



Good Friday 2024

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We're back at Good Friday, which, as I've often said, is an interestingly named holiday that we think about it as good, Good Friday. And you know that it's good in our theology but it is quite a bizarre thing that a government-sanctioned execution would be something we look at particularly as it relates to our leader being killed. I mean, if we were thinking about our leader and he got executed by the government on a Tuesday I don't think we would celebrate it as Good Tuesday. We would think it's a horrible thing. Or if the crowds gathered around the person that we listened to, our teacher and our leader, the one who we think is the Lord, and they all cheered for him to be killed and the government said, "Sure, we'll kill him for you," and they killed him, that would be horrible.

There are plenty of ways that we've executed people as I often mentioned on Good Friday throughout history. There are plenty of ways that we've decided that this person is not deserving to live and so we're going to end this life. We're used to that. But it makes it even harder when we think about people who we think are righteous and good. Like in the Reformation when people were preaching the Word of God, the gospel of grace, and authorities were killing them, burning them at the stake. Or even when we go back to Bible times when these three Hebrew teenagers refused to bow down to the pagan king and they were thrown into a fiery furnace. These kinds of attempts at executing righteous people we would want it to end the way it did there in the book of Daniel, that God would somehow deliver them and that they would be saved. But all of these, particularly burning, you would think what a horrific way for the government to kill the worst of their criminals or would-be supposed criminals in our case. And yet nothing was more horrific than the crucifixion of a criminal. That was as far from good as it gets. It probably started historians say back with the Assyrians who learned to find a way not only to kill the worst of their criminals in their culture but to torture them for hours and hours on end before you killed them.

It was so horrific and instilled such dread in those who were insurrectionists or against the government, Alexander the Great thought this was a pretty handy tool and he adopted it and we saw it then practiced in the Grecian Empire. He thought this would be great because he was greatly feared. Alexander the Great went around conquering the world and subjecting his enemies. The Phoenicians brought it to the shores of what we call the Holy Land, Israel, when on the shores of the Mediterranean they worked hard to perfect this gruesome form of killing the worst of their society. But nothing was worse than when the Romans got a hold of it and decided that they would make it as gruesome as they could possibly make it. And they made it not only bad, but they made it ubiquitous. There were times when they would crucify just hundreds of people at one time lining the Appian Way with the runaway slaves or insurrectionists or whatever they saw as deserving governmental sanctioned execution. They went hard after it.

And they came up with precursors to the actual crucifixion, things like whipping the criminal before they actually had him crucified. You can imagine being stripped down and having your back and your body filleted by the Roman whip and then being affixed to a cross. That would



be horrible. Before you were affixed to a cross you would have what we call in our culture, the perp walk. You would be walked through town as a criminal and you'd be humiliated so people could jeer at you and scorn you and give you all the verbal assault that they thought you deserved. They didn't just march you in chains with Roman soldiers on each side, the Romans actually gave you the cross piece. That patibulum that the Latin word depicts, that beam that goes across that they would nail their hands to, they would be led through the city carrying this beam. And, you know, a lot of the depictions show the entire cross, but well some historians debate this and commentators do, articles that I've read from historical sources that I believe are on to the truth of what the Roman executioners did, this was probably the method that was invoked in the first century. So Christ was told to take his cross. And so when you see that in some movies or depictions or paintings where Christ has this beam upon his shoulder, that is probably the accurate depiction of what Christ had to do. And of course, you remember he wasn't executed alone. He was executed with other criminals. And all these criminals were conscripted to carry this beam.

Now, historians tell us this beam was probably 7 to 8 feet tall and probably weighed anywhere between 100, 110, some historians say up to 135 pounds. And you just think about kind of the magnitude of that. And to help you, let me show you what this would be like to have a Roman beam, a cross beam that you were forced to carry. It was very heavy as you were supposed to lift this on your shoulders. (Pastor Mike lifts a full-sized, wooden beam onto his shoulders) And often they would tie this around your arms as you were forced to walk through town as people were then mocking you and jeering you and spitting upon you. Now, I planned to carry this here for you tonight. I woke up this morning with a really bad cold and I said to myself, "God, I can't believe I have to carry this cross and I've got a cold." (Audience responding) I felt Jesus rolling his eyes at that moment because of course he was beaten. Beaten according to the book of Isaiah, the prophecy says, beyond recognition. And of course, the Bible talks about him being whipped, his back carrying this beam, as then he marched through the crowd and was led to his crucifixion. That was a scene to imagine. And of course, he had already had that crown of thorns upon his head.

If you think about this as we celebrate Good Friday, the reason this is good, as Joseph just read for us from Isaiah 53, is because the Bible says what was laid on him was not just a big, heavy block of wood he then had to take through the town and bear the scorn of his critics and those who hated him. But, the Bible says that what was actually happening is that God was laying upon him the iniquities of us all, that the Lord was giving him the burden of sin. And that burden of sin is so aptly depicted in the New Testament often with verbs like this from First Peter Chapter 2, that "He himself bore our sins." He felt the weight of the sin, the sin that had offended the Father and the Father then was going to punish. And that just recompense for our sin was what he took upon his body in human form. And the Bible says, quoting here referencing back, Peter does, to Isaiah 53 that "By his wounds we are healed." It's an amazing concept we read about in our Daily Bible Reading this week how that forgiveness is effectuated. It's done and paid for by Christ carrying our sins and bearing the weight of our sins.



But the Bible says it's effectuated by faith. I love that line and I just had to quote it as we read in our Daily Bible Reading if you're part of Compass Bible Church something you read along with us every year through the Bible, we got to this passage in Luke 5 where it says, "And when he saw their faith," I just love this line, "he said," man, "your sins are forgiven." Just to think of that concept of the forgiveness of sins. That with faith, immediately, and this was before the cross, of course, but God could say your sins are going to be borne by my punishment and the weight of all that sin placed upon my shoulders. It's just an amazing concept that we have forgiveness by his wounds and by his whipping, by the crushing weight of the cross, we have forgiveness of sins. And our response, of course, is faith. But it's more than that. This passage I've left out a key element in it. That line in between, "That we might," I love this, "die to sin and live to righteousness." Now, if you think about that, that's the challenge we face as we as Christians are called to die to sin and do what is right. That's a hard thing. It was hard to die on the cross for the sins of the world. It's very hard for us in a much lesser way, but still difficult, to bear that weight.

But of course, we know the story. He left, according to John, with the weight of this 120-pound beam on his shoulders. But if you know the story, it's not how it ended. Matter of fact, he didn't get very far, and the Bible says in Matthew 27 that "As they went out, they found a man of Cyrene, named Simon." And look at this, "They compelled him to carry his cross." Of course, what that necessitates is the weight of that sin, the sin that started with the stumbling of Adam in the Garden was now mimicked in us in a way by Christ having this weight be overwhelming, like it's becoming for me, (as Pastor Mike carried the beam on his shoulders) and to have that weight crush him after being so abused and he fell under the weight of his sin. (the beam crashes to the floor) The sin of mankind upon his shoulders brought to the ground. I think to myself what a strange thing it is that Simon of Cyrene just happened to be there. And in the depiction of Christ's crucifixion, if you're planning this out sovereignly, you just wouldn't think what's going to happen here is that we're going to need a man to help him carry his cross. We even needed someone to help him be crucified. And yet, in this scene, as strange as it is, we have from that point on Simon of Cyrene here is forced, think about this, to take up that cross. I love the way it's put in Luke, "As they led him away they seized Simon of Cyrene, who is coming in from the country."

Cyrene is in North Africa, modern-day Libya. And the book of Acts says they even have their own synagogue, a Cyrene synagogue in Jerusalem. So there are a lot of people who would come to the pilgrimage feast. And of course, this is the time of the Passover. And here you see a man who's fallen under the weight of this beam and you're just coming in from the outskirts, from suburban Jerusalem. And they say, hey, you, you take his cross and "carry it behind him." So here's this man, he's like, okay, he's got to squat down and pick up this big beam. Now, of course, he's not going to carry it strapped to his shoulders but he has to pick it up and bear the weight of it on his shoulder. And you can see that scene. Here he is standing behind Christ, walking, getting the jeers of the crowd spilling into his own ears as he walks through the cobblestones of downtown Jerusalem to make his way outside the gate, to bring the crossbeam of Christ's crucifixion to the place where Jesus would be executed by the government. That's a strange thing to walk behind Christ carrying the cross and following him.



That sounds familiar. That's the phrase Jesus used multiple times in the gospels, and it's difficult for us to think of what they must have thought when here they were as Jews listening to Jesus talk about the way the Romans or the third century B.C. Phoenicians, or the Greeks or the Assyrians used to kill people and they think, yeah, Romans are killing people now all the time on crosses. And he says you guys, think about this line. You, if you're going to come after me, I'm the rabbi, you're going to be the disciple. That's what it means to come after me. You're going to be my followers. You're going to listen to what I say about the coming of the kingdom and me being "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." If you're going to "come after me," be my disciple, "you're going to have to deny yourself." You can't go where you want. I'm the shepherd. You're going to have to let me lead you. And you've got to go where I tell you to go. And you got to "take up your cross," and you got to follow me.

I mean, think about the picture that was envisioned in Christ's own mind. And now he's telling people what you got to do. You got to take the burden upon yourself and "you got to follow me." What a picture. Jesus walking through Jerusalem whipped and beaten, bloodied and too weak to carry 110 pounds on his shoulders. And here he is getting this man who would later, by the way, because Mark names his two sons who are mentioned elsewhere in the Bible. We see it in the book of Acts, Alexander. We see Rufus, his other son, mentioned in the 16th Chapter of Romans. Simon of Cyrene apparently becomes a Christian after all of this. His wife is named by Paul as though she were his own mother. He said, "she was a mother to me," Simon of Cyrene's wife. So here he is taking this crossbeam and following Christ. It's a strange concept. And then in the mind of those who listen to Jesus teach it must have been a strange thing to their ears. What does that mean? There must be a burden to be your follower. Well, they hadn't seen the full burden that Jesus himself would bear. But that is the picture, right? If you want to modernize it, I guess, it's the image in your eyes right now of me carrying a big beam around and saying, okay, this is the burden I got to bear.

Jesus made it clear. Luke 14:27, "Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me he cannot be my disciple." If you want to follow me without a cross, you can't do it. If you want to follow without a burden, you can't do it. If you want to follow with me without weight in your life that you didn't formerly have, you can't do it. So in a sense, we need to take that metaphorical use of the word "cross," that of all the times it's used in the New Testament a handful of these times it's used metaphorically. Take up your cross. Matter of fact, it's used almost as many times metaphorically as it is literally about a physical wooden beam. Here's the picture of you taking up something that is like a cross, a burden, and bearing it. I think you'd agree that if you were living in, I don't know, the 60s of the first century and Nero was the king, for you to become a follower of Jesus you'd have to pay a pretty big price. The burden would be big. Your cross would be pretty heavy. If you're living in the second century under Diocletian as he exterminated Christians across the Roman Empire. So you want to be a follower of Christ, that's a big deal. It's a heavy burden. There's still a burden to bear. I may not be as big. I'd love to get something in your hand, much like I have on my shoulder, that might remind you of the weight that we have to bear. If you want to be a Christian you cannot accept the benefits of the cross without him saying to you, "You take up your cross and you follow me."



I'm going to ask the ushers to do something a little strange here tonight. They're going to pass out something that's just big enough to be awkward. Just big enough to get in the way. Something big enough that you can't put it in your pocket. And you can't gild it and put it around your neck. I want you to take this 4x4 16-inch piece of wood that represents your little corner of the cross of Christ and say, you know what? Whatever that means metaphorically let me illustrate that now physically. There's something that I have to hold on to. And if you think about the weight that we carry, here's the weight you carry. Reading stories today about athletes. Reading stories today about people in entertainment to find that occasional Christian who's willing to speak up about Christ. As soon as they speak up they get the wrath of the rest of their industry. And you find a lot of them recanting and backtracking. You cannot stand with Christ without taking the reproach of Christ if you're faithful and you're vocal.

The Bible says that Jesus was clear that if the world hated him, he said if they hated me they're going to hate you also. That's a burden that we bear. The love of Christ is not a burden. It says in First John 5, we love God. We want to love God and that is not a burden to us. It's not a burden to keep his commandments, "to love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, strength, and mind." Your heart is rewired for that. It's easy in your prayer closet. It's easy in a church service. Those things are easy. It's when you leave the doors of this facility and you stand up for Christ in your industry, in your extended family, in your job, in your marketplace, in your office, and you say, "No, I stand with Christ. Here's what he said about marriage and divorce. Here's what he said about gender. Here's what he said about truth. Here's what he said about the sanctity of life." And you stand for it. And the Bible says, "If you are of the world," and you parroted everything the world said, hey, you know what? "The world would love you as its own." But as it is, he says, "I've chosen you out of the world." You've got to live differently, which is a great thing that you become his. But as soon as you become his, his follower, he hands you a burden. And that burden is the burden of not fitting in like you used to fit in.

Being a Christian is going to be hard. It's the reason that the world will not like you if you are a vocal, as you must be, a vocal Christian. That 16-inch piece of wood that sits there and will become something that will get in the way, I just want you to remember this is your calling. It's a calling and it's an identification to you. It's metaphorical, I get that, but let it be physical at least for today, for tomorrow, for this week where you say, I got to have this reminder that what I'm bearing is the name of Christ. And you know what he says? If you bear my name, you're blessed. If you're blessed, if you do it for me when people hate you you're blessed. Hey, you're blessed if people don't invite you to that party, they don't let you in on that thing. You're excluded. When you're reviled, when you're spurned as evil when you haven't done evil, on account of the Son of Man. When that happens, because you're identified with Christ, well you're bearing the weight. It's a small weight compared to those who were burned at the stake 500 years ago. It's a small weight compared to a lot of people who were crucified upside down, who were hung, who were decapitated, who were executed because of their faith. But we've got our burden to bear and it's not fun. It's easy to love the Lord in a church service, it's easy to love God in our prayer time, but it's hard when we have to bear that weight.



You know what? It's more than that. There's a weight that we all bear as Christians. "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake," Paul said to the Colossians. He hadn't even been there yet. He said, but I've been working for you. "In my flesh," listen to this now, "I'm filling up that which is lacking in Christ afflictions." Now, that's a bold statement. "Lacking in Christ afflictions?" Well, in one sense, there's a picture of it when Simon of Cyrene is following Christ. And you know what? What's lacking is Jesus' ability to carry this cross. You think wait a minute. What's going on here? Jesus in history ensures that there is someone who has to pick up the weight of his cross and carry it. Think about that. Was there anything lacking in him being striped for our forgiveness? No. Was there anything lacking when he died on the cross and the wrath of the Father was incurred on him? No, he said, "It is finished." Filled. I've done it. It is finished. When it comes to the affliction of doing what Christ called us all to do, to build up the body of Christ, to serve the Church, we know there's a lot lacking there. As Paul said, I'm doing it all for "the sake of the body." And by that I mean the Church, the people of God.

Think about it. In this room there are people who have become Christians recently and they realize they open up their Bible and they say part of it is to bear the burden of the community, even financially. Right? You make 100 grand a year, let's say, and you become a Christian. Well, now you're making 90. Let's just look at it that way. Right? Think about it. You've lost part of your income because you're going to give to the Lord and the Lord's work. And if you're generous you're losing more than that. You have 168 hours a week to live your life. That's what your neighbors got to work with. That's his stewardship. You become a Christian and you know all of a sudden you cannot forsake the assembling of yourselves together. You got to be involved in church, you got to be involved in some kind of small group. You got to get your chairs face to face as the Bible clearly implies that all of us must do. You go from 168 hours to what? 152 hours. Because you're investing in everything that God calls us to do. And it's one thing to serve God directly in our prayer life, in our worship, in our study of God's Word. But, you know, it's really tough when it comes to serving the people of God. We have to go the extra mile. We think really? Why? Stay the extra hour or spend the extra dollars? These things are hard to do. It's the burden of being a Christian. It's part of the struggle. It's the affliction of Christ that hasn't yet been filled up. And it's the cross that we bear. And there are probably other things that you have to bear in the sinful world. And that's tough, really tough. I understand that.

It is that sense in which you're going to have to carry a burden you wouldn't have to carry if you just turned your back on all this. Right? But there's no option for us. Right? Where else are we going to go? We're going to go and do what Christ did and that is to know that to please the Lord we've got to embrace Christ. "There's no way to the Father except through him." We look to Jesus as Hebrews 12 says, "the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him," he's going to please the Lord, he's going to serve the Lord, he's going to look to hear from the Lord, from the Father, "Well done." "This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased." Well, to do that is to go to the cross. That's going to be hard. The Bible says he endured it. And then I love this word, "He despised the shame." That's a colorful Greek word, it means that you think less of it. Whatever you think of it you make it small in your mind. And, yeah, I got this. It's uncomfortable, it's awkward, it's difficult, it's a



burden. But it doesn't matter. I think less of the shame of the cross. Right? To be excluded, to be reviled, to be hated, to be tired, to spend another night serving the body of Christ. Those things are hard. But to be a Christian that's what it means. And God says you can't be my disciple if you don't take up your cross. There's going to be a burden, it's going to be hard.

But we do it because Christ asked us to do it and says this: there's no other way but to follow this narrow road and this small gate and he says that road is hard. We think about the difficulty of Christ dying for us and bearing the weight of our sin. I just want you to have a little taste of that tangibly. Matter of fact, if you have a pen at some point you should jot down on that piece of wood Luke Chapter 14 verse 27, "You can't be my disciple unless you carry your cross." It's a small cross comparatively. A lot of people looking over the rails of heaven who've been through centuries of Church history and they've watched it unfold and they think, yeah, you 21st century Christians in America, there's a price to pay, right? They're not insensitive to that, I'm sure, and Christ certainly is not. He's near to the brokenhearted, but we do have to get it in perspective. It's a small cross we bear in this generation but we do it because Christ laid down his life for us. First John Chapter 3 verse 16, "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, so too we must lay down our lives for the brothers." All of that is hard. What he did was hard, extraordinarily hard. What he asks us to do is hard.

The response to the gospel is faith in Christ. You put your faith in Christ. You say, I need your forgiveness and he will forgive you. And he'll look at you like he did that paralytic man, "Your sins are forgiven," done, finished. But the work's not done. You got to bear your cross. As awkward as it is this cross of inconvenience, this cross of persevering through the difficulties. I call us to do that gladly. "He laid down his life for us. No greater love has anyone than that." And how we return our love for him by saying we're willing to be burdened, inconvenienced. It's awkward to be a Christian in the 21st century. It's harder now than it was in the 1950s. It's time for us to do it. I ask the ushers to come down the aisle, pass out the elements of the Lord's Supper and I want that awkward piece of wood to remain in your lap. Work your way around that. It's going to be a little bit awkward. I'd love for you to keep it and decide how long you want to do this. A week, three days, two weeks. I want you to carry that thing around and say this is a reminder of the cross. This Luke 14:27 cross. You might want to write a few more things on it just to remind you what this is but you do it all gladly because of what the Lord has done for you. And you say, "He bore our sins in his body on a tree." "And by his wounds we are healed." But don't forget what's sandwiched right in the middle of all that, so that we can "die to sin and live to righteousness." Is that easy? No, hard. But it's okay.

If you're a Christian, and I mean that, but consciously you know what it is to repent of your sins and put your trust in Christ, take these elements. We'll get back together here in just about four minutes and we'll take these together. If you're not a Christian, you're not sure, you're not sure exactly what this is, just let it pass by. But if you're a Christian, I want you to take these elements. These are reminders of the body and blood of Christ where he dies in our place. You spend some time talking to God. You get the tactile feel of that piece of wood that's going to give you splinters perhaps this week. That's all right. It's going to get in the way, that's okay. You're going to put it on the seat of your car and not know what to do with it, okay. But you remember, you gladly bear the reproach of Christ this week because he bore



your sin on his shoulders. You pray and talk to God. We'll be back in just a few minutes. We'll take these elements together.

If you know the passage that's up on the screen you probably recognize it. It ends here with a comma, and it's not the end of the sentence nor the verse. We're supposed to look to Jesus as our example. Of course he's the founder. He starts our faith and the one who continues to strengthen and perfect our faith, hopefully through services and activities like this. We look to him because we know for the joy set before him he endured the cross and he made less of the shame, "He despised the shame." But you know how it ended for him. Here's the next line. "And he's seated at the right hand of the throne of God." It's a great phrase that depicts the truth that is so well explained in Philippians 2, that "by being obedient," and being willing to "die on a cross. Therefore God highly exalted him and gave him the name which is above every name, the name of Jesus every knee should bow ... every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." This is the great exaltation of Christ, returning to him the glory that he had before and yet now as an exalted leader of all mankind, "one like the son of man," Daniel 7, to whom all "dominion, all people, all glory, is to be given to him." He's earned the salvation of all those who would trust in him and he's the exalted King, yet to take that power and begin to reign here on a kingdom on earth, but he will. The Bible says one day that's coming.

Just like Jesus had a cross phase before he got to the crown phase, so we do. The Bible says there is a weight for us to bear in the present age. There's one day coming a crown, and the laurel wreath was what they had in mind when they thought about a crown. All the glory of standing on the podium at the Isthmian Games in Corinth, equivalent to our Olympic Games that we celebrate. The idea of a winner being the best and doing what they've been called to do faithful, keeping the rules, working hard. They've accomplished the kind of exaltation of being the best in their field. Well, as Christians, of course, Christ has earned for us our salvation and then he calls us to fight the good fight of faith. And as Paul said at the end of his life in Second Timothy 4, I fought it to the end of his life, "I finished the race, I kept the faith," and I love this next line, "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness."

As we celebrate the Lord's Supper, I want us to remember where this points that I often try to emphasize from this platform, Christianity is really not about the "here and now." I mean, it has huge implications for the "here and now," but it's ultimately about the "then and there." It's about where we're headed. Just like Jesus for the joy set before him, which wasn't the shame of the cross, it was the exaltation of the Father after he completed the cross. It was the crown that was the joy. And so it is for us. "In this world we'll have tribulation," but we're supposed to, "take heart; because Christ has overcome the world." Or to put it in the words of the Apostle Paul, he said, "Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God." It's going to be great in the kingdom when he says, "Enter into this kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." It will be an amazing entrance into a great place. And the great news is our cross will be behind us.

I would like you to hang on to this cross. I'd like you to write passages like Luke 14:27 on it, or whatever else that might remind you of the burdens that we bear here and now that you'll



gladly bear because of what Christ bore for you. And you decide whether you're in a small group or sub-congregation, figure out how long you want to do this. Keep it in your daily life. Put it on your desk, I don't know. Carry it from one room to the next. Put it in your car. See it every day. It's too big to hide. Put it somewhere where you'll see it and say I'm willing to bear the cross. But here's the thing about Christianity. Just like when Jesus was about to go to the cross, he said, I got to remind you, "I'm not going to drink this fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in the Father's kingdom." I'm going to wait for that. That's where we're headed. One day we won't have this cross anymore. One day it'll be all replaced with joy. It's like the old hymn said, right? "The old rugged cross I'll ever be true," in this life. "It's shame and reproach," just like Christ, "I'll gladly bear." But I love this. Then one day he's going to call me home "to my home far away. Where his glory forever I'll share." He's already exalted. We're on our way. And if you know that old hymn, "I'll cling to the old rugged cross," I love this line, "and exchange it one day for a crown."

I put one of our Orange County beach fire rings here on the screen. And maybe you ought to run down to Corona del Mar or down south to Doheny wherever you can find a fire ring. And after you and your small group have decided how long you want to carry this very awkward piece of wood around, maybe next weekend, maybe ten days from now, maybe two weeks, you get together, you go to the beach, you take that cross in anticipation of laying down our cross and exchanging it one day for a crown. I would encourage you with your sub-congregational friend group, whatever it takes in this church, go toss that piece of wood in the fire and burn it. I know one day it's coming. We will put this thing behind us. All the pain of this life, all the trouble of this life, all the pressure of a world that hates what we stand for and crucified our leader. Right? It'll all be behind us. For now we celebrate the finished work of Christ, which is depicted in this cup and this bread. And I would invite you, if your trust is in Christ, to with me eat this bread and drink this cup.

God, we are grateful that one day this world will be behind us. The valley of the shadow of death will be behind us, and we know that "goodness and mercy is going to follow us," chase us down, "all the days of our lives." And one day we're going to reach our home and we're going "to dwell in the house of the Lord forever." And in that day there'll be no more pain, no more suffering, no more crying, no more dying, no more separation. We look forward to that day with great anticipation. I pray there will be great little celebrations all along the beaches here in Orange County. People being reminded that one day our cross will be done. We'll lay it down and exchange it for a crown. We look forward to that day.

In Jesus name, Amen.