

Hope in the Heaviness
Psalm 42
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I love being part of a church that values our students. A couple weeks ago we had our Jr. High retreat, where we dug into understanding God's will for our lives. By the end of the retreat we were able to come to the conclusion that God's will is for us, is to glorify Him.

Our first night at the retreat, one Jr. High student began to share in small group time that he was just tired of sinning... he shared that he sinned... he asked for forgiveness and repented... but only to find himself sinning again. Obviously emotional... He was like "When will I finally stop sinning?" One of the small group leaders took him straight to scripture... We see that Paul struggled with the same thing.

Romans 7:15

15 For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. Even our Jr. High students are wrestling with difficult things... Even our Jr. High feels the heaviness of a fallen world pressing on them.

I have a phrase written on the black board in my office, that I wrote on my very first day on staff here. "Is what we are doing, helping students fall deeper in love with the Gospel?" If we are leading students to simply know facts about the Bible, or to simply know stories or characters from the Bible... if we are leading students to behave, or to be moral... then we are missing the mark. I don't want students to ACT like Christians... I want them to BE Christians.

I was listening to a podcast that was discussing why so many Gen Z are walking away from their faith. This podcast challenged the research and suggested that Boomers and Gen X actually did pass their faith down to the next generation... but you see, the faith that we actually passed down to Gen Z, wasn't being in love with the Gospel, BUT the faith we passed down was moral- therapeutic- deism.

Moral- therapeutic- deism rests on 5 points

1. A god exists who created and ordered the world and watches over human life on earth.
2. god wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other, as taught in the Bible and by most world religions.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. god does not need to be particularly involved in one's life except when God is needed to resolve a problem.
5. good people go to Heaven when they die.

THIS as a whole... is the faith that our culture has passed down to Gen Z.

They pushed this topic even further to say that our culture relates faith with being moral... with being good... not necessarily with pursuing the God of the Bible. They support this by saying that the

statistical majority of American Christians haven't actually read more than a few passages of Scripture, so how could they actually know who God is. They conclude that Gen Z isn't specifically walking away from their faith... They have just never been shown true Christianity. Because of this... our students need a genuine and authentic faith lived out by their parents... Our students need us to expect more than for them to just "be good"... our students need us to show them Jesus. I want students to desire to know God more intimately... for students to yearn after God, to long for Him... to fall in love with the Gospel... see... this is when life change happens.

Our faith is easy to proclaim when society is approving... But our students are growing up in a culture that is increasingly anti-Christian. We need to be praying for our students to have a faith that withstands the heaviness of life... to see the hope in the heaviness. So being a church that prays for our students... Will you join me in praying for our students that they fall so deeply in love with the Gospel, that they will stand fast to the truth, even if that means they are standing alone. If we aren't preparing students for the tough times in life, then what happens to their faith when they are faced with struggles.

I have heard so many times the Gospel being presented in a way that makes it seem like once you accept God's grace in salvation... once you are saved, that life is all amazing... all your problems are suddenly gone. Because Christians aren't supposed to struggle... Christians aren't supposed to have hard times... Christians aren't supposed to have hurts or addictions...

And then we are shocked when God isn't a genie in a bottle and doesn't deliver on my every desire. We question if God hears our prayers, we question if God is really good, we question if God really loves us... we question if God is real. And we deconstruct our faith.

The reality is that we are promised temptation (1 Cor 10:13)... we are promised suffering... AND we are supposed to REJOICE in them (Romans 5:3-5)... we are promised trials (James 1:2-4)... we are promised tribulation (John 16:33). We are promised persecution (2 Tim 3:12).

How do we prepare students to see that even though we are promised suffering in this life, we are also promised that our God is BIG and is intimately present with us, that a good God has promised to comfort us and give us hope, and we can have confidence in knowing that suffering will be used to glorify God. How do we prepare students as they are taking their next steps... as they are graduating and stepping into the world, to see that Jesus doesn't make life easy... but He makes it all WORTH IT!

If our students aren't prepared for this, then when the waves of life strike against them, they often fall away from their faith.

If we want our students to hold onto their faith, if we want our students to continue pursuing God. We have to meet our students where they are in life. One article states that 49% of Gen Z self-report as being in the Atheist, Agnostic, and Nothing in particular... essentially 49% of Gen Z are without faith in God. With decreasing rates of religious affiliation over the past generations, has now led much of Gen Z having had no formal exposure to Jesus. So the trends we see is that students are not specifically walking away from the church... but instead have grown up never even being exposed to Jesus. This

same article talks about how we can reach Gen Z. 1) is to be authentic. Gen Z is “starving for something that feels genuine. The best way not to scare them off immediately is to be vulnerable, and authentic. Giving them the space to see that we in the church are not perfect... that we still have struggles... but we have a God that gives us strength to overcome them. 2) since they have little to no formal religious beliefs, “you will be talking to a clean slate, as far as biblical doctrine is concerned. Much of your work will be to educate them on the basics of the faith... to help them build a firm foundation. If this is the case, we need to be patient with students... but we also need to give our students a correct theology... giving our students the hard truth of the fall of man... standing up and telling our students the reality of the Gospel. Helping them count the costs of living out their faith... helping them to see that the purpose of our life is not about us... but it is about making God known. In our consumerist culture it is difficult for students... let's be honest... it's difficult for all of us to understand... it's not all about us!

So, today on Youth Weekend. We celebrate our graduating seniors, but more importantly we celebrate how God is working in the lives of all of our students. I want to take a moment and thank the Student Ministry Leadership team for being living examples of people who are in love with the Gospel, and who are pointing students back to Jesus. If you are one of the Student Ministry Leaders will you stand and be recognized? I specifically want to thank Chasity Holmquist for all she does with our Jr. High students.

So, I keep using the phrase “falling in love with the Gospel.” But what do I mean by that? I believe that falling in love with the Gospel is when the Spirit has done such a transformation you have such confidence in your faith, that **knowing God's presence and God's goodness aren't based on the circumstances you are under.**

I pray we begin to see that God is not good... only when times are good. And God is not present... only when we feel He is present.

Psalm 42 discusses exactly this. The psalmist talks about having times of discouragement, times of hurts, dry times spiritually and low seasons of life. The psalmist begins to pour out his heart about the circumstances in his life.

It is uncertain who wrote this psalm. Most believe this was from King David, as he reflected on when he was forced to flee into the wilderness because his son Absalom led a rebellion against him in 2 Samuel 15-16. We also see that Psalm 42 was intended as a song that was sung by the Sons of Korah. Korah was a descendant of Levi and is most well-known for leading a rebellion against the Lord and Moses (Numbers 16) while the Israelites were wandering in the wilderness. Although Korah was judged for the sin of rebelling against the Lord, his descendants were redeemed and later became musicians in God's temple, but Psalm 42 isn't your average worship song, but instead is a heart cry to God. “Why are you downcast O my soul.”

In 2010, I went on my first mission trip. I traveled with a group of believers to Haiti, shortly after the earthquake that leveled most of the country. One night, I woke up to the sound of rain. As I looked out the small window, across a single lane dirt road, I noticed a man pulling a blanket soaked with

water, out of his makeshift tent in the otherwise empty lot across the road. This tent, which was really just a blue tarp held up with a few sticks, and this blanket appeared to be the only belongings this man had... the moon broke through the clouds of the rainstorm, and I saw this man drop to his knees in this now flooded lot and began to sing. By this time one of our translators had woken up and saw me standing at the window. I just stood there shocked when the translator began to share with me the song of praises this man was singing. In this moment when this man could have easily cried out to God... "Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me?" In this moment, this man would have been justified to drop to his knees and cry out "Why God?" Instead he began singing... worshiping God... acknowledging God being big, acknowledging God as in control of all creation, and was thanking God for the freshwater. This was my first real example of a man that was in love with the gospel. **Knowing God's presence and God's goodness aren't based on the circumstances you are under.**

Psalm 42

Why Are You Cast Down, O My Soul?

To the choirmaster. A Maskil[a] of the Sons of Korah.

42

As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. **2** My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God? **3** My tears have been my food day and night, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?" **4** These things I remember, as I pour out my soul: how I would go with the throng and lead them in procession to the house of God with glad shouts and songs of praise, a multitude keeping festival. **5** Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God. **6** My soul is cast down within me; therefore I remember you from the land of Jordan and of Hermon, from Mount Mizar. **7** Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me. **8** By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, and at night his song is with me, a prayer to the God of my life. **9** I say to God, my rock: "Why have you forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" **10** As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?" **11** Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God.

As we read through Psalm 42 we see these waves of emotions he is going through... these highs and these lows.

Reading through Psalm 42 we see 3 things in how he responded in this time where life was heavy.

First we see his Condition (cries out)

If we look through this Psalm, we can see the condition of the writer. What a word picture that we are given... as a deer pants for flowing streams. This isn't a place where the deer is thirsty... or just a little parched and needs a sip... but this is a place where this deer is in desperate need of water. As a deer pants... longs for. This is the same word used in the Exodus when the Israelites longed for water... to the point that they thought they may die. The writer's soul is in desperate need of the living water. The woman at the well when offered this living water was told it was a spring of water welling up. One

commentator describes the soul as one's whole being, one's every desire, that every ounce of who he is, is longing for the Lord.

As much as the fall has affected us and our desires, as much as our sinful nature attempts to drive our actions, we still have an indwelt yearning for a relationship with our Creator. In Genesis, we see that Adam and Eve walked in the cool of the morning with God. The psalmist is desperate to once again be near God... to be satisfied in God's presence.

Verse 7 gives us another word picture of his condition. He says:

Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me.

Think of being in the ocean with waves breaking in. Yet, you get a little too far from shore, and one of the waves strikes you and knocks you over and the wave pushes you down... you struggle to plant your feet on the ground and push up... desperate for air to fill your lungs, just as you feel yourself coming above the water... another wave breaks and pushes you back down. Over and over. Every ounce of yourself is straining for relief. But in the midst of THIS... his cries are drowned out by the roar of the waterfalls.

Have you ever felt this way?

As much as you do, as hard as you try... you feel like life keeps knocking you over... pushing you down... beating you up... Over and over... the waves of grief slamming against you... the temptation of addiction rushes over you... the uncertainty, the pressures of life... slamming against you... over and over. You cry out but your voice is drowned out by the same waters that are crashing over you.

10 As with a deadly wound in my bones, my adversaries taunt me, while they say to me all the day long, "Where is your God?"

In the midst of the writer feeling the weight of life pressing on him... he is also being attacked, as he has people questioning "Where is your God?" Now, people wouldn't ask someone whose life looks like it is amazing "where is your God?" So, the circumstances of his life must have been so obvious, so critical that they looked at his life and came to the conclusion... you claim to have this big God... you claim your God even spoke creation into existence... but... look at your circumstances... look at all that is going on... "Where is your God, in the midst of all of this?"

Now, not only is the writer feeling the heaviness of life, but now instead of having people walking alongside him, encouraging him, pointing him back to Jesus and the hope and comfort that only God can bring... he has people, instead... that are placing seeds of doubt for the one thing that the writer stands firm on. Twice in this Psalm we hear this attack "where is your God?" This shows the continued attack, this emotional blow that he likens to that of a physical assault... "as with a deadly wound in my bones." This deadly wound to his bones... the psalmist describes the pain of their continued taunts, similar to the pain of his bones being crushed... the deadly wound to his bones... to the structure and foundation of his body... is symbolic to the attack on the foundation of his life... "where is your God?"

Psalm 135 tells us though as much as the psalmist relates devastation of the waves crashing over him, we see that God is the one that commands the sea.

Psalm 135:5-7

5 For I know that the LORD is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. **6** Whatever the LORD pleases, he does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps. **7** He it is who makes the clouds rise at the end of the earth, who makes lightnings for the rain and brings forth the wind from his storehouses.

Micah Kongkousonh, our youth assistant, was conveying how big God is to our Jr. High students at their retreat. He discussed that when we talk about the seas, we often think of sitting on the beach with gentle water lapping against the shore. Micah instead described the fishing boats we see on TV that are in the Dutch Harbor. We see the power of the waves... walls of water... crashing over the boats, we see them being tossed around... man has tried and is incapable of harnessing the power of the seas... even in the midst of those storms... God is sovereign and in control. Able to speak and calm those storms, with a word... **“Peace! Be still!” (Mark 4:39)**

Maybe today, in the midst of the storms in your life, you need to be reminded of this... Peace! Be still!

Job was in a very similar place... his soul was cast down.

Job 29:1-5

And Job again took up his discourse, and said: **2** “Oh, that I were as in the months of old, as in the days when God watched over me, **3** when his lamp shone upon my head, and by his light I walked through darkness, **4** as I was in my prime, when the friendship of God was upon my tent, **5** when the Almighty was yet with me,

This is the point where you say “Chris, what a downer of a sermon... if I wanted to hear something so depressing.... I would be a Packers fan discussing next season.

I shared with our students, as we studied the book of Romans, that we can't know how good God's grace is, until we understand the depth of our depravity. We can't understand how amazing salvation is, until we see our desperate need for a Savior. How do we know how good God's comfort is, if we have no need for it? How do we know the depth of God's hope, if there is no purpose?

First we see the authors Condition (cries out)

Next we see that he REMEMBERS

It would be easy and even understandable if the author of this Psalm just sat down, throwing up his hands, and gave up. It would be easy for him to shake his fist at God and say “why?” But instead of questioning why God is allowing... ordaining... such hardship... instead... He begins to remember.

Verse 4 he says

These things I remember, As I pour out my soul: How I would go with the throng And lead them in procession to the house of God With glad shouts and songs of praise, A multitude keeping festival.

A second time he remembers

My soul is cast down within me; Therefore I remember you From the land of Jordan and of Hermon,
from Mount Mizar

So he reflects... he remembers back to the time where he was close with God... where he would lead crowds of people to the house of God. In those moments he had glad shouts... he was singing songs of praise. In his downcast condition, he remembers... he reminds himself that God was there in the past, and if God is who He says He is... then God is with him now... even through the heaviness of life. It is believed that David mentioned these places, because when he was banished by Absalom, he had been at all of these places, and in these locations, had remembered God, and directed his prayer to Him.

RESPONSE

That's where this psalmist is at in life. BUT... we have to stop for a moment and look at what his response is. Because he doesn't remain here. He doesn't just sit in the heaviness of the conditions of life. Instead, he begins to preach to himself. I often share with our students that every morning I preach the Gospel to myself. I need to be reminded. He reminds himself of who God is. Now this is important... The author doesn't listen to himself... but speaks to himself... reminds himself. Instead of allowing his feelings to dictate truth, he began to tell himself who truth is.

The author doesn't listen to himself... he doesn't follow his heart... because his heart... is downcast. He doesn't tell himself... "you be you" or "be true to yourself" or "believe in yourself"... because he already understands the depth of his sinfulness... he doesn't say... "live your truth"... because he knows Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. He doesn't listen to himself.... He speaks to himself... he reminds himself who God is.

In verse 5, he speaks truth to himself... this is how he is combating his downcast soul... how he is combating against the heaviness of life... Remember life is crashing over him like wave after wave. In the midst of all the heaviness of life, he begins to preach to himself.

Verse 5 he tells himself **Hope in God**; He is reminding himself **for I shall again praise him, My salvation and my God.**

Verse 8

By day the LORD commands his steadfast love, And at night his song is with me, A prayer to the God of my life.

Verse 9

He calls God "**My rock**"

Verse 11 he finishes by repeating himself

Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, My salvation and my God.

Three times he questions why his soul is "cast down."

BUT... 12 times he tells himself who God is...

- 1) That God is a God of hope... Both verses 5 and 11, so, he reminds himself twice that he can rest in his hope... Hope defined is His confident expectations in what God has promised... and hopes strength is found in God's faithfulness.
- 2) Twice we see God is worthy of praise. The author says he will praise Him again. This means that he has praised Him before... but in the heaviness of life, he is struggling to praise Him now... We already see that he remembers leading crowds of people with glad shouts and songs of praise. His intent is to do it again. He isn't walking away from his faith... he is not deconstructing his faith... He understands his cast down soul is temporary.
- 3) But I love this... in the next breath... the author says twice that God is His salvation. The author is affirming not only has God redeemed him, but God is also his source of joy and peace... not his circumstances
- 4) And twice, he shows that God is a personal God as he says he is "MY GOD" this isn't a God who is distant or leaves us... even though his cast down soul may feel so... he affirms that God is personal... intimate... present...
- 5) He then says in verse 8... the LORD commands... This reminds him that the LORD is sovereign and in control... is capable. Specifically, he says the LORD commands His steadfast love. Interestingly when he says this in verse 8, he had just finished talking about how it was God's breakers and God's waves that kept crashing over him. So his theology is right... he has a right understanding of suffering. That the Lord commands and ordains all things out of His perfect love. Although the author may not understand why he is going through these circumstances... although he obviously doesn't like them... doesn't enjoy where he is in life...he is still submitting to God's will.
- 6) Verse 8- he says "at night his song is with me." We see in verse 4 he discusses the songs of praises that he would lead in... that he would join in. BUT this song... this song was at night... it is implied that he is alone... previously, the author led in songs to God in public... corporately.... But this shows he also sang these songs of praise when he was alone... at night. So, God is a God worthy of praise... no matter what circumstances we are going through. BUT... I also know how difficult that is sometimes. I know how difficult it is sometimes to walk in here on a Sunday morning... with the heaviness of life resting on your shoulders... I know how difficult it is sometimes, to lift our voices in songs of praise to God, when life feels out of control. But next he reminds himself...
- 7) God is the God of his life. The end of verse 8... In the midst of all of the heaviness, he still sees God as trustworthy to hold his life.
- 8) Verse 9- God is his rock- (He built his life on a firm foundation of God's Word, on Scripture.

Luke 6:47-49

⁴⁷Everyone who comes to me and hears my words and does them, I will show you what he is like: ⁴⁸he is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when a flood arose, the stream broke against that house...

When "Deep calls to deep at the roar of your waterfalls; all your breakers and your waves have gone over me."

and could not shake it, because it had been well built.^{1 49} But the one who hears and does not do them is like a man who built a house on the ground without a foundation. When the stream broke against it, immediately it fell, and the ruin of that house was great.”

He reminds himself... he is standing on something firm... he is standing on a firm foundation. He is standing on the rock!

He knows that the storms of life will come... they WILL come.. And when they come... he is ready... he is prepared... he has built his life on the ROCK!

3 times he says his soul is downcast... life is heavy... This is a rhetorical statement. “Why is my soul cast down? Why would it be cast down, when I know... I know who God is? This writer affirms he knows who God is... God is a God of hope, He is worthy of praise, He is his salvation, He is personal, God is sovereign and in control, God is trustworthy with his life, God is his rock.

12 times he reminds himself of how good God is. 3 times he says his soul is downcast... and he has to combat his downcast soul by reminding himself of how good God is 12 times. So, repeatedly... over and over again he has to be intentional to remind himself of who God is. To preach the truth of the Gospel to himself.

Paul tells us something similar...

Romans 15:4-7

4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. **5** May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus...

Paul tells us that Scripture is intended to instruct us and to encourage us... in this we find hope. It is in THIS... that we remind ourselves of who God is... and find HOPE. Not only do we find encouragement in Scripture... but verse 5 tells us that God is the God OF encouragement. BUT this tells us that we find encouragement and endurance in Scripture... So if today... you need encouragement and endurance... Maybe we need to open our Bibles a little more? Remind ourselves who God is.

In the heaviness of it all, he still **knows God's presence and God's goodness aren't based on the circumstances you are under.**

He knows he shouldn't be crushed or in anguish... he knows who God is... he knows the Lord is his salvation. He knows God is his deliverer.

I find it interesting that the writer does not lash out... doesn't ask for God's wrath to be poured out on his adversaries.

I question... I wonder, if the writer is in the midst of his own suffering... if he is also broken-hearted... if his soul is downcast not just for himself... but that his soul is downcast FOR the oppressors more than it is for himself? He is comforted as he KNOWS God... but, is at least part of his downcast soul, grieving

his oppressors? Is his prayer maybe similar to that of Jesus? Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.

In Romans, we were able to see Paul's heart for the Gospel.

Romans 9:1-3

I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit— **2** that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. **3** For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my kinsmen according to the flesh.

Paul is so in love with the Gospel that he is willing to take on God's wrath, if only the Jews could see Jesus for who He really is. Paul would take the punishment for their sins, if only his brothers would make a decision for Christ. Paul describes his great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart... Paul's soul is downcast. This is one of those moments that Paul wanted the Gospel for others, more than they wanted it for themselves.

How many of you can relate with Paul in this? You have someone in your life that you are praying will receive Christ. You have a friend... you have a brother or sister, maybe it's your husband or your wife that you're praying for their salvation... or is it your son or your daughter that has walked away from their faith? And your soul is downcast, over them.

Every week the pastors get a list of prayer requests from you. It is one of my greatest joys, to go before God, with your prayers. Week after week, I see prayer requests, asking for God to pull the hearts of some of your family close to Him... praying for their salvation. My grandma prayed for decades for my salvation. So, don't give up... don't stop praying. So often we want salvation more for others, than they want for themselves. This is where Paul is. His heart longing for his brothers to know Jesus. Paul was desperately in love with the Gospel.

But, we have to see that Paul has a right understanding of living in the heaviness of life. Paul underwent immense suffering over the time of his life as a believer, in his ministry. But when Paul's soul was downcast... Paul **knew God's presence and God's goodness aren't based on the circumstances you are under.** So Paul was able to celebrate... even in those heavy times.

Church...we are called to have a faith that is authentic and real. a faith that isn't just dynamic and alive when their life circumstances are in a place of worldly success, but even in the tough... in the deep... to lean even further into God to withstand the heaviness of life... the difficulty of life, that we will hold fast and stand on truth, even if that means they are standing alone. I pray that we will fall so deeply in love with the Gospel that we will have no other desire than to share the hope we have in Jesus... with all the nations.

It is this hope... it is this hope in Jesus that we hold so tightly on to... it is from this hope that we look back... we remember... all that Jesus did... all that Jesus did in your life... and mine. I look back and remember who I was before making a decision for Christ. I look back and I remember the sacrifice He

made... for me. We are told in 1 Corinthians to look back... to remember. Paul tells of the night when Jesus was betrayed.

1 Cor. 11:23-26

23 For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, **24** and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." **25** In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." **26** For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

We see a few things here.

- 1) Do this in remembrance of ME. It is all rooted in what Jesus says and what Jesus did. Jesus is the son of God, Jesus is the Savior of the world, Jesus is in Heaven at the right hand of the Father. So as we take communion... Jesus is the focus.
- 2) This is reserved for believers- it is celebrated by the gathering of believers... the church, to proclaim Jesus. A few verses earlier, Paul is actually correcting the church of Corinth over how they were taking communion. But Paul says 3 times... "when you come together." Paul is telling of when the believers come together... the church, so communion is set aside for believers, for those who have placed their faith and trust in Jesus.
- 3) Paul says there are two physical actions of communion- eating of the bread and drinking of the cup. There is no need of penance, trying to clean yourself up or getting your life in order first... instead, he says... come!
- 4) Mental action of communion is to remember... remember back to Jesus, His actions... His crucifixion, His death, burial and resurrection. Verse 19 tells us to take communion in remembrance of Him. so, we are to be intentional with this time... We are not to let our minds wander or mindlessly take communion... but to be hyper focused... as we remember all Jesus did.
- 5) Treasure and trust Christ. Paul goes on to tell the church of Corinth that they are not to take communion in an unworthy way... instead... They are to use the time to REMEMBER and to treasure and trust Christ and His completed work on the cross.
- 6) Examine ourselves (verse 28)... This is not to see if we are good enough, but to see if there are relationships that need to be reconciled... if there is sin that needs confession... Ultimately we examine ourselves to see if we truly... trust and treasure Christ... if we have fallen in love with the Gospel...

From that we celebrate the right relationship we have through faith in the completed work on the cross.

At Edgewood we practice open communion. This means that everyone who has placed their faith and trust in Jesus... who is a born again believer, is welcome to the table. As our deacons and student leaders pass out communion, take one of the stacks of cups. One cup has the bread and the other has grape juice. We will hold on to these until everyone is served, then we will take communion together.

Pass out communion

Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, **24** and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Take BREAD

25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

TAKE JUICE

As we leave the four walls of this church... stepping out into the world. Let's choose to live an example of the hope we have in Christ, **knowing God's presence and God's goodness aren't based on the circumstances you are under.**

Romans 15:1-7

We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. **2** Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. **3** For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me." **4** For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. **5** May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, **6** that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. **7** Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.