

The Butterfly Room

Watch this: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W7pHy2MB6HM>

Did any of y'all watch that when you were kids? Maybe that exact series, but one of the many versions of the Power Rangers?

Every week was the same, at least it was when I was growing up. Can you believe it's been around for almost 21 years? Crazy stuff. But every week was roughly the same.

The Power Rangers would be fighting some bad guys, monsters, aliens, or whatnot and then they'd start losing. Losing badly. Getting a beat down put on 'em. And then they'd have a realization, as if it was the first time they'd ever had this thought, this brand-new, original, brilliant idea come to mind: what if combined our powers and became Megazord?

What a great idea.

And so you'd be treated with riveting special effects, circa 1950s Godzilla movies. Duhnuh nee nernee! Duhnuh nee nernee! Go Go Power Rangers!

There would always come a point at which the Power Rangers would have a realization of their need for transformation. They knew that if they wanted to defeat Goldzar or Rita or Lord Zed or the 1000 other monsters of the galaxy, they were going to have to be transformed into something greater and more powerful than themselves.

I know that's stupid and for crying out loud, it's Power Rangers but I want to repeat that and I want you to hear it with spiritual ears this time.

We must have a realization of our need for transformation. (Can you say that?) And if we want to overcome, we **HAVE TO BE TRANSFORMED** into something greater and more powerful than ourselves.

Tonight, as you probably already might've guessed, we are talking about the **Butterfly Room**. It's a room that's built all around that word that we've already used several times tonight: transformation.

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.

It's no secret to most of you that we talk a lot here about cocoons. Cocoon is such a cool word if you think about it. I try to go over this from time to time because we've got **SO MANY** new people that we've met over the last year, but I just think it's a great reminder of why we do what we do!

Why the Cocoon? - a place to weather storms - small spaces where great transformations take place - a place for those who struggle - new life in Christ - a place to grow - a place to become something even more beautiful - a place of preparation - a temporary home - a place of protection - a place of refuge - a work in progress - out with the old, in with the new - learn to fly

Isn't **2 Corinthians 5:17** so beautiful when you think about that picture and idea of what a cocoon does? In Christ we become a new creation!

But still **until we have a realization of our need for transformation**, it doesn't really matter.

I was trying to come up with a good way to illustrate the point that I want to make tonight. And this is probably borderline so I'm sorry if it doesn't work, but I think it might.

But first of all, in this illustration you're going to have to use your imagination a little bit, ok? I'm going to ask all of you to pretend that you're caterpillars. Imagine that we're all little caterpillars down here on planet earth. And we look over here and far off in the distance we see this beautiful land. And it is the caterpillars' paradise. Been spending most our lives in a caterpillars' paradise.

But seriously, the land is beautiful. There are all kinds of leafy green things to eat, and beautiful trees, and it's just the most spectacular place you're ever laid all 12 of your caterpillar eyes on. And you're thinking, "Ok, well I've got to go *there*."

But then you also notice that in between the land you're standing on and the land in the distance is this very large cliff with a raging waterfall. You cannot get across. You'd never make it. There's no way to cross. No bridge; no trees to crawl over. Nothing. Just raging waters.

And suddenly, you have a realization: the only way that I can get to where I want to go is to under a magnificent transformation. Because you're not going anywhere looking like this. You know what I'm saying? You cannot go where you want to go unless you are

transformed. And so you spin your cocoon, and it takes a lot of work and time and energy and it's hard but guess what? A magnificent transformation takes place and suddenly, that place off in the distance where you've been wanting to go, you can get there.

Why? Because you've been transformed.

Now I know that that might be a little bit cheesy of an analogy, but isn't that kind of similar to us as human beings down here on planet earth? We know of this place off in the distance called heaven, this place where God is, the One that all He's ever done is love us, this place that we want to go.

But here we are separated from Him by something called sin that we cannot overcome on our own power. We cannot cross over to God. And so we're stuck. We cannot go where we want to go.

But then God says, "Hey, I tell you what. I want you to come over here more than anything. But here's the deal, you can't come over here looking like that. You're going to have to be transformed: transformed into the image of my Son. You must become a new creation."

And so we're left with a decision to make: do we want to be with God? Guys, every single one of us has to make this decision. And I'm not just talking about a onetime decision here to be baptized although baptism definitely applies here.

Do you want to be with God?

And if the answer is yes, then you must have a realization of your need for transformation.

So here we are and God is calling us home. And He's saying, "Hey, I'm offering you the chance to be with me in Paradise! I'm offering you the best life that there is to live! The only way to live! I'm giving you everything I have to offer!"

And yet so many people would say, "Heaven, I don't know. I guess there's a heaven. And I guess I want to go there. I mean, if there is a heaven I sure hope I wind up there."

To go back to my pretend caterpillar world, how foolish would it be for us caterpillars to say, "Man, I sure hope I get across."

Hoping it and knowing it are two completely different things.

Stop wishing for it. And instead **have a realization of a need for transformation** and give your life over to Christ.

There might be somebody in this room tonight that's thinking: "I know what I need to do. I get it. **I just need to transform my life and then give it over to Christ and I'll become a new creation!!!**"

That sounds really good, doesn't it? But hold up. And look closely at that statement.

Let me tell you **two words you will NEVER SEE in the Bible side by side: transform yourself.**

Why is that? It's because that's something that you and I cannot do. We simply do not have that kind of power. Only God has transformative power. You cannot transform yourself. (Girls you cannot transform that good for nothing side.

Sometimes we fool ourselves into thinking: "Man if I could just change this, if I could just do this better, if I could do this, then I'd be good enough!"

And God says, "No, no, no, no, you've got it all wrong. It's not about you being good enough. It's about Me being good enough. It's about my grace being good enough. That's what makes this picture so beautiful and that's what makes Me a loving God: Just come to me—I've got you."

The Creator is the only one who can make a new creation.

I just want to close by saying something that I probably don't say enough honestly. If there's anything that I can do for you, I hope that you'll let me know. I've been praying about this message and praying that those who needed this message would take advantage of the opportunity to get their life right with God. And if I can help you in that process in any way, if it's prayer or talking or a text or whatever, I'm here for you.

Pray. Help us all to have the realization that we have a need for transformation.

The Clock Room

Tonight we're kicking off a new series called "Make Room."

No doubt that by now most of you guys know the story of how we got into this building. We had dreams. Dreams of having a place where the whole youth group could meet together and then break up into smaller groups. We had the dream, but what we didn't have was room.

Little did we know that God was making room. He found a way just when we needed it the most. On September 5, 2012, we had our first Wednesday night in the chapel.

And for the last year, we've been making rooms. And the rooms over here are pretty awesome. We've got the Lego Room (where you at Lego Room?), Door Room, the Timeline Room, the Restoration Room, the Roots Room, the Commons, The Suitcase Room, the Clock Room, the Waiting Room, the Butterfly Room, the Legacy Room, the Mirror Room, the Light of the World Room, and the Prayer Room.

Maybe some of you guys have been like, "Why do we have the Waiting Room? What's the point in having a Mirror Room or a Clock Room or a Suitcase Room? Is it because they just wanted to make it look cool?"

No. Every room over here in this building was laid out the way it is laid out on purpose. And over the next few weeks, I want you to get a better understanding of why that is. Tonight, we're kicking things off with the Clock Room. Watch this.

*****It's a wonderful life clip where George makes big plans.**

George Bailey was a man with big plans. "I'm shakin the dust of this crumby little town off of my feet and I'm gonna see the world!"

He was gonna build skyscrapers, and bridges 100 miles long. He was going to see Italy, and Greece, and the Parthenon, and the Coliseum.

And it sounded all fine and good. But as most of you probably know, the movie "It's a Wonderful Life" isn't about George Bailey's overseas adventures. It's a story about a man whose plans get interrupted by the harsh realities of life. George's big plans come crashing back down to reality. I don't want to spoil the story for you if you haven't seen it. But if you haven't seen it, see it! It might be my favorite movie of all time.

Upstairs in the top left-hand corner of the auditorium is a room we call the Clock Room. It's as you might've guessed a room full of clocks. Clocks are everywhere. They cover the walls. Clocks of every shape size and color are in the room. There's a clock face on the floor. There's even a giant clock made out of clocks.

Why? It's because there are some things that God wants you and I to know about time.

Look at James 4 starting in verse 13. (James 4:13-17) **13 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit";**

Alright, let's call timeout right there. That sounds really harmless, doesn't it? Here's a guy that's making plans, just like we all make plans like, "Well, later tonight I'm going to go to the store and then

this coming weekend I'm going out of the town to see my grandparents. And then when I get back I've got school, etc, etc.

Just a guy making some plans. It sounds harmless enough, right? Well, why then does he lead off with a "C'mon, man?" Come on, you who say today or tomorrow we're going to go to such and such city...

What's wrong with that? Look what James says.

14 whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow.

You don't know what's going to happen tomorrow. How do you even know that there's going to be a tomorrow? You can't control that. You don't know whether or not you'll have a tomorrow.

Let's keep going. Here's the rest of verse 14. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away.

You guys know how cold it's been the last few days. You probably haven't spent much time outside, but you know how what happens when it's this cold outside and you take a deep breath in, and let it out, what happens? It's so cold you can see your breath. It only lasts (exhale) that long. You can only see it for a second and then it's gone.

James says "That's your life. You're only a vapor. You're here for a short time and then you vanish. Then verse 15.

15 Instead you ought to say, "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that." 16 But now you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil.

So just to recap, here's a guy in verse 13 that says, "Hey, tomorrow I'm going to go here and sell stuff and maybe I'll stay there for a year or so." And James says! Come on man! You don't know what's going to happen tomorrow!

How very presumptuous (that's a word that means you think you know exactly how something is going to be even before it happens), how very presumptuous of us to think that tomorrow will be given to us! I know that at first this sounds like such a petty thing and minor issue, but James doesn't make light of it AT ALL. He calls it **sinful. Boastful. Evil. Arrogant.**

"Ok, so you're telling me it's sinful for me to make plans about what I'm going to be doing next week. Next summer? Where I'm going to be going to college? What I want to do with my career?"

That's a great question. Let's really think about whether or not that's what God is saying to us.

Let me make an analogy here to show you the heart of what James is saying.

What if you stole your parents' credit card and spent money like there was no tomorrow? And I mean went crazy with it. Let's pretend that you have no idea how much is in their line of credit. And you decide the first thing you're gonna do is hit up your favorite restaurant (where you goin', James? I'm with you. Your treat). You think, man, that was awesome.

I'm going to Best Buy to stock up on movies. Girls, you think I'd like some new clothes. So you go to Forever 21 and it's Supermarket Sweep. You just grab thing after thing after thing and put it in there. Oh, this dress says it's XXXXXXXXXXL I'll take four of them.

And you don't stop there and you think! You know, I've always wanted a new car. And hey! You think, "Why stop there?!" You put a down payment on a new house.

Somewhere between your visit to PF Chang's and the new car, you're going to learn something about that credit card: it has a limit. There will be a time where you can't spend anymore.

Many people spend time on this earth like it has no limit. But there's coming a time when time will run out. The Bible tells us that even this earth has an expiration date.

Think about how foolish and irresponsible we can be with our time. It's like we've taken God's credit card out of His wallet and we're spending like there's no limit, but God has said, "Wait a minute. You're spending more money than I've put in your account. I haven't guaranteed you that there'll be money on that thing tomorrow. I haven't given you permission to spend your time this way. I'm the Giver. You don't put days on the calendar. I do. You don't know how many breaths are left in your lungs. I do."

...So what's wrong with saying, "Hey, I'm going to be gone on vacation next week, but I'll see you guys when I get back,"?

What's wrong with that is that **only God can hold something so massive as time in the palm of his hand. Time is in God's hands—mine aren't big enough.**

Think about that! Time is so much bigger, so much more massive than us. We're fortunate if someone we know lives for 100 years! But that's not even a speck on a timeline. That's a warm vapor of breath on a freezing cold winter's day.

God transcends time! You know what that means? It means that He was here before time began. He doesn't fit on a timeline. He is eternal. He was before time! It's kind of a mind-blowing thought, but God has outlived time. He's been around longer than time.

He said, "You know what I'm going to create time." Boom. And we read, in the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. And time begins. But God, God doesn't go on a timeline. He is the Everlasting.

So what does the Father of time want us to know about time—that thing he created?

God wants us to know Who holds it and who doesn't. **Time is in His hands—mine aren't big enough.**

For us to think or behave like we know the future that belongs to Him," God says, "is arrogant."

And if there's one thing God hates, it's arrogance.

"Man, I've got big plans! I'm going to do this and this and this in my career. I'm going to make crazy money. I'm going to find a girl and get married. I'm going to go to such and such university. I'm going to play college ball. I'm going to move to another country."

God says, "Wait, wait, wait. Let me get this straight. This future that you've got all planned out—how many of those days are you going to create?....."

You see how quickly your plans and my plans just fell apart? Without God giving us another second, another minute, another hour, another day, our plans don't mean a thing. Time is in His hands—mine aren't big enough.

Ok, planners. There's the problem. And procrastinators, he's going to talk to you in a minute, but before we look at that, let's look at the answer to the problem.

Remember our question from earlier: should I not make plans? Is it sinful for me to think about my future? To think about college? To think about marriage? To think about my career? No! Not at all! It's wise to think about those things!

What's answer? How should we make our plans? How should we talk about our plans? How should we talk about time? The Bible tells us. Look at verse 15.

Instead, the Bible says we ought to say [15 Instead you ought to say,] "If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that."

You ever heard people use that phrase, "Lord willing?" It's not something you hear a lot of times from our generation but the older generation seems to get it.

"Alright, so what time are we meeting for supper tonight? 6:45? Alright, I'll see you guys there, Lord willing."

"Lord willing, I'll meet you guys at the game tonight."

"Lord willing, we'll be at the beach that week."

Alright, those of us who are planners, God says, "Don't forget who calls the shots! Talk like it! Act like it! Live like it! Add the phrase "Lord willing," to your speech, to your thinking, to your life. Time is in His hands—mine aren't big enough.

Ok, what about God's message to procrastinators? Look at verse 17. Remember, we're still talking about the context of time and the way we look at it, talk about it, and live with it.

17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

At first it might not look like that verse fits in with the other verses we've been studying. But remember **we sin with our time when we think we control it.**

Planners, control freaks, that's easy for us to see. But we procrastinators think we control time, too. We just think that the time will always be there for us when we need it. (=) Right? I'll get it done later. I'll do it tomorrow. I'll meet the deadline. And so we put things off. I've got plenty of time.

The message of James, aka the message in the Bible, aka the message of the LORD is pretty straightforward here.

There it is. 17 Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.

If there's something you know is the right and good thing to do, and you aren't doing it, the Bible calls that a sin.

... That's a sobering thought isn't it? It's sinful to drag our feet James isn't talking about your math homework here. He's talking about matters of the heart. Obeying God.

Remember when we were talking to the planners a moment ago? And how God says it's arrogant for you to think that you can plan for the future, because I hold the future?

If there's anybody here tonight who knows what they need to do, you understand what God's will is, but you have refused to follow Him, is that not just as arrogant?

To think that you have a tomorrow to take care of the things that you need to do today, is arrogant.

I'll do it tomorrow. I'll do it when it's more convenient for me or for everybody else. I'll become a Christian at church camp this summer. Sure I've think about being baptized, but I'll just do it another time. I'll stop committing that sin tomorrow. I'll get this sin under control when I'm older or when I'm in college, or when I'm married.

Guys, the time is now.

...I hope tonight you've been challenged about the way that you think about time. The way we talk about it and the way we think about it, God says, is sinful. It's probably a sin that we overlook many times. But when you think about it, it's easy to see how much this kind of thinking must bother God. A created being behaving like that can do something that only the Creator can do: control time. This mindset replaces Him and displaces Him. When we behave like we control time, we foolishly remove Him from His place on the throne and climb up and take our own seat upon it.

Imagine how small you would feel sitting on God's throne. It's too magnificent for us to even imagine. We don't belong anywhere close to that seat!

So here we are. The first Wednesday night lesson of the year. How awesome would it be, to do the things that you put off all of last year, and to say "Today is the day of salvation." This is the day when everything changes for me.

All you've got right now is this very moment. Not tomorrow. You aren't promised a moment 30 seconds from now.

I hope there are some of you in this room thinking, "I need to be baptized tonight." And if you don't understand baptism, I'm not hoping that for you. You need to understand it before you do it.

But I'm hoping that everybody here, myself included, will give some thought to what you want to change RIGHT NOW. You aren't guaranteed a minute 5 minutes from now.

If you want to get right with God, I'm asking you to talk to somebody tonight who can help. Don't let another moment slip away! Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.

Let's pray.

The Commons

Over the last few weeks here, we've been doing a really cool series here called "Make Room." We've been taking a look inside of all of the rooms over here in the youth building because every one has a spiritual focus. Tonight, I want to introduce you to a room you might not think about a whole lot in a spiritual way, it's called "The Commons."

The Commons is right smack in the middle of the youth building (right over there). It's called the commons because it really is kind of a common space, a good hangout spot.

It has a big oversized "L-shaped" seat that wraps around the walls of the room. It's got the letters MJYG. It's got pictures from some of the different places that we've been together as a youth group, and t-shirts from past retreats and camps and such. There's even a rhinoceros head busting out of the wall from our camp "Rhinos R Us" a few years ago.

You might look around that room and think, "Ok, it's a room full of t-shirts. How is that spiritual? What's the point of that?"

That's a really great question. Have you ever thought about that? This whole youth group thing, why do we have it? Maybe you came on the Youniversity retreat. Have you ever really stopped to think "Hey, why did we have retreats?"

"Well, it's because you get to hang out with cool people in the youth group! And I love the youth group!"

Ok, that's good, but so? What's the point of having a youth group?

And while we're at it, you ever thought about this? Why did the elders at the Mt. Juliet church of Christ decide a few years ago, "You know what? We need to hire a youth minister." Did they just go "Well, that church has got one and that church has one, and they've got one, so we should probably get one, too."

Why did they hire a guy to do this? Why did they decide "We need to hire a fulltime youth minister," in other words, a guy whose only job would be to devote as many hours as he could to working with 6th-12th graders here.

In case you guys didn't know, this is my fulltime job. I don't do this and work at Chick Fil A on Tuesday nights making balloon animals. I promise that's not me. The elders wanted to hire a guy who wanted to do this as his career. That would be me.

On while we're on the subject of me, why would I devote my life to this? Is it because this is the closest I could come to making a career out of playing Ultimate Frisbee? Probably a little bit.

But seriously, why? Why youth ministry? Why youth ministers? Why is youth ministry even a thing? Why a youth building? Why retreats? Why do t-shirts hang up on the wall?

Oh, I love this. This is awesome. Look with me at Mt.22:1-14. Here we go.

And again Jesus spoke to them in parables (in other words, Jesus is about to tell them a story with a hidden meaning), saying, 2 "The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, 3 and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come.

So here's a king and spoiler alert the king in this story represents God. So God's throwing a feast for His Son, who's God's Son? Jesus. And he's sent all of his servants, and who would that be? Well, hopefully it would be you and me. If you serve God, you're His servant. He's told all of his servants, "I want people to meet my Son. Go tell them they're invited!"

Ok, everybody hold up the **stickers** we just gave you. You know what that represents?

THINK ABOUT THIS, GUYS, THIS IS POWERFUL. THAT INVITATION IN YOUR HAND COULD BE THE FIRST STEP THAT GOD USES TO CHANGE SOMEONE'S **FOREVER**. That little sticker could affect eternity for somebody.

This story is a powerful story about the power of an invitation. As God's servants have been given a stack of invitations and God says "Hey, go hand these out. I want people to meet my Son."

This retreat might be the one chance that someone at your school has to meet Jesus.

And so what happens?

[the king] sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come."

"Well, God, I tried. I really tried. I invited a friend. But they didn't want to come."

What's God say?

"Well, you did your part. You tried. And that's all you can really do. Let's do the feast anyway, with the servants, the regulars. Besides we'll still have over 100 people there."

No! That's not what God does at all! In fact He does the opposite.

8 [Then he] said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' 10 And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

He tells his servants, "Ok, new plan. Go invite people until you get a yes. Go everywhere. Good people, bad people. As many as you can find. Bring 'em. I want them to meet my Son."

... You know, several times a year I ask y'all to invite people to come to retreats and to Fwednesdays and to things like camp.

I'm not trying to be harsh here, but I want you to truly understand the spirit of the parable that we've been studying tonight: to all of you inside of this room who don't invite people, **why not?**

When we handed you an invitation and you began running through a list of people in your mind that you could invite, why do you talk yourself out of inviting them?

"Well, they're not a good person." Remember the servants in the parable invited the "bad" people, too.

"Well, you know, having to hang out with that person all weekend long. That's just going to get annoying.

“They already go to church somewhere, so it’d be a waste.”

“I’ll have to entertain them. And I like to go on retreats and relax”

Listen, **God’s servants aren’t the ones who get to decide who’s on His guest list.** God is the Host. And the party is not for you. It is for His Son.

...The power of an invitation, of just being invited. You know, it’s pretty cool, one of my favorite things to do is look back on events and see people.

-**Rebelution** (my first retreat at MJ): I remember meeting Daley and Braxtin.

Follow: the Spring Retweet—I remember meeting Scott Wilson, and Ruben Urbina, who was supposed to come with Matt Sircy but Matt got sick last minute, and Ruben came anyway! And I’m so grateful he did!

On the **Love is Loud Retreat** last spring, I remember that being a big one for Lexi Davis, Preston Vann, and Colby and Wesley Burtnett, and Kelsi and Mackenzie Williams. And I remember that one being the one where we met Christian Frans

I think about the **Ohana** beach retreat and I think about Joana, Payne Dobson, and Braden Lovett.

And then I think about **Youniversity**, and I think about Camdyn, Cantrell, Lauryn, Ryan Ruppel, Devin Aguiar, Jacob Haskins, Shelby Sperry, Hayley Wolfe, Katilynn Stephens, Andrew Copeland, Colette, Brice Dabbs, Kelvis, Kendelynn Hassel, Devan Hayes, Connor Jones, Sierra Sevier, Breanna Walker.

Those **shirts** on the wall aren’t just reminders of awesome times we’ve had together, but of the people that we’ve met along the way.

...**So why youth ministry?** Why youth ministers? Why youth buildings? Why youth budgets? Why youth retreats? Why ReYOUUnions?

Guys, EVERYTHING WE DO IS ABOUT SOULS.

I told you that an invitation could affect someone’s eternity.

On the spring retreat last year, Spencer Flueallen invited a guy from his school named Christian Frans to come with him. Christian came on the retreat, and he fell in love with the church here. He went back home and said, “Mom, Dad, I found us a new church home.”

And so Christian came home and invited his parents and his two brothers Patrick and Frazier to come to church with him.

Fast forward the clock a few months, and Christian became a Christian. And fast forward the clock a few more weeks and **Frazier** became a Christian. And fast forward a few more weeks and **Patrick** became a Christian.

Brooke Eakes decided to invite a girl she played softball with to come on a retreat with her. And so on the Youniversity retreat, we met Brice Dabbs. Brice fell in love with the church here, and in January of this year, **Brice became** a Christian.

My question to you: how’d that happen?

We wouldn’t have met Brice, if Brooke hadn’t invited her. We wouldn’t have met Patrick or Frazier if Christian hadn’t invited them, and if Spencer hadn’t invited him!

God works through invitations.

Christian, Frazier, and Patrick Frans, and Brice Dabbs are four names that have been added to the Lamb's Book of Life. Their names are written in heaven! Why? It all started with an invitation to the feast to meet Jesus.

Why youth ministry? Because God has invited teenagers to the feast, too. Isn't that awesome? There's no kids table. You've got as much of a right to be at the table as anybody else in the room.

Why? It all comes full circle, you matter to God.

Let's pray.

The Door Room

Tonight in our Make Room series, we visit the **Door Room** (or as I like to call it, the Monsters Inc. room). It's one of my very favorite rooms in the chapel. As you have probably seen or as you can see from the picture, it's covered in doors.

3 different verses that appear inside of the room. One is from *John 10:9* where Jesus says "I am the door." Another is from **Revelation 3:20** *Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.*

But the final verse, and the one that I want to spend the most time looking at this evening is from **Matthew 7:7**. *7 "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.*

Watch this.

And just like that, the dreams of Heidi Kloser (pronounced "Closure") the number 4 ranked moguls skier in the world, came crashing down in a warm up run, just before her qualifying round, tearing her ACL, her MCL, and fracturing her femur.

And on the way to the hospital asks, "Am I still an Olympian?"

I wonder how many of us have cried out something similar when it has come to our faith: "If I doubt, am I still a Christian?"

...I think I may have a better question: How would Jesus react if you doubted right in front of Him? Imagine standing before the Son of God, and you have the audacity (that means bold courage) you have

the audacity to doubt with him standing right in front of you! How would he react?

What would he say? Would he say, "You're not worthy to be my disciple"? Would he say, "Just go. Get out of my face." Would he say, "Hey, not cool. I tell you what, when your faith is stronger, come back and then we can talk"?

How would Jesus respond to your doubt?

Let me tell you something awesome: you don't have to imagine what would happen. That's not a hypothetical question that I laid out for you. We know exactly how Jesus responded when His followers doubted standing right in front of Him.

Let's look at **Matthew 14:25-31**. Maybe you've heard this story before, but maybe you've never connected it to doubt. So I want you to see it through that line of thinking.

25 And in the fourth watch of the night he came to them, walking on the sea. 26 But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. 27 But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

You can already hear the doubt in Peter's voice in his reply.

28 And Peter answered him, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water."

He's not completely sold on who the identity of this ghost is. I mean sure the ghost sounds like Jesus, but that's probably exactly who the ghost wants me to think it is. All part of the ghost's master plan to eat my soul.

29 He said, "Come." So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. 30 But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me."

Ok, so here's Peter. He hops out of the boat. He's walking on the water towards either Jesus, or this ghost who's doing a really great Jesus impression.

But Peter is convinced that it's the Lord, so he jumps out of the boat and walks on the water and comes to Jesus.

Then something happens. Doubt creeps into his heart. Verse 30. He sees the wind and the waves, and he's scared and he's starting to sink and he cries out to Jesus, "Lord, save me!"

Timeout. Here's one of the apostles. One of the guys who has literally on the very same day seen Jesus overfeed over 5,000 people with a little kid's Happy Meal.

Any of you ever seen Jesus do that? Me either. But apparently, even if I had, I would've still had doubt in my heart.

Peter! For crying out loud, you were walking on the water! How could you doubt! After all that you've seen Jesus do! And you dare to doubt Jesus' power and his identity right in front of His face! How could you?!?

How's Jesus going to react?

31 Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

At first it might sound like Jesus is really disappointed in Peter, like shaking his finger and shaking his head at him. "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

But really look at what Jesus says, He doesn't say "You idiot! How dare you doubt Me!!!" He doesn't take His foot and stomp on his apostle Peter for sinking, and say, "You know what Peter? Just stay down there. Let me show you what happens when you doubt." He doesn't tell Peter how unworthy he is to follow after Him. He doesn't de-disciple him for doubting.

Instead He asks a better question and deeper question for Peter to consider: "Peter, your faith is small. Why is that, Peter? Why did you doubt?"

The Bible tells us the answer to that question as it applies to Peter. It says he saw the wind, and he was afraid.

In other words, "Why did you doubt?"

"Lord, because I was afraid."

...I have a hard time telling people that Jesus is mad at them for doubting. Instead I think He'd probably ask us the very same question in our doubt that He asked to Peter: why are you doubting? Where's it coming from? Why are you doubting?

Man, that's a deep question if you think about it, isn't it? It's not a question to make you feel terrible about yourself. It's a question to help you realize something about yourself.

Maybe you doubt because you saw something on the internet that really confused you. Or something on TV. Something in a textbook. Something you heard a scientist say. Something a friend said?

Why do you doubt?

I don't know what your answer is, but whatever would go inside of the blank for you, it would probably all boil down to one word: fear.

What if there is no God? What if the Bible is just one big, made up lie? What if Jesus isn't really who we think He was? What if there really is nothing at the end of this life? What if the atheists are right?

There's something scary about those questions. Something that makes us afraid. And so we begin to sink.

But I love the 2nd word in verse 31. Did you catch it? *Immediately.*

Look at verse 30 again. It says, "*and beginning to sink he cried out, 'Lord, save me.'*"

Listen, when you are **beginning** to sink, cry out to the Lord—**don't wait until you're drowning!** As soon as doubt creeps into your heart, cry out to the Lord! This might sound weird, but I'm telling you it's powerful. The next time you feel doubt start to surround you like waters, pray these words: "Lord, save me!"

That's exactly what Peter does, and look what happens! "Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him..."

Listen, just because you follow Jesus doesn't mean you won't sink.

This is an interesting point. Why did Jesus allow Peter to sink at all?

I think it's because it's in the times that we are sinking that we realize we need saving.

Finally, tonight, you need to know that just because you doubt, doesn't mean that you're doomed.

Jesus wants to pull you out of the doubt that you're sinking in. *I think one reason for that is because **doubt is a dark shadow in which satan loves to hide.*** You know the very first thing we learn about satan is that he loves to cast doubt? Remember this line, "**Did God really say 'Don't eat of that fruit?'**"

satan's been using our doubt to his advantage since the beginning of time.

But Jesus isn't content in watching us drown. Instead he offers us His help: "**If you're sinking, seek Me.**"

And it all comes full circle. "**Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. 8 For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.**"

To me it's almost like a dare from Jesus Himself: "Search all around, but you'll find that there's only one me. Seek, and I promise you, **I will deliver every time.**"

Heidi Kloser has already said that she's not through. She says that she's got unfinished business. She's working hard for 2018 Olympics.

Listen: if tonight you've got doubt in your heart, I've got some good news: **Jesus isn't through with you.** In the Bible He wasn't through with His doubters! Think of his critics, think of Peter, Thomas, and the rest of the apostles. He had other plans for them and he's got

other plans for you. He wasn't finished showing them things, and he isn't finished showing you things. He wasn't finished teaching them things, and He isn't finished teaching you things.

Even in times of doubt, if you will seek him, you will find him.

-Pray.

The Legacy Room

Tonight, our Make Room series comes to a close. We are so blessed to have a place like this to meet. 14 rooms for cocoons and a big space for the whole youth group. Just amazing. You do know that our youth building is bigger than a lot of church buildings, right?

Tonight we introduce you to **The Legacy Room**. When you think about that word legacy, what do you think about? It's a word that has to do with what you leave.

And that's kind of what's cool about the legacy room. It's a place where our seniors leave something behind, some kind of memorial for us to remember them by. And it's our vision for this place over time to be filled with hundreds of items (from pictures, to origami, to Frisbees and football helmets, to signs to paintings and on and on and on) covering the walls and the ceilings, each item serving as a reminder of the seniors who've passed through this place.

How will you be remembered? How do you want to be?

God wants us to remember Him. And not only that, we are invited by God to share His legacy with others. Tonight I want to take a look at a cool story found in Joshua 4. I don't think it's going to need a lot of introduction. The action took place in Joshua 3, but chapter 4 kind of retells the story of what happened, so let's jump in and begin in Joshua 4:1.

When all the nation had finished passing over the Jordan, the Lord said to Joshua, 2 "Take twelve men from the people, from each tribe a man, 3 and command them, saying, 'Take twelve stones from here out of the midst of the Jordan, from the very place where the priests' feet stood

firmly, and bring them over with you and lay them down in the place where you lodge tonight.'" (I promise it's going to make sense in a minute)

4 Then Joshua called the twelve men from the people of Israel, whom he had appointed, a man from each tribe. 5 And Joshua said to them, "Pass on before the ark of the Lord your God into the midst of the Jordan, and take up each of you a stone upon his shoulder, according to the number of the tribes of the people of Israel, 6 that this may be a sign among you.

Let's skip down to verse 14.

14 On that day the Lord exalted Joshua in the sight of all Israel, and they stood in awe of him just as they had stood in awe of Moses, all the days of his life.

15 And the Lord said to Joshua, 16 "Command the priests bearing the ark of the testimony to come up out of the Jordan." 17 So Joshua commanded the priests, "Come up out of the Jordan." 18 And when the priests bearing the ark of the covenant of the Lord came up from the midst of the Jordan, and the soles of the priests' feet were lifted up on dry ground, the waters of the Jordan returned to their place and overflowed all its banks, as before.

19 The people came up out of the Jordan on the tenth day of the first month, and they encamped at Gilgal on the east border of Jericho. 20 And those twelve stones, which they took out of the Jordan, Joshua set up at Gilgal. 21 And he said to the people of Israel, "When your children ask their fathers in times to come, 'What do these stones mean?' 22 then you shall let your children know, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.' 23 For the Lord your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over, 24 so that all the peoples of the earth may

know that the hand of the Lord is mighty, that you may fear the Lord your God forever.”[c]

At first you’re going to be like, why are we talking about this, but I think this’ll make sense, so stick with me.

One of my favorite things about **Goodwill Hunting** is the part where we go out in public and we look ridiculous together. It’s really funny to watch people’s reactions. Because they do a double take. Or they do a loooooong single take (that’s called staring).

What’s cool though, and it never fails, is that people see the ridiculous clothes we’re wearing and they say “Hey, I have to ask, why are y’all dressed like that?”

To which we say, “What do you mean? Dress like what?”

No but seriously, we’re asked just about everywhere we go, by people who will have the courage or the time to ask, “Hey, why are y’all dressed like that?”

And usually, I’ll say something about the story of how it got started; about how a few years ago there was a kid in my youth group who decided prom was dumb, had a lot of bad stuff, expensive, and not fun, and expensive. He said, “I’d rather just get my friends together and go find a ridiculous outfit and go out to eat.”

And so Goodwill Hunting was born. And everybody we meet is like, “Man, that’s the coolest thing I’ve ever heard of.” Everybody we meet loves it. And we do, too.

But do you see how that works? When people see something a little different, something that stands out, they stop and go “What’s that about?”

Stay with me here!

In this story, God has just done something mighty for His people, the Israelites. It’s a miracle that, **verse 23 reminds us, is a very similar miracle to the one that God did when he first revealed himself to the Israelites when He rescued them from Egypt.** He parted the waters of the Red Sea.

Here’s a generation who needed a new reference point! None of the people here were alive to see the Red Sea being parted (except for Joshua and Caleb). That generation was all dead and gone; they weren’t allowed to enter the Promised Land. Why? Because they had trust issues. They didn’t trust God.

God performs a familiar miracle (that’s an ironic statement! Familiar miracle. But that just shows you how powerful God is! Only He can perform a miracle to begin with, but the fact that He can make a miracle familiar only reveals His power that much more! Only God can make a “trademark miracle.”)

And then God says I want you guys to remember this, this mighty work that you witnessed together. We’re going to do a little hands-on activity. We’re going to have show and tell.

I want you to choose man from every tribe of Israel. 12 men. And I want to commemorate what you’ve just seen and experienced. I want you to take 12 stones from the Jordan with you to Gilgal. And I want you to set up those 12 stones so that they’ll catch people’s attention.

And whenever you look at those 12 stones you remember this day. And you remember that I am the mighty God over all, and you remember those waters. Remember the pathway that I blazed through the middle of the Jordan River. And the powerful image of the Ark of the Covenant there in the middle of it all.

And one day, when your five year old looks at you and says, "Daddy, what are those rocks for?" God says, *let your children know, 'Israel passed over this Jordan on dry ground.'* ²³ *For the LORD your God dried up the waters of the Jordan for you until you passed over, as the LORD your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up for us until we passed over,* ²⁴ *so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the hand of the LORD is mighty, that you may fear the LORD your God forever.*"^[c]

And so Israel left behind a legacy in those stones.

Tonight, everybody should've received a rock. Tonight, I've got a little hands-on activity for y'all. I want you to spend some time thinking about how the hand of the LORD is mighty. Verse 24, why did God do this miracle? One of the reasons, we read, is so that all the peoples of the earth may know that the **hand of the LORD is mighty**, and also that you may fear the LORD your God forever.

And so here's what I want you to do. I want you to think about a way that the LORD has revealed His mighty hand to you. What is something that you have seen God do? It might be a prayer that God answered. It might be a person's name that God has used in a mighty way in your life. It might be a story. It might be a place. It might be a short phrase. I don't know what you'll write.

But basically, I want you to write down that word, or that phrase, that reminds you of that time.

Does that make sense? For instance, let's say you wrote the words: 8th grade. For me those words would serve as a reminder of a time in my life when God sent me some friends that were good influences on me when I needed good influences maybe the most. So, I want you to write a word or a phrase that will remind you of a time where you saw the mighty hand of God at work.

And if you're cool with it, **take a picture of it, and post it on Instagram using the hashtag #mjygstones**. I'd love to see what you guys have to say and I hope you'll put that rock somewhere so that when you see it, it'll serve as a legacy reminding you of that time in your life.

Seniors of the youth group, as we close, I'd like to talk to you about your legacy, not items hanging on a wall, but about the legacy that you have left behind for this youth group. I'd like to have all of the seniors join me at the front.

I've been in full-time youth ministry for 7 ½ years now. I've never been as close to a class as I am to this one. When I moved here, you were freshmen, and so you've been with me for 4 years.

I cannot thank you enough for buying into what I was selling from the very beginning. I needed that more than any of you will ever know. Laura's the only one who knows how much I needed that. Working with you, my job became fun again.

You believed in me, even though I was not, I am not, and I never will be Phil Waggoner. And you guys were okay with that. You made me feel like I could be myself. So to the rest of you, you can always blame the class of 2014 for the way I am.

I want you guys to look out there. That's the legacy you're leaving behind.

I had this thought this week: if you guys hadn't bought in, honestly, I don't know if we'd be in this building. I don't know if I'd be in Mt. Juliet. Here's what I do know: youth ministers need buy in, because if we don't have it from our own students, it's gets hard to keep going. You motivated me to keep going, and I thank you for that.

You believed in me. But most importantly of all, you believed in the One who's a lot bigger than me: you believed God. And you believed that He could make things better here and make this youth group as big as He wanted to and you weren't just ok with that—you welcomed it. And that's exactly what we've got here: a place where you can be loved and belong.

Look what God did. And to the class of 2015, He's not done yet. Pray.

Cocoon Leaders: In your cocoons, I think this would be an awesome time for your students to share what they wrote and why they wrote it. We will have multicolored Sharpies in all of the rooms!

The Lego Room

Tonight I want to introduce you to the Lego Room. Check this out... Show video: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HShqL3q8D7s>

Source: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/adamellis/things-you-might-not-know-about-legos>

In 2000, The British Association of Toy Retailers named LEGO the “Toy of the Century”, over the teddy bear and Barbie doll. “LEGO” comes from the Danish phrase “leg godt,” which means “play well”.

It took 3.3 million LEGO bricks to build that house. 560 billion LEGO parts had been produced as of 2013. That’s 80 LEGO pieces for every human being on the planet. Every second, seven LEGO sets are sold. In the time it took for you to hear that sentence, 49 Lego sets were sold. The factory process is so streamlined that only 18 out of every million LEGO pieces fail to meet company standard.

The largest commercial LEGO set is that of the Taj Mahal, with 5,922 individual pieces.

The world’s tallest LEGO tower was 94 feet high and utilized 465,000 bricks. There are 915 million different ways to combine just six individual LEGO bricks.

LEGO is the world’s largest producer of rubber wheels—more than Bridgestone, more than Goodyear, more than anyone.

But LEGO is more than just a toy, it’s an art form. Nathan Sawaya is the world’s foremost LEGO artist and he’s shown in museums around the nation.

As you probably figured out by now, tonight we are talking about the Lego Room. Btw, doesn’t that video make you wish the entire chapel was built out of Legos?!? The Lego Room is probably one of those rooms that people seem to enjoy the most when they first walk inside of this building. There are Legos on the walls, around the white board, even the benches and the ceiling look like Legos!

Why? Why would we make an entire room based upon a popular children’s toy? What’s the spiritual purpose there? Check this out.

I Thessalonians 5:9-19

11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

I had a teacher that always said, “Whenever you see the word therefore, you need to see what it’s there for.” So what’s there for there for? Look at the verses above it.

9 For God has not destined us for wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, 10 who died for us so that whether we are awake or asleep we might live with him. 11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Ok, so what’s the therefore there for? It says God hasn’t destined us for punishment. He wants us to obtain salvation and He wants us to be ready when He comes back. God hasn’t destined us for destruction—He’s delivered us for salvation! So, therefore, since we know that we can have a destiny in heaven, we ought to be encouraging and building up each other to get there! That’s very

basic, but that's the context. We need to encourage one another, and build one another up.

Alright, now, that sets up some very rapid fire commands from Paul. It's kind of like Paul says "Encourage one another and build one another up. Here's how you do it." I'm just going to read this through without stopping so that you'll see what I mean about rapid fire. It's just boom boom boom.

12 We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13 and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. 14 And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all. 15 See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit.

And I'll stop there.

At first glance, it might look like Paul is skipping all over the place. But again, what did we just get done reading? 11 Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

Ok, Paul. How? What are some things we can do to keep encouraging each other to get ready for the day when Jesus will take us home? And that's when we read these rapid fire commands.

Look at vs. 12. First he says, "to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13 and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work."

Paul begins by talking about elders. I think that's interesting. We're not talking about elderly. That's something different. In the New Testament we read about men called elders. And they are the men in authority in the church. They are called overseers, shepherds. Why? Because they are over us in the Lord, like this verse talks about. It says elders "labor among us, and admonish us. That's a word that almost means warn or caution. They're not 300 miles away making decisions about the church here. They work among us, and they admonish us. If an elder never speaks words of caution then he isn't doing his job. Just like a real shepherd, shepherds in the church warn the sheep, not to make sheep freak out, but to protect them.

But still, all of that aside, we're talking about encouraging one another and building one another up. Why would Paul begin by talking about elders?

Have you ever thought about the fact that elders need encouragement? I know a preacher, not here in MJ, but elsewhere, that all I've ever heard him say about his elders is negative. Listen, elders aren't perfect. They're men and they make mistakes. And you'd better believe that when they do, there are some people who like to call them out on their mistakes.

But have you ever considered this: how many thank yous do elders get? Sure they might make some bad decisions from time to time, but what about all of the good ones they make? Instead of bashing elders for the things that you think they ought to be doing, why not encourage them?

Doesn't it make a ton of sense for us to be encouraging the ones who are leading the sheep? If we will spend more time building up elders instead of bashing elders, what do you think will happen? James, wouldn't it be awesome, if the next time you guys had someone who wanted to sit down with the elders they said, "I just wanted to meet with you guys to tell you that I'm praying for you, and that I respect you, and I just want to encourage you to keep following God, and lead the flock."

What would happen if elders would be the ones to receive encouragement? It would help the whole body function a little bit better.

Ok, so we're still talking about building one another up. What else should we be doing God?

14 And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle (caution those who sitting around! What does that look like? Not in a jerk way, but a "Hey. Are you doing ok? Good. Because we need you." The inactive. Those who aren't growing but are standing still.), encourage the fainthearted (those who are weary. Hey, man. I know you've had a tough week, but I want you to know that I'm praying for you. I think you're awesome. Just hang in there.), help the weak, be patient with them all. 15 See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. 16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. 19 Do not quench the Spirit.

Ok, I want to move quickly here, because I want to give you more time in cocoons.

I want to share with you two really cool ways that we are going to fulfill these verses tonight, especially as they pertain to encouraging one another and "seek[ing] to do good...to everyone."

Here's the plan. All right Mt. Julietis, here's what I need you to do. This week, we are launching what we are going to call our "Leave Behind a LEGOCy" campaign.

Here's how it will work. Everybody here tonight should have 2 Legos.

Here's what I want you to do. In the context of building one another up, I want you to send the first Lego through the mail to someone in the church. It can be an elder, or a deacon, or a Bible class teacher, or a widow, or a little kid, or whoever. I want you to send it to someone that either builds you up, or to someone that you know could use a little building up.

And so that's your challenge! We want you to help us send like 200 Legos through the mail this week!

Ok, what about the other Lego? Well, here's the other part of the "Leave Behind a Legocy" challenge. Again, let me call attention to verse 15 See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

What I want you to do, is seek to do something good for another person at school without them knowing. You might buy someone's lunch without them knowing while they're standing in line. You might leave them a \$5 bill in their locker. You might write them an encouraging note. You might get really creative and order a pizza to their house. You might do something way more creative than that!

Go crazy and dream something up! But whatever you do, don't let them know that you did it.

Here's all we want you to do, leave behind a Lego for them to see.
(Leave Behind a Lego, See?)

Now, on that Lego, they will find the letters "mjyg.org." So, here you are doing a good deed without taking any credit, and then someone goes, "Hmmm...that's weird. I wonder who bought my lunch." And the lady at the cafeteria or the pizza delivery guy says, "Oh, they told me to give you this." And they get the Lego and they see the website and think, "I'm gonna look this up."

So they get the Lego. The Lego directs them to our website, where they will be greeted with a message on the homepage that says, "I got a Lego." And then when they click it, it'll explain why they got a Lego, and how much we would love for them to come to church with us sometime.

Boom. We've left behind a legacy. Pretty cool, right?

We're not done yet! The next verse says "Rejoice always!" (vs. 16)
How are we going to do that? There will also be a tab on the home page that says "I gave a Lego." There we want you to take just a second to let us know what you did and how it went. There you can even post anonymously so that you won't be drawing attention to how awesome you are. =)

So what are your two jobs this week? (1. Mail a Lego to someone in the church. 2. Do something good for someone without letting them know it was you, and leave behind a Lego for them.)

Prayer.

The Light of the World Room

-Bring MJYG Mission Panel up.

Questions:

1. *Where did you go? Who did you go with? What did you do? (How many times have you been?)*
2. *What/who got you interested in going on this trip in the first place?*
3. *What did you learn from this experience?*
4. *Where did you see Jesus on that trip?*
5. *Funniest moment of the trip.*
6. *Advice for people in the audience that may or may not be thinking about going on a mission trip.*

Thank you guys. You can have a seat...

Tonight, we're talking about the "Light of the World Room." It's a room where we really wanted to emphasize and drive home about three big ideas.

One, we wanted to emphasize the fact that Jesus is the Light of the World. [John 8:12 "Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."]

The second reason we went with the Light of the World, and this is pretty cool, is because Jesus, the Light of the World, turns around and calls us the light of the world.

Matthew 5:14 "You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. 15 Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that[b] they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

Wait a minute Jesus, I thought you were the light of the world? How can we be the light of the world? If the light is in us, it shines out of us. He shines through; And we light up the world with his light.

And the last thing we want this room to emphasize is the Light of the World's mission to the lights of the world. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in[b] the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." Matthew 28:18-20

I'm thankful that so many of you are involved and are interested in mission work.

Have you ever thought about this: why do we go on mission trips?

In Luke 15 we see God's business model. Parable of the Lost Sheep. Guy has 100 sheep. And loses one. He leaves the other 99 that he has to go find that sheep.

Wait, what? Are you serious? You know there's 99 sitting right there, right?

This summer, we're going to hopefully knock every door in Mt. Juliet. It's going to cost the church some money to pull this off correctly. It's going to take a lot of time. It's going to cost some vacation days. It's going to take a lot of hours. There's going to be a TON of planning. A whole lot of manual labor. A lot of meals to be cooked, a lot of Bible study, a lot of meetings.

It's going to cost A LOT. Work, time, money, effort, prayers, etc.

Let me ask you: how much is too much? How many hours *should* we spend? How many doors should we knock? At what point do we decide: is this really worth it? I mean, what if we knock 25,000 doors this summer, and we only have one baptism? I mean what a waste, right? All of that money, all of those hours, all of those doors, all of that planning.

All for one soul? Really? Is that it? One is all?

You'd better believe it.

To **God one IS all**. God's math isn't the world's math. God's business model isn't the world's business model. Because to God, **one is all**. One means everything.

Why do we do mission work (whether it's in your school, I hope you're doing mission work there, or whether it's in Sudan, why do we do mission work?

Well, what's one soul worth to God? All. What was it worth to Jesus? All. What should a soul be worth to us? All.

What's your soul worth? All. It is and it was worth everything—worth dying for.

Wrap up with prayer for my friends **Michael and Kris Bowen and Gavin and Lauren Pinkston** who all left for Laos last week. If you guys want to follow and keep up with them, follow them @UCDisciple on Twitter or undercoverdisciple.com It's illegal there.

Let's pray.

The Mirror Room

Queen: Magic mirror on the wall, who is the fairest of them all?

Mirror: FAMED IS THY BEAUTY, MAJESTY. BUT HOLD, A LOVELY MAID I SEE. RAGS CANNOT HIDE HER GENTLE GRACE. ALAS, SHE IS MORE FAIR THAN THEE.

Queen: ALAS FOR HER! REVEAL HER NAME.

Mirror: LIPS RED AS THE ROSE. HAIR BLACK AS EBONY. SKIN WHITE AS SNOW.

Queen: SNOW WHITE !

It's amazing, that probably most of us inside of this room haven't seen that movie in years, but every single one of us knows what it's from.

In 1937 Walt Disney struck gold in the release of Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs.

Originally the movie was budgeted at \$250,000, but after production ran over it ballooned to \$1.5 million—which is a crazy amount of money today but was a really crazy amount in the 1930's.

Disney was forced to mortgage his home to pay for the production of his film. He took a giant risk. In fact, even Walt Disney's wife, Lillian, thought the movie would bomb.

Well, you know the rest of the story. The movie didn't bomb. In fact it made history. And Walt Disney used the profits from Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs allowed Walt to build Disney Studios in Burbank. The picture really says it all: the dwarfs were what

supported Walt Disney Studios in the first place, and the movie paved the way for many, many more Disney movies to be released in the future.

And to think: the story all began with an evil queen looking into the mirror. Why? Well, because the Evil Queen knew what all of us know to be true: the mirror doesn't lie.

The book of James tells us that the Word of God is like a mirror.

In the book of James 1:23-25

23 For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man observing his natural face in a mirror; 24 for he observes himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of man he was. 25 But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does.

We look into the mirror and we make adjustments. We see our hair needs washing so we get in the shower, we spot that spinach caught in our teeth and where do we brush our teeth? The mirror. You get dressed, and before you walk out the door, you probably check yourself out where? In the mirror.

Why? Because we can rely on mirrors to show us what needs fixing. We look into the mirror and we make adjustments. And why is that? Because the mirror doesn't lie. The mirror is a truth-teller. And so is the Word of God.

Except, there's one kind of mirror that does lie: it's called a distorted mirror. They distort things. They can make look like you weigh about 5 times you weigh or they make you look like deathly skinny. Or it

might give you a giant head and a tiny body. It's like that app on your phone that really makes you look messed up.

So really we have two mirrors. We've got one that shows things for how they really are, and another one that distorts the image. We've got a mirror that doesn't lie and a mirror that all it does is lie.

In John 8:44 Jesus tells us some things about Satan. You think he knows a thing or two about how Satan works? He's known him from the beginning.

Satan says, "Just look in the mirror. Look at yourself. You don't matter. You're not important. Nobody likes you. You don't have any real friends. Nobody ever calls you or texts you. Nobody asks where you are when you miss a day at school or at work or a church. Nobody checks in on you to see how you're doing. Nobody really cares about you. Nobody will ever date you. Nobody will ever love you. Nobody will ever marry you.

Just look in the mirror. You're just a waste of space.

But if you could just disappear, everything would be better and everybody would be better off. You wouldn't have to feel this way anymore. Maybe then somebody would notice you.

Just look in the mirror. You're don't matter. Nobody loves you.

God says, "Just look in the mirror!!! You're beautiful! Look what I made! You were fearfully and wonderfully made! I made you in my image! You are my masterpiece! I created you! You don't need surgery, you don't need to be skinnier, you don't need a magazine to tell you what you have to do to be loved! You've already got my

love! I love you! I love you so much that I sent my Son to die for you.

Just look in the mirror you're beautiful!

God says, "Just look in the mirror! You matter! You're important. I know your pain. I see you. I hear you. I hear your cries. I see your tears. I see your pain. I care about you. I'm sorry you're hurting. Every day I see your hurt. Talk to me. I'm here. You're not a waste of space.

Just look in the mirror. You matter. I love you.

Two mirrors. Which one will you gaze into?

Too many times, there's a voice inside of our heads that keeps us from doing what we know deep down in our hearts that we need to do. A voice that is resistant to the ideas of change and brokenness.

Here's the question: whose voice do you think that is?

Whose voice would try to convince you that everything is fine? Whose voice would want you to keep to yourself? Whose voice would try to silence you from making things right? Whose voice would use your fear as a weapon to cripple you against making changes? Whose voice would offer excuse after excuse after excuse as to why you can't do what you know you need to do?

You don't need to go forward and ask for prayers. What will people think about you? They'll think that you have problems. They'll think that you're weak. Besides **you're** not the one that needs to go forward. Just look around at all these hypocrites inside of this room. You're fine. You don't need their help.

You don't need to confess your sins. You don't need to let people know that you're struggling. After all, you know that they're just gonna judge you, right?

Well, you're not ready to become a Christian. You're just going to mess up. You're not ready to become a Christian. You don't know enough at the Bible. You're not ready to become a Christian right now. Just wait and do it when you're older. There's always tomorrow. It's no big deal if you wait.

Let me ask you: that voice—do you think that voice is from God?

What if instead of listening to the voice of the father of lies, we started listening to the voice of the Father in heaven, The Voice of Truth? What would God say back to the lies of Satan that we allow to play on repeat inside of our minds?

Satan says "Don't ask for prayers." But the Voice of Truth says, "... confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. (James 5:16)

Satan says, "But they'll talk about you." The Voice of Truth says, "if God is for us who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31)

Satan says, "You're just a coward! You're afraid! Afraid of failing! Afraid of not knowing enough!" But the Voice of Truth says "Be strong and courageous and do not be afraid. For the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9) And "perfect love casts out all fear." (1 John 4:18)

Satan says "You're too weak." The Voice of Truth says, My grace is sufficient for you, for my **power** is made perfect in **weakness**. (2 Corinthians 12:9)

Satan says "Well, that sin is no big deal," but the Voice of Truth says "the wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23)

Satan says "Just wait." But the Voice of Truth says "And now why do you wait? Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins calling on his name." (Acts 22:16)

Satan says "You can't do it!" But the Voice of Truth says "You can do all things through Christ who strengthens you!"

Tonight, I'm asking you to make a conscious decision to shut up the mouth of the liar and to listen to the Voice of Truth. Don't hold back. If you want to ask for prayers, if you want to be baptized, or if you just want to talk to some people that are trying to be like God that will listen, I hope you'll talk to someone tonight. Let's pray.

The Prayer Room

Tonight, in our Make Room series we are talking about the **prayer room**.

I'd like to begin by introducing you to the **Prayer Wall**. We want to be a youth group that prays together. Whenever you've got something that you want us to pray about, write it down on the prayer wall. It's located inside of the prayer room in the back. You can write something on the wall before class or after class. That's where we'll start our youth group prayer list each week...

The other thing I want to share with you about prayer tonight is... hold on... ignoring you. That was my brother. Kind of weird, he's supposed to be teaching right now. But anyway, prayer.

We are also starting a youth group prayer list...and are you serious? Andrew, dude, I'm sort of busy here. I'll call you back.

Each week we will hand out some sort of prayer list of things that we want each other to pray about. You've got to be kidding me. I can't deal with you right now. Ignore.

...Aren't you glad that **God doesn't ignore your calls**? We never read these words in the Bible: "...but God was too busy." We never read these words either: "...but God didn't feel like listening"

Instead, it's just the opposite. We read things like "...and do not be anxious about **anything**, but **in everything** by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." (Philippians 4:6b) In everything. Isn't it awesome to know that God isn't too busy for your every thing.

Tonight, we're going to give you guys plenty of time in your cocoons to pray.

In James chapter 5 it says, "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray... Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. (James 5:13a, 16)

As I look around this room tonight, I can't help but wonder: is there someone here tonight that connects with **Philippians 4:6**? Is there somebody here that is anxious about something? Is there someone here tonight that connects with **James 5:13**? Someone that would say, "Yeah, I'm really suffering right now."

Is there someone here tonight that connects with James 5:16? Someone who needs to say "I'm struggling with this sin and I need to ask for prayers from the people in my cocoon that care about me."

When we are in need, God doesn't ignore our calls. Let's not ignore one another's calls either. Tonight, let's spend some time calling out to Him in prayer.

Let's bow and dismiss.

The Restoration Room

Tonight, we're talking about **The Restoration Room**. If you haven't been up there to take a look there are some really cool elements to the room that say a lot about its purpose.

Just about everything in the room is recycled or restored. A bunch of pages from an old song book are on the ceiling. There's a car fender on the wall, and an old Chevy tail gate that serve as wall art. There are some books that have been cut out into the shape of letters that spell out the word "renew." A bunch of Polaroids of baptisms from 2013. There's even a cross on the wall made out of pennies!

Is it me or is this super distracting? Why? We like order, don't we? We like things have normalcy.

Restore. You know what that word means? The word "restore" means to bring back to bring back into existence, use, or the like; to reestablish. 2. To bring back to a former, original, or normal condition.

That might sound a little complicated, but this is such a simple concept to understand. You want me to show you just how simple? Virtually every Disney movie plot line has something to do with restoration.

It gave me an idea: we're going to play a little game called **"Restoring the Magic."**

Here's how to play! I'm going to give you the title of a Disney movie, and I want you to tell me where you see the idea of restoration in

the movie. Got it? It's very simple. Also, if you answer correctly, I will you candy.

"Restoring the Magic"

-Frozen. (restoring order to Arendelle).

-The Lion King (restoring order to Pride Rock)

-Beauty and the Beast (restoring the beast back to himself)

-The Jungle Book (restoring Mogli back to his village)

-Robin Hood (restoring order to a corrupt government; giving to the needy who had been robbed by the rich)

-Tangled (Restoring Rapunzel back to her rightful place in the kingdom)

-Toy Story (a return a restoring of order back to when things were good in their lives; before Buzz Lightyear messed it all up.)

-Snow White (it all begins with the evil queen wanting to restore her mirror's reply: Snow White is the fairest of them all)

-The Emperor's New Groove (restoring Cuzco back to his human form)

But what's more important than all of those things is how important that word "restoration" is especially as it pertains to the Word of God. We see the idea of restoration in virtually every page of the Word of God.

Now, you guys rattled off Disney plot lines like nobody's business. Where do you see the idea of restoration in these Bible stories?

-Adam and Eve (restoring them after Eden)

- Moses and the Israelites (restoring an old promise)
- Peter
- Nehemiah (wall)
- The Prodigal Son
- Jonah (him and Nineveh)
- The life of Jesus?
- Zerrubbabel (the temple)
- For two pieces of candy: Psalm 23 (vs.3 He restores my soul...)

Restoration is a huge theme in the Word of God and I'm so thankful that we've got a room over here that draws attention to that concept.

Tonight I want to share with you three life lessons about restoration. They're very simple but very important.

I. **We're broken.**

Have you ever had something that was just completely broken beyond repair? Really nice crystal bowl for a wedding gift. Shattered into a million pieces. I simply did not have the power or ability to fix it.

Our relationship with God is the same way. When I sin, there is nothing I can do to fix myself. It doesn't matter how hard I try: I can't pick up the pieces and glue them back together. Sin has ruined the picture.

All of us have a sin problem. Romans 3:23 says "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."

And why is sin a problem? Romans 6:23 says "For the wages of sin is death."

Our relationship with God was broken and was beyond repair.

2. **Jesus brings restoration.**

Think about how powerful this is: in everything that Jesus did, and in every place where Jesus went, he brought about restoration.

Think about how true that is.

He saw a blind man. What did he do? He restored his sight. Crippled man? Demon possessed man? Woman caught in adultery? "Where are your accusers? Nothing do I condemn you. Now go and sin no more." Storm around him is raging. The apostles are terrified. Peace be still!

Everywhere that Jesus went he brought about peace and order; restoration.

He did then, and He does now. He wants to bring order to your life.

Do you need to be restored?

Matthew 11:28 Come to Me, all you who **labor** and are **heavy laden**, and I will give you rest.

3. **Finally tonight I just want to remind you of the fact as we study restoration that "The cross is beautiful."**

As we wrap up tonight, I want to draw attention one last time to an image in the restoration room: the cross covered in pennies that hangs on the wall. It's a beautiful image. In fact it's a little bit of an ironic image.

First off, it's covered in pennies. Pennies are the worst, you know? In a way, you'd almost rather they not exist. You're digging around for a dime in your pocket and you feel something small so you think, that's it. Nope. Just that annoying little coin called a penny.

And then there's the cross.

I've heard it said before that if the New Testament Christians saw us wearing jewelry or shirts with crosses on it they would've been really shocked and confused. I've heard it said it would be like the equivalent of us putting a charm of the electric chair on a necklace or on a tshirt. That's how they would look at the cross.

To them, the cross was a dreaded symbol of execution reserved for the vilest of criminals. It was the most shameful, most treacherous, most torture-filled way to die.

So here's this cross, this symbol of torture, combined with pennies, this symbol of worthlessness.

But here's the cool thing: Jesus rebranded the cross forever. You might say Jesus restored the cross's image. He gave it a new purpose, a whole new meaning.

Listen to how Paul viewed the cross. It's beautiful. Galatians 6:14 But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

Isn't that awesome? He says, the only thing I can brag about is the fact that I've got a loving Savior who died on the cross for me. And now the world is crucified to me; and I'm crucified to the world.

I love that.

And remember a minute ago when we said that Jesus came to bring order? Check this out. The cross was anything but a place of peace. It was a place of chaos. It was mankind at its worst.

But again, look what the Bible says about how Jesus rebranded the cross.

Colossians 1:19-20

19 For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.

Remember? Everything that Jesus did, and in every place where Jesus went, he brought about restoration. He brought about peace.

The chaotic cross brought peace, perfect peace.

The symbol of death has become to us the symbol of life. And this symbol of worthlessness has become a symbol of worth.

-Pray about anyone who might need to be restored tonight.

The Roots Room

Are you guys ready for summer? (Olaf)

And yeah, all the yg stuff is great, but don't you just love the feeling of jumping into the pool on a hot summer's day? I'm ready for that.

I want you to picture in your mind a hot summer's day, and a beautiful lake that goes on for miles and miles. The waters are so still that it looks like a mirror image of the skyline above it. The waters are so calm and serene that it looks like one solid texture, like a blanket is sitting on top of the water.

And you look around you and you think "This is perfect. I've got to jump in." And you notice a great place. A little spot about 8 feet up from the water, nothing so high up that it scares you, so you get a good run at it and you just leap with all of your might and you put your arms out for the perfect dive...only to discover that it's more like a puddle than a lake. There's no depth to it at all.

Maybe it would look something like this...video.

Except it wouldn't look anything like that. It wouldn't feel glorious. You'd hurt yourself. Badly. You'd skin up your knees, you'd break your ankle, and your wrist. Maybe even break your neck. It wouldn't be a pretty sight.

And so here was this beautiful lake. This perfect scene. And it looked the part. But what happened? **Well you discovered that were looking at something a mile wide and an inch deep.**

Let me ask you, could the same be said about your faith? Is it a mile wide and an inch deep? Sure on the surface it looks great. People might look and say things like, "Man! That guy is always at church! That girl is so on fire for God! She is so faithful. He is so talented!"

And they might even look at our youth group and say stuff like: Dude, their website is phenomenal. And man, I saw what they've been doing on Facebook, and I'll bet it's awesome being in their youth group! They're always getting together and doing fun stuff. I wish my youth group was like their youth group."

You go to church. You go on retreats. You go skiing. You go to the beach with the youth group.

But what's really underneath the surface?

What would God say about your faith? Is it fun-based or is it faith-based? Is it a mile wide and an inch deep...or is it deep and wide?

Jesus didn't come to offer shallow faith. He came to offer something we could throw deep roots into.

Tonight, we're talking about **The Roots Room**. The Bible uses a lot of analogies that have to do with, well, for lack of a better word, plants. It talks about sowing and growing and reaping; about seeds and weeds, planting and watering, vines and branches, pruning, and grafting, plowing, and harvesting, and fruits and roots, and I could go on and on and on...

Colossians 2:6-7 are on the wall in The Roots Room. It says this *6 Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, 7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*

How important are roots? Look at the very powerful words in that verse that also are closely connected with the role of roots. Roots help “build up; establish; roots help make things abound.”

How important are roots? **In Luke 8 we read a story.** It's called the parable of the sower. In it we read about a guy who is spreading seeds trying to get plants to grow. (You can read it on the screen but basically he throws seed everywhere and he gets different results in each place.) 5 “A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. 6 And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. 7 And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. 8 And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold.” As he said these things, he called out, “He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

In verses 11-15 Jesus explains the meaning of the parable. Here's what He says **11 Now the parable is this: The seed is the word of God. 12 The ones along the path are those who have heard; then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13 And the ones on the rock are those who, when they hear the word, receive it with joy. But these have no root; they believe for a while, and in time of testing fall away. 14 And as for what fell among the thorns, they are those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by the cares and riches and pleasures of life, and their fruit does not mature. 15 As for that in the good soil, they are those who, hearing the word, hold it fast in an honest and good heart, and bear fruit with patience.**

How important are roots? The seed on the path (**vs. 12**) never had roots. The seed on the rock (vs. 13) didn't take root. The seed in the thorns (**vs. 14**) started out right but its roots got choked out. But the seed on good soil (vs. 15) was able to throw down deep, healthy roots that allowed the seed to grow and produce fruit.

We want to have a faith with roots. Not a faith that's a mile wide and an inch deep! Look at **verse 13**. Here was a plant that was growing. It received the word with joy! Maybe they get baptized! They're on fire for God! They're pumped up!

And you look at them and you think: “Wow! They're on fire! Look how much they're growing!”

But what happens? Well, something happens and you get tested in some kind of way. Maybe you go through something hard at home. Maybe you sin and instead of getting back up, you just lay down and quit. Maybe you lose a friend. Maybe you go through a tragedy. Maybe you have doubts.

Whatever it is, it's some kind of test that you go through and instead of sticking with it, what happens? Verse 13. In the time of testing, what happens? You fall away.

It's like that glass lake. Everything looked great on the surface, but what was happening underneath the surface? What was happening underneath the soil? There weren't deep roots thrown down. It was still a very immature, shallow faith, not deep rooted faith.

... **Question for you:** you guys know how freakishly strong I am. How many of you think that I could just walk right up to an oak tree and uproot it? I mean, just pull it straight out of the ground?

You want to see me do it? Ok. Get ready to be amazed. *(Take an acorn out of a cup with dirt in it.)*

You see that? That acorn was on its way, man! Put it in the right environment and boom! A mighty oak tree. No way you're pulling that thing out of the ground!

The easiest way to prevent a tree from taking root is to pull it up early.

Turn that around and think about what that means spiritually. Satan knows that the easiest way to keep you from taking root is to pull you up early. Which is easier for Satan to uproot: an acorn or a full grown oak?

It's just like the parable of the sower: the devil wants to take your roots away before they even exist.

I want you to imagine that you had a plant that resembled that amount of faith that you have right now. Would it look like a seed? Would it look like a sapling? Would it be a more mature looking plant? How hard would it be for Satan to uproot you right now? How hard would he have to tug on you to pull you up?

The easiest time to uproot a tree is when it's young. New Christians, you'd better believe Satan is going to come hard for you.

Seniors, Satan's going to come hard for you in the coming months. You're going to be tested. You're going to get a chance to see what kind of roots you've got. I hope you've been taking advantage of the time you've had here before you leave. I hope it's been a time where you've grown some roots and soaked in some rich nutrients, so to speak.

But just because it's easy to uproot a young tree doesn't mean Satan will uproot you. "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world." That's talking about the Holy Spirit. You don't have to be uprooted. You're not destined to lose. You're destined for victory!

And just because you have deep roots doesn't mean you can't be uprooted. Oak trees still have tornados to deal with. Satan will still try to wreak havoc on you. But if you've got a good roots system, you're going to be in better shape.

Tonight I want to close with a message for our seniors, but really it's a message for our juniors, and our sophomores, and our freshmen, all the way down to our 6th graders.

I HAVE NEVER, NEVER, EVER TRIED TO CONVINC ANYBODY IN THIS ROOM YOU WHERE I THINK THEY OUGHT TO GO TO SCHOOL.

I've never done that. That's not business. That's not my decision. Not my place. Not my life.

But tonight, I'm going to tell you where you need to go to school.

And the answer might not sit well with all of your parents. Some of them aren't going to understand it. I'm not saying I'm better or smarter than them. I'm not better or smarter than them. I'm just saying that they may not get this.

You've been thinking for a long time now about where you're going to go to school in the fall. By now, you've made some college visits. You've probably given some thought about what you want to do career-wise. And then you've probably checked out the different types of programs that each school offers, you've taken into

consideration the scholarships they're offering you and on and on and on...

And so, I'm going to tell you where you need to go to school: *make the decision that is going to be the best thing for your soul.*

Ugh. Here we go. I knew it. I knew he was going to tell me I had to go to a Christian school.

I'm not saying a Christian school is the way you need to go! But at the same time, I'm not saying it isn't the way you need to go.

What I'm saying is that your soul is a lot more important than your degree.

So you're saying I don't need to choose a school based on my career? You're saying it's wrong for me to look at schools that offer top notch programs? It's wrong for me to go to the school that offers me the best scholarship?

I'm not saying any of that is wrong.

Here's what I am saying: **make the decision that is going to be the best thing for your soul.**

I hope you've considered that in your search. I hope you've been thinking about things like: is there a faithful church near the school? Is there an active college ministry so I can be around some other students that care about their souls, too? Is there a Christian Student Center?

Those are questions you need to ask.

If you're looking at a school out in Montana or Massachusetts or wherever, you need to know: is there a faithful church near that school? If not, where's the closest one? And then be honest with yourself: are you disciplined enough to wake up and actually go by yourself? Can you handle being that far away from a church?

Listen, you know yourself. You know yourself better than anybody else. Will you make yourself get up and drive x amount of miles out there when you're all by yourself without 160 students in your youth group and 29 adults looking out for you every week? Do you have the roots for that or not?

And be honest about that. If you can't handle that, it doesn't make you a terrible person! You just need to be honest about it and then make the wisest decision when it comes down to your soul.

There's nothing in this life that's more important than your soul. Jesus said, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world loses his own soul?"

"So what if you went to Harvard? Did you lose your faith while you were there?"

So what if you got a full ride to play baseball. Did you quit on the Lord?

So what if you got that PhD? Did you lose your faith in the process? So what if you make 6 or 7 figures?!? If you lose your soul, you're bankrupt.

Guys, you have been blessed with rich soil here. I beg of you: take root! And take root deeply.

-Pray.

The Suitcase Room

Preview of Noah movie.

Ok, so I have a confession to make to you: I love previews. I'm that guy. The one that wants to get to the movie 15 minutes early to read the trivia before it, and not miss a single preview. Who's with me? I love the previews. I know I'm easily amused, but I'm a sucker for a good preview. I love to see if there are any good movies coming out.

In fact, I'd love to go see a movie tonight after church. Who's with me?

Alright, here's the plan: we'll go and we'll get there 15 minutes early. We'll get some popcorn, we'll pour some Buncha Crunch in there on top of it (if you haven't done that you haven't lived) and get a big fat Coke, and then finally the moment we've all been waiting for: the previews!

We'll watch the previews and then we're leaving! Sound like fun?

No it doesn't sound like fun. You don't go to movies for previews.

Just like you don't go to the Cheesecake Factory for the dinky bread they bring you at the beginning of the meal.

You don't go to the football game so you can watch the pregame stretches.

I don't go to the movies to watch previews. I go to see the feature film. I don't go to concerts for the opening act. I go to watch the headliner. I don't go to Cheesecake Factory for the bread before the meal. I go for the best part: dessert. The cheesecake: the sweetest part of the meal.

But here's a crazy thought. How many people all around us each and every day are living for the previews—you know, the part at the beginning that doesn't matter. How many people in this world are living for the dinky bread that they give you at the Cheesecake Factory, instead of for the cheesecake, the sweetest part of the meal that comes at the end?

How many of us are spending all of our time, effort, and energy into living for the previews, that is, the part of this life that isn't what it's really all about? How many of us are living for the previews when heaven is the feature film? How many of us are in love with the idea of living in a tent instead of the mansion that God has prepared for us? How many of us are living like this world is it, that this world is all that there is, that this world is our home, when in reality, this world is not my home?

Tonight we're talking about The Suitcase Room. It's a room designed with this very idea in mind, that is, the fact that this world is not our home. We're just traveling on to another place.

We are going to dig deep into the Word of God for a few minutes and look at a passage that speaks a lot to this idea of how this world is not our home.

Turn in your Bibles to 2 Corinthians chapter 4. If you don't have one, you can look on the screen, but I want to encourage you to look inside a Bible if you can find one.

Let's jump in, starting in 2 Corinthians 4:7.

⁷ But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. ⁸ We are afflicted in every

way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair;
9 persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

Maybe you've heard of the band Jars of Clay. This is where their band name came from. Maybe you thought, "Huh, that's a weird name. Do they have some kind of fascination with clay jars?" Look at the verse again, we have this treasure in jars of clay. Remember, when God created Adam from dust? Clay and dust are closely related. So here's Paul writing saying, Think of your body like a clay jar with a soul inside of it. Christians can know that that soul inside of them, that faith that they treasure so much, has treasure in heaven.

Look at verse 8. We might have all of this terrible stuff happening to us, but it's not the end of the world! Why? Because this world is not our home! You can break the jar, but you can't take away the treasure. You might be mistreated, made fun of, even tortured. Yeah, they could break the body, but they can't take your reward away.

Surely there were times when Paul thought, "I can't do this. This is too tough. Everybody hates me, people want to kill me, our pets heads are falling off. If anybody understood what it was like to hurt it was Paul! He was afflicted. He was persecuted! He was struck down! Paul gets that.

But he says, "It's not the end of the world!" Look at verses 10-11.

10 always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies. 11 For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

He says while I've got a body to give to the Lord, I'm going to show His Son to people." I'm paraphrasing verses 10-11 there... Let's keep moving and then we'll get to the so what part of the lesson.

-Skip down to verse 16.

16 So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self^{is} is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day. 17 For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, 18 as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient (that means temporary), but the things that are unseen are eternal.

Lots of big words in these verses, but here's what he's saying. Verse 17 is really cool. I think I read past it a few times but don't miss it! This is cool. God's saying that the mistreatment we receive here on this earth is preparing us for I like this, "an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison."

Guys have you ever underestimated how heavy something was that somebody was handing over to you? And you were like, "Oh, yeah. I got this." I think it's a guy thing but we like to think nothing is too heavy for us to carry. And so somebody dumps that weight on us and you're like whoa! I wasn't expecting that. I'm not talking about something you just carry in your arms. I'm talking about something heavy that seems to almost fall on you all at once like a really heavy blanket or something.

Look what that verse says, There is an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison. Have you ever thought about the weight of glory? What's that going to be like? I'm not talking about a literal weight that you have to lift at the gym. I guess I'm kind of talking

about the feeling you get when you first feel how heavy that something truly is. That overwhelmed feeling of “Wow. I had no idea that this was going to be like this.”

Imagine the glory of God in heaven. You can't. The Bible even says here it's beyond all comparison. He doesn't say imagine the glory of a tornado! You talk about amazing! Or imagine the glory of an earthquake, or the raging winds and waves of a hurricane, he doesn't say the glory of God will be like an erupting volcano. He doesn't compare it to the Grand Canyon.

He says, “Volcanoes, tornados, earthquakes? No. Those are just the previews. God's glory is beyond all comparison!

To think, there's nothing you can compare to the glory that will be in our home in heaven! The glory of God is going to overwhelm us with a feeling of “Wow. I no idea it was going to be like this.”

Let's keep moving. I want you guys to have some time in your cocoons.

5 For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. **2** For in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling, **3** if indeed by putting it on we may not be found naked. **4** For while we are still in this tent, we groan, being burdened—not that we would be unclothed, but that we would be further clothed, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. **5** He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

6 So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, **7** for we walk by faith, not by sight. **8** Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. **9** So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. **10** For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil. **11** Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others.

I really, really wish we had time to dive more deeply into this, because there are just so many awesome things here to see.

But here's what I want to do. What I want to show you tonight from this passage is the perspective that God teaches us that we ought to have toward this world. Remember, this world is not my home. We just showed up for the previews. We haven't seen anything yet!

1. When I understand that this world is not my home it changes the way I look at being mistreated.

When I understand that this world is not my home it changes the way I look at being mistreated. It's kind of like when your favorite sports team is playing a road game. We expect them to be mistreated, and booed. That crowd isn't pulling for your team. They want them to fail. They're not on your side. We should expect the same kind of treatment in this world. It's not home.

Remember Paul says, We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; **9** persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed;

People can do what they want to you, but it's not the end of the world—there's a treasure inside of you that they cannot touch.

When I understand that this world is not my home it changes the way I look at being mistreated. Remember, we're the road team—we should expect to be mistreated.

2. When I understand that this world is not my home it changes the way I look at death.

For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

We get really bummed out about being laughed at for our beliefs, but this verse is saying to the readers back then, "Hey, some of you are going to be given over to death because of your love for Christ. That's okay because it will show people the life of Jesus." And remember he was killed for crimes that weren't crimes! You're in good company!

I know a lot of you inside of this room have dealt with loss...

But there's great news: we're just watching the previews! The movie's going to start later! We'll see our loved ones again who loved the Lord.

3. When I understand that this world is not my home it changes the way I look at my body.

We live in a culture obsessed with the body...diets, surgery, models, sizes, what kinds of clothes are worthy to be put on your body and what kinds aren't.

It's interesting that Paul doesn't describe our bodies as fine china. He says they're like clay jars. Remember, guys, remember girls, the treasure is not the body. The treasure is inside the body! We don't need to spend all of our time worried about our bodies. That's not what gives the jar its worth. It's the treasure inside, it is our faith, it is our soul that has the real worth!

Remember when Jesus said this? "What shall it profit a man if he gains the world and loses his own soul?" The soul is the profitable part, not the worldly part that will be destroyed.

When I understand that this world is not my home it changes the way I look at my body.

And number four is closely connected to number three and number five.

4. When I understand that this world is not my home it changes the way I look at others.

We've got to stop looking at people as valuable based on what their jar, their body looks like. Guys, how many girls do you ignore at school because to you they're not "pretty?" Girls, how many guys do you ignore at school because they're not "hot?"

Listen, when I understand that this world is not my home it ought to change the way you and I look at others.

We've got to see the soul, not the jar.

5. When I understand that this world is not my home it changes the way I look at my time.

Look at chapter 5:11 **Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we persuade others.**

We talked a lot about time last week, but check this verse out. It's a verse that almost haunts me.

Let me ask you a question: why do you tell people about Jesus? Why do you tell people that they need to be baptized? Why do you tell people that they need to follow God?

Well, because Jesus wants us to! And the Bible says to! And God wants people to know that He loves them!

Yes, yes, and yes.

But how many of you in your mind said this? "I've got to do everything I can to persuade people to follow God because I fear for them if they don't."

We talk a lot about knowing the love of the Lord, but what about knowing the fear of the Lord? Another translation says, "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade others." **Translation: It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. (Hebrews 10:31)**

...I would venture to say that everybody's favorite part of school is the part when the bell rings and you get to go home. What if tomorrow the bell rings and Jesus comes back? Would you get to go home or would you go to a place that you don't ever want to be?

-Let's pray.

-Cocoons.

The Timeline Room

“Visually, they are a nightmare: tight, dandified, Edwardian/Beatnik suits and great pudding bowls of hair. Musically, they are a near-disaster: guitars and drums slamming out a merciless beat that does away with secondary rhythms, harmony, and melody. Their lyrics (punctuated by nutty shouts of “yeah, yeah, yeah!”) are a catastrophe, a preposterous farrago of Valentine-card romantic sentiments...the odds are they will fade away, as most adults confidently predict.”

Newsweek magazine: February 24th, 1964.

Newsweek ran that story 50 years ago. It was a response to something else that happened 50 years ago last week: it was when The Beatles made history, appearing on The Ed Sullivan Show, making their mark on America’s timeline.

Music would never be the same.

-73 million people tuned in to watch.

-It’s estimated that over 60% of the homes in America were tuned in.

-40% of every man, woman, and child in America watched The Beatles on The Ed Sullivan Show.

Wow. There are some things in life that leave their mark on time.

Tonight in our Make Room series, we’re highlighting the **Timeline Room**. As you guys were coming in tonight, I had you take a minute to share with us some of those times in your life that stick out most to you...go over to timeline to share a few.

Some things in life leave a mark on time. And that’s exactly the concept behind the Timeline Room. The walls are covered with the names and dates of a lot of you inside this room tonight. Why? Why cover a wall with names and dates? Were you guys going for a church camp cabin approach? You know, like: Philip Jenkins was here 6/4/13! David Minton is a hotttie July 2nd, 1902.

No. The reason for the names and dates is very simple. It’s because **when you meet Jesus, He leaves a mark.**

Tonight, I want to share with you three moments that I hope will be on everybody’s timeline.

I want us to turn to Acts 8:1-5.

But Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, and suddenly a light from heaven shone around him. 4 And falling to the ground he heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?” 5 And he said, “Who are you, Lord?” And he said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

If you could picture Saul’s life on a timeline, he’s about to experience one of the most important days of his entire life. Why? **It was the day when he met Jesus.**

And that’s the first point on the timeline of your life that I want to talk to you about: the day you met Jesus.

Have you ever thought about this? There are people in the Bible that the **ONLY REASON WE EVER MEET THEM IS BECAUSE THEY MET JESUS?!!**

That single event made the mark on their timeline that changed everything. Peter, Andrew, Zacchaeus, Mary Magdalene, Joseph, Mary, even Pilate, Caiaphas, Judas. We only read about those guys only because they met Jesus.

For Saul (who would change his name to Paul), was going about his business as usual. He was traveling down the road with some buddies, and then verse 3 a light from heaven shines around him. He hears a voice, and it's not one that he knows, but it's one he'll never forget.

The voice says, "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting."

Skip down to verse 8. Saul rose from the ground, and although his eyes were opened, he saw nothing. So they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. 9 And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank.

Guys, **when you meet Jesus, He leaves a mark.**

Now that sounds like a great point. But let's think about this for a second. How many of us have ever met Jesus in the way that Paul did?

So **how do people meet Jesus?**

A story that I had to get permission to share with you tonight... Alex Lam. We love Alex here and some of you have known him from the very first night that he stepped foot in here about two years ago. What you

probably don't know is why he stepped foot in here in the first place... the story of Grace. After a high school devotional about three weeks ago...

Alex's heart was open to visiting Mt. Juliet that two years ago back in February because a girl named Grace took the time to show him Jesus!

How do people meet Jesus? It doesn't happen on the road to Damascus. The way most people are going to meet Christ is by meeting a Christian. Who showed Jesus to you? Who will you show Jesus to?

I'm thankful that a girl named Grace, a girl I've never met, took the time to show Jesus to Alex Lam, because we would've never met him if she hadn't. And if we had never met him, would Alex be a Christian?

Think of the difference that this girl Grace made, not just in Alex's life, but in Alex's forever. What Grace did will echo into eternity. I thank God for grace, and I thank God for Alex Lam.

Let's move on to the next mark on the timeline.

The next mark on the timeline: the day you followed Jesus.

You see, there's a difference in meeting Jesus and obeying Jesus. Lots of people met him. Lots of people heard about him, hear about Him. But let us not become so foolish as to believe that hearing about Jesus is the same as following Him.

Jesus doesn't desire to be your acquaintance. He demands to be your all. Saul met the Lord that day on the road, but he wasn't saved until he had given his life over to Jesus, and had his sins washed away.

We read about a guy named Ananias who played a role in leading Saul to Christ. In Acts 22:16 Ananias says, *“And now, why do you wait? Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins calling on His name!”*

Guys, how cool is this? When we are baptized, a new point on the timeline begins. God takes out His pen, and He writes your name, not on a wall inside of a chapel, but in a Book inside of heaven, that will last forever.

This is the verse written inside of the Timeline Room...

And when you reach this point on the timeline, nothing in your past matters anymore. Your sins are forgiven. God forgets them. They don't count. They're gone. They've been washed away.

It's a day that I hope will be on everybody's timeline.

Finally, there will come a point on your timeline when you will meet Jesus.

We don't know when that day will be. The only thing that you control on this timeline is **this one right here**: only you can decide whether or not you will follow Jesus today. When you meet Him face to face, what do you want him to say? “Well done, my good and faithful servant!” Or “Depart from me. I never knew you.”

Let's pray. Our sins left a mark in the nail-scarred hands of our Savior. But thank you, God, for allowing us to meet Jesus, who has left His mark upon the heart of every believer. In Jesus' name, Amen.

The Waiting Room

Show The Day Indifference Died YouTube video.

(Back to Prezi) It's amazing to think about what God began doing here two years ago. Something that He isn't done doing yet.

I'm thankful for some very convicted high school students who decided that they were sick of walking into a room filled with cliques, who from that point onward, decided to put an end to the atmosphere of indifference & set out to begin an atmosphere of evangelism.

Maybe you've seen "The Waiting Room" and thought to yourself, "That's kind of a weird room. Why do they have a room that looks like a doctor's office?"

One reason is because it's our little way of paying tribute to the story of Esmin Green that represents so much to our youth group.

But also it's because of these ideas found in Scripture. Look at Mark 2:15-17.

15 And as he reclined at table in his house, many tax collectors and sinners were reclining with Jesus and his disciples, for there were many who followed him. 16 And the scribes of the Pharisees, when they saw that he was eating with sinners and tax collectors, said to his disciples, "Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?"

Wait a minute, Jesus! Aren't you supposed to be a religious person? You can't associate with sinners? You can't be eating with these guys!

17 And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

These two lines are **loaded with meaning**.

Let's break this down a little bit. First of all, Jesus is making this analogy about sickness and going to the doctor. He says, "Healthy people don't have a need to go to a doctor, but sick people."

Jesus is saying, "I came to call sinners. I came to call those who are sin-sick. I didn't come to call the righteous. If you're righteous you don't need me. If you already think you're healthy, you're not going to come to me."

Our immune systems can fight off all kinds of sickness, but it cannot fight against sin. It's deadly. It's lethal. And unless you treat it, it will take your life. Romans 6:23 the wages of sin is death.

"But to those of you looking for a cure for the sickness that is inside of every soul, an anecdote for the sins that are tearing you up on the inside, for those of you looking for a Savior, come to me. I am the Healer. I am the Great Physician."

"Well, Jesus, maybe later. I mean, I don't know. I know I've got sin in my life, but can I just reschedule an appointment with you later? I'm really busy. And it's not really convenient right now for me to give my sins to you.

"Plus, Jesus, I'm a good person. I don't murder. I'm not a drug lord. I don't kidnap children. I'm not a con artist. I'm not a terrorist.

Jesus says, “Oh, you’re a righteous person?! Then, take all the time you need. Because you don’t need me! If you can do this on your own, by all means, carry on. If you’re healthy, if you’re righteous, you definitely don’t see your need to see *this* Doctor.

There are two groups of people here in this story. One is the Pharisees. And the other the Bible calls “sinners.” Notice, this wasn’t a stereotype given to these people by the Pharisees. This is the Bible calling these guys sinners. They were known for their sins.

I want you to see the irony in what Jesus says here. I just want to highlight again the words of Jesus.

17 And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”

The Pharisees saw themselves as “well.” They didn’t see a need for a doctor. Jesus said, “I didn’t come to call the righteous to repentance. I came to call sinners. If you’re righteous, then you don’t need me.”

To the Pharisees he’s saying “You guys already think you’re righteous, so you don’t see your need for me.”

But here’s the ironic thing: who needed Jesus? The Pharisees.

It’s like Jesus is saying, “You guys are sick, but you have no idea.”

We’re surrounded by people who truly believe that Christianity is the problem. The world tries to make Christians out to be Pharisees. But in reality **the world is full of people who are sick AND THEY HAVE NO IDEA, BECAUSE THEY HAVE NEVER SPENT ANY TIME WITH THE GREAT PHYSICIAN.**

That was the Pharisees’ problem! And if they would’ve just sat down at the table with Jesus, if they would just spent a little time getting to know him, their lives would’ve been completely different. If they would’ve swallowed their pride, their story would be drastically different. But they were too busy criticizing him.

The sad, ironic thing about this story is that Jesus *is* calling them, but they have no idea.

Another verse that you’ll see in the Waiting Room comes from John 5:6 that simply reads, **“Do you really want to be made well?”**

I wish we had time to really look closely at the story. But that verse comes from a story we read about a paralyzed man who is lying beside this pool of water. And here’s this paralyzed man, and he’s been lying in this condition for 38 years. And then Jesus sees him and he asks him a simple question.

Do you really want to get well?

It almost sounds like a cruel question to ask! **OF COURSE HE WANTS TO BE MADE WELL! DO YOU THINK HE ENJOYS BEING PARALYZED?** Why in the world would this guy want to remain where he was any longer?

Do you really want to get well?

Yes, Jesus! Of course! I believe in your power! I know you can do all things! Just snap your fingers, just say the word, and I know that I’ll have the strength to walk again.”

But Jesus doesn’t snap his fingers. Jesus doesn’t immediately make it to where he can walk. Instead, he says: “Do you want to get well? Then **“Get up! Pick up your mat and walk.”**

9 At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

Let me ask you tonight the very same question Jesus asks, “Do you want to be made well?” Are you sick of feeling terrible about yourself? Are you sick of trying to do things on your own? Do you want to be made well or do you wanna give all of the excuses as to why I can’t heal you?”

“Get up. Pick up your mat. And walk.”

Do you want to get well? The first thing He says is “Get up.” Is there someone in here tonight who’s just sitting around and you know what you need to do to follow Christ? Take action. Stop waiting around for a miracle. This man waited day after day after day for a miracle, for an angel to stir the waters of the pool that he was lying next to, because apparently it had healing properties if you were the first one in the water after the angel stirred the waters.

And so here’s this man lying around every day waiting for a miracle. Jesus says to this man, “I am your miracle.” Jesus says to us “I am your miracle! I am the resurrection and the life. I’m the Great Physician.”

Then He says “Take up your mat.” That mat that you have grown so comfortable with. Maybe it’s a sin that you have grown really comfortable with. A sin that you have rationalized and rationalized about and have tried so hard to justify for so long that you can’t even see straight anymore.

Maybe it’s something you do with your boyfriend or your girlfriend. Maybe it’s something to do with the way you look at girls.

“Oh, Philip. It’s not a big a deal if I look at girls that way. All the guys do it. It’s woman crush Wednesday. There is NO WAY that I can keep from looking at girls in that way.”

“Philip, it’s not a big deal if I post pictures of that celebrity with his shirt off. Besides it’s man candy Monday. It’s not a big deal.”

Listen, lust isn’t something that *just guys* do. It has to do with your heart. What’s your motivation behind looking at that picture?

But I can’t help it! It’s all over the TV. It’s all over my Twitter feed. It’s all over my Instagram.

Jesus said to the man (and I know it’s a little different context but the principle applies), He says “Get up and pick up your mat.” It’s time to leave the old life behind. And finally He says “Walk.” Walk after me.

Maybe you’re here tonight and feels like the man lying on the mat. You feel like Esmin Green lying on the floor of a hospital waiting room. Maybe looking for something, but you don’t really know what it is. I want you to know we’re here—here to help, here to listen. Whatever you need. If tonight you feel like you’re spiritually dying, Jesus has great news: that’s exactly why He came. He came for you, and He came for all of us, He came for the sick, not for those who “have it all together.”

And this world is our **waiting room**, until the day finally comes when we can meet the One who’s loved us from the very beginning.

-Let’s pray.