

SUCCESS ON THREE LEVELS
August 28, 2016 morning service
Exodus 17:8-16

Thank you, Travis. We look forward to tonight. Do you think you're going to feel led to sing "A Mighty Fortress is our God" tonight? Yeah, I think you will. I think the Lord spoke. That's good. Amen. What a great job. Thank you, dear friend, for being with us all this day. Tonight you'll want to be right here.

Now in a moment I'm going to open the word of God to the book of Exodus in chapter 17 and introducing this sermon both in this service and in the next, we are commissioning our middle school and high school students. We prayed over teachers a couple of weeks ago but this morning we're going to commission students. They've been preparing this summer to go into our middle schools and our high schools as great witnesses, as gospel tellers and all of those kids are going to come and be here. I've asked a representative to come and just kneel here at the front today. Maddie and Campbell are going to come. This is Maddie Lowe and Campbell Smith and I'm going to ask them to come and just kneel right here in the altar. Maddie represents our high schoolers, Campbell our middle schoolers, and I want to lead us as we pray and I want you to pray that God'll raise up an army of young people to go with the gospel.

You know, they tell us you can't pray at school. Yeah you can. Students are great missionaries as they go if they're full of the Lord Jesus. So we're trying to raise them up and train them up so that they go along with others and scores of churches sharing the gospel and sowing seeds in that school district. So you bow your heart and I'm going to pray.

Lord, I thank you today for Maddie and Campbell. I pray for them especially that, Lord, you'll empower them. Lord, they represent their peer group from high school and middle school today. I pray You'd raise up boys, girls, seventh graders, sophomores, seniors. Lord, help them see that they, as Your children, are to be witnesses in the classroom, the hallway, and the sporting event, extracurricular, and I pray they would be salt and light with a testimony and a witness verbally as you give opportunity. So we commit them unto You today and pray, God, you'd raise them up for such a time as this. It is my prayer by faith for them in Jesus' name. Amen and Amen.

Maddie, Campbell, we'll let you slip out. I know you've got to get to your small group but thanks for coming just to be here as a picture of all of those others that will stand here in the second service today.

Now you've got your Bible and we are in Exodus 17 in just a moment. I read every month a magazine that comes to my mailbox called *Success, Success Magazine*. Huey Pearson recommended it to me years ago. In that magazine there's a CD that I listen to and I plug it in my car and shove it in there and I listen. Everybody they interview, they ask three or four questions at the end and they ask every one of them,

“How do you define success?” It’s a great question for you to define success. How would you define success if I walked right out there and put a microphone under your chin and said, “Success is...”? What would you answer?

Several years ago I was on an airplane flying in from Atlanta late one night to Pensacola and sat next to a man who was a good friend of one of my great heroes, Coach John Wooden. We began to talk about him. He said, “Would you like to talk to Coach Wooden?” I said, “Yeah, I’d kind of like that.” He said, “When we get off the plane I’m going to call him and see if I can get him on the phone.” He did and I chatted with that man, well into his 90’s at that time.

Coach Wooden gave me one of the great definitions of success in one of his books that he wrote. John Wooden defined success this way. Doing the best you can with the resources you have. Now different people have different resources in this room. We think of money. Some of us have more. Some of us have less. We think of gifts and talents. Some have more talents than others. Some are gifted in one area. Some are gifted in another. Some have more experience. Some have less. John Wooden says it’s doing the very best that you can with the resources that you have.

Now the greatest resource every believer in here has is that the person of the Holy Spirit lives in you. What a resource. He takes inexperience and a lot of experience. He takes rich and poor. He takes educated and uneducated and He uses us in a powerful way. When these students – some will be more gifted than others but they all go doing the best they can with the resources that they’ve been given to be a witness in our world.

Now everyone in this room ought to endeavor to be the best you can, do the best you can for God, using the resources that you’ve been given. Including the person of God, including the training you have, including the education, including the experience. Everything that’s in you, those resources you need to use to the very best of your ability. We find success on three levels in Exodus 17 in an encounter between Moses and the Amalekites. Most of us that have been in our Bible for a long time, we know this story. Look with me. Exodus 17, beginning in verse 8.

Then Amalek came and fought against Israel at Rephidim. So Moses said to Joshua, “Choose men for us and go out, fight against Amalek. Tomorrow I will station myself on the top of the hill with the staff of God in my hand.” Joshua did as Moses told him, and fought against Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. So it came about when Moses held his hand up, that Israel prevailed, and when he let his hand down, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands were heavy. Then they took a stone and put it under him, and he sat on it; and Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus his hands were steady until the sun set. So Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. Then the Lord said to Moses, “Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven.” Moses built an altar and

named it [Yahweh Nissi] The Lord [Yahweh Nissi] is My Banner; and he said, "The Lord has sworn; the Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation."¹

We are in conflict all the time. If you are a believer, you are set in a world that is against you. You are on a narrow road going down a highway that is a four-lane highway not running beside you, but coming at you. Narrow way, broad way, which one are you on? If you're on the narrow way you're running counter to this lost and dying world. That puts you in a conflict and in that conflict God has called us to be witnesses as these young people are to be and He's called all of us to do that and He's called us to be successful in what we do in His name in this world.

I want to show you success out of Moses' life in this story on three levels. Now Moses had the enemy of the Amalekites all of his life. The Amalekites came against him, against him, against him. After he died, they continued but there was a day when the Amalekites went away because you've never met an Amalekite, a Hittite, a Jebusite. All those "ites" that you find in the Old Testament, they're gone save the Jew. He's still here because God said that generation will prevail forever. They'll be here when the Lord comes. But those Amalekites came against Moses and the people of God and here was the warfare and the success that came on three levels. So let's look for just a moment this morning. I want to show you these levels where you need to be fighting war.

Number one is the spiritual dimension. Now when you read in Moses' life, you back up in Exodus chapter 4. You remember when God called Moses and he was around that bush and God lights him up and shows him what to do? Then when He gets him ready to go forth in Exodus 4, He says, "Moses, what's in your hand?" He said, "It's a staff." A shepherd's staff like a staff with a crook on it. A shepherd's staff because he was taking care of the sheep. He said, "What's in your hand?" He said, "A staff." He said, "Throw it down." You know the story. It became a snake. He said, "Pick it up." Not by the head but by the tail. He did and that became the mark of the spiritual presence of God in the life of Moses. When Moses went to the hill he told Joshua to, "Go into the valley and you'll fight but I'm going to the hill and as long as I raise my hand and I've got the staff of God in my hand and I keep that up, then we're going to have victory." We see that in this text.

Hear me, friend. You must first, foremost, before anything else, you must fight on a spiritual level in a spiritual dimension. That's where the real battle takes place. When we lift our hands up to God, He's got the staff of God in his hand. You see, you are soul, mind, will, and emotion. That's great but you don't start there. You're physical, that's fleshly. That's good and there's a part of that we're going to talk about but you must begin first and foremost as a spiritual man, as a spiritual woman. That's where the warfare takes place. It's on your knees in prayer. It's lifting up to God. It's giving praise when you're in the conflict. It's the spiritual side of life and we have a victor. His name is the Lord Jesus Christ and we must lift Him up, lift Him up. When we

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make Him low we find we are defeated but when we lift Him high, He draws men and women, boys and girls unto Himself.

Victory comes on the spiritual dimension from the mountain lifting high the name of God and they fought the battle and they won the victory and then it says down in verses 14, 15, 16 that Moses told them to write in a memorial to give to Joshua and he did that the Amalekites were going to go away and then He said to him, "Build an altar and call this place of prayer where you will kneel, where you will come, you call this place *Yahweh Nissi*. *Yahweh*, Lord, the Lord God. *Nissi*, banner. It is here, the place of victory, that you lift up a banner.

Do you have places of victory in your life? You set a banner there and you remember. God gave victory. God gave victory. God gave victory. Now there's at least two banners that everyone in here needs to lift high. You need two days in your life. Many, many others but everyone needs two. Number one. You need a day where you placed the banner of salvation above your life. That is the day that you understand that you are not good but God is good. That is the day you understand that you are not righteous but you were a sinner, that you are not good enough to get to heaven. I have people all the time that say, "You know, pastor, I'm good." I say, "Yes, you are but you're not good enough."

You see, when we compare ourselves to other people we can be good but when we compare ourselves to God we're not so hot. There's none righteous, no not a one. We come to the place where we see that we're not good and God came for us and Jesus came to die for us. It's the blood of Jesus that speaks for us as we've been singing out. He shed His blood. He came to redeem and to love. He came for you and He came for you and He came for you. When He came He called you to come to Him. "Come, let us reason together, says the Lord." "Peter, leave your boat. Come and follow Me. Come and follow Me."

Thursday night I was preaching at the First Baptist Church of Opelika, Alabama. There were 400 plus men there. Olive, you never know what you're doing. I met two men – well many men there that encouraged me but I met two men that really blessed me. One man had spent a year in Iraq. He said, "Pastor, somebody from your church sent me a CD of your services every week and I played it in our Barracks every week for a year and men listened to you preach the gospel in Iraq. Every week we listened to that CD." He said, "When you opened your mouth and started to talk I said, 'I know that voice.'" I have a lot of people say that. "I've listened to that redneck. I'd know that anywhere." You never know when you drop your offering in the offering plate that it pays somebody's salary that's making a CD and somebody's mailing that and sending it somewhere. I had no idea.

We finished up. I preached awhile and a young man walked up to me. He used to be a member of this church. He said, "Pastor, in the year 2000 I was sitting in the balcony minding my own business." He said, "You preached that day and the Spirit of God reached and grabbed me and said, 'Today is your day.'" He said, "I walked out

and down to the front and told you and they led me to faith in Christ and I prayed a prayer and I received the Lord that day and that evening you baptized me into the fellowship of Christ and into the fellowship of Olive Baptist Church.” I didn’t remember that man. It’s been 16 years ago. There’s a lot of stuff 16 years ago I don’t remember. There’s some things I do remember that I’m trying to forget but there’s other things. I just didn’t know. He’d been gone now for 16 years.

Some of you are sitting there today and the Spirit of God is telling you, “You’re a sinner. You’re going to hell when you die.” God loved you and Jesus came for you and He died for you. He bled for you. He’s redeeming you and now the Spirit of God is saying, “Come. Come.” In a moment I’m going to stand right here and Jon’s going to sing and the Spirit of God is going to woo you and say, “Come,” and you’re going to come and set up a *Yahweh Nissi*, a banner and you’re going to say, “Today is my day of spiritual victory.” It’s why the Lord came. You fight on a spiritual dimension.

Every Sunday I preach the gospel I fight on a spiritual plain because the wicked one says, “No, don’t go,” and the Spirit of God says, “Yes, come.” And we give that invitation and you come. Many days God gives victory and others people walk out and say, “I’ll wait until another time.”

D.L. Moody tells the story in his biography that almost every Sunday in Chicago he pressed the gospel but on one Sunday he said, “I want you to go away and wait seven days and if God has saved you, then come next Sunday and tell me.” It was the next night that Mrs. O’Leary’s cow kicked over the lantern that started the great Chicago fire and many people that were in that building that Sunday burned to death before they got back the following Sunday. Moody went to his grave saying, “I hurt because I did not press the issue that salvation is now.” Now is the accepted time to come. Today is the day to set up a banner of salvation.

There’s a second day. Some of you have secured that salvation day. You know that you’re in Christ and you know that you are His. Amen. But you’re living in the flesh. You’re living in partial obedience. When I say that, immediately you know what it is God’s called you to do that you’re not being obedient about. For some of you it goes right to your wallet. For some of you it goes right to your lips. For some of you it goes right to your eyes. For some of you it goes right to your attitude. For some of you it goes right to your Facebook account.

Twice this week I typed a long deal on Facebook, mad. Mad. I said, “Bless God, in Jesus’ name, I’m about to tell somebody something.” The Spirit of God said, “Why don’t you just let Me handle that and why don’t you just be quiet and let’s fight on a spiritual plain rather than throwing gas on a fire that you don’t have any business messing with?” I set me up a banner. Victory in surrender to what God said do.

There are other times I say to myself, I’m not going to say a word and God says, “Mmm, it’s time for you to speak up.” You need to be obedient to the whims of your emotion. You need to be obedient to the directive of the Spirit of God within your heart

and when He speaks to you then you obey Him and when you obey, you set up that banner of victory and when He has a banner of victory our God is our banner. You leave the results to Almighty God and I'm here to tell you, He can handle it. He'll take care of you. For soup to nuts, from A to Z, He'll take care of you if you will be obedient in the spiritual dimension where God calls you to walk.

We are to be successful in the spiritual side of life, the spiritual dimension and we set up a banner of salvation and of surrender. Secondly, though, come off the mountain and look down in the valley. Old Joshua's fighting the war. Now there is not only – you must begin with the spiritual dimension but now secondly you must come to the physical dimension. Friend, you're not going to have a war if somebody doesn't pick up weapons and do something. You must get active. You must prevail. You must persist. You must do the work God's called you to do. That means being obedient and then you pick up the book. You pick up the shovel. You pick up the sling. You crank the card. You ride the bus. You extend a hand. You give money. You get obedient in the physical realm.

I met a fellow this week who was a major league baseball player for eight years. He was in the conference with us on Thursday night. His name is Scott Sullivan. Scott pitched for the Cincinnati Reds. He was in their organization eight years and he showed a video. He was a submariner, an underhanded kind of pitcher, side arm underhand. One night during a baseball game in Cincinnati playing against the Colorado Rockies' the pitcher hit Ken Griffey, Jr. Now that's like hitting a multimillion dollar player, one of the greats. A fight didn't break out. Scott said, "I was sitting down in the bull pen as a relief pitcher, chewing on seeds and doing a crossword puzzle." He said, "We're down there behind a wall. We can't even see the game. There's no TVs back there. We don't know what's going on so we're just waiting on somebody to call us to tell us we're in or whatever is next."

He said the phone rang and the coach went to it and said, "Yes." He said, "Hey, Sully, it's for you." He said, "The manager never talks to us. He talks to the coach and the coach tells us what to do." He said, "I came to the phone and I said, 'Yes, sir.'" He called his manager's name and the manager said one thing. "Sully, take care of it." Now what that meant was that Scott was about to go in the game and the first thing he was supposed to do with the very first pitch, the next guy that came up to bat, he was supposed to knock him down. He was supposed to drill him with that baseball. So he had the video. He went in, he wound up, he came underhand and man he hit him right up under the ribcage and it was on. A war broke out, a rhubarb as we'd call it. That batter threw down his bat and he charged the mound. Scott threw down his glove and when that guy came at him he hit him right in the jaw and that guy fell like a fencepost. He drove straight on him, hit him two more times, and then it was just a waylay everywhere. The last thing you see is Scott Sullivan with his hands over his head just like this, people just pummeling him. I thought, what kind of sermon's coming out of this?

Here's what he said. He said, "Secondly, when He tells you what to do and even when it's hard you are supposed to use his manager's word, take care of it." Now the illustration is on the negative side but the point is well taken. There are some things that God calls you to do that no one else is going to do and He's telling you, "Take care of it."

We have an explosion going on down in the preschool division right now. The last two Sundays there were well over 300 kids down there. We don't have enough room. Some of you are going to have to move out of your adult class so we can move children and move preschoolers. You say, "I don't want to do that." Take care of it.

On Wednesday night we've got an avalanche of kids coming to AWANA in our children's program and right now we don't have enough workers. You say, "I don't know if I want to give my time." Take care of it. God's called some of you to go to work to serve and when God says, "Take care of it," He means take care of it.

There's some things God's afforded us in this church that we must be about and we begin on a spiritual dimension and we set our banner of salvation and surrender but then on the physical side He said, "Let's go. Take care of it." And Joshua went to war. You must serve someone somewhere. Begin to pray this prayer. Don't pray, "Lord, bless me." Pray this prayer. Make me a blessing to someone. Now you're ready to go to work. Not, "Lord, bless me." We're good at saying, "Lord, bless me. Bless me." No, no, no, no, no. We are to pray the prayer, "O God, make me a blessing to another," and if you begin to pray for God to use you to be a blessing to someone you'll take care of it. That's what he told Joshua down in the valley.

Joshua. "I'll stand up here. I've got the rod. You go take care of it." God's called some of you on the physical dimension to have success but you've been lazy. You've been absent. It's time for you to do what God's called you to do. I'm still working on my sermon for the end of September about the voting issue. I got a lot of it done this week. The day after tomorrow is election. You say, "Well I'm just going to sit out." You can't sit out. You can but I'm telling you, you need to go take care of it. You need to be involved. You see, when it comes to this, it's not the lesser of two evils, it's the better of two people. It's not the negative side. It's what's going to take us where we need to go and what give us the greatest chance to get there. Take care of it. Be involved in it.

Success comes on a spiritual dimension. Secondly, it's found on a physical dimension but now, thirdly, watch this. This is ever so important. There is then the relational dimension. Moses is up on the mountain. He's got his hands up. That's the spiritual dimension. Joshua's down in the valley and he's taking care of the physical dimension but now Moses is up on the mountain and his arms get tired and Aaron, that's his brother, and Hur, H-U-R, most people out of tradition believe that's Miriam's, that's his brother-in-law, that he's got his brother and his brother-in-law that are next to him and when he got so tired that he couldn't hold it up anymore they got a rock and put him on it so he can sit down and then they held up his hands for him on either side. He had the right relationships.

Now listen to your preacher. Success comes when you have successful relationships. Friends are important. I Corinthians 15:33, don't miss it. Bad company corrupts good morals. If you're hanging with the wrong crowd, you're going to be hanging out and going with the wrong crowd after a while. That's why some of you need to leave the bar and come to the church. That's why many of you need to leave some of your societal situations and get involved in the *koinonia* of the spiritual church. Can I get a witness? Somebody help me. I'm dying up here. These relationships are important. That's why you ought to be a part of a local family. That's why you ought to be a part of a connection group within the life of our church. That's why you ought to get in a small group.

But now watch this. Being a part of the church, wonderful, come join us this morning. Being a part of a small group on Sunday called connection groups, wonderful, but now listen to me. Here's the most important thing you can do and that is be involved in an organic, an organic small group. I'm not going to do it for you. No other staffer's going to do it for you. Out of your small connection group you need to find those friends and those become three or four and organically you begin to meet down at Starbucks or you meet over at Panera Bread or you meet in the basement of somebody's house and it's there that you've got fellowship, two or three. You've got Moses and Aaron and Hur so that when the warfare gets hot you've got people you can bare your soul to. They're your friends. You are in a right relationship with them. They can ask you hard questions. You can ask them hard questions. You can encourage one another on a depth and a level that you can't do with anybody else.

Don't come asking me to start that for you. It's organic. It's Holy Ghost built and started when God leads you to certain people to get involved with and there you need to be a part of the church. Get in that connection group because we do ministry together there but then spinning out of that comes these small, organic groups. It makes all the difference.

You see, friends, there's some folks you're supposed to avoid in your life if you're going to be successful. Proverbs says avoid the foolish people, Proverbs 14:7. You don't want to be hanging with a fool. You witness to a fool but they don't become your best friend. You are to not hang out according to Proverbs 16:28, don't hang out with dishonest people. You don't need to be around liars and thieves. Thirdly, Proverbs 22:24 says you don't need to be hanging out with angry people. You've got people that are always mad. They're probably not going to be great friends to hang out with. Their anger will get in you and make you angry.

I watch this over and over. I'll see a lady that gets in a bad relationship. She's a church member. She and her husband start having trouble and the first thing she does is start hanging out with three divorced ladies. You know where she's headed? Yes, sir. What she needs to do is find her three ladies to hang out with that's got a strong marriage because those three ladies will tell you what you don't want to know. Those three over there that have been wounded and hurt, they're going to tell you what you

want to know. Now can I just give the caveat because I can see it on your face? We have divorce recovery here. We love people that have walked through divorce but we understand God's plan is one man for one woman for life. Nobody gets in to break up. Divorce has touched my family. Divorce has touched yours. It'll touch us all. We live in that culture but we come against that and we're trying to keep people where they need to be. We know that God redeems and forgives and puts us together. We understand all that but I'm just telling you, nobody wants to be in that to get tore up and it's hard. Gosh, it's hard. Hang out with the right kinds of folks.

Find Aaron and Hur. That was his brother and brother-in-law. You say, "I ain't hanging out with my brother-in-law." It's just a principal. It's not a direct command, alright? My father and his brother-in-law, Joe Bowman, were the best of friends all their life. He was the brother my dad never had. God'll give you those people like that.

A spiritual dimension, a physical dimension, and a relational dimension. Everybody in here ought to be 4-F, 4-F. Now I now we come to the military and back in the draft days, 4-F was not good unless you wanted out but 4-F in relationship is really good. There are four places you need to be rightly related. Number one is with your Father. I mean by that your heavenly Father. You need to be rightly related to your Father. Secondly, you need to be rightly related in your faith, that is to who you are and what you believe in your faith. Thirdly, you need to be rightly related with your family. Number four, you need to be rightly related with what we've just been talking about and that's your friends, your friends.

This morning I was getting ready to pray with three of our deacons, or they were praying for me like we always do on Sunday. I'd forgotten to put my phone on silent and I got a text message. I looked at it and it was from one of my friends. His name is Fred. He lives over in Louisiana. He's a retired preacher. Now he prays for me every Sunday morning. Every Sunday he sends me a text and calls my name. He said, "Ted, I just want you to know I've been on my knees praying for you today." One of my dearest friends in all the world that's preaching at my home church this morning, Travis and I talked about him a few minutes this morning. He was as close to me as a brother growing up and he's preaching there today. One of my friends I know is having a little issue this morning, I sent him a text. I said, "I just wanted you to know, hey, dear friend, I love you today, praying for you as you go to the pulpit. It won't be an easy day I know but God'll see you through." Friends. Friends.

Now I know we always take that Old Testament passage that says, "There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother," and we always talk about that being the Lord Jesus and Amen for that but let me tell you, there are some friends in your life that will stick closer than your blood brother. Yes, Amen, because there's a spiritual dimension that both of you share and you come together under a banner of success.

So Moses is on the mountain. Joshua's in a valley. Aaron and Hur are on the mountain. He's lifting high the hand with a rod and a staff of God in it and Joshua prevails over the Amalekites. Moses is going to die. He'll hand it off to that young man.

He's going to take them forward. We've got to be handing off to this generation that was right here, these two, and there'll be scores in the second service. We've got to send them out. The way they learn is we have a spiritual dimension, a physical dimension. We're getting it taken care of. Then we have a relational dimension where we are loving one another.

I have people in the church all the time, they'll walk up to me and say, "Preacher, do you know my name?" No. I don't know everybody's name. Do you? You don't know everybody's name here. I don't. I remember hearing Dr. Rogers one time up at Bellevue – and their church is gargantuan. I've used it before but you've got to be – I can do it now but you have to be at a church a long time to be able to do what he did and I've been here long enough now I can. Sometimes I'll have a senior adult lady, I'm talking about in her 80's, she'll walk up to me and she'll say, "Pastor, do you know my name?" I say, "No, but I know if we look in your purse we can find it somewhere. I know we can."

You see, I may or may not know your name but if you'll get in a small group somebody will know your name. Amen. If you do certain things that are negative or positive I'll probably know your name, alright? I get to know some people. A lot of people I know faces but I can't always tell their name but it's in that relationship that's so important. Related unto the Father, related to yourself in your faith, related to your family, and then related to your friends.

He was eat up with cancer. It was all over his body. His name was Oscar Thompson. He was my second evangelism professor at Southwestern Seminary. He came in. We thought he had already died but he came back to class and he had those metal, you know, those metal kind of crutches that they have, you know the bands that go on your arms like that. It's got a little handle here and you can hear them rattle. He came walking back into class. You talk about being able to hear a pin drop. He came in and he leaned one crutch over and took a piece of chalk. He looked at it and he said, "Boys, forget everything I told you." He said, "I've been to the bottom as far as you can go without dying and it's solid." Well we liked to have a shouting spell right then. He said, "I've been as far as you can go to the bottom without dying and it's solid." He looked up and he said this and it became the premise for his book that he left for us that the most important word in the English language outside of personal pronouns is and he went to the board and he wrote relationships. The most important word in the English language outside of personal pronouns in relationships.

He said, "You must be rightly related to God the Father through Jesus Christ our Lord." That's a spiritual dimension. He said, "You must be rightly related to your world." That's the physical dimension. Then he said, "To your wife, if you have one, to your mother and father, to your friends, family around, you must be rightly related with nothing between your soul and their soul and that there is no word more important in the English language outside of personal pronouns," and he wrote it again and put a line under it. Relationships. He said, "Don't ever forget that."

Be rightly related to your Father, rightly related in faith to your world, and rightly related to those people that are around you. That's been 35 years ago and the older I get the more I understand the truth that Oscar Thompson told me that day on two levels. He'd been to the bottom and it's solid. I don't care how sick you are, let me tell you, there's a rock. Amen. It's solid. And relationships, they're important. They're important.

Some of you have never trusted Jesus. I'm telling you today, you need to come. You need to come. Come and trust Him. Now walking down this aisle won't save you but coming to Jesus, that's where you'll find your Savior. Some of you, after you've been saved, you need to be a part of this church. You need to come join this church today. You need to come out of that balcony, across this ground floor, you need to come. You need to be in a fellowship right here. Some of you are already saved. Some of you in this church need to get up and walk down to the children's division and say, "Where do I sign up to help on Wednesday night in AWANAS? Where do I do that, preacher?" Go down there and talk to them. All they're going to do is have you go around and listen to kids as they memorize scripture. Then they'll embarrass you and you'll have to start memorizing scripture.

That's why we're sending you down there. It's not for them, it's for you, but you'll help them. You'll serve in that physical dimension. Some of you God's slaying and He's calling you to obedience. You need to come. I'm going to pray a prayer and after I pray our dear minister of music, Jon, is going to start to sing and when he sings and you know you ought to, just get up and come while I'm praying. You come on right now. Be standing right here when I open my eyes. That's good. You come. You come. You come this day.

Father, have Your way in my life, every life. Lord, I pray that in the spiritual, the physical, and the relational dimension of our church and our lives, that You'll make us to be successful, victors, that you'll do the work that needs be done in this church. We love You and give You praise in Jesus' name.

On our feet we are all over this room, standing and singing, the Spirit of God wooing. You step out and you come. You come. You come.