

HIGHLANDS CHURCH

Preparing the Way

Full Transcript

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The Shoe-Tying Parable: Learning to Ask for Help

- 0:00 Brooke and I have six kids. We've got four older kids, call them the squad, and then we took a little break and then we have round two, the other two kids that are much younger. This story just involves the squad. This was long before round two was even a thing. We had four kids under the age of six and so it was a lot, whirlwind of stuff all the time. And my second daughter, Laney, every kid is very different and they're all beautiful in their own way. Laney is a little bit like me, a little high-strung when it comes to time. Gotta be on time, gotta be on time. Very responsible, we'll put it that way.
- 0:37 She's very responsible, as am I. But man, time is a big deal to her. And so on one particular Saturday, she was all decked out in her AGAF volleyball gear. We were going to her volleyball game. And 15 minutes early is already 10 minutes late for Laney and so we are sitting there and we're all trying to get ready to go and she's probably eight or nine years old and Riley, her little sister, is maybe four or five. And Laney is decked out. She's got her gigantic knee pads on and everything else. She's ready. Dad, we gotta go! We're gonna be late!

The Message of Repentance: Turning from Self-Reliance

- 1:11 We got some time. No, we gotta go now! Okay. Guys, we gotta go. Laney's in her thing. You gotta, we gotta get ready. So Riley decides, I'm gonna start getting ready. And at this time, Riley is learning to tie her shoes. So she plops down at the base of the stairs, plops on her shoes and begins to tie her shoes. And she starts to tie her shoes. And she's struggling. But I think what's going to be special about this moment is [unclear - appears to be speaker's internal narration that was mistranscribed]
- 1:52 And that is to allow her to take care of herself. Whenever she's doing that situation she I she I think I can do it. She can't do it. She can't do it. Dad, she can't do it. We've got to go. And Riley just keeps trying, keeps trying, keeps trying, and just, I mean, crocodile tears boiling up on her eyes. She can't even see anymore because she's all covered in tears. All the while, I just sit there, just waiting, watching the scene play out. One lady needs to learn to . But she's .

The Law's True Purpose: Pointing to the Savior

- 2:24 And Riley, I can't, I can't, I can't. And all she's got to do is look up at me and go, Dad, can you help? I'm on it. Been tying shoes since I was your age. But there she is. And she's trying, and she's trying, and she's getting more and more frustrated and more and more upset. And the tension is building until finally she just looks up and goes, Dad, would you help? Absolutely. John the Baptist is going to show up. He's going to say a specific word over and over and over again to these religious leaders. He's going to say, repent. Repent. Repent. Repent. Repent. I come with a baptism of repentance. Bear fruit in leading with repentance and in overflowing of repentance.

3:09 This idea of repentance is a turning from, a changing the way you think about something and turning from it and going the other way. Repent. Here's why I share that shoe -tying story and how it ties into what we're talking about today. The religious leaders have been spending their entire, existence trying to tie their own shoes, trying and trying and trying and never able to get it right.

The Challenge: Where Are You Trying to Tie Your Own Shoes?

3:38 And all they need to do is stop trying and look at God and go, help, because Jesus is the answer to what they've been trying to solve for 2,000 years. From the very beginning, God says, here is my law. And my law is meant to keep you set apart, to keep you different. But you will not be able to accomplish my law fully. So I'm going to set up a whole bunch of ways in which you can be reminded of your failure. We call that the sacrificial system. They had a bunch of feasts they would do every year, essentially showing up going, well, we all blew it again, but thanks, God.

4:17 Somewhere between when it all got started and where we end up here today, the religious leaders had lost sight of God. They had lost sight of what the law was meant to do. The law was meant to point out their need for a savior. Somewhere along the way, they felt like the law had become their savior. And so they began to preach a message of, tie your own shoes and everything will be fine. And John's going to show up and he's going to say, you guys need to stop. Stop trying to fix a problem on your own because you can't. Turn from the way you're thinking and realize and see just how much you need.

The 2,000-Year Promise: Abraham to Jesus

4:52 This coming savior in Jesus Christ. That's what he's going to talk about. That's where he's going to go. That's what we're going to look at today. And so before we even dive into it, here's a question that I've been wrestling with. I throw out to you as well.

5:08 What are the areas of our life? And for some of you, for some of you in here, in this place, it is your very salvation. You've been trying to save yourself through doing all these things and you're like a little girl trying to tie your shoes and you can't. And what you need to do this morning is look up at God and go, God, I can't. God's going to go, that's exactly why Jesus came.

5:32 There are others of us, this guy in particular, who have acknowledged, God, I can't save myself. I need your son Jesus for everything. And my faith and trust and security is in Christ alone. But there are plenty of things that come in my life that I try and fix. And I try and go, maybe, God, you're too busy for this. I'll work on it. And I get. Frustrated. Or I fail.

John the Baptist: Preparing the Way

- 5:58 I get anxious. I get worried. I get consumed by things other than the Lord. And it's me trying to tie my own shoes. And I've been convicted a lot this week to just be able to go, stop. God, I need help. I need help. I can't. My loving, gracious Father scoops me up and goes, watch what I can do. He begins to take those things. And we'll hear why that's so important in a little bit. But you've got to take a look at your own life. Is there anything, whether it be your own identity with the Lord or even the way in which you are living your life, that maybe today, as Thomas even shared earlier with our finances, is just a posture of surrender?
- 6:36 God, here it is. I can't. I need your help. Let me pray, and then we'll dive into the word. God, thank you for your patience with us. God, certainly your patience with me all these years. God, thank you for giving me the freedom to try. And yet, God, when I fail, thank you for your infinite grace in scooping me up, doing what only you can do. God, I pray today, as we lean into your word, if there are any here, God,
- 7:08 That need to do as you say in Colossians, God, put to death those things that are in us. God, that we would leave those in this place, and that you would restore us. You would rebuild us. You would do your greatest work in us. And it would not be us willing it to be or us manipulating or manufacturing an outcome, but God, it would be a complete posture of surrender. So that, God, you and you alone would get all the glory. And we could do nothing other than just fall on our knees and praise you for everything that you've done and continue to do in our life. God, if there's anyone here trying to fix this problem on their own, God, I pray that your Holy Spirit would not relent from pursuing and chasing after them.

Confronting the Pharisees and Sadducees

7:47

Matthew 3:1-3

In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord; make his paths straight.'"

- 8:07 So Matthew chapter 3 starts off this way. It says this. In those days, John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea. What is he preaching? He's preaching this. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is the one spoken of by the prophet Isaiah when he said, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord, make his path straight. That's Isaiah chapter 40. Now, what is all of this in reference to? Here's what we need to understand, because we are so far this side of the cross, and we read these stories, and we go, OK.
- 8:43 Genesis chapter 12, verse 3. God is looking out at all of humanity, and he chooses one man. This man's name is Abram. And God tells Abram, I'm going to tell you to tell you to bless the entire world through you.

Wheat and Chaff: The Judgment to Come

8:59 Genesis chapter 12, verse 3, a promise is made to a person named Abram, who later becomes Abraham, who then becomes the father of the entire Jewish race, the people of Israel, God's chosen people. Genesis 12, 3, 2,000 years before Christ, the promise is made, all the world will be blessed, blessed through you. That is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. For 2,000 years, the Jews are looking for this promise to be fulfilled.

9:35

Jeremiah 31:31-34

"Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah, not like the covenant that I made with their fathers on the day when I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, my covenant that they broke, though I was their husband, declares the LORD. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."

John's Baptism and Jesus' Coming

10:13 And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me, from the least of them, to the greatest, declares the Lord. For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more. God begins to speak of this new covenant that is coming. All of it meant to get the Jews to go, man, we can't wait for that day.

10:39 But 2,000 years is a long time to wait. And so they've been waiting, and they've been waiting, and they've been waiting for this promise to come. Just to put it in reference, it was about 2,000 years ago that everything. Everything we're reading about now took place in Jesus's life from where we are today. And so if you think the days of Jesus are ancient, ancient history, think about a Jew waiting for the promise to come, that promise that was made 2,000 years ago to Abraham. And all of a sudden, it's about to show up. Here comes John the Baptist looking at the people going, stop doing what you're doing. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

11:18

Matthew 3:4-6

Now John wore a garment of camel's hair and a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the region about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Jesus Ushers in the New Kingdom

11:40 Then Jerusalem and all Judea and all the regions about the Jordan were going out to him, and they were being baptized in him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. So we got this guy out in the wilderness, the wilderness, wearing camel's hair and a belt, and he's eating bugs and honey. What? Again, many people would say this is kind of the foretelling of Elijah, right? Go back and read 1 Kings. There's this talk of Elijah and the one that comes. Elijah is going to come before. John could be a loose reference to Elijah. 2 Kings 1 .8 would talk about this is what Elijah was dressed like, similar dress to John the Baptist here, the one coming to prepare the way for the Lord.

12:20

Matthew 3:7-10

But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father,' for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

12:49 Well, my guess would be, this is just me guessing, they should be teaching the law of the Lord. They're going to show the law of the Lord. They're going to show up in the synagogue one week, and they go, wow, not many people here. Where is everybody? They're all out in the wilderness with the guy in the camel hair and eating the bugs. Well, let's go see. And so all these Sadducees and Pharisees begin to make their way out to find out what's going on, what's disrupting the influence and control that we've had for all of these years. Where are all the people? Let's go out and find out. And so they roll up, and John sees them, and he greets them with a hearty welcome.

Bearing Good Fruit Through Surrender

13:20 He looks at them and says this. You brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit in keeping with repentance. And don't you dare presume to say to yourselves, we have Abraham as our father. For I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children for Abraham. Even now the ax is laid to the root of a tree, and every tree that does not bear good fruits is cut down and thrown into the fire. What is this talking about? Well, here you have John the Baptist looking at these religious leaders, and he says, you bunch of vipers. You have hijacked the law of the Lord, the law that God gave you, that he entrusted to you, that he said, would you steward this and keep my people set apart from the rest of the world and keep them constantly living by the law and realizing we can't,

14:15 We need. Keep their eyes always looking forward to the coming Messiah, to the promised one to come. And somewhere along the way, the religious leaders stopped saying, do this as a reminder of our need for what's to come. And they started to adopt some understanding of, do this, and that's it. Follow the rules. Do all the things. If you do all the things, then everything is good. And so you had a bunch of people doing the right thing, but not for the right reason. You can go read Isaiah 1. Even Isaiah 29. I mean, the prophets have been referencing this over and over and over again.

14:58 God looks at the people of Israel and goes, I'm sick of all of your stuff, your new moon Sabbath and your feasts and all of the things you bring. They disgust me. Isaiah 29, right? They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Well, they were doing the things, but they weren't doing the things for the right reasons. They're trying to tie their own shoes and not acknowledge that they need help. They think they can help themselves. And so they try and they try and they try. And now they're telling other people, this is the way to the Lord. And John shows up and goes, you brood of vipers, stop.

Personal Application: Are You Still Tying Your Own Shoes?

15:37 Stop doing what you're doing and turn from it. Stop doing what you've been preaching and turn from it and realize that you were never meant to save yourself. Everything the law was created for was meant to remind you of the one to come. So fix your eyes on the one to come. And the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

15:56 What does this reference to Abraham? Well, the religious leader said, oh, but we got Abraham's blood, the covenant of Abraham. It applies to us. And John goes, no, no, no, stop. Don't think for a second that God can't replace you with stones and rocks if he wants to.

16:11 You're putting your faith in the wrong thing. They're still putting their faith in the rules. So John says, repent and bear fruit in keeping with repentance. Bear good fruit in keeping with repentance. And then we get the judgment. What's the judgment? It says this. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is going to be cut down and thrown into the fire. He's going to double down on this analogy in just a second with this idea of wheat and chaff. What's this talking about?

16:44 I believe what he's referencing here is all of those that would look and go, we're doing, we're doing, we're doing. Look at all the things that we do. But they don't know the Lord, and they don't realize their need for a savior. It's those that are trying to tie their own shoes and are getting real close, thinking close enough is good enough. It's not with the Lord.

The Path to Salvation: Total Surrender

17:06 Who are those that are going to be cut down and thrown into the fire? Who are those that are going to be separated like wheat and chaff? It's all of those that are being obedient without the acknowledgment and acceptance of Jesus Christ in our context. In our context today. In their context here, it was those that were saving themselves by what they did and not acknowledging who or why they were doing it. This is why if you can just flip two pages to the right in your Bible if you want, you can read Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount interacting, and he says this towards the end. He goes, there will be some on that day that will look at me and say, Lord, did we not do all of these things?

17:41 Didn't we do all this stuff? God, look at all that we did. We went to church every week. We did. We did. We did. And what does Jesus say to them? Depart from me, for I never knew you. Why? Because they did all these things, but they never acknowledged who or why they did it. This is why I continue to say

God cares more about why you do what you do than what you do. And I think the Pharisees missed it. They were more focused on the what than on the why.

18:11

Matthew 3:11-12

"I baptize you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

Living on Mission: Telling Others About Jesus

- 18:43 John's only purpose. I baptize you with the baptism of repentance. But he who is coming after me, he's mightier than I. In fact, whose sandals I am not even worthy to carry. When he comes, he's going to baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. And his winnowing fork is going to be in his hand. And he's going to clear the threshing floor. And he's going to gather the wheat into the barn. But the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire. Again, I believe in acknowledgment to the judgment that is to come. So what's the difference between wheat and chaff? Chaff are those that are doing, being obedient to all the things without accepting their need for a savior.
- 19:34 In our context, in our world today, it's all of those that would say, if I do all of these things, I'm good.
- 19:42 It's every time we do something. Not out of reverence and awe and eyes fixed on Jesus. But we do them out of a way of, well, if people see me, they'll think I'm good.
- 19:54 But there's an entire religious structure that's set up. For when you fail, when you do something bad, you would show up and go, I screwed up again. OK, well, if you do these five things, you're good.
- 20:07 And we've created a self-saving religious system that is not of the Lord. And what God would say if he were to walk in here, he would say, repent. Stop trying because you can't tie your own shoes. In fact, I made you tie your shoes so you would realize you couldn't. So you would look up with me with tears in your eyes and go, I can't. Would you help? I did. That's why Jesus came. Stop trying to save yourself. So what is this wheat and chaff? The wheat are those that would say, God, I can't.
- 20:40 And a posture of humility, right? He's going to say it in just a, again, one page over. Blessed are those that are poor in spirit. Blessed are the poor in spirit. Blessed are those that show up and go, God, I have nothing, but I need you for everything. God goes, now we can do our best work. Because now you're not trying to fix it on your own, but you're relying on me. And that's the place we were always meant to be. Old Testament, try. We can't do it. Look to the coming one. Us now, try. God, I can't be perfect. Look back to who Christ is. Repent. Stop trying to fix it on your own and start relying on the Lord.
- 21:20 That is his message. And then comes the judgment. Some will be gathered into the barn. Again, I would argue those that have put their faith in Christ, gathered into the barn. Those that have not burned with unquenchable fire. So how do we make sure that we are not those burned with fire or the unquenchable fire? It's to ask yourself that question. What do you believe about Jesus?

- 21:41 Why are you here? Why do you do what you do? Is it because you are absolutely in love with Jesus Christ? Is it because you have acknowledged you can't but he can and so you're all in on Jesus?
- 21:57 Are we living out an honor me with their lips but their hearts are far from me? Are we living out a I do all the things because I think that's what it is? Man, this is a great fear. I know for at least Thomas and I, I can't speak for every pastor, but my guess would be it would be pretty close.
- 22:16 And when all is said and done, that there are going to be some people that God has entrusted us to shepherd that are going to kneel before the throne of God someday and they're going to go, God, I did, I did, I did. Look at all that I did. And God's going to say, but I never knew you. You were so focused on doing everything, but you never stopped to acknowledge your need for me. Man, if that is you today, if you've been going to church your whole life, been doing all the things your whole life,
- 22:41 And there's never been a moment that you have said, God, help, I can't. Would you forgive me? Would you make me right before you?
- 22:54 That's what it means to go from chaff to wheat, to go from self -saving to total submission and surrender to the Lord. And then you know what happens? Then we begin to look and go, God, I can't tie my shoes. And God goes, watch this, I got you. And God does his greatest work. And we don't walk out of here and go, look what I did. Tied my shoes.
- 23:17 And we walk out of here and we go, look what God did. God changed my life. I tried and I tried and I tried. I tried for years. I could never get there. And yet, man, God did an incredible work. We were just sitting out here with our church staff on Friday night listening to a man declare that story. I tried and I tried and I couldn't. And then one day God said, I got it. Sit back, watch this.
- 23:45 Life radically changed. Not because he did anything other than to say, help, help, I can't. It takes humility. For anyone that goes, well, that seems too easy. It's not. It's why we've been screwing it up for thousands of years trying to fix it on our own. Well, I mean, certainly I got to bring something to this, right? Yeah, you know what you need to bring? This posture. God, I can't. Would you help? I can't. Would you help?

24:17

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; and behold, a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."

- 24:51 You want me to baptize you? Jesus replies with, let it be so for now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. So John consents. Verse 16. And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water. And behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. And behold, a voice from heaven said, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased. You want a fulfillment of Genesis 12? You want a fulfillment of Jeremiah 31? You want a fulfillment of everything that was pointing, the Old Testament was pointing to? It's God

watching this man come out of the water.

25:33 And all of a sudden, God peels back the sky and goes, he's my kid. He's the one. And I am well pleased with him. Watch what he's about to do, because the kingdom of heaven is at hand. And Jesus is about to go on a three and a half year ministry of taking all the religious leaders and all the religious systems and turning them on their head. He's going to preach a sermon called the Sermon on the Mount. And he's going to say over and over and over again, you have heard it said, but I say to you. You have heard it said, but I say to you. You've been living your life this way.

26:07 But let me tell you how you guys got it all wrong, and it's really about your hearts.

26:14 This is the one that John has just baptized. This is the one that is ushering in the new kingdom. This is the one that is looking at all of these religious leaders going, guys, can you stop? Can you stop trying to fix it yourself? And can you realize you need me for everything? It's the whole purpose. It's the whole purpose of the Mosaic law. Read Romans 7, verse 7 and following. The law exists to point out our sinfulness.

26:39 The law exists for us to realize and acknowledge we can't, but he can. And the he can shows up, and he comes out of the water, and God says, this is him. This is my beloved son. This is the one you've been waiting for for 2,000-plus years. Listen to what he has to say. And from that moment on, his ministry takes off, and here we are 2,000 years later celebrating his birth because what his life and his death means for you and for me.

27:09 We got to surrender, and we got to acknowledge our need for a Savior. How do you bear good fruit in keeping with repentance? You acknowledge that it's not you bearing the fruit. It's not you doing any of it. That's why Paul would say the fruit of the Spirit is.

27:27 That's why Paul would also write in Colossians, look, you need to put to death those things that are earthly in you and allow the Lord to put on the things of him. Surrender. Got to be a posture of surrender. So let's go back to where we started. Here's the question.

27:45 Are you tying your own hands? Are you tying your own shoes in any area of your life? I don't want to run with that analogy or make it too cheesy, but again, just in the last couple of weeks, financial issue came up, stressed out, freaked out, spent way too much time trying to fix it on my own until God was like, Kevin, just take a deep breath. God, I can't. I don't know how to do this. Watch. I got you. Has he solved it yet? No. But there's great confidence knowing that he has been faithful and will continue to be faithful.

28:17 Again, calloused heart in my life. Real hard-hearted towards a few individuals. Don't love it, but it's real. God, help break my heart. I'm so angry. I'm so bitter. I'm so, ah. You soften my heart because, God, I can't. I try. Hey, buddy, how you doing? It's about as good as I can get in my flesh.

28:41 God, you got to give me a heart. You got to soften this. Only you can. I'm done trying to tie him. God, I need your help. And again, for me, many years ago, 14 years old, sitting in the mountains up in Prescott, Arizona. God, I've been trying. I've been trying to do everything. I've been trying to do everything my parents taught me. I've been trying to follow all the rules. I've been trying to do everything right. And I just can't. Would you help?

- 29:11 I'm putting my faith in your son, Jesus. It's no longer in me and what I can do. It's all about you. And from that moment on, I'm going to do it. going to do it. God ushered me into his barn, adopted me into his family. And I still screw up 50 ,000 times.
- 29:29 And yet, what was the covenant in Jeremiah? Their sins and their iniquity I'll remember no more. Why? Because I'm good? No, because Jesus is good. And my faith is in him. And because of him, I'm forgiven. And I'm a child of God. So if you've never put your faith in Christ, here's what that means. You've heard Thomas talk about it. You've heard me talk about it. It's this. It's coming to a place in your life where you acknowledge that God is madly in love with you. But you, like me, and every other person in this room, and every other person outside of this room, is a sinner. We do stupid stuff. We say stupid things.
- 30:06 God says do this, and we go, meh. And because we have sin in our life, it separates us from the Lord. And so God said, look, I'm done watching him try. I'm going to send my son, Jesus. And so this Jesus that we read about, this Jesus that has just been baptized, that comes up out of the water, lives a perfect life. At the end of his life, he dies on a cross. And then three days later, comes back to life, beats death, so that any one of us that wants to repent and turn from self -saving to total surrender to the Lord can become a part of his family. And we are forgiven, not only in this life, but in the ages to come.
- 30:48 But that takes humility. It takes a posture of surrender. It doesn't take coming to church. It doesn't take doing all the things. It takes that simple and yet profound act of saying, God, I need you, because I can't. And I'm putting my faith and trust not in me, not in a religious system, not in a church, not in a human being, but in Jesus Christ and Christ alone. And in that moment, you're adopted into God's family. If you've never done that today, here's been my prayer.
- 31:22 If any one of us have lived in the land of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and we think, well, we've been doing all this stuff, therefore we're good, but we can't acknowledge a moment where we've totally surrendered to Jesus, don't leave today without wrestling with that. And don't let pride be the reason that we don't. I've been coming to church forever. What would people think? People are going to celebrate the same way we should all celebrate any time someone comes to know the Lord. But don't miss that opportunity today. Last thing is this, and then I'll close.
- 31:56 Tying your shoes, so much of it for me has to do with saving ourselves in eternity and salvation and acknowledging our need for Jesus. But I just talked to a good friend of mine after first service, and he was in tears saying, man, for him, life's given him some challenges, some stuff that, if he's honest, he's just weary. He's tired. He's exhausted. And it was life -giving for him to think, I don't have to carry all this on my own.
- 32:22 There's a part of him that went, man, God, I'm giving these hard things up to you. Does that mean God's going to wave a magic wand and it's all going to be great? No. But there's something beautiful about knowing, God, you're with me in this. And it was life -giving for him just to say, I just gave it to the Lord. And I don't know what he's going to do.
- 32:40 But I know he's got it. I know he's got me. And if that's you today, and you just need to surrender some things to the Lord before we close in worship, I'd encourage you to do that. Let me pray. God, thank you for our time. Thank you for your word. God, I thank you.

- 32:55 God, I thank you that you sent Jesus. And you didn't expect me to get it right. God, you provided a way for all the times when I get it wrong.
- 33:08 And God, even as we are about to sing, what a powerful name is the name of Jesus.
- 33:14 I pray that you would continue to convict me. God, you continue to convict every brother and sister in this room today, God, that your name, the name Jesus,
- 33:27 Would be the name of Jesus. Jesus be the name of Jesus. Jesus in the manger. Jesus on the cross. Jesus seated at the right hand of the Father now.
- 33:35 God, that the name of Jesus would hold awe and reverence and power in our lives.
- 33:42 And God, that when the world and our minds and our own drive wants to get us to stop and to fix things on our own, God, that we would not forget the name of Jesus. That we would look up to you.
- 33:57 And in humility, God, sometimes through tears, we would just say, Jesus, help. And yet you would meet us in that moment because, God, you are who you are and you love us. And you sent Jesus for us. And so, God, let us continue to have that image, that posture, that awe and reverence for who you are and what your name is. We love you. Thank you for whatever you continue to do in the lives of the church family here and, God, certainly in my life. Thank you. We pray all this in Jesus' name, amen.
- 34:29 What a powerful name the name of Jesus is. Powerful enough to change our lives in ways that we could never do on our own.
- 34:39 There's an entire world driving by outside trying to tie their own shoes, trying to fix everything on their own. If you're in this room and you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, would you start praying for opportunities this week and in the weeks to come to be put in front of those and just simply say, if you're ever done trying, I got the answer. It's not coming to this place. It's not doing a bunch of stuff. It's just looking up to Jesus and going, God, help me. I need you because I can't. And brag on Jesus. That's what it looks like to live on mission, to live the next couple weeks of our lives thinking, God, who do you want me to tell about your son?
- 35:19 That's what we do as a church because we will be as witnesses, not only here but near and far. And so that's what we want to do as a church. Start right now in this place. Service isn't over until you love somebody. Love somebody here before you get out there. But have a great rest of your week. We'll see you all next weekend.