

I Am  
The Bread of Life  
6-14-20

Hi family. So glad you're here. Thank you for coming this morning. I have eagerly desired to preach this sermon to you because it's the 11:30 service. So I don't have a back end. I can give you all the juicy stuff, all the good stuff, all the stuff that makes me a Bible nerd and I like it. So, I want to get rolling on this morning, cause we got a long way to go before the sun sets. Are you guys ready to go to work? Yeah. Um, I have small group tonight, so it won't be clear til sunset, but it'll be close.

We're in this really cool series on the I Am's. And one of the things that we're wrestling with, these seven items in the gospel of John is, what is John doing with these seven claims of Jesus? Like at one level, just kind of on the surface, it's just truth about Jesus, right? It's just simple truth about Jesus. Okay. But are there other ways to understand this, that give it depth and color and meaning to help us kind of get into a better understanding of what John's writing about? And there are, in my opinion, and so we want to explore that a little bit. What's interesting about Asia minor, which is where John is located in the city of Ephesus in this region of Asia minor, which is really big. But what's interesting about it is they speculate; they don't know for sure, but it's most likely somewhere between 20 and 30% Jewish. And there's a reason for that. And that reason is because 700 years before the time of Christ, 700 plus years before the time of Christ, the Assyrians come through and they Israel. And when the Assyrians conquered a nation, what they would do is they would take the people that are kind of the influencers, the wealthy, the government officials, and they would relocate them all over the world. They basically broke the countries up so that they would lose all sense of nationalistic pride. And this is how they ruled the world. What they did with the Jewish population is they put a large part of them scattered out across Asia minor. So there's a strong Jewish population in Asia minor. Now, if you fast forward to right after Jesus ascends up into heaven, very shortly after that, there's a persecution that breaks out against a guy by the name of Stephen it's in the book of Acts and he winds up being stoned to death. And then there's, this persecution really starts, kind of kicks into overdrive and the lot of the Jesus followers scatter, and they go all over. There's a small group of them that stay put in Jerusalem and hide, but the vast majority of them, they scatter and they go all over the world telling everybody about Jesus. Which, the fascinating thing about that, for me, is that the missionary movement of the book of Acts didn't happen as a compelling result of how much Jesus loves them. It was rooted in persecution. Maybe there's a lesson in that for us.

And so they, many of them go -- at least six of the 12 apostles go -- to Asia Minor. Many of these Jesus followers move towards Asia Minor and Christianity really takes root there in Asia Minor. What's the Obi wan Kenobi's quote about the bar on tattooing. -- You can never find a more wretched place of theft and villainy, scum and villainy. I think it's hilarious that you knew that. That was Asia minor. It was as pagan, as hedonistic, it was as fleshly as you could get. It was this massive melting pot of Eastern and Western world of all, like any desire that you have, you could, there was a place to have it. Like it was, it was a mess. You couldn't find a place further from God. And these Jesus followers, through persecution, move in there. And within a hundred years of the apostles, it's almost, it's over 90% Christian, which raises a question like how in the world did they do that? Um, cause we live in a culture where I would say that the church, many of us would, would espouse this, is losing influence in our culture. And so I would love to know what were they doing that actually moved in, and the gospel of the kingdom of God, took over a place, right?

Like I want to know that that's what we wrestle with. When we go to Turkey study tour, that's the trip. How did they do it? What did they do? And how did it happen and what changed and, how were they having conversations with that? What we're going to find today, as we wrestle with this passage, is that John is so brilliant in the way that he's writing that the pagans that are new to the Jesus movement in every way --they haven't seen the Bible, they don't know about this God of the, of the Jews they don't really know anything about him. These people are going to be like, "no way, that blows my mind". And then on another level, the Jewish population that are there are going to read what John's writing and go, "no, no, no, you're completely missing it". There's whole new layers to what he's doing here. And so what we're going to do is wrestle with kind of both of those worlds today, and maybe have a couple of mind blowing moments. I hope. Maybe you'd be like, this is boring, but I'm the one teaching.

Before we get anywhere, I gotta introduce you to a God by the name of Apollo. Let me show you a picture. This is Apollo. Look at him, man bun before man buns were cool, right? I, this is a stunning picture and when we go to Turkey, we look at lot of sculptures like this, like look at the detail -- that used to be a big hunk of rock. And somebody could like the detail and the folds on his cloak and the, in his hair. Like it's stunning to me, thousands of years later, that kind of detail is still there. It's like, it's breathtaking, right? This is Apollo. And Apollo has a really important role in the Roman world. Um, he's one of the gods that when it transferred from Greek to

Roman, he didn't change names. Okay. And so he was that significant of a figure in the Pantheon. K, let me tell you about Apollo. First of all, his dad is Zeus. Zeus in the Greek Jupiter in the Roman Pantheon, but Zeus is the chief of all the gods. He's the Mac daddy. He's the big dog. He's is the, he's the big Papa. That's Zeus. He's the chief of the chiefs. And Zeus has a propensity to have lots of mistresses and lots of wives. And so in the mythology, he has a lot of children. Okay. Some children he has with other goddesses, some children he has with women and they become demigods. So you have stories of Hercules and some of those kinds of things. One of the goddesses that he has an affair with is the goddess Lido. She's a mistress of Zeus and she becomes pregnant with twins. So here's the story. Lido gives birth to Artemis first and Artemis, which is a female Artemis immediately turns around and helps Lido to deliver safely Apollo. And because of that, she becomes the goddess of fertility and childbearing. Now this is really important in the ancient world because in a world where 80% of babies die just by being born and 50% of women die in childbirth, anything that you can do to increase the odds of your safety is actually a big deal. And so they would pray to Artemis the goddess of fertility and childbearing. The world center for the worship of Artemis is in Ephesus where John is based. We're gonna talk about her in a few weeks. The Artamesian, which is her temple, was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. People came literally all over the world to see her temple. It was believed that women, if they worshiped Artemis, would be saved in childbearing -- that she would protect them. So when Paul writes to Timothy and he says to Timothy who's in Ephesus, that women, if they follow Jesus properly will be saved in childbearing. What is he saying? Is he saying women shut up and have kids? The answer to that is no, because if it was I wouldn't say it like that, what he's saying is Artemis isn't the one who protects us in childbearing. We'll talk about her more in a few weeks. Apollo is her brother. By the third century BC, Apollo had become known as two things. Number one is the God of light. He's called the light of the world. And the reason is because he has a chariot that has four horses on it. And he attaches that chariot to the sun. And that chariot's job is to pull the sun across the sky every day. So Apollo rides, in the chariot and pulls the sun across the sky. Now you have to understand that even in the ancient world, they understood the importance of the sun. If you don't have sun, you don't have life. And so for any God that gets attached to the sun, that is a really, really important God. And that matters a lot. Okay. The other thing that he is known for is that he becomes known as the God of Oracle. Let me explain to you what that means. There are eight Oracles in the first century. Technically they're eight locations where the Oracles are. Typically the Oracles don't live very long. And so they become very quickly replaced. Um, and there's all this criteria for that. Let me explain to you Oracle. You go to the temple of an Oracle and you pay money to the Oracle and you relay a request to the Oracle. I

have this question about my life -- this situation that I need help with -- this, whatever. I go to the Oracle and I pay money to ask the Oracle how I should handle my life's questions. The Oracle goes to the gods, the gods give the answer to the Oracle. And the Oracle gives you your answer and like it or not, that answer comes from the gods. Now, we would look at that and go that's hogwash. That's nonsense. That's-- we can't buy that. But here's the thing, what we have to wrestle with is before we just so quickly be dismissive of it, is there anything to this? Here's what I can tell you. One of the places that we go in Turkey, when we do our study tour in Turkey is a place called Dittema. At Dittema, there is an Oracle temple, not the most famous of them. We'll talk about her in a minute, but the most, the most, this is a Oracle temple in Dittema. The temple pillars are so big -- I have a picture of me standing in front of the pillars that hold up the temple walls, you know, the fluted classic fluted, temple pillars. I'm standing like this with my arms, stretched out in front of it. And the pillar is on the outside of both my arms it's that big around, and 64 feet tall. These pillars archeologists say based on the size of the temple, it took them 900 years to build the temple at Dittema. And this isn't the most famous one. If there's nothing to this, there's no way for them to sustain the ruse for 900 years. Are you with me? Like there's something going on here? So, the question is what? But that's another conversation for another day. What's happening there? By far, the most famous of all the Oracles was the Oracle at Delphi. Delphi is an island between Turkey and Greece, the Oracle at Delphi. Talk to the gods, the God that the Oracle talked to was Apollo. And then Apollo would go to his dad Zeus with the request that you bring to the, you can't get a more powerful God stamp than to have a Apollo talk to Zeus himself and come back on your behalf and give you Zeus his answer like this. Isn't some weakling, lesser God, this is Zeus. So, the Oracle at Delphi was incredibly powerful. And Apollo becomes known as the God who brings the message of his father, the most powerful God -- are there any connections to Jesus, yet? He becomes known as the one who brings the message of the God most high -- he's the God of Oracle. And so it's brilliant that John chooses to make a play on Apollo. Now, Apollo was also given the power to heal by Zeus, which he transferred that power to his son, Asclepius, or Asclepius depending on whether you say it in Greek or Latin. The name for a hospital in the ancient world is a Asclepian. It's the temple to the God Asclepius. They don't have a hospital, like we think of a hospital, like don't have Parker Adventist. They don't have that. They don't have quick care clinics. They don't have any of those things. They have a temple that if you have an ailment of some kind, you go to the temple of, Asclepius. And what you do is you pay tribute to the God and then you receive healing. Now we're going to talk again about him later. Here's what happened. So Asclepius, through his power of healing, figured out -- he built on it and he figured out -- the power to raise people from the dead. So Zeus got

mad and killed him, but then he felt bad and he brought him back. But he said you can't resurrect humans anymore. So, Asclepius becomes the God of resurrection and life. We're gonna make a play on that one too. Right? So we're gonna talk about him in a few weeks. Here's a question for you though. What do you do, Jesus follower, when your child has appendicitis? What do you do when your wife is breach with childbirth? What do you do when your child breaks their arm or their leg? This is the wrestling match. Do I, just, just go and we'll just go over there. We know Asclepius isn't real, but, but my child has appendicitis. I gotta get like, what, what really? Cause in order to do that, you gotta pay tribute to Asclepius. So you're going to do that. Or you can let your child die. This is the real issues that they were facing as Jesus followers in the first century. Our biggest issue is somebody made fun of our Jesus t-shirt -- their lives were literally riding on the line with this one. And they took over the region because great movements are born out of hard circumstances.

By the way, this is an interesting little detail. Augustus – Caesar Augustus, his favorite God was Apollo. Okay. And so he changed Apollo's birthday to September 23rd. And the reason he did that is because that was his birthday. That was the birthday of Augustus. So he changed the birthday of Apollo, the God, to September 23rd. Now, who was Caesar when Jesus was born? In the days of Caesar Augustus, a decree went out that the entire Roman world should be taxed, right? You've seen, you've heard that story. This is the birth of Jesus.

We're going to enter into John chapter eight, this whole conversation around the light of the world. Two stunning truths about John chapter eight. Number one is that it comes right after John chapter seven. You can never forget that because the second reality, equally as stunning, is that it comes right before John chapter nine. John, when he's writing his gospel, doesn't have the chapters and verses those aren't in it. John is writing a narrative that is an unfolding story of the work of Jesus in the world. And so it's all part of this larger narrative and we lose the forest for the trees so often when we don't understand that. In John chapter seven, that all the Jews are at, what's called the Hoshi Ana Raba. That's the Hebrew word for it. The last and greatest day of the feast. Okay. Question? Which feast. This is where it gets awesome. Sucoat or the feast of Tabernacles or the feast of booths. It's sometimes called when is Sucoat celebrated? The answer is the middle to the end of September. Wouldn't it be? Just like, God, I can't prove it, but wouldn't it be just like, God, if Jesus makes the claim, I'm the light of the world on the day that they celebrate the birthday of Apollo. I can't, I can't prove it. So you can be like, that didn't happen. Okay. They still said it ,right. Would it be interesting? That'd be, that just feels very Jesusy to me. I dunno, you do with that what you will, but those are

kind of things that when you start to get to the story around the story, Oh, here's another snuggler. I didn't even, I forgot this. I'm going to give you all the bonuses. Remember I was talking about the diaspora, right? The spread out Jews that were taken away by the Assyrians. Gamaliel the rabbi was the first one to write letters to the diaspora, to help them stay connected to their faith. Okay? Guess who Paul's rabbi was. It was Gamaliel. Why does that matter? Cause where does Paul learn to write all his letters to the churches? He learned it from his rabbi, right? Real people, real place, real time. All this stuff is going on around the story. And we don't ever know to ask those questions.

John chapter eight, what happens is we have the last and greatest day of the feast. And then the next story is the woman caught in adultery, which is a beautiful tender story with Jesus. And I'm going to preach that sermon one day. Cause there's all kinds of stuff going on. Like why did they wait until that day to bring her to Jesus and all that stuff? There's all kinds of things going on that are just really stunning and how Jesus handles it is brilliant. Like he has to be God or something. You should totally follow him. But then it says this, "and Jesus spoke to saying, I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." So the light of the world brings the light of life. Right? Which the interesting thing is what Jesus is going to say here in just a minute is, it's the father's testimony about me that I'm delivering to you. It's God's word that I'm giving to you. You with me? What does the Bible say? What does this say? ItnProverbs. Your word is a lamp unto my feet light into my path.

When Jesus makes the claim of light. What he's saying is the words that I'm giving you that are confirmed by my father. This is clean instruction on how you should live. It's nonnegotiable. It's not like, well, you know, if you want to, it doesn't work that way. So the Pharisees said to him, you're bearing witness about yourself. Your testimony is not true. Now let me run, just a hypothetical situation here. Let's say that Apollo comes down to the Oracle and gives a testimony about what his father had said. And the Oracle's like, ah, you're testing. You're testifying just on your own. I don't believe you. I don't believe that that really came from your father. What might Apollo use as leverage to justify his actions? Maybe something like, do you know who my dad is? Let's see if that shows up. Jesus answers, even if I do bear witness about myself, my testimony is true for, I know where I came from and where I'm going, but you do not know where I come from or where I am going. You judge, according to the flesh, I judge no one, (which by the way, if you're taking notes, you should probably circle that) yet. Even if I do judge, my judgment is true for it is not. I alone, no judge, but I am the father who sent me. Do you know who my daddy is? In your law, it is written that the testimony of two people is true. I am the one who

bears witness about myself and the father who sent me bears witness about me -- by the way, he's going to go on to say, and your father bears witness about you too, your father the devil. Which by the way, you don't probably ever want to be accused of your dad being Satan. It's probably not going to be good. So Jesus claims to be the light of the world, that his words give light to our path. And that light is life for us. And that when we walk his path, that gives us the light, the best life that God wants for us to have possible. Which doesn't Jesus say in earlier or actually a little bit later. No, he says it earlier. Um, he'll say I came that you might have life. What kind of life? To its fullest. Like, he's not trying to give you a halfway life. He's like, look, if you'll listen to my words, you're going to have the best life. Like following Jesus isn't just right. It's better than what we can come up with on our own. It's not just, I'm bigger and tougher than you, so do what I say or I'll spank you. That's not Jesus. His heart, the heart of Jesus says, listen, if you do what I say, like more abundant life opens up for you. I want to give you all the good things. That's his heart. And so this challenge to the pagans that are early, they're new Jesus followers, --they've not grown up with the word, they've not grown up understanding what's going on with the Hebrew Bible and all that stuff. And growing up with any of that stuff, these guys are like, Whoa, I love the play that he's making on Apollo and being the light and that his light is life and that it directs our path. And especially that whole thing with the Oracle. It's so fascinating how he ties all that together, man. It's incredible. John, you're brilliant. And the Jewish followers of Jesus are looking at them going, Oh, you guys, you have totally missed it. Cause here's what's going on from their perspective: if you take the gospel of John and lay it side by side with Isaiah chapter 40 to Isaiah chapter 53, it is an exact mirror. It's incredible. And it makes total sense that Isaiah 40, which is the theme passage of the Essene movement and the time of Jesus. These Essenes are the ones who lived out in Qumran by the dead sea, where all the dead sea scrolls were found. These are the people who the Essenes are the reason why we can trust that the Bible that we have in our hands today is the same one that Jesus carried because of their work and their scholarship. Their theme passage was Isaiah chapter 40. It goes like this, comfort, comfort, my people -- of course, that's where John would begin his gospel speak tenderly to Jerusalem and tell her that her hard service is over that she has paid double from the hand of the Lord for her sins. The voice of one crying in the desert, prepare the way of the Lord. Every mountain and Hill must be made low. Every Valley raised up, make straight a highway for our God. And the glory of the Lord will be revealed. And the voice said cry out. And I said, what shall I cry? All men are like grass and their faith is like the flowers of the field, the grass withers and the flowers fade because the Lord breathes on them, the grass Withers and the flower fades, but the word of the Lord stands for ever. John begins with "in the beginning was the word. And the word was

with God. And the word was God. And the word became flesh and became a light to all men comfort.” What's the next story? The next story is John the Baptist, the Pharisees come to him and go, are you Elijah? And he goes, crying in the desert, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight a highway for our God. What's the next story? Jesus gets baptized. And the glory of the Lord is revealed. It's brilliant. This is the kind of geeky stuff that I'm like, huh? I lose track of time with this kind of conversation. I'm like, what time is it? I need to hurry. For the Jewish audience that is reading this first gospel. I want you to hear section out of Isaiah 42, here's what it says, “Behold, my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delights. I've put my spirit upon him and he'll bring forth justice to the nations. By the way, the word nations is the Hebrew word goyim. It's, it's a large, you can be also translated the world. I bring forth justice to the world. Uh, cause it's like all peoples, all places, all times, it's kind of that word. All of these big things. He will not cry aloud or lift his voice or make it heard in the street. A bruised reed he will not break and a faintly burning wick he will not quench. He will faithfully bring forth justice. By the way, we're going to talk about that word justice in the fall. Um, what does that mean? Um, he will not grow faint or be discouraged until he has established justice on the earth. And the coastlands wait for his law. Thus says, God, the Lord who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people on it and spirit to those who walk in it. I am the Lord. I've called you in righteousness. I will take you by the hand and keep you. I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the world to open the eyes that are blind. Now that's weird. It a weird connection because light doesn't help blind people see. It helps people who can already see to see. Are you with me on that? Light doesn't help blind people see. So why is it open the eyes of the blind? What does that even mean? To bring out prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison, those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord. That is my name, my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols. Behold, the former things have come to pass and new things I now declare before they spring forth, I tell you of them. Why is that connection so important? Because that other stunning reality of John chapter eight is that it comes right before John chapter nine. What's the next story after this. Jesus who sinned that this man was born blind, come on, no one, but this man was born blind so that the glory of the Lord could be revealed in him. You got to hear that because the Jews are like, do you know what he's saying? That Jesus is this giver of the glory of God to all nations, to everybody. And here we sit in the middle of this pagan mess and somehow we gotta figure out how to be faithful in all of that. We can't just be part of it. We got to rise above it. How do we do that? We pray hard. That's what we do. I don't know. But what's brilliant about what John's doing is that he has this incredible message of who is really the source of the light that leads to



life for the people who really don't know anything about Jesus, they're new to the game. But he also has this incredibly profound fulfillment of prophecy message for the Jewish followers too, which gives us some really profound, like no matter how long you've been walking with Jesus, he's still got news for you. That's significant. And that leads me to all kinds of implications, mainly because here's what I noticed is that for most of us in the room, we're like, I've never heard that before. I've never heard that before.

That leads me to my first implication. How badly do you want to know the words of Jesus? My teacher studies the word regularly with a group of Orthodox Jewish rabbis for a lot of reasons. One of them is just the color and the beauty that they bring to the contextual conversation. But the second one, another reason is, that they, you can't, Jesus is a Jewish rabbi. So you can't really understand Jesus until you understand his Jewishness. You have to know that you have to know that reality for him, right? And so he studies them and they're not Jesus followers. In fact, they, they often mock Jesus, not in a, in a, like a prejudice way, but like in a joking banter friends. They'll say this. Jesus must be the worst rabbi ever.

And one day, my, teacher asked him, why do you say that? They gave two reasons. Number one, if Jesus was a rabbi, then you are all his students. If Jesus is a rabbi, then you're his students. He said in the reality is, as we look at the church, his students look nothing like their rabbi. Second reason is this: If you really believe that his words, his teachings are what you say, they are, that this is utterance from the very mouth of the God who holds the universe together. How in the world could you call yourself a student? If you don't read the gospels every week, all of them. Every week. He said, he must be the worst rabbi ever. By the way, if you want to tackle that at 16 chapters a day, you think I can't do 16 chapters. I can't read for five minutes. I'm so busy. You're in quarantine. The problem is not whether or not we have the time. The problem is how badly we want to know the words of Jesus. I say that with not, not to get at people, like I'm not trying to make you feel bad. I want you to understand if we really believe that these words contain the power that holds the universe together, we don't have a choice. How could you treat it any differently?

Number two, how badly do we want to understand the words of Jesus? Because knowing them and understanding them are two very, very different things. What we do is we're like, okay, I'm gonna read. And we start reading and reading and reading. And we either just gloss over it so far that we just get a surface level interpretation, which isn't evil. That's not wrong, but there's so much more there that just gives and gives and gives the more we mine, the more we're like, Oh my

gosh, there's so much more to God that the transformational power of the word resides deep in its truth. Or, we're reading the Bible and we're like, I don't understand that. Uh, nevermind. Ah, no dig in, don't stop. Don't move past it. That what if almost passed out right there? What if the breakthrough that you're looking for sits right on the other side of that confusion and you just glossed over it. God's showing you an opportunity for you to learn more of his nature. And the, I don't, I don't understand it. I'll just move on. No. How badly do you want to understand the words of Jesus? I mean, not just know them, understand them. It's not enough to just gloss over. There's more, there's so much more and people tell me all the time, like where do you get that stuff? I've never heard that before. That's incredible. Where do you get all that information? Work! There's no shortcut to knowing in the word, no shortcuts.

Number three, are we interested in reaching the world around us the same way the early Christians did? Cause here's what they did. They created these creative and provocative and interesting parallels to the culture and they invited people into a conversation and they worked at it really, really hard to understand and to be understood. They didn't demand that people acknowledge them as right. They allowed the Holy spirit to take care of that. What they did was stand in the tension of all this stuff that was going on and say, man, this is amazing. I have a God who is above it all. Would you like to know him? And we, we live in an era in our culture where the church has become truth bullies. Well, I'm right and you're wrong. And we have [inaudible]. So take that. It's weird that nobody wants to listen to us. I wouldn't want to listen to that either. At some point we got to come to terms with, are we willing to really be serious about connecting with the world the way that the early church did? Cause it's not like we're doing it. And I would just invite like it, doesn't not right or wrong. Good or bad. It's that's not the conversation. The conversation is effective or ineffective. Is it working ?

Number four? Jesus says, he's the light of the world. Where do we go to cling to that light? Here's what I've learned over the last several months. We are living in a time that you, at one level for sure could classify as dark. Like it's, it's confusing. And it's unsettling. Like the world is very unsettled right now. Like globally that, and you know, are we going to make it economically? Are we going to like, what's going on? And there's so many questions and all this different and there's people that are so like there's people trying to secede from the United States in their cities. They got like, what is going on? This is crazy. It's crazy. It's this. You could very easily classify this as a very dark place. Jesus is the light. Where do we go to cling to that light? Here's what I can tell you that I've learned in this process. The church is God's idea.

And I think I understand a little bit better why. Cause when I'm on my own, it's so easy to justify compromise in an uncertain world. It's so easy left to myself because nobody will know I'm not connected to anyone. I'll tell you this. When I come in here and worship with you, like I know I'm not by myself. You don't have to agree with me. You don't have to believe everything I believe, but together we're like, we're, we're going to keep going. I need this corporate space. In fact, what I've figured out is the more I grow up in Christ, the more spiritually mature I become, the more that I realize my need for church. Like I don't ever get to the point where I don't need you. People. I need you more. I need more and more and more connectedness with my family, my Jesus family, because I don't, I don't want to quit. I don't want to give up. I don't want to be done, but it's so easy to do that when I'm by myself. I've, what I've heard, I don't know this to be true or not true. But what I've heard is that across America, one of the conversations that's being had with families is that there's a lot of them that are just deciding to, Hey, I like coming to church in my pajamas. I don't want to come back to church ever. Um, I, I will watch it online. I'll do it with my family and that'd be fine, but I don't ever want to come back to church ever. I get it. If your experience of church is just to come in and sit and try to be entertained and then leave and not really do anything with your faith then, okay. Like that's probably the long and the short of it. But if you really believe Jesus is the light of the world and that his words actually transformed things around you. And you actually got to know what that is in order to walk that out well, you need people. I need people. I don't get to get away from that. It's one of the reasons why our life groups are so critical. They're so critical because it creates space for us to stay in that connectedness. But I need, I need this corporate worship. Like I, I love worshipping with you. I love being moved by the energy of listening and shouting myself. And I don't really sing. I shout and it's not good, but like doing it together with you, knowing that, okay, all week I've been feeling like I'm the only one who understands where I'm coming from. And now I have a whole group of people that are like, I'm in this with you. I need that.

As we move into our time of communion, we which we'll take it all together here in just a second. Um, I would just invite you to consider that like, where are the places that I go to cling to the light and am I, am I taking that as seriously maybe as I should.

On the night, Jesus was betrayed, he took bread and he broke it and he said, this is my body which is given for you. So whenever you eat this bread, do it in remembrance of me after the dinner, he took a cup and he said, this cup, it's the

blood of the covenant, which is shed for you. So whenever you drink this cup, do it, remembrance of me.

Let's pray. God, I confess, I repent of my heart and my desire to search your words. Sometimes it's not what it should be. And Lord, I'm just asking that you would come sit with us, inspire all of us to, to explore the depths of your words. Not over our heads. It's not beneath our feet. Lord, your word, penetrates our heart and God, thank you that you don't bail out on us while we're working through stuff. Thank you for this group of people that I can worship with. Thank you that they are here to inspire me in your name. Amen. Let's stand and sing one more song.