



AUTO-SERMON TRANSCRIPT

What is the condition of our soul?

Following, 3 of 5 from January 21st, 2024

"Regularly gathering with others reshapes our souls to Christ-likeness."

Mark 12:28-31; 1 Peter 1:17-23 by Michael Lockstampfor (@miklocks)

[\[https://www.ocalaneighborhood.church/watch-a-message/following-3-what-is-the-condition-of-our-soul\]](https://www.ocalaneighborhood.church/watch-a-message/following-3-what-is-the-condition-of-our-soul)

PLEASE NOTE: transcript is generated automatically and may not be completely accurate.

[Music]

my name is uh Michael I'm one of the pastors here at neighborhood church we have been going through a series that we've just called following um what does it look like to follow Jesus what is like what are the components what are the pieces how do the pieces relate to the whole how does it actually work and not just how does it work on Sunday um because I think in some sense we know that there's an anchoring there's some kind of a foundation of of a Sunday thing but um but how does it work on Tuesday how does it work on Thursday night like what does what does life look like if we're actually Walking With Jesus because he's he said I didn't come just to I didn't just come to condemn the world I came to give life and to give it abundantly so I want to ask like what does it look like to have life with Jesus and there's two passages that we're going to look at one is kind of introductory um and I've got it up here on the screen for you it's Mark 12: uh 28-31 um that we'll read together and then we'll do one more passage kind of towards the end of our our our um our time together as we talk so um in this In this passage in particular there's a bunch of different people who are coming up to Jesus and asking him questions but they're not asking him questions because they want to learn from him they're asking him questions because they want to trip him up they want to catch him in what he's saying they want to make him look like a fool or to cast doubt on him I don't know if you've got family members or or or critics haters that like to try to trip you up in in the things that you say and and Jesus is surrounded by this cloud of haters at the moment they're coming and trying to ask him questions and this one comes up he's a religious guy he's he's what they call a scribe so his job is literally to hand copy uh the law the Old Testament so before they had copy machines we did all that by hand and this guy's job is to to copy down the Bible presume that he would know it somewhat and so he comes in Mark 12 to ask Jesus this question not because he's really interested in the answer but because he's really interested in making Jesus look silly so I'll read this to you mark chap 12 beginning in verse 28 which is on a different page in my Bible I'll flip that there and one of the scribes came up and heard them these other haters disputing with one another and seeing that he Jesus answered them well asked him asked Jesus which command is most important of all Jesus answered the most important is this here oh Israel the Lord Our God the Lord is one and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul with all your mind with all your strength the second is like this you shall love your neighbor as yourself there is no other commandment greater than these so the Scribe comes up he says hey you've got you've got a a big old you got a big old book here um let's see if I can find it

find the the vision here so you got a big old book here that's that's supposed to tell us how we should interact with God uh how would you summarize all of that like what's the most important thing of all the things that you could read and see and study and question what's the most important thing and Jesus says I got I got an answer for you the answer is love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul with all your mind and all your strength Okay so just love God he's like well actually there's you should also love your neighbor as yourself like the two are are kind of related the first is you got to put that first you got to love God first if you're going to love anybody well but but but that's it like you could summarize all of that text of scripture by that that's what your takeaway ought to be um but what does it look like to like love the Lord with all of your heart like if if I run an EKG like should it should it should my heart be uh pounding out Amazing Grace uh no that would that's called arrhythmia they would probably think I'm close to dead if it was doing that like how do I love the Lord with all my heart like I can't I can't make it beat anything other than what it's beating how do I love the Lord with all my soul like what even is my soul how do I love the Lord with all my my strength like does this mean I need to go CrossFit and powerlift like so I can bump up my strength so I can love Jesus all the way right what is like what are we even talking about like Jesus that sounds really good and maybe that'll preach on a Sunday morning air condition heat or not it doesn't matter maybe that'll preach on a Sunday morning but what do I do with that so in this series we've been trying to take apart the pieces the pieces are related to one another they're kind of indivisible because Jesus is saying that he doesn't just want a piece of your life he doesn't want to just be added to your life he wants to be Lord over our undivided inner life the whole thing I want all of it I want to be Lord over all of it I don't want to just be an addition I want to be Lord Master over every part of your life as they're related to one another okay um and so what is that like so we've been taking apart the pieces we talked last week about the heart a little bit uh and so if I can't preach the whole thing to you again I mean I could but we've got lunch and stuff um we talked last week about your heart and we said that regularly celebrating Jesus motivates our heart to want to follow him so we start off with this celebrating piece that we we build a rhythm of our life where we focus and we celebrate the work that Jesus has done that's what we do and what that does is that motivates us motivates our heart our will our decider the the thing that's going to um make decisions for us in our life to want to make decisions that please Jesus right is that fair summary we remember from what remember okay hopefully hopefully we got that today we're going to focus on how to love the Lord your God with all your soul all right um and I'm hopeful that it it that it's helpful to you let's let's pause and let's pray together so our habit as neighborhood church to pray uh what I call the disciples prayer this is the prayer that Jesus left for his disciples I know other people call it the Lord's Prayer but I call it the disciples prayer because he gave it to them um and so uh it's our habit to pray this together so I'd encourage you to pray along with me the words are on the screen if you'd like to pray out loud um but at the very least let's bow our hearts together and let's begin with

prayer Our Father in heaven Hallowed Be Your Name Your Kingdom Come your will be done on Earth as it is in heaven give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors and lead us not into temptation but Deliver Us from Evil for yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever

amen you ever just have those days where like you can't get your head to like do the things um so miss sah there's a book on my desk could you bring me the book I actually will need it today it's uh it should be on top of the Z it's called Soul keeping thank you so I need some help this morning I'm going to try to organize our thoughts and our discussion together by

*Following, 3 of 5 from January 21st, 2024
Mark 12:28-31; 1 Peter 1:17-23 by Michael Lockstampfor (@miklocks)*

answering three questions these will sound familiar to you we did something very similar last week so the three questions we want to answer is what is our soul if we're going to follow love the Lord Our God with all our soul what is our soul uh how is our soul which is another way kind of a simpler way of saying like what is the condition of our soul like if we check in with our soul how's it doing how is our soul and then lastly how is our soul reformed okay so I'd like to answer some of those questions or begin to answer some of those questions together today this morning um and so we'll start with what is our soul so I'll give you some words if you're a words person this this should be good for you and then I'll give us a picture if you're a picture person it's coming okay the picture will will be helpful I promise so our soul is um it's an imit matal part of us it's it's not there's not a a thing that we can like grab on to and say this is my soul um sometimes you'll see them in cartoons but like it's it's the thing that you can't really grab on to and what it's doing in us what our soul does in US is it kind of integrates us it's it's a a unifying um I I use the word controller um it's a unifying controller when I use the word controller what I have in mind is like in business in the world of business there's somebody who works yep that one there's somebody in business who's called the the controller the finance controller right is that have we heard of that I had to I had to think about it I had to do some research because uh Finance is not my big deal but the finance controller is a person who is responsible for the coordination and the management of Finance uh financial reporting both internally inside the business and out externally outside the business so they're the person who not only like leads the people who are spending but also tells them when they can and when they can't spend they they control the spending inside a business both inside the business and outside the business now what I learned this week is I was trying to use a a finance metaphor which it's like me trying to use a football metaphor like I just can't do it it's not my thing um I found out that there are other types of controllers did did you know that in business bus in the business World there are Financial controllers there's human resources controllers there are um marketing controllers which I thought was a really interesting idea and there are operations controllers the people who like tell people what to do within the business now the marketing controller was the one that was really interesting to me because when I think of marketing I think of clearly just external the business is communicating to those who are not in the business what the business is doing so what would what would why would you need a controller for that well I think marketing department uh hypothetically could like be like hey we really want to sell this stuff so let's make all of these promises for how this product is going to solve all your problems but then the people who made the product go it can't actually do any of those things you just promise that it's going to do to sell them right so a marketing controller would be like you can't make promises we can't deliver on because if we can't deliver the promises you make then people aren't going to buy the thing next time right that's what we might call Integrity your soul is the controller of you your soul is the one who's trying to integrate all of you to have some semblance of Integrity to act consistently within yourself does that does that idea make sense somewhat are we getting there okay I've been work this is the difficulty I was talking with Ryan this morning I said I've been thinking and chewing on this for like 10 years of of of trying to understand and I feel like I'm just getting to a place where I'm starting to understand and so the burden now is to communicate to you in a way that makes some kind of sense and I'm not I'm I'm hopeful so if if I completely lose you just throw the hand up and and we'll Circle back in so that's so our our um our soul is that integrating Force we might think of it as our conscience it's it's trying to make sure that things are aligned um it synchronizes the different parts of oursel into alignment so it's kind of like our conscience and it seeks to eliminate discrepancies it doesn't want the parts of yourself to lie to one another it doesn't want to but it totally like we know that we totally can right our soul is the thing that tells us we should not right now it is a gift it is also a gift from God and I'm

going to quote out of the King James version we usually use the English standard version but I'm going to quote out of the King James version because they use this word uh in particular as as as uh as Genesis is describing the creation of Humanity talks about how God Made made people and he says the Lord God formed Man Out of the Dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and the Man became a living Soul the ESV would say a living body a living person the the King James says he became a living Soul what's interesting in this story is God is speaking he's creating what we call ex nihilo so out of nothing he's there's nothing and he says something and there's something right so he's speaking things into creation he speaks the oceans and the dry land to be separate and they do it he speaks uh the the L uh the land creatures and the air creatures and the water creatures he speaks them into existence but they but when he comes to humanity he uses a different word he's not speaking things he is he gets down in the dirt and forms Fashioned Humanity so humanity is distinct from the rest of the animal in that way but then he he makes he makes something he forms he shapes something but it's not anything until he breathes into it and when he breathes into it it now is a living Soul so our soul that integrating feature like is a gift from God it's something that helps us to be like him to the rest of creation there's nothing else in creation that has a conscience like you ever like cats cats are just pure

evil okay sorry sorry cats have have no qualms about doing wickedness like they don't care at all what they what they murder in fact they will drag it along drag its dead corpse to you and present it to you as a gift we that would be a problem if a human did that for you but we accept that kind of behavior from cats because they don't have a conscience right okay forgive forgive my if you like cats I still love you all right what you I still love

you dogs will do it too but cats yeah cats are aggressive okay so this is part of what makes us human and part of what makes us human makes us connected with God is this this soul idea okay so it seeks to eliminate discrepancies a gift from God okay that's the words we got the words we ready for a picture okay here's the picture picture um I already did that here's the picture we started we started last week with the heart the heart is kind of the central feature of of the human this is kind of like the structure of a person uh if if we could actually see so inside the heart in the middle is our heart it's our will it's our decider it's our core now we learned last week that our decider is unique to us but it all and it's very very powerful but it gets winded easily so our decide we like our deci will Outsource decisions um to other parts of our self because it can make really simple decisions it can make really big decisions but it gets tired easily and so if it has to make a bunch of really small decisions it's just like I don't care do something I don't care like it just gets overwhelmed and so our it will Outsource things to other parts now I'm going to tell you about the mind today I'm going to tell you about it and we'll talk about it next week if the Lord allows so the mind is where our feelings I know this is different there's a different way of thinking in the ancient world the mind is where our feelings and our thoughts are so the way you're like well feelings and thoughts are two different things they're incompatible like they're you should you should listen to your thoughts but not to your feelings and I'm we'll talk about that next week but the the way to think about this is the things that you are conscious of the things that you are conscious of like you are aware occasionally of what you're thoughts are you are aware occasionally of what your feelings are it's your awareness um and I would even say that some of your your thoughts and your feelings actually cannot be independent of one another we sometimes we'll fool ourselves into thinking they can be but but you can't have a thought unless you have felt something about a thing and the two we'll talk about it next week okay so that's your that's your mind okay your strength is your body like if you have a heart and a mind you have a a decision maker and a feeler thinker but you don't have a

body to actually act it doesn't matter what you've decided so your body is kind of like like your power pack like it actually is enables you to do the things that you've decided to do right um and we all have a body it's it's the our ability to act within this material world okay that means that our soul is the synchronizer it integrates and aligns all parts of itself all parts of the self together our soul is trying to make sure that what our our heart has decided our our mind agrees with and then our body does sometimes our our mind will change our heart sometimes our body can reshape our heart um but like our soul is just is just working over time to try to make sure that these things are aligned within ourselves our our our soul wants all of these parts all of these individual parts to be at peace with one

another so um this this book is is uh really really helpful it has been helpful to me um if you don't read this book if you want something to do because this if this whole topic has been like if everything I've said so far you're like we're way up in the clouds Michael like this is that's all this is it's all up in the clouds so if you like being in the clouds this is for you if you don't like being in the clouds I'll give you the part that is going to be helpful um he says he says this if your soul is healthy so if your soul is healthy meaning it has successfully synchronized all of those things if your soul is healthy then no external circumstance can destroy your life if your soul is healthy then no external nothing outside of you can destroy your life if your soul is unhealthy then no external circumstance can redeem your life if if you are out of sync with yourself if if you are not aligned in in the way that God designed you to be then there's nothing outside of you that can save you except for God if your soul is healthy no external circumstance can destroy your life if your soul is unhealthy no external circumstance can redeem your life so the question then is how is our

soul oh we got a thumbs up cool I can't answer this for us often conflicted often conflicted okay great like let's just take a minute I know this is crazy let's just take a minute and just close your eyes just just for a second close your eyes because I can't answer this question for you take a deep

breath and you can ask uh ask God hey how is my soul like am I uh conflicted Within Myself or are these parts of myself Waring within me or am I have I been been reconciled am I at peace in

myself I've come to find that often times if I am not if my soul is is sick like I get real uncomfortable just being

quiet Lord we know that we don't in ourselves have the ability to diagnose what's wrong with us and we need your wisdom and we need your

guidance we ask for our daily bread that you'd give us what we need today not so just that we can be at peace within ourselves but so that your kingdom can be represented Faithfully on the earth Lord we ask that you would teach us and guide us this day it's in your name we pray

amen how is our soul for me it is often in tension with itself there's often times where like I have decided I'm going to do something but my my my appetites won't will be in conflict with that I say I want to be that kind of person but then when it comes down to it I actually do this other thing right um and so if if our if our goal is to be integrated if the soul is trying to integrate these parts then uh when we are in conflict with ourself I'm going to use the

word there's a dash in there but but it's kind of kind of cute it's it's too clever for me not to use then our soul is disintegrated disintegrated disintegrated

right and I don't like here's the the reason why we paused the reason why we paused there to to check in is because I don't think you necessarily need the Bible to tell you that that's true do you ever do something that you don't really want to do like really really do you ever want something that you know is going to be harmful to you logic tells you all of the terrible consequences that are going to come from this action and yet man that's the only thing I want to do right now I'm going to read you a story because uh of all of the things that I read out of here this one picture came has come to mind probably weekly for me because I think it's just a beautiful picture picture of at least how my brain works maybe you'll identify with but at the very least you'll know me better he's telling the story about a time where he went to lunch and he doesn't identify who orders the dessert but somebody orders a dessert and and there's something that happens in a split second that he kind of zeros in on um and and it highlights the the relationship between these things I'll put I'll put them back up here for you so I'm having lunch with a friend and one of us orders dessert even though the person knows he should not have ordered dessert to make matters worse when the dessert is served it is huge it's on a gigantic plate there's whipped cream all over the place embarrassing the eater it makes that guy appear to have a huge appetite for sweets but then a solution to his embarrassment appears the plate is so large the the huge dessert might seem small by comparison the next sentence to come from the guy who ordered it big plate little dessert do you see the logic he orders something in front of his friend he's embarrassed by how big it is so he says oh big plate little dessert now where did that sentence come from it came from the mind what is the mind doing the body said I want something I want dessert I want fat and sugar and all that stuff that's not good for me the will said okay fine go for it buddy that leaves the mind with a problem want to think of myself as a self a person of self-control and strong will yet here I am indulging in something I know is not good for me and I also don't want my friend to think of me as gluttonous or unhealthy the mind could go back to the will and say hey don't do this you don't need all those calories and fat besides your friend will think you have no self-control but the will is not going to do that the will has already said yes to the body so what does the mind have to do the mind has to find some way to rationalize the decision the will has made so the the mind can continue to feel good about the kind of person he is does any of this sound familiar okay cool I feel better thank you thus out of the thousands of things the mind could notice it focuses its attention on the ratio of the dessert volume to the surface of the plate which is actually larger than is the case for desserts in many restaurants the mind says now this what this means is that if I only look at the dessert then I'm an out of control Pig and I can't deal with that so the goes straight to the obvious deception big plate little dessert all of this happens way faster than we can consciously process then the Mind continues not only is that thought true but if I could get the mouth to express the thought out loud then it can help the other person realize that I am someone with greater self-control than dessert so eyes alone might indicate so not only can I rationalize what my will is doing but I can also control the thoughts that others are having about me all that in four little words big plate little dessert so this the the it's talking about the tension between the will and the body and the mind and I think the soul he's he's going to go on to say the soul is the thing that's that's throwing flags we are in conflict with each other right I just okay there we go so what's interesting to me is if you look at the Psalms if you look at like the the book in the scriptures that God gives us uh that are kind of like a guide for prayer a guide for how to talk with God what's interesting to me is how often the psalmist speaks to his soul he speaks to his soul almost as if it's a second entity within him uh in Psalm 42 he says why my soul are you

*Following, 3 of 5 from January 21st, 2024
Mark 12:28-31; 1 Peter 1:17-23 by Michael Lockstampfor (@miklocks)*

downcast why so Disturbed within me then he tells his soul put put your hope in God for I will yet Praise Him My Savior and my God so he instructs his soul put your hope in God and you'll be reconciled within yourself so when so here's our here's our here's our question to start with when are we most aware that our soul is

sick when are we most aware that our soul is disintegrated when do we feel it the most where are we who are we with like when do we notice we don't always notice but when do we notice that our soul is sick because our soul was designed that integrating force was designed to connect us with others the reason it does what it does is to connect us with others to connect us with God and also to connect us with other people so there's um there's another part of of this so this book's real simple there's another book that's way more complicated in the more complicated book he actually puts a another Circle in here see that blue circle between the strength and the Soul he calls that the Social Circle so there's something about our social connections that socially connected with God and socially connected with other people that is that our soul is also eager to to synchronize if the people you if the people if you're in conflict in your life with the people you care about the most doesn't it ache inside you like your soul Longs not only for you to be at peace within yourself but for you to be at peace with the people you love the most and it aches for us to be at peace with God like that's that's what it is doing I think that's why God gave it to us because it's this this uh eternity that's been placed within us it says I I'm designed to be connected with the one who made me and when when that relationship is broken I cannot be at peace I'm designed to be connected with with the people who who I love the most like and when we are we are not connected when we are are are in Conflict like I cannot be at peace with him myself if I'm in conflict with everyone around

me so truly Psalm 62 truly my soul finds rest in God and my salvation comes from him but there's uh the way way that this gets worked the way that this gets reformed is within

relationships did you know that in the New Testament there's more than a hundred times where where scripture tells us that we're to do something in our relationship with God to one another so I'm if I'm I'm trying to focus I want to get my faith right I want to get spiritually healthy I'm focusing on my relationship with God God says okay there's a couple of things you need to do as you do that and a hundred of them are to one

another that's a lot right um the the the Greek word for it is Al Al Alon so it's two words one another in English but in in Greek it's one word and so somebody went through and wrote up a a selection of them these are the the places in the New Testament where Alon shows up different verses so there's there's a significant number of them um but when we ask when we ask how is our soul reformed there's one passage in particular that gives some really clear Insight so I'm going to take us there um we're going to go to First Peter chapter 1 First Peter chapter

1 I'll flip there two and I'll tell you the page number it's towards the

end

1 Peter chapter 1 beginning in verse 17 we're going to read 17- 23 it's on page 1259 in these blue Bibles here how is our soul

reformed 1 Peter chapter 1 beginning in verse 17 if you call on him as father who judges impartially according to each one's Deeds conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your Exile knowing that you were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers not with perishable things such as silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ like that of a lamb without blemish or spot he was born before the foundation of the world but was made manifest in the last times for the sake of you who through him are believers in God who raised him from the dead and gave him glory so that your Faith and Hope are in God verse 22 having purified your souls by your sincere obedience to the truth for a sincere brotherly love love one another earnestly from a pure heart since you have been born again not of perishable seed but of imperishable through the living and abiding word of God okay so we'll pause there he says look if you put your faith and your confidence in the father who judges impartially he's not fooled by by any lie that you might tell yourself he's not fooled by any public relations campaign you might be running on social media if you put your faith in God who judges impartially then you should know that you were ransomed by the precious son of God you were you were ransomed you were purchased not not with money but with a life with true life you were ransomed by Jesus and so conduct yourselves with with with reverence with respect like I was I was bought by somebody's life and so if I if they have taken my death and now I have their life like I'm going to live that differently right he says if that is true if you you put your faith in Jesus and you're walking in his light then this purify your souls by two things obedience to the truth and Brotherly Love from a pure uh from a pure heart obedience to the truth and Brotherly Love from a pure heart okay so we'll talk about those I'm going to give you a couple of passages to talk in in to talk about this obedience to the truth as we talk about like refreshing the soul or the soul being integrated with with one another if I say the way that you like feel better about your soul is to read the scripture how many is like oh I of course that makes perfect sense okay I got I got one I when I read the scripture most of the time I come in and go I this is not I do not feel healthier for reading this I I am more aware of how sick I am when I read this however when I come to the word I've got Psalm 19 which tells us the law of the Lord the scripture is perfect refreshing the soul there's something in identifying sickness that can be refreshing especially if the truth leads us to repentance the law of the Lord is perfect refreshing the soul the statutes of the Lord are trustworthy making wise the simple but Jeremiah tells us that this is what the Lord says so he's he paints this picture stand at the crossroads and look look at all of the options you have ask the ancient paths ask where the good way is and walk in it and you will find rest for your souls so so God says hey look at your options look at all of the ways that you could live and and find the good path and when you walk the good path you'll find rest for your soul but you said Jeremiah is talking to his but you said we're not going to walk in it I read it I heard it I saw that it was a good path and I decided that's not for me I'm not going to do that

and so Jesus words his encouragement is do not be afraid of Those Who Kill the body but cannot kill the soul rather be afraid of the one who can destroy both soul and Body in hell if if you're not motivated to save your own skin like be motivated to save your own soul submit your soul to the one who is outlined away that we can have true life so purify your souls by obedience to the truth

good okay so I think that I think you kind of expected that you you came to church and the pastor told you to read the Bible yeah big surprise okay so Brotherly Love from a pure heart what's going on here purify your souls by for Brotherly Love from a pure

heart we gather together with one another to care for one another's Souls this is this uh I don't know that this is is an assumed idea so we gather together with one another to care for each other's Souls um regularly gathering with others reshapes our souls to Christ likeness now I'm I'm using that word gathering in a very specific sense because we can get together in a group and not care for one another's Souls I like we can go to a football game and gather with a bunch of people and I don't care at all how they're living their life right so not every Gathering does this but Christian Gathering purposeful Christian gathering with others reshapes our souls to Christ

likeness it assists in our integration why because I pointed this out you've never seen your own face like I'm too close to my own face to see it and so I need somebody else to tell me if there's something on my face if there's something like I'm pretty good at lying to myself about the things I've decided to do and the way that I'm walking them out because I can I can spend pretty much anything I want to do to make it seem like it's the right thing and especially like if my job is like my job title is Pastor like there are all different kinds of way I can overp spiritualize the stupid stuff that I want to do that's actually self-serving and so what I need is people who know me well enough to say Mike you're you're really being selfish here like you're actually serving yourself and instead of serving other people like you're you're motivated to build your own kingdom not to build the kingdom of God because I can lie to myself and and justify anything that I want to do I can I'm I'm so good at this I can even find bible verses to help me justify the things that I selfishly want to do that are against the word of God I'm that I am that

twisted and so I need the input of other people around me to help me see the places where my soul is in conflict because I'm lying to myself about the things that I'm doing or the things that I'm thinking or the ways that I'm feeling or the ways that I'm deciding

right I need people and and here's a couple of things as we gather together uh with this idea of like authenticity and transparency and caring for one another I need people to help call out my hypocrisy because I'm pretty good at convincing myself that I got it all together I'm I'm a pretty good guy like myself okay all right but there's also times where I'm I'm real hard on myself and where I beat myself up for things that are probably not really that big a deal and so there's times where I need to be surrounded by people who who not only going to call out my hypocrisy but they're going to call out my my my my um unnecessary sadness to say Hey you you're you're not on the wrong track here you're beating yourself up over nothing I I don't know about you I need those people I need people to help me to describe the next steps that I need to do like with my body the actions I need to take based on the thing that God is shaping in my will the things that he's changing in my heart sometimes my heart decides in a way that I ought to go but my feet don't have never been that way and so I need somebody to help me say well what if you did this what if you took that next step step um and I need help sometimes identifying the ways that my mind that I'm that I'm lying to myself in my mind either by the things that I thinking that are untrue or the things that I am feeling that are that are pointing me towards falsehood okay we read from Galatians 6 and I'd encourage you to look look back at that um this week but what do we do like how what does that look like okay I want to I'm on board I want to gather together with other Christians and be re shaped to be like Christ like that's a thing that I want to do what do that what does that even look like okay here's the thing I think food will help that's I grew up Baptist so that's kind of my go-to answer but I think food will help so when we close here because this purpose is to celebrate I try to close here pointing you to Gathering I say of all the things that I've preached the thing that's going to be helpful is if you get together with

some other people who are trying to follow Jesus share a meal because food helps and then ask these questions of one these application questions of one another because other people are going to help you walk with Jesus better than I can from here right so when we get together we're getting together for that authentic transparent Fellowship there's there's an openness of having a conversation now really really simply I think you can get together and have this and have this Gathering share your lives with one another share what's going on I think you could ask one question the one question would be this how is the holy spirit challenging you this week so get like get down look somebody in the eye say how is the holy spirit challenging you this week I don't know I haven't really talked to him okay well I found one right uh yeah I don't I don't like that's so I have advocated now for two years that gathering in groups is asking one question how's the Holy Spirit challenging you this week I have been challenged that that question in of itself is not overly helpful because it is so vague and generic so instead what I've done is I found three questions that help to break that question down some so the three questions are this how did you feed your soul this week how did you feed what did you what did you pay attention to what voices were you listening to this week how did you take time away and grow your relationship how did you feed your soul this week I didn't even think about it I don't really know I just have so many things to do I didn't I didn't ever take time to stop and think about what I was doing I was just so busy doing that I never thought about it and I just kept consuming but I never really like fed I didn't think about the diet of what I was eating I just whatever came up on my feet that was the thing that I paid attention to like okay well maybe let's curate some of those inputs what are the inputs how did you feed your soul this week and then how did you feed others how did how did the things that you were taking in bless somebody else that you're in relationship with and we'll talk about that Lord willing in two more weeks talking about serving and all the ways that that gets manifested but then then third I think this is really where it gets down to how did you feed your flesh how did how did you feed the ways that you lie to yourself this week how did you justify an unhelpful or a sinful Behavior the Bible word for this is confession so we regularly gather with others to reshape our souls into Christ likeness we we talk about you know what it is that is going in we talk about our our and we we talk about our spiritual inputs we talk about our spiritual service and the way we take care of one another and then we confess to one another the ways that we have failed you don't confess to me CU odds are like if you come and you make this big appointment and you come and you sit with with me and you tell me all the things that are going wrong and then you go back to your normal life like I can't go with you there but when we confess our sins one to another like he is faithful and just to forgive like he he's there in that moment and so confess to somebody who's going to call you on it the next time you do the same stupid

thing how are we prioritizing truly gathering with other Jesus followers if you to lay your schedule out for the next month how are you prioritizing Gathering like gathering for authentic transparent Community some trusting somebody with your life and other Jesus followers because regularly gathering with others reshapes our souls to Christ likeness let's pray

together oh Lord God um there's been so many words and so God I uh I know that the the mouth is a furnace and there are all kinds of Sparks in there so God if there's something uh that I've said today that is not true or distracting uh or misleading um God I just pray that those things would be quickly forgotten um but Lord if we have if we have interacted with your Truth at all if we have seen truth in your word that that would that would sink deep into our heart that our souls would be reshaped by the word Lord I pray U I pray for our church here in Okala and in Lakeland and and Sebring Lord I pray for for your church that we would

be a place where um there would be safe places to gather and share meals and to share life the good and the bad

Lord I know if there's any peace at all between people it's a

miracle and Lord I know that opening ourselves up to one another is vulnerable it can be

frightening and so Lord there's a sense in which I just want to protect all of us from any injury and pain and Lord there's a sense in which I just need to trust you that if you you are growing your church and you are binding us together to do your work in the world that there are going to be hard conversations that you and your spirit are going to lead us

through Lord I don't come as somebody who's mastered any of this but Lord you know uh the weaknesses in my own self even in this

hour so Lord I pray that you would be our Good Shepherd that you would comfort us that you would encourage us that you would correct us where we need it that Lord you would do your spiritual soul searching work here in this place in these moments and throughout this week as we gather

together it's in your name that we ask amen

[Music] amen