

God Among the Goldfish Crumbs
Luke 9:46-48; Romans 12:1-3; Matthew 28:18-20

Good morning! My name is Chris Martin. I'm not a pastor like Trevor, a lay elder like Joel, or a staff member like Jacob or...really anything around here.

I'm just a guy they asked to preach for some reason...so, here we are.

Stick around long enough, and maybe they'll ask you to preach! ...Just kidding.

Our primary text this morning is Luke 9:46-48, but we aren't going to be starting there. We'll be starting our time in Romans 12, if you want to go ahead and find that in your Bibles.

If you don't have a Bible, the words will eventually be up on the screen behind me. Also, we have some paper Bibles out in the lobby that you can grab on your way out today.

As you turn or tap your way there, and before we read through our first text for the morning, I want to tell you just a little bit about myself.

Growing up, I was by most relevant measures a "good kid."

I grew up going to church. I got good grades in school. My teachers loved me. I ~~didn't~~ ~~commit~~ was never convicted of any crimes. I generally kept my nose clean and didn't cause much of a fuss.

But despite all of that, I was *a pretty big pain in the neck*, especially at home.

By the time I was a teenager, I was argumentative. I was a jerk. I was critical of others, and also of myself.

My parents often told me that I would make a great lawyer, which every parent knows is just another way of telling your kid that they're an, uh, effective and persuasive arguer.

So, on account of being a pretty sharp but difficult kid, it really took a village to raise me when I got to my teenage years.

Some angelic teenagers listen to their parents without needing any other voices to speak wisdom into their lives, and...that must be nice.

I don't know what that is like from my own experience as a young person. Perhaps one day I will know it as a parent, but I suspect not.

Many teenagers need **other adults** in their lives to reinforce **the will** and **the wisdom** of their parents.

I want to briefly highlight two groups of people this morning who were pivotal in my development as a hard-headed, difficult teenager: my teachers in middle and high school and the youth ministry leaders at the church where I grew up.

First, the teachers.

Jason Birkenbeul, my eighth grade social studies teacher, didn't laugh at me when I used a life-planning project to present him with my four-step plan to become president of the United States one day. He helped me refine my ideas.

John Houser—who was like if Coach Taylor from Friday Night Lights also loved Shakespeare and classic literature—was my freshman and sophomore English teacher and a coach on the football team I begrudgingly joined. He took a red pen to the weekly essays we had to write as 15- and 16-year-olds, and he taught me how to write something worth reading. He treated me like the adult he knew I would become rather than the punk teenager I was.

Kerry Miller, my third year Spanish teacher, was a friend and a light in a place and time that could feel dark and unfriendly.

These teachers went well above-and-beyond what was expected of them. They could have shown up, taught their classes, and gone home. But they didn't do that.

The best teachers know that education is **much more than information transfer**.

Teachers like this *spend **their** lives* helping young people **discover how to live theirs**.

These people, and plenty of other teachers I could name, were instrumental in helping me develop as a person.

I think of my daughter, Maggie, heading to kindergarten here in a couple of weeks, and I cannot wait to see what kind of wonderful teachers she will encounter. People who have already decided to invest their lives into the lives of little girls like her.

I think of the many teachers and educational professionals here at City Church. I adore teachers, and think teachers are the definition of what it means to be a pillar in our community.

I know everyone is headed back to school here in the next week or two, so let's all be sure to take time to pray for our friends in education these next couple of weeks as they get back into the swing of things.

Likewise, beyond my teachers, I was profoundly impacted during this volatile season of life by the leaders in my church youth group.

When I was a teenager, I attended a pretty large church with a high school youth group of about 80-100 kids any given Wednesday. An army of mostly college-aged youth leaders led by a 25-year-old youth pastor fundamentally changed my life.

Matt Childers took me out for pizza before Bible study and drove me to youth events just to get extra time with me. I saw the love of Christ in him.

Luke Johnson and John Wassell playfully bullied me in a loving sort of way that helped me break out of my self-absorption and critical spirit. I saw the gentle discipline of God in them.

Most of all, our youth pastor, Phil Knuth, was the older brother I never had, **calling me over** to play video games and **calling me out** when I was being a fool—often all in the same day. He helped me realize that I was treating God like a feature of my life and not the center of it.

I don't know if you have had people like this in your life, or if I was just extraordinarily and extravagantly blessed, but I can tell you I was brought to tears as I listed all of these people out while I was writing this sermon.

When you are young and feel invincible, it's hard to appreciate the sacrificial love of people who are old enough to know they are not invincible.

I cannot imagine who I would be or what I would be like without all of these people. I am who I am, at least in part, because of who those people were willing to be, because of what those people were willing to give up in order to **spend time** with me and **be patient** with me.

So, what do all of these teachers and youth ministry leaders have in common?

In a cultural moment that promotes **self-fulfillment** instead of **self-sacrifice**, these teachers and youth ministry leaders spent some significant portion of their lives investing in the **earthly** and **eternal** futures of young people when they could have spent it on themselves.

This morning, I want all of us to see how God calls us to this kind of life.

Here's our big idea for this morning, and our three points are sort of the three legs that hold up this stool:

BIG IDEA: We worship God by investing the life that we have been given in others instead of spending it on ourselves.

What I want to show you in the Scriptures this morning is that Christians are called to worship with how they spend their lives, and that one of the best ways we can spend our lives is by caring for and discipling those who are younger than we are.

I've got three points this morning that support this big idea.

We'll spend a few minutes walking through two foundational ideas we need to agree upon as Christians, and then we'll finish up in the actual text I was assigned in Luke 9.

Okay, so first, before we get into anything about the importance of caring for young people, we need to briefly talk about worship:

1. Christian worship is a daily decision to die while living. (Romans 12:1-3)

I hope you've kept track of Romans 12, because we're going to go there now. Romans 12:1-3 says:

1 Therefore, brothers and sisters, in view of the mercies of God, I **urge** you to present your bodies as a **living sacrifice**, holy and pleasing to God; this is your true worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the

renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.

3 For by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you **not** to think of himself more highly than he should think. Instead, think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one.

Toward the end of his letter to the church in Rome, the apostle Paul calls believers to a sort of oxymoronic life. A life of “living sacrifice.” This sacrificial life is, as he says, our “true worship.”

Then in verse 3 he gives us the sort of heart posture we need in order to live a life marked by sacrifice.

He says that we must not think of ourselves any more highly than we ought.

WHY?

For if we think of ourselves as somehow more impressive than others, we will struggle to fulfill the call to give ourselves up for others.

This is a super important point that we will come back to a bit later when I bring us home to Luke chapter 9.

So what is going on in these three verses in Romans 12?

We could do an entire series on these verses, but, simply put:

Christian worship is a daily decision to die to ourselves while we go about our everyday lives.

In the church, we rightly highlight men and women over the centuries who have given their lives for Christ on the mission field or as martyrs for the faith.

Some Christians have had their lives snatched away from them—they have been killed—on account of believing in and talking about Jesus Christ. They have their lives taken from them because of who they worship.

Here, Paul is calling us to something different—something that *may actually be* more difficult than dying for our faith.

He's calling us to live for it.

Paul himself recognizes that living for the gospel is more difficult than dying for it. He says as much in Philippians 1:21-24:

21 For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 Now if I live on in the flesh, this means fruitful work for me; and I don't know which one I should choose. 23 I am torn between the two. I long to depart and be with Christ — which is far better — 24 but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.

When we think about giving our lives for the sake of Jesus, our minds often immediately jump to **persecution stories in faraway places**—the kinds of experiences we as Americans may never see—and **we fail to realize that we have all been called to a kind of sacrifice that is much more ordinary and mundane and routine**, which can sorta make it more difficult.

It feels less heroic and less remarkable than we often want our lives to feel.

Christian worship is made up of daily decisions to die to ourselves so that others may live and find the good life in Jesus.

What's interesting about this idea that we are called to be “living” sacrifices is that before we come to trust Jesus as Lord, we are ***spiritually*** dead.

But that may be a little confusing, so let me explain.

The good news of the gospel—the heart of the Christian faith—goes a little something like this:

God created everything as perfect and good. But in the beginning, our parents, the first humans—Adam and Eve—chose to disobey God in an effort to be like gods themselves (more on that later).

This choice cursed all of humanity and caused brokenness and sin to run rampant throughout all of creation. Adam and Eve chose to be their own gods, and that gene just kept getting passed down all through history.

Humans, from that point on, were spiritually dead—they couldn't connect with God like they could before sin messed everything up.

But God promised that, one day, he would send a Savior to break that curse and bring all of creation (including humans) and God back together.

All these famous Old Testament people you may have heard of before showed glimmers of that Savior—Moses led God's people like the Savior would; David was a king like the Savior would be—but none of these leaders could be the perfect savior we needed to fix our relationship with God.

Eventually, Jesus, the Son of God, was born as a human so that he could live the sinless life humans couldn't live, and then die the death we deserve to die because of our sin.

Our sin against God demanded a perfect sacrifice and God the Father sent his own Son to be that sacrifice on all of creation's behalf.

Then, a few days later, Jesus rose from the dead to show that he is, in fact, God over not only life, but also death.

And in his resurrection, Jesus provides us with the opportunity to no longer be spiritually dead, but to be raised to life and be in relationship with God through the Holy Spirit we receive when we trust that Christ truly is the Savior who God promised.

This is the good news: we were dead, but in Christ we are made alive—not only in eternity, **but now**.

So then, when we are given life because of Jesus, **we are then instructed** to give up the life we have been given for the sake of others as “living sacrifices.”

This gets us back to our big idea for the morning:

We worship God by investing the life that we have been given in others instead of spending it on ourselves.

If we, as Christians, are going to live a life of daily worship characterized by dying to ourselves, we should probably have some kind of guide to help us know how to even do that.

God's Word as a whole may serve as our guide throughout life. And one specific part of the Bible that serves as an especially good guide is the Great Commission.

2. The Christian life is oriented on the eternal good of others, not the earthly satisfaction of the self. (Matthew 28:19-20)

I think it's important for all of us to have some kind of a North Star in life.

Do you know what I mean by that? I'm sure you do.

The North Star, the star Polaris, appears brightly in the night sky, and because of where it is in relation to the earth, it always appears in the **northern** sky. This is why sailors and other navigators have used it to help with navigation for millennia. They still use it as a backup for when more modern navigation systems fail.

What makes the North Star valuable is that even amid choppy waters, stormy seas, and wobbly ships, the North Star is unmoving (at least to our eye). The North Star is consistent, and it can take you where you need to go no matter what you may be experiencing.

I think it's important that all of us have a "North Star" in our lives. We need an unchangeable, biblical truth that exists outside of our selves and our circumstances that we can **remind ourselves of** when we encounter difficulties or forks in the road of life.

Your North Star could be a favorite Bible verse or passage of Scripture. Or it could be a theological truth about who God is or who you are as a child of God and who God calls you to be.

As we try to live lives faithful to the gospel, we may find ourselves looking for gospel guidance of various kinds depending on our season of life or other things.

Whatever your North Star is, if you follow Jesus, whatever you use to guide your life ought to be something that aligns with what Jesus gives us in the Great Commission.

If you're keeping up in your own Bible, go ahead and turn over to the very end of Matthew's Gospel in Matthew 28, otherwise it will be on the screen behind me here in a second.

Maybe you find yourself coming out of Romans 12 thinking something like:

“Yeah, yeah, I get it. I’m supposed to be a ‘living sacrifice’ as a Christian, but what does that actually mean in my life? Like, how does that actually *look*?”

I think the disciples probably had similar questions when they saw Jesus after his resurrection and shortly before he ascended to be with God the Father.

Jesus doesn’t leave much mystery about what it is we are supposed to do when he gathers his disciples and huddles them up on a mountain along the sea of Galilee. He says:

“18 All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth. 19 Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Everything around us encourages us to make ourselves the center of our own stories. We all have a little bit of “main character syndrome” that we tap into from time to time.

You may often hear, or be tempted to say to someone else, “The world doesn’t revolve around you!”

Oh really? It doesn’t revolve around me?

Tell that to my Instagram feed when it shows me advertisements for items I have *only ever thought about purchasing*!

The world is increasingly designed, technologically and otherwise, to tell us that we are our own gods and that our North Stars reside inside of ourselves rather than outside of ourselves.

It has never been more culturally acceptable to believe that the world revolves around you. In fact, it seems borderline *virtuous* these days.

But what is the **big idea** we’ve already talked about a bit this morning?

We worship God by investing the life that we have been given in others instead of spending it on ourselves.

This is so radically counter-cultural it feels *weird*. And heaven forbid we feel *weird*.

In the Great Commission, the final teaching that Jesus gives his disciples, we see a command to live a life dedicated to the **eternal good of other people** rather than the **earthly satisfaction of the self**.

Despite what some sketchy TV preachers may indicate, **the Great Commission is not a great self-enrichment scheme**.

If you are looking for a comfy, cushy life, the Great Commission is not a great North Star for you—it's not a great way to orient your life if you are here to consume all that the world has to offer rather than cultivate for the good of others.

We take the gospel to our families, to our communities, and to the ends of the earth **not** because we're looking for a way to enrich ourselves, but because we are compelled by the **peace** God offers us in this life and the **presence** of God in the next, and we cannot imagine **not** sharing that with other people.

This is our ultimate North Star.

And as we saw in Romans 12, **Christian worship is the mundane decisions we make each and every day to give our lives away without actually losing them**.

And now, in Luke 9, we will see an earlier interaction Jesus has with his disciples that gives us a **specific example** of what it looks like to be **living sacrifices** oriented on the North Star of the Great Commission.

Our third and final point for this morning is this:

3. We look for God in the mirror, but we find him among the Goldfish crumbs. (Luke 9:46-48)

Let's get to our primary text for the morning, the one I was actually assigned, in Luke 9:46-48. It says this:

46 An argument started among them [the disciples] about who was the greatest of them. 47 But Jesus, knowing their inner thoughts, took a little child and had him stand next to him. 48 He told them, "Whoever welcomes this little child in my

name welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me welcomes him who sent me. For whoever is least among you — this one is great.”

Here we have the disciples, a bunch of teenage boys or young men, standing around talking about who is the best among them...

...And people say the Bible has no connection to reality in 2025. *Come onnnnnnn.*

Today we just call this a “podcast.”

So, anyway, the disciples are arguing about who is the greatest, most faithful disciple among themselves, and Jesus—being God—knows what is really going on in their hearts.

He gets a child who was nearby, probably watching the disciples make fools of themselves, and Jesus basically tells the disciples, *“You can stop your bickering and start caring about kids like this and maybe you’ll start to sniff greatness...or at least you’ll get to know me better.”*

We get a little bit more color in the commentary Matthew provides in his Gospel of this event. Matthew 18:1-5 says this:

1 At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “So who is greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”

2 He called a small child and had him stand among them. 3 “Truly I tell you,” he said, “unless you turn and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. 4 Therefore, **whoever humbles himself like this child** — this one is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. 5 And whoever welcomes one child like this in my name welcomes me.

In Matthew’s account of this event, we not only get Jesus telling the disciples that those who welcome children welcome him, but we also get Jesus’s call to **childlike humility**.

Here we see Jesus providing yet another example of how the kingdom of God, and how life is truly supposed to be, feels a bit upside down compared to how we see the world operate today.

Scripture in general, and the ministry of Jesus specifically, shows us that:

- We really gain by being willing to lose.
- We come in first place by being willing to be in last place.
- We die to live.
- We are greatest when we consider ourselves least.

The kingdom of God feels upside down, but it's really our broken world that is upside down and Jesus is telling us what it looks like when everything is right-side up.

This interaction between Jesus and the disciples is, I think, pretty straightforward.

The disciples bicker and fight about who is the greatest in the presence of the guy who spoke the universe into existence, who I imagine in all of his perfect patience and love is sighing to himself and thinking, "Goodness me, these fools."

So he gets a child and makes clear to them that the way up is down, and the way to be great is to care for little ones who have nothing to offer themselves.

And then, in an effort to fulfill this new definition of greatness, the disciples compete to set up the greatest children's ministries you've ever seen, complete with playground equipment and the highest quality snacks that first century Costco could provide.

No! That last part didn't happen.

What do we, living in Murfreesboro, Tennessee in the year 2025, take from this interaction between Jesus and his disciples?

I think what we take away from this interaction is the **big idea** we've been circling around this whole time:

We worship God by investing the life that we have been given in others instead of spending it on ourselves.

It's easy for us to look at this passage and laugh at the disciples debating among themselves who is the greatest and jockeying for Jesus's favor, as if competing for attention, affection, and affirmation isn't the most popular pastime in our culture today.

At least those guys were trying to get affirmation from the guy who hung the stars and not just people they hung out with in high school.

When we look at the fall of humanity in the Garden of Eden, a lot of emphasis is often put on the disobedience of Adam and Eve by taking and eating of the fruit God told them they shouldn't eat. But the sin of Adam and Eve goes **deeper** than **disobedience**, down to the **heart** of why they disobeyed.

The first sin Adam and Eve committed in the Garden wasn't disobedience, but the desire to be great—the desire to be as great as God—that motivated their disobedience.

Their disobedience was really just the fruit of the root sin: self-idolatry.

In 2025, we've gamified self-idolatry with social media and made it a hallmark of our culture.

We don't need to sit around and debate about who is the greatest because we have plenty of people in our pockets who will give us the attention we so deeply long for whenever we want it.

Our biggest obstacle to worshiping God by offering our lives as living sacrifices is that, deep down, we kinda, sorta think we are gods.

We would never say this, of course, but we act like it when we get frustrated that people are taking too long in line at the grocery store or when yet another home appliance breaks down.

We feel like everything should be **bending to our will** and **getting out of our way**.

The difficult reality that is hard for us to admit is that **we look for God in the mirror**.

And in this passage, Jesus tells us that **we're more likely to find God among the Goldfish crumbs**.

So amid this foolish discussion about who is the greatest, and among our constant jockeying for attention and affection in our own lives, Jesus pulls a child close and says to his disciples, **and to us**, in Luke 9:48:

“Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me. And whoever welcomes me welcomes him who sent me. For whoever is least among you — this one is great.”

This is the big idea, isn't it?

We worship God by investing the life that we have been given *in others* instead of spending it on ourselves.

One of the ways we welcome and love Jesus is by welcoming and loving and investing in our young people.

But what does this actually look like? What does it require of us to take Jesus's words seriously here?

I can think of a few ways we might worship God by investing in young people instead of spending our lives on ourselves.

Let's talk about these three application points, and then we'll be done for the morning, okay?

(First Application) First, we can **parent our children in light of eternity.**

I'm going to keep this point short because the last thing I want to do as a father of two girls under the age of six is get too far out over my skis giving parenting advice.

But I think for those of us who are parents in the room, we have a clear way to "welcome children," as Jesus says, and care for them.

As parents we are called by God to pray for our children, introduce them to God's Word, and tell them the good news of the gospel of Jesus. Every parent is a children's ministry leader or youth leader 24-hours a day, 7 days a week.

And let me say something about this for a minute.

Pardon me while I get my soapbox out, okay?

The children's ministry at City Church does not exist to entertain our children.

The youth ministry at City Church does not exist to handle all the hard conversations about life that we, as parents, ought to be having with our teens.

These ministries *may* do these things, and that's great. But that is not their chief purpose.

Children's and youth ministries at any church (including City Church) exist, first and foremost, to **support** and **resource** parents as the primary disciplers of their children. This is not my opinion; this is what the Bible says.

Paul says in Ephesians 4:11-16 that church leaders exist to "equip the saints for ministry" not to "do all the ministry."

Okay, *puts soap box away*. Now let's get back to the text.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9 provides the clearest instruction on how parents are to disciple their children. I know Trevor talked a little bit about this passage a couple of weeks ago. It says:

4 "Listen, Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 5 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength. 6 These words that I am giving you today are to be in your heart. 7 **Repeat them to your children. Talk about them when you sit in your house and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.** 8 Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them be a symbol on your forehead. 9 Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your city gates.

Next time you wanna make fun of reclaimed wooden boards with Scripture on sale at Hobby Lobby you just remember they're trying to help us all live up to these verses, okay?

In a manner of speaking, we parents are charged with helping our children find the true North Star.

For parents, the Great Commission starts at the dinner table.

This is a high calling and a serious responsibility. The role of a parent is a God-given role that requires God-given patience and grace. And we must realize that this responsibility requires the sort of daily death of being a living sacrifice to which Paul calls us in Romans 12.

Thankfully, we are not called to do this alone.

(Second Application) The second way we can live out this calling of Jesus is this: we can **start to see all the children of our church as our own, in a way.**

Whether or not you are a parent, if you consider yourself a part of this church or you are literally a covenant member, you bear some responsibility for the discipleship of the children in this church.

Once or twice a year we do **child dedications** at this church, and we don't just do it so a bunch of parents can dress up, invite their families to church, and get good pictures for Instagram. Parents bring their kids up here on stage and we all engage in a call-and-response exercise during which we commit to care for and help raise the children of City Church.

When we call ourselves “brothers and sisters in Christ” that is not some goofy metaphor—Scripture would say that this is *true* brotherhood and sisterhood. In Matthew 12:46-50, we see Jesus talk about this:

46 While he was still speaking with the crowds, his mother and brothers were standing outside wanting to speak to him. 47 Someone told him, “Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you.”

48 He replied to the one who was speaking to him, “**Who is my mother and who are my brothers? ”** 49 **Stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, “Here are my mother and my brothers!** 50 **For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”**

My daughters are accountable to this church. The smelly teenage boys in the youth ministry are a wonderful part of this family.

What would it look like if we acted like it?

If you see my kids acting a fool in the church or, once they're old enough, around town, you oughta give 'em a side-eye look like they're accountable to you—*because they are*.

Let's show up to City Kids' dance recitals. Let's attend some high school football games or track meets.

Let's act like the family we are.

(Caveat that we ARE very good at this as a church.)

Even the kids with the best home lives need adults who are not their parents to invest in them and disciple them—I am an example of that. My parents were, and are, wonderful parents.

My home life as a child and a teen was as healthy and stable as one could feasibly hope to have. And even in that my life was radically changed by adults who gave part of their lives to invest in mine.

I love when statistics and data back-up what Scripture says is true about how the world should work. I won't bombard you with all the data that's out there, but I can tell you that numerous studies confirm that young people who are mentored by adults **who are not their parents** flourish far more than young people who receive no such mentoring.

They get better grades, they are more obedient, they experience less anxiety and depression, and so much more. All of this is amplified, especially, among young men.

City Church: we have a responsibility to care for the children and young people in this church family, almost as if they are our own. This can take a number of forms, but perhaps the clearest way is what we'll talk about here in our third and final application point on how we might "welcome children" as Jesus calls us to do in Luke 9:

(Third Application) Third, and finally, a way we can obey the command of Jesus in this passage is by **volunteering in our church's children or student ministries.**

Some of you may know this, but I'm sure a good number of you don't because City Church has grown so much in the last few years.

Once upon a time, I was the volunteer youth minister here at City Church for about three years.

...Until they decided they needed someone way cooler than me, so they hired Tracey Bowler.

...And then they needed someone better looking than him, so they hired Cade.

Just kidding.

In middle school and high school I served in the children's ministry at my home church.

Then, in college, I helped lead the children's ministry at the church I attended in my college town, while Susie and I also served in the youth group there. Some of the kids Susie and I led back when we were in college have married each other and have kids of their own now, which really makes me feel old.

And then from college in Indiana and the whole time we've lived in a couple of different places around Middle Tennessee, I never really stopped serving in student ministry until we had Daisy in 2023.

These days I just harass all of you for your stickers at the doorway to our children's hallway here at the church, and I make sure you don't try to pawn your kids off on someone else before you scoot out of the building.

In my 14 years of student ministry and something like a decade of children's ministry, let me tell you what I've learned. Are you ready for this profound wisdom I've gleaned?

Here it is: ***all you really need to do is show up and care.***

Just show up. And care.

Of course sometimes you need to do more than that...

Like change a diaper or stay up all night eating junk food and playing countless games of Mafia. But when it comes down to it, you really just need to show up and care.

You need to be willing to invest in the flourishing of young people at the expense of your time and energy.

Put another way, you need to be willing to find God among the Goldfish crumbs and the Mountain Dew cans instead of in the mirror, or in your comfort, or in your free time.

A Final Word

We worship God in the mundane, daily moments when we choose to sacrificially live our lives with our eyes fixed on the North Star of others' eternal good rather than on our own earthly comfort.

All of us will find different ways to do this in our lives based on our rhythms and our other commitments.

But I just want to leave you with a question this morning that I hope will stick in your mind and kinda bug you until you find an answer. Here it is:

How can I give more of myself for the good of young people in my church or community?

Or, put another way: How might I welcome Christ by welcoming children?

Let's pray.