. But nothing in this world will satisfy our hearts. Remember Augustine said, You have made us for yourself, O Lord.

Our hearts will always be restless until we find our rest in you. And so from our very earliest forefathers, Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, to being delivered from Egypt and slavery, through walking in the wilderness, to getting into the promised land, to living under the kingship of David and Solomon, to going into exile in Babylon, to Christ coming and following Jesus, to living in the book of Acts as the disciples, all the way through to the new creation, this life is marked by living in humble dependence, reliance, confidence in Him, not in ourselves.

That's what the great temptation in the Garden of Eden was, right? Remember Satan says to Eve and to Adam, You don't need God. Why don't you need Him? If you eat this fruit, it will make you wise.

You will become like God. You will know right from wrong. You can make decisions. You will have infinite wisdom. You don't need His restraints, His rules. Be your own God.

[15 : 44] Well, think of how, in Numbers 13, God says, Go into the promised land. The people say, No, no, it's too hard. We can't do it. And then eventually, they change their mind and say, Okay, we'll go. We'll go. We'll do it in our own strength.

And God says, You're in deep trouble. You're doing your own strength. You are finished. Well, Saul in Samuel 15, right? Samuel says to him, Wait here for the Lord.

Wait for God. He will go before you. But God's taking quite a long time. And so Saul says, Ach, I'll just do it on my own. Come on, I'll offer the sacrifice. We'll go ahead. And it ends in disaster.

It's the end of His kingdom. Think of Proverbs 3, verse 5. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding. That's God's call to us, right?

Well, Jeremiah 9, 23. Thus says the Lord, Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom. Let not the mighty man boast in his strength. Let not the rich man boast in his riches.

[16 : 38] But let him who boasts boast in this, That he knows and understands me, That I am the Lord, The God who practices love and justice and righteousness. Well, here's one more.

John 15, I am the vine. You are the branches. Whoever abides in me, And I am him. They bear fruit. Apart from me, You can do nothing. We could say, Spend all day here, Just quoting scripture after scripture.

The storyline of the Bible, From beginning to end, Is life is found in dependence on him. Apart from him, We wither and we die. Friends, God is the creator.

We are creature. God is self-sufficient. We are vulnerable and needy. God is self-existing. We are God-reliant. God has life in him.

We find life as we are united to him. That's how the world was created. God designed the world, So that as we are plugged into him, Dependent upon him, And reliant on him, We find life.

[17 : 38] And apart from him, Life fades away. It saps out. It drips away. And that's why God often brings storms, And struggles, And sufferings, And crises into our life, Right?

God brings these things into our lives. These are a gift from God. Yes, They suck, And they're frustrating. You're like, God, Why are you doing this? But actually, God brings these storms into our lives, To help us, To wean us off our self-sufficiency.

Charles Spurgeon said, I thank my God for the waves, That drive me onto the rock of Christ. These waves come, And you storm tossed. And what do these waves do? They should drive us onto the rock of Christ, We build our lives on him, Rather than the shaky foundation of self-sufficiency.

And one of the problems, Is that in life, We tend to think that we've got it all together. And then life goes horribly wrong, You get cancer, Your child gets sick, You lose your job, You get relocated, All those things Niels was praying for, And suddenly you realize, Oh man, I do not have it in control.

Friends, One of the dangers of being young, And I know we are a young church, When you're young, You think you're invincible, Right? You think you're never going to get old, You're never going to get stiff, On the basketball court, You can play for like five hours, Next day you just bounce back, No problem, Right, Gunnar?

[18 : 56] And then one day, But one of the blessings of getting old, Like me, Is that you suddenly realize, Oh actually, I'm not invincible, Right? We are a young church, And one of the dangers, Is that we think that, We can handle life on our own.

Friends, Can I ask us, As a church, Don't waste our suffering. Hey, Storms, Suffering, Crises, Challenges, They're going to come our way, They are a gift from God. It's like God taking us, When we're blind by the hand, Saying, Let me lead you, Come, Let me show you the path to life.

They're like, Suffering is like glasses, That help us to see reality. If you've never had glasses, And the world's blurry, Suddenly put in glasses, You think, Wow, I can see, Suffering does that, It helps us, And that's what Naaman is discovering, Right?

He's this wealthy, Powerful, Influential man, He's used to getting what he wants, Through bribery, Coercion, Threatening, Whatever it is, And suddenly, His life is threatened, And he realizes, He's not invincible.

He is not God. But God is not done with him, Because God, In his grace, Is still at work. Naaman has not yet realized, The secret of dependence upon God, But God wants to help him.

[20 : 06] So in his kindness, And his mercy, He brings this pagan worshipper, To his knees, And he brings him to the living God. So look what happens in verse 8 here. I love this part.

Verse 8. So Naaman has gone to Israel, He's threatened the king, He's tried to bribe the king, But it's not working. But Elisha, Hears that Naaman is in Israel.

Okay? Maybe God speaks to him. It says, When Elisha, The man of God, Heard that the king of Israel, Had torn his clothes, Okay? Good thing Naaman brought, A change of 10, 10 changes of clothing.

Okay? He sent word to the king, And he said, Why have you torn your clothes? And now, Torn your clothes is a sign of like, Desperation. Like, Oh, What? I can't do this, Right? Why have you done this?

Send Naaman to me, That he may know, That there is a prophet in Israel. So, Naaman saddles up his horses, And his chariots, And he goes down to Elisha, And he stood at Elisha's door.

[21 : 03] But, Elisha doesn't come out to meet him. What does Elisha do? He sends a messenger. He sends a servant. So, Elisha stays indoors, And he sends his servant. He says, A messenger, Just go tell Naaman what to do.

Right? Verse 10, Elisha sent his messenger saying, And Naaman, Go and wash in the Jordan River seven times, And your flesh will be restored. You shall be clean. Verse 11, But Naaman was angry, And he went away saying, Behold, I thought that this prophet guy, Would surely come out, And stand, And call upon the name of the Lord his God, And wave his hands, And over this place, And cure the leprosy.

Are not Abana and Papa, The rivers of Damascus, Better than all the waters of this stupid place, God Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be clean? So he turned, And went away in a rage.

Okay, So Naaman's come to Israel, Elisha's told him what to do, And he's offended. He's angry. He leaves in a rage. He's angry. Things are not going well for him.

And throughout the story, Do you see what's going on here? God is trying to help Naaman see, It's not his strength that's God interested in, It's his weakness. It's not his abilities, Or his power, Or his reputation, Or his fame, Or anything that Naaman's got.

[22 : 24] That's not what God's interested in. What God's really interested in, Is his weakness, His need, His dependence. Look at how the story unfolds. First, It's a young servant girl, Not the great doctors of Syria, That tell Naaman, How he's going to get healed.

Secondly, When Naaman saddles up his war horse, And he goes to Israel, He goes to the king's palace, Because that's where important people go, And that's where solutions are found. But the king can't help him. It's some little prophet down the road, That's going to help him.

And eventually he goes to Elisha, And he expects the prophet Elisha, Is going to come out, And greet him, And go through this whole ceremony, But Elisha just sends his servant. He doesn't even come out and greet him.

And then finally, When he's told what to do, He thinks, Okay, It's going to be this wonderful ceremony, And there's going to be bells, And whistles, And smoke, And we're going to go through this whole thing, And God's going to heal me. And it's just as simple as going down to the river, And taking a bath.

And it's not even the great rivers of Syria, These majestic rivers, It's some of the back waters of Israel. And he's offended, And he's angry, Because he thinks, God, You, Elisha, You treat him like a child.

[23 : 31] I mean, That's one of the things, Right? Anybody can go into, The river. One of my little soldiers, A little private can go in the river. A child can go in the river. That doesn't require anything great. Elisha, Give me something great to do.

Tell me to slay a dragon. Tell me to swim through fire and water, And fire and ice. Give me something profound, Something difficult that I can do, To prove my worth. How much money do you want?

Do you want a billion dollars? Okay, That I can do. You want me to charge that mountain? Okay, That I can do. But to go swim in the river? Anyone can do that. You see, Friends, What God is trying to show Naaman here, And if we have eyes to see it, We'll see it.

Naaman's got a problem. It's not just the leprosy of his skin, It's the leprosy of his heart, Right? The problem of his heart, Is pride and self-sufficiency. It's pride and arrogance. It's not just his body, That needs restoration.

It's his inner heart, That needs to be healed. Naaman is affected with self-importance, With entitlement, A sense of superiority, And it's killing him.

[24 : 34] And friends, Just like leprosy, Self-importance and pride, And self-reliance, And self-sufficiency, Makes our hearts not work properly. It damages our relationships.

Right? It destroys our relationships. Friends, How many of us here, Have a trail of broken relationships, Behind us? Everywhere we go, There's conflict. There's issues.

Why is it? John says, It's not because we're very humble, And gracious. It's because the leprosy of our hearts, Has made us self-righteous. We think we're better than others. And this leprosy is, Like the leprosy of skin, It's incurable.

You think you can sort yourself out, And you will die. It will kill us. Undealt with, It will kill you. It is destructive, It's far-reaching, It's incurable, It's fateful, It's fatal.

None of us are immune from it. All of us can catch it. Friends, It will kill our relationships, It will kill our community, It will destroy watermark. It will eat us from the inside out.

[25 : 37] And so twice in the scripture, It says that Naaman is angry. He's angry with Elisha, Because Elisha told him the solution to his problem, But it's not what he thought. He wants something great, And Elisha says, You've got to come to the end of yourself.

Sally Lloyd-Jones, Who wrote the Jesus Storybook Bible, It got the best light. She says this, All Naaman needed was nothing, But nothing was the one thing he didn't have.

Isn't that profound? He had the money, He had the change of clothes, He had 6,000 talents of gold, He has the authority, He has the letter from the king, He's got an army behind him, He's got everything he needs.

There's only one thing he needs. He needs nothing. But it's the one thing he doesn't have. And so he's stuck. But look what happens next. Naaman is offended, He's insulted, He's angry, He gets on his war horse, And he's ready to ride away, And leave any hope of healing and restoration.

See, it's not leprosy that's going to kill him, It's pride and self-sufficiency. That's what's going to kill Naaman. But verse 13, His servants came near and said to him, Master, If the prophet had told you to do some great thing, Would you not have done it?

[26 : 43] How much more now than when he says, Simply wash and be clean. So they convince him. Verse 14, So Naaman went down and dipped himself in the river, Seven times in the Jordan, According to the word of the man of God, And his flesh was restored, Like the flesh of a little child, And he was clean.

And in the rest of the story, We don't have time to go through it, The rest of the story, Naaman is not just healed, He's saved. He goes home with new faith, He goes home a different man. Before he's superstitious, Now he goes home with faith.

He believes that God has healed, And God changes him. He goes back to Syria, As a worshipper of God. And in verse 15 it says, He says, Now I know that there is no God in all the earth, But the God of Israel.

And it's actually amazing, He goes back and he says to Elisha, He says, Elisha, I'm going to have a problem, Because my king is going to make me worship, In Dagon's temple, The temple of the God of Syria, Right? But he says, But I know that actually God alone, Your God, God, Yahweh, He's the one true God.

What do I do? And it's an interesting story, But he comes up with a way of saying, Even when I'm in Dagon's temple, I'm going to worship God. On my knees, I'm going to be saying, Yahweh, You alone are God.

[27 : 54] But the point here is, Naaman, He's not just superstitious, He's changed. He's got faith. God has saved him. He changes his entire life.

You see, Before he comes to Elisha, To save his reputation, To save his career, To save his wealth, Now he goes back to Syria, A worshipper of God, At great cost to his reputation, Great cost to his wealth, Great cost to his career, And everything that he is.

He comes out of the waters, A new man, And it's all by grace. Naaman hasn't done a single thing. He hasn't paid any money, He hasn't earned it, He hasn't achieved it, He hasn't deserved it, He's left his chariots, And his money behind.

In fact, It's the problem, That he's wanted to earn it. That's been the problem all along. And as long as he held on, To his pride and his reputation, He was dead in the water. At the moment, He's willing to let go, And say, Okay God, I'll do things your way.

He gets saved, He gets healed. Okay friends, So what about us? What is God saying to us, As a church family? This whole weekend, We've been talking about, Dependence upon God. We want to grow, And reliance upon him.

[29 : 03] Let our self-sufficiency die, Become more God dependent. And friends, We often say this, You know, John 3.30, I think it is, John the Baptist says, He sees Jesus and says, He, Jesus must increase, I must decrease.

For us as a church, He, Christ must increase, We must decrease. And especially the leaders, The elders here, We must decrease, More of him. More of Christ. We must become more dependent, Reliant upon him, Less reliant and dependent upon us.

I think that's going to be, One of the great things about sabbatical, With me going away, And Jeremy leaving, We're going to be, As Watermark just goes forward, Without a blip, We're going to all be under, There's going to be no illusions, About who leads Watermark, Right?

His name is Jesus. And I'm not going to be here, Jeremy's not going to be here, And Watermark's going to go on, Just perfectly. And everyone's going to realize, Oh yeah, Kevin doesn't do that much around here, Actually, It's all Jesus, Right?

Maybe I won't have a job after it, You're going, Oh, Why do we even need this guy, Man? Okay. Friends, He must increase, Jesus does not need, Our brilliance, Our power, Our connections, What he's looking for, Is humble dependence upon him, For us to bring our nothing, So that he can fill us, With his power and his grace.

[30 : 19] Just, Three more minutes, One of the areas, Where I think we really want to grow, And I'm really excited about this, Is for us to grow, In mission and evangelism, To grow, For us to grow as a church, Where we see many, Many people saved, I'm so excited, As I even look across the room, A bunch of people, Who have come to faith in, In Christ, In Watermark, The last few years, I saw Raph earlier, And I saw Alfred earlier, And Jack, And those are just, In the last recent few years, Raph, Who were we talking with yesterday?

Jeff, Yeah, Jeff also, About two years ago, Or so, So many people, It's one of my, It's one of my best things, About Watermark, Is that people are coming to faith, All the time, And yet, One of my greatest prayers, And our prayers as leaders, Is God may you multiply, We want to see, Hundreds and hundreds of people, Coming to know Jesus Christ, As king and savior, And friends, I know that, There's some of us here this morning, That are not Christians, I'm so glad that you're here, It's so great to have you here, You're not yet to follow, Of Jesus, Friends, We want you to know, We long, We long for you, To come to a place, Where like Naaman, You realize, The only thing you need, Is to get on your knees, It's the only thing you have, Is your nothing, Your money means nothing, Your wisdom, Your self-sufficiency, Can't save you, Your brilliance, Your career, Your success, Your status, No, They're not going to do anything for you, The only way, That you are going to get saved, The only way, That you're going to find life, The only way, You're going to spend all eternity, With God, Is to know that Christ is king,

And to bow down your knee, Before him, And we long for that, That to happen, That Jesus is not just a good example, He went to the cross, To die, To take our sin, In our place, So that he can, And then he rose again, So we can rise with him, For all eternity, We want you to know that, And to trust that, And to be saved, And to be born again, And to surrender to him, Friends, You don't need to bring your, Track record, Or your goodness, Or your perfection, You just need to bring your, Honest dependence, Your need, We want you to like Naaman, And say, God I need you, Forgive me, I want to find life, In your name, But for all of us, Who are part of Watermark, I think the next few years, Are going to be so exciting, I am so excited, To come back from, Sabbatical, I think the next few years, Are going to be amazing years, And God's going to do, Wonderful things, But our confidence, Can't be in ourselves, We need to get smaller, And he needs to get bigger, And so just as we close, What does a dependent church look like?

Hey just three, Very simple things, A church that is full of humility, And repentance, We've been talking about this, A lot recently, We can't take ourselves, We're not taking ourselves, Too seriously, We're not taking our reputation, Our ego, Too seriously, We are willing to lose face, Lower ourselves, Maybe even look foolish, For the sake of walking, And faith and obedience, Where we are, Full of humility, And repentance, Secondly, A church that is full of prayer, We've spoken about this a lot, But Leonard Ravenhill, Was this American revivalist preacher, And one of the things he used to say is, A church that is not praying, Is simply playing, Either we're playing games, Or we're on our knees, Thank God we need you, Right, And so everything we do, Must be saturated with prayer, You meet up with a friend for coffee, At the end, Hey how can I pray for you, Let me pray for you right now, Someone says they're going through a hard time, Don't just say, Hey here's some advice, No pray for them, Right, You start CG, Start with prayer, End with prayer, Everything we do, We must be saturated with prayer,

And then I can just encourage you, The Thursday night prayer meeting, Is one of the best church meetings, In the whole month, Okay, Here's a brief confession, Every Thursday, At about five o'clock, I feel like, Or not every Thursday, The first Thursday of the month, I feel like, I don't know if I feel like this, Okay, Just confession, Don't tell anyone, Just keep this between me and you, Okay, Often on Thursday afternoon, It's the end of the week, I'm like, Okay, I'm not sure if I feel like this, But by 930, Oh man, I am pumped and ready to change the world, It's like, Come on, Prayer meeting is the best meeting, In the whole month, Okay, I really encourage you to come, It's amazing, It will build your faith, And encourage you, Lastly, A church which is full of faith, Courage and risk taking, Our confidence is not in ourselves, Our confidence is in the promises of God, God's made these amazing promises, We can stand on those promises, I loved what our young said, Taking risks, Being bold, Doing things that maybe don't make logical sense, In some ways,

[34 : 53] But God is with us, So friends, Let's not bring our A game, Let's not bring our strength, Let's not bring our best fight to the fight, What do we bring? Let's bring our honest weakness, Let's bring our need, Let's bring our nothing, And saying, God, We need you, You are God and we are not, Have your way, Hey, Why don't we do it now, Let me close for us in prayer, And then I'd love to, For us to just get into groups, And think about how to respond, Father God, Won't you help us as a church, Lord, We, This whole weekend, We've been talking about growing, As a dependent church, God, This picture on the front of the, The booklet is, It's what we want to be, Just this guy on his knees, And humble dependence upon you, God, May this be the picture of Watermark Church, God, May we decrease, And you increase, God, I pray for more of your spirit, More of your power, More of your anointing, More of your grace, God, Won't you do in Watermark, What we can never ever do,

In our own strength, God, We want to confess, And say, We're so sorry, For times we've, Wanted to try and be impressive, God, As one of the leaders here, I confess, I form that temptation, I sometimes, I want to look impressive, I want to arrange things, That we look good, I want Watermark, To look more successful, And bolder, And bigger than it is, God, I confess that, That is me wanting to try, Human techniques, And I forget, The power of God, Is in God alone, God and God alone, And so God, May we decrease, May you increase, May human leaders, Become less and smaller, May Jesus Christ, And the Holy Spirit, And God the Father, Become bigger, In our hearts, And in our church, And God, As we decrease, And you increase, We pray God, For a mighty harvest, Lord, We pray that, Next year, Tens of people, Will come to faith, Come to know you, Bow their knee, And be radical, Radical followers of Jesus, God,

We pray, Won't you do this, In your wonderful, And gracious name, Amen.