

Sermon Title: The Triumphal Entry, The Final Week, Week 1

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Sermon Questions:

1. Why was it so hard for those around Jesus to know who he was?
2. Why was it important that Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a colt of a donkey?
3. In what ways did the crowd understand who Jesus was? In what ways didn't they understand?
4. How can you celebrate Jesus this week?
5. How is God inviting you to open your eyes to see him more during Lent?

Transcript

I want to begin the sermon with this question. Do you have eyes to see God at work? Do you have eyes to see God at work? It's a challenging thing to see God at work. Just a few weeks ago we got back from our trip to India with our partners with Mission Voice Network and we don't usually get to do anything touristy.

We actually didn't have any plans to do anything touristy during our time there. But it just so happened that kind of a morning opened up and we're in Madhya Pradesh, which is a state in the heart of India. It's the home of the Bengal tiger. And so we got to go on a jungle safari, which is fantastic. And of course if you're going on a jungle safari in Madhya Pradesh, your hope, your dream is to see a Bengal tiger.

Now I'm going to ruin the story because we didn't see a Bengal tiger. But bear with me here. Bear with me here. They don't just let you go in the park in your own car. You don't drive a bus in the park.

You go in a jeep with a guide, someone who has spent years of their life learning the habits of the Bengal tiger, learning how to spot a Bengal tiger. And sure enough, you'll be driving through the jungle and your guide will just throw up his hand and the driver stops. And then he pops his head out like a bird. He's looking around, listening, and sure enough he's heard a deer warning call or a bird or a monkey warning call. And now he's beginning to kind of locate how that's cascading in the jungle.

And then he's going to, he's like, take this, take this road here. And this is remarkable because a

Bengal tiger is a 500 pound animal. You'd think if you're trying to find a Bengal tiger, you just wait and come lumbering through the underbrush and just listen for that. No, no. These are stealthy animals.

You have to be trained to have eyes to see, to track the Bengal tiger. And so it is with God. We have to have eyes attuned in this world to find, to see where God is at work. And can I just suggest that I don't know if there's ever been a time that's been more challenging to live in, to have our eyes, to have our ears attuned to the work of God in this world. We live in a distracted society where, where stuff is just constantly flipping past us.

Last Sunday, Angela and I are watching the super bowl, the biggest sporting event in America. And the third quarter comes. I'm like, wanna switch the channel, honey? It's kind of boring. I mean, like, how American is that, right?

But it's true, right? Like, we constantly flip. We. We're constantly filled with noise in our life. And it's challenging to see the work of God in front of us.

Here's what I'm going to suggest this morning. That to have our eyes attuned to see the work of God, the evidences of God in this world, we will not have our eyes tuned toward the biggest thing, the most powerful thing, the flashiest things. We have to have our eyes tuned to see humbleness, humility, to see the work of God, the evidences of God is to be attuned to the humbleness of God at work in this world. I want to begin with a passage that Paul writes to the church at Philippi in Philippians 2, where Paul talks about this very thing. He talks about Jesus entire life as an incarnation of the human humility of God.

Let's pick up in Ephesians 2, starting in verse 5, he says this. Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God, a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men and being found in human form. He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Do you want to see God at work in this world? Paul says, then have your eyes tuned, your ears tuned toward the humbleness of God, because Jesus very life is the life of humility.

Now we're starting a sermon series in preparation for Easter called the Final Week. And as we prepare, as we walk through this sermon series, we're gonna walk through every single day in that final week that Jesus was on earth. So Jesus died on a Friday, rose again on a Sunday. And we're gonna begin the Sunday before He rose again, which is the triumphal entry, is what we call this Sunday. And so as we prepare for this, as we prepare our hearts even for Easter, and we walk through this day by day, we're gon.

What is the heart of Jesus in the final week, what are we learning? What are we seeing about

the character of Jesus? And today we're going to reflect on this, the humility of the Savior who enters as a king. So let me. Because we're just dropping into the gospel accounts in the final week, kind of.

Let me set the stage. So the big event that happened just the week before the triumphal entry is that Jesus raises his friend Lazarus from the dead. Jesus is close friends with two sisters and a brother, Mary, Martha and Lazarus. In fact, he's gonna go back and forth from their home in Bethany this final week. It's, you know, to Jerusalem, to Bethany, Jerusalem, to Bethany is what he's gonna do the final week.

And Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead just the week prior. And the reason that's a big deal is because all of a sudden there's this huge target in Jesus ministry. Jesus, of course, had found opposition at the hands of the religious leaders of the time, the Pharisees and the priests and the Sadducees. He's been claiming an authority that they're uncomfortable. There's evidences and claims that he is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God.

And they're uncomfortable with the claims of this new rabbi, this new teacher, Jesus. And so they've resisted him throughout. They've seen these evidences of him turning, of feeding the thousands of healing the blind and the lame. They've seen him teach with authority. And yet all of that all of a sudden just explodes when he raises a man from the dead and he doesn't do so in a hearsay way.

There are many witnesses to the resurrection of Lazarus. And because of that, all of a sudden the heat is turned up to the maximum and they want him to be grabbed, put on trial, arrested, and they want him and his ministry and his life to be over. And so Jesus now has a target on him. And you might think at that time that Jesus is going to, you know, skate back or maybe hide out or whatever. Instead we're going to find he goes straight into Jerusalem on the high holy days, straight into the middle of everything.

So let's open up our text in Luke 19. And we're going to see Jesus walk into Jerusalem and we're going to see what unfolds there on during what we call the triumphal entry, Luke 19, starting in verse 28. And when he, Jesus had said these things, he went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. Now, let me just pause here. Let me kind of situate us kind of in terms of Jesus ministry.

Jesus, his, he's from Nazareth, which is in the north of Israel. We have a map, we're gonna show here. His main ministry is up in the north for the three years of his ministry. He does come down to Jerusalem several times for high holy days during those ministries. But most of his ministry is up north.

And as the time nears for the end of his ministry. We're gonna find him coming to Jerusalem.

Now, you note back in that text. I'll just note, since we have the map up here, you'll also note that Jerusalem is. And I know you probably can't read this map.

That's okay. You can look at it online afterwards if you want. Just two miles to the east of Jerusalem is Bethany. That's where he raises Lazarus from the dead. That's where Mary Martha and Lazarus live as well.

And then we're going to see the text continue over in Luke 19, we see this in verse 29, when he knew, he drew near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mount that is called Olivet. I'll just pause right there in the verse. So he's headed from the east into Jerusalem. And now he's on the Mount of Olives, a significant mount where it's promised that the Messiah will come. In fact, it's from the Mount of Olives that Jesus is ascended to the right hand of the Father after he resurrects from the dead.

And it's on that mount that it's promised that one day he will return. In fact, let me give us. Let me show a picture, if we can. Here. This is by Pastor Greg.

He's an awesome photographer, by the way. And so this is taken from the Mount of Olives. And what we're looking at is in front of us is the Temple, Jerusalem. And the Temple is on the east side of Jerusalem there. If you see that large wall going across, this is the Temple Mount.

This is the entry into the temple entering into the city. In fact, you can't see it in this distance, but actually they walled up. The Turks eventually walled up the east gate to the temple because they knew the Messiah was supposed to come through there. So they figured, well, let's just put a wall up there. So you actually have no openings on there because it's been walled up.

But this is where Jesus is as he looks into Jerusalem, looks into where he will spend the final days of his life. And then he considers what's about to take place. And we see then our Sovereign Lord know exactly what's going to take place. And he orchestrates these next moments. The very end of 29, it continues.

He sent two of the disciples saying, Verse 30. Go into the village in front of you, where on entering it, you will find a Colt tied on which no one has ever yet sat. Untie it and bring it here. If anyone should ask you, why are you untying it? You shall say, this The Lord has need of it.

So Jesus has supernatural knowledge somehow of this colt, of a young donkey that's tied up, it's not been ridden, that's tied up in a certain place. And he even just predicts what's going to happen in this conversation. Hey, if they're like, what are you doing taking my colt, Say, the Lord has need of it. All right, okay, Jesus, that's what we're going to do. You're going to see it play out just that way.

Verse 32. So those who were sent away and found it just as he had told them, and as they were untying the colt, its owner said to them, why are you untying this colt? And they said, the Lord has need of it. And they brought it to Jesus. And throwing their cloaks on the colt, they set Jesus on it.

And so we don't know how, why, we don't know the backstory. Maybe this is. This is a family that has heard of the ministry of Jesus, heard his teachings. Maybe God has just supernaturally opened their heart in this moment. We don't know why, but they freely give this colt.

Now, why a colt? Why in the world of all things, would Jesus come riding into Jerusalem on a baby donkey? Now, just to be clear, sometimes we, like, contextualize things. Hey, it was a lot different then. No, no, no.

Riding on a donkey then was a lot like riding on a donkey. Now, like, this is what the merchants rode. This is what the priests rode. This is not what a warrior rides. This is not what the king rides and Jesus comes riding in on.

I want to take us over to a prophecy that Jesus is fulfilling in this moment. A prophecy out of the Old Testament from the prophet Zechariah. In chapter nine, we read, rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion. Shout aloud, O daughter of Jerusalem. Behold, your king is coming to you righteous and having salvation is he humble and mounted on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

And so it's predicted. Hey, do you want to have eyes to see God? Do you want to be one of the people who knows when the Messiah is arriving? Here's how you will know Zion. You look for someone riding a baby donkey.

Really? Yes. You look for someone arriving in humility. Now, what you ride 2,000 years ago mattered, and it matters today, too. All sorts of social cues are being presented in what we ride, right?

I mean, it matters when you're a little kid and the bike that you ride, it matters when you're an adult. And the car or the Motorcycle that you ride. I remember 16 years old, I was at CDO. Here's where my wife and I went to High School. 16 years old is a big deal, right?

Driver's license happens. And with the driver's license comes that all important question. What now? Are you. How are you going to show up to school?

Are you going to keep taking the bus to school? Is mom going to drop you off? Are your parents buying you a car? You're getting your own wheels, Are you borrowing a car? What's the car

that you're driving?

Well, John Beeson circa 1995, comes rolling in to CDO High School with the borrowed. My parents were kind enough to let me borrow their car. 1978 Toyota Corolla hatchback. Just like the donkey. It's just as cool now as it was then.

I mean, it's pretty cringe, right? So that's the car that I'm riding to school. Meanwhile, like this is the era where you either you had one of, if you're cool, you had one or two kind of cars. You either have the low rider, like you need to be scraping these speed bumps as you enter into the parking lot, or you have the lifted truck, right? Those are the only two options if you're going to be cool.

Meanwhile, I'm driving in 1978 Toyota Corolla hatchback. And this is the deal.

This is what God is saying. This is what Zachariah is saying. He says, do you want to see God at work? Look for the humble things. Look for the humble ones.

Don't look for the things that are exalted in this world. Look for the things that are lowly in this world. In fact, Zechariah continues over in verse 10, he says this. He intentionally now contrasts this baby donkey with the other rides of the ancient world. I will cut off the chariot of from Ephraim and the war horse from Jerusalem.

And the battle bow shall be cut off. And he shall speak peace to the nations. His rule shall be from the sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth. The king of kings will come not with a sword, not with a chariot, but on a donkey and in peace. These are the markers of the Messiah.

You can imagine living in Jerusalem at that time. You've seen the power of Rome in display. You've seen the chariots of Caesar come in through your streets. And now waddling down from the Mount of Olives comes the baby donkey. And here's the amazing thing, the people there get it.

They get it. It's Remarkable. Let's pick up the story and see what happens in verse 37. As he was drawing near, already on the way down the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of his disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen. They're praising God.

They're reflecting on the work of Jesus. And they're praising God. God, I was there that day. He fed the 5,000. Thank you.

Thank you for sending us your Messiah. Praise your name, God. I was there on the day that he

healed that man of his blindness. God, I heard of him raising Lazarus from the dead. Praise your name, O God.

And they praise his name. And they worship. They worship. The one on a donkey continues in verse 38, saying, Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord, Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. Let me just pause before I get there, because what they're doing right there is they're drawing right out of Psalm 118, which I'm going to read in just a moment here.

But can we just reflect on just how jaw dropping this has been? If you read all four gospel accounts, have the triumphal entry and as you read them, marked in every page of the gospel leading up to that is the crowds not getting Jesus like you see it again and again, right? The disciples themselves are totally at a loss to who Jesus is. They don't get it. And yet here of all times, for some reason, the scales are like pulled back and they see who he is, and they're pulling these pieces together in the story that are just remarkable.

In fact, I skipped verse 36, and verse 36 is a big verse. So let me go Back to verse 36. Thank you, Tech team. You're amazing. Here we go.

And as he rode along, they spread their cloaks on the road. So they're spreading their cloaks on the road and praising God and rejoicing in his name. And so let me pull some of these things together first. Spreading their cloaks on the road. What are they doing?

This is how you welcome a king. You take off your coat, you put it on the dirty ground so that the hooves of the animal going on, it won't touch the dirt. What happens when you pick that coat up afterwards? It's dirty, maybe has some donkey poo on it, right? Like that is a symbol.

You are. You are my king. In fact, this is how the Israelites, if you want to see this, the Israelites themselves do this to Jehu the king. This is the entry of A king, they pull off their cloaks, they lay them on the ground. This is the king second.

The other three Synoptics, I mean, the other three Gospel accounts, all say that palm branches are also laid now. Palm branches. In fact, this is why when this Sunday happens, which is the week before Easter, it's called Palm Sunday because of those branches. Now, if you're not a Jew, you don't understand how weird that is, because this is an act of response of the festival of Sukkot, the feast of tabernacles, of dwelling places. And that we're talking about right now.

The Passover, which is what they're there to celebrate, is in the spring. Sukkot is in the fall, totally different time of year. But they're taking down palm branches and they're laying them in front of Jesus to celebrate a celebration and a feast that isn't even close to being celebrated. So what are they doing? Because they are all of a sudden making these connections.

He's the promised king who comes on a colt in Zechariah 9. He is, as we'll see the coming king in Psalm 118, as we're gonna read. And he is also. He is also the fulfillment of the feast of Tabernacles. Now, why does that matter?

Because the Feast of Tabernacles was a time of celebration of Israel's time in the wilderness, when they had dwellings, impermanent dwellings, that were made by things like palm branches. And as Israel celebrated it, it became part of the understanding of that celebration that it was directed toward the coming king, a time in which the king would come and dwell with his people and draw in the nations, that it was no longer Israel dwelling with the king, but the nations. And so Israel is saying, the king of the nations is here. This is unbelievable. The people have their hearts opened in incredible ways.

Now let's flip over to Psalm 118, and let's see exactly what they say here. They quote directly from the Psalm. In fact, Luke pulls out the beginning part. The beginning part you might be more familiar with because it's that word hosanna. If you've been a Christian for a while, you probably have heard that word hosanna.

It just means save us, save us. And we're gonna see that in Psalm 118. And then we're gonna see that Luke picks up with the second half of what the crowd say. So let's read the whole thing. It says this verse 25 of Psalm 118, Save us, we pray, O Lord, Hosanna.

O Lord, we pray. Give us success. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. We bless you from the house of the Lord. So the crowds cry out to Jesus, whose name, by the way, means Savior.

Savior, save us. Hosanna. Jesus, save us, Rescue us.

And then that little line there. Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord Jesus. We know that your life is marked by the character of God. In Hebraic understanding, that little phrase, name of, means the character of God. Your life has been marked by the markings of God, by the humility of God.

We see it in you, Jesus. We have eyes to see God at work, because we have eyes to see your humility and at work. And they praise his name. And then, like this little topper is that final little line in which the crowds kind of echo the angels at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke. Did you catch that little phrase there?

Peace in heaven and glory in the highest. Very similar how the angels greet the newborn Jesus.

Have eyes to see. Now here's the reality of what's going to happen as we pause and reflect on this. This is a crowd whose hearts are opened by God's grace to see God at work and

responding, really, for one of the first times, full times of knowing Jesus and yet still responding, we will see that while he rides in on a colt, they want him to move to a stallion. They're going to want him to exchange peace for a sword. They're going to want him to give him what they want him to give as their king.

And their faith in him will be stretched over that week to the point of breaking.

And so it is with us.

How many times, even when we praise Jesus, is our praise marked by Jesus being the Jesus we want him to be? And so we praise him when he's the Jesus of our comfort. We praise him when he's the Jesus of our peace. We praise him when he's the Jesus of our success. We praise him when he's the Jesus of our prosperity.

But what happens when that colt goes all the way to the cross? We still praise him then, when he is Jesus of the crucifixion, Jesus of the cross, Jesus of suffering.

Jesus comes. Jesus comes in glory and power and in God's mercy. For this one moment, the crowds have eyes to see and respond to him in praise. And yet, even there, the praise is fragile and frail.

The scene has an amazing ending as we flip back over to Luke. We see the Pharisees, who have been among the crowd the whole time, respond to this event. Verse 39. And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, teacher, rebuke your disciples now. Put yourself in the sandals of a Pharisee at that point.

Like, this is a weird event for a Pharisee, right? Like, on the one hand, like the exact thing you were hoping for happening is happening. You thought maybe this Jesus figure would, like, skedaddle after, you know, after raising Lazarus from the dead, Go in hiding. No, Here he comes straight to us in Jerusalem. This couldn't be easier.

And yet, oh, goodness, the crowds are gathering around him. They're worshiping him and praising him. They think he's king.

And so the response is, rebuke them. Why rebuke them? Because they're worshiping him. And the Pharisees see that, and they're like, no, you can be a rabbi, but you can't be God worthy of worship here. There's something happening in this moment that even they can feel.

This is worship of this man. Rebuke them.

Jesus responds this way. He answered. Verse 40. I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones

would cry out.

You have no idea. I am made for worship. I am the one deserving of worship. The one who comes in humility is the one who will come again in power and still humility, and the one in whom every knee will bow and every tongue confess that he is Lord. Even my rocks.

The creature knows its creator. Jesus says, you may have rejected me, but they have not rejected me. In fact, it echoes back in Psalm 118, verse 22. The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. Jesus.

His very rejection, the humility, the lowering of the one who comes to a people and their leaders reject him, is actually a mark of the authenticity of who he is.

Jesus, how do we respond to this? What does this mean for us in our lives?

Let's apply this in three different ways to us. First, celebrate Jesus. Celebrate Jesus. Sometimes, as we reflect on the triumphal entry, it's like preachers jump past the beautiful moment of celebration to the crowds turning on Jesus. But let's not forget the beauty of Jesus.

Rejoices in it is a delight when God receives celebration. And we, God's people, ought to be those whose lips are filled with gratitude, filled with the celebration of what he's done in our lives. Would we be marked with that celebration? Would we have eyes to see that little verse 37, the mighty works that God has done in our lives is doing in our lives, and then give him credit for it?

This is the mark of a follower of God. What would it look like? New life for every one of us this afternoon to just have this little internal conversation? Okay, if I'm going to celebrate Jesus, who am I going to celebrate him with? And maybe just take this step.

I'm going to text three people. Three people God lays on my heart. They might actually. I would love for them not to be Christians and just say this. God has been so good to me in this way.

Let me just celebrate. Let me just tell you of the goodness of God in my life. Celebrate Jesus. Number two. We need to be those who open our eyes to see Jesus at work.

It is hard to see Jesus at work in this world. We are attuned to all of the noise of this world. Meanwhile, the colt is waddling down the Mount of Olives. Let's have eyes to see the King at work. So Lent begins on Wednesday.

This Wednesday Lent begins. And you know, for some of you, you come from traditions that that's a comfortable thing. For others of you, that seems like a thing other traditions do. Can I

just encourage us? I think it's a beautiful time of preparation for the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

A time for us to peel away the things of the world, the things that so easily distract us and try to attune our hearts and our minds to God in this world, to see his work in this world. The ancient practices are pretty basic. Worship, actually, every Wednesday. Here, 8am worship Wednesday. Maybe something for you to add into your Lenten practice prayer.

Talking to God, speaking to him, hearing him speak to you. The scripture, the word of God, hearing His voice, hearing his truth, filling your heart and your mind with his truths. And then can I add one to specifically highlight fasting? Fasting. We're not a culture that fasts very much.

I might suggest we're a culture that really needs to fast a lot.

Like, we have access all the time to fill our mouths, fill our eyes with all manner of stuff.

And who among us doesn't need a cleansing, doesn't need my appetites of this world not to be quenched so that my hunger for God can be greater, sharpened, whetted.

So I'd invite you to consider perhaps fasting over this season. Consider what the Lord might be inviting you to, to increase your hunger so that your ears could be attuned more to God. Your eyes could be attuned more to Him.

So first, celebrate Jesus. Second, let's be those whose eyes are open to Jesus. And third, let's follow Jesus because that Bengal tiger guide is of no use if he knows the calls that are happening, if he can kind of locate where that tiger is. And then he says, yeah, he's probably over there somewhere. And then he leaves you in the jeep right where you are.

No. If we're going to have our ears tuned, our eyes tuned to God in this world, then we need to follow Him.

And for some of us, that's going to be a very first step this morning. And I praise God for that, that you've been kind of on the fence with this whole God thing, but the reality is Jesus is impressing to you right now that he is the only, only one worth following and that you are. You need to stop being in that lukewarm place. You need to stop stuttering in your step. You need to be all in with Him.

And so I invite you, our team, up front, we would love to pray with you online, would love to pray with you as well. It would be an honor to walk in step with Jesus together. And for those of you who've been a Christian for years, maybe, would we also be those who follow Jesus? You see, our test, our faith, like the crowds, is going to be tested. It's going to be strained, it's going

to be pulled, it's going to be challenged.

And the reality is for so many of us, we. We think the very places where God. It looks like God has stopped working in our life are the very places in which he's abandoned us. And they're actually the very places where he's like, I'm taking you to the foot of the cross, and if you will trust me to follow me here, you will meet me in ways that you've never met me before. Let's follow Jesus.

Follow him all the way to the cross. And as we follow him, just a practical thing for us. We have these guides that are right out in the lobby. They're here both at Corterra, they're there at Gladden as well. And maybe an opportunity for you to have eyes and ears that are opened to see Jesus at work as you prepare your hearts and this season of preparation for Easter.

And with that, we have the blessing before we close in song of transitioning to a time of prayer for our kids and for our families. In the first service, we had the opportunity of celebrating a dedication for the Gray family for four boys. It's a lot of fun, but we don't want to miss that opportunity here at the 10:30 service. And so we want to spend a little bit of time praying for kids and families and even just with this heart, right, I look at that video that Paul played, I think, man, that's where God is. I bet if you were, if you're down in our kids ministry this morning, you'd think this is where God is.

Like God loves those who are on the margins. He loves those that the world dismisses and pushes away. God gives us kids as a blessing, and he doesn't just give parents kids as a blessing. He gives the family of God, the church of God, kids as a blessing. I want to read from Psalm 128, this beautiful little word of truth that at first seems like it's a word of truth just to parents, but it's a word of truth for far more than that.

It says this. Behold, children are a heritage from the Lord. The fruit of the womb, a reward, like arrows in the hand of a warrior, are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them. He shall not be put to shame when he speaks with his enemies in the gate.

I love that. As I read that, I got a wonderful little cry of a baby. That's beautiful.

May there be many more cries. May we be a place that loves kids so well, that parents know our place, that comes around their kids in support and love. They know that they have a family of support here. Let me just speak as a dad of two college kids, one of the things that you realize as a parent more and more is that the further along you are in your parenting journey, the more you need the family of God around you. And you need them when they're little too, for different reasons.

But there's a profound beauty of the way that the people God has set in my kids lives can, can

speaking the truth of God to them in ways that I'm just not able to. And God has given us the family to be the people who gather around and support those families. So I don't want us to miss out on a dedication here. You don't get the delight of seeing four little boys in this service. But that's okay.

We have lots of kids here even in this service. And so let me pray for us and then we're gonna close in worship. God, I'm so grateful, Lord, for the gift of kids, Lord. Right now I just even specifically, I pray for a blessing on our children's ministry for Sammy and for her whole team. I just pray, Lord, that you support them, Lord.

Grant them joy. And Lord, I pray for those who are sitting here. Maybe they've been on the sidelines and the reality is that you've. You've given them a special heart for kids. I just pray that you would draw them in, Lord.

Help them to join the team in that way. Lord, we are all part of your purposes, and so help us to step in in whatever ways you've called us to be faithful, God, to the kids of this church, the parents of this church, the families of this church. And would this be a place, God, where you're honored and glorified? We're grateful for you, Jesus. In your name we pray.

Amen.