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[00:00:06] Let's all stand together. We're in the Book of Isaiah today. So if you have your Bibles, go ahead and open up to Isaiah chapter one. And while you're turning to Isaiah Chapter one, also want to ask you to put some type of marker in Matthew Chapter six. And so whatever that might be, your credit card, your neighbor's hand, however it works. Just Matthew, chapter six. We're going to wrap up the study today with some verses in that chapter. Well, God says to us today in Isaiah, chapter one, verse 18. And this is really good. Come now. Let us reason together, says the Lord. Though your sins are like Scarlet. They shall be as white as snow, though they are red, like crimson. They shall become like wool. Somebody say. Thank you, God, for that. If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat of the good of the lamb. But if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword for the mouth of the Lord or the mouth of Yahweh has spoken. Let's pray together. Father. Thank you, God. Thank you. And thank you again that you speak to us through the Scriptures. God, you speak to us through your word. Father, we know today that what we hold in our hands is not. A book that is written by man, is not the reflection of the mind of man or the philosophy of man. God, it is your very word, inspired, breathed through instruments that you have chosen. And today we surrender ourselves and yield to the authority of Scripture. God. We give you our lives. We come with open hands and open hearts. Father not desiring that any part of our heart would be sealed off from you. God, no closed doors, no restricted areas.

[00:02:10] God, no. No fly zones for you. Father, we pray that you would have total and complete authority and influence over our lives today as you speak to us through your word, in Jesus name, amen. You can have a seat. The title of today's message is Why We Live by the book. Why We Live By the Book. And before I explain that to you today, I mean, actually, it might just pretty much sound obvious, but there needs to be some explanation to that. Before I do that, I'll want to remind you, I know you know this, but I'm going to say it anyway. This book is not God. Right. This book is not God. We do not worship. We do not worship the Bible. We worship. The God of the Bible. This book leads us to a living relationship with God according to the Scriptures, because we believe that the Holy Scriptures are in fact and we discussed this last week. They are, in fact the inspired words of God. In fact, this book is authoritative because it is inspired. Understand that today it's not inspired or excuse me, it's not authoritative because of who published it or whether you have it in digital or or hardback form. It has authority because. Because these are the very words of God, in fact. It is fair, of course, to say, as we're studying the Scriptures. It is fair for me to say, Hey, the Bible says. The Bible says. It says in the Scriptures, it's good for me to say that it might even be more appropriate for me when we open the Bible. For me to say to you, God says, when we read the Scripture today and we started with the words God says, we did so because this is the Word of the Lord

[00:04:08] for us. The Bible is authoritative because it's inspired by God. And not only is it authoritative in a general sense, it's authoritative in a personal sense. When you open the book, God is speaking to you. The amazing thing today is this there may be thousands of people that gather here or or watch online and listen to what is spoken as the word of God is read. And, you know, all of us can walk away today with a deep sense that God has spoken to us personally. We can walk away saying, you know what, God ministered to me. God spoke to me. I mean, it was somebody said this earlier this week to me, Pastor, you've been reading my email. Has my wife been telling you what's going on in my life? And the answer I mean, sometimes that does happen, but more often than not is not. Listen. That's the Holy Spirit. That is the spirit of God. That is the ability and the power and the authority of the Word of God, as it's read, to be set forth like an arrow into your heart and to meet you right in the middle of everything that's going on in your life so that you can walk out of a room, you know, where the unbelieving world looks at and says, Man, you guys are. You're so out of date. You're so anachronistic. You're so not with the times. You're reading this ancient book that has no value or purpose or relevance for today. And we can walk out of this room saying that God spoke to me and God revealed himself to me and God is changing me. Can you say amen to that today? And that is the case. That is the case because we open the book and as we do, the full authority of God pours through the Bible, it pours through the Bible.

[00:05:52] You know, in World War Two, when we declared war against Germany. I mean, it would have been one thing if a citizen of the United States said, hey, listen, we're you know, with everything that's going on, we declare war against Germany. I mean, that citizen has no authority, has no power, would have pretty much been ignored if somebody that was in the Senate or a Congress woman or a congressman said, hey, just want to let you guys know with everything that's going on, we're declaring war against Germany. I mean, there might be some more weight to it, right? It might cause you to it might have caused you to kind of perk up and to listen that maybe something was going to go down. But it wasn't until the president of the United States. It wasn't until the one who had the authority who was able to, like, gather up the full authority and weight of the nation because that power had been vested in him. It wasn't until he said that we were going to war against Germany that everyone understood the reality of what was going on. And I'm saying to you today, we looked at this last week, God has spoken. We believe the Bible to be the inspired word of God. Well, as we have believed that, we also acknowledge that the full authority of God comes with his spoken word. That is true. Do you believe that today, by the way? Do you believe that today God authoritatively speaks to us. He speaks to us authoritatively, through his commands. But then, in addition to that, there is this grand narrative. There is this glorious story that is absolutely true is the story of God's creation and perfection with Adam and Eve as image bearers.

[00:07:30] And of course, they send in, transgressed, they trespassed against God's known command, and humanity fell. And the story the story from that point on is a story of God's love and how he redeems humanity to himself over the course of time, and particularly through the nation of Israel, all of it culminating in the glorious message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, who is the only begotten Son of God who came from. Heaven to earth to die on a cross for our sins, and was victoriously raised from the dead on the third day. This is the story, right? This is the story is the authoritative because it's God's story and we respond to it. I think it's important for us today to just describe what it means to respond to the authority of God's word. And today, the description is up on the screen for you. This is important for us to consider this. It will be up on the screen for you in a second. So responding to the authority of God's word means that we are daily surrendering every aspect. Of our lives. We'll put this in the personal for for for you and for me, for us daily, surrendering every aspect of yourself and your life to God by living in a faith filled relationship with Jesus and being obedient to His Word daily, surrendering every single day we're coming to God and we're giving to him every aspect of your life. Let me ask you a question. Who does that perfectly today? Raise your hand. All right. That's good. We had one person raise their hand in the first service. Now it's really concerned. All right. I'm really concerned. How many of you would say that you need to grow in this? Raise your hand.

[00:09:18] All right, that's good. Look at you. Some of you like you raise your hand as quickly as you could to acknowledge that it was the right thing to do, then pulled it down as quick as you possibly could because you didn't want other people thinking that you're not perfect. Well, guess what? You're not perfect. We're all growing, right? We're all in relationship with God. He is sanctifying us on a daily basis. We are learning that there are more areas of our lives that need to be surrendered. You know, if on the day that you put your faith in Jesus Christ, God showed you all of the ways that you were an absolute rebellion against him, you wouldn't have been able to handle it. And so God graciously brings you along, right as you're living in a place of daily relationship, faith filled walking with Jesus Christ, what does God do? God shows you progressively areas of your life that needs to be need to be yielded in surrender doors that you have that have been closed to God, restricted areas, no fly zones. And as we grow in relationship with Him, as God reveals those things to us, we lay those down to Him submitting to the authority of his word, and we experience the power of his cleansing and healing work in our lives. I think that God's Word is in authoritatively loving invitation to come and have a relationship with him. I think that God, through His Word, is saying, Hey, I love you and I have a plan for you and I have a purpose for your life and you matter to me and you are treasured and the Scripture is God reaching out to you. I, I so deeply appreciate what Isaiah says.

[00:10:51] And of course, this is the word of doorway. Come, let us reason together. Like, doesn't that blow you away? That God would ever even be in a place where He would condescend in such a way, and generously and graciously and tenderly reach out to us and invite us towards himself in an invitation to say to us, Come, let us reason together, not as if God is on the wrong side or God has done the wrong thing. But we all together have been in rebellion against God. We've shaped our lives with no space for Him to dwell in. And yet, in spite of that, God says, because the Bible says God is love, He reaches out to us and invites us towards himself, acknowledging and declaring that the issue has been our sin all along, and then beautifully providing forgiveness and cleansing and healing and restoration. You know, God speaks authoritatively because what he says is true and there are real consequences to the way that we respond. Remember today that when God speaks, he's not saying, hey, listen, you know, if this feels good for you, God is not saying, hey, if it's convenient for you guys, not saying, you know, I mean, there's lots of options out there and maybe you could consider me, but if you don't consider me, no problem, that is not the way the commands of God work. That is not the way the authority of Scripture works. God speaks in truth, and there are real consequences to the way that we respond. In fact, I think and of course, we wouldn't say this is the ultimate purpose of the expression of scripture, but I do think that the Bible in some ways it well, obviously it does it conveys the story of how people respond to the word of God.

[00:12:42] I'm not saying that that's the ultimate purpose for a scripture, but if you read the word of God, what you understand is God is disclosing to us the various ways that people respond and the consequences. I think about Adam and Eve and the obedience and the disobedience. I think about Abraham and Sarah and their willingness to go out to a land that was totally unknown to them. I think about Cain and Abel and the various ways, the contrast to how they responded to God's Word or Peter and Judas or the religious leaders and the disciples. God invites us to come. But understand today there are consequences to how we respond to his invitation. Today, if you're taking notes, I have a couple of points to share with you today. And this is really the the trajectory that we're on today. We're going to talk about the reasons why we surrender and submit to the authority of God's word. And then at the very end, we're going to talk about how we can do this on a practical basis. Day by day. Now, the first reason that we should be responding to the authority of God's word is probably pretty obvious to you. And it's this Yahweh is God, Yahweh, he is God. You say, Well, Derek, why are you using the name your way? Because I want to make sure you understand the God that we're talking about. I'm not talking about the pantheon of the Greek gods today. I'm not talking about the God of Mormonism or the God of the Jehovah Witnesses. I'm not talking about the various gods that are represented in various religions throughout the world. I'm talking about the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

[00:14:23] Let's just make sure today that we know which God we're talking about. And He is Yahweh is God. And look, this is super low hanging fruit today. His essence requires our obedience. His essence requires our obedience. I'm saying to you and it's so obvious, right, that because he's God, the right response for us is to obey him. In fact God says This is God speaking in Isaiah, chapter 45, verse five, he says, I am the Lord, the word Lord in capital letters. We know that to be the name of God, I am Yahweh, and there is no other besides me. There is no God. Like, just to be clear, there is one God, and that God requires our obedience because He is God. Like, this is not a foreign concept. We submit to authority all the time. Tomorrow, or maybe later today you're going to go to work and. And you have a boss, you know, you have a manager, you have a pit boss. You work for a CEO. Whatever the case may be, you're going to find yourself sometime probably this week, you know, interacting with your boss. And and you're going to have to yield to the authority that's been invested in her in this employee employer relationship that you have. You know how that works. And when you don't do that, when you step out of line, there's a problem for some of you, your athletes, you have a coach. And I was watching our football team practice this week. And, you know, they're doing push ups and and, you know, they're they're running sprints. And I got tired just watching them. I'm telling you, I'm like, thank God those days are over because I'd never make it. But, you know, if you don't respond to the authority of your coach the right way, you're in trouble.

[00:16:10] You're going to run more sprints, you're going to do more pushups, you're going to do a bunch of up downs. Some of you, you love Disneyland. You you go to Disneyland and there's a ride. Operator And you know what? You obey the ride. Operator You get on the ride. When they tell you to get on the ride, you get off the ride. When they tell you to get off the ride, we get how authority works. And if it works that way for our boss or for our coach or the ride operator at Disneyland, it should work in our relationship with our maker, with our creator. Like, who is he? Who is he? He is the one who is made us. He is the one who has created us. The Bible says that we were knit together while we were yet in the matrix of our mother's womb. We are fearfully and wonderfully made. By who? By the process of natural selection, I think. Not by God, the Almighty God. And that is sufficient reason. It's sufficient reason. Well, some of you are like, Yeah, well, I get that, but but I really think we should respond to his authority because he's merciful and tender and loving and long, long suffering. And I'm with you. All right. I'm with you. We're going to talk about that in just a minute. But let's just land on the reality that he is almighty. He is our maker before he says these words to Israel, come now, let us reason together to the Jews living in the time of Isaiah. He said to them, he said to them, You guys are not living in submission. You're not living under the authority of my word. And it's a it's a fascinating thing for me to see, because even creation understands how this works.

[00:17:45] He says to them, The ox knows it's master. He says to them, The donkey knows this master's crib. So so we get a little ghetto talk there, you know, from from the scriptures. Even the donkey knows his master's crib. But my people do not know. My people do not know. My hands have been stretched out to a rebellious people. God says, like of all people, you, the Jewish people living in Judea some 600 years before the birth of Christ, should know because of how sufficiently I've disclosed myself to you. And yet you are living in a place of constant rebellion. You've compartmentalized me. You've got these festivals and these fast and. And the Sabbath said that you keep what is convenient for you. You go to temple and yet your heart is not in it. And I've been reaching out to you. And so now I say to you even more fully, come, let us reason together. Is it not sufficient? She ain't that I'm your maker. Is it not sufficient that I'm the almighty God who is love you so faithfully? God wraps this up. And Isaiah, chapter 66, verse one. And he establishes how just the fact that he is the Almighty Creator is sufficient reason for us to submit our lives wholly to him. The Bible says in verse one of chapter 66, thus says the Lord, or thus says Your way, or God speaks to His people, saying, Heaven is my throne and the Earth is my footstool. What is the house that you will build for me and what is the place of my rest? All these things my hand has made. So all these things came to be, declares the Lord, check this out. But this is the one to whom I will look.

[00:19:31] He or she, who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word and trembles at my word. God says, Listen, I'm not looking for your sacrifice. I'm not looking for you to build me a house, because what house could ever contain me? The Almighty all present God, that's not what I'm looking for. My heart, my desire, my eyes are searching for that individual who is who is humble, who is humbled themselves, who understand that I am God and they are my created being who has a heart of contrition, a willingness for self-evaluation, to acknowledge those areas of departure and misalignment. And and a response to my word, where they tremble. Man, when's the last time? When's the last time we were in a place? You were in a place? I was in a place where God's disclosure to us, through his word was so powerful, was so visceral, so personal, that we just got on our face before the Lord and poured our hearts out to Him. Where we lit literally trembled. We trembled because we knew that we were hearing the Word of the Lord today. Maybe you're sitting here and maybe, maybe even as a believer and and, you know, you've compartmentalized God and you've got pieces and parts of your life that are yielded to his authority. And I would just I would I would plead with you today. I would plead with you today by reminding you that he is the Almighty God and he is worthy of your obedience. But not only that, because God doesn't just leave it there. The second thing is this God is located His authority in His Son Jesus. The second reason that we are enticed and we are lovingly drawn to a place of absolute surrender to God is because He has located His authority in His Son Jesus.

[00:21:34] I know I said this to you and I'm going to say it again because I think it's just important. This book is not about a bunch of rules to follow, right? This book is not about some various principles to live your life. I you know, sometimes I I'll be talking with somebody who's not a follower of Jesus. And and, you know, I'll say, well, I'm a Christian, you know, and maybe I'll even share that I'm a pastor. And invariably, invariably they're like provoked for some reason to say, Well, I follow the Ten Commandments, you know, yeah, I get that spiritual thing, you know, and I got you. But, you know, what I try to do is I try to live my life by the Ten Commandments, which I don't say this, but I'm like, really? Like, what a bummer for you. What a bummer for you. Because they're good. They are good, but they do not lead us to a relationship with God. They expose our failure. You know, the Ten Commandments isn't some rule that's given by God that that we try to live up to so that somehow God can be pleased with us. The Bible says in the book of Romans that that God gave the Lord so that all mouths would be stopped before him. It proves not our innocence. It proves our guilt. Or sometimes people, the unbelieving individual, you know, that is trying to like express some sense of spirituality, will say to me, Will I live by the Golden Rule? I know you're dude, I know you're dude. And he said, do unto others as you would have them do unto to yourself. And and I think you're dudes a cool dude, you know, that Jesus guy. And I even had a bumper sticker on my car at one point in time or a little fish or something like that.

[00:23:04] And so, you know, I just try to live my life that way by the Golden Rule or NT. Wright. Who is a very well-respected new New Testament scholar. He frames it like this that sometimes we look at the Bible as if it's a book filled with good advice, you know, like, hey, you know, your life is messed up. Well, there are some really good principles in the book. And so if you just would, would open up the book and, and live your life to those principles, things will get better. Let me just say to you, in some sense that's true, because there is power. There is power. There is a blessing in being obedient to God, even if you're not a Christian. These are principles he's established there. Principles that are. In the spiritual realm, just like he has established principles in the physical realm. But the Bible is not about you getting to know the principles of God, because the authority is not in a principle. It's in a person. It's in the person of Christ. It's in a living relationship with Jesus. You know that if you leave the person out of the principles, all you will be left with is the law. That's all you'll be left with. And when you operate by the law, it is about your performance before God. Well, how are you doing today? How are you doing today? How are you performing today? Well, it's not the case when you put your trust in faith in Jesus Christ, because, you know, when you do, it's not about your performance. It's about his performance. All authority has been vested in the in the person of Christ. And just so you know this, let me give you some scripture.

[00:24:36] As the Bible says in Matthew 28, 18, Jesus speaking, all the authority has been given to me in heaven and on Earth. John three, verse 35 The father loves the son and is given all things into his hand. John, 17, verse one. Father, Jesus says in the high priestly prayer. Father, the hour has come. Glorify your son. That your son also may glorify you, as you have given him authority over all flesh. Does that include you today? Does that include you today, as you've given him authority over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as you have given him? And this is eternal life. Check this out. We'll talk about this more when we get to this chapter in John's gospel in about 24 weeks. And this is eternal life that they may know you, that they may know you. So Jesus isn't saying, hey, eternal life is this distant place, you know, this geographical location that you will end up at one place in time. No, he's saying when people put their trust and faith in me, that's when eternal life begins. Because eternal life is knowing the father and knowing the son. And this is eternal life that I may know you, the only true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. Look, the reality of all authority being invested in the Son is why Jesus can claim exclusively that He is the door. He is the door to everlasting life. He is able to say, I'm the good shepherd. He is the one that shepherds the souls of men and women. He is the one who is exclusively able to say, I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the father but by me.

[00:26:30] Today, if you want to be right with God, you need to put your trust in faith in Jesus Christ. If you want to be forgiven, if you want to be fulfilled, if you want to be healed, if you want to be empowered for the purpose that God has for you. If you want to live in everlasting relationship with God, the message of Scripture, God says all authority has been vested in the Son, and so He is the one who is able to do that in your life today. Maybe you need that. Maybe today you need this. Maybe you've been bearing the burden of guilt and shame. Maybe you're looking over the course of your life and you see all those things that have fallen short of the glory of God. And there's that dysfunction and that toxicity that exists not only in your life, but has has bled over into the lives of people. And you're bearing that burden of guilt today. You can be forgiven today. That burden can be lifted today. You can know that you were accepted and received by God, the Father, through faith in his son. Today, maybe you've been lacking purpose for your life and satisfaction. I shared this on the earliest service. You know, whenever I say the word satisfaction, I've no idea why this happens. But I think immediately of the Rolling Stones. It's not my fault, okay? It's just not. But. And honestly, I don't even really like the Rolling Stones. But but for some reason, you know, Mick Jagger's voice just resounds. Yeah. You need to pray for me. Okay? That's. That's just especially when I'm preaching. But, you know, is that. Is that proverbial declaration of humanity? I can't get no satisfaction. Right? There's that emptiness.

[00:28:09] There's that hole in your life. There's the inability for that thing to be fulfilled. And no matter what you try to put in that place to satisfy that need that the world has to offer, it just seems to grow. And that is because the only one who is able to satisfy that need that you have in your life is Jesus Christ. And when you put your trust in Him, you know you don't have this thing. I can't get no satisfaction. You can you can see I have been fully satisfied. I've been fully satisfied. Jesus is more than enough for me. Today maybe you need that healing. Or like I said, maybe you need that empowering. All of it comes through the person of Christ. And so let me remind you, Christians aren't just good people we're Jesus. People were not just good, people we're Jesus people. It's not as if we've gathered together and somehow we pulled ourselves up by our moral bootstraps and made us up, made ourselves appealing to God. That is absolutely not the case. We have oriented and centered our lives around the person of Jesus Christ, and we through him have been reading this in that good news today. Yeah. So we yield we surrender to the authority of God because he is God. He is located his authority in the person of his son. If you want to get to the father, you've got to come through the son and and through his son. This is point number three, through his son. He appeals to us. He appeals to us to come. God appeals to us. God is not just seeking to coerce us or manipulate us or browbeat us into submitting to his authority. He appeals to us to come to him through his son.

[00:30:01] What a beautiful statement God makes through the Prophet Isaiah. Come now, let us reason together, says the Lord, though your sins are like Scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Those are red like crimson. They shall be as wool. I mean, you know, it was a good word for the Jewish people at the time. And, of course, he's calling them to come to himself to offer sacrifices on the brazen altar there in the temple. But but prophetically, there's an even more profound fulfillment that we have to the person of Jesus Christ some 600 years later. There was the son of God, the logos, the word of God, God incarnate. The word became flesh. He lived a perfect life, and he laid his life down in substitution. Every sacrifice for you and for me, so that God could say to us, Come, let us reason together, though you have been stained by your sins, though you have been stained by your sins. I will wash that stain away though it is red like crimson, and you will be as pure as new wool. And of course, the the mindset there is this beautiful sheep that is spotless. The wall is spotless before the Lord. You know, sometimes we have the tendency when we think about the authority of God to think, well, God doesn't really understand. God doesn't understand God's up there. He's disconnected. He's far away. He's God. I'm a human being. Like He doesn't even understand me. Or we have maybe the tendency to think that God doesn't care, that He's disconnected from the concerns of our life. Or maybe we have this view of God that he's angry or abusive or mean that is a bully and that he just wants to hurt us.

[00:31:46] And if that's what you've been thinking, let me say, number one, stop listening to other people's versions of God. Stop listening to other people's versions of God. And number two, let me say this. Stop projecting versions of God that come from your life experience where people have abused authority because you know that that happens in our life. We can have a we can have a boss, we can have a parent, we can have a spouse abuse authority. And, you know, if we're not careful, what we'll do is we'll take that toxic, dysfunctional experience that we've had and we will project it falsely upon God and will begin to think that God is just like those people who have failed us. And I've got good news for you today. He is not. He is all together. He's all together different. He's altogether unique. He is absolutely. And in every way perfect and good. And today there's an invitation that he gives to fully receive all that he's done. You know, some of us are living with tapes. You know, I just dated myself. I could have said eight track tape and, you know, but I did it. But I remember listening to a track tapes. Imagine that we have tapes that are playing in our mind. We have ways of thinking that God wants to deconstruct attitudes that we have about him. You know, sometimes thinking that God is an individual, is this being that somehow is abusive and mean that he wants to hurt us and that is just not the case? How do we know that's not the case? We know it's not the case. By looking at Jesus. Jesus is the perfect reflection of the father. Remember today and we'll talk about this as we go through, John, to it's not as if God is this mean angry out to get you want to ruin your good time take away all the fun stuff kind of God.

[00:33:40] And then you have this son who's gentle and loving and compassionate, and he pacifies the anger of the father. That is not how it works. The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are fully united in their attitude towards you and their attitude towards you is this you are a treasure in the eyes of God. You are wonderful and beautiful creation, that he has purpose, that He has a plan for. And, you know, that's the case. As you look at Jesus Christ, Hebrews chapter one, verse one says this long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers, by the prophets. But in these last days, He has spoken to us by his son, whom he appointed the air of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of His nature. Isn't that amazing? Isn't that amazing? Let me read that last verse again. Here is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature. So, you know, today I'm talking about really yielding and surrendering to the full authority of God. And you're thinking, well, why would I do that? Why would I do that? I've heard you say, Pastor, I do it because God is God, that all of his authority has been located in the person of Christ and through Christ. He beckons us to come to himself. But what does that mean? Well, it means this. God says to you through Jesus, Hey, there's a thing between us, and the thing is your sin. It's not that I've been wrong. It's that you've been in the wrong place. It has ruined our relationship. But I will fix it through my son.

[00:35:21] I will fix it through my son. This is how God is express his authority. If you're taking notes today, there are four things about the son I want you to consider and I want to encourage you to anchor your life to God expressed his authority. Number one, through the incarnation of Jesus Christ, through the incarnation of Jesus Christ, we yield and submit to those things that God has said, because we know through the Incarnation that that our Savior is humble, that God himself is humble. This is what Paul says in Philippians chapter two, Let This Mind Be in You, which was also in Christ Jesus, who did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but divested himself and humbled himself and came in the likeness of man taking on the form of a bond servant, the incarnation, the word becoming flesh, the ultimate condescension of the son from the throne of Heaven, from the glory and adulation of angels to taking on a human body. Among his creation is the greatest expression of humility. And as we see the son bridging that gap, we understand that this is what God did. How far did God reach? Well, God reached all the way and through his son. He identified with us. He associated with us. He relates to us. I'm saying to you today that God does understand. God does understand. You can never say and I know there are times where we feel like this, believe me, believe me, I know this. There are times where we're in the midst of our pain. We say, God, you don't understand. But that's when we have to anchor ourself to Christ in His incarnation. And remember that He does He does understand. You know, we don't have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but he was in all points, tempted as we are tempted.

[00:37:08] And yet he is without sin. What does that mean? He knows what you're going through. He knows the agony. He knows the pain. He knows the sense of vastness. He knows what it means to be confronted with temptation. He knows what it means to be betrayed by friends. He knows what it means to be denied. He knows what it means to be rejected by his own. He understands that. And the incarnation compels us to concede to God because it's the greatest expression of humility. You can never say, Well, God, you're out there and I'm here. God says, No, I bridge the gap by my son. I bridge the gap. We yield to his authority because of the incarnation. We yield to his authority because of the crucifixion. The crucifixion is the greatest expression of the love of God the world has ever known in this is love not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent his son to be a procreation for our sins. When we anchor ourselves to the Cross of Christ, we are reminded. We remind ourselves He suffered for us. He sacrificed himself for us. He paid for us. That in those moments where you think, man, God, you just don't care, you know that's not true. You know it's not true because he expressed to you that he couldn't care more. He couldn't care more. There was there's no greater expression of his intimate and personal care for you than the cross of his son. It's in those moments where you think that God is angry with you and mad at you and punishing you and wrathful towards you. Don't get me wrong, we know that God Chase and those whom he loves, like a parent with a child, he is faithful to do that.

[00:38:49] That is different. That is different than punishment or anger or wrath. All of that was taken by Christ when he hung on the cross. Surrender is the language of love. Surrender is the language of love. When you're in a inter-personal relationship with someone that you trust, that you trust. And and, you know, that there's. There's faithfulness and there's loyalty and there's love. What do you do? You take your heart. You take your heart. And you place it on the table. You place it on the table. And you yield yourself to the risk of relationship. Because every relationship's a risk. You yield yourself because you know that that person loves you. And today you can take your heart and place it in the. Hands of God, because he will always be faithful. The third thing you anchor yourself to is the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which reminds us that He is powerful. He rose for us. He broke the power of debt for us. He paved the way to heaven for us. He is able. He is able today. I say to you today that the scripture says that if you come to Christ, you put your faith in Christ and have connection with the Father. This is what He'll do. He'll forgive your sins. The sins that were like scarlet, those stains that you have in your life as you believed in the cross of Christ and the power of His resurrection, those sins will be washed away. I was out too, every time I eat Italian food. I invariably am wearing like a light colored shirt. I don't know how I don't know how this happens. But the other day we were eating and I can't even remember where it was after the meal.

[00:40:31] I walked away and I had food splattered all over, like all over my shirt. And I was so embarrassed because I'm thinking, man, they knew the whole time that little Mister Piggy on the other side of the table is like slurping and splashing food all over the place. Right? And. And you know how it goes. You pull out the tide stick. I mean, I'm not any good at this either. So that's a whole other story. You pull out the tied stick and, you know, you try to deal with that stain. But sometimes there's a shadow left, right. There's a shadow of the stain that you just can't get it all out. And that's not the way it works with your sin. When you put your trust in faith in Jesus Christ, there is no shadow. There is no stain that remains there. There is this is just. You believe that? Do you really believe that? Then stop bringing your sin up. Stop bringing your sin up. I was talking to somebody the other day, and and, you know, they're talking about their life. And and there's stuff in the past, you know, their stuff in the past. And and inevitably, what happens is, is, you know, they recycle these events that that I know about. Right. It's like, dude. Trust in the Lord. Receive the full forgiveness of your sins. God is not reminding you of your sins. So stop reminding yourself. Like stop going back to that trough. Because. Because the devil wants to keep that nonsense cycled up in your life. Don't get me wrong, there is wisdom in remembering where he's pulled you from and not going back there again. But you don't need to remind God. You don't need to remind yourself.

[00:42:07] You are not in this mode of doing penance for your sin. It's not as if like God will receive you a little bit more if you just feel a little worse by your past failures. You want God to be blessed, then receive the full forgiveness that is given you the total pardon through the Person of Christ. But let it go. Let it go. And the stone that was rolled away is God saying to you, I can do this, I can do this in your life? Not only do I have the power, but I have the desire. The final thing is the ascension. He ascended to the right hand of the father. He sits at the right hand for us. Why is he there? What is he doing? It's an expression of his authority. But also the Bible says Jesus, speaking, that he lives forever more to make intercession for those who come to him in faith. What is Jesus doing is praying for you. He's praying for you today. Maybe you rolled in and you're like, I got nobody. I got nobody, Pastor. No one prays for me. No one prays for me. No one cares about me, no one's concerned about me. I raise my hand and no one laid their hand on me. And so, you know, you bear that as a hurt. And I just want to say to you, if you're a believer in Jesus Christ, he is praying for you. Jesus is praying for you. Jesus is your advocate. You know, you've been wounded, you've been victimized. Everyone's abandoned you. Your case has not been handled the way that you think it should be. And, you know, you're thinking, well, who's going to be my advocate? The son is your advocate.

[00:43:36] First, John, chapter two, verse one The son is your advocate. The son is the one who is in your corner. The son is the one who is praying to the father for you. He's interceding. He's laying up your need. You could not be in better hands than you are right now because of your trust and faith in Jesus Christ. He's ascended to the right hand of the father. So? So this is why this is why we choose a lifestyle of obedience. It's because of him. It's because of him. Some of you listen, you've had an experience with God. It's been visceral, it's been existential. It's so real. No one could ever take it away from you. You had a moment with God that was absolutely, undeniably him. And you know what? You've been living off of the inertia of that experience for five months or five years or ten years or 15 years. And as good as those experiences are, they're insufficient to supply you on a daily basis with what you really need. And this is coming from somebody who had one of those experiences. You know, I've said it a hundred times crazy. College aged party person ended up in jail for assaulting a police officer. And God stepped into my life. And He transformed me and changed me. In a moment. I was radically born again, and I thank God for what he did in my life. But that amazing moment, as good as it was, was not sufficient to sustain me over the course of my life. I needed daily communion with the father. Daily communion with the father. You know, the truth is this. There's a good percentage of us who have a relationship of convenience with God in this room.

[00:45:18] It's a relationship of convenience. You know, we look at some of the principles in scripture and we surrender and yield to the authority of some of what God says. But we don't. We don't surrender to all of it. We pick and choose. We pick and choose what we want. And there are some principles that we agree with and some principles that we don't agree with. And the problem isn't the principle. The problem is the person for us. The problem is the person you say, I don't have a problem with Jesus Christ. Well, Jesus said, if you love me, you will keep my commandments. That's what he said. He didn't say, You'll keep some of my commandments. He said, you'll keep all of my commandments. The way that we express our love for Christ is by being obedient to everything that He has said, surrendering and yielding to his authority in a daily faith filled relationship with him and obedience to his word. So so I want you to turn to Matthew. This is just going to take a second. So those of you who are clock watchers, just chill out. Matthew, chapter six. I got to end it like this because today, hopefully you're in a place where it's like, okay, you know what? God, there's a lot of good that you've done in my life. And then at the same time, there's still there's a lot of areas for me to grow in and maybe, maybe I have been conditioned or maybe the relationship is a matter of convenience. And, and there are some principles that I deal the two, but I've not fully surrendered and submitted to the authority of Christ. How do I do that on a daily basis? Well, I just want to remind you of the Lord's Prayer or the model prayer that Jesus gives to his disciples in Matthew Chapter six.

[00:46:59] I believe that this is a prayer, that it provides a guideline. It provides the framework for us in our prayer relationship with God. But it also provides a guideline for our lifestyle. Right. Obviously, when Jesus gave this prayer to his disciples, he was not saying, hey, just memorize this and repeated heartlessly. That's not that's not what he intended. He was saying, use this as a guideline and use it as a guideline, not only in what you pray to the father, but also in how you live. Because those two things cannot be in conflict. Our prayer relationship with the father and the lifestyle that we live need to be congruent. They need to be locked together. So check this out. My encouragement is this week, take this prayer and practically apply it to your life on a daily basis, on a daily basis, and not look something like this. You're going to get up in the morning and let me just read this and we'll go through it, he said, verse nine Prayed then like this Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. And some translation say at this point on for yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. Amen. So you wake up in the morning and you start by acknowledging that God is your father. You're living in relationship with him, our father in heaven. God, I'm in relationship with you. I understand that today you're going to have my full and undivided attention. God, I'm not going to start my day and then walk out this door and forget you and then take you up.

[00:48:50] When I get back home, I'm going to live in communion with you all day long. I'm going to endeavor to be a person that prays without ceasing. He goes on to say, Hallowed be your name, are holy, be your name. And so in that also, you're not just saying, God, I'm in relationship with you, but God, I respect you. I have reverence for you. You are the Almighty God. You're the maker of Heaven and Earth. You are not to be trifled with. You're not to be played with God. You don't want me playing games with you. You deserve my total commitment and submission to the authority of your purposes in my life. I honor you today and I want to honor you with every single decision I make. Your kingdom come, your will be done on Earth as it is in Heaven and God. Not only that, but I recognize that you desire to bring your kingdom here on Earth right now. Heavens, not just this geographical location that I'm going to get to after I die. Your son was incarnate, and he came. So the fullness of heaven could be experienced in my life right now. And so, Father, I'm orienting myself around the purposes of your kingdom. And I'm praying that not only today would you fill my life with your power and your presence, but, God, your kingdom would flow through me and touch the lives of those around me. He says, Give us this day, our daily bread. God, as I'm choosing to live today, I I'm acknowledging that you are my provider. You are the one who is my sufficiency, that I'm not on my own. It's not as if I am the one bringing to pass the issues of my life.

[00:50:28] God, you are the one who is in control. And I am leaning upon you. I'm. Looking to you to be my sufficiency and my provider verse 12 and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors. Forgive us our debts, forgive us our trespasses. God, I'm acknowledging to you that I am not a perfect human being. Let's just pause on that one for a second. God, I'm acknowledging to you that the heart is deceitful and wicked. Who can even know it? God, search me and try me. Disclose to me those areas of disobedience so I can bring them to you in contrite repentance, and that I can experience a forgiveness of my sins. And not only that, but God, as you give me forgiveness, help me to extend your forgiveness to people around me. God, I'm choosing not to live in bitterness. I'm choosing not to live in anger. God, I'm not going to allow the poison of unforgiveness to pollute my heart and damage my relationships. God, I'm going to choose to live in right relationship not only with you, but with those you placed in my life. In verse 13, lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. God, I'm trusting today that you are going to guide my steps. And when temptation comes, help me to endure. Help me to endure. So that, as James says, that the individual who endures temptation one day will receive the crown of righteousness. God, I don't want to say yes to what the devil wants for me. I want to say no to him. I want to say yes to you. I want to walk that straight path so that you might be glorified in my life. For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever.

[00:52:15] And God's people said, Father, thank you, God. We're thankful today for your Word and. And. As you've spoken to us, we. Open up our lives. To you and desire to respond in. Real concrete ways. We want the right response. We want the response that honors you today as are our eyes are closed and as our heads are bowed. I just want to encourage you this morning we are not done with today's time together and. And. Let's be patient today and let's be prayerful today, as there are people in this room who have yet to make the single most important decision of their life, and that is to follow Jesus. Today. If you've never put your trust in faith in Christ. God has been speaking to you today. God is calling you to come to surrender to him. Yes, it's true because he's God. But even more than that, because he has revealed himself to you through his son. God beckons you. To come home to him. To believe in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. That you can be restored and redeemed. And those are big biblical terms that. That simply means that you can belong to God. A treasure in the heart of the Father. All that you've needed. Is found in him. And maybe today, you know, there's been that approach to the scripture where for you it's been. A set of rules are some good advice to follow, but that's not what the scriptures are about. They're about the person of Christ. And you have to have that moment in your life where once and for all, you surrender your heart to the love of Jesus. And you put your trust and faith. In all that he did and all that he said today, if this is you as God is reaching out to you and speaking to your heart, would you would you take that step of faith today? Would you believe in Christ? This is you this morning.

[00:54:51] I want to encourage you right where you're sitting. You'd say, Pastor, that is me. I know I need to believe in Jesus. I want a real relationship with God. I need this burden of sin lifted from my life today. If this is you, raise your hand this morning. I want to see who you are. I want to pray for you today. I see your hand over here on my right. Thank you. And here in the center, in the back. And right here in the center as well. I see your hands over here in the back, on my left. God loves you today. Make no mistake about that. This is what this morning is about. Is his love for you. Stretch your hand up today. Anybody else? I see your hand. I see your hand. I see your hand. You're not too old. You're not too young. God is, God has shaped a word for your heart today for you to once and for all say yes to him. Thank you so much for raising your hand over here on my left. He knows your name. He knows the circumstances of your life. You've nothing to fear. Anybody else. You can put your hands down today as a Christian. Maybe. Maybe for you today, honestly? In some ways, perhaps. God has been a matter of convenience. You know, there there are known areas of your life that are not yielded to or submitted to the authority of God. Areas that need to be. Presented to him and in humble repentance. I'm just just being honest today. God wants, He has a jealous love for you. He wants all of you. All of your heart so valuable you are to have Christian today. If if you need to take that step and you really you need to give God everything.

[00:56:42] You need a moment in time where you can once again have that reconnection with the father and from this point forward, live in that daily rich relationship with this son. If this is you today, would you raise your hand? I want to pray for you, too. God bless you. Thank you so much. I see your hands. I see your hands in the back over here on my left. He loves you, loves you so much. And you can put your hands down. God, thank you. Thank you for these today who have been touched by your word. We pray, God, please, that all that you desire to do in their lives would come to pass right now, in this moment, in Jesus name. Amen. Today, Pastor Tony is going to lead us on a song of worship. And and, you know, and I'm just going to ask you guys, I know it's a little late, but just stay tight. Hang tight with me. This is really the most important part of our service as people are responding to the gospel as God has touched your heart today. God has spoken to you. And, you know, maybe you need to put your trust in faith in Jesus Christ. Maybe as a Christian, there's more of your life that needs to be yielded and surrendered to God. It's good for me to pray for you, but you need a moment in time where you can come to the father and you can confess your need to him, and you can pray to him. And you can have this this real experience with him right here and right now. And that commitment to move forward in relationship with him. And so today, if you raise your hand, we want you to stand right now and to come forward this morning.

[00:58:13] I want to lead you in a very simple prayer as God has spoken to your life, Tony, Tony's going to lead us in a song of worship. Stand right now and come on forward. Give us the opportunity to lead you in prayer today. I'm going to lead you guys in prayer today is God is just so clearly spoken to your heart. We want to encourage you to pray with faith and anticipation as you look to Christ and knowing that as you trust in Jesus, that the Father is going to fulfill His beautiful purpose for you so you can pray this prayer out loud. Just follow me. God today. Thank you. That you have spoken to me today. I'm choosing to trust. In Jesus, your son. Receiving the forgiveness of my sins. Receiving your love and receiving your perfect plan for my life Fill me now I pray with your Holy Spirit in Jesus name amen. Amen.