

1. The Building Block of Commitment

Well, Happy New Year, everyone. And let me welcome you to The Journey. My name is Nelson if we haven't had a chance to meet, and one of the pastors here I have the privilege of serving as the founding pastor of the journey, and also as a teaching pastor. And I'm excited today because I'm teaching in all of our locations. And so let me welcome everybody who's joining us online. Whatever time you're watching us, I'm really glad that you're here, I hope you will fully participate in the service. There's some downloadable notes right next to the video player, go ahead and print those out, you can follow along with the Scriptures, and the study and some of the notes that I'm going to give you today. And then let me welcome everybody in South Florida.

I realize the last a couple of times I've been with you, I've worn my New York shirt. So today, I am representing South Florida here. And so a big shout out to everybody in Boca Raton, and you have a set of notes inside of your program, if you want to grab those and grab that pen, you can follow along as well. And then, of course, the original journey where it all started in New York City. So glad to have you gathering in person. And I want to wish you a Happy New Year as well. And inside of your program, you can find message notes, and you can follow along.

I'm privileged today to be able to kick off a brand new series called the building blocks of life, the building blocks, it's really the foundations of a great life. And we thought with all that we've been through recently, we just want to get back to some of the foundations and look at what life is about. And we're going to do that kind of through this image of building blocks. And so over the next little while, we're going to lay down some building blocks. And you know, just because we're coming out of Christmas, I was thinking about Legos. Did you like Legos as a kid, you know, I'm almost old enough to remember a time without Legos. But hey, I'm not that old. Okay. But I had some Legos as a kid.

But you know, now that my son is kind of aged out of Legos, there's still a bunch around. And I remember how Legos changed from my generation to his generation. And one of the things that you do in his generation is, when you're building something, you get a platform that sort of looks like this. And then you have a goal in mind, like his big goal, toward the end of his time with the Legos wants to build a space shuttle. Yeah, have you ever seen that. And so he built a space shuttle. But he also was fascinated by New York buildings. But we had a lot of, we had a hard time building New York buildings, because you had to build it on this really shallow platform. And as they got so high, it just the least little touch or the least little misstep, it would fall over. And the reason why is this is flat, you know, the Legos have to sit right here on this five piece.

There's no, there's no foundation. But you know, if you've ever really followed the building of a building, you know that big building needs a great foundation. So I did just a little research about foundations, because we're talking about building blocks, and a lot of what you see when you build something high, or what's important when you build something high is what you don't see. Let me say that one more time. A lot of times when you're building something really high, when you're building something great, like we're going to talk about building a great life, you need a deep foundation. So let's talk about the Freedom Tower. For example, as you probably know, the Freedom Tower claims to be 1776 feet tall

1776. But did you know that the foundation of that tower goes down forty seven stories, and you may know that from having visited some of the visitor center and different things there. But then if you fast forward to the Taipei 101 tower in Taiwan, it's only slightly shorter at 1667 feet tall. They probably don't use feet in Taiwan, but just stick with me. But it goes down 24 storeys underground, it's taller underground, and most buildings in the world are above ground. And then we have another picture here for you. This is the Shanghai Tower in China. It's 2073 feet tall. So it's gigantic, and it goes down and incredible 26 stories below the ground. And you know, the simple truth is, you can't build a great building without a great foundation.

Now that's true. When it comes to Legos. That's true when it comes to construction. But that's also true when it comes to life. If you want to build a great life, you've got to build a great foundation. And so some of these building blocks that we're going to work on over the next few weeks there gonna be below the surface there on the inside of you, there are things you choose to do. Maybe outwardly people don't notice them. But you have an inner conscience and inner conviction and inner commitment, as we're talking about today. And thus we can build on that. And God can build a great life for you. And that's what God wants for you. And that's why we're starting this new year with this brand new series, because there's only one thing that you can build a great life on. And that's an unshakable foundation.

So to get us started, grab your message notes. And you'll notice the first verse in your outline is our memory verse. It's actually two verses from Matthew chapter seven, found in a passage, a larger passage, we sometimes call the Sermon on the Mount. Now, during this year, we're only going to have one memory verse per series. So this is our memory verse for the entire series. So if you've never jumped in and grabbed a memory verse card, or taken advantage of maybe cutting out the memory verse card, or the memory verse from your message notes, and putting it up, or writing it in your journal, or putting it in your phone background, or whatever, this will be a great year to do that, because we're going to challenge you to memorize about a dozen scriptures over this next year. And I think that can be really doable. And every one of those is going to be powerful to help you build that life that God has for you.

But let's listen to what Jesus says in Matthew chapter 7:24 through 25. I'm going to read it, and then maybe you can help me with a few words. Okay. Anyone who what? listens. So listening is important. Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, Jesus said, now with your finger right there. So the opposite of that is if you don't listen, like I've been told that I sometimes failed to do. If you don't listen, you're unwise. But if you listen, you're wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Though the rains come in Torrance, and the floodwaters rise and the winds beat against that house, it won't what collapse, because it is built on bedrock. Those of you in New York City, you know about bedrock. But I imagine everybody listening knows that these deep towers that we were talking about earlier that go 20 storeys underground, I mean, that's to be some pretty solid rock underneath there, to build on.

So this is our memory verse, and I hope you'll take a chance to really dig into it to read it, and perhaps memorize it over the next few weeks of the series. Because if there's ever been a time in our life, when the rains are coming, and they're coming in Torrance, and if we've been living through the rising of the

floodwaters, and we've had winds beat against us, it's been this last two years. And you know, as pastors that the journey, and I speak for all of our pastors, we are very concerned and have been concerned. And we want you to have a solid foundation for your life, so that you can stand strong, even during difficult times, like we've had, over the past two years, or whatever the rest of your life might throw at you, you know, maybe sometime down the future, you're going to face pain. Or maybe you'd like me at age 45, you're going to be diagnosed as cancer, with cancer. And by the way, I just celebrated three years cancer free just before the holidays. And now I'm working on trying to get my liver healthy.

That's why I'm not standing up today are teaching, I still am in the battle with some of the residual effects post cancer, but God has been with me I have hit that foundation. It's not been easy. But I've known that when these winds come and when these torrents come, I've built my life on the foundation of Jesus Christ. And I've been building that life for quite a long time. Not perfect, but working on it. But you see building a life on a solid foundation. It doesn't happen accidentally. It comes from an all in commitment to God and to His Word. So during this series, what we're going to do is we're going to look at three foundational scriptures, just three scriptures over the course of this series. And all of them are what we call great statements. And if you've been through membership class, this may seem familiar, but even if it's not, you're going to learn them as we go.

Now, before we get into the first great statement, what I've done is I've taken those statements and I've put them into a sentence, the foundations of a great life, so jot this in as we go. It starts with a great commitment. And that's what we're going to do Get today, a great commitment to the great commandments, which we're going to look at today. And the great commission will say a bit about that today. But we'll come back to that a little bit later, done with great compassion, and you model is compassion. And you have over the last two years some more about that in a future message that will grow a great Christian.

And that's really cool, a great Christian, and a great church. So we're not going to talk so much about growing a great church, I'll make a few comments as we go along, and other pastors will as well. But what we're really going to talk about as this entire series is about helping you become a great Christian. And these foundational statements that you build your life on, none of them will happen. Without that first word that you wrote down, go back to that first word, that first underline and look at that word commitment. You are a product of your commitment. And if you think about it, everything that you've ever done in life, with maybe the exception of choosing your parents, has come through a commitment, you made a commitment to your first job, you made a commitment to your spouse, if you're married, you made a commitment to follow Jesus, if you are a follower of Jesus, or when that time comes. You will. But it starts with a commitment. Commitment is key.

Now what kind of commitment, a great commitment. Say those two words with me? Great commitment. Say it again. Great commitment. Okay, one more time online. New York City, Boca Raton twice as loud, great commitment. All right, very good. So as we begin today, let me ask you, what are you committed to? What are the most important commitments in your life? You know, there are some commitments that are good things, but they're not necessarily the best thing. Yeah, I mean, just to be honest, there's some good commitments, I mean, you can make, you want to make a good commitment to your job,

you want to make a good commitment to your family, you want to make a good commitment to your friends, you want to make a good commitment to other things that you are involved in, like how you manage your finances, and all of that, those are good things. But the greatest thing that you can commit to is you can commit to God as a priority in your life. It's a commitment to God. And so when God is first, and he's your greatest commitment, then his power flows down, and helps you live out all of those other good commitments, so that you can be a great Christian. But if you don't have God first, and you try to put those other things in the god place or in the great place, you're always going to struggle.

Sin is always going to be around the corner, there's going to be loneliness in relationships, there's going to be emptiness. So really, making that great commitment to God affects everything else that you can do. So as I said, I'm going to ask you to make an all in commitment to God. To do that. I want to invite you to make four commitments with me. And again, I'm renewing my commitments as well. You know, I've not done this perfectly over the years. But I'm going to renew my commitments today. And I hope you will, too. So here's the first of the four commitments, four commitments to build my life on number one, building block, commit to God as the first priority in my life, commit to God as the first priority in my life. This is the most important priority you will ever make when you commit to God as the first priority in your life. And just like those buildings that we looked at, they have to go deep down into something they have to choose first to build the foundation.

They have to say the first priority is we're going to dig deep before we build up. And so that's how it is in our life. We have to say our first priority is going to be an internal soul filling all out commitment to God, and God is going to be our primary building block. You know, we used to call this the cornerstone of a building. Back in ancient times you can talk about a cornerstone today a Cornerstone is kind of a symbolic stone they add after the building is built but originally the cornerstone was that most important stone on which these ancient buildings We're built. But that's really what you're saying when you say God is first priority in my life. Now, what does that really mean for God to be first priority? Is that about keeping all the walls? Is that about? Saying religious stuff is? What is it all about? Well, let me give you a little background on this first great passage that we're going to look at here in a moment from Matthew 22. In the Old Testament, remember the Hebrew Bible, the first part of the Bible. In the Old Testament, there were 613 commitments that the people of God were expected to make. Now, if you want a guy to be first priority, you had to keep all 613 of those. And I'll tell you, that's impossible. They're almost impossible to count. But one day, a religious leader came to Jesus and said, Okay, of all those commandments Jesus, you know, the most important ones.

So what is the most important? And then Jesus gave what we call the great commandments. Now, this is not in your notes. But do you see Matthew 22:37-38? above that? Would you write great commandments, great. commandments, there's two of them. Now, here's what I love about what Jesus did. And only Jesus could do this. He took all 613. And he said, Let me summarize it into, he's not being simplistic, okay? This is not about simplifying, it's about elevating these two, above all others. And here's what he said. The first is, you must love the Lord your God, with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. So you love God, and you build that foundation, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. And then this is the first and greatest commandment.

Now we're gonna get to the Second Great Commandment, and just a moment, but this is the first one. God said, putting me first in your life, loving Me with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, it's your most important priority. Because if you do that, everything else in life lines up. In fact, nothing makes sense in life, life is out of control. Life is always dealing with the storms and the winds and the torrents and the rain, when God is not first. But if God is first, then what you're saying is, God, I'm gonna go your way. I'm not going to follow the way of a godless crowd, I'm not going to live in disobedience, I'm going to seek you, I'm going to look for you, I'm going to put you first I'm going to make you a priority in my life. Remember, first priority, first priority in my day, first priority in my time, first party, my finances, first party and my relationships, first priority in my week, like being here at church today, different things like that.

So you can just take that and build that out and say, in every area of my life, whenever I'm in God, you're gonna be first priority. And as a result, life begins to make sense. And you begin to grow and become that great, Christian. Now, as I mentioned, these statements are not only for us individually, but this is how we've built our church. And so one of our core values as a church, and you can jot this down is we value Jesus, we value Jesus. And that doesn't maybe at first glance, sound all that controversial. But in a world where most people don't even understand who Jesus is, nor understand his teaching, when we go out, and we say, We're gonna live with Jesus's first priority. That's countercultural. I mean, that's, that's the building block most people miss. And just quite frankly, this is what breaks my heart. I see so many people living apart from Jesus. And I think if they just knew the way, if they just had this commitment, then if they just allow Jesus to matter in their daily lives, it would make such a difference. And then the question for reflection for you is, am I following Jesus daily? It's that first priority. Jesus said it this way. He said, Seek the kingdom of God. In other words, seek my way of living, seek my priority, above all else, and live righteously. And talking about his father will give you everything you need. So that's where it starts. First priority. God is the first priority. But then number two, commit to God's principles as the foundation of my life. So now we move from priority to principles. And the principles are the principles that are found in the Bible.

And so when we talk in our society about what is truth? And you know, this has been a big question for a long time now, what is the truth? And if you go back 500 years, they had one definition, if you go back 250 years, they had another definition. And even, you know, in the last number of decades, there has been different traditions and answers to the questions, what is truth, but the one truth that has held out now for hundreds of years going on over 2000 years, when you get back to the Old Testament, over 4000 years, it's the eternal truth of God's word. That's why everything that we do is centered on God's word. That's why we try to give you a memory verse every week. That's why we study God's Word, God's word is the truth. And so I want you in this next year, to know the truth at a deeper level, because when you have that first priority, you say, Okay, I'm gonna build the priority of my life on Jesus. And then that stability that comes is going to come from the truth of God's word. That's why each year, we put together a one year Bible reading plan. And we've done that again this year. And each year, we try to update it, and we try to make it fresh for you. And did you know that if you invest 15 minutes a day, that's all it takes, then you can read through the entire Old Testament and New Testament. And this year in our Bible reading plan, we broke it down.

So you read a little bit of the Old Testament, and a little bit of the New Testament. So that way, you don't get bogged down, maybe sometimes in a certain section, but you can bounce over to the other. And by the way, if you pick up this reading plan, you can download it on the website, if you're at online church, or it's in your program, if you're there in person, and you know, start today, maybe you want to go back and pick up from the first or whatever, but just start today. And then if you miss a day, just jump ahead, you know, I'd rather you know some of the truth of God's word than to totally ignore it as we go along. But you can do it. And maybe you say, Okay, this year, I'm just gonna read the New Testament part. That's okay, too. Yeah, that'll take you about five to seven minutes a day to do that. This is about you ingesting truth, every day, as the foundation of your life. You know, in talking about this, Psalm, chapter one, says this, all the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked. In other words, it's good when you don't fall into living your life on bad truth, untruth, wicked truth.

Our stand with sinners are joined mockers, but they delight in the law of the Lord. What's the law, the Lord the Bible, meditate on meditate, it easy for me to say, meditating on it day and night. They're like trees planted along the riverbank, bearing fruit each season, their leaves never wither and then get this. It's a big promise, and they prosper. In all they do, why do they prosper, because they're building their life on truth. And if you say two plus two equals four, you're gonna pass that test, you're gonna prosper. If you say two plus two equals six, you're not going to do so well, in prospering and that because you're not building your life on truth. And so then as we get into this reading plan, let me remind you have this core value, we value application of Scripture. And that's why when we teach each week, we're teaching you the Scripture, we're teaching you the history, sometimes we look at some of the background and the words, either the Greek words or the Hebrew words or whatever it might be.

But ultimately, we're trying to help you take the Scripture and apply it to your life. And so as you go through your reading plan, that's what you're looking for. You know, I would rather you read one verse, and have it capture your heart, and then live that out, than to fall into the fact that I've got to finish and check off every single thing on my reading plan. Now, reading and listening to God's word is good, but application is what it's all about. Because when you apply it, here's what you do. You adjust your priorities, to be consistent with scripture. So remember, Jesus is your first priority. You got the principles of Scripture. So now you're aligning those two. You say, Okay, Jesus, I want you to be first priority, but what does it mean? Well, scripture tells you how to do it. That's why they question is, are my priorities consistent with Scripture. And then here's what Jesus promised, Jesus said, but even more Blessed are all who hear the word of God, that's good to hear it like we're doing today. And put it into what? Practice, put it into practice. That's what the building block is all about. And then here's the third building block. I think you'll like this one.

Number three, commit to God's people, as essential partners in my life, commit to God's people, as essential partners in my life. So we've got Jesus as your first priority. We've got God's word as the principles for truth. But now you need godly people. You see, you weren't meant to go through life alone. Now, I know the last couple of years, there's been an epidemic of loneliness. It's not new, but we've had an epidemic of loneliness for a long time. And we talk a lot about overcoming loneliness and dealing with loneliness at the journey. We're going to talk about that even later this year. But the increase in loneliness, the epidemic of loneliness, has increased. And being back together in church in person that's helped. I know some of you are not ready to come back yet. But when you can, that does

help. But in the meantime, you can engage online and you can be with God's people. You're with me today, online. There's others, you can't see them. But we're together online today. And then when you join a growth group and growth group, signups start in about a week. And there's some in person groups, and there's a lot of online groups. And I know it's not quite the same, but it's still being around God's people who are encouraging you, and essential partners for you is so important. So you remember earlier, I gave you that first great commandment. Well, then here in your notes in Matthew 2239. This is the second ATT Great Commandment. So you can write that down.

Second Great Commandment. Remember, Jesus took all 6600, and something of these walls, and he summarized them in these two, the first one was, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. And then here's the second, he says, it's equally important. That's an interesting phrase, it's not second, it's Of equal importance. And what is it, love your neighbor as yourself, to catch that loving people is equally important to loving God. And then the first priority of those people are the people that you're growing with. The people that you're in church with, and certainly this can apply to your family, and it can apply to others, but particularly it applies to the church. And in, in looking at this in preparing for this next passage, which is rather long, but it's one that you may have seen around the journey for a while, I was struck by the number of words that are used in the Bible to describe the people of God.

So for example, there's a lot of different words to describe the people of God. Words like the gathering, or the church, or the fellowship, or fellow believers or assembly. But as you know, the most common word that is used to describe the church is that we are brothers and sisters, we're brothers and sisters in Christ. So God is our Heavenly Father. And so therefore, as we've been adopted into the family through Jesus Christ, we share the Holy Spirit together, and our fellowship, we're brothers and sisters in Christ. So in other words, we're just in love with our brothers and sisters in Christ. Now you should love your family and others as well as best you can and that, but here, it's focused on the church. So let's look at just a beautiful example of what it means to be a Christian, but then to be a part of a community of faith. Remember, there's no such thing as a solitary Christian. It's a contradiction of terms.

So here's a beautiful picture from the book of Acts. All the believers devoted themselves so all the brothers and sisters, all the believers, devoted themselves to the apostles teaching what we would call today, the Bible, the truth of God's word, and to fellowship that's spending time together and in sharing meals, including the Lord's Supper. You know, we really had to find creative ways to celebrate the Lord's Supper over the last couple of years. But as we can, we'll be bringing that back each and every Sunday, we have some different ways that we can do it this year. And then they worship together at the temple. Today, we don't worship at the temple, we worship at the church, and we worship in our worship space Ministry Center, and South Florida. And we worship and we turn a theater into a church in New York City, or we worship online, through our website, that becomes our church.

They met in homes for the Lord's Supper and shared their meals with great joy, and generosity. And then they praise God together, like we did earlier. And they enjoyed the goodwill of all the people. And these were loving people. These were people that others took note of, they said, There's something different about them. And each day, the Lord added to the fellowship, those who were being saved, just parenthetically, over the last couple of years, even in the midst of all that we were going through, almost

every Sunday, the Lord added somebody to our fellowship. And as you're going to receive some information in the mail and updates from our church over the next few weeks, and maybe even in some of our emails, you're going to see how many people were baptized, you're going to see how many people came to faith in Jesus, how many first time guests happened. So we were doing this even in the midst sometimes of the trials that we were going through over the last couple of years, and then we expect even greater things to happen this year. Millison, if you're going to build the foundation of a great life, you won't be able to do that apart from God's people. So just a couple of challenges for you. First, commit to be in church every week, as much as possible.

Now, if you are ready to come back in person, I would encourage you to do that. If you need to take extraordinary measures to do that, or extra measures to do that, you know, our spaces are big. And there's plenty of space for you to social distance. If you prefer to wear a mask, you're not going to be singled out with that if you want to take turns coming as a family and somebody's staying home with the children. That's fine, too. But there is something about coming back. But if you're not ready, and I'm not trying to push you on that, I'm just saying, if you can do it, I think you'll see some benefits. But if you're not ready, we are committed to continuing online church and online church is REAL CHURCH, it's God's people gathered together to worship the fellowship, to study his word. And we're gonna continue to be an online church. And we're going to make some big improvements in online churches over this coming year and online groups. And that's a second commitment, I would invite you to be a part of a group. Again, some of the groups are meeting in person in places where it's safe. And like in South Florida, it's easy to meet outdoors, a little harder to do that in February or March in New York City.

But you know, we've gathered some spaces where it's ventilated and easy to do. But then also online. And what you're doing there is you're putting yourself in a group of 15 to 20 people where you can pray together, study the Bible together and grow together. And these two things together, show your partnership with God's people. Because if you're going to have the building block, to grow, one of those is you need essential partners, from God's people. So let me review number one, commit to God as the first priority in my life. Number two, commit to God's principles. Number three, commit to God's people, and then commit to God's mission for my life. Commit to God's mission. Can you imagine building one of those buildings we talked about earlier? I mean, even the Freedom Tower, can you imagine building that and not knowing why you're doing it? Well, we just thought it'd be nice to build a building, you know, something pretty something high. But you got to know the why behind it.

A lot of times the why behind it and you know, in the world is to make money or to office or to do something like that. But you got to know why. And so you have to know why, why am I building these building blocks? Well, if you're a follower of Jesus, there's an innate desire from the Holy Spirit to grow. Because remember, this is about being a great Christian. And then if you're looking to go even deeper than that, there's what's called the Great Commission. And sometimes I think of the Great Commission as our life mission. Now, we're gonna come back at the end of the series to the Great Commission, but I want to give you a heads up on that right now. So this next passage, man Matthew 28:19 through 20, it says that we all have the same life mission. Let's look at it. Jesus said, Therefore go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And I am be sure of this, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.

Now, we'll unpack that in a few weeks, but go back up and underline, go and make disciples. So this means sharing your faith. This means telling other people about Jesus, many of you have been equipped to do that many of you, this is your first chance at doing that. So you can start with something simple, like inviting people to church. And if people like to start new habits at the beginning of the year, tell him to come next week with you. And a few weeks, we're kicking off a very exciting series called the relationship code. And I think a lot of people are going to be interested in that it's the most modern, up to date teaching series that we've ever done about relationships, and how it's all changed in our society. But the eternal principles of principles of God as it changed just how we apply it, to this new technology has changed. But this great commission, it's everyone's life mission. So we have a common life mission. But we do it through our own unique personality. So you know, if you have breath in your lungs, and you're a follower of Jesus, no matter what your job, your education, or your social, social status, God has given you a life mission.

So who could you invite to the journey this year? Who could you pray for and invest in invite, this year, at the journey that can be part of your life mission, it's one of the building blocks. You know, I started talking about the difficulty of having no foundation, when you're building Legos, you know, they just you just don't have the bedrock, you just don't have the foundation. But what we're looking at, is to build an eternal foundation that goes deep, not just 24 stories, like some of those buildings, but deep into God's word, deep into Jesus Christ, a deeper understanding of who God is a deeper understanding of our life mission, and then living that out. So right now, would you be willing to go all in with your commitment, where you adjust whatever commitments maybe that are a little off that are a little out of water, and say, Okay, those are good. But my greatest commitment is going to be to the Lord. And it's going to be to Jesus's plan for my life, to His Word, to him being first priority to God's people to his mission.

This series is going to show you how to build your life, on the building blocks, that God set in place from the very foundation of the earth. But again, if I could summarize it, it's the be all in with guide to make that commitment. You are the sum of your commitment, what will be your number one commitment this year, I want to pray for you. And I want to pray that you will make that first commitment, that commitment to live for God and be the great Christian by His power, that he would have you to be first Kings eighth, and just gonna let this stand as we pray. And may you be completely faithful to the Lord our God. May you always obey his decrees and commands, just as you're doing today. That's my prayer for you. So on this first Sunday, of this new year, let's renew or let's make some new commitments. Let's bow our heads and pray together.

These are their heads bowed in a moment, with just as little distraction as you can muster. Are you ready to make these commitments that we've talked about today? If so, just right now pray with me. Just words like this heavenly Father. I commit myself to you today. I know there's a lot of priorities in my life. But I choose to put you as my first priority from this day forward. I want to build my life on your word, and experience the blessing that comes from committing to share life with your people in the church. Help me to fulfill my life's mission to point others to you so that their lives can be built on this firm foundation as well. Now before we say, amen, there's some of you here today, who have never opened your heart to God's free gift of salvation that comes through Jesus Christ. And unfortunately, you're about to start another year cut off from God. cut off from his forgiveness and blessing and

goodness in your life. But you can change all that right now. If you're ready to have a fresh start with God, just pray this with me. guide today on putting my trust in Jesus for the first time. I believe that He died on the cross for my sins and that he rose again. Jesus come into my life and forgive me. I commit to follow you from this day forward, and the fellowship of your church. Amen. Well, I'm going to hand it back over to your pastors, thank you for letting me be with you. On this first Sunday of the year. We have a great year ahead of us. I cannot tell you how excited I am about what God is going to do. And our church. I'm renewing these commitments. If we make these commitments together, it's going to be amazing to see what God is going to do. Thanks for being with me today. Let me hand it back over and I'll see you again soon.