

Okay, don't say it if you know, but does anyone even know what QR stands for in QR code? Right. Multiple choice. Here we go. So the QR code they put on the screen is for if you want to know, if you wanted to.

I had to learn this about a year ago. You take your phone out, put your photo thing on, you take a picture, you know, you get it on there, and it comes out of focus. But I asked Phil on a Friday, what is this? Nobody knew. So here's.

Here's multiple choice. This is the Sherwood Oaks Technology Awareness Quiz. So we want to be informed people and part of our culture. What does QR stand for? A Quirky representation.

B, Quite Repulsive. C, Quit ranting. D, Quantum Realms. E, Quiet Ripple. Someone added this one.

F, Quentin and Renee. It was our worship leader up here. Or G, none of the above. Anybody have any ideas? It's actually none of the above.

QR stands for quick response. Now, you've learned something this morning. If you get nothing from this sermon, you have something you can take away with, right? So. But anyway, that's gonna be up there.

So if you want. If you scan that, it'll send you to the Bible passage on your phone. I actually read my Bible on my phone quite a bit. So I'm just. If that's something makes it easier for you to read the Bible on a regular basis.

This is called youversion. This has all kinds of different translations and stuff. So if you hold up your phone and do that, or, you know, you can do it, but that's gonna be up there, I think, in future weeks as well. QR code. So.

But now what QR means. So at least you're technologically up to things. All right, so I've been somebody joking me before about how many signs I have. So this is from even the former church I had. One of my signs says pray like Jesus.

And Sean asked me one time, you guys must have had a sign budget. I mean, this is like, what, \$50, \$40? So instead of making a new sign, you know, pray like Jesus is a good thing. But today the sermon's gonna be a different title, but instead of making a new sign. Cause I don't wanna bump on the sign budget too much.

I just made a separate thing to put on here. So this Sunday's sermon is Eat like Jesus, right? Eat like Jesus. If I could have made a new sign, I would have made this a neon flashing. All right?

Eat like Jesus. And you might think, wait, what does that mean? I'm

pretty sure if you weren't here last week, Jesus never had Oreos. I don't think he did. I don't think he had chocolate then at that part of the world, I don't know much.

But today we're talking about Jesus eating with people and how that's maybe for you and for me, a really good opportunity to have conversations with people about Jesus. So the title of the sermon actually is called Breaking Bread, Building Bridges. I just think, like, Jesus kind of gets to the point. And we're doing a series called Ripple Effect. And it's about evangelism.

Evangelism literally means the good news. So we're trying to figure how do we be bearers of the good news in real practical ways with people we know, neighbors, friends, co workers. Right. So last week, Sean talked about praying first, listening, well, being that kind of people. And this week, it's about breaking bread and building bridges.

And the role that eating a meal together might have opening an opportunity for you to talk about Jesus with people. Because Jesus had a lot of meals. A lot of the gospel stories are meals he had with people. Some of them were contentious. So this week we're looking at Matthew chapter nine, where Matthew, one of the first disciples, he was also a tax collector.

We'll talk about that. When he was called, he invited Jesus over for a meal. And Jesus disciples. And Matthew had some other guests as well. So we're gonna read Matthew chapter nine.

And just for the sake of. We won't do this every week. I think it's good to stand up to read scripture, but especially cause none of you did anything yesterday. Cause it was raining, physically. So let's stand up, get a lecture.

So stand up. We're gonna read three slides. This is Matthew, chapter nine. This is the Gospel of Jesus. The good news about Jesus Christ.

Here we go. As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man named Matthew sitting at his tax collector's booth. Follow me and be my disciple, Jesus said to him. So Matthew got up and followed him. Later, Matthew invited Jesus and his disciples to his home as dinner guests, along with many tax collectors and other disreputable sinners.

But when the Pharisees saw this, they asked the disciples, why does your teacher eat with such scum? Let's ask that question again. Why does your teacher eat with such scum? When Jesus heard this, he said, healthy people don't need a doctor. Sick people do.

Then he added, now go and learn the meaning of this scripture. I want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifice. One more time with that one, I Want you to show mercy, not offer sacrifices. For I have come to call

not those who think they are righteous, but those who know they are sinners. All right, go ahead and have a seat.

Thanks for reading that with me. So this is about. There's obviously tension in this story. He's. The Pharisees are upset that Jesus are eating with these people.

And I'll tell you why these people were so offensive to the Pharisees. But then Jesus has this incredible response about mercy. But there's gonna be three things I'm gonna encourage you to do. All right? First one is this.

Watch for opportunities. Watch for opportunities. Obviously, there's an opportunity for Jesus. Go to Matthew's house. He was invited, but I've lately, just reading the Bible lately, I've noticed the word opportunity show up a lot.

A couple weeks ago, if you were here, I preached from the Gospel of Acts where Peter and John healed somebody. And then a crowd gathered and it said, and Peter saw the opportunity. Last week, if you were here, Sean Talked from Colossians 4, where Paul writes about, I'm gonna pray for opportunities to talk about Jesus. Jesus even said, if you're called in front of people to testify about Jesus, in that case was called in front of rulers. He said, don't worry about what you're gonna say.

This is an opportunity to talk about me. Jesus said, so this whole idea of opportunities. And again, I'm gonna emphasize this, it's not an opportunity. You have to architect, create and force. Yeah, you might wanna invite people for a meal, but you don't have to script out what happens.

The opportunities sometimes just come to you and you just have to see it. And by that, I mean you have to see it with the eyes of your heart. The opportunity comes to you. In this case, the opportunity came to Jesus and his disciples. Matthew said, hey, come over for dinner.

I got a big party going on. All right? Sometimes you need to see the opportunity because eating together, we all know. I was reading this week about the psychology of eating together. All right?

And eating together generates connectedness. It generates trust. It generates openness, it reduces endorphins. I mean, lets out endorphins in your brain, puts you in a good mood. Unless you're eating with the wrong people, of course.

Right. But eating together is a good thing. So Jesus eats with the disciples and the tax collectors, and he takes advantage of an opportunity. All right, so let me tell you about an opportunity I had

once. So I was a.

When I was probably 22 or 23, I was a licensed Umpire to umpire baseball in the state of Indiana. I don't know if I was very good, but I was at least licensed and I got paid. So I was umpiring a game one time in my hometown, and the other guy umpiring with me was named JD And I didn't know him well. I just knew he was a good athlete from the other high school. And I kind of respect him, but never, ever, ever talked to him.

But he knew I'm from a big family. People knew we were Christians and stuff like that. So after the game, he came up to me and he says, hey, Moose. They used to call me Moose. People still do some hey, Moos.

You want to go out for pizza and a beer? I'm buying.

Now I'm buying. Was attractive to me. Pizza was attractive to me. But in the world I grew up with, beer was like.

I wasn't an alcoholic. I was legal to drink. I don't particularly like beer, but I could have gotten Sprite. And in this moment, if you freeze from the moment, I'm thinking, did I have dinner plans that night? No.

Did I really like JD and would love to talk to him? Yes. But if we go somewhere for pizza and a beer, I said no. I think I lied to him about what I was doing. And I want you to all say, on the count of three, Matt, that's awful.

One, two, three. All right. @ the time. But at the time, I felt like it was righteous. Cause I grew up in a culture, and maybe some of you might have grown up in a culture too, where Christianity was defined by what you don't do.

This is an old one. You don't drink or smoke or go. You know, you don't drink or smoke or go. The girls would do, you know. And then I had.

I remember in high school, one of the. Another classmate of mine said to me, oh, you go to that church that doesn't let you do anything? And I was like, is that how we wanna be known? But in that situation, I missed an opportunity. And the fact that I thought about it 40 plus years later, I just wonder, did he wanna talk?

Could we have had a conversation about Jesus? So you don't know? And I wasn't planning for him to ask me that. I had no plans that night. But even if I would have had a busy day, I still could have said, yeah, yes.

But my point is, watch for opportunities. And if you start watching

for them, it's kind of like, I think I said this last two weeks ago. You know, my first car was a Pontiac Sunbird. And once you had it, then I saw them all over the place on the road. It's kind of this.

It's called the Bader Meinhof syndrome, right? But as you start watching for opportunities with other people, you will notice them. If you even ask Jesus to open the eyes of your heart so you'll see them, you'll have opportunities that will push your agenda a bit and might even push your legalism a little bit. All right? So in that case, I miss the opportunity.

And so my question for you is, could an unexpected situation become an opportunity for you? An unexpected encounter this week, an unexpected opportunity to have a meal with people or a family this week. Could that be an opportunity? Because we don't need to create, we don't need to manufacture it. That feels like guilt and pressure, but an opportunity feels like the spirit of God's leading you.

So the first thing is watch for opportunities. Second thing from this passage is you have to confront the Pharisee. Jesus did. They're like, they didn't ask Jesus this question. They asked the disciples, why does your teacher Eve was such scum?

And let me just tell you why they called them scum. So Matthew's a tax collector. Tax collectors worked for Rome. Rome occupied Israel, like Nazi Germany occupied Europe. They were not welcome there.

They were hated. So if Matthew worked for Rome collecting taxes, he was doubly hated as a Jew who worked for the enemy. And tax collectors were known as corruption, dishonest, you know, deceitful, vulgar, everything. They were the lowest rung of the spiritual totem pole according to the religion of the day, the Jewish faith, The Pharisees, they weren't even allowed to testify in court. They were thought to have no credibility.

So walking by them and spitting on them could have been a norm. But this is Jesus asking Matthew, a tax collector, despised, corrupt, or at least thought to be, to follow him. And then Matthew invites Jesus and his disciples over to party with more tax collectors and other disreputable sinners. So think about the kind of people that would hang around with the lowest kind of people. It's those kind of people.

Some people, some commentators even think they're more likely prostitutes there or other sex workers of that time. So it was not a seemly, it was not a righteous church gathering. And I often wonder, what was that like? What was that meal like? I'm pretty sure Jesus didn't go around saying to each one, stop sinning, stop sinning, stop sinning, stop sinning.

You're bad, you're bad. You're bad. Not that he doesn't want them to

be holy. He did. But there was probably a lot of conversation, maybe even laughter.

These people wanted to be around Jesus. And as disciples, we don't know. The disciples are probably a little bit uneasy. And the Pharisees were more than uneasy. They were angry.

Why does your teacher eat with such scum? And then Jesus responds in a way. He calls them out. He calls out the Pharisees. He calls them on their hypocrisy.

He calls them on their lack of love for these people. So sometimes you need to identify and challenge the Pharisee. And sometimes when you identify and challenge the Pharisee, you see that person in the mirror, right? Cause we all have a little Pharisee in us. As long as we're following Jesus, he's working that out of us.

But we all have that in us. And maybe sometimes that becomes the barrier to open conversations about Jesus. So I was at a conference once, years ago, and it was ministry people. But there was a guy in my small group for this conference. He was.

I think this is still a common word. He was blinged out. I mean, he looked like the ultimate TV preacher. Jewelry, every part of his clothes was perfect. And we were introducing ourselves.

Cause this was my first experience with. With what I thought was the Pharisee. And he's like, I pastor Binding Force Christian Church. He said with a Kentuckian accent I'm trying to mimic. And I was just like, oh, brother, this guy must be arrogant.

He's shiny. He's a Pharisee. And then as we go around sharing our stories, he starts to tell his story. He grew up in a horrible home in the hills of West Virginia. No plumbing, no electricity.

Dysfunctional and abusive. Spent time in state prison for a number of years, where Jesus changed his life. And as he's talking, I'm realizing the Pharisee in the conversation wasn't him, it was me. Cause I had labeled him based on his appearance and based on how he talked that he must be arrogant. And I thought, it's me.

So when I'm saying challenge the Pharisees, sometimes you need to challenge your own reason as to why you don't wanna be around that person. And I'm not. You know, beer's not sanctified or unsanctified. How we use it might be. But, you know, I was in.

Like I said, I grew up in an environment where you just didn't. I didn't go anywhere where there was beer. So what? You know, there Are other things. We all have our own little things.

But just identify the Pharisee in you. And maybe right now you're thinking of somebody, you think, yeah, I think I'm better than them. Or I wouldn't want to hang around with them because this is what they do. And that's not the kind of. And maybe you need to know their story.

I think killing the Pharisee inside of us, one of God's primary tools is listening to somebody else's story. Cause when I found out this guy's story and how God had changed him, and he's almost crying when he's telling it, that's what I should be looking for. His heart, not his looks, right? So confront the Pharisee within you. Cause that becomes a barrier to having these kind of conversations with people.

Last thing is. Or the last of the three things is, let mercy lead you. So when Jesus. And I'll explain what I mean by that in a second. So when Jesus was.

The Pharisees said, why does he eat with such scum? And Jesus, they were asking the disciples. But Jesus, of course, overheard it. He hears everything, right? And he says to them, you know, it's the healthy don't need a doctor, the sick do.

Then he says to the Pharisees, you need to go and learn something. And that something is from the Old Testament, the Jewish scriptures. So Jesus was telling these very learned people who may have had some of the Old Testament memorized by heart. And he's telling them, you need to learn something. In Hosea, chapter 6, verse 6, God said to the people, the Jewish people in that time, centuries ago, who were doing all these.

They did all the right religious stuff. But God said to them, I desire mercy, not sacrifice. If you wanna know me, you need to excel in mercy. And by sacrifice, it was. Jesus was basically.

God was basically saying, Hosea six, six, I want you to embody my mercy in you. I don't really care about your religious traditions now. He wasn't saying those things didn't matter, but he's saying mercy matters way more. Let mercy lead you. Not legalism, not doing the right thing at the right time.

Let mercy lead you. And then it was also later in the Gospel of Matthew, the disciples were doing something on the Sabbath. They were picking grain, cause they were hungry. Pharisees complained again, threw the penalty flag. Look what your disciples are doing.

And Jesus is like, learn this. God said, I desire mercy. Not your sacrificial exercises of religion that make you look good. I desire to be merciful. I Don't care if you have a flawless image.

Of course he wants us to be holy, but he wants you to be merciful. And

he's saying this to these people. And he's saying to them, let mercy be how you act. We should be. I told you in high school, I was one of the girls told me one time, well, you go to that church that doesn't let you do anything.

What would it be like if somebody said, oh, you go to Sherwood Oaks. That church seems very merciful and compassionate. Wouldn't that be what we want to be known as? As opposed to what we don't do or what we're against? No, we are for mercy and compassion.

Mercy. Let me tell you what that word means. So sometimes mercy we misunderstand as pity. When I was a kid growing up, there was a rule in baseball. If you were headed by more than 10 runs after four innings, they called the game.

It was called the mercy rule. Cause we feel so bad for these people who are getting beat by 10 runs. But Mercy is not pity. Mercy is kind of an essential part of the character of God that he wants in us. In Exodus chapter 34, when God first self defined himself to Moses and God defined himself as I, one of the things he said was, I am overflowing with mercy.

And mercy means it's this kind of love that comes out of me. It's regardless of whether you deserve it or not. It's not a dutiful thing. I don't do it cause I'm supposed to. I do it because there's a goodness in me and a love in me.

The Hebrew word is hesed, but it shows up a lot in the Old Testament. It's this steadfast, everlasting love. The love that endures forever. It's the kind of love God has for us. Even though we were sinners.

Christ died for us, right? So Jesus is saying to the Pharisees, that's what God wants in you. He wants that mercy in you. Cause that's the character of God. And quit playing these silly religious games where you're trying to figure out who's on the higher level of the ladder of spirituality.

Let mercy lead you. Let mercy lead you. Don't let legalism lead you. Don't let fear lead you. Don't let condemnation lead you.

Here's some examples of that I'll give you. So if you were here two weeks ago. I preached two weeks ago, and I'm not saying that for that reason, but after the third service was done, we sing Songs, right? And I was over here, probably in the second row of singing. And as I do sometimes, I was already thinking ahead to this sermon.

Not intentionally. It just came to my mind, okay, I've got to think about the next time. That's one thing preachers have to do. Sometimes we think we finish one, we're on the next one. And I was thinking about the next sermon, which was today, sitting over there, we were



singing.

And I will say this. When you're worshiping, don't discount what feels like random thoughts. Cause if you're opening your heart to God, then you got this open communication back to you. Maybe you'll think something that feels random, but it might be God. At least test it, right?

So we're singing over here, and I'm thinking this passage. And I'm thinking where the Pharisees said, why does your teacher eat with such sin? I don't know why that came to my mind, but it did. When we were singing, and I felt Jesus say to me, that's how you think of David. And I'm making, it's not the person's name.

It's not his real name. Person I know, not from this church, but that's how you think of David. And I was. And I felt like God said, you hold him in contempt. And I was like, I didn't say.

I didn't. I didn't say no. I said, but he deserves it. You know how he's treated me, God, he deserves. He deserves the way I have to respond to him.

He deserves it. And then I clearly is. And this is. You can do. This can happen to you, too.

I knew God was saying to me, I want you to have lunch with him. I'm saying, no. Can I just tell you I love him after all? Yeah, I do love him. God, can we skip the lunch thing?

Right? No. I mean, it's like Moses. It was like Jonah saying, God. God says, go to Nineveh.

And he's like, no. So I was like, no. I didn't even tell anybody about it. I didn't tell my wife about it. I knew what God wanted me to do.

But I was balking, right? Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, I told Sean, when I was meeting with Sean and Maggie, I'd say, hey, I just want you to pray for me about something. Cause I don't know what to. I didn't say, I don't know how to do this. I know what God wanted me to do.

I just lacked the courage to do it. Friday, Saturday, and then Sunday, I finally emailed this guy. And I said, hey, would you like to have lunch sometime? And I said, this is what I said. I don't really know your story.

I just wanna know your story. Can we not talk about this stuff that we have conflict over? Can I just hear your story? And it was like, I got an email back within an hour. Yeah, tell me when.

I don't know. I don't know. I know parts of the guy's story. There's still parts of him that I'm just like, God, why? But it's like, I knew God wanted me to over a meal.

Cause I was like, can we just. Can I just email him back and forth? No. God's like, no. Over a meal.

Okay. All right. Another situation. I'm just talking about how mercy leads. Mercy was leading me.

Cause I knew it was God saying, I love this guy and I want you to know his story. He has no spiritual interest, as far as I know. But then there's another person that came to mind. This is a person that I knew. I know that's not.

They don't irritate me. They're just in my way, world. And I just didn't really know much about their story spiritually. I mean, I know they don't go to church. I know this person, this other person now I'm talking about doesn't go to church.

Don't have much of a spiritual story. Has probably said or done things that I would say are not righteous. Right. But I like him. I've known him for a number of years in, again, a different setting.

So I just felt like God was saying, ask him for lunch too. Cause I'm saying, if we're gonna be challenging, if I want you, and we want you to kind of figure out maybe as a meal, and you don't have to have it happen before Easter. Maybe there's some other. Have a meal with somebody. And I would encourage you this.

Have a meal with somebody solely to hear their story. Don't come with your Bible to throw at them. There'll be an opportunity for that. I promise you that. So this other person, I emailed him, this is what I asked him.

I'm gonna call him Marvin. It's a fake name, of course. And I don't know anybody named Marvin. So it's easy, right? Nobody here knows.

Maybe somebody hears Marvin. I'm sorry, but I'm not writing to you. And this is what I emailed. I'm giving you as an example of how I try. And I thought I gotta.

I can. So this is what I said, hey, would you be open for breakfast or lunch sometime? And I said, yes, I do have an agenda. Smiley face emoji, right? I said, my agenda is that I wanna hear your story.

And to be specific, I'd love to hear your religious story, like your experiences and thoughts about church, God and Jesus. I think you know me well enough to know I'm not a pushy pastor. I've known this guy for probably 15 years. So I have no hidden agenda other than I just wanna

hear your story. No judgment.

And I'm saying this too, because I didn't say. And I'd like to tell you my story. That's called bait and switch. I've talked to people who were put off by Christians because they had a conversation where the person kind of loved them and heard their story. And then it turned into, now let me tell you what I think.

And it was like them hearing was only a reason, so they could then use the megaphone to shout the gospel at people. That's not mercy, right? So then I said, I'm currently working at Sherwood Oaks Christian Church where I now teach and preach. Part of my motivation is I'm going to encourage people at the church with an assignment. This is you, right?

To have similar low pressure listening conversations with friends and neighbors. So I figured if it's good for the congregation, I need to do it myself. And you're the one, the first people I thought to ask. So no problem. If you simply like to pass on this, I totally understand.

He and I are gonna get together in a couple weeks. Did I feel anxious sending the email? Yes. Did I feel like. I don't wanna think he's weird.

I'm weird. Yeah, I thought that. But then I thought, he has a story. Maybe there's times where he, in the depths of his being, in whatever way he knew, was saying, God have mercy on me. I don't know what to do.

I don't know. Everybody has a story. And so I'm gonna listen to him and his story. No judgment, no other agenda. I'm not gonna do bait and switch.

If he asks me questions, I'll answer them. But you can do it without having the pressure. And then the third thing I'll talk about was in terms of letting mercy lead. So you've seen these Easter cards, You know, these Easter postcards that invite people. So the church I used to work at, we had some too.

On Easter, we had a meal. I had a meal. And we were gonna have some kind of a message with it. So I Decided. And this can let mercy lead.

All right. I decided to invite some of my neighbors. So I did the highly relational thing of driving to their house, opening the mailbox, stuffing it in there, closing and going home.

Was I being led by mercy then? No, I was being led by duty, obligation, fear. I want more people there on Easter Sunday. There was no mercy in that. Now, should I invite them?

Yes. But I need to invite them out of mercy that I love them. I know God loves them. Not out of. I'm not joking when I said I put in the mailbox, slammed it and drove home.

I'm not joking. Now, I want you to say, matt, that's awful. One, two, three. Okay. Right.

We can all be that way. But I thought I. So now I'm thinking, well, God, how do I have God? You have to give me that mercy. You have to fill me with your spirit.

Cause your spirit is the source of that mercy in me. That kind of love for someone, that's not duty. It's not duty.

I think God loves them. So lately, when I've been singing worship songs in my car, these two people who I call David and Marvin, I see them worshipping. They're not followers of Jesus, but I try to see them. Okay, God, this is how you see them, what they can be. So I'm gonna have a conversation.

I just wanna hear their story. Because I'm guessing when Jesus sat down with Matthew, the other deplorable sinners, and the tax collectors and the disciples, I'm guessing Jesus didn't say, excuse me, I'm gonna preach right now. I'm sure he maybe heard some of their stories. And I'm sure they were drawn to him because they sensed in him. No judgment, no agenda other than, I wanna set you free.

I wanna set you free. Cause that's what Jesus is like. And maybe, maybe, maybe, maybe some of us struggle with that because we need to experience more of the mercy of Jesus in our lives. All right? Evangelism literally means the good news.

And I'm gonna say it this way. It's the good news about Jesus. And that may be kind of obvious, but maybe it's not. Sometimes I hear people say, oh, I just want the gospel to be known. And I say to them, can you just say Jesus instead of gospel or the Gospel of Jesus?

But we don't. Evangelism is not. We want people to know how good I am, how good my church is, how good religion is, and why the Bible's true. Those are all good things. I want them to know Jesus, right?

You want them to know Jesus, Encounter the person of Jesus. Why? Because there's no one like Jesus. I had a conversation just a couple weeks ago, again, unexpected. I teach a class at iu and after class, one of the students, the student in my class who I would say least likely, I thought I would want to talk to, and they were talking to me about their spiritual life out of the blue, right?

Opportunity. And as we're talking, all I said in response was I said,

I'm not trying to preach at you, but I said, I'm just enamored with a guy named Jesus. He's changed my life. He's gonna change the world. World.

I said, there's no one like him. So if sometimes that's the all you need to say, sometimes that's a lot. Because I tell there's no one like Jesus. He delivers people from Satan's power. He heals the brokenhearted.

He sets people free. He heals physical sickness. He's courageous. He's kind. He's dangerous.

He's good. He rejects the temptation to be popular. He loves the lovely. He touches the untouchable. He forgives the unforgivable.

He socializes and eats with sinners. He offends the spirit of religiosity. He knows the truth, yet leads with mercy. He's misunderstood, he's rejected. But he remains wildly free, peaceful and joyful.

And then he's killed. And then he rises from the dead, right? He rises from the dead. There's no one like him. There's no one like Jesus.

Let him pour his mercy into you. Maybe there's issues in your life you got to deal with God about, but his mercy is great. I've said before, his mercy is enormous. I use a word that's not a word. It's ginormous, right?

That's the mercy of God. And you might think, well, you don't know what I've done. I don't know what you've done. God knows what you've done. Jesus knows what you've you done.

But his mercy is enormous to you. And the more we experience the mercy of God through our own brokenness and need for healing, we become then these conduits of the powerful life saving mercy of God to people like David or Marvin or my neighbor that I stuck stuff in their mailbox, I want to be a conduit of that. And that can happen over a meal. It's a great thing. But be a conduit of the mercy of God.

Let mercy lead you to the people. You love and know neighbors, friends and co workers. So Jesus, we. We love you. That's kind of an understatement.

We're enamored with you. There's no one like you. We want to be that way with the mercy filling our souls. But Jesus, we think about. I'm sure right now, people have already in their heads.

They think about people that have come to mind is their version of David or their version of Marvin. And they think about those people and they're like, God, what am I supposed to do? How do I again, God,

you never speak with guilt. You never speak with pressure. You move us with love and mercy.

We want to move to that, to connect with our friends and neighbors and look for watch for the opportunity to talk about Jesus. We ask this in his name. Amen. So our response time. I'm standing over here because here's one of the tables.

We have communion. We do communion every week. It's a way to respond. Jesus said when he was doing this, when he was serving the disciples the meal at a meal, the Last Supper, he was telling them, every time, you eat this and drink this, remember me. Remember me.

And maybe what he wants us to remember is how much mercy he. He shows you and how much mercy's inside. He wants a meal. Revelation 3 says, Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice, I want to come in and have a meal with them.

Jesus wants a meal with you, which means connection, love, trust, no condemning judgment. But he wants to set you free, right? So we will sing. That's part of our response. Communion.

We just come up. We don't dismiss by rosary. You just come up during the song. You'll grab your own. There's bread on the bottom, cup on the top.

And you can figure that out. You're doing good. And then. But it's. We're doing that because we remember.

We're putting that in our bodies to remember. And there's also people around the room that has orange lanterns there for pray for you. And maybe you just want somebody to pray, pray that I have more of the mercy of Jesus in me. Maybe that's what your prayer is. And if there's someone here this morning who would say, I'm on this side of the mercy of Jesus, I want to be on that side, I want to follow him, then tell somebody with orange lanyard come talk to me, whatever.

But if that's you, and if you want to get baptized, we can do that today too. But it's all about the mercy of Jesus. Toward us and then through us, all right?