

MESSAGE TRANSCRIPT //

WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS NOW | PATIENCE

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Traders Point, how are we doing? Hey, it's so good to be with you. Everyone at the campuses, everyone watching online, welcome. So glad that you are with us today.

Today we are continuing in our series *What the World Needs Now*. And this has been our summer series. We've had a great start. Can we just take a moment and give it up for Bart and Kyle leading us those first two weeks? Unbelievable job.

If this is your first time here, or maybe you've been gone for a while, let me catch you up on what this series is. *What the World Needs Now* is not us looking out at the world and culture and saying, "Hey, let me tell you what you guys need right now." We all love that person, right? This is a call to us, to the church, to followers of Jesus to say, "Hey, what the world needs right now is what God has graciously provided to me and to you."

See, the Bible talks a lot about who God wants us to be. More so than what He wants us to do. He wants us to be with Him and to be like Him. So to do that we've been studying this phrase that we see in the Bible called the fruit of the Spirit, the fruit of the Spirit.

This is Galatians 5. Here's what that is:

The Fruit of the Spirit is God producing His character within us.

This is God supernaturally planting within us and producing the fruit that only He can. This cannot be found anywhere else on the planet. This is God taking His character and saying, "Hey, I want My character to show up in your life."

And we actually get a short list of what that looks like in Galatians, chapter 5. Take a look at this. It says:

"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."

What a list. Can we hold that up there for just a few minutes? I want to talk through a few things. One, when we look at this list, and we want to know who God is, He is all of these things perfectly. That is who God is.

And I want to draw attention to this word *fruit* because I know a lot of you right now, especially my grammar nerds, are tweaking a little bit. It's like, "You said He produces this kind of fruit, singular, but then lists all of these multiple things. I'm cringing right now. What does this even mean?"

I think we need to look at this with this idea that this is one fruit and it's a perfect piece of fruit. All of these are not separate, they are interdependent, they hang on to one another.

For example, if you look at this, real, true love is not unattached from joy and peace. If you're going to have love, it is a joyful love, it is a love that brings peace and a love that is patient. And on the flip side, when we look at patience, true patience, it also includes love and joy, right?

I mean on the surface patience and apathy can really look the same. You might be looking at Bob like, "Wow, Bob is unbelievably patient." But Bob has learned how to sleep with his eyes open. He's not patient. He's unconscious. He's not lovingly participating in this thing. He is completely removed.

So we need all parts of these. They go together to show this fruit that God is trying to produce in our lives.

And I do think that Paul, the author of this, seems very particular with his words. He uses the word *fruit*. It gives you the picture of a gardener, of a farmer, right? You get the idea that this is something that is planted, and it grows little by little time after time.

I do think that what I've seen, especially lately, is the way that we approach our faith is very much like, "Hey, we have an organic faith. It is a natural faith." And I hear what you're saying, we're swinging from that pendulum of cold religion where we just do, and we focus on what needs to be done. We've shifted.

But I do want us to focus on this: organic doesn't mean spontaneous. Right? Organic farmers don't just find spontaneous fields of fruit. There is not a farmer out there today calling his wife, like, "Martha, you will not believe this. I've found another one of these fields. Perfect." Just filled with corn or soy beans or if there is anything else that we grow here in Indiana. "It's just here. Look at this." No. Organic does not mean spontaneous. It's actually hard work.

I want us to look at this because I think some of us have been confused by this:

Some of us have been confused by a spontaneous baptism that didn't lead to spontaneous spiritual fruit.

Like you heard the message about Jesus. You gave your life. You were baptized. You came out of that water, and you thought immediately there would be spiritual fruit just everywhere in your life. You would come up and just love and joy and peace and patience—this is amazing. Look at who I am.

You got baptized on a Sunday and then you went to work on Monday, and you were like, “Wait a minute. I’m still kind of a jerk. Did we do it wrong? Did I miss a step? What happened?”

But I think we need to see this. Spiritual fruit is different than spiritual gifts. It’s different than baptism. The baptism that you had was really kind of tilling the soil, it’s you dying to yourself and now you are in a place where you can actually yield this kind of fruit that God wants to produce in your life. But it’s not an overnight thing. It’s day by day. It is little by little.

I think someone today needs to be encouraged by this. Just because this fruit isn’t showing up spontaneously all at once doesn’t mean that something went wrong. It doesn’t mean that there is something wrong with you. God is going to develop this kind of spiritual fruit in your life. But you have to give it time.

And I think that leads us to a perfect segue to what we are going to be focusing on today. Which is the part of the fruit: patience. Patience. Let’s just kick it off:

Are you a patient person?

If you already answered that question, then you’re ahead. You’re probably not. You’re not a patient person, get on with the next thing. Maybe a better question is would the people in your life describe you as a patient person?

It’s a tough thing to do in our culture, in our society because we don’t have to be patient very often. Things move so seamlessly, they are so quick, we can get things instantly so we’re never in a position, really, where we have to be patient, where we have to wait for something. So when we do, we’re kind of uncomfortable.

I’m thankful for the time when I grew up. I grew up in the 1900s, okay? And you had to be patient for a lot of things. Even trivial things we take for granted now. Even something as simple as watching TV. Wanting to know what is going to come on next. Do you remember this? There was no way to know. You didn’t know what was coming.

The only way that you could know was there was this one channel, TV guide channel, that scrolled through. And you would go to this channel, and you would wait. And I promise you, whatever channel you were looking for, this guide was on the opposite side of it.

If you were looking for ESPN, which is channel 2, it was on channel 90 and you had to wait. If you were looking for Nickelodeon, channel 40; Cartoon Network, 41; MTV, 51, BET; 62—I promise you, whatever you were looking for, this thing was on the other side and you had to wait for it, wait for it.

Even things like commercials. You know, we have three kids and we never had cable in our house. We were taking a family vacation, we’re in a hotel. We sat the kids down.

They were watching a show and a few minutes later we hear them yelling from the other room. They were like, “Dad!” And I go in there and they were like, “Skip the ads. How do we skip the ads?” I’m like, “You can’t skip these ads. You have to wait patiently for your show to come back on.”

Think about how much access we have to anything that we could possibly want. With our phones, immediately we can get it no matter what. But back in the 1900s—do you remember to try to get on the internet? Oh my gosh. It was a whole day venture.

You had to go to the one spot in your house, if you had it, that one computer, you had to wait about 45 minutes for the beast to turn on. And then you would click, and you would click, and then finally you got to the spot where you would go to open the internet [dial tone, dialing, dial up noise]. Oh, who decided on these sounds? Who was like, “This will help them wait?”

And you would wait, and you would wait, and usually about now is when someone would try to make a call—disconnected. Try again tomorrow. Right? I’m not doing this again.

But there is so much now that I would say that we need patience for. And we need to be able to create that within us. That’s what God is trying to do. He is supernaturally trying to place patience in our lives. For us to be able to carry and to have the same kind of patience that He has with us. And maybe that one is hard for you to give because you have a few thoughts about God but none of them really lead to this idea of there being a patient God.

I hear about this sometimes. When I sit down with someone or I see them post something about who God is, that He’s angry and quick to act and He does all these things.

But especially they kind of separate God into two different Gods—there was the God of the Old Testament, and boy was He angry. But then He grew up a little bit and He had a kid, kind of settled down and now He’s much more at peace and He’s more patient.

When I hear people talk about that, it’s pretty clear that they haven’t read the Bible. Because the Bible, from cover to cover is this incredible, almost painful love story about a God who loves His people so incredibly much that He tried over and over and over again to have a relationship with them. That love is never quite reciprocated. But He never gives up on love. That’s the story of the Bible.

And that’s even how God describes Himself, as a patient God. In Exodus 34, right after He’s rescued His people from slavery, pulled them out of Egypt and He’s starting this relationship with them, He wants them to know who He is. Look at the way that He describes Himself:

“Yahweh! The Lord! The God of compassion and mercy! I am slow to anger and filled with unfailing love and faithfulness. I lavish unfailing love to a thousand generations.” Exodus 34:6-7 (NLT)

That’s the God we serve. That’s the God of this universe. That’s the God who wants a relationship with you. He is *s l o w* to anger. We tried. We tried. I was patient. I was patient for it. It didn’t quite come. But that’s another word for patience.

In Galatians, chapter 5, if we translate *patience*, the actual root of this word means:

long suffering

Long suffering. That’s the ability to **endure** for a long time.

That’s the ability to **persevere** without wanting to retaliate or seek revenge.

The ability to be **content** in all circumstances.

So now let’s go back to that question I asked earlier:

Are you a patient person?

How about now? Do you have that ability to endure for a long time? Do you have that ability to persevere? That’s the passive thing, to be patient. It’s not us just waiting but it’s for us to move forward with what God has for us without retaliating, without seeking revenge. Do you have that? Do you have this patience that allows you to be content no matter the season you find yourself in? Or no matter the person that you find yourself on the other side of? Do you have patience?

I think for us to be able long suffering, we need a long fuse. Do you have a long fuse? Do you know what I mean by that? I think there a lot of us who have some short fuses, and not for all people or all areas of our lives, but there are a few where there’s just a little fuse. Somebody lights that fuse; we are exploding right there in the moment. But if we’re going to be able to be patient, we need a long fuse.

You know, when I was growing up I was just this little guy and I remember I was outside, I was walking down the street, this was around the 4th of July, and I saw a firecracker on the ground. And I picked it up. I’d never had a firecracker of my own before.

And I did what all boys would do in that situation. I picked it up. I looked at it. And I took it inside. And I said, “Ma, Pa, I found this firework outside, and I just want to make sure we dispose of it in a responsible way. And make sure that no one gets hurt. I’ll be off cutting the grass. I’ll see you guys.”

No. I picked it up. I snuck into the house. I took a lighter. I made my way back outside. And I didn’t even get to the sidewalk before I tried to light that thing. It was the smallest little firecracker.

And the wick on this thing—I mean it was back in the 1900s. There must have been a shortage on fuses. Because they only gave you about this, this much [an inch]. And I’m holding this thing as tight as I can, The wick is barely over my fingers and I’m trying to figure out how to work a lighter and light this thing.

Finally flick, flick. And as soon as it touches I realize I have done this wrong. I didn’t even have time to throw it. I just released it from my hand, and it exploded. And my eyes are closed but I can feel the heat and the pain radiating from my hand. I’m afraid to open my eyes because I thought I lost my hand. But I open my eyes and I’m okay. I still had both of them. I haven’t messed with fireworks in 20 years—that’s neither here nor there.

But does anybody feel like that firecracker? Like you’ve just got this little fuse. And you don’t want it, but it seems like everywhere you go, week in and week out, there comes a time where people push you and you explode. You set a fire everywhere you go.

You don’t want to live like that. I don’t want to live like that. And what God wants to produce in us is a long fuse. This idea that when someone tries to set you off, there is a long time from here to there.

But it’s not just extending that fuse. God actually wants to produce in us the kind of character that when we are tested, when our patience is tested, we still hold on to things like love and joy and peace and patience and kindness and goodness and self-control. To just hold on to all of that even in the midst of being tested.

Does anybody want that kind of life? Does anybody want that kind of patience? I do. But maybe some of you are like, I don’t even know if patience is really that spiritual. Is that a spiritual thing?

And I hear you. But there is actually a theologian who would disagree with you almost on the complete other side. He goes as far as to say:

Impatience is at the root of all sin.—Hans Urs von Balthasar

Think about that. Why? Why did he say that? Why did you lie? Because you were impatient. Why did you steal? Why did you cheat? Why did you cut the corner? Why did you cross that line sexually? What is it?

Well, it’s a lack of patience. We become impatient with other people. We become impatient in the moment. We become impatient with God’s way of doing things and we say, “You know what? I’m going to step over here and do this.”

But, I’m telling you, if we want to be a more faithful group of people, who want to follow Jesus better, who want to live the lives that He has called us to and to love people well, we’re going to have to be patient.

What I want to do with the rest of our time here is to look at some of those things. What can we do as a people to become more and more patient? That's what the world needs from us as a church. To be patient with ourselves. To be patient with others. And to be patient in the seasons that we find ourselves in. How do we do that?

I'm going to give us a few things. And the first one that I'm going to give you, I'm going to be honest, it's not fair because most of us can't do it but to be honest with you, it's the best thing that I've seen that produces patience in other people's lives. And it's this: become a grandparent.

Have you met these people? Listen. I know my parents very well. We were roommates for a long time. We did life together. I know how they respond to things. And I'll be over there and hanging out at their house and I'll bring all my kids. And my kids are kids. They'll be in the living room. They'll be making a mess. They'll be yelling. They'll be fighting.

And then I'll see my parents go to walk that way and at first I'm like, "Oh, no." But then I'm like, "Oh, you all are going to get it today. You all need this. You need this time of discipline that we got in the 1900s to build the fortitude that I have."

But then they make their way over there and they are completely different people. Suddenly they understand the concept of a second chance. They've exchanged praises like, "Oh, you gonna cry? I'll give you something to cry about," for, "Hey, are you okay, buddy?"

Okay?

"Oh, no, that's okay. You didn't mean to set that place on fire. Come here. Give me a hug."

It's like, "Who are you?"

But we all can't do that. I can't wait to know what that is like, though. That will be great.

But for all of us, what can we do this week to kind of help? Remember this former analogy. This is us co-laboring, co-partnering with God to produce this fruit. We do what we can and trust that God will do what only He can.

So if we want to become more patient, then I think there are three things that we can focus on:

- PACE
- PERSPECTIVE
- PRAYER

That's the pace of our lives, that's the perspective that we approach our lives with, and that's our prayer life. Those are the three big things. And I think if we want to focus on God growing patience within us we need to focus on those three things.

The first one is: pace. Looking at the pace of your life. How would you describe it? I think for most of us we run so fast, we are in a hurry from here to there. The faster you move, the quicker you become impatient.

Think about that. When you are in a hurry everything becomes a problem. On a Sunday drive when you've got nowhere to go, nowhere to be, a red light is not a problem, "I'm just sitting here." When you hit that same red light and you're late because you're rushing from one meeting to the next, the idea of a stoplight is now the dumbest invention that you've ever heard of in your life, "Why do I need someone to tell me when to stop? There's nobody here. I could go if I wanted to."

When you're in a hurry, everything becomes a problem.

When you're sitting down for dinner with your family and say you've got three little kids—hypothetically. And they are eating. And they are taking forever, that doesn't bother you because you know kids are kids, right?

Unless you're already thinking about what you need to do next, the thing you need to schedule, the work you need to do. Then you become very impatient when they spill their water. You become very impatient when they tell you that they don't eat chicken nuggets anymore, even though they ate chicken nuggets less than 24 hours ago. When we are in a hurry we become quickly impatient.

How would you describe the pace of your life?

You know there was a pastor who was starting out and he was talking with a mentor, and he said, "How do I have a spiritually healthy life? What are all of the things that I need to do?" He asked this guy named Dallas Willard. And this is what Dallas said:

"You must ruthlessly eliminate hurry from your life."

And he said, "Sounds great. What else to you got?" He said, "That's it."

We need to take a look at the pace of our lives and realize that we are not machines. We need to build in margin, build in space to slow down to be ready for whatever we are going to face on the other side.

Mornings are a great time to do this. And I hear you, "I'm just not a morning person." It is better to become a morning person than to live as an impatient person. If you can spend the first part of your day focusing on praying to God, sitting with God, having a moment of silence and solitude, it will help you prepare for whatever it is to come.

Build in the rhythms that God places before us, like a sabbath, which is one day every week where you stop from the hustle and grind and the fast pace of life and say, “No, today I pause. Today I reflect. Today I feast. Today I celebrate all that God has done for me. I give that work; I hand that work over to Him. I know it will be there tomorrow. But this world is going to keep spinning and I need to know that.”

That is the first thing. We need to check our pace. A lot of times hurry is leading to impatience.

The second thing I would say is our perspective. The perspective that we approach life with, both with relationships with other people and with the perspective we have on the season of life that we are in or that we will find ourselves in.

Perspective.

You know, I don’t know about you, but I want to be a patient person. It’s people who won’t allow me to do it. I try so hard. But I’m telling you if we can have the right perspective and just be reminded of who we are and who we are not, it will help us to have a whole lot of grace for the people we find ourselves with.

Take a look at this verse and I think you’ll know what I’m talking about. It says:

“This is a trustworthy saying, and everyone should accept it: ‘Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners’—and I am the worst of them all. But God had mercy on me so that Christ Jesus could use me as a prime example of his great patience....”

Did you catch that? This is Paul. He started off a little rough, but I mean, definitely not the worst sinner that we could think of. He did incredible things, but he’s the worst sinner that he knows because he knows himself better than anyone else. And he says that he is a prime example of God’s patience.

When God is talking about and bragging about how patient He is, He is using us as an example, “You want to know how patient I am? Look at how patient I am with Ryan. What a dummy. He keeps doing the same things over and over again, But look at how patient I am with him.”

“... with even the worst sinners. Then others will realize that they, too, can believe in him and receive eternal life.” 1 Timothy 1:15-17

It’s this idea that I’m waking up and I realize that I’m the worst sinner that I know. And I know that I am the *Mona Lisa* of patience for God. I am His masterpiece. He has to use so much patience with me.

Now, I’m at a place that when I meet someone and we don’t immediately connect, or I get frustrated, or they push my buttons.... No, no, no. I’m at a place where, “Okay, now I have empathy. Now I have understanding. Now I have a better place to come from than

being this superior person. I'm trying to get this person to understand where I'm coming from." A right perspective.

Is there a person in your life that you struggle to be patient with?

I'm telling you, the pace that you are running at probably isn't allowing you to have that conversation, saying, "It's fine. I'll deal with it." Or, "They would never understand." Or, "They're actually hopeless anyway. I'm not going to waste my time."

But I tell you, patience will allow you to slow down and have a crucial conversation. It will allow you to step in and to see what is going on, "Is there an expectation that is not being met? Did I miss something? Is there something I need to clarify? Something that I need to own?"

Patience will slow us down to a place where we can actually love people really, really well. Impatience with one person will eventually bleed over to impatience with everyone else. So that's the perspective we need with other people.

And I'd say the other thing that we need perspective for is the season that we find ourselves in. Most of my life has not come to a place where I'm like, "Yeah, this is exactly the way that I planned it. This is exactly how I would have done it." No, we all find ourselves in seasons that we wouldn't have picked if it were us. But that doesn't mean that we're in a wrong season. It doesn't mean that we just wish it away.

Here's the truth that we can hold on to:

I can wait patiently because this season has a purpose.

I can wait patiently because this season has a purpose. I don't need to wish it away. No, what I need is not for God to remove me from this season, but now my prayer has changed, and I say, "God, allow me to suffer well if I need to. God allow me to adore. Allow me to persevere through this. Allow me to be content and allow me to see what it is that You have for me."

I think about it like this. Have you ever been driving on a road trip and you're making your way down and then you hit road construction? I'm telling you that there are few things in life that I despise more than road construction.

And you know the type. You always hit it when you're going down and you're going through Atlanta. I don't know what you guys are doing down there, you're just always going to be doing something because you're upset that people go through you to get to Florida. I don't know what is going on, but it never fails. You get to Atlanta and then you slowly start to feel those lanes come in: four lanes, three lanes, two lanes, one lane—what are we doing?

I will get off at the earliest exit and take back roads from there to Florida so that I do not have to sit in it. And being in a car that can go 100 miles an hour, or at least that's what

I've been told, and to sit there and not move at all—from my perspective, I just rolled into a mess, I just rolled into something that is completely not put together.

But if I have a different perspective, if I pull back for a second, is that true? Is this chaos? Is this a mishap? No. This was actually very thoughtful. What's happening here is actually going to make this experience better. There is actually going to be something that is produced during this work that is getting smaller for a second, but there will be a season where it's better.

There are actually a lot of people who know what is going on here. There are hundreds of people working on this job site. And hear me when I say this. There is actually a blueprint of what this thing is going to look like when it's all said and done.

What if we could see life the same way? That the seasons that we find ourselves in have purpose in them. That we're not just showing up to a dead-end road, but God is going to use this construction site, this slowness that we are finding ourselves in to produce something within us that only that season could produce.

And He's going to say that nothing is wasted, "I will use every bit of the suffering that you go through and then you can hold to this, and you know that I've got a blueprint for the way this thing shakes out. There is going to come a time when this road opens up.

"There is going to be a time when I come down to be with my people. And every tear is wiped away. That there is no more pain, there is no more struggle, there is no more sound of connecting to the internet. There is no more road construction, there is no more cancer or death or pain. Hang in there with Me."

And that leads us to the last thing with our perspective. We're going to hold onto a new perspective. We're going to be patient. And we have to hold on to hope. See, to have patience, we must remember the hope that we have in Jesus. There is this direct tie between patience and hope.

In situations in your life where you find yourself becoming impatient, it's because you're losing hope. You've said it once. You've done it once. You've tried it. You went weeks and months and years and you are brought to this place where, "I do not have hope that anything is going to change." So then you become impatient. And then you begin to find ways to move around this.

But for us, as followers of Jesus, we have a hope that can never be taken. We have a hope that no season can overshadow. We have a hope in the name of Jesus that nothing can stop or triumph over.

We have a hope and a power and a strength in it that says, "No matter what I face, no matter the struggle, no matter the pain, no matter the situation, no matter how bleak or dark it looks, I have a hope with me that says my God can overcome, my God can prevail, my God can use me, my God can bring me back to life. I believe in a God who

knows no bounds. I believe in a God who is the hope of the world. And as long as I can hold on to hope then I can hold on to patience.”

To have patience we must remember the hope we have in Jesus.

That’s perspective: we need to remember who we are, who others are, to remember the seasons we find ourselves in and that God has a plan for them, and we hold on to hope.

And the last thing that I would say is that we just have to pray for it.

Like I said, this organic process that we are going through to be formed into the image of Jesus is one that takes work. And prayer is one of those things that we collab with God on. We get before Him, and we pray.

I’m telling you, if you’ve ever seen a patient person you’ve seen a prayerful person. They spend a lot of time before God.

So what I just want to give you today is a prayer. And it’s not an exhaustive prayer. It’s just a prayer to get you started this week to begin to ask God for patience. It will be on a few different slides so feel free to take a screenshot and take it with you and make it your own this week. Here’s a prayer for all of us.

Father, produce in me your perfect patience. Give me the ability to endure for a long time, to persevere without wanting to retaliate or seek revenge, and to be content in all circumstances. Allow me to extend to others the same patience that you have already graciously extended to me. Help me to become more and more patient by constantly remembering the hope that I have in Jesus.

That’s a prayer that we can all pray to begin our days this week. And that’s a prayer that I’ve seen God answer in my own life and in the lives of those around me.

For some of us who are here I want to speak to you for a second because maybe this is all new to you. This idea of a patient God of a loving God of a gracious God of a relational God, to you maybe it’s always felt like God was distant, God was always a little bit removed, He wasn’t showing up when you wanted Him to show up. That’s been a thought that’s been in the back of the minds of humanity for thousands of years.

I want us to look at what it says in 2 Peter because I think it could help someone today. It says:

“The Lord isn’t really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.” 2 Peter 3:9

Don’t mistake God’s patience for slowness or absence. God is here every step of the way. Since the beginning, since God brought creation into existence, He has desperately wanted a relationship with us. He is so patient, over and over and over and over again.

And humanity turned its back on Him. So finally He said, “You know what? I’m going to send my one and only Son. And Jesus would come and would live this perfect life, the life that you and I could never live. And He held on, and He actually reciprocated that love back to God. And His reward was a painful mistrial. His reward was an execution, an assassination. He was brought to a cross, and He was murdered.

But when He went to that cross, with Him He took every bit of sin and every bit of shame, everything that was separating us from God and completely removed it. It was nailed to that cross. And when they took Him off that cross and put Him in a tomb, that is where all of that shame all of that condemnation all of that sin all that separation is now.

But Jesus rose. Jesus rose on that third day and now He is offering a relationship for you and me to have with the God of this universe, a God who wants us to be with Him and to be like Him. A God who wants to produce something supernatural in our lives. A patience that will carry us from now to the day that we are with Him for all of eternity. That’s a relationship that you can have right now.

At all of our campuses, we’ll have people at the front of the stage after the message today who would love to meet with you and to pray with you and talk about what it means to follow Jesus.

And for followers of Jesus I would say that what the world needs right now from you is patience, especially coming off of the week that we just had, a decision on Friday by the Supreme Court—a decision that big, that monumental, that provoked all kinds of responses and actions in a lot of different people.

Some of you know that our lead pastor, Aaron Brockett, is on study break right now and he’s actually scheduled some time to be with his family. He’s completely unplugged at this time. But over the past couple of days, I actually got to catch up with him and talk about what we need to say as a church, who we need to be.

So if he were here, this would be the message that he would be delivering as well. For all who are Christians, followers of Jesus, we will always celebrate life. We celebrate life because every single life is so uniquely special and valued because every person is made in the image of God, the author of all things. In Jeremiah God says that before you were in your mother’s womb (you were formed there) I knew you.

We also see in James that as the body of Christ we are called to love and to care for all lives outside the womb as well, especially those who are vulnerable. James tells us that this is true religion, to care for the widows and orphans. And that is exactly what we are going to do.

There’s this messed up piece of our culture, this either-or part of our world, where it says you have to either be for the rights of the unborn or for the rights of women. And

that is a false dichotomy. We believe we can do both. We believe we are called to do both.

The greatest commandment is to love God and to love people. That's what we are going to do. We're going to love, defend, care, serve, provide for, be there for both. That is the church. That is who we are.

There is no legislation that changes our plan of what we are going to do moving forward. We've already been about our Father's business. We have a FAM ministry, a foster and adoption ministry. We foster kids. We adopt kids.

We provide care communities to help support.... We helped bring what is called a care portal where we work directly with DCS to provide families with what they need so that kids don't get removed from their families. We provide beds and other essentials.

We partner with organizations here in our city and around the world to care for vulnerable children and women and we are not going to stop.

What the world needs right now is not keyboard warriors who are making these big posts. What the world needs now is a display of love and care and affection for all people.

There are people in our church, this isn't people outside in the world or in the culture, there are people in our church and the news on Friday brought very different emotions for them. Some celebrated and some were crying.

Now is not the time to do what I heard one pastor say—a victory lap. It's to see people on the other side with a view completely different from you, and to say, "Hey, can we sit down and have a conversation? Can you help me understand why you're crying in a moment like this?" And for the other side to say, "How could you possibly be celebrating in a time like this?" And for us to have the patience that allows us to sit and to not worry about making a point, but making a difference by loving people with the love of Christ.

That's the church that we are called to be. The church that steps into this and says what Paul calls us all to say in Galatians where he said:

"My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." Galatians 2:20 (NLT)

That is what we are about. That is what the world needs. So what I want to do right now is just ask everyone to stand at all of our campuses. What we're going to do now is I'm going to pray and then we are going to worship, we're going to worship and we're going to surrender because we know that that is the only hope that we have in this, is that Jesus would work through it, that He would lead us into what is next. We're going to worship. Will you pray with us?

God, we thank You so much for today. God, we thank You for the hope that we have in the name of Jesus. We thank You for the hope that we have in Your Spirit. God, that is what the world needs: men, women, and children filled with Your Spirit.

God, we pray that You would produce spiritual fruit in our lives. That You would lead us. That this would no longer be about us or our agendas or what we want to see happen. But, God, we have truly been crucified. It is no longer we who live, but You who lives in us.

God, I pray that it is less and less and less of us and more and more and more of You until it is Christ alone. God, in these moments, we surrender. We hand over the way we've been doing it. We hand over our opinions, our ideas, our wants, our desires and we trust that You will produce something so much more than we could ever ask or imagine.

So, God, we lay all of this at Your feet. We surrender. And we ask for even more and more of You, Jesus. It's in Your perfect name we pray. Amen.