

# SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

Raising Kids

PART

4

TITLE

Aiming For Transformation

SCRIPTURE

Ephesians 4:17-24



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Well, Providence family, it's good to see you. I hope you've had a great week. And if you're a guest with us here, we're glad that you have joined us. If you're in the room or at home, we're glad that you took the time today. It's important for us to pause and just to thank God for his grace in our life and to learn from him. And so the opportunity that we have today is to look into God's word. If you have a Bible in your hand, if you want to look with me at Ephesians 4, you can go ahead and turn there. If you don't have one in your hand, that is a Bible, there's lots of Bibles in the chairs here in the room. And if you don't have one at home, please take that home as a gift. We are in a series, the last week of the series on Raising Kids.

And so it's just really pertinent today for those who don't have kids but we are in that series next week. We're going to start verse by verse through 1 Thessalonians and so I'm excited about that. That'll actually, take us all the way into August but today there's something that is not only important for your kids, it's really important for you, it's important for all of us. And so I want to pray for our heart because this one deals with the heart which means that for some of us, it's going to land a little heavier this week than maybe last. Father in heaven, we bow before you and we recognize that we are prone to wander, that we are prone to wander away from even being impressed with who you are. We are prone to wandering away from being impressed and overwhelmed by what you have done for us. We can look into the world and we can see a world where everything is an expression that it has your fingerprints on it.

So much beauty, so much good, so much life and in the best of what we see many times our hearts can process what we're seeing and never once think about you. Our heart is broken, we confess that it is but we thank you, Jesus, that you came for us and that you have the power over our heart, that you can transform us and we know that transforming work only takes place by the power of your spirit. And so I ask for the sake of your name and your glory, would you pour out your spirit upon us now that you would cause us to be curious about spiritual things, that you would incline our hearts away from boredom or from being distracted, that you would help us to lean in these moments and recognize that there is a potential that what we find in this passage, it has the real potential to change the rest of our life for good.

And so would you speak through weakness and would you glorify Jesus Christ? Would you build up your church, would you save people who are far from you, would you bring children to yourself, would you bring wayward children home? We pray all of this in Christ's name. Amen. So when I was a kid, there was a toy, his name was Stretch Armstrong. All right, those of you who are a little older, I think they've just come out with that again. But if you're unaware, it was not really an action figure, it was a little guy about this big and his arms in his legs, you could stretch, you could move around, you could really stretch him out. You could pull on him, you could sort of contort his body but the thing about the toy was that anytime you release pressure upon it would revert back to its first created form. I say it was, it is incredibly prescriptive of our greatest problem.

And it represents one of the greatest challenges in parenting or in raising kids. You see the Bible tells us that we all have an original form and that form, it's broken. We have a bent towards sin, we lean away from God,

we are prone to growing unimpressed with our creator. We are prone to growing bored with his ways and as a result of that, we're prone to sin. And the fact is without a change of heart, I'm not just saying like a change of heart like we change our mind. I'm talking about having a heart that is so transformed that its nature is literally, reconstituted. It is regenerated, it was dead and now it's alive. It's made with new fibers unless that heart is utterly transformed, the fact is that we all revert to form whenever pressure is released.

And that's why for each one of us, the majority of the times that we sin, we're making a conscious decision to wait to do it until there's less likelihood that we're going to be shamed in front of others or we're less likely to be caught. In other words, our behavior can be contorted and twisted and bent and yet our heart demands sin. It's hungry for sin, our old heart, which is why when we release the pressure, when we're alone, when we're tired, when it's dark, when there's less likelihood of being caught, we all tend to do things that we wish we wouldn't do. And this has tremendous importance when it comes to raising kids. You see, because for each one of us, we can say things that are really moral and really important things like you're at a birthday party, your kid gets a gift and you say, "Hey, say, thank you." But the question is this, how do we help our child receive a heart that is so transformed, that it is thankful?

We all look to our kids and we say, "You need to share your toys," but what is the process by which we can help our child's heart be re acclimated to generosity and we can limit what our child sees, what they hear. We can say, "No, you can't watch that. You can't go to that because I'm protecting your purity." But the question is in particular, as they get older is how do we participate in helping our child have a love for purity? Jesus said the world would glorify God by seeing our good works not hearing our good instruction and so we have to aim for more than, be good. We have to aim for transformation.

And this is what Ephesians 4 is all about. Let me show you how the chapter works in verse one, he tells these Christians after he has described for three chapters what Jesus did in dying for our sin and rising from the dead. He says, "Look, as a result of this, I therefore urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you've been called." And then our text is verse 17 to 24 but when you get to verse 25, he begins to give the shotgun approach of moral instructions. Things like tell the truth and love the truth and go to work and share what you get and he's showing us how to deal with anger, all these real practical things. But what our text does, verse 17 to 24 is he connects this, what is the connection between a call to live worthy of the gospel that we received, connecting it to, these are a bunch of things that we're supposed to do when our heart doesn't want to do them.

And so verse 17 to 24 teaches us how to change. This is what he says, "Now, this I say and testify in the Lord that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds, they're darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ. Assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him is the truth is in Jesus to put off the old self which belongs to your former manner of life and

is corrupt through deceitful desires and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to put on the new self created after the likeness of God and true righteousness and holiness.” The first thing I want you to see is that transformation begins by tracing sins to their source.

A few years ago, we had something smelling in our house and we couldn’t find it. We knew something wasn’t right because life isn’t supposed to smell like that. And so I can’t tell you how many times we were like, just get some more air freshener and we’d spray it. I’d look and look under the bed, under furniture, everything. I’m like, “I just can’t find it.” There was a time I’m like, “It’s got to be up in the attic.” And so I went up in the attic and at first it was just a little inconvenient, just like a lot of our sin or some of the things that our kids do. It’s just a little inconvenient and so I went up with the tenacity, really no tenacity. I looked around and I thought, “Okay, if I see something dead, the size of a bear I’ll probably, be able to find it.” But I really wasn’t looking real close. I was just like, I don’t really smell it, all right.

And it was winter and so I was like, it’s not so bad. And then a few months passed and we’re running out of bottles of air freshener. I can’t tell how many times literally, I’d get home and I’m like, “I’ve got to find it.” Well, finally it got to about April, May, it was warm and things that don’t smell good they don’t smell good even more so when it’s warm. And so I got the boys on and I said, “Guys, we’re going to the attic, we’ve got to find this thing.” And literally, we start moving around insulation, all kinds of different. Then we’re like, “We are going to find this thing,” and then we found it. We did, it was about a four foot snake. It wasn’t that bad, look at you. I mean, it was just a snake. Okay. But the snake was dead, it was very dead. Now, you say, “What is the point of all that, right?” Here’s the point, when something in your life stinks, you can mask it or you can find its source.

And that’s true of a dead animal and it’s also true of your sin and the sin in your kid’s life. And so I want you to watch what Paul does to help us to learn how to dig to the source from the sin in verse 17 he says, “You must no longer walk as the Gentiles do.” Now, let’s just pause for a second. The word Gentiles here is used two different ways in the New Testament. One of them is non-Jewish, it’s ethnic. If somebody who’s a non-Jewish person is a Gentile person and that’s not how it’s used here and it’s not how it’s used many times in the New Testament.

In the first century, you remember that the gospel came, Jesus came to the earth. He died, he rose from the dead and that message of his resurrection it went first to people near Jerusalem, Jewish people. But there were all kinds of people groups around the world, Gentiles who have never heard and so they had no reference point to the gospel. When Paul is writing the church in Ephesus, this is what we’re reading, Ephesians, it’s written to a church. A lot of these Christians in the church were Gentiles and so it would make no sense to say, “You must no longer walk as the ethnic... You are in ethnic Gentile.” That’s not what he’s saying, walk as those who have never heard the gospel, who have no reference to Christ, who have no relationship with Christ. And so he is telling Christians, “We don’t have to walk like we once walked because we know Christ.” So that’s what he says, “You must no longer walk as the Gentiles do in the futility of their minds.” And then

in verse 19, he shows us what they're doing. He says, "They have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity." Now, this is where most of us in our personal life and in our parenting we're content to stop right there. When we see something that is visible, sensual, impure in the lives of our kids we're like, "That's the problem right there." And the reason is because we care what other people think and so that which is visible is potentially shameful and so therefore we think, "I need to parent in that direction," and yet what he does and what he shows us here is we need to dig deeper because this is only the symptoms, it's not the source and so notice what he does.

"You therefore must no longer walk as the Gentiles do," and then he tells us, I want to get deeper in the futility. This is why they're living like this is because they're trapped in a world of futility. And then he seeks to describe this world in verse 18. He says, "They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God," let's stop there. Darkened in their understanding, what he is saying is that when somebody is alienated or separated from a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, they're not connected to the story of life. What happens is their mind gets darkened and life gets confusing but then he says, "But don't stop there, it gets deeper." And notice what he says, "Because this is happening because of a reason, get deeper because of the ignorance that is in them". Each one of us are created with a craving that can only be met in Jesus Christ, all of us have a whole, literally. We're just like, "God, it's got to be filled," but we're ignorant that it's supposed to be filled and can only be filled with Christ. And so what do we do?

We settle for substitutes which is what sensuality and impurity is. It's created by an ignorance but then he says, "But don't stop there, go deeper. All of this is due to the hardness of heart." Now, we found the snake. You go out to your yard and you see all this or you smell something and then you see something up in the grass and it's like, "Uh oh, we have a sewer leak." You have to dig down to the pipe due to the hardness of heart is the broken sewer line. If you don't dig down to it, you'll never remedy the impurity and sensuality, those are just symptoms. Everything we do is drawn from a well, whatever you pull out of the well was in the well. It's in the heart, it's in us and so one of the ways that we serve our kids is by taking the time, slowing down a life to trace their behavior to a particular condition of their heart.

And one of the ways that you can do that is simply asking this question, when someone is doing that, what does this say about what my kid's heart loves? We all do what we love, we protect what we love, we justify what we love. A hard heart still loves, it just loves in the wrong direction. It loves unlovable things, it loves things that are distorted and twisted, it still loves. It's like a pipe or a forceps that is busted and so it's just constantly pouring out water all the time. You can turn it and it does nothing. Every one of us, our heart loves, it has affection for things, it gives itself to something. We root for something, we love all of us, even a hard heart. This is why Jesus said, "Look, I came to the earth." A lot of the world came to the earth and yet people loved the darkness rather than the light. They loved in the wrong direction. The apostle Paul writing Timothy, he says, "This is what you can expect in the last time."

And as I read this, just notice that there's no word in here. That's repeated twice, except one time and it's

repeated five times, “People will be lovers of self, lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, heartless, unappeasable, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not loving good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God.” Now, if these behaviors, if this was a pond you would not want to swim in it but notice that it’s all driven by love but it’s loving something that’s not lovely. It’s loving in the wrong, it’s loving self, it’s loving money. It’s not loving good, it’s loving pleasure, it’s not loving God.

This is why when Jesus in Luke 16 was talking about the idol of money and he says, “You cannot love God and money, you can’t worship both.” And what happens next, it says the very next verse, “The Pharisees who are lovers of money, heard all these things and they ridiculed him.” The new Testament does this over and over again. If it was merely us looking at someone’s behavior, we would say the Pharisees and because we can’t see necessarily always what somebody loves our story would be, and the Pharisees heard all these things and they ridiculed him. Ridiculed is the symptom, the New Testament takes the time to show us the source. The reason they ridiculed the son of God is because they loved money.

Since we do what we love, justify what we love and protect what we love then let’s patiently dig down to examine the heart. Multiple times today, I’m going to tell you’ve got to slow down. Because you’re running out of air freshener, you have to slow down and take the time to find the source. Let me tell you, digging to the source will fix nothing but it will reveal what needs to be fixed. If you have a sewage leak and you dig down and all of a sudden you find it, you’re like there it is but that doesn’t fix anything it just shows you what needs to be fixed. It shows you what you need to pray for.

There are reasons that we lie, cheat and steal and hate and hoard, gossip and slander. And the way you can identify what it is, is that when I hate, ask the question, what am I loving? When I hoard, what am I loving, when I gossip, what am I actually, loving in that moment? And let me encourage you don’t sterilize your sin. We do this with each other and with God, “God, I was at a party. I probably, said a little bit too much.” No, that’s never going to help. No, instead you say, “God, this is what happened, I gossiped about someone who’s created in your image. I sowed seeds of discord among your people and I liked it.” Now, all of a sudden we’re getting somewhere. You see I’ve told us so many different times before that our greatest problem isn’t that we sinned last night, it’s that we wanted to. If your kid lied at school this week, that’s not the greatest problem, the problem is the kid wanted to. If you looked at pornography this week, it’s because you wanted to, there’s something in the heart that wants something, it’s the love.

And so let me encourage you to take the time to trace our behavior to the source and let me encourage you to take the time to trace your kid’s behavior to the source when they’re little so you know what to pray for, really what to pray for. And then as they grow, take the time to help the child trace their sin to the source so that they can do so when you’re not there because one day you won’t be there. The only way to do this is to slow down in life. Most of us, we can’t slow down in life because we must be at the party, we can’t say no to people. What I’ve found is this, if you want to be a great parent you have to be willing to miss parties you

wish you could be at.

You have to be in there, it takes time to go deeper than “Be good,” in order to dig down into their heart, on their behalf to protect their future. The second thing I want you to see is transformation comes from seeing the light of Christ. You see, if we can find this source, we can find the snake, we can find that broken pipe but if we lack the power or the tools in order to fix it then it only leads to futility. And so where does the power come from to fix it? And what he tells us is, the power comes from Christ. That’s what he says in verse 20, “That is not the way you learned Christ, assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him as the truth is in Jesus.” He’s comparing these Christians to people who don’t know Christ and yet they’re living necessarily similar lives.

And he says, we don’t have to live like that anymore and all of that futility and brokenness. And the reason is because we have heard about Christ and we know the truth is in Jesus. Jesus has the power, he’s the only one with the power to change the heart. You see, apart from Jesus Christ, this is the equation of behavior. The Bible says that we are confronted with the world that is tempting, a flesh that is prone to wander and a devil that leverages the world’s temptation against the strings in our own heart. And what that does is it yields a whole lot of sin. When you come to faith in Jesus Christ, you still have your old nature, there’s still Satan and there’s still the world. But now we get to add a different factor, a new factor to the equation and it’s Jesus Christ who has power over the world, the flesh and the devil.

And as a result of that equation has the potential when we yield to Christ and he pours his power into our life for us to behave differently for us to have a change of heart, Jesus wants to change your heart. Ezekiel 36 tells us that when Christ came to the earth, those who would trust in him, what would happen? God says, “I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.” The heart of stone, that hard heart, the snake in the attic, it doesn’t have to be there the rest of your life.

Because Jesus came to the earth, he lived without sin. He healed people, he taught people how to live. And then because we couldn’t fix ourself, he went to a cross and he died for our sin, my sin so that I wouldn’t have to be alienated from him anymore. It is available to us and when we trust in Jesus Christ and that’s what he says, he goes, “Look, I just rose from the dead. When I rise from the dead, if you’ll put your faith in me and you affirm, you can confess with your mouth not only that I rose from the dead and you believe in me but believe and confess, I can’t save myself, I can’t change my heart, I cannot get rid of the problem in my life. The Bible says that his spirit comes to live within our heart and begins a renovation project and the tool that he uses is the truth of Christ, it is the Bible.

I promise you when it comes to spiritual life in Christ, God has assigned power that will come when his spirit connects our heart to this book. He has power and he dispenses that power when we expose ourself to the truth, the story of Jesus Christ. So let me show you how this works. When you open up the pages of the Bible and you happen to have a week that you were boasting and you were arrogant and you’re like, “I probably,



shouldn't have said that at the party that was a little shameful, how arrogant I was," or maybe you have no shame whatsoever. And you open up the Bible and suddenly you see men arguing over who is the greatest disciple among them and you're like, "Hey, I could enter this fray, this is my kind of people." And then all of a sudden you see the son of God and all of his grace and glory take off his clothes, wrap a towel around his waist, pour out some water and begin washing the feet of the disciples. Do you know what happens when this happens?

When you see the kindness of Jesus on display that leads people to repentance, it's kindness that leads us to repentance. Jesus didn't scold them in that moment, he washed their feet and that kindness melted their heart. We've got to stop arguing over the who's the greatest because the one thing we know for certain is Jesus, the one who's washing our feet clearly, he's the greatest, he's the miracle worker.

And what happens is that when you come confronted and your mind begins by the power of the holy spirit to begin to imagine vividly those stories within the Bible and you see how Christ overcame those men's hard heart and you can see how the base of our problem, our own hard heart can be overcome. When you hear and see the instruction of Jesus, you open your Bible and you see instruction about life, you see instruction about origin, purpose, destiny, relationships, responsibilities, how do we restore relationships, forgive relationships, how do we give and save and work? And what's the problem with all... Jesus instruction is so clear and lucid and it covers every single base of what we need in life. What you find is that when your heart begins to hear and see this instruction in Jesus, ignorance loses its power.

So now we've dealt with the hardness of heart, we've dealt with the ignorance that has been in us then all of a sudden you see the sacrifice and the invitation of Jesus and you come into full view of Jesus suffering for you, dying for you, taking nails for you, it should have been me, it should have been us. You see that compassion and that sacrifice and that mercy on full display, what you find is this invitation to come to Christ causes alienation from the life of God to melt away. And so what you find is that when you see the kindness of Jesus in the pages of scripture and you see the instruction of Jesus in the pages of scripture, you see the invitation, the sacrifice of Jesus in the pages of scripture what happens is this, futility gets broken.

The heart begins to re-acclimate. It begins to reconstitute. It gives a new nature so that we want righteousness. You know how easy it is to obey when you want to, it's easy. And so you need power, power that you don't have, it comes with Christ and that leads us to the third point. I'm sorry. I should have... There's an application I'm supposed to do. Let's not tire of drawing near to the Bible, this is an important one. The power comes from the word of God. In the lobby, we have these Bible reading journals we make available every four months. Now, let me tell you something if you have a plan, if you have some way that reminds you and that successfully leads you to open up the Bible for yourself daily, keep using that one that's a great one. If you don't have one, I have a better one.

I have a better one than none and it's out there and it's free. You can just go take them. They're all right against



this wall back here. Little passage to read each day, a chapter of the Bible and helps you understand and think through how to use it. Each one of us as individuals and as parents, we have to expose ourself and our kids to the power of God through the word of God. The third thing and last thing I want you to see is that transformation grows by being renewed in our imagination. Now, if you are following along and you understand what we've done, the first thing we've done is only identify the problem. The second thing, what we've done is we have identified the solution in terms of the power but then comes the third.

And the third is how do we participate with God on a daily basis so that we can grow just a real key so you understand the difference between gospel parenting and moralistic parenting. Moralistic parenting does one in three. It finds a problem and it says, "Work hard, do better, do good, don't lie," but it gives no resource to do that. Well, the gospel is far better because it literally, gives us wings and tells us to fly. And so the Christian life we see from page to page in the scriptures is the life of daily repentance and obedience. Two things, repenting, when we're walking in and we're like, "I shouldn't be doing this anymore." We repent by the grace of God and all of a sudden, we're like, "You know what? I want to do this because this is obedient by the grace of God." And what happens is, and Paul loves metaphors like I do.

And so Paul, chose a metaphor that would be so familiar to every one of us and that's a metaphor of changing clothes. So he is going to talk about it like changing clothes and so notice what he says, verse 22, "Put off your old self which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires." This is repentance, to turn away from something. In other words, each time we as Christians look down at our life and we see that we're wearing old clothes, that old bundle of clothes, that's old attitudes, our old behaviors, things that belong to our former manner of life not the Christian life, the life when our heart wasn't walking with the Lord, the things that bring about corruption in our life. He says, "When you see those things, you say, you know what? I don't want to wear this dirty shirt anymore."

He says, "Take it off, put off, get rid of it or repent." And it's amazing how frequently you have to do this because we wake up and sin and we are like, "Oh, somehow I'm wearing that shirt again. I have that same attitude again, that same arrogance, that same self-centeredness." And so we have to take it off but then notice what he says in verse 24, "Put on the new self created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." Now, this is obedience that's motivated by a desire to imitate Christ. That's why it says, "In the likeness of God and righteousness and holiness." This is who I want to be, this is the clothing that I want to wear. Now, the big question comes and it's really important and that is, what's the motivation to do either one of these things, what's the motivation to repent of sin or to obey? In particular when he says that repentance, we have to leave, we have to put off things, he says that were deceitful desires.

What that means is we have desires that lie to us and tell us, this is really in your best interest. So what's the motivation not to act on that when we have a desire that's lying to us? Where does the motivation come in the moment to repent of sin and to obey what Christ is saying? And the answer is verse 23, it's the bridge in the middle of the two. Notice what he says, here it is, "Put off your old self," that's repentance down here, "Put on

the new self;” that’s obedience and notice the bridge in the middle, “Be renewed.” Passive tense, that means it’s happening to us, we’re going to do something and God is going to do something to our mind, to our heart. He’s going to renew that heart. “In the spirit of your minds,” another way to translate is in your imagination. So let me put this together and then we’ll close. If you go to a doctor and you think I’m barely overweight and you get to the doctor and he says, “You are overweight and if you keep eating like this, you’re going to die.” You come out of the doctor’s office, you get into the car and your friend happens to be sitting there in the car waiting for you. And he or she has a cheesecake like a whole cheesecake. So right there in front of you, they’ve already cut a piece and it’s in a plate and they’re hand, they’re just waiting. Now, what happens right in this moment, what you do with your imagination in this moment is going to determine the outcome.

If you vividly, imagine what that tastes like there’s a good chance you’re going to eat it. But if you vividly imagine having a heart attack you probably, won’t. Here’s the principle and then we’ll apply it to sin and obedience. Whatever captures our imagination, governs our behavior. And so let’s just say that you’re tempted to steal something, your child is tempted to steal something. The outcome of that temptation will depend largely on the spirit of the mind, the imagination. If you vividly imagine the pleasure of having it, you will likely steal it. But if you vividly imagine justice before God, the potential of public shame if you’re caught and the residue of guilt that’s going to remain with you likely won’t. So let me encourage us as we close to ask God to renew our imagination in the moment. It calls for a kind of prayer or say, “God, I want to walk with you today. I need your help and so would you renew my imagination with the rightness of repentance and renew my imagination with the blessing of obedience.”

And as parents or those who are caregivers of children, we have to slow down enough to get past, “Just be good,” in order to help them slow down in the moment to imagine the blessing of obedience and the rightness of repentance. What I have found in life is we live too fast and we justify living faster than God intended on the basis of things that we love. Your kids are worth more than that party, they are worth more than so many things we give ourself to that cause us to have to live quickly that allow or that forces our hand to parent quickly. That leaves them without the necessary instruction to make decisions about repentance and obedience and to make that quickly, we live too fast. And so when those little ones are in your care, if we do not dig down which takes time, we will spend much of our time aiming at symptoms instead of the source. Jesus came to deal with the source. He’s ready, he’s waiting. I encourage you and me, we have 700 kids at this church that need people who would slow down enough to teach them how to live. And for those of you who don’t know Christ if you’re sitting here and you’re like, This all is amazing, it’s about parenting but really what you’ve done is you’ve highlighted I’m alienated from God. I don’t know what to do with it.” The beautiful thing about the Bible is he gives such clear instruction and he simply says this, “If you will call out upon the name of the Lord, you’ll be saved,” Right now, you admit that you’re a sinner. You say, “God, I know, everything he’s talking about, about the brokenness, futility in life, that is me to a core.”

Second is believe, you confess your belief, “I believe that Jesus came and I believe he has all the power he died and he rose again.” And then we confessed in his word of our life and the Bible says, he’ll forgive you.

It is a long process but it's a good process and I urge you to walk with us so let's pray. Father in heaven, we bow before you and confess to you that we're too busy. We do a lot of good things and we have to do a lot of important things and sometimes we trip over how busy we are in really important, really vulnerable things are sometimes swept up in that wake.

And we ask that you would recalibrate our hearts, that you would address our hearts, that you would take even a life that's too busy and help us to recognize that even that is a symptom. There's a reason our heart chooses to be too busy. Would you help us to take the time to patiently address the sources in our motives and intentions, affections that cause us and lead us and motivate us to these kinds of behaviors. I pray for those who are also considering trusting Christ, that you would inclined their hearts now to believe and to call upon you in faith, to confess their need and confess their hope and trust in you.

God, I pray for our children, all the children of Providence and the children in our homes. We pray for your richest blessing upon them, that you would train them and teach them. We pray father, not merely for the instruction of their mind. We pray that you would inspire their hearts and you would influence their will, that you would change each one of us from the core. And so we thank you and we know that this is only possible because of Christ in us. And so we sing in response to that truth. Jesus, you're worthy of it. We love you. And we pray this in Christ's name. Amen.



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