



Scott Turansky, Senior Pastor
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NUMBERS 8:5-10:10

Numbers Series

[PRAYER] Lord, you called your church with two tasks. One is discipleship. We're trying to set the structures for discipleship to take place in the life of this church with the Bible studies and the small groups, the times for people to be mentored and counseled, and work on Bible study and teaching. So discipleship is really important here, Lord, and we know it's important to your heart. We also know you want us to reach out and so we're trying to do that in a number of different ways. We pray for this particular Saturday that we've been looking forward to for several weeks, that as we hand out water bottles with little cards on them about living water that people would receive that well. We pray that people would benefit from conversations that our young people and our parents and adults will have with others. We ask that you would use this in a very positive way and be preparing this week those who don't even know that they're going to come in contact with us that they would be ready for the interactions that take place. Lord, we want to be sensitive to what's going to happen on Saturday. Those people that come by our table at the community fest, we ask that you would give us wisdom to see past the outside things to see inside the hearts. Give us your grace this week as we serve. In Jesus' name, amen.

Would you please turn in your Bibles with me to Numbers 8. We're in the book of Numbers in the Bible. What we do at Calvary Chapel is we go through the Bible verse by verse. We're going through the book of Numbers and now we head up to chapter 8. It's an important part of the movement through and I'm going to explain to you what's happening through the book of Numbers.

Let me read chapter 8:5. That's where we're picking up this week. Chapter 8:5 says, *The Lord said to Moses: "Take the Levites from among all the Israelites and make them ceremonially clean."*

Now up to this point in the book of Numbers we've taken inventory of what we have. How many fighting men do we have. We have them counted. That's why it's called the book of Numbers because they're all counted there. We've counted the Levites. We've also dedicated or we also identified all the pieces of the tabernacle. So it was all the inventorying first and then after the inventorying came the dedication of these things. So we had the dedication of the tabernacle and now we're going to have the dedication of the Levites.

I think this is a great model for us because the people aren't just moving out as we're going to see in chapter 11. They're on their way to the Promised Land. They don't just move out. First they take inventory and they dedicate. I would suggest in each one of our lives we want to take inventory of what God has given to us. We want to dedicate it to the Lord and then we step out

and move. That's the pattern that we see in the book of Numbers and we're seeing right here. So now we come to the place where we dedicated the tabernacle. We come to the dedication of the Levites in verses 5-6.

Notice verse 7. This gives the how they're going to do it, the ceremony as it were. *To purify them, do this: Sprinkle the water of cleansing on them; then have them shave their whole bodies and wash their clothes. And so they will purify themselves. Have them take a young bull with its grain offering of the finest flour mixed with olive oil; then you are to take a second young bull for a sin offering. Bring the Levites to the front of the tent of meeting and assemble the whole Israelite community. You are to bring the Levites before the Lord, and the Israelites are to lay their hands on them.*

As we have calculated the numbers, we know that there are about 22,000 Levites. We're talking about a large group in front of the tent of meeting. We know that there's about 2 million people around. They're all spread out. I don't know whether they're all in this group in the front and all the Israelites are spread out. There's going to be some interaction that's going to take place with them as we see going forward.

Notice it says in verse 10 – *You are to bring the Levites before the Lord, and the Israelites are to lay their hands on them.* They're going to dedicate them to the Lord and they're going to do it in part by putting their hands on them.

We do that even in our fellowship. We lay hands on people when we're going to dedicate someone who's going off on a mission trip. We'll bring them up here and we'll pray for them and put our hands on them as we go. Or sometimes, like last week we dedicated a baby and we all put our hands out like this as a statement of identification. That's what it is. When we lay hands on someone then we are identifying with them as we're doing whatever we're doing. That's what we're doing. We're identifying with them in the midst of that process. We're participating in whatever's going on in that.

So the laying on of hands is a participation in what's going on. Basically in this case is saying I agree with this. I'm participating in the dedication of the Levites.

Look at verse 11. *Aaron is to present the Levites before the Lord as a wave offering from the Israelites, so that they may be ready to do the work of the Lord.* Now you have all of the Israelites (2 million people), you have 22,000 Levites, and then He says I want you *to offer the Levites as a wave offering before the Lord.*

Let me explain to you what the wave offering is. In the wave offering you would take up all of your stuff, whatever it is. Let's say you have a bunch of grain. You would hold some grain up before the Lord as a wave offering and the small part is a representative of the whole. That's what it was. So I'm holding up this small part in order to... I'm dedicating this to you. I'm holding this up as a statement of my dedication of all of what I have. It's the same thing we do when we tithe, for example. You give ten percent, but the idea is all that we have belongs to the Lord and we're giving a piece that represents the whole.

So God is saying these Levites, this one tribe of all of the tribes, they're going to be a wave offering. I don't think they picked them all up and waved them before the Lord, but I think what it's saying is they're a piece of the whole. The whole being all of the Israelites being dedicated to the Lord and the piece being the Levites themselves. They're the ones who are going to serve in the tabernacle. They're the ones who are going to be this place around the tabernacle. They're going to care for these spiritual things that are going on.

It's not that the rest of the Israelites are not interested or involved in the spiritual part of the community. This ceremony is a demonstration to everyone that you are participating. You're involved in it. You're identifying yourself with it by laying your hands on the Israelite people. So this is a wave offering. The Levites are the wave offering before the Lord representing the dedication of the whole.

Verse 12: *Then the Levites (that's this one big tribe of 22,000 people) are to lay their hands on the heads of the bulls, using one for a sin offering to the Lord and the other for a burnt offering, to make atonement for the Levites.*

Now we have this identification again. You've got the bulls, which represent the sacrifices of dedication before the Lord and you've got the Levites who are putting their hands on the bulls as an identification. Whenever someone brought a sacrifice to the temple area, or in this case the tabernacle area, they would come beforehand. Some of the sacrifices required that the participant, the person bringing the sacrifice, would put his hand on the animal as it was being killed or sacrificed.

The idea is I'm participating in this and this is the sacrifice for me so I don't have to be sacrificed. I'm offering this sacrifice in its stead. Beautiful picture, by the way of what happens with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ represents us as that sacrifice and we identify with Him so that we don't have to be that sacrifice. Jesus Christ takes that away for us.

So here we have the Levites who are putting their hands on this to identify with what's going on. It's interesting to me that there are three parts involved in the dedication. There's God, who is obviously involved here. He's dedicating them, sanctifying them. Sanctify means set apart. There are the people all around. They are recognizing that these guys are being sanctified or set apart. And then there's the Levites themselves who are identifying themselves with the animals. They are also doing this. So those are three different parties involved in this.

Sometimes someone will ask me or they'll tell me they want to be a pastor. What I want to do is help them understand what that means. If you want to be a pastor there's going to be three different things coming together all at the same time.

One is there is a desire on your part. Paul tells Timothy when we're talking about a pastor that *he who desires the office of a pastor desires a good thing*. So desiring on that part. The second thing is you want God to be giving you that call. There are some people who have this desire to be a pastor, but God hasn't called them to do so and that's the problem. There are other people who think that God's called them and they have the desire, but the third ingredient isn't there. There's

nobody there to follow. There's no other people around. So those three ingredients have to come together for a pastor leadership to take place.

Now the pastor is not corresponding to the Levites. There are some similarities in they are the spiritual part of the community, but in the New Testament the Christian is viewed as the priest. A group of the Levites were priests. That is a great comparison. We now have that presence to come into God's presence and enjoy who He is.

It's interesting that you have the participation here of all three of those groups as the Levites put their hands on the bulls' heads.

Verse 13: *Have the Levites stand in front of Aaron and his sons and then present them as a wave offering to the Lord. In this way you are to set the Levites apart from the other Israelites, and the Levites will be mine.*

Now we're going to find the history of this. We're going to kind of go back into Israelite history, back to the exodus which had just taken place two years prior. Do you remember during the exodus all of those who had the blood on the lintels and the doorposts were the ones who were saved. God took the Israelites out. They didn't have the firstborns die. But all the firstborns of Egypt who didn't put the blood on the posts, their firstborns died.

You're going to see how that's all tied in because God is saying, "The firstborn is reserved for me." He's saying, "I'm going to take the Levites now in place of all the Israelites, all the firstborns that are born out there, and all the tribes. Instead of taking them, I'm going to take the Levites." Symbolic of the firstborns.

Let me read on so you get this idea of why the Levites are being dedicated to the Lord for spiritual service. It says *the Levites will be mine*. Verse 15: *After you have purified the Levites and presented them as a wave offering, they are to come to do their work at the tent of meeting. They are the Israelites who are to be given wholly to me. I have taken them as my own in place of the firstborn, the first male offspring from every Israelite woman. Every firstborn male in Israel, whether human or animal, is mine. When I struck down all the firstborn in Egypt, I set them apart for myself.*

So He dedicated the firstborn there and now he's taking the Levites as that special group of people that are going to represent the whole.

Verse 18: *And I have taken the Levites in place of all the firstborn sons in Israel. From among all the Israelites, I have given the Levites as gifts to Aaron and his sons to do the work at the tent of meeting on behalf of the Israelites and to make atonement for them so that no plague will strike the Israelites when they go near the sanctuary.*

Now you have the sanctuary (that's the ark of the covenant), which we've demonstrated or shown pictures of, we've got the tabernacle proper, the tent of meeting. That's the whole part there. Then you've got a big space around it and then you've got all the people camping. Now that big space around it is where all the Levites are and they're like this buffer. Because all the

rest of the Israelites need to understand the holiness of God. So God prescribed a way for all of the Israelites to come to God and they come through the Levites.

The Levites were this buffer around this tent. You didn't just go into this place. The Levites were protecting it in essence. They were there so no plagues would come upon them, as it said right here. It's a fascinating picture of God's holiness, but also the fact that there was some distance there.

It's amazing when you think what's written in the New Testament. When Jesus Christ died on the cross it says that the curtain that separates the most holy place from the holy place was torn in two, symbolizing the access we now have to the Father. So now in our own understanding of God and who He is there's a difference between the Old Testament process of coming to God and our process of coming to God. We no longer have to go through a priestly system in order to get to God. We can come directly into His presence and we can know God personally. We can come to Him intimately. We can come into the presence of God and appreciate Him in some powerful ways. It's amazing how that picture is being demonstrated here.

But here now more in this picture it's the separation that takes place. They don't want to go near so they're not struck by the plague. There's a holiness there. This is God we're talking about. You don't just come to Him any way you feel like it. He's holy. He's separate.

Verse 20: Moses, Aaron and the whole Israelite community did with the Levites just as the Lord commanded Moses. The Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes. Then Aaron presented them as a wave offering before the Lord and made atonement for them to purify them. After that, the Levites came to do their work at the tent of meeting under the supervision of Aaron and his sons. They did with the Levites just as the Lord commanded Moses.

Verse 23: The Lord said to Moses, "This applies to the Levites. (Now we're going to get some prescription or understanding of what this looks like.) Men twenty-five years old or more shall come to take part in the work at the tent of meeting (twenty-five years and older), but at the age of fifty, they must retire from their regular service and work no longer. They may assist their brothers in performing their duties at the tent of meeting, but they themselves must not do the work. This, then, is how you are to assign the responsibilities of the Levites."

Earlier in the book of Numbers we read the time was thirty years old. It was in the census. It was thirty years old to fifty years old. Now he's saying twenty-five years old, which leads us to believe there may have been a time of an apprenticeship that existed for five years before they started their work. But God is prescribing this and setting this up.

What we're seeing here is the dedication of the Levites to do their work. Everything is starting now. We're kind of seeing it in slow motion over several weeks. We've got the dedication of the tabernacle, we've got the dedication of the Levites, and we're ready to move forward.

We're going to follow the Lord in just a moment, but before we do we've got one more thing to do. We're going to enter chapter 9 to do it. One more thing we have to do before we can start

moving out and that is we have to remember who we are and where we've come from. So we're going to celebrate the Passover. That's what He's saying here as we go into chapter 9.

The Lord spoke to Moses in the Desert of Sinai in the first month of the second year after they came out of Egypt. He said, "Have the Israelites celebrate the Passover at the appointed time."

Now the Passover was that time that the celebration that took place. The first one was in Egypt when the death angel passed over because they had the blood on the lintels and the doorposts. Now they're saying I want you to celebrate that again two years later. I want you to remember where you came from and who you are. Before we start doing, before we go out, before we begin our journey, you need to know who you are and where you've come from.

Verse 3: *"Celebrate it at the appointed time, at twilight on the fourteenth day of this month, in accordance with all its rules and regulations."* The day started in the evening in the Jewish calendar. It starts in the evening, so that's when you're going to start the celebration of the Passover and goes to the next evenings.

Verse 4: *So Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover, and they did so in the Desert of Sinai at twilight on the fourteenth day of the first month. The Israelites did everything just as the Lord commanded Moses.* It's a memorial. It's a reminder. It's going to keep them on track.

Next Sunday here we're going to celebrate communion. There are some similarities. When we celebrate communion it's an opportunity for us to remind ourselves who we are and where we come from. So we're going to do that next week and you can prepare your hearts for that as you come. Just a heart of dedication and willingness to be open to the Lord for what He wants to do in your life.

But as Moses is setting up this Passover and telling everybody we're going to celebrate the Passover, we end up with a logistical problem from people who are trying to serve the Lord but they can't come to Passover. Moses has got to come up with a solution for that.

Look at verse 6. *But some of them could not celebrate the Passover on that day because they were ceremonially unclean on account of a dead body.*

Remember we read in the last couple weeks if you come into contact with a dead body then you're ceremonially unclean. It was part of the health protection for the community. So they were moved outside of the camp for a period of time.

So these guys, these people couldn't celebrate Passover because they had come into contact with a dead body and they were being separated for this period of time. *So they came to Moses and Aaron that same day and said to Moses, "We have become unclean because of a dead body, but why should we be kept from presenting the Lord's offering with the other Israelites at the appointed time? This is a problem! We want to celebrate Passover. We can't do it."* It's not fair is what they're saying. "This doesn't seem fair. We want to participate in this."

I really like Moses' response. Here's a leader and many of us are trying to be leaders. As we're a leader I think this is a great thing that we need to consider in our leadership. Moses' response basically is, "I don't know. I've got to check with headquarters." Look at what he says in verse 8. *Moses answered them, "Wait until I find out what the Lord commands concerning you."*

It's a great out I want you to know. Sometimes we just need to say, "I need to pray about this for a little bit." It's not just an excuse to buy more time; it's a time to go before the Lord and say, "Lord, I have no idea what to do with this situation."

We find ourselves in leadership positions – "I don't know what to do with this kid. Lord, I just need to take a break and come before you and will you speak to me and tell me what to do." "Lord, I don't know what to do with my finance. I got this thing in the mail. I don't know what to do. I just need to pray about this." "Lord, I don't know what to do with this work situation, with this problem. I just need to get away and figure out what God wants me to do."

I think sometimes we're too quick to solve problems without coming before the Lord. I like Moses' model. He says, "I'm going to take a break here for a minute. I'll come back to you on that. I need to go check with headquarters."

Verse 9: Then the Lord said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites: 'When any of you or your descendants are unclean because of a dead body or are away on a journey, they are still to celebrate the Lord's Passover, but they are to do it on the fourteenth day of the second month (one month later they can celebrate Passover on that day) at twilight. They are to eat the lamb, together with unleavened bread and bitter herbs. They must not leave any of it till morning or break any of its bones. When they celebrate the Passover, they must follow all the regulations. But if anyone who is ceremonially clean and not on a journey fails to celebrate the Passover, they must be cut off from their people for not presenting the Lord's offering at the appointed time. They will bear the consequences of their sin.'"

So one, we're seeing God is giving them an exception so that they can celebrate the Passover. But then He's coming back and He's saying you need to not use this as an excuse. Anybody can just celebrate whenever they want. If they're not on a journey and they're not ceremonially unclean, they have a responsibility to observe the Passover. It's required.

It made me think this week, what's required of me in my relationship with the Lord? Oh there are other people who want to tell me what's required of me in my relationship with the Lord. I want to be careful with that. But when I go before the Lord, what is required of me? What does God want me to do that's really not optional? I don't look for excuses. It's not just convenience. It's not if I have time or if I have money. What does God require of me specifically?

I think it's a good question for all of us to ask because I think you may come to a conclusion that God wants me to do X or Y or attend this particular thing or wants me to do this in my life without compromise, without looking for ways to get out of it. But it's between me and the Lord. It's required. I do this not because it's convenient, I do this because I'm a Christian. I do this because this is part of my relationship with God and what He's doing inside of my heart.

I think sometimes the urgent things in our lives start to crowd out the most important things in our lives. So I have an intention I'm going to go do this thing for the Lord and then something comes up and oh I feel like I can't do it because I have this urgent thing. I just want to be reminded that the urgent things often will squeeze out the important things in our lives. We have to be careful somehow to set fences up. There are some things that I don't change. There are some things that I don't give up because these are required of me.

Obviously if I create a list of all the things that I think are required of you, we enter into another problem we call legalism. That's when other people start defining for you your spirituality and what you need to do in order to be holy before God. That's a dangerous thing to be in.

But to avoid legalism doesn't mean we have this laissez-faire approach to God that we just fit Him in wherever we can. I do think that there needs to be some rules in our own heart that says here's where I'm going because of my relationship with God and I'm dedicating myself in that regard to Him. It's not an elective, serving the Lord. It's a required course. I think God wants to do different things in our lives that demonstrate that commitment that we have. This is important to be and who I am with the Lord. Don't miss the Passover, he's telling these people. They need to be a part of this.

Verse 14 – another neat insight: *A foreigner residing among you is also to celebrate the Lord's Passover in accordance with its rules and regulations. You must have the same regulations for both the foreigner and the native-born.* It's really exciting for me to know that God designed in His plan a provision for us outsiders to be accepted into His kingdom.

When they're going to go and conquer Jericho there's going to be a woman who's a prostitute who God is working in her heart. She's not an Israelite, but she joins the Israelites. She becomes a Jew and she's welcomed into the Jewish community because her heart is there. That's what we're talking about here. *The foreigner who's residing among you*, these people who decided to become my people (not because they were born Jews, but because they recognized the value of being my people), they also need to celebrate the Passover. It's a beautiful thing.

God uses the term adoption in the New Testament. He adopts us into His family. That means He takes us out of a difficult situation into a better one and a beautiful one. Adoption is always about coming out of something that's difficult into something else. That's why they're being adopted. So God uses that picture of adoption to draw us into this relationship.

I am so glad that God does that in our lives. He welcomes us into this beautiful place of relationship with Him. Really special. It's something that we can thank the Lord for and be grateful for.

Alright. Now we finished the part about the dedication. We've finished the numbering or the inventory. We've finished the dedication part of the book of Numbers. Now we're about to go out and so we're going to have instructions about going out and what the going out looks like.

I sent you an email this week telling you I was going to do something different in this sermon today and I am. I am going to have a response time and I will allow you to answer a question I'm

going to ask you. I know some of you don't answer questions in church and it's not something we normally do. But I gave you some warning, so you know I'm going to do that.

Here's the question. It was so interesting to me that there are so many applications running around in my heart about the cloud. The Israelites when the cloud moved, they moved. So the obvious application is when God moves, we move. But there are a lot more applications in there and I'm sure you came to some ideas. Let me read the passage, then I want to hear from you some principles about the Israelites and how they moved and how it's similar for us and how we follow God as well.

Let me read the passage and then we'll make some comment. Verse 15: *On the day the tabernacle, the tent of the covenant law, was set up, the cloud covered it. From evening till morning the cloud above the tabernacle looked like fire. That is how it continued to be; the cloud covered it, and at night it looked like fire.*

Whenever the cloud lifted from above the tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped. At the Lord's command the Israelites set out, and at his command they encamped. As long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, they remained in camp. When the cloud remained over the tabernacle a long time, the Israelites obeyed the Lord's order and did not set out. It's just amazing to me how many different ways he says the exact same thing.

Sometimes the cloud was over the tabernacle only a few days; at the Lord's command they would encamp, and then at his command they would set out. Sometimes the cloud stayed only from evening till morning, and when it lifted in the morning, they set out. Whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud lifted, they set out. Whether the cloud stayed over the tabernacle for two days or a month or a year, the Israelites would remain in camp and not set out; but when it lifted, they would set out. At the Lord's command they encamped, and at the Lord's command they set out. They obeyed the Lord's order, in accordance with his command through Moses.

So what are some similarities between the movement of the Israelites whenever they saw the cloud move and our desire to follow the Lord? What are some principles that apply that we need to remember about following the Lord? Give me some responses.

Yes, Kimberly. Great. We have to put aside our minds and go by what God says, not just our own mind. Good.

Somebody else. Yeah. God dictates the timing and events of our lives. I wish I could walk faster, but sometimes I can't.

Yes. Sometimes the cloud leads us, yes, into the wilderness where we may not have necessarily chosen to go. Interesting.

Yeah. Make sure you're following the right cloud. Very interesting. Good.

Like a radio frequency we need to be in tune and aware of when God's moving and where to follow. Oh that's painful, isn't it? Sometimes we have to sit there an entire year and not do

anything. Sometimes you see someone who's doing really well in their life and you say, "They're going to go far in life," as if somehow going a distance is equated with some good thing. I would suggest that sometimes staying put needs to be associated with a good thing. So sometimes they encamped for a month or a year and that was the right place to be for them. Oh man.

There's so many applications here. I hope that you'll take something away, that as God's trying to lead you you'll have an application you can put into your life today from some of these comments that have been made.

One more passage I want to take you to because it's still talking about this following the Lord, kind of the frequency idea that Carla mentioned. Look at chapter 10. Let me just take the first ten verses there.

The Lord said to Moses: "Make two trumpets of hammered silver, and use them for calling the community together and for having the camps set out."

Terrell has a trumpet that's gold-plated. I saw it this week when I was with him. He's a trumpet player and he would've had a job here, I'm sure, if he was a Levite.

Verse 3: When both are sounded, the whole community is to assemble before you at the entrance to the tent of meeting. I want you to distinguish between the ringtones that God is issuing here among the people. If only one is sounded, the leaders—the heads of the clans of Israel—are to assemble before you.

Somehow if it was one trumpet you knew it was just the leaders. All you guys need to come. Remember, you've got 2 million people. This is a huge area. So this is their way of communicating with them that things need to be going on.

Verse 5: When a trumpet blast is sounded, the tribes camping on the east are to set out. So now this is how we're going to start marching. At the sounding of a second blast, the camps on the south are to set out. The blast will be the signal for setting out. To gather the assembly (this is a different trumpet sound), blow the trumpets, but not with the signal for setting out.

The sons of Aaron, the priests, are to blow the trumpets. This is to be a lasting ordinance for you and the generations to come. When you go into battle in your own land against an enemy who is oppressing you, sound a blast on the trumpets. Then you will be remembered by the Lord your God and rescued from your enemies. Also at your times of rejoicing—your appointed festivals and New Moon feasts—you are to sound the trumpets over your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, and they will be a memorial for you before your God. I am the Lord your God.

So these trumpet blasts would be a signal to the whole community.

When I was in Hawaii (I was a pastor there), I would go into the military base nearby. If you happened to be on a military base at 5 PM, at least in the army (and then I checked with son this morning about the Marines, it's also true in the Marines), at five o'clock they play *Reveille*. So

you're going along, driving along on base and all the cars stop. Some people get out of their cars and they salute the flag or they face the direction of the blast. Sometimes it's blasting *Reveille* off the speakers all over the whole base or post. There's a moment in time there where everybody stops until the music stops. Traffic stops, everything. It's really fascinating to see that happen.

All of those people for that moment are reminded of who they are and what they're doing. Maybe they don't think about those things. Maybe they think, "I can hardly wait for this to get over so I can get on with my life," but there's a sense in which the blast is a reminder.

That's what came to mind for me as I heard the blast being used as *a memorial for you before your God. I am the Lord your God.* Wow. The passage here is a passage about dedication, it's a passage about listening to the Lord, it's about following the Lord.

We're about to take off and start the journey now on our way up toward the Promised Land. Lots of interesting stories will happen in the next few chapters of the book, but as you look at these chapters I trust that God will use these in your own heart and you'll think about what God might want to do in your life. Dedication and following the Lord. I trust that God will speak to you in the midst of that.

If you're here today and you've never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, I want to tell you it's an adventure. You don't come to Jesus just because it's exciting and adventurous, although it really is. We come to Jesus because we need a Savior who rescues us from our sin problem. That is a deep work that God does in each one of our hearts.

If you've never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior today, we have prayer counselors that will be on the sides as we sing these next couple songs. I want to encourage you to just go over there and say, "Hey, would you pray for me or pray with me?" You can pray about anything over there with our prayer counselors. But in particular if you've never trusted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, today's a great day to make that commitment before Him.

Would you stand with me and let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Heavenly Father, we come before you and we want to be dedicated to you, we want to serve you with all our hearts, we want to love you with all our hearts, we want to know you. We ask that you would teach us what that means in practical terms as we sit before our schedule or our checkbook or our to-do list. That you would give us clear guidance of what it means to follow you today, this week, to be separate, to dedicate our lives to you so that we are not just viewing you as convenience, but viewing you as a necessity. So Lord, we ask that you'd bless us, teach us, equip us. We will consecrate ourselves to you and dedicate ourselves to you in the midst of all of that. In Jesus' name, amen.