

Will Our Families Know?

Adam Griffin – November 23, 2014

Hey, good evening. How are you doing? In light of Family Worship Weekend, I would love to tell you a story. There was once a man named Hoshea, and Hoshea was born a slave. In fact, his entire family was born slaves. His people had been slaves for hundreds of years. *Hoshea* means, in Hebrew, deliverance. It means salvation.

Commentators would say his name is like a prayer, like a plea for deliverance, for salvation, which to me makes so much sense. If you are a family and you're in slavery, what are you begging for? What is your plea? What is your hope for your kid? When you are naming your son *Hoshea*, your hope is, "Lord, deliver him. Save him. Free him."

He's born into slavery. He grows up a slave, and until he's in his mid-50s, he knows nothing but slavery. Then a man comes. A man in his 80s comes to Egypt named Moses. He says to the pharaoh who has oppressed and enslaved Hoshea and his people, "Let these people go." The pharaoh refuses. The pharaoh hardens his heart to all of their requests.

So God demonstrates his power over Pharaoh and over Egypt by sending plagues, miraculous plagues, plagues that only God could do against Pharaoh, and yet Pharaoh's heart is hardened and he refuses to let Hoshea and his people go free. Until the tenth plague. In the tenth plague, God takes every firstborn son from all of Egypt in one night. He takes their lives.

In that night, the Lord who takes the lives of the firstborn passes over the Hebrews, and there's a great grief, a great scream in Egypt. Pharaoh wakes up to find all of the firstborns dead, and he declares to the people of Israel, the Hebrews, Hoshea and his people, "Go. You're free. Leave." So for the first time in hundreds of years, the people of Israel are free from slavery.

They gather their things, which God had told them to already pack and be ready, and they go. They make it all the way to the Red Sea, and there Pharaoh catches up with them. Pharaoh, who had

changed his mind, has chased them down with his army, and there God did something miraculous again. He parts the Red Sea and lets the Israelites walk across on dry land. Then when Pharaoh and his army come in behind them, he closes the waters over them and wipes out their enemies.

So now, on the other side of the Red Sea, again for the first time in hundreds of years, their enemies have been wiped out and they who have been in slavery for so long are free. It says Hoshea and his people and Moses write songs. They dance. They sing. They celebrate their freedom, their deliverance, their salvation from slavery.

Somewhere in that wilderness, on the other side of the Red Sea, Moses, who knows Hoshea, meets him and changes his name. Hoshea, whose name was given to him, which meant deliverance, has his name changed to *Yĕhowshuwa*, which means "God is your deliverance. God is your salvation." Commentators say it's like Moses changed his name from a prayer and a plea for deliverance to a promise and an actualization. "You wanted deliverance and now you have it, and who gave it to you but the Lord?"

"God is your deliverance. Your name will be *Yĕhowshuwa*." In English we would say *Joshua*. And Joshua, every time they say his name, will be a reminder that God was their deliverance. So the people of Israel, now free after hundreds of years, now singing and dancing, start to march toward the Promised Land, the land their people were promised God would give them when they were free.

They make their way three days into the wilderness, and three days in, they begin to grumble and complain and look at the Lord and say, "Why did you bring us out here? We could have died more comfortably in slavery in Egypt." Three days. In three days, they overlook the parting of the Red Sea, the miraculous plagues, the amazing things God did. It took them three days to forget what their God was capable of and instead focus inward on themselves and go, "I am thirsty," as if the Lord could not provide water, God who parted the Red Sea.

I'd like to say three days is a long time, but I know for me how quickly I forget what God has done, how big God is when I'm faced with a circumstance that is this close to me. When I'm in the midst of something, when I am so close to a struggle, when I'm experiencing any level of discomfort, it's like I'm blinded to anything God has ever done and how big he truly is.

If I were to take a second and remind myself or have my friends who know the Lord remind me who God is, how big he is, how near he is, how close he is, and how capable he is, but I get so close

to my circumstances, so fixated on myself that I forget. For the people of Israel, it took three days to forget that they follow the God who parts the Red Sea.

God *did* provide water for them in the wilderness and he *did* provide food for them in the wilderness. They marched from there, and they headed to another place where they could get water, where they could get sustenance. On the way, Scripture tells us, they were attacked by a people called the Amalekites, the descendants of Amalek, who was a descendant of Esau.

He attacked them, Scripture says, from the rear. He didn't attack them head on. It says that as they were marching, he attacked the rear. In other words, the Scripture says those who were lagging behind, the slowest, the weakest of their people, that's where Amalek attacked. Moses takes Joshua and says, "Joshua, raise up for us an army. Choose from the people of Israel someone to fight for us."

So for the first time in hundreds of years, Joshua raises up an army for Israel, who's now free. They go out to attack their enemies, the Amalekites. Joshua leads them out into this attack, and Moses says, "I will be up on this hill. I will be beseeching the Lord for Israel." He's going up there to raise his hands to the Lord.

Scripture tells us that as long as his arms were raised to God, Israel was experiencing victory in the battle. As long as he was beseeching the Lord, praying to the Lord, they would have victory. But anytime he began to get weary, anytime his arms drooped, the Amalekites would begin to win the battle.

This was not some kind of crazy magic trick Moses was doing with a stick. This is another reminder in a long string of reminders that the victory they would have, *any* victory they would have, would come from God and beseeching God. Not here, not their own strength, not the wisdom of Joshua or Moses, but only in the God who they were beseeching.

Moses stood on that hill, lifting his arms, to the point that he was so exhausted he could no longer hold his arms up, so he was joined by his brother Aaron and this man Hur, who held his arms up, who sat him on a stone so he could keep praying on behalf of the people of Israel until eventually they had complete victory over the Amalekites.

Then the Lord's voice comes to Moses and says two things. The Lord says to Moses, "Write this in a book." In other words, "Don't forget this. Don't move on from this without recording this," because

otherwise we will so quickly forget. "Write it down so you can tell future generations. Write it down so you don't forget the victory comes in beseeching the Lord. The victory comes in prayer."

Then he says a second thing. He says, "And recite these things in the ears of Joshua. Repeat them over and over again to Joshua, who will one day lead these people, to Joshua, who might quickly think it was him who had the victory, to Joshua, the man you're investing your life in. Remind him over and over again how good the Lord is, how near he is, how capable he is."

I know as a pastor I deal with my own struggles. I deal with other people's struggles. We counsel, we pastor, and sometimes I'm devastated by our lack of understanding how near God is and how victory comes in beseeching him. How many couples come and their marriage is on fire, and if the question was, "How much time have you spent in prayer about your marriage?" it's a devastating answer.

What we seek as people are easy answers, good advice, a person to solve it. "I'm single. I'm lonely. If I just met the right person, that would fix so much of my life." When the Lord has said, "Write it down. Don't forget. Recite it in one another's ears. Don't forget." Victory comes in beseeching the Lord. The Lord is trustworthy. He can be trusted. Even in the midst of the circumstances that seem so overwhelming right now, he can be trusted.

Why? I've seen him do incredible things. The victory is not here in what I'm capable of. The victory is in him. So we lean into him. We're called to recite these things to one another, because without that, so quickly we forget. I get so caught up in me that I miss it, that I won't communicate, that I won't share it.

Soon after that attack, they made it to the base of the mountain, Mount Sinai. At the base of Mount Sinai, it says Moses and his brother Aaron and 70 of the elders went up onto the side of the mountain, Joshua with them. It says there they saw the presence of God, and it says there they ate and drank. They sat in the presence of God and ate and drank.

Then a voice came from the mountain and said, "Moses, come up higher." So Moses turned to the elders and said, "You wait down here at the base of the mountain with the people. I will take Joshua with me, and Joshua and I will go up the mountain." So Joshua and Moses walk up the mountain, and they're in a mist.

They're in this mist for six days before the voice of the Lord comes again and says, "Moses, you come up even higher. Come out of the mist and into the presence of the Lord." We know Joshua doesn't go down the mountain to the people. He doesn't go up with Moses, but he waits patiently on the mountain. For the rest of 40 days and 40 nights, Moses is in the presence of the Lord, Joshua is waiting, and the people of Israel are at the base of the mountain.

After these 40 days and 40 nights, Moses comes out of the presence of the Lord, and he comes bearing two tablets of stone on which God has etched commandments. These are the laws, the way of life for the people of Israel who have been enslaved for hundreds of years. Now God will tell them, "This is how you will live as free men and women. These are the laws that will give you life."

He comes back and finds Joshua, and Joshua and Moses begin to walk down the mountain. Scripture says that Joshua said to Moses, "I hear something in the camp. It doesn't sound like defeat. It doesn't sound like grief." He says, "It doesn't sound like victory, but I do hear singing and dancing." As Joshua and Moses approach the camp, they see the people of Israel singing and dancing again, but this time not about the God who helped them cross the Red Sea.

This time they're singing and dancing around a statue, around a golden calf they've created for themselves, and declaring, "This is the god who led us out of Egypt," with Aaron as their leader. Aaron, who a little more than a month before that was eating and drinking in the presence of God, who saw him part the Red Sea, has made a golden calf for the people of Israel and said, "This is your god."

I'd love to say at that moment I'd be with Moses and Joshua and be disgusted, but at the same time, I know myself. I know us. How I can be swept up in worship, how I can be swept up in the Word of God, how I can be moved by the power of God through my friends who know him, and yet as soon as I walk out the door of the church can run right back to the gods I worship that are not him. The idols in my life that exist, I can go back to so quickly.

Aaron, who ate in the presence of God, a little more than a month later builds a new one. I get it. My hope for us is that we would remind each other constantly who the real God is so we would not so quickly forget and run to something else, something lesser. Then they leave Mount Sinai and march to the Promised Land, to the edge of it, because this is the land they have been promised.

Moses sends in 12 men, one from each tribe of the people of Israel, to go look through the land before they take everybody in. He sends in Joshua, and with Joshua he sends in a man named Caleb, who represents the tribe of Judah. We have all heard of Joshua and Caleb, because these are men we name our kids after. You probably know someone named Joshua. You probably know someone named Caleb.

He sends in 10 other men, a man named Palti and a man named Shammua, men we don't name our kids after, not because their names aren't cute and hipster, but because they came back with a cowardly report. They did not trust in the Lord. They came back from the Promised Land, the land that would be the land of Israel, and these 10 men said, "The land is good. It's beautiful. But the people are huge and strong. Their cities are fortified. There's no way we can take them. They'll destroy us."

Joshua and Caleb step in and say, "We have seen the land. The land *is* good. The people *are* big. The cities *are* fortified, and our God is bigger. Our God who parted the Red Sea, who provided water and food out of nothing in the wilderness, can give us victory in the land of Canaan," the land that would become the land of Israel.

The reaction of the people to Joshua and Caleb's tale of how great God is was for them to pick up stones and say, "We should kill Joshua and Caleb." So God said to Moses, "These people, this generation, this group from Israel, will not go into the Promised Land. They will get what they are asking for. They will die in the wilderness."

He says, "For 40 years, you will wander the wilderness, never going into the Promised Land, and during those 40 years, your entire generation will die off except for Joshua and Caleb. Joshua and Caleb will go into the Promised Land. They will lead your children, those 20 and under. I will raise them up, and they will go into the Promised Land with Joshua and Caleb. The rest of you will die."

So for 40 years they wander. Forty years later, when they get back to the Promised Land and Joshua and Caleb have watched all of the people their age die off, Caleb says, "I am just as ready today as I was 40 years ago to go in." The book of Joshua tells us that Caleb said, "The land I want for my inheritance... I want the hill country, the land where there are fortified cities, where there are the biggest enemies. That's the land I want, because my God is greater, and I delight in being wholeheartedly committed to him." Caleb said, "I trust in him. That's the land I want for my tribe."

Before they entered the Promised Land, Moses, who was told he would not go with them, stood up, gathered the people of Israel, and gave them a final speech, a final word, a repetition of the law. This is why I love the book of Deuteronomy, because what the book of Deuteronomy is is the summary of the history and the commands for the people of Israel to a new generation.

Their parents did not trust the Lord to go into the Promised Land, so Moses is saying, "Because your parents messed this up, let me tell you what you should do and how you should live as you go into the Promised Land that should have been theirs." So in Deuteronomy, he gives them three chapters of history at the beginning. "This is what we've been through. This is what God has done. This is how God has been trustworthy."

Then in chapter 4, verse 9, as he turns the corner from history into his speech before he goes and dies on the mountain, he says, "**Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen...**" Do you hear it? "Don't forget this. Guard your soul diligently." Then he says, "**Make them known to your children and your children's children...**"

He says, "Care for your own soul diligently." *Diligently* means work hard at it. Don't give up. It's going to be hard, but be patient. Don't forget what you've seen, and don't you dare not tell your kids about it. Communicate to the next generation and the next generation and the next generation who the Lord is, what he has done, how near he is, how good he is, and how capable he is, how in beseeching him we can know him.

Now I'd like to say I would be the Joshua and Caleb and Moses ready to go, that I would be the young generation who's ready to follow them, but honestly, I get what their parents went through. I get what the spies went through going through the land and coming back. In the face of opposition, in looking at how big the opposition is, we can be easily intimidated.

When we look out at the culture and what things can be said to us the church, what I look like when I say I believe the Bible, and what the world would think of that, I can cower. I can shy away. I can refrain from being bold the way the Lord has called me to in the face of opposition, because I forget who my God really is, the God who is bigger, the God who is better, God who is close, God who has called on me to beseech him.

Two chapters later... Moses keeps going, and in chapter 6, verse 4, he'll have this section we call the *Shema*. The *Shema* was part of the Jewish morning and evening prayers. It's the verse that when someone asked Jesus Christ, "What is the most important thing in the Bible?" Jesus said this, Deuteronomy 6: **"Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might."**

Moses says, "Impress these things on your children." He says, "Teach these things diligently to your kids." He says, "Talk about them when you get up. Talk about them when you walk on your way. Talk about them in your house. Talk about them outside your house. Put them on your gates. Put them on your doorposts. Put them on your forehead."

He says, "Talk about the Lord everywhere you go, whatever you do." If you are a parent, if you are single, whatever you are, this is your call. If you are in this generation, you were telling it to other generations. You were telling it to people within your generation. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your might."

The word he uses there is you teach it *diligently*. Why? Because it will not be easy, because to disciple the next generation is hard. It's messy. To be disciplined is hard and messy, because we are broken and messy people, and we are so quick to forget who the Lord is, how great the Lord is, how near he is, how capable he is.

Then as Moses draws his speech to a close in chapter 32 at the end of Deuteronomy, it says this. This is right before Moses is going to go up on the mountain, bless the people, and die. It says in verse 44, **"Moses came and recited all the words of [a] song in the hearing of the people, he and Joshua the son of Nun."** I like to imagine Joshua and Moses singing together, this 120-year-old Moses, this 80-something-year-old Joshua. I like to imagine they're these old men singing in this beautiful perfect harmony. I don't know what it really looked like, but that's what I like to imagine.

"And when Moses had finished speaking all these words to all Israel, he said to them, 'Take to heart all the words by which I am warning you today, that you may command them to your children, that they may be careful to do all the words of this law. For it is no empty word for you, but your very life, and by this word you shall live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess.'"

He says, "I'm talking to you, the children of the generation who messed this up. Tell this to your children too. Be diligent after your own soul. Be diligent in teaching it to your children." He says, "Listen. This is no empty word. This is your very life." In other words, "Your lives depend on this." For us today it's no different. This is no empty word for us. The commands of the Lord on how we should live and who he is are not empty to us. It's our very life. Our lives depend on this. Our children's lives depend on this.

Joshua, who's born in slavery and is named later "God delivers..." All of us are born in slavery to sin. All of our children are born slaves to sin, and there is only one Deliverer. Hundreds of years later, another baby would be born, and his parents would be told, "Name him *Yēhowshuwa*," which in Hebrew we would say translates to *Joshua*. If you translate it to the Greek and then to English, we would say that name is *Jesus*.

Jesus' name means God delivers, God saves. An angel comes to his earthly father Joseph in a dream and says, "Hey, don't divorce Mary; this baby is from the Lord," and the angel says to Joseph in this dream, "You will name him Jesus, because he will come to save people from sin." Jesus is named *Jesus* because his purpose is to deliver you from the slavery you were born into.

I know for so many of us in here, all day long we drag in here the sin we are entangled in, the mess our lives are, and so many of us would pray, "God, deliver me." I'm telling you that our only hope is in our only Deliverer, Jesus Christ, who for that purpose was named "God delivers, God saves, salvation is in God," and for that purpose came to live, to die, and then to be resurrected again to have victory over sin, over death, over the Devil. Deliverance solely rests in Jesus Christ.

For the next month, we'll be talking about the coming of Jesus Christ, the waiting, the anticipation in the people of Israel and in the church of God, waiting for Jesus, for the Deliverer, for God to come. His name would be *Immanuel*, God with us. For the next month, Advent, which means the coming, the anticipation, that's what we'll be walking through: the coming of Jesus.

Right before Moses died, he laid his hands on Joshua, and the Scripture says Joshua was filled with the Spirit of God and filled with the spirit of wisdom. Then Moses went up on the mountain to die, and Joshua led the people of Israel into the Promised Land. They defeated their enemies in the Promised Land, and they divided the land amongst the tribes, and then Judges, chapter 2, tells us Joshua died 110 years old.

It says the people of Israel were faithful to God as long as Joshua was alive. Then it said all of the elders who were raised up with Joshua who led the people of Israel... As long as they were alive, the people of Israel followed God. Then it says after Joshua and the elders died, a new generation came who did not know God, who did not know what God had done.

In other words, all of these commendations, all of these commandments to teach these things diligently, to care for your own soul diligently, to know what the Lord has done, to not forget, to not move on, to recite these things, to write them down and read them, were lost on a new generation who had not done that.

My prayer for us is that that would never be our story, that we would not turn over to the world the education of the next generation, we would not listen to the world on who God is, but rather listen to God on who he is, that we would not quickly forget who he is, nor would we shirk our duty to communicate who he is to the next generation. Over and over again in Scripture, it says, "Communicate this not just to your own heart, but to another generation, to the children and the children and the children."

I think we underestimate two things. First, we underestimate our culture and their message. The message of our culture, the beliefs of our culture, we underestimate just how different it is from Scripture. Our culture has a different morality than our God, has a different belief system than our God, has a different authority than our God, has a different belief in sexuality than our God, has a different belief in materialism than our God, has a different belief on you as an individual and your value than God does.

We treat it kind of like we all get along, like we're all the same, but the truth is we underestimate just how different our culture is from God and what he has called us to. Secondly, we underestimate the role you are called to play in stepping out and calling out and distinguishing the difference between the culture and the reality, in particular, distinguishing and calling that out to the next generation.

All of you have been called to recite these things to one another, to encourage one another, to say to one another, "This is who God is. This is the only place where deliverance is. It's in Jesus Christ." All of us have been called, parents or not, to lead the next generation to know Jesus Christ and the truth he is and that that is the only place where deliverance happens: in Jesus Christ.

So how do we do this? How do we disciple? I want to give you three really practical ideas, and then we'll close out. At The Village Church, we talk about family discipleship. We talk about the framework for family discipleship. I want to give you three definitions, three pieces of that framework.

1. *Family discipleship time.* Family discipleship time is creating intentional time built into the rhythm of the family's life for the purpose of thinking about, talking about, and living out the gospel. When I was single, this looked like my roommate and me saying, "Thursday night, 9:00 at the latest, let's gather in our house, and we will talk about how we are doing. We'll confess sin to one another. We'll pray for each other. We'll push each other toward the Lord." We had a time set aside that we said, "This is when we will chase the Lord together."

Now that I'm married, Wednesday nights after the kids are in bed, my wife and I have a time we call "our hour," where I will press my wife toward the Lord, where I'll hear how she is doing, where we will read a book together, we will read Scripture together, we will pray for one another, we will confess sin to one another. Because if we say we're going to do it organically, it's a nice way of saying it will rarely happen, but if we say we will do this intentionally and set aside time to do it, it will happen, because we will hold each other accountable to it.

With kids, the kids I have, the kids who are my kids' ages... I have a 2-year-old and a 1-year-old. For them right now it looks like every night when I put them to bed, we have set aside time that before they go to sleep, I will pray over them. I will read a story from the Bible to them. Then I have a verse for each one of them that I will pray over them.

For my son Oscar, who's 2, I will say to him, "Oscar, be on the alert. Stand firm in the faith. Act like a man. Be strong, and let everything you do be done in love." I'll say that to him every night, because I'm being intentional in how I communicate to him who God is, how close God is, and his call in that. To my son Gus, who's 1, he doesn't know a word yet, but every night I will pray over him. I will say, "Be strong and show yourself a man, and keep the charge of the Lord your God to walk in all his ways."

It's what David said to Solomon on his deathbed as he was passing on to his son the charge to keep following the Lord. I will do that every night intentionally, because it's the call of the Lord for me to do that, and I don't want to underestimate my call to do it. Now I can't save my kids. Leading my kids is messy. Sometimes on like a Wednesday night, I'll pull out my guitar and try to sing songs

over my kids, songs of the Lord, and my son Oscar will scream and yell and say, "Not that song, Daddy. Not that song, Daddy."

I will keep going and I will keep pressing. Why? Because the Bible says my role is not to save my kids, but my role is to be diligent in telling these things. Diligent means I don't give up. Diligent means I'm patient. Diligent means I don't compromise the truth just because it might make my son uncomfortable, even if his comfort level is my singing.

2. *Family discipleship moments.* Family discipleship moments are capturing and leveraging opportunities in the course of everyday life for the purpose of gospel-centered conversations. This is saying whatever I'm doing, wherever I am, whatever conversation I'm having, I'm trying to leverage that opportunity to share the truth of the gospel.

This week it's raining. I'm talking to my son who's 2 about where the rain comes from, why God would invent rain, and what the rain does, and how it's a beautiful picture of how God cares for the earth, that he waters it. Plants grow. We eat plants. We grow. It's beautiful. My son doesn't quite get it, but I am leveraging that opportunity to tell him about the gospel.

When times are tough, if my wife has had a hard day, I don't just say, "I'm sorry, baby." I commend her to the gospel. I point her to the only place where we find deliverance and the only place we have hope: Jesus Christ. For my sons, for roommates, for friends, for my wife, for my parents, my call is to leverage moments for the sake of the gospel. The easiest way I can encourage you to do that is know your Bible. Know your Bible, know who God is, know what he did, and then remind each other. Point each other to the truth of his Word.

3. *Family discipleship milestones.* Family discipleship milestones are marking and making occasions to celebrate and commemorate significant spiritual milestones of God's work in the life of the family and child. Making and marking. *Making* means I have set it up. I'm going to plan this. This might be something like every year on my wife and my wedding anniversary, which is a milestone... We have made it another year married to one another.

I will testify to my kids and to my wife how good marriage is, what marriage is, why God gave us marriage, what I hope for the next year in our marriage. It becomes a milestone for us. We don't just celebrate us; we celebrate who God is and what God has done. Every time I have a birthday or my kids have a birthday, I want to celebrate what the Lord has done in their life this past year and point

them toward my hopes for this next year. I take advantage of every milestone I can to say, "This is about remembering who God is, how close he is, how near he is, how capable he is, how big he is."

We just passed Halloween. We're about to hit Thanksgiving. We're about to hit Christmas. These are things that every year our culture marks and says, "Yes, this is a time we will gather as a family or we will do this as an activity." So how will Thanksgiving this year be about the Lord, about reciting to one another the things the Lord has done?

How will Christmas be a time that we recite to one another what the Lord has done? That we are another year older. Another Christmas has come. Christmas and Thanksgiving never get old, and neither does God. So every year we have another opportunity to gather our family and testify to how good God has been. You might also mark milestones, things God does in the life of someone, things like salvation. I don't get to decide when salvation is, but my kids were born slaves to sin, and I can't wait for the day to see them delivered from it.

When that happens, I will mark that day. I will remember that day. I will celebrate the anniversary of that day, and I will call to their attention what God has done in their life every year on the anniversary of that day. That's a milestone I mark. When my kids are baptized, when my kids get married, when my kids go from being boys to being men. Those are milestones I want to mark in their lives.

For you, maybe it's just a new job. It's a milestone in your life, and you want to declare what the Lord has done and remind yourself. We are so quick to forget. We are so quick to wander. That's why God says over and over again things that say, "Remember this. Pass this on. Remind one another." Because we are prone not to do that. We are prone to forget.

One of the things you can do tonight too... We've made it really easy for you. On your way out tonight in the lobby, there's a huge stack of books that look like this. These are Advent guides. Over the next month, as we're going through Advent, as we're preparing for Christmas, as you're thinking about gathering as roommates, gathering as families, gathering as Home Groups, there are family discipleship times written out in this booklet.

You can grab these on your way out tonight. You can grab one for yourselves, two for... Grab as many as you want. Take them with you. Take a stack. Take a box. They're out there tonight. You can take those with you. I want to tell you one more thing, and then I want to pray for you.

Tonight when we close out worship, we'll be singing a song, and it's really my favorite song we do. I really love it. The chorus of it says, "I won't go back. I can't go back." The people of Israel often in the wilderness said, "We would have been better off if we had just gone back to slavery." I know the tendency in us is to still love aspects of the sin we've been delivered from.

There are sins we still enjoy. There are aspects of things that are against God we still run to. I want to call us tonight to repent from those things, to confess those things, and say, "I won't go back. I can't go back. Jesus Christ, whose name means God delivers, has delivered me from them. He has saved me from them."

If you're here tonight and you're going, "I don't know what that means. I don't know what it means to be delivered or saved," then I want to talk with you too. We'll have pastors up here at the end of the service, and they want to talk with you about what that means to be delivered from something, to be saved. Let me pray over you.

Heavenly Father, I am grateful for you. I'm grateful for the mercy you've given to me, shown to my family, and shown to our church. I pray that tonight in your great foreknowledge and mercy you would save, that tonight you would move in the hearts of men and women who know you, crave to know you, and want deliverance. I pray tonight, God, for Freddy who's in the hospital struggling for life, that, God, you would reach in and save him, that you would move in his family.

I pray in mercy, God, for us that we would not quickly forget that even in Communion, as you call us to do this in remembrance of you, that we would do just that, that we'd remember your Son Jesus Christ and everything that name means to us. We pray these things in his name and for his name's sake and for the glory of his name, amen.