



## **Mission**

### **Detroit**

**October 28, 2018**

**Courage Church, Detroit, MI.**

**scriptures:** Galatians 6:9, Ephesians 2:10, 2 Corinthians 5:18-19, Genesis 31, Matthew 5:23-24, Matthew 6:5-15, Luke 19:1-10, 1 Corinthians 11:26.

In a couple of weeks we will return to our Ancient Cliff Notes series, and we will be on that again until a couple weeks before Christmas, and the Ancient Cliff Notes series will likely be one that we go back to periodically for a while to fill gaps between series' -

but I want to give everyone a heads up now, that in January, we are going to begin a series teaching piece by piece through Romans. It will, without a doubt, be the longest series that we have ever done... we have already begun studying and preparing for it, and when we get into it we are going to take it head on. We are very excited about that.

But today we are staying on the concept of Mission.

October for us this year was all about missions... we brought in 3 foreign missionaries... Caleb and Corey who are missionaries to China...

Kenny and Debra Jones who help run the Hands and Feet project in Haiti...

and Scott and Ruth, who are missionaries to Indonesia.

It was so refreshing to hear from so many people about the work being done all around the world that, through our giving, we are able to be a part of.

In addition to the three missionaries that we brought out, we actually are a part of MORE THAN EVEN THAT, *through* our missions **giving**. We support the Los Angeles and the New York Dream Centers, we are a part of what Pastor Chilly is doing through Revolution Youth in Vermont... we played a role this year in some friends mission to Cuba, we support missionaries in Argentina, and we support the work of campus ministry being done on the

campus of the University of Michigan. So through generosity, this year our church really stepped up and has been able to see the Gospel go SO SO FAR BEYOND DETROIT.

and that is because of YOUR GENEROSITY.

We said at the beginning of the year when we announced that, even though technically we are a “missions church” - and what we mean by that is that we are not here just to create a place that we all gather... we do gather and we learn but ultimately we are here not only for us here in this room for also for those who aren't here yet... we exist to bring Heaven to earth here... and sometimes that looks like helping people with their houses, sometimes it looks like huge events like backpack giveaway or Joy to the D... there is a lot of work on the ground that we do that we need to be constantly raising money and support just to be able to do.

and even though it would be very easy for us to simply be that... always be raising our own support, and putting all of the money that comes in right into what we are doing... because WE ARE A MISSION and we know that, without a doubt, the needs will never, ever run out here...

but as seeds into what we believe that God is going to do in Detroit, we decided it was time to sow into what he is doing all over the world. And HE HAS BEEN SO FAITHFUL TO US SINCE WE BEGAN DOING THAT.

But today we want to bring it home.

Because where we know that WE ARE NOT THE ONLY MISSION...

we also need to remember, that we are on a mission.

Courage Church is on a mission...

You are on a mission, whether you are here every day or not... whether you are working a job, or raising a family full time... whether you volunteer or you get paid for the work that you do... whatever it is... we are all missionaries, on mission... given the most important job in the world... TO GO INTO ALL THE WORLD AND MAKE DISCIPLES OF JESUS CHRIST.

that is why we exist.

And so today we are going to talk about the mission of *our church* and why we do what we do... and first we will talk a little bit about what is going on behind the scenes to move us toward the vision that we do have...

So, this morning lets begin by looking at the verse that we named our “verse for the year” at the start of this year... and I want to do a little bit of work to show you why it is so important to keep this verse in your heart and mind always:

Galatians 6:9

“let us not *grow weary* of doing good, for **in due season** we will reap, **if** we do not give up.”

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We did a mini series on this verse to kick off the year, which I think spoke volumes, even prophetically, in regards to the fruit that we have seen this year as we hosted more mission teams than ever before, ministered to hundreds of people at Courage Cares this Spring, partnered with Shock the World on an amazing worship night which really supplied most of what we needed for our whole summer to have an amazing Kids Club... we had the door open to do the amazing Halloween outreach we were a part of yesterday, and now as we gear up for Christmas, I am praying that it will be just like all of the other events all year...

bigger than before... more people reached than the year before. Everything we have done *beyond our walls*... meaning, everything that we have done this year FOR THE PEOPLE THAT WE EXIST FOR... the ones who aren't necessarily here yet... has been bigger than it ever has before.

But yet every single day I beat myself up because I want things to move faster than they are.

For example, we want to build the Reconciliation Table... and God totally dropped that vision into our hearts... and he totally provided a house for the

Courage House, and it had a side lot to build the Table on to... but you would be shocked to hear how hard it has been just to get that lot build-ready for the table.

We have tried to rototill it several times ourselves... we had a team try... we had a company actually offer to come in with the heavy machinery to do it for us as a donation... and before they could do it, their equipment got stolen!

We had another organization volunteer to do it, and then back out because... Detroit... and now, just this week, I got confirmation that a church a little North of us IS sending a team with equipment to get that done.

I am praying that it happens... and it is simple.

But who wouldn't grow weary, waiting through a process like that? But it certainly has taught me some things.

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there is a very powerful Greek word that Paul uses when he says "IN DUE SEASON" - he uses the word "*kairos*" - which means "time" but it is not time that can be measured... there is a different Greek word for measurable time, that is the word "*chronos*" as in Chronological.

8:30pm - thats *chronos*.

October 28th - that is *chronos*.

*Kairos* on the other hand is more about experience... its more about that moment in your life that redefines everything in your life, and suddenly all of the sacrifice...

AND in some instances, all of the suffering... is worth it. Its the pay off.

and the reason so many people never get to where they know that they are supposed to go is because there is almost always an uncomfortable gap of

time where it feels like the wheels are turning but the car isn't going anywhere... where it feels like the time is moving but life is not progressing.... where it feels like you are tilling the rocky soil but then you look at it when it is finished only to realize that you need to till it again.

and Paul warns in this verse... well actually HE PROMISES in this verse... that as long as you keep going... eventually... YOU WILL ARRIVE - if you keep going, and working the ground, and being faithful in the little things even when the fruit isn't obvious... in due season, a harvest will come from that... IF YOU DO NOT GIVE UP.

But those last words are chilling... because it is possible to work for something for so long, and not see the result you desire, and even though God is working behind the scenes and those seeds are catching and taking root in the ground but they haven't quite poked through yet, and after enough of that, it becomes easy to let discouragement dictate your life.

You know how Ephesians 2:10 says that we are God's poem? his workmanship... His work of art? Paul tells us that God created us for something specific... something AMAZING... but then he ends the passage by saying "BUT YOU NEED TO WALK IN THEM." - you need to take a step. You need to live your life as if God is actually going to use you the ways that He promised He would.

You need to live your life as if God is going to actually show up.

Because of this, and because of what we read in the Bible, we are learning to DREAM BIG... but understanding that *the result* will be a bi-product of the way we live the day to day...

that the seeds we plant through conversations and through small acts of kindness are just as effective as the huge events God some how has been able to use our little church to pull off, or the big milestone vision goals that we one day believe will be met...

but here is where we need to park... because if you lose sight of this, you really lose everything.

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Between reality and *kairos*, is mission.

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Between where we are, right now... and where God ultimately has for us... is a mission that will not only lead us where we are trying to go, but also help us pick up as many other people as possible between here and there.

and what I want to help you understand is that even though we believe and anticipate *kairos*, we can't have it without *faithfulness*...

and it is *that place between* where we are and where we are going that ultimately will determine whether or not we get there.

You could say it this way: Vision is where we are going. Mission is what we are doing.

So mission is where we should be focusing our effort and our attention.

At Courage Church, when people ask us "what is your vision for Detroit" - we usually begin with a one worded answer... we usually begin with what could be better described as our *mission; because its the mission of the whole church* - we are trying to work on our language with this one and how to best communicate this... vision is important... it tells you where you are going... But Jesus didn't give us a vision - He gave us a mission.

Here is why that distinction matters:

because if you aren't on board with the mission of what we are doing, ultimately it won't matter where we end up.

If everybody buys into this church because of where they think we are going, then if we end up somewhere different it will be disappointing... BUT IT SHOULDN'T BE.

or if it even feels like its veering a direction that was different than you perhaps thought that it was going to go... if your “buy in” with us IS WHERE YOU THOUGHT THAT WE WERE GOING TO GO... then suddenly it becomes easy to be like... maybe this is not the ship for me.

but if you buy into the MISSION - if you buy into WHAT WE ARE DOING... and WHY WE ARE DOING IT... then you won't grow weary between now and *kairos*. Because mission drives us no matter where we are going.

most of you probably know what that word is, but what I want to show you today is just how loaded AND YET HOW SIMPLE that one word actually is - the word is RECONCILIATION. It is a word that since committing to it, I continue, every day, to learn more about it.

2 Corinthians 5 says “we have been given the ministry of reconciliation” - you can look for other ministries in the New Testament that we have been given, but you won't find them. This is the ministry that we have been given. All of us. So understanding what reconciliation is, is very important so that you can know what your role in that looks like.

Paul gives us probably the most clear framework for it. He says it like this:

(2 Corinthians 5:18-19)

“All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.”

our job in our city, in our neighborhoods, in our work places... wherever we go... whatever we do... is to meet people RIGHT WHERE THEY ARE AT... no matter how far away they may seem to be FROM GOD because of the way that they are living...

and we are told by Paul here that WE DO NOT DEFINE THEM BY WHAT THEY HAVE DONE... we do NOT count their trespasses against them, just as Jesus did not count their trespasses against them...

and it says we have been ENTRUSTED with this message... the message of reconciliation.

In our church, we run everything we do through the lens of 2 Corinthians 5.

IS IT RECONCILING PEOPLE BACK TO GOD?  
IS IT RECONCILING PEOPLE BACK TO EACH OTHER?

The concept of Reconciliation IS SO BIG...

In Psalm 23, David says these words of Thanksgiving to God... God, *you prepare a table* for me in the presence of my enemies.

The word "table" is the Hebrew word "*shulchan*"

Now, of course we all know that it seems strange that David would be thanking God... rejoicing... that God prepared a table for David in the presence of his enemies...

knowing anything about the history of David would probably make you think:

THAT IS GOING TO BE ONE VIOLENT MEAL.

But that is because we don't understand the power, and the emphasis that the ancient world put on THE TABLE... on meals.

In Genesis 31 there is a story about Jacob and his Father-in-law Laban. And Jacob, who is frustrated with the life he has under Laban, he took his wives and children and stole a bunch of stuff from Laban, and left. And Laban was so mad, that he hunted Jacob down for 7 days.

Finally, when he found him, instead of using violence, they talked.

They went back and forth and talked and talked and came to terms together, that they would not hurt each other, and they shared what was called a covenant meal together.



See, in the Hebrew language, the word for “table” - *shulchan* - can also be translated as RECONCILIATION.

In Arabic, which is similar, it is the same thing... a *sulha* in Arabic culture is, still to this day, a giant meal between rival families that is entered into with the understanding that we are not going to leave this table, until we bring resolve between our families.

So where some people would argue that “*shulchan*” is one word with two different meanings, I would say that they actually mean the same thing. The table IS the best place to reconcile, because when you share a meal with someone, and you live your life in community like that, you realize that the person sitting across from you is just as broken... yet just as much a child of God.

See, when people hurt us... the main thing we want to do is STAY AWAY FROM THEM.

I have been hurt by people a lot in my life, and I know that I have done my fair share of hurting... and when YOU hurt someone, all you can do is pursue them and apologize to them... ask for their forgiveness...

but when you are hurt BY someone... it has the power to destroy your entire life... you CAN give people that kind of power... you can actually CUT SOMEONE OFF from your life, because you are so mad at them for what they did to you... and the fact that they are totally cut off and there seems to be no room to reconcile with them, it leaves YOU brewing in it.

Like, we think “if we cut off the thing that hurts us, we will be able to heal” - and sometimes in life you DO need to just go different directions (but NOT without reconciling)... IF YOU CUT OFF THE THING THAT HURTS YOU, and you never reconcile... it will continue hurting you even when it is not there.

It is called bitterness. It will ruin your entire life... it will leak into every area of your life over time.

So when David says “you prepare a table for me in the presence of my enemies” - and then he goes on to say “MY CUP OVERFLOWS” - he is saying... THANK YOU GOD, that you have given me a chance to reconcile with the people WHO I HAVE HURT...

thank you God, that you have given me a chance to be face to face with the person *who has hurt me*... **not so I can hurt them**, but so I can see them in their humanity and remember how important it is that I forgive them.

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Now, if you turn to the sermon on the mount, Jesus says two things that are absolutely mind blowing about this. The first is in Matthew 5, when Jesus is talking about anger. He warns against of what anger can do to us...

Look at 5:23-24

“if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there *before* the altar and go. **First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.**”

okay... put yourself in this passage, will you? imagine that YOU HURT SOMEONE ELSE... SO YOU ARE THE VILLAIN.

Someone else has something against YOU. You did something that has the potential to cause someone else to get bitter, if THEY aren't careful.

Then you find yourself at the altar. You are going to do a Holy thing... a sacred thing... you are bringing a gift... a sacrifice... you are in a place like this one, and you want to praise God... and somehow you have convinced yourself that THAT is the main thing...

I am telling you... if you think that you can be bitter toward another person... OR IF YOU THINK THAT YOU CAN DO SOMETHING THAT YOU KNOW WILL CAUSE SOMEONE ELSE TO BE BITTER TOWARD YOU... and then you can just go about your walk with Jesus as if the only

thing that Jesus cares about is how many songs you sing to him, or how many cigarettes you DON'T smoke because of Him...

YOU NEED TO RE-EVALUATE YOUR FAITH.

Faith is impossible without reconciliation. It is central to what it means to be a Christian. God sent Jesus to die for our sins so that WE COULD BE RECONCILED TO GOD... and gave us the ministry of reconciliation so we can live out the love of Jesus in our relationships with one another... our relationships are models for the world of what the reconciliation of Jesus actually looks like.

So you are at the altar, and suddenly your mind goes to a moment that lead to someone else having something against you... which, I would call that a Word from the Holy Spirit... you went to the altar not thinking about someone else... but subtly you get this reminder... hey, you need to reconcile first...

And Jesus says... set down the gift... NOT ON THE ALTAR... you are not giving your gift... you are waiting... first... you are to turn around, go and find that person, wherever they are... and you are going to do whatever it is that needs to be done to make sure THAT THEY are not harboring bitterness toward you for what you have done to them.

You reconcile. Then you go back to the altar, and you give your gift. Then you go back to the altar, and you praise God for how good He is... that He would meet you in the most broken places, right there at your level, and do the heavy lifting to make sure that you are reconciled back to Him.

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Its election season, we are less than two weeks from another election day, and once again the political climate is as tense as ever... and Christians are no less tense... everyone has their one stubborn side, and they are standing on soap boxes throwing bombs with their words against people who take a different side then them...

I remember vividly seeing, last election, posts from both political extremes saying “if you voted for \_\_\_\_\_” - go ahead and unfriend me. Go ahead and remove me. I don’t want to talk to you. We don’t need to be friends.

Like - there is something in our world that we disagree on, and because of that I am going to cut you completely out of my life.

There is something in our world that makes us different... and I can’t have that... so I am going to cut you completely out of my life.

If you do not believe that reconciliation with the people who you differ from, who you disagree with, even the one who has offended you... if you don’t think that RECONCILIATION WITH THEM IS THE MAIN THING...

then you are in trouble.

Watch this... move ahead to Matthew 6, we are still in the sermon on the mount, and Jesus teaches us how to pray. You also get this prayer in Luke, the disciples ask him... Lord, how do we pray?

and Jesus tells them, when you pray... this is how... don’t heap up empty words... don’t say too much... God is not impressed by your many worded prayers that make you sound spiritual... He is looking for something... else.

Notice that... because its similar language to the gifts at the altar... we think praise is most important... we think that sacrifice is most important... we think what we contribute to God is most important... we think giving God this impressive prayers is important... but watch what Jesus says here:

He says, pray like this:

our Father who is in Heaven, hallowed by thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done **on earth as it is in Heaven.**

What these first two lines are saying is: God... let our earthly lives be a reflection of what is in your heart... let our lives be about the business of bringing what is in Heaven down here to earth...

then He tells us HOW to do it... and you have to look closely to catch this:

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD... (what does that sound like? it sounds like a meal... I know we love to just say this is provision... and sure, it is that, but it is so much more than that... watch:)

Give us this day our daily bread...

AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES, AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO HAVE TRESPASSED AGAINST US.

The Lord's prayer is asking the same thing that David thanked God for in Psalm 23. God, every single day... prepare a place for us in the presence of those who have wronged us, SO WE CAN FORGIVE THEM.

set the table Lord... with everything that we need, that we may be agents of reconciliation in a world that has done evil to us.

Let us be the first ones to say we are sorry... even when it is not our fault. Let us be the ones to forgive... no matter what they have done to us.

give us our daily bread... **give us the opportunity every day and the strength every day that it takes to forgive.**

That it takes to reconcile.

set the table, Father.

In fact, Jesus ends that teaching on prayer by saying that NOT FORGIVING ANOTHER PERSON FOR WHAT THEY HAVE DONE TO YOU is the ONE THING THAT WILL CAUSE GOD NOT TO FORGIVE YOU.

set the table Lord, because we want to dine with you... but according to your word, whatever we do for the least of these we do unto you... according to your word, **forgiveness is found, when we GIVE IT AWAY.**

May we forgive as if our lives depend on it.  
May we forgive as if our eternity depends on it.  
May we forgive as if our *mission* depends on it.

Because nothing will stop a move of God quicker than people who aren't willing to extend the same grace that they have been given.

In Hebrew... its the same word... table... reconciliation. They are always connected.

but it simplifies our lives an awful lot, and takes the pressure off like crazy if you think about it. Because reconciling the whole world back to God doesn't *have* to mean growing a huge church... it doesn't *have* to mean building huge platforms and screaming loud messages... it doesn't have to mean dropping everything and going in to full time ministry working for a church or moving to Indonesia... it *can* mean that... but it doesn't *have* to.

It can be as simple as setting a table, and inviting someone to a meal.

Read the Gospels... read about Jesus' life... I can't go through all of these instances now... I will give you some... but think about what His process was for calling people to follow him? think about what his process was for reconciling with people?

When Jesus calls Matthew in Matthew 9, what do they do? they go to Matthew's house, and they eat a great feast.

When he calls Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10 what happens? He invites himself into Zacchaeus's house, which certainly would have included a meal - and something very strange happens... catch this: Zacchaeus tells Jesus "I will take half of my goods, and I will give them to the poor... AND THEN AFTER THAT... with what is left after I give away half of everything I have... FOR EVERY PERSON THAT I HAVE DEFRAUDED... (because he was a chief tax collector and he ripped a lot of people off so that he could get rich, and made a lot of enemies)

HE SAID "I will restore it fourfold."

I will give them back 4 times what I took from them.

In other words... I will take the first step... I will do whatever it takes to reconcile with the people I have hurt... even if it means giving away every single penny that I have.

And do you know how Jesus responded? He said "Salvation has come to this house, today."

No prayer... No Baptism... just a heart that had wrapped itself around the fact that the Gospel is such good news, that if it takes ahold of your life, IT MAKES IT IMPOSSIBLE to be at odds with another person.

Fast forward to the books of Acts, and the whole thing is about meals together, and taking care of each other.

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Rewind a bit, to just after the resurrection... when Peter had gone back to being a fisherman, because he had denied Jesus three times by a charcoal fire... and now, as far as Peter knew, Jesus was dead.

and what else do you do when you have blown what seems to be everything, and have landed on the bottom?

you go back to who you used to be, because who you *wanted* to be obviously is out of reach now.

But what does Jesus do?

He cooks Peter breakfast, over a charcoal fire... the same type of a setting that Peter denied Jesus at, three times. Then for every time Peter denied Him, Jesus has Peter tell him "I love you."

Reconciliation.

and rewind again, to the night that He was betrayed... Jesus had one last meal with His closest friends at a place known as the Upper Room... the

technical word for the location of the last supper is: “the Cenacle” - which comes from a latin term (*cēnō*) meaning “I dine”

and it is there that He makes the disturbing announcement that one of the 12 disciples was going to betray Him... but all 12 of them were there with Him, and do you know what He did just before telling Judas that He knew the truth about what Judas had set out to do?

He washed his feet.

Knowing that Judas had Jesus’ blood on his hands... Jesus still washed his feet.

He served Him.

its almost as if Jesus, who knew that He would not get another chance, was trying to make room for the redemption and reconciliation of the man who was leading him into the hand of his enemies.

You prepare a table for me, in the presence of *my enemies*...

Jesus shared one last meal with Judas. And it is during that meal He washed his feet of his betrayer... and it is during that meal, that He says:

This is my body... and it is FOR YOU. I am giving it FOR YOU...

Could you even imagine being Judas, knowing what you had done... what you had already set into motion... what you were about to do, and then hearing that? This is my body... and its FOR YOU JUDAS.

This is my blood... ITS FOR YOU.

Matthew’s Gospel puts it this way: “this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.” (Matthew 26:28)

The table is a representation of what happened on the cross, and every time we come together, and we share in it with someone, we are



demonstrating that same reconciling love that says “the people who are sitting at this table with me, matter.”

I am here for them... I will serve them... I will wash their feet.

And that is what makes the Gospel so powerful... is there is a seat for everyone at this table.

That is the beautiful thing about reconciliation... its the beautiful thing about mission... IT IS ABOUT EVERYONE... its no respecter of persons... its about loving the least of these, and loving the ones who everybody wants to know... because at the end of it all they all are equally desperate for the same Jesus.

And our goal here, and we aren't always the best at it but we are sure trying... is we want to cultivate the romance between you and Jesus... we want to create spaces for people to come back to God... we want to create ways for people to reconnect with each other...

and that is a big part of why we take communion every week... it gives you that chance to look up... and ask God... “are we cool?” - and if you feel like the answer is yes... then you take communion... because every time you take it, as Paul says... you are proclaiming the Lord's death...

and if you feel like the answer is NO... then you take communion... as a way of telling Jesus, I know that I have screwed up... but I want to be reconciled to you. and when you take it, as Paul says “you proclaim the Lord's death.”

But it ALSO gives you the chance to look around... and make sure that you haven't burned any bridges that you should have been building... that you haven't put up any walls around your heart because of something that someone did *to you*... and maybe you think those walls are protecting you, but really it has just walled you in to a prison with your thoughts and bitter feelings...

The table is a reminder... go work that one out, THEN DO THIS. Don't do the spiritual act, when the practical, human to human relationship is so

totally fractured and it is in your hands to make it right. Its just like prayer... its just like the gift at the altar... people matter... work it out with them.

Beyond that, we believe communion is FOR EVERYONE... because we believe that the cross is FOR EVERYONE... so when people ask "can anyone take it" - what we say is this... we don't go to their past... we don't ask if they have said a prayer... or if they have been baptized...

instead, we say what Paul said.

WHEN YOU CHOOSE TO COME UP, AND YOU DIP THIS BREAD INTO THIS CUP, YOU ARE DECLARING THE LORD'S DEATH, UNTIL HE COMES.

You are making a public statement that says: JESUS CHRIST, I AM A SINNER... I DESERVED TO DIE... BUT BECAUSE YOU LOVED ME SO MUCH, YOU DIED IN MY PLACE.

So for me... more important than whatever prayers you did or did not pray... I just want to make sure that you are clear... that you know what it is you are declaring.

you are declaring that you are broken... but His body and His blood is enough... its enough to redeem you... and its enough to empower you to be an agent of reconciliation in our world.

But when you declare the power of the cross you are not just declaring it in your life, but you are ALSO declaring that the arms of grace are long enough and powerful enough to extend even to your enemies... even to the ones who have hurt you... and that is GOOD news!

and the way we do it... its just a symbol... but it represents something more... communion truly is a COMMON UNION of people... people eating together... sharing life together... living under the grace of God and enjoying the community that God has given them, together. that is what it is. It is a symbol of the cross, and it is a symbol of the reconciliation table.

In the Bible, Christianity truly is a meal fellowship... the church of Acts... what did they do? they broke bread together... and then they shared what they had with people who didn't have... they had ALL THINGS IN COMMON.

They used the table as a means to reconcile with the world. And this small little sample of what true communion actually is, is just a taste... its a reminder of what our daily lives should look like, when we interact with our neighbors... when we talk to the people who have offended us... when we love our enemies...

So as we prepare to take communion together... my prayer is that you leave this place with a far greater understanding of just how important it is to be a person of grace... who never holds things over others... my prayer is that you leave this place with a far greater understanding of what God asks of you, and of just what it is you are doing when you invite someone into your home... or when you invite someone to share a meal with you. When you help someone when they are in a time of need... when you take the first step toward reconciliation **EVEN WHEN IT IS NOT YOUR FAULT.**

We are trying to create a culture that forgives... that believes that mercy truly does circle... so we give mercy as liberally as possible.

The vision of our church includes many things that haven't happened yet... and it all matters, and we believe that God can do anything to make those things come to life...

but the **MISSION** of the church of Jesus Christ is to reconcile the world back to Jesus. To go into the whole world, and make disciples...

The vision is in God's hands.  
The mission is in ours.