



God With Us

Part 1 – Good News for Those Seeking Guidance

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We are going to kick off our series today *God With Us*, taking us all the way to Christmas Eve. And we're looking at the good news. We are going to look at Isaiah 9: 6, the four descriptive names of Jesus will be our outline for the next four weeks.

If you have your Bible, turn to Matthew 1. I want you to follow along, starting in Verse 18 as we kick off Christmas here at Woodland Hills today with the Christmas story. Matthew 1: Starting in Verse 18 as we talk about ***Good News for Those Seeking Guidance. 18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph, her husband, was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.***

20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. 21 She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins." And all God's people said... Amen.

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet... And this is through the Prophet Isaiah. ***23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means "God with us").*** Today we are going to see that God is with us now and forever.

24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Here's where we start Christmas at Woodland Hills. Here's where we start this new series. God is with us now and forever, and this is good news. You need to know he will never leave you. Follower of Jesus, whatever you're going through, whatever decision you're making at this moment, whatever decision you just made for your life, for your family, he is with you now and forever. Notice it doesn't say now until the end. Follower of Jesus, there is no end. It's now and forever. He's with you forever, and this is good news for the lost, those who have never placed faith in Jesus, those who have never repented of their sins. This is good news for you today. Those who are lonely and feel like everyone has abandoned you, this is good news for you. For those who are broken or in a broken relationship, we want to talk to you a little bit today.

For those who are sick and for those who are dying... Thursday, I was called to the hospital in Springfield. One of our members was placed on Hospice. I walked in the room, and I'm always overjoyed to walk in a room that is full of family and friends in those final moments or those final days that someone has here upon this earth. John's wife, Elizabeth, told me... She said, "Ted, you're about to lose the biggest laughter at Woodland Hills Family Church. He loves our church."

John was a faithful member here at our church. He went to be with the Lord this weekend. But as we stood by his bed, all sorts of thoughts went through my mind. You hear me say this often around here – It's in those moments where you realize what really matters. Whatever you've been thinking about, whatever you've been processing, whatever you've been holding onto for purpose or meaning, just kinds of fades away. And everything that's important about life comes to the forefront.

John's brother-in-law... I don't know if he's here in this gathering or here this morning. He drove down from St. Louis to be with John and Elizabeth in these final hours and days. He's actually a professor at Liberty University. We were standing there next to John's bed, and he said something I had never really processed before and it stuck with me as kind of a sacred echo for the rest of the week, and I drove home with it. I'm going to kind of paraphrase because I was pretty emotional when he shared it.

Here's what he said. He said, "I'm not afraid of to die, but I'm not really looking forward to the days leading up to it. I know heaven is my home and I know the Lord is my Savior, but it's the moments of pain and suffering."

I had my arm around Elizabeth, and I said, "How do you want us to pray?" We know that hospice care can be quite difficult and can be hard, not just for the person, but for those watching.

Psalm 23: 4. As soon as he said that the Holy Spirit brought that to my mind. ***Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me...*** He's with us there in that moment. ***...your rod and your staff, they comfort me.***

Many of you know I quote Timmothy Keller around here a lot. He's a pastor from New York City that passed away in May with pancreatic cancer. I honor him. He, Chuck Swindoll, Phillip Yancey, taught me so much about grace in my early 20's. He passed away in May and some of his last words were right here. "There is no downside for me leaving, not in the slightest." I wanted to start here today because this is where I'm at and it's what I process. To go to the house of mourning... What does the Bible say? ***The heart of the wise is in the house of mourning.*** Some around here say it to me often. "You talk too much about death." It's a big part of my job. I'm going to be there for a lot of you or you'll be there for me.

Travis and I were debating that in the back – whose going first. He's a doctor. I said, "You will be by my bed, giving instruction and explaining to my family."

He goes, "You think you're going to go first?"

I go, "I go to Cracker Barrel way more than you do, yes." But there's no downside to me leaving. I hope every follower of Jesus in here... Yes, there is work to do upon this earth, but that you would have the

same tension the Apostle Paul had when he said, "To go and be with the Lord, I long for that." But I know I have purpose here, I know I have a job to do here, but I live in this tension of life and purpose here upon this earth and my desire to be with the Lord. I hope no follower of Jesus at Woodland Hills Family Church fears death because God is with you now and through all of that and through all of eternity. He will never leave you. Jesus is with me when I'm dying, and here's where we're going to go today as we look at **Wonderful Counselor**. But he's also with me while I'm living. So, I hope faith for you, salvation for you this season is not just about salvation promises – heaven is your home, an eternity with the Lord. That you understand what you have available to you while you're living.

In Isaiah 9: 6... You've seen it on greeting cards; it's shared often at Christmas, but we're going to get a little bit deeper into it in this series. Isaiah prophesied this. ***To us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders.*** Now, you have to think about what the listeners of that day heard when this was shared. They were dealing with something you and I can't really fully understand. They were dealing with incompetent leaders in government. You're like, "Don't you dare ruin Christmas with a political talk." Buckle up, here we go. It's part of the story.

In Isaiah's day, the leaders were incompetent, so imagine somebody says, "You're talking now about a Messiah who is coming to earth..." We celebrated Christmas, the first coming of Jesus, where he came to be our savior. He is going to return again. We believe in the second coming of Christ. And he is going to establish the millennial kingdom. And here's what you need to know about Jesus. He's the perfect leader. He rules perfectly with Justice and with righteousness. I guarantee you no one in here had this conversation, no one outside, no one at the Chapel, no one had this conversation at their Thanksgiving dinner table. "You know, I really like how things are shaping up in Washington right now."

Let's be really honest. I don't care if it's the person you elected in the Oval Office or not. Even when you had your favorite president... Some of you have to go back decades to figure out who your favorite president was. Even when it was your favorite president that you voted for who was elected, you still complained about the government. I want my 60, 70, 80 year old friends to look back over the course of your life. You've always complained about the government. You never go, "It's really going well."

The day is coming you will never complain again. You can't just run through Isaiah 9:6a to get to part b, these four descriptive names. You have to understand these are tied to how he will rule and reign perfectly. He will govern well. And we will never experience that. We've had glimpses of it probably. You're like, "Oh, no, Ted, you wait. 2024... That's our year! Everything is going to come together." I hope changes are made. I want all of you to get involved. I want you to vote. I want you to do your part. We all understand that, but if you're waiting for perfection from someone other than Jesus, it ain't gonna happen.

So now... You should be up here and watching people. This is the best part of the job right here: watching people. If you have your arms folded right now, just let them out a little bit, sit there with an open posture, and let's keep going.

...And he will be called Wonderful Counselor... This is the one whose government will be on his shoulders. ***...Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*** What does that mean? Jesus, our wonderful Counselor guides us in truth, wisdom, and discernment.

How about this? Every word that comes from his mouth is 100% truth. Wouldn't that be nice? Wouldn't that be something in a leader to know when they speak, it's 100% truth. He can be trusted because what he says is true because he is truth. He's given us his Word, and this is truth. We live in a day where... You see it all the time on the dumpster fire called Twitter. People get on there and go, *Hey, there's this one passage right here that doesn't really align with how I live...* So, what people are trying to do is move the scripture to align with how they live. That's not at all how we come. We come to renew our minds with the truth. We come to renew our minds with the way we live. And we read something, and we don't go, *Um... That really doesn't work... What else do we have in here?* That's not how we read the Bible at all. The Bible is truth. He's our mighty God.

Now add to wonderful Counselor, **Almighty God**. He give us strength and power for daily living. We believe the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power that raised your lifeless soul. We believe the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is the same power available to you right now to raise your dead marriage and your dead family. It's the same power. And that is in your leader, King Jesus. He is our everlasting father. He cares for us now and forever. This is very important. Sometimes it's probably the most puzzling of the four descriptive names because if you've studied and you clearly understand the Trinity, you say he is speaking here of his relationship to the other members of the Trinity. No, he's speaking here of Jesus and his relationship with time. That you are cared for now and not until the end; you are cared for now and forever. That is your King Jesus, everlasting father.

And he's our **Prince of Peace**. He brings order and right relationships. There is but one mediator between God and man and it is the person of Jesus. He brings you in right relationship with God the Father. When you repent of your sins and confess with your mouth Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart he's been raised from the dead, you will be saved. That brings you in right relationship with God. And then it begins through sanctification and growing more like Jesus, having our minds renewed, we begin to build into right relationships here on this earth. And that will be Christmas Eve. So, bring your family.

This is where we're headed for the next four weeks. Today, we want to look at Jesus, our Wonderful Counselor who guides us in truth, wisdom, and discernment.

Go one verse more – verse 7. I hope you are encouraged with this as we're celebrating the first coming, the Advent that we think about the second coming. ***7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.*** It's not just a thousand-year reign in the millennial kingdom, it's forever. ***He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever.*** This is your King Jesus. ...***The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.***

So, let's talk a little bit about those who need to make some big decisions and how you're making decisions, and is there a framework that we have that the Lord gives us to make these big decisions. I want to go around the room and go outside a little bit and in the Lobby, over at the Chapel, online. Let's just look at some of the big decisions that I know people in here need to make.

Some of you are in the middle of pursuing a degree. In high school, you went to your guidance counselor, and it was a 15-minute appointment. You felt stressed, so you had to pick a major. And

you're in your freshman year, and you're like, *This ain't my major*. I did that. I thought I was going to be an accountant. I hate math! I found that out pretty quickly. Accounting wasn't for me. I learned that in my first week of Accounting 101. So, some of you are making the big decision not just to pursue a degree, but you have to change degrees. And at Christmas break, you're going to be thinking about it. That's a pretty big decision, what to do with the rest of your life... No pressure.

Some of you are choosing a college. We're going to look at that a little bit. Hopefully the quiz we take at the end will provide some framework for that. How do you choose a college? When I look in the scripture, Mizzou, Arkansas, aren't not in there, but there is a lot of guidance on how to pick and how to pick something you can afford. How to not go into mounds of debt. We will talk about that in a moment.

Some of you need to relocate. I hear this all the time with people visiting Branson. They come on one vacation and their like, "We're moving here." And a lot of them did in 2020 and 2021. Some of you relocated and you found out pretty quickly that we don't eat funnel cakes every day, we don't ride go-carts every day. It's a normal town with normal jobs and people go about and do life, but you're relocating.

Moving where you have roots with your family. I would say that's a big decision. You need guidance on that. Some of you are thinking about starting a new job or maybe a business. And to do that, you have to make another big decision and that's to quit a job. Quitting a job isn't easy. You have to make that decision and you're trying to formulate the conversation you are going to have with your boss or whatever manager that oversees you at work. That's a big decision.

Some of you are making the decision whether or not to retire. At 8:15... They are all retired at 8:15. They were like check... decision made.

How about this one? Buying/selling a house. I talked to a lot of people. They need to buy a new house for their growing family, or something came up and they can't live in their current home anymore and they need to sell it.

We are going to see today that knowledge is knowing the right thing to do, knowing the next step you need to take. Wisdom is knowing when to take it. Knowledge is knowing the right thing to say. Wisdom is knowing when to say it. Let me say it again for the husbands. Knowledge is knowing the right thing to say. Wisdom is knowing when to say it.

So, you know you need to sell your house, but this month may not be the time, or it may be the time. You have to decide that. And those are big decisions. How do you get guidance for that type of decision?

Some of you are caring for aging family members or you're coming into that right now. How do I care for an aging Family member?

Two calls this week on this one. Let me just tell you, follower of Jesus, you are called in scripture to care for your aging family members. That is your responsibility, not the government's responsibility.

But it looks very different from family to family. Some move them into their house. Some of you are going, “huh uh.” Some have an apartment down the street or a house next door. Some are in assisted living. Some are in retirement homes. So, there are all sorts of ways for you to care for your parents or to care for your family. But you're in that decision right now and it's a big decision.

Isn't it something. Just when you think you made one big decision or your life and things are going well, and then your back here and you have to make another one. There are those in our church who are deciding right now on what treatment plan. They were offered a few options. They have a second opinion, some a third opinion. There are also people in our church who are making the decision to stop treatments. Those are big decisions.

There are young people in here with the big question, “Should I ask her out?” That's a big decision. Do you know what's a bigger decision than that? “Should I ask her to be my wife?” That's a big decision. I met a guy at a conference a little bit ago in Oklahoma. He brought his girlfriend up. It was a marriage conference and I said, “How long have you guys been dating?” He goes, “Seven years.” What kind of analysis paralysis are we dealing with bro. And then I found out he was an accountant. You can't make this stuff up. You know what? He was letting the budget...

How many of you got married poor? Look around the room. It's possible. We talked about this two series ago. You get married and you build something together. I'm just looking at him going, “Bro, pull the trigger, make the decision. The budget might not make sense, but just build something together.”

Some of you are thinking about ending a relationship. I heard from some who ended it after two series ago, *Getting to Know You*. Here's the thing. You already know the right decision to make. It's executing that decision. Some of you are deciding on whether or not to divorce. That's a big decision, not to be taken lightly. You ask for wisdom and guidance from church leaders on that.

Some of you are married and wondering when to start a family. Or you have issues with infertility and you're making the big decision on adopting or fostering. You realize this decision doesn't just affect you and your spouse, it affects the whole family.

Just so you know, that's just a day in the life of a local church. The decisions that need to be made. So, how do we gain wisdom?

Have you ever heard someone say this. “If I knew then what I know now.” And it's interesting how decision making and time go together. Or maybe you've heard somebody say this. “I wish I would have learned this years ago.” I love that when a 60-year married couple... True story – Lloyd and Jean from Iowa were married 69 years, and he came up to me after an event once and put his finger in my chest and said, “I wish I would have learned this years ago.” He got married and went to WWII and came back. I'm always amazed when I see senior adults, with time that is limited, going to a marriage conference, going to a retreat. They want to learn. We say this at our church. “Whether you're 20 or 70, we don't want to live like fools. We want wisdom, we want guidance.” So, don't think at 70 there's just too much in my past...” Do not feed your regrets. Ask Jesus to redeem your remaining days, however long that is.

Have you ever heard someone say this... Young person, let me talk to the students and young adults in our church. You want this said of you – “You are wise beyond your years.” I don’t know if Ya’ll know what’s happening in our student ministry and young adult’s ministry in this church, but let’s get behind them and cheer them on in a big way. I have enjoyed getting to talk to my young adult friends in this church and I’m listening for what is their role? What will they be doing in this church? How are they going to take leadership? There would be nothing greater to hear about Woodland Hills than “They have hundreds of students and young adults who are wise beyond their years. They know who to hang out with and who not to hang out with. They know when to leave a situation. They have wisdom in every situation.”

Psalms 90: 12 says, ***Teach us to number our days that we may gain a heart of wisdom.***

I look around this room. Solomon calls gray hair blossoming almond trees. We have a lot of blossoming almond trees in this room with experience. Now listen, age is not a guarantee of wisdom. But the longer you’ve lived and the more mistakes you learn from and the more guidance you receive, leaning into biblical community and studying God’s Word and spending time every day in prayer with Him. It is something that as we grow older, we learn a lot.

I was thinking about all these sayings we just looked at on the screen. I don’t know why, but I’ve become a big Dave Ramsey again. Who listens to Dave Ramsey? I listen to him because the callers that call in with their questions, I’m like, you’ve never listened to this show. I’m going to answer it for you right now. It’s really simple. Don’t drink coffee, don’t go to restaurants, and don’t drive anymore, and when you’re 60, you’ll have 87 million dollars in the bank. That’s Dave Ramsey. Don’t live life now, but wait until you’re old and have three years left, then go party it up. So, I’m not 100% bought into everything Dave talks about, but I’m just fascinated by some of the calls that come in. I get it when it’s a 20 something trying to learn. Or Lottery winners call... But then when he’s talking to the 60, 70, 80-year-old person who got bad financial advice... I just love when Dave says, “Stop asking your broke friends for financial advice.” Find wisdom in how you handle money. And you’re like, “I ain’t got no money to handle.” Still, don’t feed your regrets whatever your age, but gain a heart of wisdom whatever number of days you have left.

We’re going to take this quiz, but before we do, I hope this quiz brings joy and delight to your soul. When Jesus would teach, we have all sorts of words to describe how the crowd responded – amazed, astonished.

I love this one in Mark 12: 37, ***The large crowd listened to him with delight.*** When you read the Bible and it confronts you in your life, does that bring joy to your soul? Or is it more like “I’ll find a more progressive Christian to help me with this one.” Or do you read it and go, “I need to change.”

And does that bring delight? Adam shared it a couple of weeks ago and I just love the term. God is not a cosmic killjoy. When your parents tell you no, young people, it doesn’t mean they hate you. They don’t sit up at night trying to think of ways to make you miserable tomorrow. That’s not the heart of a parent. The parents are like, “I know where wisdom will guide you. And I know who you hang out with but that’s not wisdom. You’re like the sum total of the parts you hang out with. They say no to some things that maybe you can look at... And maybe it’s going to be years later. If a five-year-old gets denied sugar

all day long, at the end of the day, they are not going, “Thanks, mom, for looking out for my health today.” But years later... This is in relation to time. We can look back and go, “Our parents were smarter than we thought. They knew some things.” Do you have that type of delight when it comes to God’s direction, guidance, and truth for your life?

So, let’s just take a five-question quiz for guidance. I hope whatever big decision you need to make... We looked at some. I’m thinking all of those are pretty big decisions. I guess it depends on where you are in life. Maybe they will also help guide you for some of the smaller decisions that you are going to make this week.

1. Have I asked God for wisdom? James 1: 5 – *If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.* Just to address a few people in here, some of you don’t pray as a family. I just want to encourage you to start praying at mealtime. And go beyond the “Dear Jesus, thank you for this food, amen.” Be specific. Give praise in your prayer. Confess in your prayer. Give thanksgiving in your prayer. Make request in your prayer. Do that at mealtimes. If all you ever do as a family or as an individual is pray at mealtime, I just want to encourage you to go outside at mealtimes. Pray in the car as a family.

I have a son in college. We don’t hang up the phone with him until we pray. You can pray on the phone with your kids, before they leave the car to go to school, before you go to bed, when you get up in the morning, as you sit at home, as you walk along the way, asking God for wisdom. Amy and I pray this every day for our adult children. “Lord, give them wisdom and discernment. They are going to be in situations where decisions have to be made and the pressure is on that they would go your way and they would lean on you. So, ask God for wisdom.

2. What does the Bible say about it? Search the scripture. Yeah, the Bible may not tell you directly what school to go to, but if it’s a school you can’t afford and you’re going to be... The Bible says, “The lender lords it over those who are the borrower. The borrower is a slave to the lender.” You’re like, “I can’t afford to go to that school,” And that’s alright. That’s wisdom to say, “I’d love to go to that school, but I can’t. So, what does the Bible say about it? Psalm 119:105 – *Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path.*

Everybody at the 8:15 debrief said, “I cannot read that verse without singing Amy Grant.” Yeah, “Thy word is a lamp for my feet, a light for my path. He will direct you. And remember, a light for your path doesn’t mean... I always love when somebody asks me, “What’s your five-year plan?” Does anybody else get fearful when they hear that? I’m trying to figure out what I’m having for lunch today. Stick with me for just a second. I don’t have to see. I know the Lord is with me now and he’ll be with me way down there. I need to know what next step I need to take.

Right now, somebody in our church, is deciding, “Should we move in together? Well, let me look it up...” No. We looked at that in Getting to Know you. Don’t move in together until you get married. Some of you are living together right now and you’re wrestling... You haven’t let the conviction of the Holy Spirit work through your life from the series we did, *Getting to Know You*. And the message that came out of that. And you’ve been wrestling with , “Lord, should I move out?” I’m here to tell you. You don’t even

have to ask for that wisdom anymore because the scripture says yes, ***do not arouse or awaken love before it's time.***

Should I stop sleeping with my boyfriend/girlfriend? "Yes." Yes, ask God for wisdom, but when it's clear as day... The question for you is do you delight in this? Knowing that this is for your best. Again, it's not God, the cosmic killjoy, it's God who cares for you. Psalm 1: 2 – ***those who delight in the Law of the Lord and who meditate on his law day and night.*** I want to read it and go *that is truth.* You've been in a room where truth is spoken and there is wisdom. It's a delight because you know it.

3. do I have enough information to make a decision? This is a big one. Proverbs 13:16 – ***All who are prudent act with knowledge, but fools expose their folly.*** Fools rush into decision making, but a wise person can say, "I need to take a little time with this decision. I need to gather more information." And at some point, you have enough information. My spreadsheet friend that I met in Oklahoma, I would say had enough information. He needed to make a decision. And some of you have enough information and you need to make a decision, and some of you don't and you need to gather more. Remember knowledge knows what to say and do, wisdom knows when to say it and when to do it.

4. Who do I need to seek advice from? This is a big deal. Again, Dave Ramsey says, "Don't go to your broke friends to ask for financial advice." I would also encourage you don't go to your jaded friends to ask for relationship advice. If you have a friend who is constantly on their ex-spouse and running them into the ground, that's not the person you're seeking marriage counseling from. They can be a friend, they can be a family member who you never hear them say a positive word about their spouse in public. Don't go to that person for help. The scripture says, ***Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisors, they succeed.***

This is the difference between authoritative and authoritarian leadership. Authoritarian leadership says, "I'm going to make this decision, I'm going to do it all on my own and I'm just going to..."

Authoritative leadership is God. That's the leadership you want. That's where you seek input from your employees, from managers, from whoever you're working with. It doesn't mean you are taking everybody's input, but you're getting other advice and other wisdom. There are people in this room, across this campus, who have made big decisions like you're making right now. Find them and ask them. What did you do when you were in this situation? I would tell you to look for old people. Old people are your friends. Find a couple who love the Lord and love each other and take them on a double date. Find the couple who has done well with money, they manage money well. If you don't know how to manage money, find someone who does and take them out for coffee, and put your finances before them. Get advice, get wisdom.

So, you're asking the Lord, you're seeking what the scripture says, you're gathering information, you're asking for the input of others and then here's a big one. This is key.

5. Will I do the right thing even when the next thing isn't clear? Will I take the right next step even though I don't know where this is going to lead. This brings new perspective to Proverbs 3: 5-6 – ***Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding.*** Now here's the key. Two parts of Verse 6. Do the right thing. In all your ways, submit to him. Do the right thing at all times. And

look what it says, Heed... Our wonderful counselor, full of truth, wisdom, and discernment, **he will make your paths straight.** Do the right thing.

Obviously, I do a lot of work with couples and recently shared with a friend who is making a big decision on remarriage. He's been divorced. I just don't hear him speak well of his ex-wife. I said, "Can I just give you the Lord's word for this? I need you to start treating her like your enemy." He liked that. I go, "let me tell you what that means. Love her, pray for her, offer her food and drink if she's hungry or thirsty. That's not me going woke. That's not woke, that's Jesus. That's how Jesus tells you to treat your enemy. We'll get to that when we get to Prince of Peace.

Some of us are making this big decision on an island all by yourselves, like, "I'll figure it out." No. Ask the Lord this week. Spend some time. Actually, ask your family. "Hey, we have a big decision about our house." Or "We've got a big decision about my job. We've got big decisions to make. Can we gather for 10 minutes and pray about it as a family? We're just going to seek wisdom and discernment on this one decision. And then we are going to spend some time searching the scripture, whatever that may be." Search the scripture on works, search the scripture on relationships, search the scripture on money. Gather information. Make a phone call. "Hey, can I talk to you for just a few moments? If you were in my shoes, what would you do? Have you been in my shoes before?" And then I encourage you, followers of Jesus, do the right thing at all times. If you don't follow this number 5... This is when people start to take shortcuts. This is when they start to cut corners to get their agenda. But listen, lean not on your own understanding. Do the right thing. Don't cut corners. And trust the Lord who has your path planned out.

I don't know exactly where I am in five years, but he does and he's with me now and forever. And all God's people said... Amen.

Father, in the name of Jesus, we are grateful for how you guide us and direct us. And we want to take delight in it. give us wisdom and discernment. Jesus is our wonderful counselor, and we are grateful. For the one who has never placed faith in Jesus, that today would be the day of their salvation. That they would confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord, believe in their heart that he has been raised from the dead that they would be saved. And that they would meet with someone from our prayer team before they head out of here today that they would let us know about that so that we can walk alongside them in their new faith in Christ.

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