

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

June 11, 2017

SPEAKER

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SERIES

Jonah: Arise & Go

PART

3

TITLE

Calling To God In The Storm

SCRIPTURE

Jonah 2



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Well Providence, good morning. I hope that you have had a good week. If you brought a Bible, if you want to turn with me to Jonah 2, we're going to be there this morning as we get ready for the Lord's Supper. This is an amazing chapter; it's an amazing book because what it says is that no matter who you are and what you have done in your life is that God can use you, and God wants to use you. This is such a sweet morning to sing to the Lord with you and I'm grateful that you came this morning. If you would, let's bow and let's pray together.

Father, we come to your word again and when we come to your word, it tells us that, Lord, that this word is powerful, and that it can and will do everything that you intend for it to do. We sit under it, we yield to you, and ask that you would burst through the strongholds that we place and we build in front of our heart that keep the truth out, and that keep the lies in.

I pray Father that you would speak through weakness, and you would give us joy as we read and as we consider the things that you have said to us, even when what you have said touches on some of our failures and sin. Would you please glorify Jesus Christ, and would you serve each one of us at the point of our need; what we need this week, right now? Would you speak to us, we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

Well, let me ask you something. Do you honestly believe with all of your heart that God can use somebody with your past to change the world? It's really an important question because if not, then you're going to spend the rest of your life meandering in the crowd, and that's simply not what God wants for you.

No matter where you've been, no matter how old you are ... In fact, this may be encouraging to you is that no matter how old you are, some of you believe that your legacy's already been established in life, and now you're just sort of waiting to go see him. What if you knew that the great majority, or perhaps the legacy that God actually has for you, the thing that people will most remember you by, it hasn't yet happened yet?

That God can actually take you where you're at right now, no matter how long you've lived, no matter what you've done on this earth, that your greatest impact for the kingdom could come later and not already? Isn't that hopeful? You see, the whole Bible and all of scripture ... In fact, this man. You can go ahead and put him back up there, okay?

Wilberforce, would actually very much affirm to you that God can use anyone no matter their station of life. Now he's an older guy; in fact, he's with the Lord now, 1833, so yeah. He is an older guy. Actually, now he's all new, so he's a young guy. He is truly healed. What's interesting about this man is his story tells us, much like Jonah, that God can use anybody.

For 26 years, he didn't walk with the Lord; he experienced the regret and shame of sin. In spite of that, he was very successful. He was elected to the House of

Commons when he was 24 years old. Two years later, he saw just the futility of life without God. He saw the shame of his own sin. He heard the Gospel, and he believed in Jesus Christ, and God saved him. God transformed him, and then He even gave him a friend; his name was John Newton.

Some of you know something John Newton wrote. We sing it frequently. What song is that? It's "Amazing Grace," and John Newton was a true sinner by and by for most of his life. He was a slave trade captain of a ship. He was a brutal man, a sinful man. God saved John Newton, and John became friends with William when William came to faith in Christ.

Williams started to read the scripture, and he saw the love of God, and he saw the dignity of all humanity. Then he looked at the prevailing injustice of his own country in the [old 00:04:50] land, and that was slavery. He started thinking, "How in the world can this be? Somebody should fix this." God began to place upon his heart that this would be the thing that you're going to give your life to.

It was a particularly steep task if you think about one man, he was the only one, for 47 consecutive years, who introduced bills in the House of Commons in order to eradicate slavery from England. The great majority of the years, there was failure and endurance, constantly being berated for seeking to change culture for people who simply didn't have the eyes to see the injustice and the evil of slavery.

You see, William Wilberforce is just one example among literally hundreds and thousands where God chose one specific person at a point in their life and he says, "I can use you in order to change the rest of the world so long as you are wholly yielding to me." This is where it always starts. God can use you, I want you to know that. God wants to use you, little old you.

Not just in your past, but he wants to use little old you in the future, perhaps in ways that are greater and more dramatic, and have more effect than any way that he's used you thus far. This is the story of Jonah. Jonah is a man you guys know, that one day the Word of the Lord came to Jonah. This is what we looked the last two weeks in chapter one.

He says to him, "I want you rise, get up, I want you to go to Nineveh and I want you to call out their sin against them." Sometimes you know this, that God calls you to do things that you don't want to do. Jonah didn't want to go because he hated the people of Nineveh, and so he got on a boat and he fled the presence of God. He rebelled against God, and God loved him too much.

Even as Jonah was running from God, God began running to Jonah. It says that he hurled a storm upon the sea; that sea was so severe that it began to threaten to break up the boat, and so all of these pagan sailors, they begin calling upon their god praying, “God, would you help?” To no avail.

The captain’s running around, he goes downstairs and he sees Jonah, the Prophet of God ... Of course, he doesn’t know he’s a Prophet of God, he just thinks he’s a guy. Jonah’s asleep in the midst of a storm that’s tearing apart the boat that he’s on. He wakes him up, he rebukes him, then he says, “You need to pray also to whoever your god is, and maybe your god will give us some thought, so that we won’t perish.”

After some time, it comes out that it’s Jonah’s fault; that God who created the land and the seas, Jonah’s running from him in rebellion. They ask him, “What should we do?” He says, “You need to throw me overboard.” At first they say, “No, we can’t do that,” so they row harder. That fails, so eventually they pray to God and say, “God, we don’t really know who you are because we pray to other gods. We pray that you won’t hold this against us.”

They take Jonah and they throw him over the ship. He hits the water, and all of a sudden, the sea stills. The storm goes away. These sailors, they begin worshiping God, yet Jonah’s still in the water. He’s got a big problem, he’s swimming and now sinking in open sea. This is where we pick up in chapter 1:17. It says, “And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.”

“Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, saying, I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me. Then I said, ‘I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.’”

“The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped around my head at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed over me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple. Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love. But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD! And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.”

You have to understand that the whole book of Jonah was written after the fact, he’s writing back, and that’s why this prayer, there’s also instruction and teaching. He’s telling the people of Israel, which we’ll actually look at in a few weeks, he’s actually just one representative of a nation who was called to be a missionary nation, that refused to do so.

The reason this was written down and why Jonah, even though it was written by Jonah ... I mean, it gives tremendous credibility to the book because would any one of us, if you've read all the way through Jonah, ever write this account down and make yourself look so bad?

None of us would do that, but what he's doing is he's saying, "This is where I was at. This is what happened to me, and I'm representative of us as an entire country. God has called us to be a missionary country, pointing people to God, and we are so resistant to other people. We're so exclusive." He throws all of his mess on the table for everybody to see at the end.

What we find here is he's looking back upon some of the things that he prayed when he was in the belly of the fish, and he's seeking to teach us at the same time. What is there to learn? A few things. Number one is this, is that God's authority is aimed at drawing us to Himself. His power, His authority, it's always directed and it's directed at drawing people to look to Himself, back to Himself.

You see, the Bible says that God is sovereign which means that He has all power and authority, and so far in just what we've read, the first two chapters, God has instructed a man, God has hurled wind, he has calmed the sea, he has appointed a fish to swallow, and he's commanded the fish to throw up; to vomit. It's an amazing thing that God literally orchestrates all things on this world in order to draw people and their attention back to him. Everything.

He has the power to do anything, and this is what he's doing. Ephesians 1:11 says, "God works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will." You see, when God's authority is used, in this case, to create a storm ... You need to know that not every storm is due to sin in your life, but God has a purpose for every one of those storms, and when God's power and authority is used to create a storm, He always means to break down our self-reliance.

You see, like standing on one of those moving sidewalks at the airport, where you can just stay still and yet you can be moving, you and I naturally drift away from the Lord. If you just stand still spiritually, you will not drift closer to holiness, closer to humility, closer to love. You won't love God more next year unless you're intentional to move in that direction, even moving faster than the natural drift is taking you away.

You and I, our heart, it just drifts towards independence, towards self-reliance. You see, C.S. Lewis says it this way. He says, "Relying on God has to start over every day as if nothing has ever been done." Every day you and I wake up, and our first bent and inclination is, "What do I need to do today?"

What God wants to do, and every time he uses his authority is for us to wake up and instead of look in the mirror, we look up. He wants our attention to see Him, he wants us to know him. He wants for us to recognize, to be aware of his presence. You see, God knows that our joy is found only in being near God, and so he always targets our self-reliance that would keep us away from looking to God.

What we looked at last week is there are only two things that can break down self-reliance. One is theology, and one is affliction. Fortunately for us is that God always begins with theology, he always gives us the Word. He offers us words like Jeremiah 10:13. It says, "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not in himself, that it is not in man who walks to direct his steps."

What's that saying? The Bible through Jeremiah is saying I know that I am not a solution to my problems. I have an internal problem and I need an external savior. I know that left to myself, I'm not going to always pick the best path. That's what he's saying. We have passages like this through the scriptures that just simply remind us in kindness that if we would listen to that and go, "You know, that's true. I think I'm going to have soft soil and allow that word to deep sink in so it creates a God dependence instead of a self-reliance."

But the fact is that each one of us, we have a pretty hard heart. If every single day we have to start over again, what that means is every single day you have to allow the Word to sink within your heart. What happens if you don't? What happens if God drops seed upon our heart and it's simply too hard to absorb and to allow the seed to penetrate?

Well, God doesn't quit on us. He doesn't say, "Well, see, I tried, but whatever." No, God goes, we looked at last week, he goes out to the shed and He gets the aerator. He says, "I need to break up the soil a little." This is the purpose of affliction in your life: God's using it not to punish you or to pay you back, but to bring you back; to cause you to look back to God.

You see, Jonah, it says in verse 1, "Then Jonah prayed to the LORD." If you understand everything about what God is trying to do, then you can see in the words, "Then Jonah prayed to the LORD" as a significant breakthrough. He's no longer looking at himself, he's now looking at God. He's no longer talking to himself and sort of thinking and imagining all of his own self-interest, he's now pointing his attention.

It's not the most Godly repentant prayer you're ever going to see. There's nothing in here that say, "God, I was wrong. This is what I did; I was sinful and here's my list of sins. Would you forgive me?" There's none of that. And yet in chapter 2, what we find, the whole of chapter 2 ... if your mind needs word pictures, right? Chapter 1 is just a man running, chapter 2 is not the greatest example of repentance, it's simply this; it's stopping and turning, and looking up to God. That's all he's doing, and God sees that as a significant breakthrough, acknowledging that he is there; considering his ways, considering his love for each one of us.

If it's true that God's authority is aimed at drawing us to himself, then let's pray to God in the storm. Let's pray to God in the storm. Your storm today may be financial, it may be emotional, it may be relational, it may be physical. I don't know what it is, but what I would say is simply this: don't wait. Don't wait. You see, it appears that Jonah didn't wait to pray until the third day and the fish, you see the words? You've got to steward the words.

Verse 17 says, "And the LORD appointed a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." Then ... "Then" means "after." In other words, Jonah is sitting, unable to move, resistant and stubborn for three days before he goes, "Okay, this isn't working. I should look. I should open up my heart. God, God, God."

You don't have to wait that long. Don't wait until you're at such a point of desperation. Look to him now. Look to him today. You see, once Jonah recognized that there's nowhere that he could run from God's arm, he decided to hold on to it. Makes me think of tag-team wrestling. I used to do this with the boys. I have three boys, and myself ... We don't wrestle anymore because it's too dangerous for me. They're too strong; and we do this now, I always get hurt.

At the time, it was me against all three of them, and how we did was we would set up a rope. I'd be in the middle, and one of them would come in. We'd wrestle, and we'd wrestle. When we got to the place where they were pinned and they needed help, then they would reach back and if their brother could just tag, like if they could just get to the place where they would recognize, "I'm now defeated," they would get an arm out like this and their brother would tag, and all of a sudden that meant that that brother got to come in and save the day.

We'd keep rotating through this over, and over, and over, and over again. I always had one son though, it was always the same one. It didn't matter how bad it was for him, he just would not, he'd just refuse ... He goes, "No, no. I got it. I got it." His brothers would be like, "No seriously, just tag my arm." They're like right at this end; he'd pull it back. He goes, "I'm not going to get help." This is Jonah.

You see, God's reaching out His hand and He's just like, "Just touch. Just look. Just reach out your hand and touch, and I'll jump in the ring." For three days, Jonah says, "No, I'm just not going to touch. I'm not going there." And finally, a breakthrough takes place and he reaches out, and he says, "God, God." There's an amazing truth here for people who want to be near God in the midst of the storm.

Look at verse 4 and verse 7. In verse 4 it says, "I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple." What he's saying is, "I look forward to ... I can't go there now, but I can't wait until I'm there, back in your presence in the temple." What an amazing thing. Look at verse 7. "My prayer came to you, into your holy temple." Here's the good news, that while you and I must wait to enter God's presence, our prayers can go there now.

You can pray, and your prayer will go to heaven right now, into His presence. Even if you're guilty, I want you to know that God loves to hear you pray. This is what we see in Hebrews 4:16 when he says, "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." Grace and mercy mean that we're guilty, and yet He's saying we can come with confidence.

Now let me show you why we can come with confidence. The first point, God's authority is aimed at drawing us to himself. Second is this, is God's grace is aimed at creating contrition and confidence. Contrition and confidence. I want you to notice the similarity of verses 3 and verse 5; in fact, if verse 4 was completely removed from the text, you probably wouldn't miss it. You're glad that it's there now, but verse 3 and verse 5 could run seamlessly together. Look what it says.

"For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the sea, and the flood surrounded me; and all your waves and your billows passed over me." Skip verse 4, verse 5. "The waters closed in over me to take my life; and the deep surrounded me; the weeds were wrapped about my head." Those two verses, they tie nicely together like two puzzle pieces that somebody intentionally, it was God, put another verse right in the middle of those two verses that speak of utter desperation.

In those two verses he's saying that, "I'm drowning, and I've got seaweed wrapped around my face." It's a terrible predicament, and right in the middle, verse 4, what you find is this amazing verse that features both contrition and confidence. You see, Jonah knows that his sin is the wedge between him and God, because back in 1:10, it says that the men knew he was fleeing from the presence of the LORD because he had told them.

Jonah knew that it was his rebellion, it was his sin that was separating him from God, and so he gets to this place, and there's a measure of contrition. There's a measure of "I'm at fault here." He says, "I am driven away from your side." It's an amazing thing but notice also he's confident. He says, "Yet I shall again look upon your temple."

Now how can such confidence flow out of a heart that knows that his sin is the wedge separating from God, and then he can speak with such confidence? "But you know what? I know that I'm going to go to heaven and I'm going to spend my time with God." How can those two things fit together in one heart? It's like asking how can a lion and a lamb play together in one field? How is it possible for these two things to merge together, and this is really important for you and I to have an answer, and this is why.

It's because sometime this week, or this day, or maybe this hour, you're going to sin. And if you sin, what confidence do you then have next that God still wants to be near you? That God doesn't abandon you, and that He has a plan to use you? The only reason these two things can be found in one heart is because there's two realities found in one savior.

This is called the Gospel. You see, Romans 3:23-26 says this: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, that God might be the just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.” When we sinned against God, God Almighty sent his son, his perfect son, from heaven to earth. While he was here, he lived a righteous life. Perfect.

And yet he went to a cross in order to pay for our sin. He was buried in a grave and then three days later, he rose from the dead. He gave such an amazing invitation that for those of us who hear this all the time you think, “Yeah, I know. We’re supposed to believe in him and he forgives us.” Don’t let this get old. If you let it get old, you’ll stop running your race when you start sinning, and you’ll start meandering in the crowd.

Don’t let it get old. He says that if we believe in him, not only does he forgive us of all our sin, but he gives us all of his righteousness, and then he declares in heaven to everyone, “This is my child, and this child is perfectly innocent.” That’s what it means to be justified, perfectly righteous. Declared righteous.

You see friends, we can be contrite before God, and confident in God because Christ is the just; he’s the one who we violated, but he’s also the justifier. He’s the one who heals. This is ultimately Jonah’s hope as he sat in the belly of this fish is that 750 years before Christ, he is hoping in the redemptive accomplishments of a Messiah that has been predicted for thousands of years. He can say, “Yes, it’s true that I am a sinner, and yet I know that I am going to spend eternity with him. I cannot wait, I know that I’m going to come back to his holy temple, to his presence.”

This is what is offered to you and to me, and so Providence, let’s confess our sin and trust God’s grace. Let’s confess our sin and trust God’s grace. You know, when I was a kid, I ran a lot. I was in a track club even before I was in high school, and as just a little guy, like the first year that I was in this track club, it was at this big college out in California and so our coach said, “Okay, you four or five guys, I want you to run a lap as fast as you can.”

We get there and we start running. Well, somebody had left the high hurdles out in the lanes that we were in, and so here we were, we’d come up to it, and all of a sudden I like, I stop, and so everyone else, we’re all looking because the high hurdle is up to our neck. That’s how short we were, okay? We’re just looking at it and, it’s like right here. Do we go under it? Because we can’t go over it. It was such a hurdle that we thought, “There’s no way we can pass through this.”

Here’s the point. When you and I sin against God, there are two very specific hurdles that are placed before us that we have to have someone help us cross, and if we don’t, those hurdles will keep us from God. The first is the Law of God, that unbiased, unemotional witness against us that records our sin. The witness in heaven that never lies and says, “Did you lie?” Yes, he lied. “You’re a sinner.” Something has to be done with that, that’s an obstacle.

The second is that we have Satan who accuses us, who speaks to us, who says, “You’ll never be used of God.” Now notice what Christ did when he died on the cross; this is Colossians 2:14-15. This is what he says. He goes, “He forgave us of our sins, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he took away, nailing it to the cross. God disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in Christ.”

What this is saying is this, that the record of debt, the Law of God that was against us, all of the debt you had and have, Jesus took to the cross and nailed it to the cross. It also says that our enemy has been defeated; it says he has put our enemy, who’s a loud enemy, to public shame. What’s the picture here? Here’s the picture is that we’re in a city, and it’s under siege. There’s an army all around us, and there’s a captain of the army.

That captain is saying, “You guys need to surrender because I’m going to kill all of you.” What we do is we look and we’re like, “What are we going to do? We’re running out of food, we’re out of water.” All of a sudden what it says is that Jesus Christ at that moment, he says, “I’m going to go out there and I’m going to defeat the whole army by myself.”

We think, “Do you really have the power to do that?” He goes. He dies, he rises from the dead, and this is what it says. When it says that Christ “put the rulers and authorities to open shame,” what it means is that he went out, he defeated all of the enemies, and then he put a hook in their nose, and he’s bringing them into the city in order to show all the citizens that he has been de-fanged. He’s chained. He’s put to public shame.

Now listen, Satan still has a mouth though. He’s defeated, but he still talks and if you’ll listen to him, he will sideline you for the rest of your life. You see, if we don’t listen to God’s voice of justification, we will listen to his voice of accusation. We will. You see, we’ll put ourself on trial every day, thinking our good and bad days are tilting the scales.

Providence, listen. The Gospel is the Good News that we are more undeserving of God’s love than we ever realize, but more in possession of it than you and I could ever hope. If we don’t grow in the Gospel, we will be tossed every day. Listen to his promise of grace. The third and last thing is that God’s power’s aimed at lifting us from the darkness. At lifting us from the darkness.

Notice that God loves to pick us up. I want you to just see the progression of the words that Jonah uses in this passage to talk about what happens when we rebel, okay? In chapter 1, we’re told that he went down to Joppa. We’re told that he went down to the boat, and then we’re told that he went down to the belly of the boat.

In chapter 2, it says that, “You cast me into the deep.” It says that, “Waves passed over me, waters closed in over me. I went down,” he says, “to the land whose bars closed upon me forever.” The picture is one of descent; that every day that we’re going further from the LORD, there is more water, there is more problems, stacking up over our head. It’s the picture of the grave.

But notice what it says. “Yet you brought up my life from the pit.” God’s delight is picking you up. This is why he ends and he says, “Salvation belongs to the LORD.” You see, Psalm 40:1-2 says, “I waited patiently for the LORD; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of destruction, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on the rock.”

You see, here at the end he looks to God and he says that, “You use all that power in order to lift me up.” Some of you have forgotten to be grateful for the power that’s lifted you up. It’s natural for us to do that. We come here, “Oh, we’re doing the Lord’s Supper again. Oh yeah, it’s about time. We do that once a month.”

Do you recognize that when you see these things here, we’re talking about the authority and the grace and the power of God has lifted you out of a pit? The last thing that Jonah wants to teach us, which is very, very important, is he wants to reveal to us the greatest fall of all, and that is the forfeiting of our enjoyment of God’s love.

It’s sort of like a waterfall; you can be out hiking, it can be a hundred degrees, humid, you just need water so badly. You look over and you see this beautiful fresh waterfall, it’s just pouring down. You think, “Wow, that’s amazing.” Or you can go stand under it.

You see, when he says in verse 8, he says, “Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love.” He’s not saying that God stops loving you. He’s saying that you stop enjoying the benefits of his love if you don’t stand under the waterfall. You can look at it and go, “Yeah, that sure does look cool over there. Looks refreshing, and you know, I’d probably get clean over there too. All the dirt, probably wash off, all that wonderful water; I’m just not going to do it.”

Now why would anyone who’s thirsty not go stand underneath the waterfall? He says. He says, “Those who pay regard,” to what? To idols. Those who pay regard to idols get so tricked that they look at the waterfall and they go, “Well, that’s one option but I’m going to try a different option.”

You see, the good things in our life that we made god things in our life becomes very bad things in our life. That’s what an idol is. An idol is anything that we love more than God. Jonah, after the fact, is confessing his own idolatry that has kept him from enjoying the one great source of life, and fulfillment, and peace, and joy, and that is God’s love. What he’s saying is, “For all this time that I’ve been running, I’ve separated myself from the refreshment of the waterfall that’s right there because I’m holding my buckets that are full of stale and stagnant water; my idols.”

This doesn't have to be the case for you and me. We can repent. We can turn from these things. You see, once Jonah saw this, isn't it beautiful that God spoke to the fish and the fish immediately vomited Jonah out on dry land? He wants to lift us up. Providence, let's look to Jesus in faith and be saved.

You see, Matthew 12:40 says, "For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Now hear this, this is really important. You see, when Jesus was on the cross, he too went down into the deep, didn't he? Waves were surrounding him, and there he prayed too.

Jonah prayed, and immediately the fish vomited him out. Jesus prayed, and there was silence. He says, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" You say, "Well, if God delights in lifting people who were down up, then why in the world did God not lift Jesus up at that moment in particular when he called upon his Father?"

The reason is because the Father and the Son were so committed to saving us that the Father turned from his Son and allowed his Son to pay the full penalty of our sin so that we could turn to God. I would just welcome you, for those of you who have never trusted Christ, we welcome you to do that this morning.

For those who have, this morning we get to celebrate the Lord's Supper. For those that will be serving us, if you want to head to the back and find the elements back there as we get ready to take the Lord's Supper? Jesus told us, his followers, to take the bread and the cup, symbols of his body and his blood, as the reminder of his cross but also as a proclamation of what we believe, and what we're hoping in.

If you have not trusted Christ, we humbly ask that you allow these elements just to pass without taking them. But if you have trusted Christ, we welcome you to take the table. Jesus did tell us this. He told us not to take the Lord's Supper unless we've first examined our heart and confessed our sin. As these elements are being passed, I welcome you to take those moments just to confess your sin to God, so that you can take these things with clean hands and a clean heart, okay? Let's pray together.

Father, we love you. We're so grateful for your love for us. We count it an amazing privilege, LORD, to be able to remember, and to celebrate, and to proclaim what you have made available. We're so grateful you have lifted us up, and I pray this morning God, that you would help us to take this Lord's Supper with gratitude in our heart. We love you, and we pray this in Christ's name. Amen.



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