
Traders Point, how are we doing? Hey, so good to be with you. Everyone here at Northwest, at the campuses, watching online. It's so good to be with you all on the Memorial Day weekend. We just want to kick things off today by taking a moment to show some honor some respect and celebrate all of the men and women who have given their lives to serve our country—ultimate sacrifice. Incredible.

I also just want to take a second and acknowledge the fact that this will be my last sermon before I go on sabbatical, okay? So this is the last one. I say that for two reasons. One, it's going to be a long time before I preach again so go ahead and send a message to who you need to send it to, let them know you're not going to make it to lunch. It's going to be a long one up here today. Kidding. Kidding. I've got to get out of here. No, I'm just kidding.

I also say it because this past couple of weeks I've been looking back on the past seven or eight years of all of the things I've gotten to do here while serving. And it's been unbelievable. One of the things that really stood out to me as I was thinking back over the years, I started here pretty young. About two weeks after my 24th birthday is when I came on staff. And got right into it.

And as a minister you do a lot of different things, like hospital visits and you show up and really vulnerable places, not knowing what to say, how to say it, or what you can provide in that moment. But a lot of times you're the person who is there at the end. And you pray with them, and you hear from them, and you just try to do everything that you can.

And, as you can imagine, sometimes those are really tough moments, really hard moments. But I was thinking back to a hospital visit that I went on. I went to visit this woman who was in her late 80s and I get to her room and her family is on the outside of the room and they are kind of weeping a little bit. And they were just like, "Hey, we're not looking at weeks. We're looking at hours, days maybe of how long she has." And they said, "But you can go on in."

And I walk in, and you know, you're trying to say, "How do I help alleviate some of the fear, the worry." And I start talking to her and she begins to alleviate the worry for me. We start talking a little bit. And I said, "Well, hey. This has been unbelievable. How can I pray for you?" And this was her prayer, I promise you, it stuck with me over the past seven or eight years, she said, "Can we pray right now for the next generation?" She said, "Can we pray that you and your generation, that they keep going? That they're obedient to God. That they spread the gospel, that they don't give up. I know it's hard out there. But I'm telling you, it's worth it."

And we prayed for the next generation. If you can imagine—some of you have been around people on their death bed—that is not a normal prayer. That is not a normal mindset. But that's where her mind went and that's what we prayed for. And I walked out of that room, and I've been living with it ever since.

That's the kind of life I want to live. I want to finish well. I want to be in such a spot that I know that I've gone through my whole life, and I gave it everything that I had. And at the very end, I'm still looking back saying, "What ground are we going to take next? How are we going to keep going? How can I pray to God that He would send more workers?"

Is that not a life that you want as well? A life where you're faithful to the very end, that you finish well, that the people you love sitting around you are like, "That's it." But what is it that stops us so often from living that life? What is it that gets in the way of us being able to have that vision for others and wanting the best for them? What is it that takes us down?

That's what we've been looking at in this series, *Achilles*. And what we've been saying is that we all—all humanity—we have this Achilles heel with us, and it's called:

Pride

Pride is this thing that pushes us. Pride is this thing that keeps us going where we have no busy going. Pride is what's creating these systems, these ways of life, where so many people are getting taken down.

That's a lot of what I do. People ask me, sometimes it's comical, but they ask me, "What do you do?" And I'm like, "Oh, I do this. I work at the church."

"No, no. During the week?"

I'm like, "Yeah, still that."

I had one guy when I was working Downtown, he came up to me and we're talking, sipping some coffee. And he's like, "So, what do you do?" And I'm like, "Yeah, man. I do this." And he's like, "No, no. What do you do for like money?" And I was like, "Yeah, man. This is what I do."

And he was so surprised he cussed in the middle of the lobby. And he was like, "Oh, I'm sorry. I just really didn't think this was a full-time gig." And I was like, "Wow. So glad to be talking to you today. Um, what more can we talk about?"

But a lot of what I do, unfortunately, is that I'm the second person to find out. When something has gone wrong when someone's life is falling apart. When someone has stepped out. Whenever there is a moral failure, I'm the person who gets called and I sit on the other side of people, and I get to hear about what happened.

And I get to hear how they went farther than they ever thought they would go. I get to hear all of the parts of how they just seemed like they blacked out. They didn't know what was going on. But now they are in this space where there are pieces, and they want to hand me the pieces and they want me to put them back together, "Just please put it back. Can you fix it? Can you make it better?"

And you know sometimes God does some incredible things and pulls things back together. But other times you know people really have to live with the consequences of what happened. But what is that? It's what I've been looking at. Why are these stories more and more common?

You're not a pastor, but chances are people you love, people you are in relationship with, you're having more of these conversations. People you never thought would do what they are doing.

Marriages that are falling apart that you never thought would fall apart. And you're like, "What is this?"

What we've been looking at is this:

Pride

There is this inner voice that just keeps driving us and pushing us faster and faster at a speed that we cannot contain, that we cannot keep up with.

I don't know about you, but I don't want to live in that world. I don't want to live in that world where that's normal, that's common, where people get burned out left and right and we just see bodies drop all around us. I want to be a different kind of people. I want to be a different person. I want to be known by a different kind of love.

I want to move at a different speed than where everyone is racing and flying and burning out left and right—I want to be the one walking slowly but steadily all the way until the end. To finish well. Is there anybody with me who wants that kind of a life? Who is tired of seeing so many of the people we love and care for fall and to stumble?"

And it really started to point out to me when I was looking at this *Achilles* series and I looked at how do Achilles tears and ruptures happen. What is it about it? And I thought this spoke brilliantly, not just to our ankles but to our whole lives as well. It says:

An Achilles tendon rupture is a complete or partial tear that occurs when the tendon is stretched beyond its capacity.

Stretched beyond its capacity.

Now, I've never had an Achilles tear, but growing up playing basketball I messed up my ankles all of the time. And one time was the worst. I believe it was called an avulsion fracture. So this is where I jumped up to get a rebound, came down completely on the side of it. And what happened is the tendon wrapped so tightly around the bone that it popped it right off. There was so much pressure that it's brought to a place beyond its capacity, and it shattered.

And I just want to ask for you today, are there parts of your life where you are feeling that tension, where you are stretched beyond your capacity? Like there are different areas of your life where you feel like you are at the breaking point. And you just feel that pull and pull and pull.

And you're wondering, "How long is it going to be like this? I can't live like this." And it's only a matter of time before that tension builds up, where you keep moving at that speed that you're moving at, doing the things that you are doing that pride will not let you stop until you snap. [Ryan stretches a rubber band until it snaps.]

These rubber bands are the strongest rubber bands. I thought last service was a fluke. It was not. Whoever ordered these, great job. I can promise you. Goodness gracious. You'll break a lot easier than that rubber band, alright? Don't put it to the test.

But what we want to look at today is this unbelievable invitation from Jesus. This invitation where He looks out upon a group of people just like us who are running at a speed that they could not possibly sustain, carrying a weight that they had no business carrying. And they were crumbling underneath the weight of it until Jesus steps in and He offers something new. He offers a new way, a new speed, a new focus. Something that will actually deal with the restlessness within us. Something that can give us a true rest, alright?

And we're going to pick up with Jesus in Matthew, chapter 11. If you have a Bible, you go ahead and flip there. It will be Matthew, chapter 11, starting in verse 28. This is what Jesus said:

"Then Jesus said, 'Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.'"

It's an incredible invitation, an incredible alternative to the pace and the rate that we're running at. Our God offers us rest. And to go as easy as, *"For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."*

And maybe yoke is a word that stands out to you like, "I don't even know what that is." Same. Grew up on the west side of Indy, we didn't have a lot of yokes, we had a lot of guys who were yokes, but that's a whole different conversation.

This is a [picture of a] yoke. And here's what it was. It was a tool that was used for livestock, really. And what you have is a lot of times you would put an ox on each side of this. And you put them there and they would help carry the load of doing the work, right? You put them in there and they would carry it and it would make the job easy. That was the yoke.

But this is also a term that they began to use not just for yoke and livestock and oxen. There became another phrase that was used a lot of times. And it was called:

Yoke of the Law.

The yoke of the Law. But same kind of idea here. Same kind of premise. What would happen is, the religious leaders of the time, they were giving people a yoke—to follow them they were giving them these set of rules, ways to live, and the idea was that it was actually supposed to help carry the load. It was supposed to help them navigate through life.

But what was happening was, this yoke was crushing them. It was a religious yoke and what it was doing was it was trying to drive them to perfection. That was the goal of it. That's what all of the rules, that's all of the laws, everything that was laid on top of them, was to deal with the same thing that we are dealing with today.

This inner turmoil, this inner tension, of this want to be perfect. This inner thing that we don't even know what to do with, that we wrestle with all of the time, enough never seems to be enough. And when we land the thing that we thought would do it, it never seems to go away. This was to address those things. And it was just crushing people. This yoke of the Law.

And the important thing to start out with is to recognize that:

You already have a yoke.

It may not be a religious yoke that you've grown up with, but there is something that you have found, there is something that you have teamed up with, you and one side and you said, "If I had this over here it is going to help me drive forward. It is going to help carry the load and it's going to help me reach perfection. It is going to satisfy me and my soul and my worries and my fears. And as long as I have this, I know that I'm going to be okay.

And the problem is that anything outside of Jesus, anything that we yoke ourselves to and with is going to take us at a speed and it's going to make us carry a weight that we were never designed to carry. And when you look out and you see things and you see people begin to fall and you see these moral failures and you see all of these things going on, if you look at the speed of their life and if you look at the things that they were carrying and if you look at the things that they were trying to do to justify themselves, it was only a matter of time before they snapped.

And Jesus sees this back then and He sees it now—people just running and running and running and going and going and going and grinding and grinding and grinding and what you see is just a people moving at a speed that they were never meant to live at.

That's why I love this book that I read last year called *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry* by John Mark Comer and that's what you'll see. When you see that your life is yoked to something other than Jesus, it will exhaust you. It will wear you down. It will bring you to a constant state of hurriedness. And he does a brilliant job of listing 10 symptoms of hurry sickness. As we're evaluating this and wondering, "What am I yoked to? Is it Jesus or something else?"

I want us to go through these one by one—there are 10 of them—and then at the end, treat this like a doctor's visit. Take a picture of this and say, "How many symptoms do I have?" What we'll find on this list of symptoms, this sickness, these things are not from God. These are popping up because we are yoked to something that we should not be. We are believing a lie that we should not believe.

Take a look at these, Ten symptoms of hurry sickness:

1. Irritability

You just wake up angry. Like you're angry at breakfast. That's a tough spot to be in. You just woke up. You went downstairs. Someone cuts into their sausage and their knife hits the plate

and you're like, "Okay. I'm done." What's wrong with this? Angry. Irritability.

2. Hypersensitivity

You can take anything and twist it to be against you. It doesn't matter what's going on. It could be somebody not even talking to you but you're taking it onto yourself. There is a high sensitivity. You're not able to process things that are coming through.

3. Restlessness

There is a restlessness. You're hurried. You're moving too fast. You're going 90 miles an hour 24 hours a day. And you would think that that would help you sleep better. But you're restless. You can't turn it off. You can't stop striving. You can't stop trying.

4. Workaholism (nonstop activity)

That's a symptom. There is something that is telling you that if you work more then it's going to deal with the pain that is going on inside. If you just do it a little bit better, if you just get a little bit more, if you get one more promotion then those voices will stop. Then this yoke won't be so heavy. Workaholism.

5. Emotional Numbness

You're like a zombie. Big things are happening all around you. There is stuff going on with your friends' groups and your family and at work, but you're just like unmoved by anything. It's like, "Why can't I feel anything?"

6. Out-of-order priorities

Here's what I mean by this. If you sat down today and on a piece of paper if someone said write out the things that are most important to you, your top priorities and you would write those down, I'm sure you wouldn't have a problem doing it, but then if you overlaid those with your schedule and if you overlaid that with how much time and resources you're actually pouring into those things, they would be out of whack. You're spending a whole lot of time in areas that you shouldn't and you're neglecting other ones.

7. Lack of care for your body

This is a huge one, right? Because as you begin to kind of try to maintain and you're moving at this speed and you're trying to do 1,000 things that you shouldn't be doing, you will neglect yourself first. You'll stop going for walks. You'll stop working out. You'll stop eating the way that you should be eating.

8. Escapist behaviors

This is what you see when someone is really hurried and rushed and being pulled in a direction that they shouldn't be. It's these escapist behaviors. And obviously that has to do with you could escape through alcohol or drugs, but it's also you just needing to get away from what you're focused on, from what you're dealing with. So you'll find yourself just falling down and turning on Netflix for hours at a time—escaping to a different world.

You'll find yourself scrolling as soon as you get done doing the thing that's killing you, you go immediately to social media, and you'll just scroll and scroll. Looking at things that you've got no business looking at. You're just scrolling, escaping to a different world.

9. Slippage of spiritual disciplines

This one will begin to take the back seat if there is anything other than Jesus' driving, who's constantly going to be saying, "Hey, look more like me. Be more with me. Sound more like me."

But if it's anything else driving it's muting this spiritual discipline, it's stopping this, it's not that important. What you really need to focus on is this thing right here [spiritual discipline]. So you stop praying, you stop meditating, you stop reading your Bible, you stop going to group. And then finally:

10. Isolation

Pride has this uncanny ability to isolate you, to distance you from the group of people you are with and get you alone. You begin to think that you're the only one who is struggling like this, you're the only one who is wrestling like this. No one would understand. And you don't really want to be around other people anyway. So you stop sending out invitations to hang out with your friends and family. And you stop accepting and receiving them as well.

These are some symptoms. If you're looking at, "Hey, what am I yoked to? Is it Jesus? Or is it something else?" Just take a look at this list and know these are not from God. This is not what God is calling you to. This should not be normal. But I'm guessing if you're anything like me, you probably have some of these symptoms. So take a picture of it. And then this week circle what symptoms are you seeing?

How are you doing right now, just off the top? Five out of 10? Seven out of 10? Anybody get a perfect score 10 out of 10? What Jesus mentions twice in this hurry in this speed in this pride that will make us move at a rate that we can't sustain, carrying a load we were never meant to carry, that's what we'll see.

And what He mentions twice, what He's looking to offer is "Come to me all who are weary, and I will give you rest. I'm humble and gentle at heart and you will find rest for your souls." If you're looking for the solution to hurriedness it's rest.

So I just want to ask you:

What are you doing for rest?

And usually where this conversation begins and ends is with sleep. "Ah, I could use a nap. If I could just get a few more hours of sleep at night." How much are you getting now?

"Two-and-a-half."

"Yeah, you should do more than two-and-a-half. You're not an elf. You need quite a bit of sleep."

Obviously, that is a part of rest, and you should be getting a lot of sleep at night and take naps when you can, but I'm talking about what do you do actively to put yourself in a place where you are resting, where you are being refueled, where you are being filled up?

I was actually going through an exercise a couple of weeks ago where we were working through this, "Hey, what are the things that you do that fill you up? What is it that when you do it and when you get done with it you feel better, you feel poured into? People even notice like, you walk into a room, and you don't even have to say anything, "He's doing good today. What did you go fishing today?" It's just clear to people that there is something different about you.

You have been refueled.

As I was working through it and the first thing that came to my mind, what fills you up? I said, "When I send my kids away." And it sounded horrible at first. And maybe it still does to you. But I have a lot of children, okay? But it's not just that. It's what happens afterward. And my wife and I, the kids go away, and it's Friday, we've done this the past 10 years, we order Chinese food and drink Sprite, okay?

And some of you are like, "I didn't know that Sprite went with Chinese food." It doesn't. But when we first got married, we used to order Chinese food from this spot, and they would bring us our Chinese food and they would always bring us a 2-liter. And they would give it to us. We didn't order the 2-liter, but they would bring it to us. And I was so young and naïve I was like, "They just really like us." I didn't want to say anything, but I did tip them pretty good. So I think we're friends. We really hit it off.

A couple of times in we started looking at the 2-liter because it looked a little old. It expired two years ago. They were moving inventory. They were just trying to get rid of this stuff. But I still drank it because it's not like started good. It's not like it was in a good place before it expired. So I still drank it. But that fills me up. That is a great night for me to just eat Chinese food in the bed, drink some Sprite and watch a movie—it's great.

I love playing basketball. I grew up in Indiana. I love playing basketball. I can feel a basketball even when I don't have one. I can feel it dribbling on this stage right now. And that was one of the things that came up. To just be in a gym. I don't want to play with you or with anyone, I don't want to get hurt. I don't need any more of those avulsion fractures. But I love shooting

and I love the sound of the ball bouncing in a gym. That restores me.

I love making coffee. Like really making coffee. You know where you get out and you grind the beans, and you measure the water, and you pull out the scale and you pretend like you actually understand the metric system. You're doing grams and you're converting stuff. And I have worship music going on in the background. It fills me up.

Reading God's Word, not for a sermon, not for anything but to just read it. Praying, it fills me up.

This week take a look at those things. What is it in your life that fills you up? Sleep is on the list for sure, but what are those things that are unique to you that when you do them you feel filled. You feel like you just got a jumpstart on the day and on the week.

And a great way to house all of these, if we actually follow all of these big ideas is that God has as a Sabbath, where it's a weekly rhythm built in. You're not just sleeping all day. You are delighting and living in the presence of God where you are reminded of all of the things that He just brought you through and you're celebrating Him like crazy and then you save the best for these days. You make the big breakfast. You guys have great times playing games and enjoying life with one another. It's a beautiful rhythm to get in.

So this week (as you took a picture, I'm sure all of you did of those symptoms) look through there and ask, "What are those symptoms that I have? What's popping up?" And then make a list of the things that fill you up, "What are the things that I need to be doing?" And then create a schedule to go do them.

And I think you'll notice as you infuse these spiritual disciplines, as you do Sabbath, as you do things that fill you up, as you identify these things, this hurry sickness you'll see that the more rest you infuse the less symptoms you will have. More and more things will calm down. And it will be easier to identify the things that you are yoked to.

It will begin to stand out more and more, "What is the thing that I'm using to justify myself? What is the thing that I am looking to to make me feel like I'm worth it? What is the thing that is helping me deal with this tension of wanting to be perfect but never being able to land it? What am I following? What is helping me carry this load?" What is it to you?

You see, this is what Jesus was getting at when He goes against the religious leaders at the time. He talks about it over and over again in the gospels and He even calls it out as the church is getting ready to start too. He contrasts what He offers, this light and easy, and he compares it to what the religious leaders are giving at the time. And he says, they—He's talking about the religious leaders:

"They crush people with unbearable religious demands and never lift a finger to ease the burden."

Now this is in complete contrast to what Jesus is saying, what He would prove by saying, “Hey, I will do everything, I will completely carry the load, I will do all that it takes, but these people?”

They won’t even lift a finger. They just lay the weight on you.” And the problem with it is, this weight, the demands are fine, the way of life is okay, but it’s a want without the power to actually be able to live it out. It’s a want to do the right thing, you’re reminded of all of the things that you should be doing and you’re not doing—that’s great. But the thing that it is missing is the power to help. It can’t even lift a finger to move it. This yoke is actually bringing you down when it should be the thing that actually helps you move forward.

And nothing on the other side of the yoke can help you move that burden. It’s only a matter of time before the weight drops. It’s only a matter of time before that thing keeps moving and pulling you in a direction that takes you farther away from God and farther away from other people.

And meeting the religious demands that could simply just be your effort to meet your needs, like it is all on you and it’s only a matter of time before that weight begins to crush you. And maybe that’s what you’ve felt growing up whether you were in the church or just on the fringe of church, that’s what religion was. That’s what it meant to come to church. You came in.

Someone strapped a yoke on you and then you went off. It was constantly yelling at you from behind saying, “You’re not doing it right. You are the worst. Go faster. Do it better.” And you could never keep it. You could never hold onto it. And it was only a matter of time before you ended up just throwing it off and you kept going.

But you’re here today because you left, and you went out there and you noticed that it’s the same thing just in a different packaging of what the world is offering. It’s still all on you. It’s still by your strength. It’s still you just work a little bit harder; you just get a little bit more money. I know you’re in this awkward stage right now, but I’m telling you, in 35 to 45 years you will be set. And it’s like, when does this thing end?

See, the beautiful thing is that Jesus offers a new yoke. He not only points to the problem, to say that this is not working, but He actually becomes the solution. You see, as there was this yoke of the Law, Jesus comes in and He says, “I’m actually going to offer you the yoke of the Spirit, of My Spirit.”

And if we could show another picture of the yoke, this is what Jesus is saying. That from the beginning humanity has tried to be yoked to anything that helps us, anything that would take the weight, anything that would give us just the slightest bit of hope and we would give yoke to it. But it never works out.

And this is what it looks like to be with Jesus and to follow Jesus. Jesus is saying, “I’m going to get in the yoke with you. And I’m not going to give you a list of things to do without the power to do them. I’m going to come in and I’m going to be yoked with you.”

Please think about this. The God of this universe is willing to say that He wants to be yoked to you. That if you're looking for what it is that is going to take away this pain, what it is that is going to alleviate this weight and this burden, what it is that is going to move you at the right speed that you know you're not living at—it's only when Jesus steps in and the yoke of His Spirit is laid upon you.

You see, without that we're just dragged farther and farther in the wrong direction. But when Jesus steps in, He provides something that only He can provide. That's why He can say what he said. He says:

"Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light."

This is what Jesus is coming to bring and it is so different. It's a pace that will feel counter to you, like that rest conversation. There is a lie that will begin to come to you when you begin to follow Jesus and you see things just flashing and going by you and you begin to move a little bit slower and talk a little bit sweeter, and be a little bit more humble and a little bit more kind—the back of your mind is like, "You are doing it wrong. You've got to keep up. You've got to move faster. You don't have time to rest. You don't have time to care for yourself."

And this is what pride will tell you. Taking care of yourself is selfish. There is nothing selfish about rest. There is nothing selfish about saying that you have limits. There is nothing selfish about saying, "I need a break." There's nothing selfish about taking a moment and being present and sitting still.

See, we are called to live in this yoke, but we are going to be pouring ourselves out. We are going to be serving other people. But we cannot give what we do not have. And what Jesus is providing here is, "I'm going to give you an opportunity, because I'm going to carry the weight, I'm going to give you time, I'm going to show you how to work at a different rhythm and to live at a different speed.

See if we begin to live and just keep going, to keep running as fast as we can, we come to this spot where we are empty. And you know what happens when you're empty? It's not only that you have nothing to give, when you're empty, you're constantly looking for something to take it and that is when pride has a field day.

But what Jesus is saying is, "I have come to give you a new yoke. A yoke that I had to do so much to make sure that you could get. And it's not just any yoke. It's not just His words, but His Spirit, "It's my Spirit and it's My power that I am going to give to you."

You see, there's a reason we have this inner tension within us, this want to be good. And it's more than good if you're being honest there is never a good enough it's a drive to be perfect. That's because we were created to live in paradise. We were created to live hand and hand,

close with God where He would be there, and He would help guide us and walk us along the way.

When sin came, because of our pride it separated us from God. That is when we began to pull in all of these other things to help us along the way. And what Jesus does, by coming to earth, by leaving heaven and living that perfect life—the one that we want to live, the one that we dream about living, the one that constantly have the tension of falling short of, Jesus said, “I’m going to live it, and He did.

Jesus would live this perfect life and then He would go to a cross for me, and you and He would die for us, die for us. And then three days later, showing that He’s not just giving words and to show that He’s actually the One who has the power behind the request, He would rise.

Jesus would rise from the dead and come back and say: “Listen, all who are weary, all who just came stumbling in here, all who are looking for a better way, all who are tired of falling short, all who are tired of failing and never feeling like you are enough—come to me, I will take that burden. I already have. You can trust me. Look to the cross and you can know that I’ve already dealt with it. Trust me that I will carry it.”

Our God would be willing to do all of this, that journey that we feel, that restlessness that we feel, the want for more—it can only be found in Jesus, only in His Spirit. It is the only thing that will fulfill. It’s the only thing that will satisfy. It is the only hope that we have of finishing well and living the life that He has for us.

I want to make something really, really clear. You know that it goes from the yoke of the Law to the yoke of the Spirit. But see this:

WE STILL HAVE A YOKE

You know, a lot of times we begin to follow Jesus, we get excited. God dealt with all of the things that I used to struggle with, He forgave me for all of those things and then He puts a yoke on us? Yeah. And we get baptized and then we take the yoke off, and we leave like, “That was great. Now I’m going to go back and figure out how to really live my life.”

But what He’s offering is still a yoke. It’s light. It’s easy. But it’s light and easy because He’s doing the heavy lifting. It only works when you get in there with Him. And you can hear it in the teaching when He says, “I want to teach. I want to show you what you’re missing. I want to show you how to walk in a new way. I want to show you that there is a way to do this thing where you don’t get chewed up and spit out by this machine that just destroys everyone. I’m going to give you something different. It’s very different but you have to be really close to Me. Let Me teach you.”

As far as I can tell, there is no orientation in heaven. It starts right now. If you’re wondering what heaven is going to be like, what will I be like? It starts right now where Jesus is bringing

you to Him, with Him, and saying, “No, no. Follow Me. As I go, you go. As I step, you step.”

And when you begin to follow Jesus, you being to run and go as far as you can and He’s holding you and it feels like you’re just running up against the wall and Jesus is like, “That’s not the way you do things. This isn’t an earthly thing. This is a heavenly thing I’m trying to show you. We walk slowly. We move not in slowness, we move right on time. We move in a way that—since I know that I designed you and I know how you live and I know what is best for you, I’m going to walk with you and unlock that for you.”

And this is what it looks like to follow Jesus. If you are in a yoke with Him, now that’s the big difference. As you begin to go into wherever you are going from here, whether it’s school, work, family, home, whatever it is, now you’re stepping into it with Jesus beside you. All of those weights and all of that worry and all of the things that you were trying to do to justify yourself, to feel like you could fit in or for you to succeed, now you walk in, and Jesus is like, “No, we don’t do that here.

“Let me show you how to walk into this classroom. Let me show you how to approach the teacher. Let me show you because now you’re going to speak as if I was actually there. You’re going to love like I was actually there. And you’re not going to feel the weight of it, but you’re going to be able to experience it because it’s going to be Me working through you.”

Is this not blowing anyone’s mind? This is what Jesus offers us. Now you go into your friend groups. And you see all of this gossip going around and you see people moving at all of these speeds and all of these unhealthy things going on around you. Before, you just jumped into the loop. You just followed and went by. But now you have Jesus walking with you and He’s stopping you. And He’s helping you call things out. And He’s helping to show you things within yourself, “We can’t have that here anymore because we’re going to move at a different speed. We’re going to talk in a different way. We’re going to love in a different way.”

And it begins little by little. How you are as a friend. How you are as a parent. Everything that you are doing, now because Jesus has decided to yoke Himself to you, it’s as if He is there. That is literally our lives from here on out, “What would Jesus do if He were me in this very specific situation?”

And I just want you to look at Jesus. And this week, go through a gospel and read the gospel, but not just for the words that He says but for how He lived, the rhythms that He lived with. What He focused on. What He prioritized. It’s amazing. It’s not that He had less expectations, it’s not like He had less demands on His life, but He lived in such a pure and healthy way.

You know, I think a lot of times we can actually feel like we are the hope of the world in our little circles. He literally was the hope of the world. And He stayed constant. And He stayed strong. And He stayed true. And He went through all of it.

Look at the way that He lived. How He would slip away and find quiet. How He would pray. How He would always prioritize His relationship with God. And how He still found Himself around tables and in communities with other people eating good food and living—just look at His life and say, “I want that.” And the amazing thing is that that’s what He’s trying to give you. He wants you to live at this new speed.

The goals that we have, the metrics that we have of what success looks like, it’s not working. And I love what Paul says in 1 Thessalonians. If you’re looking for a goal to add to your life, what about this one? He says:

“Make it your goal to live a quiet life,” all of the introverts just celebrated silently. He’s preaching now, this guy, he’s good. Tell them. “Make it your goal to live a quiet life, minding your own business and working with your hands, just as we instructed you before. Then people who are not believers will respect the way you live, and you will not need to depend on others.”

I know how big of a switch that would have to be, to be able to come to a space where you’ve been running and gunning and living so hard and grinding for so long, to be able to say, “What if a goal of my life was to live a quiet life? A life where I’m going to have to retreat at times, where I’m going to have to press pause sometimes, when I’m going to trust that this speed that God is taking me at will take me away from a lot of things—but maybe it’s not taking me away from them as it’s saving me. What if God has something that He wants to show me and give me, but it can only be found at this speed, moving at this time?” What if we can come to that place?

I just want to talk to someone here today. Maybe you’ve come in with all of that baggage, all of that pain. You are still struggling with it right now and you are on the verge of snapping. You’ve been running so hard. And maybe it’s externally, it’s something secular, but maybe it’s been in the church that you’ve been growing up with this idea of this thirst for God and this want for God, but you always seem like you are falling short. Please see this. Jesus wants to carry it for you. Jesus wants to be in it with you.

And I just want to read, there is this guy, Eugene Peterson, who spent a good part of his life translating the whole Bible into a modern language so that people can read it and really grip onto it and understand what the Scripture is saying. What he did with Matthew is worth reading over and over again today. It’s just beautiful. And he says:

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest.” There’s a rest here that Jesus is offering that’s not going to come from another nap, it’s not going to come from taking your time making coffee, or playing basketball, it is a rest of your soul. It is a rest that you can enter into today and for all of eternity. It is the only thing that alleviates the burden and the weight.

“Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it.” Look at this, “Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you.” If there is something heavy or ill-fitting

on you right now, please know that that is not of God. He did not put it there, but you might feel it because He's looking to get it out of there.

"Keep company with me," the God of this universe not only puts up with you, not only likes you, loves you, He wants to keep company with you, "and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." That is something that you can step into starting today. And we just want you to know that we're here for you. Online, we're here for you. At all of the campuses, we'll have people at the front of the stage right after service. They would love to pray with you, talk with you about what it looks like to walk with Jesus, to be yoked with Him and His Spirit.

And for me, as I go into Sabbatical, this is what I'm going to do. I'm going to sit and to be with God. To learn these unforced rhythms of grace to live a quieter life, to live a more fruitful life, to be able to just sit with God.

And I'll tell you it's a fear that I have the closer I get to Sabbatical, and it really came out first service when I was preaching, see, I came to Jesus and started serving Jesus at the same time. I immediately went into it. And I think there is a part of me—I don't think, I know, that I have always strived to do the right thing. I've always tried and just thought, "Man if I could be a little bit better. If I could do a little bit more. If I could alleviate the pain that other people feel, they might be in a really hard time or some people who might really hurt them, but if I could learn to live a little bit better, and if I could love a little bit better, and if I could be a little bit more perfect, I could take some of that weight."

And if I'm being honest, I was serving, and I had the tendency to believe that if I just served a little bit more, then I could also just deal with the wrestling that I had of wanting to be perfect and trying to justify myself. And there is something scary about going away for an extended period of time where you no longer have this stage and you no longer have hospital visits and you no longer have counseling sessions, you don't really have a way to justify the fact that God still loves you and He still wants to be with you.

So, I'm going to go and I'm going to sit in that. And I pray that God just evokes in me new things and new rhythms and new speed. I hope I learn to hear His voice a little bit better. I hope I learn to walk like He walks and talk like He talks and that I come back in a few months, and I get to serve you out of an overflow for the next seven years.

You know, growing up I would stay at my grandparent's house a lot. And every night we would be in the back room, my cousin and I, and my grandpa would be in the front room watching TV. And it was like clockwork. We'd hear the TV turn off. We'd hear him walking and we could hear him coming. He was a big guy. You could hear the floor give way to his weight. And he'd get all the way to the door, and he'd open it up. We'd pause the game and he'd put his tongue on his lip and say, "If you boys don't mind, I'm going to retire for the night." Big smile. Closes the door.

And with that, I just want to say, if you don't mind, I'm going to retire for the summer. And I just want to take one more time up here to say that I'm very thankful. It's not missed on me what

we have here and what you've allowed me to do and how you've allowed me to serve and how you have loved me and carried me through in a lot of ways over these past eight years. And I'm really looking forward to being with God and I'm really excited, Lord willing and the creek don't rise, to come back after the summer to preach and to be able to serve you even better these next seven years.

Let me pray for you:

God, we thank You so much for today. God, let it not be missed on us what You offer and how sweet it is. How good of a thing it is to be yoked to You. That what we have through Your Spirit is the power to do exactly what You would do if You were us. God, allow that to give us the confidence to walk a little slower, to talk a little sweeter, to have a little bit more courage and confidence.

God, for all who are on the edge, who are at the breaking point, God, I pray that there would be a moment of surrender. I pray that they would hear that what You say, You mean, "Come to Me all who are weary and tired," and You will give them rest. God, rest cannot be found outside of you, and especially not the rest that You're offering. God, I pray that people could experience it, they could know Your love and know a relationship with You.

And, God, we just pray for that. We pray for Your Spirit to just guide us, to lead us. God, allow us to finish well. Allow us to live a quiet life where we don't need to prove anything to anybody because we know who we are, we are Your sons, and we are Your daughters.

We are the ones that You deemed worthy enough to die for. We are the ones that You decided to dwell within, that our bodies would be turned to temples of the living God. God, let nothing be missed on us. Jesus, You're an amazing, amazing God. Thank You for all things. In Jesus' name. Amen.