

Singleness as a Means to Enjoy God

Series: 5 Words --- Week 1

Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 7:7, 29-35

Dr. Matt Cassidy --- August 22, 2021

Hey, good morning. Thank you for joining us.

Introduction: *The Karate Kid*

We're starting a new series. We'll start with this. Do you know who this guy is, this guy right here? *[Matt assumes a position with arms spread out and what leg raised up and bent at the knee.]* Who's that? That's the Karate Kid. Yep. It's a great little story about a ninety-eight-pound weakling leading somewhat of a miserable life. He's getting bullied by a bunch of thugs, and so he asks Mr. Miyagi to teach him some karate so that he might be able to defend himself and lay a few punches himself. There are some revenge themes in this for sure.

And so, Mr. Miyagi has him take an oath—*Do what I tell you to do*—and the next thing you know, Daniel's waxing on all the cars and waxing off. And then he's sanding the deck. *[Matt makes circular motions with hands to demonstrate these moves.]* Then he's painting the fence. *[Matt demonstrates paint strokes up and down.]* He's doing this from dawn and into the late night, day after day—just working. And it appears that all of this labor is without purpose—pain without purpose. And pain without purpose can drain even the strongest souls.

And so, one morning Daniel just snaps. He's done. We'd love to show you the video, but we can't anymore because we're broadcasting on the internet. But this is what happens. He confronts Mr. Miyagi and says, "No more free labor, I can't believe what you're doing to me. This is not what I signed on to."

And then, Mr. Miyagi kind of attacks him with various moves, and during that attack, all of a sudden "wax on" and "wax off" and "sand the deck" and "paint the fence" are actually four major defense moves in karate. And Daniel thinks, *Oh my goodness, I am so surprised!* (And so is anyone who's ever done anything with martial arts. That's not how it works—at all!)

Anyway, Daniel has this renewed enthusiasm. He's seeing that all his pain was purposeful. He thinks, "Purposeful pain ... I'm coming back for more. I want more pain. You got anymore fence to paint? I'll see you tomorrow."

It's a great little introduction to the storyline. And I don't know about you, but I bet you thought the same thing I did. When all that was revealed, you thought, *Hey, Mr. Miyagi is being kind of a jerk here, right?* I guess in a word, it would be "cruel."

Why not just tell the kid ahead of time that all of these exercises and drills are going to lead to something and you're going to love where they lead to? *This is going to teach you karate, and you're going to be big and strong by the end of this.* Then he goes into it with a better understanding of what he's doing, greater enthusiasm, and probably getting a better workout. But nope ... he doesn't do that. That's cruel--- pain without purpose.

That's not like God. There is purpose in pain and God tells us what that purpose is, because He doesn't want to be like Mr. Miyagi, who's cruel. But also, He tells us so that we can have a renewed attitude towards that pain, saying, *Wait, it's going somewhere. It's going to develop things in me that couldn't happen any other way.* If we knew, for example, what the purpose in life was, then we could see how God is using various means to get us to that end.

Here it is. Life is purgatory. This is the time, this is the place, where we are getting ourselves ready to have a face-to-face encounter with God. This is our sanctification time. Life is a gym; it's not a spa. It's a battleship; it's not a cruise line.

And I want us to leave today with the enthusiasm that the Karate Kid had after his epiphany, once he realized that there was purpose in his pain--and particularly in our subject matter, the purpose in relationships. There's a purpose in the pain that we've had. There's a purpose in the pain that we've had in our parenting, in our marriage, in our sibling issues, in our friends, in our co-workers—all of that. Those things are "waxing on" and "waxing off" with a goal in mind.

Problem: We Were Designed to Face Out, But We Don't

So, here's the thesis: that we have difficulties in relationships and there's a reason for that. We have a deeply broken and bent soul. And the way that expresses itself is that we were designed to face outward. And that's an expression we use around here, and what it means is that we were designed to face out. When God made Adam and Eve, He created them to be constantly

looking outside of themselves, to be gazing on the wonder of God, gazing on the beauty and of creation and learning how to manage it, gazing at the uniqueness of every individual man and woman.

The prototype is Adam and Eve. They were designed and then built to turn away from their own concerns and to turn outward, constantly looking for ways to serve: to serve God, creation, and their fellow man. It wasn't even within Adam and Eve to try and get their needs met because they knew that their needs would be met by the promises of God being fulfilled, and sometimes through other people. Innocence—in those days it was self-forgetfulness. There was plenty of ambition, but it was not selfish ambition. It was ambition for what the Lord might do.

Once upon a time there lived in the world all givers—no takers. But those days are gone. And here's why. Because they chose—and we still choose—to go against this design of how we were made, the way we were meant to be. And we have a consequence for all these rebellions. And rebellion is when we turn in. We just walk around with mirrors and we are absolutely intoxicated with getting. We are addicted to self. *What about me?* That's the life motto for everyone that's bent this way, and everyone is.

And so, for life to work and for life to be enjoyed, we've got to go back to the way we were designed. We've got to fix what's broken. That's God's ambition in our lives, to become like our true selves, who we were meant to be.

Romans 8:29

For those who God foreknew, He also predestined to become transformed to the likeness of His Son, so that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

And so—let me just make it clear—God's purpose in our life—the end—is to make us like Adam before the fall, or what's called “the second Adam”—Jesus. We need to be like that person, facing out. And He doesn't hide this from us. After years of what appears to be purposeless pain, He says it right in the Bible. Look what it says in Romans chapter 8. “For those who God foreknew He also predestined to become transformed to the likeness of His Son.” Facing out, original design—Adam too. “... so that He might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.”

God foreknew and He planned before the beginning of time. He was thinking about you and He was thinking about me and He was thinking, *Look, my ambition for their life—many things that happen in their lives are going to be pointing toward this: getting them gazing outward again; getting them gazing at the glory of God, the beauty of creation, and serving and enjoying their fellow man—gazing out.*

In other words, what would Jesus be like if He were you? He doesn't want to change who you are, the essence of you; He wants to change you to be like Christ, if you were Christ, if Christ were you. What would that look like? I mean, you can look at the highlights of the Gospels and look at this outward facing in the life of Jesus. You can pick any story you want in those biographies. And one of the things that's just beyond understanding, in my experience with the Gospels, is when Jesus is hanging on the cross. He is dying in the slowest and the most painful way that is possible during that time and in that part of the world. And I think during that time, He expresses and displays courage and compassion that cannot be understood unless He was perfect—and He was. Gazing out ... because, you know what? When you're in pain, when you're in a great deal of suffering, that's a good time to say, "Yeah, I think I could spend a little bit of time thinking about me right now." I think this is a good time to say, "Hey, what's up? Can somebody help me here?"

But Jesus, in the context of that, hanging on a cross, looks and sees that His mother appears to be scared. She's afraid. And with nails piercing His hands, He looks at John and says, "John, can you take care of my mother?" His preoccupation looking outside is what we were meant to do.

There are so many different expressions of turning out. That's why at Grace here we did this Summer of Giving and a Fall of Serving. Do you know why we did that? Because maybe some of us got out of shape during the previous eighteen months and kind of started turning inwards. And we need to learn how to get back in shape. Let's make it a fun thing. Let's make it a game. Let's see how much we can give, let's see how much we can serve. And in those expressions of giving and serving, you can feel this ping of the Spirit saying, "Yes, that's the way you were designed, and that's the way life works."

It is our destiny to face out just like Jesus. Can you imagine what you would be like as a parent if you weren't concerned about your own convenience or your reputation or sleep? I mean, wow!

And what kind of friend or co-worker you'd be, or a mate. Can you imagine? Because God has imagined that. He knows exactly what that looks like, and He says, *Okay, I'm going to get you there.*

How does that transformation happen? Not through pointless pain, I can tell you that. There's "waxing on", there's "painting the fence", there's "sanding the deck." There's pain, and the pain is in relationships and it's purposeful. Pain in relationships is purposeful. They're not random, they're not pointless; they're to draw our attention to what it would be like if we faced out on this. Put down your mirror and look at what's going on around you.

Think about some relational challenges in the past. To be clear, I'm not talking about evil. Evil is over here—it makes all of this far more complicated for most of us to understand.

So, I'm talking about difficult friendships or difficult relationships. When you look back at those is it possible that maybe you could have been more compassionate and courageous? Maybe one of the things you could learn from the past is that *I should have been facing out. That was a great opportunity. I was just painting a fence and I didn't make the most of that. I could have been waxing on.*

Proof: Facing Out in Relationships Works

Let me show you proof positive that the world works in the context of relationships by when it goes back to its original design. If we go to the design and face out, life just works, because that's the way it was designed.

Seek first to understand, then to be understood.

---St. Francis of Assisi

Watch this. St. Francis of Assisi—you may know of him—in his adult life he spent his career gazing, facing out, looking at the glory of God, certainly caring for creation and his fellow men. He was famous for his wisdom and his proverbs. Here's one you probably know. "Seek first to understand, then to be understood."

In a conversation with someone: *Wait ... I want you to go first. Before we move on I want to understand your perspective on this. I don't need to make sure you know my view. Let me listen.*

And then, 797 years later, a best-selling author sells a book in business called *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*. You want to be a highly effective person? Here's what the back cover says about this book. (It was written by Covey.) "Covey calls for a 'paradigm shift'—a change in perception and interpretation of how the world works." The world works by facing out. And I'm not kidding, his fifth habit of the seven habits is "Seek first to understand, then be understood." He just steals it from St. Francis of Assisi. I think it's called "The principle of empathetic communication." Forty million copies have been sold of this "paradigm-shifting" book on how life works because it goes back to the original design.

You want to be highly successful? I bet you do. Face out. That's what Stephen Covey says. That's what the Bible says. And it's been saying it for a long time.

So, here's the thing. We need to get back to the original design, because that's who we were meant to be. We need to get back to the original design because that's what works. And the purpose of our life down here is to become like Christ, and the means of that change from the inside out by the power of the Holy Spirit is probably going to be through relationships.

Singleness as a Means to Becoming Like Christ

This week I want you to see that singleness is a means of becoming like Christ. Singleness is a means of becoming like Christ.

In the New Testament the Apostle Paul writes a book called Corinthians. And he dedicates more than two full paragraphs just on the blessing of singleness, the gift of singleness. He's using this as an opportunity to say, "Hey, if you're single, you should face out. Because then life is more tolerable."

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

What I mean, brothers and sisters, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live as if they do not; ³⁰ those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; ³¹ those who use the things of the world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away.

Look what he says in 1 Corinthians chapter 7 in these few verses that I've put up: "What I mean, brothers and sisters, is that the time is short. From now on those who have wives should live lives as if they do not; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who have things of the world, as if not to be engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is just passing away."

What Paul is saying is that life is short, so seize the day. We know as followers of Jesus Christ that the end is coming soon. This isn't home; we're just passing through. So, what he's saying is, *Look, you can be happy in your success. Just don't be overwhelmed by that success.* We would say, *Don't let that define you.*

Sure, be grieving in your loss, but don't be overwhelmingly devastated by loss, because that will define you, and it's showing you that this is your home and not the next existence. He's saying, You got stuff? Fine, just don't get engrossed in earning that stuff, because this isn't your home, and time is short.

In the context of marriage and family, he's saying, *Look, married life, single life—it's got problems. They both do. And they both have advantages. But don't put all of your hope there, because we're not from here. We're not going to end up here. Don't let a great marriage define you, or a terrible marriage, or a content single life, or a discontent single life.* Because he's saying this: Christ is our ultimate spouse. And God's family is our ultimate family. And in this life, we get a foretaste of both of those. And that's how we live.

Singleness Is a Gift

1 Corinthians 7:7

I wish that all of you were as I am. But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another as that.

The Bible says this: singleness is a gift. Look what Paul says in chapter 7, verse 7: “I wish that all of you were as I am”—and he’s single. *I wish you were all like me, single.* “But each of you has your own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.” He’s saying that singleness is a gift.

Now when the Bible talks about a gift, you need to know this—a gift is like if somebody gives you something, like my wife gifted me with this watch. This watch is mostly for me and I enjoy it. And it makes me look good, okay?

It’s not that kind of gift. A gift in the Bible is when you give your son a football, and you give him a football not so that he can just throw it up and play catch with himself. You don’t give him a football so he can put it on his shelf and it never gets scraped or scuffed or ruined. You give your son a football so that he can take it outside and the whole neighborhood can enjoy a neighborhood game of football. A gift is given to serve and to be enjoyed by everyone else. *Use the football up, son. Run it into the ground. I’ll get you another one when you’re done.*

In the Bible it will say sometimes, *You’re blessed—not for you—you’re blessed to be a blessing unto others.* So, when he talks about this gift of singleness, he’s saying the same thing. *You’ve been given this gift of singleness—use it up, for other people, facing out!* Paul’s not suggesting that singleness is easy. He’s not suggesting that singleness is not without significant difficulties. He’s just saying this: you’ve got to use that gift to look out and to gaze at opportunities for worship of God, to tame His creation, and to serve your fellow man. Because singleness facing out is endurable and many times joy-filled. But singleness turned in—oh, it’s dark. And it touches and sours everything it touches. It’s not a good way to live.

It’s interesting ... in Christianity, a social historian notes that it is the only religion and culture that exalts singleness, that just puts it out there and says that being single and being married with family are equal attributes, equal giftings. The founder of Christianity—single

man—Jesus Christ. The theologian of Christian doctrine—Paul—a single man. That doesn't happen much.

Single living makes sense and works once you understand that time is short. Time is short. Because your hope is not in a family, but in God and His family. That's how singleness can be a gift. And the idea of—one of the harder parts of being single is just growing old alone. But growing old alone is not an option for a person who is entwined in his or her local church. We won't allow that to happen. We will allow widows and singles to be part of our collective family.

Singleness Is a Gift to the Church

The second thing that Paul talks about here is that singleness is a gift to the Church. Singleness is a gift to the Church. And here's why.

1 Corinthians 7:32

I would like you to be free from concern. An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—how he can please the Lord.³³ But a married man is concerned about the affairs of this world—how he can please his wife—³⁴ and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband.³⁵ I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord.

Let's look at this passage: "I would like you to be free from concern"—untethered, in other words. "An unmarried man is concerned about the Lord's affairs—he can do what pleases the Lord. But a married man is concerned about the affairs of the world. He also has to please his wife—and his interests are divided. An unmarried woman or virgin is concerned about the Lord's affairs: Her aim is to be devoted to the Lord in both body and spirit. But a married woman is concerned about the affairs of this world—how she can please her husband. I am saying this for your own good, not to restrict you, but that you may live in a right way in undivided devotion to the Lord."

He's saying that singleness is a gift to the Church, because singles can serve in a frequency or in capacities that married people cannot because they have dual devotions and responsibilities.

It's pretty easy to see this. If you've been involved in a church that has a large singles ministry—a large college or singles ministry—then here's how announcements go. The second week of announcements: “Hey, everybody, we have eight places left in the children's ministry, and you better hurry up or you'll miss your opportunity to serve there.” And then, just like that, the volunteer needs are met, almost right away. Do you know why? Because they've got about three adults to every child. And that's why those churches seem like it all happens easily. And then you go to the typical church where those aren't the ratios, and we're at week seven: “Hey, everybody, we have ninety-seven spots left. Please, please, please, please help your church.”

And one of the reasons that happens is because at a church like ours, for every two adults there are three kids over here. Just count the minivans and the SUVs between here and your car on your way out. We have a lot of kids. So, the point is, it's not a lack of commitment to the children's ministry and loving those children. It's not a lack of commitment to volunteering. It's just this: singles are a gift to the church and they make a church healthy. That's all there is to it. They have opportunities and a frequency that we don't.

The Church Is a Gift to Singles

Here's another thing Paul talks about: that the Church is a gift to singles. The Church is a gift to singles. The Church is a place where singles can connect with a family. They can say, *That's my brother, that's my sister. We're going to spend our lives together. We're going to vacation together, we're going to eat together.* Just as singles make the Church healthy, the Church can make singles healthy, because the things that they need are granted them by the Church. The Church is a gift to singles as a place to build intimate, fun, purposeful relationships. The body of Christ: that's where singles can go to be cared for when they are in need, when they are sick, when they are in financial need. This place—Grace—grow old along with me. Let's do this together.

I tell you, the last eighteen months has been especially difficult for our brothers and sisters that are single. The lockdown timeframe was especially difficult, and then those four days

of being trapped inside your house all by yourself (if you're living alone) shook a lot of us, but especially, deeply, those singles. They felt alone and isolated.

And I must say, I am proud of how many people in our church saw what was happening and reached out to those singles and made phone calls and did what they could to get those pipes fixed or whatever that might have been. But I have to tell you, I am ashamed of myself. During that time, I turned in. I was like, *It's me and my family. We're going to get through this. Good luck, everyone.* And I didn't fully appreciate that until we started back meeting and I saw some of our singles and I thought, *I never so much as picked up a phone.* And I should know better. And I'm here to say that I am really sorry for you singles that I could have cared for more effectively, and I would love for you to forgive me. And I would like—if you're with me—wouldn't it be good if we could focus more and care more for our singles in this church and have them in the front of our minds so they don't get lost when things get difficult for us? But I want to do this better and I hope that you do too.

We have a wonderful single, a godly woman in our church. Her name is Jill, and if you know her, you love her. We've asked her to give us a little story about her singleness. And before we play her video, I wanted you to listen for things. I want you to listen to her admission of difficulty, her feeling of isolation. And I want you to listen also to how much she got involved in our church—not just our singles ministry, but she's attending adult communities that are not just for singles. One of them is Word in the Way, and it's a lot of couples, and many of those people in there are old enough to be her parents. She says, "Let's go." She got involved in Bible studies, she got involved in service places so that she could know people and serve her church. I want you to listen to her attitude. She has this value that time is short and she is seizing her singleness. And the last thing I want you listen for is her hope. Her hope is in the Lord and His promises, not in anything here and now. Okay? Let's listen from Jill.

+++++

Video with Jill Lawler

https://www.dropbox.com/s/9o1v1gp0kcs94ob/Jill%20Lawler-%205%20words_FINAL.mp4?dl=0

My name is Jill Lawler and I am from the Dallas area, and I moved to Austin in 2006 to go to UT—"Hook 'em!" And I started attending Grace in 2012. And my first

connection point here was the co-ed Precepts Bible study group during the week. And since then, my family here has just expanded and deepened through participating in other ministries and Sunday morning courses and communities.

As far as being single, one challenge that I face is that it's easy to allow myself to be isolated and unseen. Even though I'm a fairly social and well-connected person here, I imagine feeling lonely in marriage is probably more difficult at times, and it's not a unique challenge to singleness. But as a single person, I don't know that anyone sees me at my worst. And while it can be lonely, God has definitely built up a very rich family around me here at Grace with different friends and mentors that I've made from serving different ways, or just showing up on Sunday morning to different courses or community groups like The Word and the Way and the Forefront singles group.

And ultimately, I get to lean hard on the fact that God really is closer than a spouse or a friend ever could be and knows me and knows what's going on in my heart better than I know myself, and can help me work all that out.

Being single has allowed me some unique opportunities for ministry that wouldn't be possible otherwise. One example is that without much notice and also rescheduling due to the winter storm, I was able to go live with a friend for two months after she had knee surgery. And I was able to be completely available to her needs. And in serving her, God actually blessed me—even more, I think. And after living alone and working from home the last year, I was not in a good place with that. And by getting to stay with her for a while it was just great and refreshing to be with someone and have a change of scenery as well. This is an example of why I do appreciate where I am now. I do have the flexibility to really drop almost anything at a moment's notice, whether it's to help someone with something, or for spontaneous fun.

Something that encourages me is that God does not check my résumé for my relationship status before I'm eligible to serve in different ways or grow in maturity. We are all part of the body of Christ now with a part to play. It helps me a lot to think about marriage as a metaphor of the covenant between Jesus Christ and the Church, with an

ultimate fulfillment when we'll be with Him forever in eternity. And so, I think that longing serves a purpose, and we're looking ahead to something.

While this is true, I don't think that God expects that to somehow take the place of or remove a desire to be married. And that's okay. It's okay to struggle with living in that tension of living life here now and waiting for Him to make all things new.

We may eventually be married in this life. Some will remain unmarried for various reasons. But He will most completely fulfill all of those desires in the life to come for all of us, married and single, because I'm pretty sure that getting married doesn't solve all of life's problems, based on what I hear. And let's be honest—it can be hard to be obedient in the waiting. Through faith in Christ, we can approach God with freedom and confidence and always turn back to Him and follow His ways and take part in the body of Christ today.

+++++

That's the testimony of a godly young woman who's facing out. So, what? Time is short. Seize the day.

Seize the series. Here's how to make the most—here's how to seize this series. It's called "5 Words." Some of you are thinking, *Hey, didn't we do that already?* Yes, it's part of what we call our core curriculum that we repeat. It's been seven years. A lot has changed. We have a lot of new people here that didn't hear it seven years ago, and your life has changed. When we went through "5 Words" last time and you had a fifth grader—now he's driving and he's leaving next year. He graduates in just a few months. Boom! A lot has happened in those seven years.

So, here's what to do with this series. One, make sure you don't miss the rest of the series. And bring a friend. This is an easy application of why God is doing whatever He's doing in your life and how to apply it to becoming like Christ in all of life. Tell your friends, and don't miss.

Second is get the study guide we have. We have a beautiful study guide that is filled with extracurricular writings. It has great chapters from authors on the subject matter that we'll be discussing. We don't endorse all these other books in all these other chapters, but they're very

good. Like all the books that we recommend, we don't necessarily endorse. But there's good supplemental material. It's great for having a discussion. You can get that notebook if you just go to the website and download it. I think it's even on the front page. It's a pdf. You can print it yourself or use it from your laptop. We have some in the lobby, if you want some.

And then, going on to the next one, get into a small group. Join a small group. We have an auditorium across the hallway by the coffee here, and they're going to be meeting during the 11:00 service from now until the end of the series. You can join them today, no RSVP. You can jump in anytime you want from now on. And join a small group as they go through this material. They'll have study guides there as well.

Many of our adult communities are going through this. And why all the adult communities? Because each one is going to have to apply it differently. There's a section on leaving your home of origin and making sure it's not having too much influence in your own marriage. So, the newlyweds are going to be learning how to leave. The empty nesters are going to be learning how to get left. They both have difficulties in front of them, but they're completely different applications. So, we'll be doing that. They'll have study guides as well. Maybe you could even start a group. Grab some friends at work—anybody that needs work in marriage, this will help them. It doesn't matter if they go to church, whether they follow Christ or not, these principles apply to every man and woman that is in the image of Adam, the fallen Adam, that needs to be in the image of the second Adam.

Finally, I'd say that if you're mentoring people who have a lot of that going on because of the multi-generations, use this material.

Let me just conclude by saying this. Anything worth having, you're going to have to work for. Right? Anything worth having, you're going to have to work for. There's no mystery to the waxing and the sanding and the painting. It's painful, but it's purposeful pain. It is to form you in the image of Christ. It is to get you and me to gaze out, enjoy the splendor of God's glory, His majesty, to enjoy being a co-regent with Him in creation, and to have deep relationships. The pain to help us get what was supposed to be natural to us—gazing, serving, joy, love—but now we're bent and we have to learn these things that were supposed to be intuitive for us.

Love must be learned, and learned again and again; there is no end to it. Hate needs no instruction, but waits only to be provoked.

---Katherine Anne Porter

Here's what one author says: "Love must be learned, and learned again and again; there is no end to it. Hate needs no instruction, but waits only to be provoked."

Let's be a church filled with people that know how to love—compassion and courage. Wow. Let's pray to that end.

Lord Jesus, we lift up this wisdom, this knowledge, that much of the pain in our life, especially relational pain, actually has a purpose. And I'd ask that You would help us, that Your Spirit would ignite our memory and help us see that those conversations or those events were towards an end, to make us more compassionate or courageous or just fundamentally like Christ.

Lord, I'd ask that Your ambition for our life that You predestined before the beginning of time would be our ambition in life, that we would want to become more like Christ in all aspects of our lives. Give us not only the desire, but the will to do it. Give us the endurance to wax and sand and paint to Your glory in our transition. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.