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## Next Step

### Part 5 – From the Committed to the Core

Shay Robbins

So just to remind you about this process we've been walking through the last several weeks, we started first with the community. The community is everybody in the Tri-lakes area outside of our church. When they are invited by someone who attends Woodland Hills, they then become a part of the crowd. Once they are a part of the crowd, they kind of start to like what they experience and what's happening here at Woodland Hills and then they begin to use the language of "my church." That's when they become a part of the congregation.

Once they become a part of the congregation, then they make the decision or take the next step to begin serving. When they begin serving, they become a part of the committed group. Then there is a group called core. These are the folks that not only serve, but they are taking the next step to say "I'm ready to begin sacrificing for this church. I believe in the mission. I consider it my church. I take personal ownership of what's happening here and I'm going to become a part of the core group that leads this church and serves throughout our community." That's what we are talking about today. We're talking about the core group and how we get from wherever you're at today to becoming part of that group.

I think it's important to understand as we define this core idea that it's not limited to the pastors or the elders or the paid staff. It is much more wide reaching than that. We're going to go ahead and unpack that together.

Two weeks ago, a bunch of us from Woodland Hills went to the Ozark Mountain Prayer Breakfast. This is such a cool event. There were a bunch of business leaders there. In fact, Mickey's dad was one of them. They do a great job of leading this prayer event that happens annually on the National Day of Prayer. We joined over 1,000 of our community members at the Hilton Convention Center.

There were great speakers. One of them was Jay Warner Wallace. Jay Warner Wallace is an apologist. He's an author, writer, speaker, but in his professional life, he was in law enforcement. Specifically, he was a detective who focused on cold cases. Like the stories you'll see on 60 Minutes, that is the kind of thing he was doing in Southern California. A cold case is a murder that has gone unsolved. With murders, those cases never close. So these detectives will move into these scenes that are sometimes years old and they'll begin to gather evidence to hopefully try to find the killer who committed this murder. He had a really fascinating background.

Jay Warner Wallace was an atheist and he set out to disprove Christianity with all of the skills that he learned in law enforcement over the years. Rather than disproving it, he found that this faith in Christianity and faith in the Bible is in fact true. He became a follower of Christ in the midst of that process. It's an awesome story.

He begins to teach us, based on some of the experiences that he has had in law enforcement. One of the stories he shared that morning at the prayer breakfast... They were staking out a specific house and he talked about how he loved doing undercover work because he could grow out his hair and his mustache and he could wear street clothes. When they were undercover, they would have an undercover vehicle that looked very normal, very plain and they obviously dressed very plain. But, hidden away in their car, when it was time to go, they had their gear. They had the bulletproof vests, guns, ammunition, everything they needed to go kick down a door and take down the bad guys.

While they were on a specific stake out, an informant gave them information that their drug dealer would often sit... When you came in the door, it was the living room and he would sit on the far right-hand side of the couch. Right between the couch and the cushion, he would keep a handgun at all times. They knew that when they kicked down that door, if he was sitting on the right side of the couch, he was a threat. That's just what happened.

They kicked open the door and the first guy who comes in is called the scout. The scout is responsible to find the imminent threat and then they focus on that threat. Then the second and the third guy comes in respectively to the left and to the right. Their responsibility is to take everything from the threat to the left and everything from the threat to the right and that's their responsibility.

In this particular case, Jay Warner Wallace, who was the second guy to go in, came in to the left. He explained to us about the bulletproof jackets that they wore when they were undercover. They were totally black. There were two chest pockets. Inside the pockets were flaps that would come out. You could pull out these flaps and strap them down and they would say Police and have their badge on it. The reason they did that was when they would go into this situation, when you have a badge that says Police on it, when the bad guys see that, they immediately know that not only are these guys coming, but they are also bringing an entire force behind them. They tell me that no matter how bad the bad guys are, most of the time, when they see that badge and there is a gun pointed at their head, they back off.

When they kicked down this specific door, the scout went in and Jay Warner stepped in and went to the left. The guy was sitting on the couch just like they said, but he said there was a hesitation. What was probably seconds, but felt like hours, this guy sat there, frozen. He could tell he was thinking about what was going to do. Jay Warner Wallace, out of the corner of his eye, could see his buddy's chest and he realized that those flaps were still down in his pockets. This guy was looking at these guys and he was thinking *Who are these guys? Just some thugs from down the street? And how am I going to respond?*

It wasn't but a couple of seconds later until he saw the chest of Jay Warner Wallace and realized they weren't just some chumps from down the street; there were the police. He threw his hands in the air.

What he explained to us is that a lot of times, Christians forget whom they are with. The reality is that when you are a part of a body of Christ like this and you're running into difficulties or challenges in your faith or just getting bills paid or different needs walking through the challenges of life, a lot of times Christians forget what badge they are wearing.

This group in here, you guys are wearing a badge. On the left chest, over your heart, is a badge that you are a follower of Jesus Christ. Then on the right side, is an "I'm a member of Woodland Hills Family Church and they've got my back."

He goes on to explain that in law enforcement and in the military, they will put people in two categories. The first category is sheep and the second category is wolves. Sheep are that which we protect. Wolves are that which are trying to prey or attack or hurt the flock of sheep. So, standing in between those two, standing in the gap is what law enforcement and military guys consider themselves. They call themselves sheepdogs. What's interesting about a sheep dog is that they are generally not beloved by the sheep. That's because they are constantly nipping at the heels of the sheep, barking at them, yipping at them, keeping them in the fold.

Isn't that true sometimes in the church when you have those sheepdogs who are there to protect you and guard you and give you wisdom and to redirect you, it's sometimes hard to appreciate what they are actually doing for you. We believe those are the core members of this church – those that sacrifice. They are the sheepdogs that guide, direct, keep safe, and protect the sheep of the body.

I was sitting across the table from Ted. You guys know that Pastor Ted is on a badge kick right now, so he's like gobbling this stuff up. I mean he is like geeking out across from me. We are catching eyes and he's getting so excited. I think he was a little bummed because he had a Mother's Day after that and he had to pass all the epic illustrations onto me. We were kind of giving each other eyes during this. Then Jay Warner Wallace says "There is a little bit of wolf in every sheep dog." Ted just started geeking out. He loved it so much. Jay Warner Wallace began talking about how true that is.

I went home and in preparation for this message, I Googled sheep dogs and I was so pumped to see what these sheepdogs look like. This is what pops up. Not just one, but I'm scrolling. There are like 50 of these fluffy things. This is a massive disappointment. Really? He can't even see the wolves; he's blinded by the hair over his eyes. I'm not looking for dogs that look like sheep; I'm looking for sheepdogs. Finally, after going through like 50 of these pictures... Some of you guys own these dogs and are passionate about them and you are offended. I just don't care. Finally, the Bulgarian Sheep dog pops up and I'm thinking that is more like it. That looks a little bit like a wolf.

What I want you to understand is that with this role of core, there is like this fierce loyalty and responsibility that core members take on within the local church. We're going to go ahead and keep adding to this idea. We've been walking down this list together the last couple of weeks.

**Community** - I attend this church.

**Crowd** – I like this church. They go from the community. They come and have an experience, people are friendly, they enjoy the music and the message, and they walk away with a little something for their life.

**Congregation** – I agree with this church. Someone from the congregation says this. They make a more committed statement in regard to their belief system, which drives their actions. “The things that this church is teaching, the things that they believe, the way that they take the scriptures and roll them out, I agree with that.” Then they move from the congregation to the committed.

**Committed** – I serve my church. When you’re committed, not only do you agree, you agree to the extent that you are going to get involved and begin serving this mission.

**Core** – I sacrifice for my church. Finally, those who join the core, sacrifice for their church. Not only do they make a commitment in belief like they agree with this and get behind the mission by serving, but they serve to the extent that they are ready to give up some things. They are ready to sacrifice some things in their life because they believe so much in the mission of this church.

Here are some examples of some of the sacrifices that someone who would consider themselves core would make:

**I say no to other activities and plans to prioritize my church family.**

**I serve and give when it is not convenient or affordable.**

**I think about the future of my church long after I am gone.** This is key to being core. When Jesus rose again, he gave us the Great Commission. We know it’s great because he waited until he defeated the grave. “I have died and rose again; I want you to listen to me.” He charged believers to be disciplers to raise up the next generation, to bring somebody under their wing and teach them what they know about the faith and share their life with them. Somebody who is core has made a commitment and a decision to bring somebody alongside them and invest in their lives so that when they step out, they are ready to step in. They are multipliers. They replace themselves.

**I take personal responsibility for the success of my church.** The way that we define success around here is, and you’ll hear this often around Woodland Hills, we believe that the gospel brings dead men and women back to life. When we see that happening in our church... If you guys will remember Easter Sunday, when Ted gave his message and then people came up for the baptisms out of the audience, how amazing was that? That’s what we consider success. God is bringing in dead men and women, he’s giving them new life, and they are coming up on the stage and making a public proclamation that “I am a follower of Jesus.” That’s what we consider success. If you consider yourself a part of the core or your next step is to become that, those successes are what you’re going to get behind and apply your energy time and resources to. Does that make sense?

**The sustainability of the local church rests in the sacrifice of the saints.**

I want to give you a reminder before we go... I have a handful of point of how we kind of progress in regards to becoming core. The reminder is this. God had a plan for the redemption of this broken world. He sent Jesus to die for the sins of the world and when Jesus was crucified, buried, and \ rose again on the third day, he established the church and he said that the church is going to be the vehicle to

take this gospel, this good news message and bring it to the world. The local church is the vehicle to take the gospel to your community. As a Christian, in the maturity of our faith, if I'm serious about following Jesus and there is a sense of urgency in me for the souls of other people around me, the church is the vehicle the God gave us to accomplish those successes that we just talked about. If you're serious about your faith, you have no choice but to get behind that vehicle and to apply your time, energy, and resources to the mission. I want to walk through a progression together.

### **1. You are designed to fill a need.**

My wife, Ashley, loves doing puzzles. I would rather have needles in my eye than do a puzzle; it's like torture to me. In the last week, she had this puzzle with like 1,500 pieces. I just look at them and wonder why she would want to do that. But, she sits down and she just enjoys it; it blesses her. My wife is committed. When she sets out to complete something, there is nothing that will draw her off course. As she's doing this puzzle, the kids are hovering around. The odds of Tess swallowing about 13 of these pieces are just incredible. We're trying to bat the kids off her project because as particular as my wife is, if she gets to the end and she's put down 1,499 puzzle pieces and there is one puzzle piece missing, oh my gosh, she's going to go crazy. Thankfully, they were all there, which was amazing.

Here's the idea. In the church, a lot of times I think we can discount ourselves and our value. It's just typical of insecurity. The reality is that this church is a masterpiece and God has placed every single one of you in here. When one member of the body is not stepping up and filling their role, it's as if we are looking at this beautiful puzzle and it's missing a piece. Something is wrong; something is missing. We want you to hear that. Everybody in this place is valuable and God has created you unique of any individual that has ever lived. They say that there is no such thing as an identical snowflake and we believe that is true of God's people as well. He made you unique with a purpose. He gave you a personality, passions, life experiences, spiritual gifts, and talents. All of these things are applicable to the church.

Specifically, when you talk about spiritual gifts, there are several passages where you can look into the gifts that God has given believers. You can go to 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. Ephesians 4 says this: ***7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.*** Then it quotes an Old Testament passage. ***8 Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men."***

It's this picture of a triumphant entry, a king coming in from battle, bringing captives in tow. They have rooted out the enemy and taken all of these resources and the gifts and the plunder and they have come into the capitol city, where there is a big party awaiting the king. The city itself is lined with his followers. As he comes in with these captives behind him, he takes gifts and he hands them out to all of his followers. That is the picture for those of you who put faith in Christ. When the Holy Spirit indwells you, it comes and gives you specific spiritual gifts. Those gifts are given to you to build up the body of Christ. They aren't given to just a percentage of believers. They are given to how all believers. Every single one of you have been endowed with a spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit and you have a responsibility to work it out and to build up the body of Christ. To me, that is super exciting.

As I mentioned before, with inner insecurity, a lot of times we can talk ourselves down, we can disqualify ourselves. You might be saying to yourself, picturing these different leaders in the church or in the community, "Yeah, but that's not me. I don't have what it takes. I'm not that cool. I have all this junk in my life. I've made a mess of things." Here's the reality. Do you know that everybody in this church came from the same place? Whether you have yet to accept Christ or you're five years in the faith or forty years down the road, everybody came from the same place.

Luke 15 is the story of the prodigal son. The story goes like this. He has a wealthy father who loves him, but the prodigal son goes to his dad and says "I want to take my inheritance and I want it now; I want to go." The loving father reluctantly hands over this inheritance and the son runs off to a faraway land and he spends all of his money with wild living. At the time, I'm sure he was the center of the party. But, there is a point where he runs out of money and when he runs out of money, he runs out of friends.

A famine comes over the land and his stomach is aching because he is starving. He's gone from Hollywood to the gutter. The only job that he could find was feeding swine. That's like the lowest job in Hebrew culture. The Bible paints the picture of him standing in the pigpen, in manure. He's handing out these pods to feed the pigs and he's thinking to himself *Oh how I long to eat this pig food*. As he's sitting there in this nasty, horrific situation where he's just desperate, he's thinking about all of the men and women who work for his father and how well fed they are. He thinks to himself, while he's standing in the pigpen, *Perhaps I can return home and be a servant*. He makes the decision.

When he took that inheritance, he turned his back to his father. He had his back to him the whole time. The Bible says that while his back was turned to the Lord and he was standing in that manure, he came to his senses and he says to himself, *I have sinned against God and I've sinned against my father*. He decides at that moment in his life, in humility, to turn back towards home. The scripture says that his father is waiting for him.

I just imagine this father whose son has left. I bet, morning, noon, and night, he went up to the top of the hill and he looks down that winding path, aching for his son to come home. The scripture says in Luke 15, ***20 "So he got up and came to his father. But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him, and ran and embraced him and kissed him.***

The Bible says that he threw a big party for him. He killed the fatted calf. He put the robe on him and then he put a royal ring on his finger. I just think about this. Jesus is talking about salvation or a relationship with our heavenly Father. I think that we can sometimes make the mistake of thinking that the salvation moment in this story was when he finally embraced his daddy or when his daddy put the robe on him or put the ring on his finger or he finally sat down at the festival in his home. But, that wasn't it. That wasn't the salvation moment. Do you know when it was? It was standing in the pig pen in the manure in the midst of his calamity. In humility, the moment of salvation was when he turned back to his daddy. The Bible says that while he was still a long way off, his dad went running after him.

That's where we are all coming from. Every single believer in this place and those who don't have faith in Jesus... We were all born with our backs to God. I say that to encourage the group. We are all in the same place. We are all in the same situation.

## 2. There is a need.

Not only were you designed to fill a need, but there actually is a need. In Acts 6, the disciples are sharing faith within Jerusalem and the number of followers of Jesus in this church are exploding. The first church is growing to the point where the disciples can't manage it any longer. They're getting distracted from their priorities. There are these arguments and this bickering going on over food rations. They call everybody together and they make a decision that they are going to find seven men that are full of the Holy Spirit and they are going to appoint them to fill that need. Then in Acts 6, it says **4 "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."** That was the priority of the leaders of the church: prayer and the ministry of the word.

They had too much on their plate. They needed other leaders to step up and that's just what happened. As a result, we get kind of a status update in Verse 7 on what's happening. **7 The word of God kept on spreading; and the number of the disciples continued to increase greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were becoming obedient to the faith.**

Rick Warren says that the average number of people serving in a church is approximately 10%. He said another 50% are just going to be takers or consumers. They'll come to the church and they are content being that. He also says that on average, there is another 40% that are willing to serve, but they either have never been asked or they never thought there was a need. I want you to hear me right here and now. We want you to step up and we want you to fill needs and we need you. There is a role for you in this place. Imagine if we could mobilize 50% of our church. That's freaky powerful.

## 3. Woodland Hills Family Church is a partnership.

Paul writes to the Philippian church and here's what he says in Philippians 1, **3 I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, 4 always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, 5 in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now.**

A church does not have a pastor who is the owner of the church or it doesn't have a board of directors like some corporation. Rather, this church, which is set up biblically, has a group of elders that are managing a group of believers who all have ownership in this local church. Woodland Hills Family Church is your church for those of you who choose to claim it. We encourage you to take ownership. This is your baby as much as it's Ted's baby.

If you believe in that mission, if you get behind us and, in the maturity of your faith, you say, "I believe in the gospel message; there is urgency in my heart for the lost and I believe that the local church is the vehicle to go after souls. This is my church and I'm going to get involved." You get to be a part of that and you get to take ownership. That's why Paul was saying what he said in Philippians. He was encouraging them. "I thank God for your partnership in the gospel." They were doing it right.

#### 4. It's going to cost you.

Again, those who are a part of the core say, "I sacrifice for my church." There is going to be a cost. Stephen was one of the men who were called up. He was one of the seven and the Bible says that he was full of the Holy Spirit and was performing miracles and preaching the gospel powerfully. The men who rose up and killed Jesus, the religious leaders of the day, began to plant lies about Stephen. So, they brought him into the court of the day and they made him give testimony. In his testimony, he gave the gospel of Jesus. He started in the Old Testament and he illustrated that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Savior that we've been waiting for, and then he pointed his finger at them and said, "And you are the ones that murdered him." That cut those leaders to the quick and they drug Stephen outside of the city. They threw their cloaks at the feet of a young man named Saul who was giving them hearty approval and then they stoned Stephen to death. He sacrificed his life. A sheepdog.

The scripture goes on in Acts 8. It says what happened as a result of his sacrifice. God uses sacrifice to advance the gospel. ***4 Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.*** God used the first martyr, Stephen's sacrifice, the sacrifice of his life, to fulfill the great commission. Before Jesus left, he said, "You're going to preach the gospel to the outer most parts of the earth." It was Stephen's life that sent them scattering throughout the known world, starting churches all over the place. You and I are the results, sitting here in Branson, Missouri. Can you believe that? God uses sacrifice.

Do you know what's interesting? That young man, Saul, who held their coats and gave hearty approval. After Stephen's death... He was kind of responsible for pushing them out of Jerusalem. He was kicking down doors, dragging off men and women, and throwing them in prison. He had a Jesus moment on the road to Damascus and that wolf became a sheepdog. Amen.

I want to tell a story in closing, but before I do that, I want to highlight some folks that are core in this church. I want to start with a godly young couple named Nathan and Stephanie Huddleston. How many have dropped your kids off in their care? When we talk about sacrifice... While I get up, put on my Under Armor and my Nike gear, and Ted puts on his sweater vests before church, the Huddlestons get up and they put on one goofy outfit after another to entertain and to teach our kids. They are such an amazing couple. You just see that this couple has given so much to our church. I am sad to tell you that they are moving to West Plains this summer to be closer to family. They have given so much to our church and I just want to give them a big round of applause to honor them and everything that they have sacrificed.

Another gal I would like to honor is Pam Moncado. Pam is currently serving out there in Critter Street. I'm going to read what Stephanie wrote about here. *Serving with a smile in children's ministry for over ten years, she has been a small group leader in WildWoods and now serves as the coordinator in Critter Street. She has created community amongst the leaders and when a problem arises, she tackles it with a smile. Critter Street is a happier place because of her.*

I can personally attest to that. Just her kindness and her smile and the way that she leads the community of leaders that minister to our kiddos; we are blessed by Pam Moncado.

The next one I want to honor... I've been kind of itching to do this for a long time. I have known him since I moved to Branson. It's Andy Watson, Stephanie Watson's husband. Andy is currently on staff. He oversees our facilities. But, long before he was on Woodland Hills' staff, he served by his wife's side non-stop, year after year. Everything that she has needed, he has been there to support his wife's ministry. It's just been awe inspiring to watch a husband serve his wife this way.

Here is what Stephanie said about Andy. *For the past ten years, Andy has been my biggest cheerleader. He has spent countless hours doing whatever needed to be done to make Sunday excellent. He has been my technical support, the host, the storyteller, lead small groups, built stuff, dressed up in all kinds of crazy characters, and he has never complained or needed any credit. He has balanced out my weaknesses and encouraged me as a leader. I could not do what I do without him.*

I think Andy is one of these rare guys that gets more and more handsome over time. He's got this epic gray beard coming in and I think he's beginning to look like Indiana Jones' dad. Yeah! Stephanie Watson, you are lucky.

The final person I want to honor happens to be my dad. Rob Robbins and my mom have stuck by Ted and Amy's side since The River. There are a handful of folks that can say that as well in this church. As Ashley and I were a married couple and doing ministry, we were traveling around a lot and, honestly, we were probably the worst church members ever. But, we watched my parents and in particular my dad. My dad is a man of loyalty. He is committed to this church and he just decided that he doesn't what happens or who says what... He is just committed to this church.

He has served in so many different ways and with strategic planning. I think he was shaking hands when they were at the various locations before we were in the castle. He was in teardown and setup. I think that loyalty is something that is waning in our society when in reality, the value of it just continues to grow. Following in his footsteps, our family has decided that we are going to choose loyalty. We are committed to this church until the Lord either takes us home to be with him or takes us to another city or state. But, we are committed and we choose to be loyal. I've always admired that about my dad.

I'm going to close with this. June 6, 1944 is the day that we know as D-Day. It was a day that was the turning point of World War II. In leading up to it, the German armies had taken over Europe and they had a strangle hold on Europe. Their equipment, like their tanks and their planes and their guns, was just amazing. It was better than what we had as Americans. They had the land locked and they had tremendous strongholds. Europe itself was very difficult to break into. There were just a couple remaining spots that were still free in Europe and the only way the allied forces could defeat Germany was to find an entry point into Europe.

There were four different options. The first two options... If they were to take the land, there was so much water and canals and lakes that it made it difficult to even move through the territory. The third option was an area that would have been a great landing point, but Germany knew that so they fortified that area and made it really impenetrable.

The fourth option was Normandy, the coast of France. The allied force decided that was going to be their entry point and they launched Operation Overlord. They had a very elaborate scheme, another operation that was basically distracting the Germans while they moved all their forces into place. Sometime after midnight, on June 6, the airborne dropped troops of 24,000 behind enemy lines. Shortly after those men were dropped, we began to bomb them. Twenty-two hundred American and British bombers, as well as Navy boats began bombing their fortifications.

Shortly after daybreak, allied forces launched the largest amphibious attack in human history. One hundred and sixty thousand men landed on that beach on D-Day. The allied forces knew if they were going to move into Normandy, the casualties would be massive, but they knew that they were going to have to sacrifice to win this war. So, they made that decision, knowing that massive casualties were on the horizon. They won the battle on that day. Throughout the weeks that followed, over a million men then funneled through the beaches of Normandy. As expected, the casualties were very high, somewhere around 10,000 sheepdogs sacrificed their lives that day.

Once the beachhead was taken and the supply lines were set, Germany's ultimate defeat was only a matter of time. There were many skirmishes and battles that continued to happen as the allies moved into Germany, but the war was won on D-Day. The allied forces couldn't back off. Even though the war was won, they had to keep pushing because the enemy, in its cowardice, were killing off people. They were trying to erase the evidence through burying them and through burning bodies. It was of upmost importance that those battles and those skirmishes were fought with aggression. The allied forces pushed hard in order to save lives. Even though the war was won, they kept pushing until every battle and every skirmish was laid aside.

I had a buddy who was in a church in Ireland this spring. There was a memorial in this little church. It was a memorial to those who lost their lives in World War I and World War II. It said, "They gave their tomorrows so that you may have your today."

It's easy to get caught up in the violence and the horror of the last days living on this broken earth. But, remember this: Satan was defeated on the beachhead of Calvary. Two thousand years ago, the battle was won when the serpent's head was crushed, when Jesus rose again from the grave, defeating death and sin, offering the gospel of salvation to every man or woman who believes.

It is the responsibility of the local church today, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, to get in those battles and skirmishes to take as many lives and as many souls into eternity as we possibly can. The war is over, but we have a responsibility today. Woodland Hills Family Church has been called to this community at this time. We have a responsibility. Don't get caught up floating through life. We have a responsibility as followers of Jesus. Our responsibility is this: To inspire the family to become devoted followers of Christ in the Tri-lakes area. To care for orphans and widows. To visit prisoners in their distress. To proclaim the gospel to our neighbors. To raise up the next generation of leaders for Christ. To shine light in the darkness no matter what the cost is. To minister to the brokenhearted and the downcast.

It cannot happen without a collective sacrifice. It cannot happen unless our church is mobilized to take the next step. It's going to take time, money, prayer, resources, all of which we can't take with us into the next life. So, let the church be challenged today to sacrifice.

What's your next step? This question is for you. What's your next step?

Father God, we thank you so much loving us and we thank you for this body of believers. I pray, God, that Woodland Hills Family Church would become home for the people sitting here today. I pray, Jesus, that we would be mobilized and that we would go to war for the hearts and the souls of the men and women and kiddos in our community. I pray, Jesus, that you would anoint this place to become a house of prayer and the ministry of the word. I pray that the saints would rise up and that they would sacrifice. I pray that the percentage of core followers of Jesus in this place would skyrocket.

It's in your name we pray... Amen.