



Love Incorruptible
#10 Melodies
July 2, 2017
Courage Church, Detroit, MI.

This was a very strange week for me... in a lot of ways it was really good... but a lot of things really consumed my thoughts, and distracted me... and as I was studying for this message, man... I would read and read, and sit down to write...and I just wasn't getting ANYWHERE... Dawn will tell you, so will Austin... I just felt lost on this

one. I got to Friday night, and I called Pastor Brad... he is doing the same series, a teaching through Ephesians in New York right now, and we are in the same place which is strange because most of the time we were in different places... they were a little ahead of us, then we got a little ahead of them...

and I called and I said to him, "man... I have read these verses over and over... I have read every commentary on them that I have. We read a lot of the same books and authors and I know that.. but Nothing is clicking for me this week...

and I am not kidding, he talked to me for just a couple of minutes, and suddenly I had such a road map to build off of here, it was just awesome... and I hope that today blesses you... and if it does you can thank him! Because it was looking like I was going to get up here, say "Happy 4th of July! and then just dismiss." (some of you may have actually preferred that!)

But I say that to say this... today is July 2... which means that THIS MONTH, Pastor Brad will be here at Courage Church. He is teaching Sunday July 30th, and there is not a day that it is more important to me that you be here than that day... you will be so blessed. Like I said, I can have a conversation on the phone with him for just a few minutes and suddenly I

feel empowered and equipped to teach an entire sermon on what we just talked about... so getting him here for a service and some of the other trainings he will do while he is here, it is so valuable. So please please, for your own sake... get here that day... bring everybody you know.

Now, lets dive into this thing.

Ephesians 5:15-21

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

Time.

You don't get a lot of it.

Some friends of our family, very close to my parents... just a few weeks ago, their family went on vacation, they went on vacation thinking they were totally healthy... and while they were there, the wife got sick... and then they went to the ER... and there was complications with trying to make her well, and in the end she actually got worse...

and worse...

and worse.

until she passed away.

Too soon...

Because the days are evil.

We never know how many we are going to get. One day you are on vacation, enjoying your family, and the next you are in a hospital bed breathing your last breathe... you just don't know.

We need to make every moment count with the people that we love,
BECAUSE WE DON'T KNOW HOW LONG THEY WILL BE IN OUR LIVES...

and we need to take EVERY opportunity to live and share the gospel, because as we have been learning this whole series... we may be the only Jesus that someone else ever sees.

verse 15-16:

Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, making the best use of the time, because the days are evil.

Make wise use of time.

Wisdom is a powerful thing. It was the thing that King Solomon asked God for, and because he asked for wisdom, God gave him that, and everything else he could ever imagine. He was the wisest man who ever lived... and look at what the wisest man who ever lived SAYS about wisdom:

Proverbs 4:7 (NKJV) says:

Wisdom *is* the principal thing;
Therefore get wisdom.
And in all your *getting*, **get understanding**.

Look at this... the key to this verse is the word "principal" - it is the Hebrew word: ראשית *re'shiyth* (ray-sheth)- it means: in the beginning.

re'shiyth (ray-sheth) is the very first word in the entire bible. Remember that.

The first thing that God did was create the heavens, and the earth.

and in the same way, the foundation on which we build our lives... the very first thing we should go after, *is wisdom*. In all of your *getting*... in all of the things of this world that you may acquire... don't forget the most important thing, and that is WISDOM.

Because what good is time if you don't know how to use it?

The building blocks of a strategic, intentional, and effective life are founded on wisdom. Another place in Proverbs it says "by wisdom a house is built" (Proverbs 24:3)

Solomon knew what to build off of.

Look at how Paul emphasizes this - verse 17:

Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

So wisdom is understanding what the will of the Lord is. And the Lord WANTS TO GIVE IT TO US... James (1:5) tells us that if you LACK WISDOM... just ask God for it... He gives it liberally and without reproach.

It is something you seek, but it is not just a nugget of knowledge. It is NOT knowing the right answer... it is more like knowing how to navigate the problems that don't simply have "answers." There is an incredible example of Solomon's wisdom when two women come to him both claiming that this baby is her child, and one is obviously lying... now, the Spirit could obviously have just given Solomon a clear picture of who was lying... but instead the Spirit gave him THE WISDOM to figure it out... so Solomon said "okay... if we can't agree here... lets cut the baby in half and you can each have half." and of course, the real mother said NO! She even went so far as to say that the child belonged to the other woman... let her take the child... and right away Solomon knew that the Mother who was not willing to cut the baby in half was the real mother.

It is not information... it comes from understanding how to relate to other people.. it is relational... a wise person can navigate the fine lines of community, and can build the body up during times of famine... a wise

person is not derailed by an obstacle, but views obstacles as opportunities for God to show up in amazing, Spirit led ways...

We could teach a whole series on wisdom, but that can't be today...

The point here in Ephesians that Paul is trying to make is that wise people don't waste their time. It is a sign of wisdom when a person's time is so obviously valued, that they make every moment count.

So with that *brief* framework about wisdom, and the best use of our time, I want us to look with fresh eyes at the rest of the passage.

notice, verse 18-21 - it is one long sentence, so we will read it all at once but then take it a little at a time:

And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

First of all, debauchery. It is the idea of excess and waste. The first 3 verses were talking about time, and now it seems like Paul is changing the subject, until you realize what getting drunk does to your time. It wastes it. Let me show you what debauchery is like...

debauchery is like this: (3 Amigos Video)

debauchery is like being with a group of people, lost in the desert, dying of thirst... and being the only one with the water, but just dumping it out or throwing it on the ground.

There was nothing more valuable to you AND to everyone you are there in the desert with... yet you throw it all away.

Please listen carefully... if you waste your time... people die. You and I are called to be the salt and the light of the world... we talked about it last week... we called it "exposure by way of *light*... by way of *delight*..." by way

of living in such a way that everything we do draws people to repentance, and into a saving relationship with Jesus Christ. and the more time we waste, the more opportunities WE MISS to impact culture...

the more opportunities WE MISS to impact THE ONE...

and that is exactly what happens when we get drunk. There couldn't be a better example...

If you are only given a small amount of something incredibly valuable... why would you throw it away?

When you get drunk... you are rendering yourself useless for the Kingdom of God... you are throwing away time. I don't think anyone would argue that.

In hindsight, nobody wants that for themselves.

I think so often, we read the scriptures and we think that it is just rules to box us into a life that we don't want... *until* we find ourselves on the other side of it... waking up hung over from getting drunk, waking up from a night of partying knowing how much we screwed up... and how it makes us feel the next day, and it is THEN that we realize that we are actually boxed in BY our sinful nature... and the gospel is here to SET US FREE.

Because for everything that is commanded to be done *away with* the entire book, something better is ALWAYS given. Something life giving... something LIFE SAVING... is always given.

Let the thief no longer steal, but let him work with his hands so that he has more than enough to give to anyone in need...

let their be no coveting, no sexual immorality, no impurity... but rather... thanksgiving.

Don't be drunk win wine... BUT RATHER, be FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT.

but just think about this practically.

Most people think of alcohol as a “stimulant” - something that increases the activity in your body... something that gives us a “buzz” - but medically speaking, it is actually considered a “depressant” - what it actually does, is it “depresses” part of the brain so that you don’t have to think about what is actually going on.

you don’t have to think about stress.

So you don’t have to think about life... and the things that you have no idea how you are doing to figure out.

So instead of figuring it out, you lean on a substance that makes it so you don’t have to *deal* with the fact that you can’t “figure it out.”

But the Holy Spirit, in all of His wisdom and all of HIS power, he doesn’t make you forget your problems... He actually opens your mind up to be able to find the solutions.

Under the influence of alcohol we **lose control**. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit we *gain* it.

but the things that the Holy Spirit will cause in a person, outwardly, could easily look to someone like you are drunk. In the church of Acts, that is the first thing that said about the disciples when they were filled with the Holy Spirit...

“these men are drunk!”

This is actually a really powerful contrast.

Think of the ways that the outward effects can be the same... the bible tells us in Acts 4:31 how the Holy Spirit gave the disciples the power to speak the word of God BOLDLY... what happens when a person is drunk? they begin to lose their filter... and suddenly, they say things with boldness, but many of the things that they say with *confidence*, they would never have WANTED said if they were sober. You see, the problem is, they have the

boldness, but not the wisdom. They may be speaking from their memory, but they aren't comprehending properly. They are pulling from what they know, but there is no wisdom there...

When Paul gives us the list of "the gifts of the Spirit" - do you know what the first gift is that he lists?

1 Corinthians 12 he begins to list off the gifts... he talks about tongues and prophecy and healing... but the first gift he lists is in verse 8, and it says this:

"For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of **wisdom**"

Instead of getting drunk... and wasting your days away by not ever facing them... be filled with the Spirit, who will empower you with what it takes to know HOW TO SPEND THOSE DAYS.

Who will tell you what to say when trouble comes as Jesus puts it in Matthew 10...

The Holy Spirit teaches us how to live in Christian community. He is the voice in your heart who compels you to give more than you think that you can afford to a person that you maybe even don't know.

When the Holy Spirit came upon the church of Acts, He created a whole new culture within them... a culture of generosity in which *nobody* had needs because everybody realized that they were given what they were given for a purpose greater than themselves... so when one person had excess, and another had lack, the one with *excess* wouldn't do like the foolish rich man that Jesus describes in Luke 12, who has more than he needs so he tears down the barns that he has so that he can build bigger barns to hold everything that he has... and then he puts his feet up and enjoys what he was given, keeping it all to himself, and instead of sharing with everyone who has need, he says "I have enough stored up for MANY years... so I will eat, drink, and be merry."

I will waste. Instead of giving... I will drink.

But God has no time for people like that... so He tells the man “you fool... you aren’t going to eat drink and be merry... because THIS NIGHT your soul will be required of you.”

The church of Acts lived the opposite. The Spirit of God overtook them, and from that moment, everything became about community.

and when one person hurt, *another* sacrificed. And everything was WHOLE.

Let me use Dawn and I as an example...

Let me tell you about me in the flesh of this week...

This was an overwhelming week for us. I showed you last week the picture of our house... it is just a mess, and we have no idea how we are going to get the rooms done that we need done before the baby comes... the clock keeps ticking and progress is SO SLOW...

not to mention, our car only seats five and there are about to be six of us...

now, I am just going to be honest with you guys... that is one of those things, in our strength... no way.

In our reasoning, and on paper, there is just no way... no way we can buy a car, Not right now... so part of me just thought, “we may have to just stay close to home for a while, I can walk to the office... we have the MOGO bike share... we are all good.”

its not something we have made a deal about... but man did it rest on my mind...

and then there is Courage... and we have such huge visions and dreams for this church THAT WE KNOW are from God.... but in our flesh we have just no clue how God is going to bring it all to life...

and I was really reminded of that this week... those voices that try and tell you all the things that AREN'T going to work out...

that is the flesh. that is the anti-spirit.

Now, let me tell you about the Spirit's role in this week.

On Monday, my next door neighbor who hangs drywall came to my house, and began working on two rooms that need to get done this week... and he worked on them ALL week, because someone went to him and told him that *they* would pay him to do it.

Suddenly, the house feels a quarter of as overwhelming as it did a week ago.

The next day, Tuesday... we are at a meeting with someone we had really just met that day... we met them in passing one other time but this was the first real conversation we ever had...

and as we were talking, the conversation got on the soon coming baby, and we were talking about vehicles and what we were looking for... we are hoping for like a Dodge Journey or something like that, a 7 seat SUV type thing, because the fact is: Dawn doesn't want a mini van.

and we told this person that. *Several times*. But he said "A Dodge Journey is too small... you will see... I get it, a part of me dies every time I get in my mini van too... but it has room."

Now, He was selling his mini van, but actually had someone that night lined up to come and buy it. Which is good, because Dawn doesn't want a mini van.

Anyway, we are driving back from lunch, and we pull up to our car, and he looks to us and says "so... do you guys want our van?"

Its like... dude... how many times do we have to tell you, WE DON'T WANT A MINI VAN.

He said... "to be clear... I am not charging you for the van. Its free."

and this is what he said to us... he said "if you really don't want it, that's cool... I am fine with that, I have someone coming to buy it tonight. If you believe you aren't supposed to take it... THAT IS FINE. I WON'T BE MAD!!!

... but IF this IS what you need... IF this is your provision, and you don't let me be that for you...

then, I will be mad.

and the truth is, we didn't know any other options, and we thought it through, and we realized... we have raged against the mini van for too long...

but the thing is, is this mini van isn't like... gross. It is actually amazing. it's the newest car we have ever had, it drives better than any car we have ever had. Dawn drove it and text me and said "This is a dream boat."

It wasn't the "mini van" that she had in her mind when she said "I will never drive one of those."

A couple of days later... someone came up to us and just handed us a check... we asked why? And they just said "they loved us." - what is that? It is the Holy Spirit... it is the people of God listening to God, making sure that others in the church are taken care of, and through generosity, becoming a part of the story of what God is doing in our lives.

I have NEVER in my life experienced a single week filled with so much provision and yet sandwiched by all of those amazing blessings happened to be other things that made me think "I just don't know" - it is like God knew we needed it... not just financially... but mentally, and spiritually. We needed to know that God is with us.

and so every day God in different ways reminded me "your family is in the center of my will, AND I WILL PROVIDE."

The Holy Spirit has just been this constant source of provision that has SHOWED me through the generosity of others, "I got you!"

“I have your family... I have Courage Church in the palm of my hands... and everything that you try to do in your own strength will always fall short of what I want to do in your midst... so rest.”

Rest in me. The best use you could possibly make of your time begins by casting your cares on Jesus, and letting go of worry. Letting go of stress, an anxiety... and clinging to the hope that Jesus holds the word in His hands, and HE ACTUALLY WANTS WHATS BEST FOR YOU.

Don't be lazy... but rest. Getting drunk gets rid of the stress for a moment, but it always comes back on stronger...

But the Spirit offers something different. Something that makes you stronger, and instead of pain on the other side of your temporary happiness, there is joy.

think about what verses 19 and 20 say:

addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

I love the way that Paul basically says that when the Spirit is active in our communities, everyone breaks out in song. In melodies.

Music is one of the most powerful forces in the universe. In the bible, the thing that is commanded of God's people second most throughout all the text, is music. Singing... Shouting for joy... playing instruments.

You know, its so interesting because the bible says that IN THE BEGINNING... *re'shiyth* (ray-sheth) - there was music. It is one of the most powerful forms of adoration available to us...

Melodies produce hope. They are connectors. You hear them, and they draw you into a hope that you didn't even know existed.

but it is hard to sing when the days are slipping away from you... It is hard to sing when you don't have anything to sing about.

think about this... from the beginning, there was music... The book of Job (38) talks about how from the foundation of the earth, the stars sang songs together and the sons of God shouted for joy.

It is a weird phrasing... "the sons of God" - but that is how it is worded in the bible.

When everything was perfect, music was present, and the "sons of God" shouted of joy... but who are they? Who are the sons of God?

In Romans 8 Paul tells us who the "sons of God" are... He says that "all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons *of* God" (Romans 8:14)

So in the beginning there was music... and the sons of God... those led by the Spirit, were leading the way with shouts for joy.

but get this... it says something else in Romans 8 that brings this thought together a bit more... Job says that "in the beginning..." the whole world sang... but Romans 8 says that *now*... The WHOLE WORLD is groaning, in the pains of childbirth. (Romans 8:22)

Because something changed... Do you remember what God said would happen to woman after the fruit was eaten??? After sin entered the world...

Genesis 3:16 "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing;
in pain you shall bring forth children.

The foundation was disrupted! In the beginning... The *principal*, the *re'shiyth* (ray-sheth)... was disrupted. And ever since that moment, we have had to build off of something *else*.

See, before the fall, God navigated good and evil for us... we didn't have to do that... that is why things were perfect... there was no stress... there was no worries, because the stress of figuring out "what is right? what is wrong? how can we make this work?" The tree did open their eyes... to how bad they actually are. There is a LOT more to figure out now... a lot more to sort through. We used to have music at the principal, BECAUSE WE

DIDN'T HAVE TO NAVIGATE RIGHT AND WRONG... The serpent told Eve, "if you eat the fruit, your eyes will be opened" - and when she ate the fruit... HER EYES WERE OPEN. But before that bite, she didn't have to worry... THEY DIDN'T HAVE TO WORRY... they could just sing!!! they didn't need wisdom then like we do now... Now it is our principal thing, BECAUSE NOW we have to build our lives off of us trying to navigate good and evil ON our own, which leaves a lot less room for melodies, doesn't it? Who has time to sing, when you have to figure out all the details of life...

So, we went from the infinite glory of a perfect world, where music was always present, and sin was nowhere to be seen...

and now, the whole world is not singing anymore!!! Now the whole world is groaning. It is broken. People hurt each other, and stress robs us of our joy... and we forget to be thankful because our eyes are always on the things that we lack and it clouds our vision of the amazing ways that God is moving in our community.

But See... Wisdom knows how to get back there. It understands that the whole world used to sing... and WISDOM figures out... How do we make it sing again?

well... Somebody needs to give them something to sing about again...

And who could possibly do that, if not "the sons of God" - those led by the Spirit of God.

People need their music. They need hope... and hope is a melody.

and when we live by way of the Spirit, guess what...

WE GIVE PEOPLE SOMETHING TO SING ABOUT!!!

I mean honestly, there were moments this week, when I didn't have anything I wanted to sing about...

but today we are singing... because God, through others, reminded us that the world is His... that our dreams are His... that our family is His... its not

even about the fact that we were blessed... to me, the most important part of it all was that God proved that he will be faithful... which told me “keep looking ahead... as long as your eyes are on Jesus who is the author and finisher of your faith...” you will turn out just fine.

Do you realize that by following a simple prompting of the Holy Spirit, you could be that for someone?

You could cause someone else to sing a new song! You can remind them that Jesus always shows up?

You could literally be a melody!

and do you want to know what that is? That is verse 21...

“submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.”

to submit is to place yourself under...

Obviously the people who blessed us weren't following orders to do it like we typically think of submission... but they were living their lives *in that moment*, like it WAS their duty to make sure someone else was ok.

It was their job to be a melody. And that is what makes wisdom some powerful, compared to knowledge. Wisdom will show you how to meet needs... Knowledge will just tell you what they are. 1 Corinthians 8 says that “we all have knowledge...” we all see the needs... we all know they exist... we see the problems...

but then it says something incredible. It says “knowledge puffs up.”
“But LOVE BUILDS UP.”

We don't submit to one another because we HAVE TO... we submit to one another because we love one another.

and this verse is actually, in many ways, the lead in to the next several sections that we will get into in the next few weeks...

because Paul tells us to submit to one another... then he does on to tell wives to submit to their husbands, as the church submits to Christ...

then he says for children to OBEY their parents, and bondservants obey your masters.

So over the next few weeks we will cover these specific ways that Paul talks about how we submit to one another, out of reverence for Christ. But today, the last thing we need to do, is to talk a little bit about this concept as a whole.

Submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

There is a verse in Philippians, which is another one of the Epistles that the Apostle Paul wrote from prison... this verse gets so misinterpreted... and this MISINTERPRETATION has had a devastating affect on many Christian communities. I broke the whole verse down a couple of years ago, but I will give you the cliff notes version now...

so the verse is translated in English to say (Phil. 2:12-13) "work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure."

So most of the time we leave the second half out entirely... which is verse 13... which straight up tells us that it is God who works IN YOU... and gives you the desire to actually WORK for the things that BRING GOD PLEASURE. but if you remove verse 13, then you have a black hole at the end of a very confusing verse.

and what we have done with this verse is we have said "we don't need to submit to one another."

We need to work ourselves out. They need a van... they need to work it out...

and even worse: "they call this a sin or that a sin... but to me, its not a sin, even when the bible says it IS."

We talked about drinking today... it could be “how drunk is too drunk?”
“Ohhhhh... you have to work THAT OUT WITH FEAR AND TREMBLING.

“What is right for you may not be right for me... what is wrong for you may not be wrong for me.” which may be true on some of the grey matters of Christianity that aren’t totally clear... and that is called binding and loosing, but that is NOT what Paul is referring to here.

and because we have removed verse 13, AND ONLY QUOTE THE FIRST HALF OF THE PASSAGE, YET THEN BASE OUR ENTIRE LIVES AND OUR ENTIRE THEOLOGY ON THIS SCRIPTURE (which people really do!)... we don't really have any guidance, *for the way in which we work it out*... but as long as it sits well in our conscience, then we are good. That is the thought.

It is *wrong*, but that is the idea.

I have even heard pastors use it this way... and truthfully I have probably even said this to people before so I am not condemning anyone... but they will be being interviewed or whatever the circumstance is, and they will be asked about whatever the “hot topic” *sin* issue is that day... and this verse becomes kind of a “spiritual way” to *avoid* the question... you say “well I am not judge... they need to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling... and as long as they are doing THAT, then yeah, I can’t say anything.”

and that IS true... ONLY IF YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT FEAR AND TREMBLING ACTUALLY MEAN!

The word “fear” is the Greek word “*Phobos*” - and it is incredibly loaded... this is what it actually means... “Reverence for ones husband”

we are going to study next week, the strongest correlation in the entire bible between marriage and the church... and the big idea of the whole thing is that the church is the BRIDE OF CHRIST.

and if we are the bride, that means that He is the groom. He is the husband in the most powerful marriage that will ever take place.

Now... even though we LOVE TO individualize this passage, the entire thing is written in a *plural* tense... So when you read “you” or “your” you shouldn’t reading it as in “you” personally... because it is saying “you” corporately. The church... together.

So suddenly, when you work out YOUR “OWN” salvation with fear... you are actually working it out, with the help of others, and out of reverence for Christ. Who made it very clear, the way that a person is supposed to live. Always thinking about others... always acting on behalf of others... always being meek, willing to lay down his own strength... always looking inwardly, making sure the insides are clean not just the appearance.

Always opening your home to others. Always inviting the ones who CAN’T pay you back to your parties... ALWAYS FOLLOWING the nudges of the Holy Spirit...

you see... when you work out your salvation with “fear” - suddenly... just like that, you are actually right back to “submitting *to one another* out of reverence for Christ.”

Phobos.

in fact, if you take verse 21 in Ephesians 5 that we have been studying, back to the Greek... you get the exact same word.

The same word that we translate in Philippians as “fear” we translate in Ephesians as “Reverence... for Christ.”

That alone to me is just crazy. That a person could read a passage and think that they could make it about justifying themselves in their own life, when the entire thing is actually *laying out what your life should look like.*

As you take responsibility for your own life, knowing that you aren’t saved by works... here is the way you should work... out of reverence for everything that He is...

Work out your salvation with reverence for Jesus, and with Trembling:

it is the Greek word “*tromos*” and this will blow your mind. This is the literal: it is a word “used to describe the anxiety of one who distrusts his ability completely to meet all requirements, but religiously does his utmost to fulfill his duty.”

When you tremble, as Paul puts it... you look at the things throughout Ephesians 4, and Ephesians 5... you think about anger, and about stealing, and covetousness, and sexual immorality... you think about drunkenness, and the ways that we waste our lives...

and you know that in your own strength there is literally no way that you could ever achieve it... and when you tremble... you know you won't get it right... but yet every day you try to. You do everything you can... the literal says you “religiously do your utmost to fulfill your duty” -

but the difference between trembling... and actually being “religious” - is the person who trembles knows: “I will never work my way to God... I will never achieve what is required of me... BUT I AM SO THANKFUL FOR THE GRACE OF GOD... that He would send His only son to die on a cross FOR ME... that I am not going to waste my life just NOT even trying... I and not going to lose that TIME.

I am going to give it everything that I have. I am going to work even though I know that work won't save me. Because I AM ALREADY SAVED. and I am so grateful.”

and that is how you have communities who know how to sing...

Because they know what to sing about... How great is the grace of God that he would meet me HERE... and that I would have to opportunity to be that light to someone else.

We have been on both sides of it... and provision feels incredible...but just like Paul says in chapter 4... its even more incredible when you are able to be the one who can provide when anyone has a need.

see, in my life this week... because others submitted themselves to the cause of the body of Christ... to the modern day church of Acts that understands WE GET TO TAKE CARE OF ONE ANOTHER... Dawn and I were caught right in the middle of fear and trembling...

in a place where all we could do was trust Jesus to act on our behalf, believing Him that he will be faithful in our lives... but knowing that IN OUR OWN STRENGTH THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO WAY ON EARTH any of this was getting done.

But He just keeps on showing up.

Because THANK GOD, it is not a black hole on the other end of Philipians 2:12, we also have 13:

“for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.”

And He just keeps on working in our lives. In our families... In our church.

it is like Jesus is just telling us “I have such a plan for your lives... you need to keep going!

I know its so hard right now... BUT YOU NEED TO KEEP GOING!

You are NOT going to be able to do it in YOUR STRENGTH... but that is the point! Let me carry you. All I need out of you is faithfulness.

All I need out of you is fear and trembling... Reverence for what I am doing.

Let me handle the rest.

Let me handle the details.

You just keep singing those melodies... because I have you in my hands.