

The Top 10 for Life Series #5
“Cmdt 4: The Right Boundaries”

We have enjoyed our music today. How grateful I am for the hope that we do have in Christ.

Early this morning I did what is a frequent routine for me on Sundays and that was to take a walk just about daylight. I actually do that most days of the week, try to do that anyway, and that allows me to eat a little bit more and so try to do something to stay in shape but I was out walking this morning and my walk today took me out along the perimeter of the Lynn University property. As I was standing there looking at that property today I looked out and I noticed a very large soccer field that was there and all of the layout associated with that. I noticed next to that a baseball diamond that was there and saw the stripes going out down through the lines establishing the fields and the boundaries. I saw some basketball courts. I saw some parking lots, I saw some pathways and some roadways and as I looked at all of the lines that caught my eye, and I suddenly had a thought, what legalist. I mean, how can they be so rigid as to lay everything out in lines and boundaries. How many think I was really thinking that? Of course I didn't think that. My thought wasn't what legalist, my thought was what a beautiful campus and what brought beauty to the campus was the order and the arrangement, the separation by the boundaries, of all the different distinctive functions and utilization of the land, and of the development of the campus there at the university. As I looked at that soccer field, I thought, you know soccer really isn't any fun if you don't have some boundaries. Who wants to just go out in an open field and just kick the ball around forever? I mean, if you are going to play the game, you got to know where the boundaries are, what the end zones look like.

If you are going to play the game of baseball, you can go out on a sandlot and you can certainly mark out the bases but who wants to go out and play the game of baseball if all you are going to do is just take a bat and a ball and have no boundaries, no bases, no nothing.

Who wants to play basketball if it is just dribbling around and shooting in the air and there is not a goal to shoot at?

Who wants to get on the interstate in the morning if I-95 has no lines to distinguish between the lanes? It is bad enough that we have lanes and people don't stay in them, can you imagine what it would be like if there were no lines and no lanes? It would just be the continuous flow of chaos.

You see, in every arena of life we are content and we understand that there is a need for some sense of boundary in order for function, in order for interaction to take place. In the sporting world, if you have no boundaries, you have no game. There can be no victor. In life, if you have no boundaries, there is no gain, there is no way to live, there is no game plan, and ultimately there will be no victory.

Well, God knowing that He made us to understand that there are to be some boundaries, included something about one of those boundaries in the 20th chapter of the book of Exodus and, if you have a Bible, I want to invite you to join me there, Exodus, Chapter 20.

We have been studying together God's top 10 list for life. We have been learning that these are not rules, these are just right. They are the right things that help us to understand how to live, how to succeed, how to be what we were intended to be, and how to live life to its fullest and when any one of these things is lacking or missing in our life, that somehow our life is not complete. Well, here in Exodus, Chapter 20, beginning in verse 8, we learn something of one of the boundaries that God has established for every one of us. Let us read the 8th verse out loud together and it is here on the screen so maybe you can just join me in reading it out loud. "Remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy."

Now, let me continue. "Six days you shall labor and do all of your work but the 7th day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God, in it you shall do no work, you, nor your son, nor your

daughter, nor your manservant, nor your maidservant, nor your cattle, nor your stranger who is within your gates, for in six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the seas and all that is in them, and rested the 7th day; therefore, the Lord blessed the Sabbath Day and hallowed it.” The fourth commandment in the translation that I have just read from includes 94 words. It is interesting to me that when God wanted to speak to us about the need for regulation and boundaries in life that He used 94 words but you go down just a few verses, to verse 13 and when God wanted to speak of the sanctity and the honor of human life, He used 4 words. I think God is serious about this matter of the Sabbath and of the need for us to understand the significance of the Sabbath in our life. Now, I realize that by simply bringing this subject forward and addressing something called the Sabbath in this public forum, I realize that it immediately is a term, it is a concept that is very quickly open to argument, to misunderstanding, and to dogmatism. There are a lot of negatives that have been associated with the concept of a Sabbath but I want, this morning, to try to zero in on the positive affirmation of what God’s intention is in this commandment in our life and I want us to learn together the value of positive boundaries in our lives. Now, in order to be able to do that, we need to take this text apart and we need to examine this concept in several different ways and so we are going to look at it from three perspectives this morning.

1. We are going to review the purpose of the Sabbath. Why did God make a Sabbath, what does He mean by the Sabbath.
2. Secondly, we are going to revisit the problem of the Sabbath because, obviously, there is conflict in the minds of people even sitting in this building this morning, as to what is the real intent of this commandment.
3. And then, thirdly, we are going to do our very best to recapture the principle of the Sabbath in our life today.

So let us begin, we have a lot to do, we have a very limited amount of time to do it today, but I do want you, I do want you to hear, and I want you to know about the right boundaries in your life.

1. Let us review the purpose of the Sabbath.

You say, well, that is nice but hang on just a minute, I don't even know what Sabbath means. Well, the Sabbath is typically referred to as the 7th day, the last day of the week. It is Saturday for that reason. Many of our Jewish friends worship on that day because the Sabbath was established, as you see here in the Old Testament, as a part of the covenant of law with God's people and his nation, Israel, has set apart a separate day of worship. But the term 'Sabbath', itself, actually means 'rest' or 'pause.' It really has its roots, not so much here in the book of Exodus, but back in the book of Genesis. In fact, you find this matter of the Sabbath being introduced in Genesis, Chapters 1 and 2. Of course, there is the beautiful unfolding of God's creation of the world and there we hear day by day how that in the evening and morning of the first day and the evening and the morning of the second day, that God, through creative wonder, brought about all that we see in creation. But the Bible says that after God made man on the 6th day that God took the 7th day, that would have been Saturday, and that God rested. Now if we are not careful when we hear that term rested, we immediately tend to think that that means that God worked so hard on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday that, finally, when He got to the 7th day, He just said, 'whew, I am tired.' It is a big world and there is a lot in it but I have to tell you something, God did not get worn out creating the world. In fact, all He had to do was say, 'sun, moon, stars take your places' and they were there, just like that. But the amazing thing is that when God had created everything, not because he was pooped but because He was pleased, He stood back and looked at His creation and the Bible says there was a day to simply pause in wonder of the creation that God had made and yet, as we look at that creation, God built into the creation specific pause points at every level. Beginning with the sun and the moon God divided the light and the darkness and, as you know, every 24 hours we have a season of light and a season of darkness and the entire light factor changes in the world every day. There is a rhythm, there is a motion, and there is a movement to daylight and to darkness. We see it not only there but we see it in the tides. You know that there is a time of day when the tide comes in and there is a time of day when the tide has gone out so there is a regulatory fashion of incoming and outgoing movement of the tide and we see that in our world. We see it in the seasons of the year. Hey, aren't you glad summer has passed, huh? I

mean I love summer time, don't get me wrong but when you live in Florida, and in South Florida in particular, it is really nice to get up to some temperature that is below 70 in the morning and many of you have just come back here from beautiful areas of the country where you have seen the leaves changing, but the seasons of the year represent a cycling and a recycling of all of nature and certainly we know that if we go a step further, beyond just the seasons, we look at the soils, even the soils of the ground, and there we know there is to be a season of planting and there is to be a season of development and there is to be a season of harvest and then there must be a season of rest because if there is just endless effort to plant and to reap and to harvest, the soils will become deplete and the soils will be nonproductive.

It was just about a year ago, right now, actually about two weeks earlier, the end of October early November, that I had the incredible privilege to go to China and then, with a delegation of five other men, to go over into North Korea. It was one of the most exciting and, I have to tell you, one of the most frightening experiences of my life. As we went into the borders of North Korea, one of the things that overwhelmed me was to meet the massive need of people who were hungry and starving and to see the barrenness of the soils around them. It appears that through the aggression and control and the direction of the strong military and communist state there in North Korea, that very little attentiveness has been given to many of the needs of the people and to what typically, for us, be common agriculture practices and, as a result, the lands and soils are depleted and when that is combined with the famines, not just the famines, but the horrible devastation of floods and typhoons, that they have had, the people of North Korea have been starving by the thousands over the last couple of years. But I realized again the simple importance of a simple principle of rest in the soil. If that is true in every arena of nature, then don't we need to perk up our ears and listen when God looks at you and God looks at me and God says, 'you will remember the Sabbath.' There is a need for you to have a pause point in your life and just as there is a regulatory process to all of nature; there are some regulatory points that are necessary in your life and in my life. When you buy a car the car you buy comes with an owner's manual. Now, the car is not made for the owner's manual but the owner's manual is made to help you know how to run the car and in the

same way Jesus Christ took this whole issue of the Sabbath and He cut it down to the bottom line and this is what He said, 'man, the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath.' You see, God has a purpose in the Sabbath. And it is that every one of us needs to pause points in our life.

Make of this discussion this morning and that is that we need to revisit the problem of the Sabbath because, obviously, today is Sunday, it is not Saturday. Today there are many things we will do that have become a part of our life that may not be a part of what we have just read in this text and we have to ask ourselves are we having a collision at the point of one of God's commandments in our life by getting up this morning, by driving your automobile, by going and eating out in a restaurant this afternoon, by doing some of the things you will do and I will possibly do on this day. Are we in violation of the Sabbath? The bottom line is, have we missed it all together, because our Jewish friends, some of the them were even walking to church yesterday to the synagogue, to the temple, they don't call it church, but you know what I mean. Did we miss it? Are we mistaken? Are we somehow in conflict over this issue of the Sabbath? I mean, it is a pretty emphatic commandment here. Well, guess what! Of all of the 10 commandments, 9 of them are recorded again in the New Testament. Of 10 commandments, 9 of them are recorded and repeated in the New Testament. Guess which one is left out! It is this commandment. You say, 'well what does that mean?' What it means is that God had a specific purpose in the use of a specific day in the calendar when He established the Sabbath and when He instituted that with His nation of Israel. Because of the covenant He made with his people the Sabbath Day was to be the reminder of their need to pause and wonder and in worship. But it was also to be a day that was kept as a ritual, as a part of the culture of that day in that time. The Bible tells us though, that when Jesus Christ came that Christ fulfilled the law for us. We are no longer under the old law of the Old Testament; we are living in a new age, the age of grace. Now that doesn't mean we can do anything we want to, live any way that we want to. What it means though, is that there are some provisions and there are some directions in the new covenant that separate and distinguish them from the old covenant. In fact, if the push were to come to shove today, if we were to miss the Sabbath, which was yesterday, according to the

commandment of the Old Testament, the only rightful thing to do would have been for us to have been stoned to death. Because, believe it or not, violation of the Sabbath took a death sentence. God was serious about wanting people to pause as a nation and to focus upon him. But today, Jesus has fulfilled, and Jesus has instituted a new covenant and I want you to see how clear this is in the New Testament.

Hold your hand there in the book of Exodus and if you have the ability, turn over in the New Testament to the book of Colossians, Chapter 2. You see something very significant happened. Over a period of time what the Sabbath did become was simply a ritual. It was no longer a time of focusing upon the relationship of Israel with God, it was ritual. The rabbis created strong and tense systems of control over the Sabbath. There were 39 letters in the command of the Sabbath in the Hebrew alphabet and so for each of those letters they created a list of things that were to be done and by the time of Jesus they had 1,521 specific ways of violating the Sabbath. It had become a very encumbering experience. Jesus came and said that the whole purpose of the Sabbath was not about some ritual, some ceremony, but it was about a relationship with God and Jesus Christ came to provide that window and that bridge of relationship with God.

Colossians, Chapter 2, verse 16 makes this very clear. The scripture says, "Therefore, let no one judge you in food or in drink or regarding a festival or a new moon or Sabbaths, which are the shadow of things to come, but the substance is Christ." All of these things were shadows but the shadows are now gone because the substance of the shadows has come and Jesus Christ is the substance of the shadow. Jesus Christ came that He might bring us into a rest relationship with God, that Sabbath might be experienced in my life, not just on the 7th day but that it might be experienced every day in my life and so now I live as a believer living in the fullness of the Sabbath enjoying the rest that Christ has brought to me. However, living in that rest and living free of the regulation of a specific day does not mean there should not be a priority of the day of worship or of the importance of focusing upon worship in our lives. Now, we do worship on the first day of the week and the reason we do that is because Jesus arose on the first day. Jesus was crucified on a Friday, He was buried, but on the first day he arose and as He arose on the

first day of the week, that is on Sunday, Christians from that time to this have met and worshipped on Sunday. If you just run through the New Testament you will be interested to see how many first day facts we find there. Jesus rose from the dead on the first day, Mark 16:9; Jesus met the disciples on the first day, Mark 16:11; Jesus' second meeting with the disciples was also on the first day of the week; The disciples were commissioned to preach on the first day of the week in the book of John; The Holy Spirit was imparted to the disciples on the first day of the week; The day of Pentecost, the day the church was born, was on Sunday, the first day of the week; The revelation at the end of the Bible was given to John on the first day of the week and we read in the book of Acts, Chapter 20, verse 7, that consistently the church met on the first day of the week and then, yes, they gave offerings it says in First Corinthians 16, on the first day of the week and so there is a significant shift in the pattern and the pattern was intended to remind us of the purpose and the purpose is that we need to put priority on the things of God one day a week in our life. So, you have not violated the Sabbath by failing to worship yesterday but you could violate it today even though you went to church by failing to have the right focus in your Sabbath, which is upon the Lord. Now, it is true that Sunday is simply our selected day of worship but everyday is to be a holy day for a Christian. I mean, don't say something is wrong on Sunday and it is right on Monday, Tuesday...I am telling you, you need to have principles in your life that govern your life. If it is wrong on Sunday, it is probably wrong on Monday but the fact of life is that on Sunday we bring our focus and our attention back to the Lord and to the things of the Lord in our life.

Now there was a day in our culture when our culture protected this day with us. There was a time when culturally, as a nation, we believed that we needed a day carved out to be with God. Today we have no time for God and that is no longer protected in our world but there still needs to be in the hearts of God's people a priority in the arena of worship, prioritizing time with God, because, if you do not set aside time, you won't make time. You see, it is just like your job, if you go to work tomorrow and they get everybody in a room and they just said these jobs are all just everybody's job, everybody go do your job, nobody would do anything effectively. You see, it has to be set apart, it

has to be specified and so we have continued to honor, not just for tradition but because of priority, a day of worship on Sunday.

Let me talk to you about how Sunday can be a day that has Sabbath quality in it for you, that can be a day that encourages rest in your walk with God and can help you to be a healthier and more complete person, and that is through recapturing the principle of the Sabbath. Recapturing the principle of the Sabbath. If I am to be a person who lives in the rest that God intends for me, and if I am to understand the need for boundaries, and times in my lives to disengage and to download some of the activity level in my life from just constantly being in circulation, then there are some specific steps that I can take that will help me to be able to benefit from the Sabbath and from boundaries in my own life.

What can Sunday as the Lord's day and what can the understanding of the importance of a Sabbath day in my life do to help me to be a more complete person? It can help me to refocus my priorities.

It was Socrates who said an unexamined life is not worth living and so many times in life we begin to stumble, fail, and fall because we lose sight of our priorities. Life just becomes one big active blur and Sunday, the Lord's Day, I believe, provides an opportunity for us to step back and get our priorities back in front of us and say, 'today I want to refocus on the priority of my relationship with God and my relationships with others.' And so, there is a need in my life and in your life to reexamine, to reevaluate, and to regroup. Now the question comes, if I make Sunday my day of worship and if I am going to try to refocus the priorities of my life on that day, the question comes immediately, 'well, pastor, what should I do and what shouldn't I do? I mean, I am a fireman, I am a paramedic, and I am a nurse, should I ever work on Sunday. Is that wrong as a Christian? My job requires that I work.' Some people would say, 'well, pastor, should I ever watch football or not watch football during the season?' I mean, that is a big question to some people. Some of you are just hoping on grace that you can just keep on going and just, you know never address that. But that is a question in some of our minds. Other people would say, 'well, you know, what should I do? Should I work in my yard on Sunday, or not work in my yard?' All of these questions come and

all of you have ones that you would like to have an answer to but guess what, if you ask me, I am the wrong person, because just like you, I am to seek the Lord. I cannot tell you what is right and wrong for you. I tell you what I can tell you is that Sunday should be a day in my life and in your life where the focused priority of my life is on worshipping God and not just the work and the activity and the things that otherwise have a tendency to consume my life. There is no pattern required in scripture. Jesus got in trouble because he violated the traditions of the Sabbath but what we do have is the principle of refocusing our priority on the Lord. Let Sunday be a day where you have extra time to get into the Word of God and to worship God. By the way, I commend you for being here today but make coming together with God's people a priority. Don't try to make that a decision when the alarm goes off on Sunday morning that is the worst time to make that decision. I can tell you, covers will win nine times out of ten. Let it be a priority in your heart and in your life.

Secondly, not only does the Sabbath, the principle of Sabbath, when it is embraced in our life, allow us to refocus our priorities; it allows us to understand the need to renew our relationships, to renew our relationship. You know, sometimes the area of our life that needs the most attention gives the least and that is really focused attention on relationships and building relationships. We tend to use our relationships. But, God has brought us into relationships with people that we might be rightly connected with one another in such a way as to have the fullness and the completion of our life. You know, for many years, in our nation, Sunday was a day of faith and family. Many people would go to church together and then they would go and have a big family gathering and a big family meal together. It was a wonderful thing because you got around that table and possibly spent half the afternoon just sitting there and talking there and connecting there. The fact of life is most of us find it difficult to ever have a meal where we all sit down together around the table, that is why we try to create spiritual banquet tables here on Sundays, not only a place to come and have this kind of time where the Word of God is preached but to have times where we break into Bible fellowship groups and where, through the use of the Word of God and prayer and care and concern for one another, we can enhance the quality of our interpersonal relationships through fellowship with one another. We need that in our friendships. We need that in our families and if you will

learn to honor the principle of Sabbath in your life, you will understand there is a need to gather, to sit, and to talk, to eat, and to enjoy time together, to have times to renew your relationships. I hope that many of you will establish the habit of coming here on Sunday, gathering with people, and talking about things we have talked about here, and sharing together. Sort of like that little girl who was riding home with her dad after church on Sunday. They were talking about the service and she said, 'Daddy, I really liked the music but that commercial was too long.' There are a lot of things to talk about but I hope you will find the best things to talk about. In fact, I hope you will understand the importance of talking about the good things, about who we are and what we are in Christ together. The worst thing you can do is leave here and go get indigestion talking about roast preacher and, you know, frying the program of the church there publicly with everybody. I think what you need to do is connect and renew your relationships.

Something else that Sabbath can do for our lives is that we can learn the principle of relaxing our bodies, to really set aside a day where we try to offload some of the stresses and tensions. If you take your fist right now and you hold it and clench it as tightly as you can and you hold it and you hold it and you hold it, you may be able to do that for 30 seconds, maybe 60, maybe more, but I can promise you that you cannot do that for 60 minutes. You cannot do that for half a day. Somewhere you have to release and your body needs some times where you release and where you relax. I believe the Sabbath gives us about as good a biblical foundation as anything for a Sunday afternoon nap. The Bible says that He gives His beloved sleep and so if you want to make that on Sunday, you do that, but the principle of the Sabbath needs to be honored in our life. We need boundaries so that we will relax our bodies. You can't just keep going and going. You are not the exception; I am not the exception. The body wears and tears and so God has given us a Sabbath.

We also need a Sabbath to help us recharge our batteries. We need a day a week where we have some emotional downtime. Because our current begins to weaken and our lights begin to dim, if all we do is try to live at the level of letting the circumstances on the

outside and the emotions at the surface level continue to internalize what is happening in our life, we need recharge time.

I don't know if you have seen it in the last few weeks on the television but the energizer bunny is getting his batteries changed. Have you seen it? After all these years of going and going, he is actually kind of coming in and the pit crew meets him and sticks a new battery in him and, man, he starts zooming back down the highway. Well, let me tell you, that pink bunny needs it but so do you and you need to have the batteries of your life recharged and energized. You need to have emotional downtime through quietness, through reflection, through a setting aside of the compulsiveness that so often dominates our life, to learn to be still and to know that He is God.

The Sabbath principle can be captured in our life when we use the Lord's Day as a chance to refresh our minds. We need to be able to let the mind think well and that is why I believe that Sunday is one of the great days of the week, as every day, but certainly Sunday. To spend extended time in the Word of God and to let the Word of God strengthen your mind and replenish your thoughts, to reflect, and to renew your heart.

And then we need to recapture the principle of the Sabbath so we can find rest for our souls. Jesus said, "come unto me all ye who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you life." You know what that word is? Sabbath. I will give you Sabbath. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me for I am gentle of heart. You see Jesus wants you to find rest for your soul. Do you know what is wrong with our world? We have a lot of restless souls running around. We have a lot of weary souls running around. People who have assumed that just through profiting and pushing and pressurizing that somehow they can find fulfillment in their life. Do you know what Jesus said? He said, "what will a man profit if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?" You see we have weary souls and Jesus is the One who can give you peace on the inside. That begins the moment you receive Him as your Lord and Savior. I don't mean that all of the problems change in your life but there is a new connectedness with Christ on the inside that begins to change your life and real rest and real peace begins in life when you receive Jesus

Christ as your Lord and as your Savior. But not only that, for those of us who know Him, rest returns to our life when we just keep coming back to Him time and time again and letting Him renew us.

Sometime ago I found a prayer for the overworked I want to share with you:

“Lord, how did I get so busy? I am blazing through life at light speed away from You. I have become too occupied it seems to begin each day rejoicing in Your Presence, to put on the brakes long enough to share Your Love with a co-worker, to seek a quiet mid-day retreat to tell You how much I love You or to take a personal interest in helping a brother or sister in Christ to grow. Has the activity of a Christian life overshadowed the serenity of Christ Himself in me? Has pressure replaced prayer instead of profiting it? Have I substituted workload for wisdom? Could it be that I am too busy teaching to learn and passing others by too quickly to take their extended hand? Instead of mounting up with wings like eagles I have become content to be a squawking chicken shuffling aimlessly in a cloud of dust. Instead of being still and knowing that you are God I am moving so fast no longer do I even really know whom God is. How long has it been since I let you lead me beside the still waters? I seem to prefer instead the neurotic navigation of relentless rapids. If I could only stop hacking at life’s overgrown weeds long enough, I would notice the cool patch of green You prepared for me. The burning pace I keep has made me thirsty for Your peace. There You have stood all along, Your cup overflowing with refreshment. Why do I refuse to dwell in Your Word? I sometimes feel as though the Bible has become a script for acting like a Christian with lines cleverly regurgitated on cue. Oh how I need to take it in, like a life-giving nutrient that it really is, swallowing every word, digesting every truth so that my life will bear the shining fruit of the Master. Forgive me, Lord, for worshipping You only when I can fit You in. I keep forgetting that I am the one who fits into Your plan and Your schedule. Lord, I need a vacation with You, alone, at the Open Arms Inn. So, here I am one saint checking in, weary and confused, desperately in need of the Creator’s loving embrace and quiet encouragement. Do you have something beside the still waters? I knew You would.

Lord, thank you today that we can come and find rest in Christ. Thank you, Jesus, that You are our rest and our peace and that You take the weariness, the brokenness, the injuries of this life, and through Your kindness and Your love you bring us to a place of rest even at the troubled waters.

Father, I know this morning there are people all over this building who are living at the edge of troubled waters. I know that the natural tendency is to try to keep pushing, pressing, and persevering but I just pray right now that there would just be a release of our lives to You. I pray, Lord, that where there are those who have wandered, who have lived their life with no boundary, today they would come to the place called the Cross to put their faith and trust in Christ and begin to allow the Lord Jesus Christ to establish the right pauses and the purposes in their life. Father, I pray for others who are here who know and love You but who need a family of friends, like a church, to get connected to, that you would use this moment and this time to gather them together. Father thank you for the strength that comes in Christ. Thank You for the significance of a moment just like this moment where we can look to You, where we can call upon You, where we can experience You. For we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

I want you to look this way. Before we walk away from this place this morning, before we simply jump back into the pace of life don't you think it might be worth the pause of just saying come from where you are to Christ today. Isn't it significant that we as a church should take time and say to people, if you are restless, if you are troubled, if you are needy, if you are hungry, if you are thirsty, if you need today to know the Christ that brings rest to your heart, today we have Him to offer and we want you to know Him and we want you to experience Him. I believe that is fitting. In fact, I believe it is not only fitting but I believe it is the compelling of this message today that we need to give people an opportunity to know our Christ. Now that doesn't mean that what we are about to do is the only way that a person can know Christ but certainly this is a way, a way of understanding and a way of sharing. In just a moment we are going to stand and we are going to sing together a chorus, Come, Just as You Are. And as we stand and sing the pastors of our church are going to stand here at the front, at the head of each aisle.

Wherever you may be today, if there is a need for Christ, if there is a need for connectedness in the church of Jesus Christ, through a commitment of your life and your heart, then I want to invite you to come and speak with one of these pastors. Maybe you already checked earlier on that card today on the back that there were some questions, some needs, that you had and we will respond to you in that fashion. But it might just be that this message, this morning, this moment is for you so I want us together to pray, to extend God's invitation and to give people an opportunity to trust Christ, to follow Christ, to come and find rest in Him today. So would you stand with me, would you sing with me, pastors would you come and join me, would you pray as people come to follow Christ. If this is your need, you can step out and come. We don't want to embarrass you we love you! We are praying for you! We just want to help. Come. Follow Christ.

You may be the only one who comes. You may be the first of a whole group of people who would come to follow Christ. Maybe it is for prayer. We are going to just sing this chorus one more time. Come.

Father replenish, renew, restore our souls that we may be whole and complete in the midst of a broken world shining forth with the love of Christ, our Lord and Savior. In His name we pray. Amen.

Thank you so much. Thank you for staying, for being a part of the time of commitment each Sunday, I appreciate that. I thank you for your prayer and your patience in that and don't forget as you leave there is a box, it is empty right now and we need to fill these boxes up and as we do we will fill up the lives of a group of boys and girls. I hope you will pick up one of those up.

I hope I will see you at 6:00 right here in the auditorium as we regather and then this week in the missions gathering.

Let us sing as we go. Sonny, lead us in a chorus as we go.

Sermon preached on 11/8/98 by Dr. David H. McKinley