



I thank My God for Our Church

Pastor Ted Cunningham

Today, we have a standalone message – this week and next week – before we begin another series. This one has been running through me for a little while. I don't know if you use Notes on your phone. Who here lives by Notes on your phone and you're just always thinking? I'm at that age where if I wake up at 2:00 am with a thought and I don't put it down in notes, I will not remember it when I wake up. For years, I've been keeping a list on Amy, on my kids, on friends, and on this church of all the reasons why they are worthy of honor. We call it an honor list. But what I've changed that to a little bit lately is a gratitude list, which is just all the reasons why I am grateful to God for you, Woodland Hills family. So, at 2:00am I'll wake up and grab the phone. As soon as I grab it and start typing in, I will feel a hand hit my left shoulder and I will hear Amy go, "Turn down the brightness." So, I turn the brightness all the way down and I type it out.

I wish I could share it all with you today, but I wanted to take an entire Sunday to just simply tell you I thank my God for this church. I thank my God for you. And we are going to see today... If you have your bibles, turn to 1 Corinthians 1. We are going to get there today and spend a little time in the first nine verses, but we read Paul's words in 1 Thessalonians that reminds us that we are to be a people who rejoice and a people who pray and a people who have gratitude. Christians should be known as grateful people, not people with critical spirits with a burn it to the ground mentality.

He says, ***16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.***

Now you know I pick on studies and research around here quite a bit because I think we spend millions of dollars coming to a conclusion that you and I were at already. And so, years ago, a professor from the University of Miami and one from the University of California got together and did a gratitude study. They broke people into three groups. They said, "We want you to journal every week for the next ten weeks." To the first group they said, "We want you to write down things that happen to you and why you're grateful for what happened to you. That's all we want you to do. Write thoughts of gratitude." To the next group they said, "We want you to write down all of your irritations and frustrations." To the third group they said, "We just want you to write down what's happening to you, but don't really pay attention to what's negative or positive."

Here we go. This is a big shock for a lot of you, I know. Which group would experience better wellbeing at the end of ten weeks? Shocker... I want to say, "Send me the millions of dollars that you spent on that study, and I would tell you it's the group that wrote down thoughts of gratitude."

They didn't go to the doctors much, they said, "We enjoy our relationships more, we have a more positive outlook on life. So, here's what we know from research. Gratitude improves relationships, sleep, immunity, and decreases aggravation, anxiety and depression.

In marriage, we always teach this to couples because if you will wake up each day with gratitude for your spouse, it not only will give you a more positive outlook of your spouse, but it opens up and provides a safer environment for you to share concerns about your marriage or areas of improvement. But it starts with gratitude.

Here is what we know. If I wake up every morning with a critical spirit, I will nitpick you all day. My son, when he was ten, he heard Amy and I talking that we needed to hire somebody to come out and power wash the driveway. My ten-year-old said, "How much are you paying that person?" We told him and he goes, "I can do that." And we know a ten-year-old is going to do it as good as the professional.

I go, "Carson, I hate to say it, but I'm pretty picky about pressure washing. How many of you love pressure washing? It's one of my favorite things to do in life. So, I go out and I go, "Okay, let me teach you how to do it. I start up the power washer and I go, "Listen, it's very important. It's a smooth, steady stroke. Don't stop over here or that area is going to be cleaner. Just keep it going and just work your way... I don't want to see lines." I gave him a 30-minute instructional video. And I go, "I'm going to go in and I'll come back out and check on you in 30 minutes. I came out 30 minutes later to art work on the driveway. I'm not going to tell you what I paid him to do that. Our kids have a good way of calling this out in us. If I wake up every morning with gratitude, I thank God for you. I call it out; I point it out.

Amy and I had one of the best Sundays a couple of weeks ago. It was a blessing for us. We were free for a Sunday morning in Southern California with no responsibilities. I said, "I want to go to my friend's church. I just want to show up. We're not telling anybody. I just want to show up like guest and we're just going to allow the church to minister to us and be refreshed. Ahh, it was so refreshing.

We pulled in and we followed the signs for guest parking. This is southern California; it's a large, very affluent church. I've been there before. We pulled in and you need to know that a lot of what happens on our campus, we picked up in bits and pieces from churches around the country. Things we were inspired by, we said, "Hey, we can do that at Woodland Hills." So, there the thumb print of so many churches and leaders around our church.

As we walk up... We're not to the building yet. We hit the sidewalk, we immediately pull out our phones, and start taking pictures. I know the greeters were wondering why we were taking pictures of the light stands, the flower buckets? Here's what happened. My spirit started to change because I was walking into the church and becoming critical. I was looking for the flaws in it. Again, I know this church is larger than ours, and has more money than ours. I'm over there and Amy goes, "What are you doing?" I go, "Come here. There's a bald spot in the grass." I'm taking a picture of the bald spot telling my friend, "Step it up. Throw a little patch seed on there, come on!" Then we go over to the coffee station. Little tiny cups, lukewarm coffee. We were at the last service of the morning. They have two services on Saturday and three on Sunday, but come on, step it up on the coffee.

I don't know if you've ever walked on this campus like that with a critical spirit. "What was Matt wearing today? That worship pastor needs to step it up. He should iron his shirt." "I can't believe how long it took to check in and why are we labeling these kids and tagging them for the wild?" Can we all admit that it's easy to point out things that could be done better. My problem... And I have to guard it everywhere I go – restaurants, stores... the license bureau. I'm like *can we just handwrite one more sign and tape it to the wall. Somebody says something you don't like it's like, "that's another sign going up there on the wall."* There are literally a hundred signs. You have to read all these handwritten notes when you walk in. And I go, *Here's what I would do if I ran the place.*

Do you ever walk into the Version store? *Here's how I would do it if I ran the Version store.* You do this when you walk on campus. *If I ran this place, here's what would happen. I could walk up to the coffee shop and order whatever I want, and they would have the ingredients to make whatever I want.*

And then we go into the service. And Eric is doing a message. Oh, I just said his name. You might be able to figure out who it is. His initials are Eric Geiger. And Mariner's Church is an awesome church, doing great things, leading hundreds to Christ, baptizing hundreds. And Eric is there speaking that morning on anger. I'm not in the mode to receive yet because I'm still nitpicking everything I'm seeing. *Wouldn't do the lights like that. I'd change that. Oh, you need me to move? I got here early for this aisle seat. This person is 20 minutes late. Why should I reward them for sleeping in. Why do you even bother coming; we're almost done.*

Eric goes, "Maybe you have these two people in your life – you have friend number one and friend number two. With friend number one, everything is awesome. They're happy about everything.

You're eating out with friend number one and they're like, "Is this not the most amazing salad you've ever had in your life?" You're like, "We're at Applebee's. Back it down a notch. It's good, but is the same Sisko truck – white truck, blue letters – that drops off food here and then at Cheddars and then at olive garden. It's all the same food." But I'm just sitting there going – He's talking about friend number one, that positive, encouraging, grateful person in your life and I'm like *I hate that person.*

Then he started talking about friend number two and I go, *I'm friend number two. I've been friend number two since I stepped on this campus. I've been critical the whole time I've been on this campus.* With friend number two, you're at the restaurant and the server says, "Sir, can you cut into that steak and tell me if it's medium like you requested." Friend number 2 says, "Does that look like medium to you? That is medium rare."

If you don't know which one you are, you're probably friend number two. All of that to say what we're talking about today. Critical spirit is easy. And we all drift to that often. But choosing gratitude, rejoicing, praying, being grateful people...

Let me throw up the characteristics of a church and ask you if you would attend a church like this. If you knew the church had divisions over church leaders. There were groups of people saying, "I like Shay." "I like Adam." "I prefer Travis." "Can we hire Alex Himaya? Why do we have to have Ted as our senior pastor?"

You have people with holier-than-thou attitudes. They look down their nose at other members and it was known. Lawsuits among believers. You heard that people were suing each other in the church. They were abusing the Lord's Supper. They were abusing spiritual gifts. They were Marginalizing poor Christians. There was sexual immorality throughout the entire church.

Would you go to that church? Would you invite your friend to that church? Maybe some of you would say... And I know, I hear it all the time. When a church starts to have trouble, you'll hear people say, "Close the doors. they're not even believers." They begin questioning whether or not a church like that would even have believers in it if all of that was going on and not being dealt with.

But today, in 1 Corinthians 1: 1-9, you're going to get the Apostle Paul writing a letter to this church. You need to understand what's going on. Corinth, the City of Corinth, not the church in Corinth, but the City of Corinth was a notoriously immoral city. So, he had brand new believers who had formed a local church, the Church at Corinth, in this city. Paul actually leaves the Corinthian church under the leadership of Aquilla and Priscilla to go on to a second missionary journey.

On his third missionary journey, during his stay in Ephesus, he receives two letters detailing the decay in the church. Yes, it's in the city, but it is in the church, it has found its way into the church. When you hear all that's going on in this church, you might think *burn it to the ground, start over, shut the doors, it's of no use to the kingdom*. Why is all of this important. Because you're going to see the tone today, the apostle Paul is like a father talking to his son.

And I would hope that when you see immortality, arrogance, or pride in the life of your child, that your tone would be that of care and love toward your child, and not of *take 'em out*. That's not what you get at the introduction to this letter. Make no mistake, he deals with all of this throughout the letter. You even see bits and pieces of what he's going to deal with in the letter in the introduction. But I want you to hear what he shares with them and the tone in which he shares it. As you understand I's gratitude in this text focuses on the Lord not the Corinthians' faults. It's what God has already done in them and what he's going to continue to do in them until the day Christ is revealed.

1 Corinthians 1: 1-9 I, called to be an apostle of I I by the will of God... And I would add in here to the local church of I, so we understand he is talking about the local church and Big C church. **And our brother Sosthenes...** This is important to understand what's going on because in Corinth, there was intellectual superiority. They really prided themselves on their ability to think things through intellectually. So, when Paul would come in and speak, you can imagine. It's like if it doesn't live up to the level of the philosophers, they are going to discredit him. And Paul starts this letter off by reminding them, "Hey, I'm called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, not by your opinion, not by what you think of me, not by what you think of my words or how well I speak or don't speak. Know who has called me to this clearly as I write this verse."

2 To the church of God in Corinth... So, yes, the moral decay in the City of Corinth, but now I'm speaking directly to the believers in the city, new, young believers. **...to those sanctified in Christ Jesus...** We just read a list of all that was going on with the believers in Corinth, and Paul starts off by saying, "To the

believers, to those who are called in Christ Jesus.” Isn’t it something today when a church is having struggles or Christians aren’t acting or living up to the standard of righteousness that they have already in Christ that people start discounting them; “they’re probably not even believers.” That is not at all where Paul starts. He says, **to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people...** This is important. He’s saying, “I am coming to you from a position in Christ that I have and a position in Christ that you have. You are saints.” We believe in the priesthood of believers. Your like, “That list you just read would describe saints? Yes, because the work of Christ makes a believer holy forever in God’s eyes. What he’s going to share with them throughout this letter, they were far from the goal of holiness. And he will address that. ...**together with all those everywhere...** Now he’s spreading out into the Roman Empire **...who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours:**

3 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. What a warm introduction to a letter. It’s verse 4 that you can read and go, “This seems odd. It seems strange that you would say thank you like this when they are in such a mess.

4 I always thank my God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. When a church is having problems, is that kind of the tone or the message you picked up online when people start going at the church?” **5 For in him you have been enriched in every way—with all kinds of speech and with all knowledge...** “Yeah, I know what the culture is pressing in on you, but know you have all you need in Christ.” **6 God thus confirming our testimony about Christ among you.** In other words, catch what he’s doing. He’s not just thanking them, he’s thanking God for them. He’s thanking God for what he has done in them and through them.

And that is the key and that’s what I want to do today with our church. I want to express the gratitude list. I wish I could share the whole thing, the gratitude list I’ve been keeping on this church for years. I’m going to share a few with you today just to say thank you because I think sometimes, as a church, it’s easy for all of us, members and leaders, to develop a critical spirit to make things better and to find ways to reach more people and to find ways to disciple people, but there are times, like today, that we need to stop and say “I thank my God for you.” I thank my God for what he’s doing in you and through you.

7 Therefore... I want you to see here that he’s starting to introduce, where later in the letter and we have it as an epistle or a book in our Bible.... The letter is like three chapters worth of dealing with some of these issues. He’s just introducing them in the introduction. **Therefore, you do lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed.** . Watch this. This is why you should never give up on the church. Because the gates of hell will never prevail against it. You should never stop being a part of the local church. Young people, I know it’s easy and you’re surrounded by peers who are saying it’s not all that important, and just find a good ministry or whatever. Be a part of a local church. **8 He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.** So, how long do we stick with the local church? Until the Lord returns or calls you home. Among all of God’s people, lean in to the body of believers in the city or the town in which you live. **9 God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**

Maybe you’ve seen this... I’m going to paraphrase. I’ve seen it said several different ways, but maybe you’ve seen this online. “If the apostle Paul were alive today, the church in America would get a letter.” I agree. But every time I see it, I think to myself. It probably wouldn’t say what you would want it to say.

I'm almost guaranteeing you it wouldn't have the attitude in which you would want it delivered. Because it's usually a snarky pastor or person that's posting that or somebody that's saying, "Hey, give it to the church. they deserve it. they have it coming." We just read Paul's words to a church in moral decay and a city in moral decay and he says, "Listen, God is at work in you."

I want to share some things with you that we need to live up to this standard of righteousness and holiness. We are already declared righteous because of his work, not ours. But now our lives need to reflect that. Don't be transformed by the culture. Don't be moved by the culture. Don't drift in culture but be transformed by the renewing of your mind in Christ Jesus.

Yeah, I'd bet we would get a letter. But it would sound different. It wouldn't have this tone. These are just some of the approaches you see people taking toward the local church today: Cancel culture. I had a friend call me this week and said, "Some of our staff has been listening to this podcast and now they're wondering if that's really happening at our church. And are we a toxic, spiritually abusive church? I'll be honest with you. I get those calls so often and I talk to so many people dealing with it and I'm just like, "Listen, disagreeing with a church member or a staff member doesn't make you toxic. Disagreeing with a church member or a staff member more than once doesn't make you a bully. Disagreeing with a female staff member doesn't make you a misogynist. But there is just this broad stroke that we're painting over the church today and this isn't the approach that Paul took with the church. He didn't come in with a critical spirit, he started with gratitude.

Some are like: Firing squad. "Whoever these leaders are, set them up and they are done." That's why so many churches today, leaders today, have a lot of private support, but no public support because the people they are seeking support from don't want to go on the radar and be in front of the firing squad. I hope you've made your decision. Let's stand on truth, let's do the right thing, Let's follow Jesus. And if it puts us in front of a firing squad, it puts us in front of a firing squad. I will be a guide at Dogwood Canyon in a heartbeat if that's what I'm called to do. "Burn it all down! Just burn it to the ground! If there is bad fruit, up root the tree, get rid of the church." Understand the word picture.

Weaponized anger. I know there are people in here that have been hurt by the church. Again, you may be zero percent to blame for what happened to you, but you are 100% responsible for your attitude moving forward. And will it be a critical spirit or will you be grateful.

So many blogs and articles being written on... I call them hit pieces. You could also call them failure porn. We can't get enough of it. As Abraham Lincoln once said, "Don't believe everything you read on the internet. It's not true."

I served a pastor in Little Elm, Texas. His thanksgiving message every year, he would stand up, and he would preach the same message every Thanksgiving. He's a dear friend. His initials are Scott Jackson. He'd open his Bible and he would go, "Today, I want to talk to you about the attitude of gratitude." I still remember those messages because again, I can walk in and go "oh there's so and so..." And every church has it. I heard from Chuck Swindoll last week in one of his messages. He told this great, great story. He said, "There was this church gossip, and everybody was so tired of this gossip. One day she was driving down the road and she saw Elmer, an older guy in the church. She saw his truck was parked in front of the bar. She started running her mouth. She started telling people, "Elmer's a drunk. I saw

his truck out in front of the bar.” She caught Elmer at church and said, “I saw your truck out in front of the bar, and I know what’s going on in there, I know what you’re doing.” Elmer, knowing her reputation and knowing his character and his walk with the Lord, he didn’t say a word because he knew there were other ways to deal with a church member like this. He said, “My car broke down and I had to park it there to wait on the tow truck, but he didn’t go back and forth with her. All he did was, that night, he parked his truck in her driveway. And he left it there all night.

In the time remaining, can I share with you seven reasons why I thank my God for our church. A lot of these have been written at just all different times and places. I want to do this because sometimes I make a lot of jokes and I can get snarky, and I can have a critical spirit. I’m asking the Lord to work on all that. I turn 50 next year, I should be figuring this out by now. I don’t think we say it enough. I thank you often for your generosity, but there is so much more to be grateful for with what God is doing in this church.

1. You expect strong biblical theology and teaching. And when you don’t get it, I hear about it. And I’ve been quoting some pastors for years who have changed on some things and people really come after me. I’ve been accused in recent years of going “woke.” I don’t even know what that means anymore. But I can tell you what I believe about the Bible, what I believe about God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, what I believe about salvation, what I believe about life in the womb, what I believe about marriage, sex, gender, sexuality, none of that has changed since we started this church 21 years ago. None of it has changed. And we speak clearly on it. We give whole Sundays to it. You hear me address it often. But Paul told Timothy, **3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires,** And to live the way they want to live and to choose their identity, and to be who they want to be, and to define themselves however they want to. They are not going to put with put up with what you’ve been teaching. We’ve seen this. We are in this time. **...they will gather around them a great number of teachers...** No Instagram, Facebook, Twitter **...to say what their itching ears want to hear.**

So please understand that when you walk into this church, we are not going to tell you what you want to hear, we’re going to talk to you and share with you what you need to hear. And we will be clear on that. And I thank you that you’ve always had that heart at this church.

2. You thrive on fellowship, not hype. You know I’ve said this often around here... Maybe one time on Facebook I posted as a joke, “Hey, join us Sunday. The sermon is going to be lit.” I don’t do the lit emojis. Primarily because the sermon would be okay. It may be a single or a double. It’s not like everything you ever hear here or see here is going to be a homerun. I don’t know if you’re watching playoffs, but somebody hits a single at the right time, and the whole place goes nuts. So, singles and doubles can win the game. Can I get an Amen on that one. So, we don’t thrive on the SUNDAY IS GOING TO BE THE MOST AMAZING SERVICE YOU’VE EVER BEEN TO IN YOUR LIFE!! Probably not. You’ve probably been to better. But you know what you thrive on? I see it all Sunday here. Our gathering. I walk in and you’re spending time with people, you’re enjoying the fellowship of people.

We read about the first century church in Acts 2: 42-47, **42 They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship...** Being together, brothers and sisters in Christ. **...to the breaking of**

bread and to prayer. We focus more on fellowship, more on hope. And I just want to say thank you for how much you enjoy each other and how much you enjoy gathering together.

3. You support a plurality of leaders. I say thank you for that. I thank my God for you that you've embraced the biblical model of the plurality of elders. Because it allows everybody to continue to do ministry more effectively and with greater longevity. This is not a pastor led church. I don't call all the shots. I don't count the money, I don't determine where the money goes. I'm a voice in the process, but we have a plurality of elders. We have a whole staff. We have so many people making decisions.

I love it when people will email me or come in and be like, "Hey, the buck stop with you. I've got a problem and here's where it goes." And I'm like, "And I'm telling you go back to the person you're having an issue with and, one on one, you two figure it out."

We're not a committee led church, I'm praising my Father in heaven for that. We're not a congregationally led church. We're led by a plurality of leaders.

So, Paul says to Titus, "**The reason I left you in Crete was that you might put in order what was left unfinished...**" But guess what, you don't have to do this all by yourself. "**...and appoint elders in every town as I directed you.**" In other words, the job is to equip all of us for the work of ministry. And that is spread out. And I'm just grateful for a church where you don't expect me to do all the teaching, you don't expect me to do all the leading. I just can't wait. Next week, I'm here... I never say who's speaking, but your favorite preacher is here – Alex Himaya. But I get to be here next week as just part of it. I love that because that fellowship is even more intense when I don't have to keep a message or outline in my head. I'm just grateful that you allow that.

4. You are generous to meet the needs of church members. I say this and the next one almost every week. But as you continue reading about the first century church, **...they sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.** That's why we never shy away from telling you and encouraging you to give. We don't meet needs around here with \$25.00 gift cards for a snack today to get you through the day. We meet significant needs of our church members. We take this very seriously. That's why some of you have had your rent paid, you've had mortgages paid, you've had cars fixed, you've had utilities turned back on, you've had groceries paid for the week. Why does that happen? Because that's what we are called to do as believers in Christ Jesus. We are to bring our resources together and make sure no one in this church, or no one that calls Woodland Hills Family Church their church home, that no one in here has need. Paul says, **share with God's people who are need, practice hospitality.**

5. beyond just here in our church, you are generous with support for ministries in town and missions around the world. There are a lot of ministries in town that do a lot of great work and we give them a one-time gift at the beginning of the year as they are starting out. I've just been blown away that we've been able to give that again as I shared with you in the fall. So, there are some ministries that we gave this amount year after year, but because of your generosity this year, that gift is four times what we've given them in the past. Again, because of your generosity. To ministries that aren't impacting you or your family. You're just saying, "Get the gospel out. Take the gospel to the ends of the earth and missions around the world."

We read Philippians 4: 13 often and we forget that that's in the context of Paul sharing about contentment and Paul saying, "I can weather extreme circumstances because I'm in Christ and he meets my needs" So we often forget Philippians 4: 13 is in the context of generosity. Here's what he says. **14 Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. 15 Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; 16 for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid more than once when I was in need.** I think it's one of the greatest joy I have in this church when a missionary calls and says, "The truck broke down, we're having this ministry take place and we can only afford to have 100 pastors or leaders from whatever nation it is around the world come, but we know there is more need and more want to come. Would Woodland Hills consider... what's great is the answer is yes. Not just consider, we want to participate in what God is doing in Kenya, in Ethiopia, in Haiti, in Indonesia. Just thank you church for that.

6. You are grateful. I know I joke around here a lot about the people's small coffee cups and all that stuff, but I'm telling you 99.9% of you show up every week so grateful for all that was put into the gathering. I hope today, when you leave and you pick up your kids at Critter Street, Wildwoods, crew, all of it, that you just say "Hey, thank you." And it is a sincere thank you for watching my kid. I know my son. and I want to say it again thank you." Colossians 3: 15 – **15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.** I hope our church is always known in this community as a church that rejoices, prays, worships, and has sincere gratitude.

7. Colossians 3; Your gratitude for the Lord is evident when you worship. I experience that in our first gathering, I experienced it here at 10:00. **Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your heart.** I've got the best seat in the house right here on this corner chair. I want you to know it's not my seat. If anybody in here or the courtyard or over at the chapel wants this seat, it's yours anytime, take it. You'll find no greater joy that to turn during worship and to look back over the congregation with hands lifted in praise and people pouring out their hearts to the Lord. It brings me great joy every week. We have 48 seconds left. And I need to share five more with you. I'm going to see if I can do it really quickly.

8. You invite your family and friends

9. When other people invite their family and friends, you warmly welcome all of our guests. Thank you for your hospitality. Thank you for parking over in express.

10. You serve faithfully. Some of you have served for decades. Thank you. Some of you are just getting started. Join with what the Lord is doing here at Woodland Hills.

11. You let us be creative. Thank you. Some of you I know when we do the Superbowl thing it's like *this is no place...* Well, it's a gathering where we worship, yes, we teach, yes, we also have fellowship. We can have fun around a sporting event without it being idolatry. And there are times we do crazy things around here that didn't work. We go to the back at 8:15 a lot going, *"that didn't work," and you will never see it at 10:00.* That's why people love going to the 815; it's like the unplugged, unrecorded, "Ted will say things that won't get him canceled at 8:15. At 10:00, he's a little more reserved." Some things don't work but we feel this overwhelming freedom to try things.

12. You love to laugh. A cheerful heart is good medicine but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.
Thank you, Woodland Hills. I love you.

Father, We are grateful for what you're doing in our church. And I thank you for each one in here, for each one outside, for each one at the chapel, for all those who are serving all the kids. We thank you for what you've done in us, what you will continue to do through us, until the day Christ Jesus is revealed.

For the one who has never placed faith in Jesus, we ask that this be the day of their salvation, that they would come forward, meet with someone from our prayer team, and place faith alone in Christ alone.

We pray all of this in the authority and the name of Jesus. And everyone agreed and said... Amen.