



Scott Turansky, Senior Pastor
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JOHN 4:28-35

I want to share with you some of the things that are going on at Calvary Chapel Living Hope with the journey that we're in, so let's live it together. That's the idea I want to communicate with you. Our church has grown to a place that we need to talk about. I want to share with you some things that are going on.

Our church has grown and is growing past the 100 mark. That's not a huge church, but it is a very important piece of information. First of all, did you know that 50% of the churches in the United States are less than 100 people? So we are growing past this significant number. But it's not about numbers. It's about being effective and being the church that God has called us to be. Studies have been done on churches. Churches that are over 100 and growing often are churches that are vibrant. Something is going that is alive in the church because many churches today are declining. There are some challenges that we face when we move to a church of our size and I'd like to share with you about some of those challenges because we're feeling the tension in this right now.

The challenges are these. Some people attend and have trouble getting involved. When we were small and only had fifty people it was hard to get missed, so people were able to get involved. We also have the fact that some people get missed. That's a significant issue that we have in our church. Some people either aren't able to come on Sunday morning or when they come on Sunday morning they sometimes get in and out without us being able to address them. So that's an important issue. Then thirdly I would suggest that some people feel like they're not connected here at Calvary Chapel Living Hope. We want people to feel connected. So it's important that we make some shifts, some adjustments in the way that we operate. I want to share those with you because we're going to make three changes that I think you'll appreciate and benefit from.

But I want you to know there are some things we're not going to change. We're still going to teach through the Bible verse by verse. That's what we do.

We're in 1 Samuel 25. We're in a passage about David getting angry and his emotions are controlling him. I'm just pondering all of this in my own mind because I know that sometimes negative emotions control us. Anxiety, sadness, or anger are the big three. So I'm just doing a lot of this research right now studying in God's word and just trying to discover what are some solutions we can bring to that. We talked about one solution last week. Next week I'm going to bring some more ideas to you in this whole area of handling challenging emotions right out of the Bible and the passage that we're going through verse by verse in 1 Samuel.

We're still going to do worship like we do. Vibrant worship. We love to sing together and worship the Lord. We're going to continue that. We're still going to have an emphasis on children and we're still going to love them and we're going to embrace young people in the life of the church to help us serve and to not have to wait till they get to be adults to be members of the church so to speak, that they now can be serving the Lord. We are going to do many of the things we are already doing because that's who we are as a church.

But we are going to add some things here that I think you'll find helpful. One is the communication card so you can communicate. Sometimes you leave here maybe and wish you could've shared something that you didn't get to share. I would like to know what that is. I read all of the communication cards and then if you have some information you want to share with someone else (like I want to share with the women's study, or I'd like to serve in the nursery, or something like that), we'll pass that on to the appropriate place. So that's the communication card. I hope you'll use it every week when you come.

A second thing we're going to do is do some more teaching on membership. Some of you are members here at Calvary Chapel Living Hope. Some of you need to be members here at Calvary Chapel Living Hope, so we're going to be talking more about that in an intentional way. The first time we do a membership class I'm going to do it on Sunday morning for all of you and then we'll offer that on a regular basis for people.

A third thing that we're going to do is we're going to provide on-ramps to engage. On-ramps so that people can get engaged in the life of the church. That's important because engagement is different than just kind of hanging around. The church is not an app store. You can go and punch into your phone, or on my watch I can listen to a sermon or a worship song. The church is not an app store. The church requires engagement in order to get the most out of it. We want to provide on-ramps for engagement here at Calvary Chapel Living Hope.

Here are some ways we're going to make engagement easier. If you'll take your bulletin, you'll see that it looks different this week. Not just the format looks different, but if you look inside it's broken out differently. Notice there are three kinds of activities mentioned there. Because these are the kinds of activities that will help you to engage in the life of the church.

What do you need more of in your particular situation? I would suggest that some people really need more discipleship growing in their personal walk and in their faith.

Other people need connecting, they need better friends. Do you know that the people you hang around with will determine the quality of your life? That's really important. The friendships you develop are very important. The quality of your friendships will help determine the quality of your life, so having opportunities to connect is a significant way that we minister to people here at Cavalry Chapel.

A third way is opportunities for service. Like we served the homeless last week and we have other opportunities. Whether that service is on Sunday morning where you get involved in the things that are going on here or outside of Sunday morning in different ways. Engagement is

important in God's church for you to make the most of it and for us to benefit from who you are in the life of the church.

A second thing in this area of engagement on-ramps is to offer small groups that are 10-12 weeks long. The women are already doing this. You can sign up for a women's group, it goes for a certain length of time, then they take a break. We're going to do that with the Take Jesus Home group and encourage other groups to form for a certain length of time. This is why. You'll be much more likely to sign up for a group that has a start and end time than for a group that goes on forever. So we're going to offer you opportunities to engage with people in a small group for a period of time because the small group ministry is where a lot of ministry takes place in the life of the church.

A third thing we're going to do as far as engagement on-ramps is we're going to officially adopt the connecting times as part of Sunday. We connect before church and we connect after church in some significant ways. So if you look online now and find out when does our church start, it now starts at 9:45. You just have to know it starts at 9:45. That's what it says in your bulletin there. That's what it says on the website. If someone calls the office and asks, "What time does your church service start?" It starts at 9:45. Do you know why? Because we believe that the church is a connecting place. When we connect with others then we're able to be the church that God would have us to be.

I would just encourage you to take advantage of that. Maximize your Sunday morning. Two hours that you can give on Sunday morning that will bless you in some significant ways, whether you come early or you come at the 9:45 time and connect at that time or stay afterwards. Make the most of your Sunday morning so that you can connect with other people and be the church that God has called us to be.

Our goal at Calvary Chapel Living Hope is to be a Spirit-led church. That's what we want. We want to be led by the Spirit of God and we want to do that by engaging people in authentic evangelism and passionate discipleship. Just think where we'll be next year. I don't know where we'll be as far as numbers, but that isn't the important thing. Where will you be in your relationship to the life of the church? A lot of that is determined by how much you engage over the next year. You are part of this church and can help this church to grow to its next level. What you do can affect the life of the church in some significant ways. So as you plan and you lead and you take initiative, you might decide you look at the bulletin and say, "Hey, we don't have a lot of this particular kind of activity." You might offer to lead something along that line. Life – that's what we're involved in. It's a journey. Let's walk it together.

Let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I thank you for this church and for what it means to me in the treasure that it is in my own life. I thank you for the friendships that I have here and the relationships that I enjoy. Thank you for the opportunity I have to serve here and to connect with others and also to grow in my faith. Thank you for the privilege of being part of this church. Lord, I ask that for each one of the folks here, for the young people that are here that you would help them to grow in their faith and that they would be able to find opportunities to serve and to

be disciples. That they'd experience the friendships that happen in an environment like this, that they can take away and enjoy together. So Lord, we're asking you to do a great work in our lives together and in our lives independently. In Jesus' name, amen.

Would you stand with me? I'm going to read our scripture passage. In honor of God's word I just want you to stand. This is our bread, this is our sustenance. When we look at God's word it means a lot. So out of respect I want you to stand while I read the passage, which goes this way: *Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah?" They came out of the town and made their way toward him.*

*Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."
But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about."
Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?"*

"My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Don't you have a saying, 'It's still four months until harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest."

Before you sit down, look at the good-looking person next to you and say, "The harvest is here!" Maybe you need to turn to the other good-looking person. Say, "The harvest is here!" Alright. You can be seated.

It's hard to use an agricultural example in an app world. Any of you farmers here? We're not farmers, so to understand an agricultural example is a challenging thing. Context brings clarity. You know that. You get a call from someone and you're kind of offended by the phone call, and then you find out the person is stranded on the road and they're calling me or the person is calling me from the hospital room. You give them a lot more grace. You go "oh, I get it." So you're not so offended. Context brings clarity. It's important for us to understand about this context in this passage because I don't think we get it normally.

When I think about the harvest, here's what I think. You plow the ground. And that's hard. Plowing the ground, especially if you use a shovel, it's hard to dig it all up. It's a lot of work to plow the ground. Then you plant the seed, then you water it, then you fertilize it. Then you kick back and you wait for the harvest so you have all the fresh vegetables on your plate. That's how I imagine the harvest is. So the harvest is really enjoying all of the fruit of all of the work that you've done in the past.

That is not what's happening with the harvest. You've got to understand the harvest. The harvest is the hardest place of the whole process. When the grain grows up it gets to a place that it needs to be harvested and there's no sleeping in during the harvest. You've got to get out there and you've got to do a lot of work. Why? Because you're taking the grain that's ready and ripe, you're trying to get it off those stalks before the rain comes to knock it off and it be lost. Before the strawberries get all rotten. Before the snap peas get fungus on them. You're trying to catch them before they have a problem. They're trying to get those peaches when they're just sweet

enough. You want to get them off before they fall off. So there's a lot of work done during the harvest. That is the most important time or the hardest working time is the harvest time.

I want you to understand the context because Jesus is using an agricultural example to give us an understanding more about something that's going on and needs to go on in our own lives.

Now let's look at the story. I want to show you the context in the story of where we're getting the passage. This is the story about the woman at the well. You probably already figured that out. So here's what happens. Jesus and His disciples come to this area. The disciples say, "Hey, we'll get some food. Jesus, you wait here." So Jesus waits by the well. A woman comes out to the well and when she comes out to the well then Jesus has this dialogue with her. So one of the characters in the story is Jesus. The other is the woman.

Now this woman comes and Jesus starts to dialogue with her. In the midst of all of this experience, she is transformed. This is really big. Her life is totally transformed. She comes in and has a dialogue with Jesus and she's given up on marriage. She's had five husbands and the one she's living with now she didn't even bother to get married to. She's given up on marriage. God, in the midst of her interaction with Jesus, transforms her heart. So she heads back to the town. She's just a changed person. She goes back to town and she wants to tell other people about Him. Can you imagine Jesus in the midst of that moment?

I mean let me ask you. Do you get excited when someone accepts Jesus as their Lord and Savior? This is church; you can have a little emotion here. Do you get excited when someone gets... Yes! Right! This is so powerful.

Marge was telling me this story last Sunday. She's telling this story to me. She said she talked to her sister on the phone the week before. Her sister had been meeting with some other ladies. The ladies' conversation would always end up with some spiritual things. Her sister's relaying this to Marge who's obviously a Christian. So Marge says to her, "Well have you ever asked Jesus into your heart? Have you prayed the sinner's prayer?"

Her sister says, "No."

So Marge over the phone says, "Would you like to do that now??"

And her sister says, "Yes." So over the phone Marge led her sister to the Lord.

What do you think of that? Yes! That's exciting!

Okay here's what happened. Jesus is really pumped in this story. This is really exciting for Him because sometimes when He talks to people He gets rejected, like we do. He gets rejected by people continually, but this time the lady responds and she goes back to tell all her friends about what's going on. So that's one character in the story. We've got the woman and we've got Jesus.

On the one hand Jesus is really pumped about ministry and what He's doing and oh this is so exciting, but on the other hand you've got the disciples had gone into town to get food. Maybe they went to Whataburger or In-n-Out Burger. I don't know if you know those places. They are other places in the United States. These are great places to eat. We have Sonic now in our area.

Maybe you can imagine Peter and John going up to the counter. “Hey John, what are you going to eat?”

“I don’t know, I’m thinking about those waffle fries and double burgers. You never know when we’re going to eat again around here. And I’m going to have a milkshake.”

“Great. What do you think we order for Jesus?”

How do you order food for Jesus? I have no idea. Does He like pickles and mayo on His hamburger? I don’t know! But they get a bag of food for Jesus and they bring it back to give to Him.

Now you’ve got to give credit to these disciples because they are the people that get things done. It’s very important for them to get things done, but you have to understand the timelines in the story. So here we’ve talked about the characters. We’ve got the woman, we’ve got Jesus, we’ve got the people coming out, and we’ve got the disciples with the food. But notice the timelines here. If you read the passage you’ll see that the woman has talked to Jesus. She goes back into town and the townspeople are coming out. That’s the timeline. And while they’re coming out, it says meanwhile the disciples come to Jesus and they’re talking to Him about the food. “Hey Jesus, we got you some food. I want to give you this food.” Jesus is so pumped in this moment He realizes He needs to teach His disciples something because they’re not getting it. You need to understand something here in order to get it.

So Jesus wants them to know there’s something more important than food. “I’m really pumped about this,” Jesus is saying. So He says this to them: *I have food you don’t even know about.* Now this is really confusing for these guys because they went into town to get food. They’re the A-postles. They’re wondering if the B-postles brought Him some food. What’s going on here? How did He get food? Does He have a protein bar in the pocket of His robe? Where is He getting the food that He’s talking about?

Here’s the problem with the disciples. The disciples are meal-minded. They’re thinking about all the things that need to get done and they are meal minded. Jesus is mission-minded. This is the big truth in this passage. Are we meal-minded or are we mission-minded?

It’s the same problem that Martha had in the story of Mary and Martha where Jesus is talking to Mary, and Mary is sitting at Jesus’ feet, and Martha is in the kitchen preparing the food. Martha says, “Jesus, why don’t you tell Mary to get in here and set the table. Why don’t you tell her to get in here and help with the food.” And Jesus says, “What she’s doing is more important,” because she is mission-minded and Martha is meal-minded.

Now I think in the midst of this story is a lesson that we all need to learn. I think we’re like the disciples. We’re mission-minded. I think the disciples are mission-minded people. These are the people that are trying to move with Jesus. They’ve totally committed themselves to Him. They’ve left their past, they’re going forward. But even disciples, like us, can become meal-minded and start thinking about the things around us, the things that have to get done and we miss the mission that God would have for us.

A couple weeks ago I had this phone call. The woman starts the phone call this way. “I want to get a divorce.” That’s how she starts the phone call. Now over the next over an hour that I spent talking to her on the phone, God started working in her life. I watched it happen. It was just so fun because by the end of the conversation here’s what she’s saying: “I have learned so much. I can hardly wait to share this with other people.” And I’m going, “I am so glad you called me today! You encouraged me so greatly. This is so powerful.”

When I hung up the phone after that conversation, I was pumped. I can imagine how Jesus was feeling. This is so cool that God took a woman in just over an hour and changed her whole perspective on her life and now she wanted to do something completely different and she wanted to share a message about how God works, even in difficult circumstances with other people. I was just so excited about this. It was amazing for me to experience that, enjoy it. I can know how Jesus was feeling in the midst of this situation.

This person just committed themselves to the Lord. She’s gone off and now we have other people coming. Why are they coming? Why are the people from the town coming out? Each one of them is coming out because they’re wondering, is this the Messiah? Is this the one who’s going to bring peace on earth? Is this the one who can help me with my problem that I’m experiencing? Is this the person that I’m looking for? Is this the solution to my life that I want? That’s what they’re coming out for.

Jesus is just so excited because people are searching. They’re excited about what’s going to happen in their lives because they meet Him and He’s excited because He wants to share more about that. Wow. This is big. That’s the message He wants to communicate to His disciples.

Well in my day this happened on a Wednesday and on that day after talking to this lady, I was pretty excited. But then I went back to my office and I was working at my desk. I had to get back down to some things that we all have to do. I had to call Verizon in this case because the Verizon bill was wrong. So we had to work on the Verizon bill.

So I have this problem whenever I call Verizon because I think whenever my name comes up on the Verizon screen of the Verizon customer service person the screen flashes or something. I’m sure that’s what happens. They must have some indicator because they always do the same thing to me. They always want to sell me more. Whatever I have, they want to sell me more. I’m a good candidate for that and here’s why.

So the lady says to me, “Oh I noticed you have our double-play service,” which is phone and internet. She says, “We have TV service. Can we offer you TV service?”

So I say, “I don’t have a TV.”

She says, “I know you don’t have TV service with us, but I’d like to offer you that TV service. Who runs your TV service? Who offers you that?”

I said, “I don’t have a TV.” The line goes quiet. She doesn’t say anything.

This time I’m already pumped from this other experience. So I explain to her what’s going on. I say, “Okay let me explain this to you. I don’t have a TV. My wife and I haven’t had a TV for the last thirty-eight years since we’ve been married. The reason why I don’t want to have a TV is

because my life is so exciting already it's bizarre. Some people will watch TV and watch reality TV. I don't have to watch reality TV. I just have to have people come into my office and they start telling me about their lives. That's reality. Or I talk to someone on the phone, I get an insight into what's going on in their life. That's reality and I see God work in their lives. Most of my work is done with parenting. So I talk to people about their families and lives are transformed. It's amazing. I'm so excited. And that's why I don't have a TV. Why would I want to be entertained like that when I've got all these other things going on in life?" She's laughing with me about all of this.

So we get into the bill and she solves my bill problem. And then at the end of our conversation ten minutes later, she says, "I want to make sure I've given you five-star service. Do you have any other questions?"

I said, "Yeah, I just have one more question. Do you have any children?"

Dead quiet.

Then she says this, "Yes. I have a sixteen year old boy."

I said, "Well if you've got a sixteen year old in your home, I know you're probably struggling with some things. There's tension in your home. I have solutions that can help you. You can go to my website, biblicalparenting.org, fill out the little form and I'll talk to you for fifteen minutes about your son and I'll give you solutions that will change your life."

So she says, "Okay, I'll do that."

I said, "Okay great." I've done that with other people and no response. So we were done with the phone conversation. I was pumped already, so this was just more pumping.

But the next morning I got up to this email. She filled out the contact form on my website. Look at this. This is a page-and-a-half of her. She's saying like "I think this is going to stop me from typing, but since it's allowing me, I'm going to keep going."

I'm just going to read you the first paragraph of what she says. Her name is Dianne, last name Verizon. Here's what she says:

"I was beyond moved by Dr. Turansky's enthusiasm and drive towards his calling. I spoke to him on the phone today for his issues at Verizon. I feel everything happens for a reason. By the end of the call he asked me if I had children and I told him a sixteen year old. He felt that I had issues. Reading the website, he understands my issues more than others. I got off the phone with him at 4:18 and couldn't take another call. My shift ended a 4:30. It was like he had a vibe of my issues. I went to the bathroom and cried. I need help. I haven't found the proper fix or even the patch.

That's what I say. I go, "Wow. Wow."

There are people right around us who are coming out of this city and saying, "Could this be the one? Could this be the solution to my problems? Is this something that can help me?" People want answers today. They need answers today. It's big. Jesus wants to communicate this message to His disciples. What I'm doing right now is really big and you're talking to me about a Big Mac. Jesus has this message He wants to communicate.

Now I love this church. This church is a ministry, mission-minded church. For that I'm very grateful. To hang around with you guys because we're out serving, doing all kinds of things. You come here intentionally. This isn't like one of those churches where you show up and disappear to do your act of service for the week. You're engaged and you're involved in that. I just think in our lives we want to do this thing called church. We want to live life together. It's a journey. Let's walk it together. This isn't about being an observer and just looking at the hike from the outside. This is about working together and living our lives together in a way that honors the Lord.

I turn sixty years old this month. Most people in their sixties start thinking about retirement. That's not a problem. If you're retired or thinking about retirement, that's great. But I'm trying to think, when I start thinking about retirement... What is retirement anyway? I get so confused about this idea because retirement is like a time when you can spend more time doing what you really want to do. Right? Well if that's the definition of retirement, I retired thirty years ago. I'm doing what I really like to do and I'm excited about that. That's really fun for me.

In fact I want you to know that I will retire. Right now I'm setting my sight on ninety years old. But I'm not committing myself to that yet. So if I change my mind when I'm ninety, I don't want you to be disappointed. I may continue after that. But right now that's where I'm setting my sights. I'm going forward and I'm making a commitment to you, this church. This is the church that I love and I'm pouring my heart in here. I'm giving you my best. That's my commitment to God and to you. I'm giving you my best.

If you heard my sermon on Monday morning, you would not like it. It's like when you get out all the ingredients out to make cookies and you say, "Here, would you like to have some flour? Try eating a little bit of flour." That would be gross, wouldn't it? Or "Here, have some salt. Would you like to eat a raw egg? How about some baking powder? How about a teaspoon of sugar?" It would be gross. You wouldn't want to eat all those things. But when you put them all together and you mix them up and you stir them, they turn into something delightful. So God starts to do that in my heart with the sermon during the week. By Wednesday or Thursday I've usually got something that I'm sharing with people. Boy, I can hardly wait for this sermon on Sunday. I'll tell my wife what I'm sharing or the small group I'm in on Wednesday night what's going on. Boy, this week is what I'm going to be talking about because the Lord starts to stir that in my heart.

By the time I get up here on Sunday morning, I've preached the sermon. This is the fourth time I've preached the sermon this week. I preached it on Friday morning, Saturday morning, and Sunday morning before I came here. I preached it to me and my computer, standing up, walking around my office, and whatever. So when I come before you, I've prepared it in a way that can maximize the impact on your heart.

I believe that God wants to do something powerful. If I get the distractions out of the way and provide you with a meal that you can use, God can do some great things in your life. That's my promise to you to be a pastor that's totally committed. You're going to get the best of my time.

I know I'm preaching this story to myself too. I need to be mission-minded, not meal-minded in my life. The whole town is coming out. All these people are coming out. There are people right around us. But most people I would suggest are meal-minded people. What's the next meal? What's the next appointment? What's the next problem? What's the next challenge? I got to rest up here and be peaceful for a moment because I know my kids are going to get upset again. What's the next thing going on? We are meal-minded and we're not focused on the solutions that God would have, which are mission-minded solutions.

That's why your friends don't get you. Right? You tell your friends you're going to church Wednesday night to the Take Jesus Home small group or whatever and your friends say, "What are you talking about? Didn't you go to church on Sunday? Didn't you do your duty on Sunday? Why would you go on Wednesday night again? Why are going to that event over here?" This week they had the big event at the beach. What's that event called? Bridgefest. Bridgefest happened this weekend. You go to that event and they say, "How come you're doing that? Didn't you already do your duty?" Your people don't get it. You are mission-minded and mission-minded people do different things.

The harvest is here. Right? Shout that out with me. You guys are so weak sometimes. Come on. The harvest is here! That's the message Jesus wants to communicate. The harvest is here.

Young people, you've got to understand something. God has given you a mission. One fourteen year old boy I worked with said, "I don't want to grow up." I said, "Look, life is fun. Just because you grow up doesn't mean you can't have fun anymore. But you've got to understand, if your idea of not growing up is you're going to live with video games for the rest of your life, you're going to have problems. We have a mission and the mission isn't going to be get to the next level on the video game. There's a mission to impact our world for Jesus Christ." That's what we're trying to do and that's what God wants us to do.

When you're on a mission, you have opportunities. You say no to some things and you say yes to other things. Right? If you're on a mission to lose weight, there's some things you have to say no to. You don't eat those things, you don't drink those things. You're on a mission. The same thing is true in all of our lives. When you're on a mission there's some things we say no to. Does that mean those things are bad necessarily? No. Some bad things we stay away from. There's even some good things we say no to because we're on a mission. We know where we're going and God wants to take us there.

These disciples are thinking about the happy meal and Jesus is thinking about the mission. There is some sense of urgency that Jesus wants to communicate with them and that's why He's sharing this with them.

I'm sharing this message with you and I kind of presented it to myself because I'm inviting you to join with me in this process. Join with me in this walk together. Let's engage together and be the church that God wants us to be in his particular area. It means you probably adjust some things in your life in order to do that and many of you have and that's great. So we're together engaged, being the church that God wants us to be.

Well let's zero in on verse 35. This is Jesus' punch line. This isn't really a joke, but if it were a joke, this is the punch line. This is the point. This is His statement that He's making in verse 35. It says this – *“Do you not say, ‘It’s still four months until harvest’? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.”*

Now I think the picture is the wrong picture here. When they open their eyes, what are they going to see? Because this is what I used to think. What they see is grain on the wheat that's about to fall off. Boy, look at it. It needs to be harvested. Wow. The harvest is ripe. I don't think this is the picture that they are looking at. You see, the disciples are saying, “Come on, Jesus. You need to eat quickly because the people are coming out.” I think what Jesus is saying is the harvest is coming out. I think the disciples are saying, “I know that the harvest is coming. Why don't you eat the food so that we can get away from these people and we'll go do the harvest.” I think that's the disciples' mentality. The people are the problem. We can go do the harvest and we can get away from the people.

Don't you feel like that sometimes? You like work; it's the people you don't like. There's this sense of the people are the problem. Or I like my family; it's just the people that I have a hard time with. So it's the people that He's focusing in on. So Jesus sees this. He looks at them and it's just so passionate that this is really important. This is big. There's some things that are so big that you don't even feel like eating. It's so big. That's what He's saying.

I'm going to show you another picture here because I think this is how God sees what's going on in this story. We need to see what God sees. He sees the people. The people that are coming out. You can't see that very well. Let me zoom in on it a little bit. The people is what He's talking about. It's those people that He's talking about. It's the people. The harvest is the people.

Who lives right around your neighborhood who doesn't know Jesus yet? I don't know. Fascinating study thing we're doing. Paul Jurik and I are partnering together to do a Bible study in his home. The Take Jesus Home group is in Paul's house. He lives in an apartment and I think his whole apartment has got to be 400 square feet. Is it bigger than that? I'm telling you this has got to be the smallest apartment I've ever been in. But he says I'm going to allow my home, my apartment to be used for ministry. So we use his home. If you want to join us on Wednesday night, we're going to talk more about this and emotions and other things on Wednesday night.

So Paul is a guy who loves Jesus. He wants to share Jesus any way he can. He's the one who has tickets to Bridgefest that some of you used over the weekend. So I say, “Paul, I'll create a flyer. Maybe you can take it around the apartments in Allentown there” – 100 to 120 apartments or so probably in that apartment complex. So he takes them door to door. The flyer basically says this: “We're having a neighborhood barbeque sponsored by Calvary Chapel Living Hope because Calvary Chapel Living Hope is coming into Allentown. We have a church in Robbinsville. We're coming into Allentown. Would you like to come to this neighborhood barbeque?”

So we get out the grill, put it outside the house, and put the sign up (the “Welcome to Calvary Chapel” one that sits out there), and we just wait. Some of our folks come who are part of that group and we're waiting. Now we don't know what's going to happen. But we're all eating and getting ready.

Here comes a lady with a cake. She's walking across the parking lot with a cake. She's bringing food to the picnic that we invited her to. I'm going, "This is so cool!" Here's a woman we didn't even know about in this area. Now as we started working and we started meeting at Paul's house, we found out that Greg lives at number 6. He lives at 31. Number 6 is just across the quad there is where Greg lives and Greg has been coming to Cavalry Chapel since then. And now we've got Greg and we've got Pat who brings the cake. So we start talking about the sermon a little bit out there on the grass in front of Paul's house and here comes another guy. Dave comes over and Dave wants to be a part of this.

I'm just telling you in 120 apartments, four people that we didn't know are interested. And then after we're done a lady comes with her kid and wants to meet us. She goes to another church, but she's really interested. These are all people we didn't even know. In 120 people, there are four people that are interested in what God is doing in this church in Allentown. Wow.

I just got to ask the question, what could happen in your neighborhood? See, this is the church, yes, the church gathered. But when the church is scattered, it's in these different places all over the community. Who knows if you took a flyer out to the neighborhood in your community and said, "We're having a neighborhood picnic here, come and meet some of your neighbors sponsored by Calvary Chapel Living Hope. We want to get to know you because our church is in your neighborhood." Is it? Is our church in your neighborhood? Yes, it is in your neighborhood. So now you're bringing the church to people and people are coming out from the town to see, is this the answer to my problems? Is this what I want?

Wow. I just think I am so blessed, I am pumped to be part of what God is doing and I want to keep being mission-minded, not meal-minded in my life so I can enjoy the total blessing that God has to offer.

Now you might be saying, "There is nobody saved in my neighborhood." Well maybe that's true. So get involved in another neighborhood where people want to get saved. All I'm saying is we are the church and our world is getting wound up tighter and tighter and tighter.

I don't know if you noticed that, but the further we go in our history of our world as we continue to develop, our world is winding up tighter and tighter. It's because of the end times. Pretty soon it's going to spring open and Jesus is going to come back. But right now it's getting tighter and together and we're all feeling that, or most of us are feeling that. Some of us are feeling more health problems, people are feeling more financial challenges, more parenting problems, more marriage problems, more interfamily issues. Why? Why is this happening? Because we're moving more and more toward the end times. And the world is getting more wound up and wound up and wound up.

So people are more and more willing to say, "I can't do this myself. I need something outside myself in order to manage life." And what is that something? It's Jesus. Jesus Christ will help you to manage your life. So people like to go to self-help books. They like to try the latest meditation techniques to try to manage their lives. We have the answer. The answer is Jesus Christ. That is the answer.

The harvest is here. Say it with me. The harvest is here! We are on a mission to reach people for Jesus Christ. There are a lot of counterfeit answers out there. There is only one real answer and that real answer is Jesus Christ. We're in this to serve the Lord together. I invite you to join with me. Let's continue to be the church that God has called us to be as we grow together, as we serve the Lord together in what we do.

Would you stand with me? Let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, I thank you that you have created the church – a place where we can find nurture, where we can find friendships, where we can find the encouragement that we need. We thank you that we can come together and study your word, whether it's on Sunday morning or in a small group. We thank you that you're at work in our lives. Thank you so much for the church, a place where we can experience your growth in our lives. We are grateful. Lord, I ask now that you would bless each person that's here. Work in each person's heart and life. We ask that you would give each one of us a greater sense of what it means to be the person you want us to be, that as we live life together that we would be encouraged by each other's commitment to each other and to you. Bless this day, Lord, and bless this week. We ask in Jesus' name, amen.