

Sat. Healing and Communion Service (2002 C&ma Council)

by Jeffery A Valentine

The sermon emphasizes the importance of servant leadership, trusting in God's sovereignty, and the power of prayer in our lives.

Scripture: Exodus 14:21, Matthew 26:29

Topics: "Communion Service"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a personal experience of feeling unable to articulate his thoughts due to a speech impediment. Despite this, he had prepared four sentences to speak, but felt prompted to offer a sacrifice of praise instead. He sang a song of worship and rest in God's control and deliverance. The speaker emphasizes the importance of focusing on Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit in difficult situations, as they fade away in the presence of God. The sermon also references Moses' frustration in leading the people of Israel and how God assured him of His presence and glory.

Transcript

It is my privilege this morning to have the task of introducing to you the newly elected officers of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, at least those who were elected in this Council for another term of service to the Lord. As I read the names of these officers, I'm going to ask them to stand, and then in a few moments, I'll be asking you to join the continuing members of the Board of Directors in a prayer of commissioning and dedication for these new officers. First of all, re-elected to another three-year term as our President and as our leader, Dr. Peter Nanfelt.

Dr. Nanfelt, would you stand, please? And Jerry, if you are present here in the Sanctuary, and I'm certain that you are, I'd like to invite you to come up and join Peter before we have prayer together. Second, our new Vice-President for Advancement for a three-year term, Reverend David Prescher. David is not on the platform, but David, wherever you are, would you please come to the platform? Yes, I see that hand.

And I'd like to ask your wife, Mary Ann, if she would come also, if she is present here, and join you on the platform. In just a moment, we'll be laying hands on you and commissioning you. As you know, our previous Vice-President for Advancement, having served two years, is moving back into the pastorate, back into the ranks of the working poor.

He is going to be assuming the position of Senior Pastor at the Salem-Oregon Alliance Church, and we want to recognize his two years of faithful service, and as we commission our new officers, also commission him and his wife, Joanna, for their new ministry. So, John, would you please stand? And would you please join me in expressing your appreciation to John for his two years of service? And I'd like to invite Joanna to come up and join John. If you are here, Joanna, would you please come? Now the newly elected members of the Board of Directors, several of them could not be with us this morning as they had to return to their churches, but those who are present, if you would please stand as I read your name.

Timothy Vang, Mark O'Farrell, Charles Folkstad, Trent Thornton, and John Soper. And three newly elected members who are not with us are Kenneth Liu, Scott Slocum, and Richard Henriksen. I'd like to invite all of you to stand now, if you would, and I'd like to invite the continuing members of the Board of Directors to stand and to gather around these new board members and these officers and their wives and lay hands upon them as we commission them for the Lord's service.

And I know all of you cannot lay hands upon these folks, but I would like you to feel a part of the process. And so I'm simply going to ask you to extend a hand in their direction as a sign of your standing with them and being a part of our commissioning them for the work of service to which the Lord has called them. Please join your spirit with mine as we go before our Father's throne.

Gracious Heavenly Father, we thank you for the men and women that we commission today for positions of servant leadership in this movement. Father, the only kind of leadership that you endorse is servant leadership. The Lord Jesus walked among us as one who served.

He told us quite clearly that he did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life for us. And Father, we pray this morning that these men and women would assume their new roles with servant hearts. Father, we pray that they would assume their new role with deep humility, because you give grace to the humble and ultimately exalt them.

You perfect your strength in our acknowledged weakness. And so I pray as they assume their new roles that they would do so with a sense of weakness and holy desperation, recognizing that none of us, none of us are sufficient for the ministry of the gospel without the anointing and the indwelling and the empowering of the precious Holy Spirit. And I pray as servant leaders that they would seek your face and seek that anointing and cry unto you for your infilling and your wisdom and your power and your discernment.

For the flesh profits nothing. It is the spirit that gives increase. Father, we pray for Dr. Nanfelt.

His is a position of great responsibility and a certain measure of loneliness. Dr. Toza reminded us that to be in leadership is to always experience a certain measure of loneliness. There are some things that just cannot be shared with other human beings or understood by them.

But Jesus knows and understands. And Father, I pray in these next three years that Peter would come to know Jesus better than he's ever known him before. For if our president does that, he will lead us well.

Father, I pray for David and for Maryanne as they transition from the district superintendent's role to vice president for advancement. Give them grace for that transition. Give them great wisdom for that important ministry.

Father, I pray for John and Joanna as they transition from the national office back into the pastorate. Give them grace for that transition and great anointing and blessing in their new ministry leading that strategic church in Salem, Oregon. Then Lord, for the members of the board, those continuing and those who are new, we pray today that we would have wisdom from on high.

Our task is not to lead the Christian and missionary alliance. Our task is to be led by the one who raised up the Christian and missionary alliance. And Father, our task is simply to run errands for the Holy Spirit, who is the only sufficient superintendent for this work.

Help us as board members to approach our work that way, to simply run errands for the superintending Holy Spirit. Father, as the church, we ask your blessing upon our new officers and pray that as they are led by the Spirit, that they would lead us into what you have already decreed for this movement. We are not here to invent anything.

We are here to discern what is good in the sight of our Lord and to bring ourselves into harmony with it. Help us so to do in the days ahead so that in our communities and in the nations where we serve under the banner of Christ and the alliance, we might see in these coming years the greatest in gathering of souls that we have ever witnessed. Because all that we are doing here this morning is not about us.

It's about the men and women walking the streets of our world who don't yet know Jesus. Burn that deeply into our hearts and help us to serve you well and to seek no applause but the applause of heaven at the judgment seat of Christ. These things we pray as we commission our officers in Jesus' name and the people of God together said, amen and amen.

God bless you. Thank you. You may be seated.

We're going to sing together today the doxology and I hate to do this to you, but would you stand once again as we sing. Don Pittman and his wife Mindy, four children, live in Indianapolis, Indiana, where Don and Mindy are planning a church. The name of the church is Higher Calling Community Church.

The church was launched on October 1st in the year 2000 and praise to the Lord, approximately 100 people have committed their lives to Christ during this time. Don has experienced quite a few trials and physical difficulties in his life in recent years and he has agreed to share his heart and his testimony with us this morning. I know that the Lord is going to use his testimony to minister to us.

Don, thank you very much for being here and sharing your heart with us today. God bless you. It doesn't take very much for me to become emotional when we're together like this and praising God because of the incredible way that I've seen him move in my life, especially when I know the kind of person that I am and I know the kind of God that we serve and when I'm able to sing praises to him, well, since April of 1999, I will never ever view singing praises to him the same way.

I was experiencing some incredible fatigue and I was also experiencing a pain in my chest, not an internal pain, but an external pain. It was sore to touch, but I was involved in a very physical part-time job and so I just assumed that I had some pulled muscles, but at the insistence of my wife, I did go to the doctor and they ran the appropriate tests and discovered that I had a large mass in my abdomen and they said we're going to have to schedule surgery right away and remove that and then go from there. And obviously when you hear something like that, your hope is that once the mass is removed that everything will be fine, but the reality hits you that what could very likely happen is when they find that mass, they'll decide

that there's more to it.

And so they removed the mass and discovered that I had, at 38 years of age, I had a type of cancer called multiple myeloma. It's a blood cancer, it affects your plasma cells, causes the plasma cells to overpopulate in the blood system. Right away I met my oncologist that I've had an ongoing relationship now for about the last three years and he said we have to get in there and aggressively fight this cancer.

My wife said, well, we should be able to have a good shot at it because at least we can know that we've caught it early. And my doctor said you're in the last stage of this disease. This disease is incurable.

I have, it's not a curable thing. We're just going to try to fight it and work on it the best as we can to try to give you some quality of life. And so we went into it, not getting the most hopeful news from my oncologist.

I went through four rounds of chemotherapy and then had a bone marrow transplant, which was an ordeal just in and of itself. Before I went through any treatment, chances are the plasma in my blood system was near 100 percent. What is normal is between one and five percent.

We went through all this treatment, all the chemotherapy, and it looked like I was responding well. It looked like I was doing very, very well. Even through all this we felt so confident that God was working and that God was there and that God was blessing.

But after this rigorous treatment, I was retested and the cancer levels in my body were still at 80 percent, which was well over normal. The doctor said, well, that wasn't what we hoped for. We wanted a much, much better response.

We have no choice but to do another transplant. We have to get this under control. And then he took my wife aside and privately told her, we're going to do this other transplant, but even if we do this transplant, I just don't know if I can get it all.

I don't know what the outcome is going to be because he didn't respond very well the first time through. Well, we approached then, as you have to do in expensive procedures like this, the insurance company. And the insurance company, in essence, said, well, we've paid for this procedure once and it didn't seem to work, and so we're not going to pay for it again.

And so they denied my treatment. They said, we're just not going to do it. Well, obviously most of you don't know me and you don't know my wife, Mindy, but you don't tell my wife Mindy no about anything.

It doesn't matter if you're a multibillion, multinational insurance company, you just don't tell her no. She got on the telephone and she began to call the insurance commission, the labor commission, the newspapers, television stations. She knew secretaries at all these places.

She knew vice presidents at all these places. She knew their extensions and would call them on the phone and would tell them that this has to be approved, this has to be done. I wasn't in much shape.

I was still recovering from some of my previous treatment and I could give her some prayer support, but I wasn't spending much time on the phone. She literally would spend hours on the phone, eight hours a day, many times frantically fighting for what she thought was the life of her husband, because we were told that we had to have this treatment. It had to happen or I would have no chance of living.

A strange thing happened. An incredible thing happened. Separately, as we were both off fighting our separate battles, me in my bed recovering and she on the phone frantically fighting for my life, we both experienced a strong sensation of God's peace.

And it was as if he was telling us separately, you don't have to fight for this anymore. You do not have to struggle. You don't have to work so hard.

Let me fight the battle. You just relax. Well, this was the message that we both received, but we both didn't know the other one had received it.

And so later that day, when we had a chance to sit down and kind of compare notes, we began talking and realized that that's indeed what we had both heard from God. God was saying, take it easy, relax. You don't have to strive anymore about this.

And so we determined that that meant that we shouldn't push to have this other treatment. We shouldn't push to have this transplant, that God was going to take care of it, that he was going to watch over us and take care of us one way or the other. We went back to my doctor and we very seriously told him this was our conviction.

The insurance company has said no, but we really feel like God is moving and telling us not to pursue this treatment. We hope you can understand that. And although he was a little concerned about it, he was very respectful of our beliefs and of our decision.

And he agreed to it, but he thought, well, maybe at least he could do something to help and to give me some medication or to do something that might at least prolong my life. But he said, but before I do anything, let me retest you just to see where you are now. We knew you were at 80 80 percent just a few weeks ago.

Let's see where you are right now. And so he retested my bone marrow. Remember, I said normal is about one to five percent.

He retested my bone marrow and without any other treatment, my bone marrow came back at one percent. Very well, obviously very well within normal ranges. The the amazing thing was that as I continued on, there were still some other numbers and testing.

If you've been to the doctor, you know that they can test you to death. You can go into the doctor's office well and then give you enough test to almost wear you out. But in some tests, they still came back a little bit unusual.

But even in the course of the months that I was still under his care, I continued to improve without receiving any more treatment. It was amazing what God was doing. I knew that it was God's healing touch on my life.

I couldn't attribute it to anything else except that God had been faithful and that God had loved us and that God had shown me and my family mercy. But the wonderful thing is that that's not the end of the story. As Dr. Manfred mentioned, due to all this and I I can't go into all the details of it except to say that due to my weakness and due to the illness that I that I went through and due to God's healing touch in my life, he also allowed my family and I to plant a church in Indianapolis.

And in that church, we have seen people healed of their sins and we have seen people healed of their addictions and we have seen people healed of their diseases because God is still a powerful God who loves us and wants to bless us and wants to deliver us. And I am so incredibly blessed to be a part of this fellowship who believes that and holds that so dearly as one of one of her tenants. I wasn't affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance three years ago.

That's been a recent development in my in my life and in my career of ministry. But once again, I believe it was God that brought my family and I together with this fellowship and made it possible for made it possible for so many people to be touched with the gospel. I just want I just want to tell you, thank you so much for your love and support, because I know that you believe in the power of God to heal.

And I do, too. I have no choice but to because I'm living proof of what God is able to do. My reality is now you might wonder why I had to hobble up here with a with a walker and that because of the cancer I had a problem in my leg that caused a weakness in the bone.

I ended up having to have a rod put in my in my leg to strengthen it. And the bone went ahead and broke anyway. And now I'm facing some other treatment and some other things going on and and we're making it OK.

I have turned to a particular scripture in 2nd Corinthians, chapter 1, verse 10, in which Paul says. He has delivered us from such a deadly peril and he will deliver us. He we had he has said that we have set our hope on him that he will continue to deliver us.

I have seen God deliver me before. I know that he is faithful to deliver me still yet again. And I believe that whatever life or circumstances throw my way, that God will be there to deliver.

And aren't you so glad that all of us worship and serve a God who delivers us not just one time, but as many times as we need. God will love us and bless us for as long as we need him, because his grace, praise God, is inexhaustible. Thank you.

I don't often make song introductions before my wife and I sing, but I felt compelled to today. In fact, I tell the folks who do special music at our church to please remember that they are the special music and not the special speaker. But I wanted to tell you that God changed this song that we're doing this morning.

We had planned to do a different song. We had it all prepared. And in the hotel room, as we were preparing, God said, this is the song I want you to do.

So it may be for some of you who are here. In fact, I'm sure it is. It's funny that when we're in situations that just seem to almost break us, if we can get our eyes off that situation and get our eyes on Jesus and his presence in our life and the power of the Holy Spirit within us, how those things just seem to fade away in the prayer.

Holy Spirit, thank you for the power of your presence. Thank you, Chris and Nita, for leading us in that wonderful hymn of worship. Jeff and Mary Lee Valentine, pastor in Missoula, Montana, where Jeff has been the senior pastor since 1994.

Jeff and Mary Lee have three daughters. Prior to their time in Missoula, planted a church in Red Deer, Alberta, Canada, starting in 1987. Jeff, over the years, has experienced some remarkable things in his life, both the hand of God upon his life for ministry, but also the hand of God upon his body and healing.

And Jeff has agreed to come and minister God's word to our hearts this morning. He does so out of a deep experience and a devout walk with God. Jeff, we're very appreciative of your willingness to share God's word with us today, and we invite you to do that at this time.

And following the message that Jeff will bring to us, he'll lead us in our time of prayer for those desiring a special touch from God for healing in their body. Jeff, God bless you. I come to this time today recognizing that you get asked to speak at the healing service because you've had bad health.

But I am humbled and privileged today to stand before you, healthy, to exalt Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. I have to confess, though, that I've been a little bit nervous speaking at the end of the week like this for fear that one of the other speakers might use my passage of Scripture or use one of my illustrations. All I can say is that Ravi Zacharias used all my material.

What Ravi said is what I would have said, and now I don't know what to say. I know, in my dreams. It was at this service in Indianapolis, 1996, that my wife Marilee stood before you to exalt Jesus for healing her of grade four breast cancer that had invaded her bloodstream.

She received devastating chemotherapy, extensive radiation, multiple surgical procedures. As a family, we heard many reports that her odds of living were poor, and we feared losing the one that we loved so much. Because of the strength of her chemotherapy, we were told that Marilee would not be able to have any more children.

But those of you who were here in 1996 for Council, you may remember at the conclusion of Marilee's testimony, our six-month-old miracle baby, Olivia, was brought up to the platform. Two weeks ago, our now six-year-old Olivia underwent heart surgery in Seattle Children's Hospital. And to the glory of God, she's at home, and she's recovering well.

And to the glory of God, Marilee recently had her tenth anniversary of being cancer-free. Little did we know in 1996 that in 1997, I would be diagnosed with a brain tumor, a subependymoma located 270 degrees around my brain stem and intertwined through my cranial nerves. I was told that if I did nothing about it, I probably had weeks to live.

And so a day later, I underwent a surgery I was told would be about four hours long. But when I awoke, I learned that my surgery had been 15 hours long. And I had just about every complication you can imagine.

Double pneumonia, the inability to speak because of paralyzed vocal cords, not good news for a pastor. Unable to swallow, not good news for someone who loves to eat. Severe double vision, cranial nerve damage, a stomach tube for feeding, a tracheotomy for breathing, constant nausea, and no promise of any of it getting better.

And while I believed in our doctrine of healing, all of a sudden it became intensely personal. Now over the years of attending healing services, I've approached them almost like the got milk ads, a got healing kind of mentality where I would take inventory to see if I had the formula for healing. What are the correct things to do to get God to heal a person's physical needs or emotional needs? And truthfully, feeling discouraged that we have to make the disclaimer that not everyone is healed.

That's not what I wanted to hear. Dealing with fear and knowing all too well the needs that my family and I face physically, I wanted to believe that there's a formula. There must be some series of things to do to

cause God to heal.

And it's just a matter of us finding out what that is. But is it about what we do when it comes to healing? I'm wondering this morning if we can set aside what we imagine we must do to get healing in order to consider the healer himself. As we come this morning, I want to exalt the God who loves you and has made provision for your every need in the person of Jesus Christ.

As we take a look at Ephesians 1, I'm not thinking specifically about the doctrine of healing, but rather the greatness of God. Ephesians 1 gives us just a glimpse of who He is. And in particular, a phrase in verse 6, Ephesians 1, where Paul writes, to the praise of the glory of His grace.

The NIV translates that to the praise of His glorious grace. But I do love the ASV and the King James Version and other translations that say to the praise of the glory of His grace. Paul is outlining some of the blessings that are ours in Christ Jesus.

And if we start with the tail end of that phrase in verse 6, we understand that these blessings have to do with God's grace. At times I'm just overwhelmed by the depth of this word, grace, unmerited favor. It's all God.

If you pick up in verse 3, and I'd like, I'm going to read a few verses here, and I'd like you to take note, if you would, as we read along, how much of our salvation has to do with us. I'm just going to read and see here, as I read, if you would, make note how much of our salvation has to do with us. Beginning in verse 3, praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, for He chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight.

In love, He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will, to the praise of His glorious grace, or as I said, to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He has freely given us in the one He loves. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. Let's stop there.

As it relates to our ability to have a relationship with God, it's clear here the sole credit goes to God. It's all God. And yet how often I convince myself that things depend on me.

My church needs me. Or so I thought. And then I had brain surgery, which is an appropriate result for such a thought.

And for six months, six months, I sat across the street from our church, in our home, in the living room, hooked up to tubes, unable to eat or speak above a whisper. And I had severe double vision. I mean, two distinct images for everything I looked at.

And now on Sundays, sitting over at the house, I sat there and I watch now twice as many cars come up to the church. And that's a humbling thing. It's becoming real clear to me that this church doesn't have a whole lot to do with me.

And then God healed my eyes. And I mean completely healed my eyes. And now we're back to the same number of cars there were before.

But for six months, I could do nothing. And it was during this time that I know God wanted me to learn the depth of His love. One of the hardest lessons for me to learn was to receive.

You know, as pastors, I think maybe we feel that we're called to do. We do. We don't receive.

At least that was my mentality. And I had to learn how to receive. My wonderful wife took care of my most basic of needs.

Day and night, month after month, my girls prayed for me fervently. My extended family cared for me so sacrificially. And our church family, it reached out to us constantly with prayer and cards and meals and care for our children.

And every payday, the doorbell would ring at the house and our accountant from our church would deliver, hand-deliver my paycheck. And I would just weep, because all my needs were being met. And it had nothing to do with anything I had done.

I had done absolutely nothing. And here in Ephesians chapter 1, we see this is the very nature of our salvation. It completely comes from God.

It's all Him. To the praise of the glory of His grace. But Paul seems to say, or seems to want us to comprehend more than God's grace alone.

He speaks of the glory of His grace. Dan DeHaan in his book, *The God You Can Know*, writes, God's glory is the total manifestation of all of His attributes. Most of us here would know that if we saw God in the total manifestation of all of His attributes, it would kill us.

The Lord said to Moses in Exodus chapter 33, you cannot see My face, for no one can see Me and live. The total manifestation of all of God's attributes adds up to the blazing brilliance, the overwhelming holiness, the awesome power and the presence of God. When we talk about the glory of God, it seems to me that we're talking about the visual evidence that this is all about God.

All the credit belongs to Him. And God does give us glimpses of His glory. God reveals to us in western Montana, for example, the glory of His creation.

Missoula is in a valley surrounded by 360 degrees of mountains. And I will walk from the church sometimes over to the house and I'll just stop and say, oh my, the orange and sometimes pink colored clouds across the evening sky, the snow-capped mountains, the smell of the trees, the sound of the birds chirping and I say, thank you God for the glory of Your creation. You have been here.

People had nothing to do with this. This is all you. In Exodus chapter 33, Moses seems frustrated.

God has asked him to lead the people of Israel and he's been trying to do that. But now Moses is essentially saying, I can't do this. These people are impossible.

Everything is out of control. I can't do what you want me to do. And perhaps that is what some of you feel like saying in light of what God has asked you to go through.

You want to say, I can't do this. It's too much. This is not what I had in mind when you called me to follow you God.

I can't do what you want me to do. And so God says, as He did to Moses, well, I'm going to go with you. And when Moses understood that God going with him meant God's glory going with him, Moses said, well then, I want to see your glory.

I want to see your glory I want to know you more. And God says, that's exactly what I'm going to let you see. But here's how it's going to be, Moses.

You would never be able to see my face and live. And so I'm going to put you in the cleft of a rock and I'm going to shield you with my hand as I pass by in front of you. Just a side note here.

God is the creator. Nothing created is greater than the creator. Consider for a moment the sun in our solar system.

The magnificence and the brilliance of the sun. God created that. And He himself is far greater than the sun.

Can you imagine being a few feet from the sun? And that would be an insufficient example of God's glory. The total manifestation of all of His attributes. And so Moses hunkers down in the cleft of a rock and God shields him with His hand as he passes by saying, the Lord, the Lord God, compassionate and gracious, slowed anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

And Moses sees this explosion of the glory of God's back. His own face glows like a floodlight. And Moses is like, oh my.

It's all about God. I'm nothing compared to the glory of God. And His glory is going to go with me? I have nothing to worry about.

I release myself from this situation. I release my condition to Him. If He's going to go with me, He will do it.

In Exodus 34, verse 8 says, at once Moses bowed down to the ground and worshipped. Can you imagine being Moses in that context? The only thing we can imagine is saying, oh God, show me more of your glory. I receive from you whatever you're willing to give me.

But give me more of your glory. I trust you. I release my life to you, to the praise of the glory of your grace.

Something that was so hard for me was to release my situation to God. I reasoned that I have a family. I have to provide for my wife and for my little girls.

I've got to get better and it's got to be soon. But I didn't get better. I made multiple trips back to the hospital because of complications.

And then I struggled with the question, day and night, how much longer can the church continue to support me when I'm doing nothing for them? My surgery was October 8, 1997. And my first time in front of our church family was actually way too early, but they asked if I could just make an appearance in front of the church family that hadn't seen me. And so it was on Christmas Eve of that year that I sat on a chair in front of the church family on the platform with an awful sounding voice because of paralyzed vocal cords.

And I had always loved to sing, but that was out of the question now. It would be all I could do to articulate the four sentences that I had crafted weeks earlier and rehearsed every syllable of each word over and over and over again with my speech therapist in the weeks before Christmas. The only thing that would

happen on this night would be those four sentences.

But when it came time to speak, I had this insane prompting to offer up a sacrifice of praise. The sentences that I had written started to register. I had said them over and over and over.

I could do it in my sleep. A couple of which were God is in control. In the fullness of time, he will deliver me.

I had said those sentences so many times. And when it came time to say those sentences, I said them. And suddenly I could rest in that.

And I opened my mouth and sang. I love you Lord. I love you Lord.

And I lift my voice to worship you. Oh my soul, rejoice. Take joy my king in what you hear.

May it be a sweet, sweet sound. May it be a sweet, sweet sound in your ear. And our church family spontaneously stood in thunderous applause to our glorious God.

It was a true Christmas miracle. Members of my medical team stood in the auditorium with their mouths wide open. It was the turning point in my recovery.

You know, when you begin to grasp the truth of God's grace, that right in the middle of your condition it hits you, that God loves you as much as He's never going to love you. As much as He loves the greatest saint on earth. You realize it's all about God.

The lights are going to come on in your mind and there's going to be an explosion of the glory of God. As you realize that I'm chosen. I'm predestined.

God loves me. I'm adopted in a way that He loves me. God loves me in accordance with His pleasure and will.

He loves me in all of my insufficiency. It's true. And it's completely His doing.

The total manifestation of all of His attributes is coming into view. His holiness and His love and His grace and His mercy and His compassion and His forgiveness and His infinity and His unity and His loving kindness. And oh God, cover me with Your hand.

His satisfied justice on the cross of Jesus. His power to raise Jesus from the dead. The gift of His Holy Spirit.

He will go with me. He will sustain me. He will cover me.

All because He loves me. To the praise of the glory of His grace. It's too wonderful for me to take in.

You know, I just dipped my foot in the pool of these truths and I was overcome with emotion. God, I don't ever want to make what I do to be more important than who You are. I just want to say, I want to stay right here in the glory of Your grace.

I don't want to go back in the muck of the world. I don't want to be exposed to anything that would contaminate the glory of Your grace. I want to know You more.

I want to worship You. There's something powerful about resting in the knowledge of God's care. God, I receive from You all that You want to give me.

No striving. Just receiving all of You. Because I believe it's all done in the cross of Jesus.

A half mile from Disneyland in California lives an old strawberry farmer. Years ago, he bought 63 acres of land right there in that vicinity. Years ago.

For something like \$3,500. 63 acres. In all these years, he's poured himself into this land.

He's poured himself into growing and harvesting strawberries. Until this year. After some conversations with Disneyland officials, that old farmer made a great exchange.

He said to them, here's the deed to my 63 acres of dirt. It represents years of work. And in turn, they handed him a check for \$80 million.

Disney will open its third theme park on those 63 acres in ten years. This whole matter of healing is rooted in the lavish, lopsided love of God in the person of Jesus Christ. To receive healing is to make the great exchange where you receive the glory of God's grace.

It's a deal that He wants to make. You say, God, I can hardly believe you want to make this exchange. But here's the deed to all my dirt.

Acres and acres of it. My life. Unless you take it, it'll always be just dirt.

And you exchange the deed for Himself. I release my life. I release my health to you, God.

To the praise of the glory of your grace. If you were to ask me, Jeff, is that what happened for you? I would say, yes. Not in the sense of take up your bed and walk.

But in the sense that over six months, I realized that my health is not in my hands. But in the hands of Almighty God. Who wants me to trust Him.

To look to Him. To know Him more. And experience the glory of His grace.

Having said that, I feel confident of this. There are no formulas. There is just the greatness of God.

His relentless pursuit of you. And your relentless pursuit of Him. Somewhere in all of that, because of the marvelous gift of Jesus, His healing work is revealed in many.

But we are instructed to ask. Jesus said that we should ask that God would give us this day our daily bread. We're to ask for the Holy Spirit as we did so many hundreds of us last night.

We ask for the Holy Spirit. And when we're sick, James says, we are to ask for help. We're to submerge ourselves in community and ask God to heal us.

It's the biblical pattern. When sick, ask for healing. It's a step of faith because you're asking for something you can't do for yourself.

No way. But the prayer of faith is not about the words of the prayer, per se. The prayer of faith assumes a categorical belief in this God of grace.

The words of the prayer are not as important as to whom we pray. The God of all grace, who loves us and gave Himself up for us and who has shown us over and over again that what He wants to do is give us Himself. But we are to ask for the Holy Spirit.

In C.S. Lewis' book, *Prince Caspian*, the fourth in the *Chronicles of Narnia* series, you have Narnia, which is a land of talking animals and dwarfs, harmless creatures, really. So Narnia is this kind of innocent land, non-offensive, non-aggressive, and then you have the great lion Aslan among them, who promises to protect them whenever they call for him. Aslan is the Christ figure in this allegory.

The rightful king of the Narnians is Prince Caspian. He's a human, and in his possession is just a little horn that's strapped to his side, which can be used at any moment to call for help. The promise is that you blow this horn and help will come, empowered by Aslan himself, the great lion.

The tension in the story builds when the Narnians are under attack by the Telmarines, who are superior in strength. I mean, it will be a slaughter for sure. But under the leadership of Caspian, Prince Caspian, the Narnians give it their best shot.

They fight valiantly, but they are no match for the Telmarines. With their backs up against the wall now, casually severe, they're about ready to concede defeat. As you're reading this story, you're saying to yourself, oh, for crying out loud, Caspian, blow the horn.

Help will come. Blow the horn. But Caspian did not blow the horn.

Maybe he thought it would indicate weakness, or maybe he didn't remember he had the horn. Or maybe he thought the horn was so insignificant in light of their problem that he thought it wouldn't make any difference. About that time, Trumppkin, a little dwarf, decided that he couldn't take it anymore.

He had to do something to help the Narnians. And so he decided he was just going to run for help. And so he did.

I invite you to listen to what he says. He says, I've been running along for many hours when there came a sound that I'd never heard the like of in all my born days. Hey, I won't forget that.

The whole air was full of it. Loud as thunder, but far longer. Cool and sweet as music over water, but strong enough to shake the woods.

And I said to myself, if that's not the horn, call me a rabbit. And a moment later, I wondered why he hadn't blown it sooner. The story is that at the same time the horn was being blown, help was on the way.

At that very moment the horn was blown, came the strength of Aslan and a decisive victory for the Narnians. The question, will we call for God's help when we have needs? Will we take steps of faith as we've been encouraged all week to do? Or is our horn just too insignificant? We have a great horn because we have a great God. We call out to Him to the praise of the glory of His grace.

That's the message today. Blow the horn. Help will come.

Not because our horn is great, but because our God is great. To Him it calls out to. He is faithful.

He will do it. To the praise of the glory of His grace. Blow the horn.

Help will come. As we come to this rich tradition in the Christian and Missionary Alliance this morning, I imagine many of you come having needs. You come trusting that God would be your healer.

Emotional or physical needs. We're going to give you opportunity this morning to essentially blow the horn. In your program this morning there are instructions there for how this is going to happen.

We want to give you the privilege of entering into community where you have an opportunity to have people pray for you. You have a need. We're going to ask that in just a moment, those of you who have a need, we're going to ask you to move to the nearest aisle.

Once you are standing in that aisle, we're going to instruct that those who are in your area would move quickly to form groups of intercessors around you. At each intersection in the aisles there will be a steward who will have a goblet of oil. We're going to ask those stewards to move at this time.

And so you are in place and ready. We believe that God is still the healer. We believe it will be for His glory.

I'm going to ask at this time, if you have a need, you feel free to move at this time. Stand, move to the closest aisle near you. If you are someone who is unable to stand once at the aisle, please feel free to tap the shoulder of the person sitting at the end of the aisle.

Ask if you could use their seat. We just ask right now that you just move to an aisle. Once all of you are standing in that aisle, then we will give instruction for others to move around you.

I want to make sure that each of you are in place and once we see some movement stopping, we will give instruction for others to gather around you. All right, we're going to ask that people in your area, if you would just move to form groups of intercessors around each of these people standing. And then if one person in your group would go to the steward who has a goblet of oil, retrieve some oil, come back and pray for that person.

If you are remaining seated in your area, we invite you to enter into small clusters of intercessors. Pray for the needs of someone standing near you or perhaps people in your family, your churches, the mission field. Or pray for people in your area, if they would trust God with their lives.

Let's enter into now this time of prayer and intercession. As our prayer groups are completing the healing portion of the service, if they could complete as soon as possible, we will continue with the service. I will be sharing information about our offering today as they are completing their prayer time.

The offering we normally take for this service is for a benevolent offering for our Provident Fund, which is used for our domestic workers, and then the Missionary Emergency Fund. This year, the Provident Fund is not here. We believe we have adequate funds to cover the needs for this coming year.

And so the offering today will be used for our retired workers that are in the Fellowship Fund. The offering will go towards a cost of living adjustment for them. As you are probably aware, the Fellowship Fund does not provide a cost of living adjustment and is not able to do so.

So we are using the Honoring Their Sacrifice offering, taken later this year in September, and this offering to enable a cost of living adjustment for these workers. The adjustments will then, the offering that will be taken will then be computed and then the adjustments will be provided to our retired workers in January of

2003. We know what this offering means to our retirees.

We get many letters thanking them for these adjustments that we have been able to provide over the last two years. And if you could see the letters that we receive, you would certainly know how much it is appreciated by those that have gone before us. Give as God has blessed you and let us give with joyful hearts to our retired workers that have built a wonderful foundation to enable us to build upon.

Let's pray together. Father, we thank you for our retirees that have served so faithfully for so many years. We pray for this offering that it will be used to provide for those who have gone before us and served so faithfully for many years before.

We are now building on the foundations they have built. Lord, may you speak to each of our hearts and cause us to give as you wish. As the Apostle Paul said to the Corinthians, each man should give what he has decided to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

Thank you, Lord, for this privilege to give. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen.

David Julian. Before our corporate vice president, Dr. Abraham Poon, comes to read in the Scripture this morning, I wanted council delegates to know that it was our intention for Mrs. Lisa Beamer to be with us this morning. Lisa had very graciously agreed to come, participate in the service, share a word of testimony with us.

All the arrangements were made and we were anxiously awaiting her arrival. When we received the disappointing news that her grandmother had passed away this week and the funeral actually is today, so Lisa is not able to be with us this morning. I mention this not only to inform you about it, but also to suggest that many of you may want to send a card to Lisa expressing your love and concern for her and your prayer support.

I think that card would reach her if you sent it to the Princeton Alliance Church in New Jersey, where Lisa regularly attends. Now our corporate vice president will lead us in Scripture reading. Scripture reading this morning taken from the book of Matthew, chapter 26, beginning verse 17, ending with verse 30.

Now on the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, the disciples came to Jesus saying to him, where do you want us to prepare for you to eat the Passover? And he said, go into the city to a certain man and say to him, the teacher says, my time is at hand. I will keep the Passover at your house with my disciples. So the disciples did as Jesus had directed them and they prepared the Passover.

When evening had come, he sat down with the twelve. Now as they were eating, he said, assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray me. They were exceedingly sorrowful and each of them began to say to him, Lord, is it I? He answered and said, he who dipped his hand with me in the dish will betray me.

The Son of Man indeed goes just as it's written of him, but woe to that man by whom the Son of Man is betrayed. It would have been good for that man if he had not been born. Then Judas, who was betraying him, answered and said, Rabbi, is it I? He said to him, you have said it.

And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke and gave it to his disciples and said, take, eat, this is my body. Then he took the cup and gave thanks and gave it to them, saying, drink from it, all of you, for this is my blood of the new covenant which is shared for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now and until that day when I drink it new with you in my

Father's kingdom.

And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives. May the Lord bless the reading of his words. The Exodus event, as we know, influenced all of biblical history.

God's deliverance of the Israelites was a vivid demonstration of his tremendous power. God's extraordinary act of releasing the Israelites was a clear demonstration and statement of his great love for him, for them, for his people. What God did on that day showed that he would stop at nothing to demonstrate his love for his people and to do for them what he wanted to do.

It was God's intention, of course, that the Israelites would never forget the events of that great Exodus day. And to this end, he established the Passover feast. Down through the centuries, the people recited the mighty acts of God to their children.

Initially, I would imagine the experience was so vivid that as they went through the Passover feast, it was though they relived the event. As time passed, most likely the experience that they all enjoyed on that day began to fade from memory. The miracle of God performed became just a thought in their minds.

But there was always the Passover feast, the Passover feast to remind them of what God had done for his people. Needless to say, God's work on Calvary far exceeded anything that he did there on that Sinai Peninsula. His death as the Passover lamb demonstrated his love for us, demonstrated his power over sin and the evil one.

God's redemptive act on the cross made it absolutely clear that he would stop at nothing to show his love for the people that he wanted to save and that he wanted to be with him in glory. I wonder if you'd just take a moment and look at your right hand, the palm. See any nail print there? Look at your other hand just for a moment.

Do you see any nail print there? Of course you don't. And you'd feel no scar in your side, no nail prints in your feet because Jesus bears those marks because of his work on Calvary for you and for me. The communion service today, the Lord's Supper that we're participating in, was instituted by Christ to remind us, as we know so well, of his incredible work on Calvary Street.

And just as the Israelites would remember God's work there in the Exodus event, this feast, this the Lord's Supper, is to remind us, to remind us of his incredible work on Calvary Street for you and for me. Sometimes we talk about observing the Lord's Supper. I hope today that we'll not be observers, but that we will be participants, participating in this wonderful moment of celebration when we remember Christ's death and his sacrifice that we might have forgiveness of sin.

Reverend Ron Morrison, who is a pastor in Ohio and a member of our board, is going to lead us in a word of prayer, thanking God for the broken body of his son. Let's bow together. Amazing love, how can it be that you, our God, would die for each and every one of us? Our Father, we thank you and praise you for this opportunity that we have to celebrate the bread of life, the Lord Jesus Christ.

We thank you, our Father, that the God of all glory would come and take on a body that he might pay for our sins. We pray, our Father, that you would just quiet our hearts before you, that we would not just rush through a ceremony that we've observed time and time again without the thanksgiving and the sense of wonder that it deserves. Lord, we pray that we would commune with you, that your Holy Spirit would just make us aware of what the Lord Jesus Christ had to do to make this observance something real,

something precious to our hearts.

We pray, our Father, that you would remind us that just as the Lord of glory took on a body to do your will, we pray, Lord, that you would remind us that our bodies have been given to us for that same purpose, to do your will. We pray, Father, that you would bless these elements, that we would partake with a sense of thanksgiving like never before. We pray, Lord, that we would just recapture that sense that the disciples must have had as they beheld the perfect body of the Lord Jesus Christ, and he was saying that this body is about to be given for you, broken for you, to show a love that we will spend all eternity trying to understand.

Father, we thank you. We praise you for this opportunity to celebrate the bread of life. In Jesus' name we pray.

Jesus said, this is my body, which is for you when you do this. I wonder this morning before we actually partake, if you could turn to the person either side of you, maybe a couple of people, and just quietly remind you, what Jesus said, this is my body. Would you do that? Just take a moment and affirm that.

Let's partake together. After the bread, Jesus took the cup and he blessed it. Let us pray for the cup.

Father God, I want to thank you for your Son Jesus who died on the cross for all of us. Thank you for your grace so rich and so free and so manifold and enrich all our lives, save our lives, give our lives new meaning. And Father, because of the strife, we are healed.

Father, this morning we claim your promise for healing for all those people that have been prayed for this morning, that because of your broken body, that we are healed. And Father God, we further come to you for a further cleansing for our sin. Thank you for the blood.

We bless the cup in Jesus' name, that as we partake of it, we'll remember what the Lord has done on the cross. In Jesus' name, Amen. Jesus said, this is my blood of the new covenant.

This is my blood of the new covenant. Before you partake, why don't you say and remind the one next to you what Jesus has said. Let's do that before we partake.

Let us remind one another. I would like to invite you to stand together as we partake of the cup. This is the blood of Jesus.

We do this, we drink this in remembrance of him. Let us partake together. And after partaking of the cup, the disciples sang a hymn and they left for the Mount of Olives.

Let us continue to worship the Lord with the hymn. Has this been a wonderful week for you? I know your hearts full of praise to God and thanksgiving for all he has done for us this week. And we leave this service with great anticipation of what God is going to do with us and through us and in us in the coming days.

Take just a moment to remind the board members, including the new members, that we will meet this afternoon at three o'clock in Jackson. Would you join with me please in prayer as we conclude our service today? Lord, our hearts are so full of praise and thanksgiving to you. You are our God.

You are so majestic and wonderful. We thank you for your love and your mercy and grace. Thank you for sending your son.

Thank you, Jesus, for dying on the cross for us, giving us hope. We thank you that you are in us. Lord, I pray that you'd help us today, even in the remaining hours of this day, that we will reflect your glory and be a blessing to one another.

Father, we commit ourselves to you with thanksgiving and praise, giving to you all the honor. Do your name. Dismiss us now with your blessing.

I pray in Jesus name. Amen. God bless you.

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