

Comparison: The Thief of Joy (Women's Ministry)

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[0 : 00] The thief of joy, this concept that we truly can have joy and delight in the Lord, regardless of our circumstances, regardless of what we have.

But oftentimes, through comparison, it leads to envy, and that really steals our joy. And envy is something that steals any contentment that we may have had.

And so I want to talk about two different verticals, kind of forming across here with my hands, two different verticals to the concept of envy. And we are recording this for some of the ladies, but we're going to take off the discussion part so that people don't hear that.

So there's a vertical dimension to envy, right between us and God, our relationship with God, that really results in, it's an issue of a lack of trust paired with a lack of gratitude.

We become envious when in our relationship with God, we don't trust him, or we aren't grateful for what we have. And then it's a horizontal dimension as well in terms of envy.

[1 : 03] In our relationship with others, it's actually rooted in a lack of love for our neighbors. This may sound weird, but we're going to look at some scriptures to really flesh out what this looks like. So between us and God, it's a lack of trust and a lack of gratitude.

And with us and others, it's a lack of love for our neighbors. So I'm going to pose that when we understand that we as believers have the most valuable thing that has ever existed since the dawn of time, when that truth and that reality hits us to our core, gratitude and thanksgiving is just the natural outpouring of our hearts in response to salvation from death.

When we understand, like, at our core, the most amazing thing we could ever have, the most amazing thing we could ever be, the most amazing thing we could ever do has already been done, gratitude and thanksgiving and praise is the natural outflow.

And our attention is moved from what we don't have but want toward what we have but don't deserve. I think that's a really important mind shift that oftentimes when we do end sinning in envy, it's because we're comparing to people that have what we want but we don't have.

And it's helpful for us to think about what do we have that we don't deserve? And there's a lot of things we're going to talk about later in the natural world that we actually do have as blessings that we may be taking for granted.

[2 : 29] But ultimately, it's our salvation. So I'm going to ask a couple volunteers in your Bibles, whether it's on your phone or whatever. I have four verses I'd like us to read out loud and to discuss maybe some common themes we're hearing.

Can I have a volunteer read Romans 5, 8? Lauren? Lauren, Romans 5, 8. Ephesians 2, 8 through 9.

Aubrey, Ephesians 2, 8 through 9. And then Amanda, can you do 2 Corinthians 5, 21?

5, 21. 2 Corinthians 5, 21. And then the last one, Romans 8, 31 to 32. Okay, Mina. Romans 8, 31 to 32.

Okay, so it's Lauren, Romans 5, 8. Aubrey, Ephesians 2, 8 through 9. Amanda, 2 Corinthians 5, 21. And Mina is in Romans 8, 31 to 32.

[3 : 28] So I'm going to ask you guys to read them slowly because everyone's not going to be able to follow along in writing for those that are not auditory processors. So let's listen to these verses. And we're going to talk about a common theme that maybe you hear.

Aubrey, can you share Romans 5, 8 with us? I mean, sorry, Lauren. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this. While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing. It is a gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one knows. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him you might become the righteousness of God.

What then shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for us all, how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

So what are some things that are sticking out to you guys that you're hearing? He saved us when we were a mess? It's a gift.

[4 : 46] He what now? It's a gift. It's a gift. He knows how to give three gifts. He died for all of us.

He's given us all things.

He's given us all things. Yep. Not a result of works. Not a result of works. Yep.

It's not because we deserve it. Anything else?

They're so nice to see you. so so the question really comes down to do you believe that god has been gracious towards you and giving up his only son for you do you really believe that you have what you don't deserve and that you actually have it all things in jesus and if you believe that god has been gracious towards you and giving up the most precious thing he could have ever given do you believe that he would be ungracious and ungenerous towards you in your current situation if god was gracious in giving his only son do you think he's going to be ungracious and ungenerous towards you in whatever your current situation is and that temptation to believe that god is withholding good things from you goes all the way back to the garden of eden eve thought god is withholding good things from me therefore i gotta do something about it and again i'm not going to compare us to men because that would like kind of like be ironic um teach back comparison but i really do believe ladies that this is something that like we do really deeply struggle with is this concept and i remember um it was such a blessing to me it was about a year a year and a half ago um bailey was spending some listening time praying for me and she heard the lord say such a simple phrase and i have been meditating and chewing on this for like over a year she the lord told bailey to tell me i'm not withholding anything from you do you remember that was this the cabin huh was this the cabin i don't remember i think it was before that it was like a long time ago withholding nothing i think was the phrase you got withholding nothing well whether she remembers it or not it was deeply profoundly impactful because at the time i really was where i still am now like lord why am i not married yet lord why do i not have the career that i want yet lord why am i still struggling financially when before like i was like financial abundance lord why you know all these different things um and so i really have had to take some time to wrestle with that why do i believe he's holding good things for me because that is not truth that is not what we see in scripture um so yeah that that is an age-old temptation that it's gonna continue to be a temptation to think and so we really have to root ourselves in scripture and not just have these trite little you know cliché things like oh no no i'm doing me my life is good or whatever you may be tempted to say like at a deep core level we have to receive that message of like he gave us everything in jesus right like everything else is just icing on the cake after that literally um so there's an aspect of envy that is actually in romans 12 15 it's a failure to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep and so um it's this concept that if we're envious of what someone else has right if i'm envious of that co-worker who keeps getting that kind of praise or um you know that that sister who keeps getting married and having a kid and having all these you know these types of things or financial success we end up not being happy when they succeed and we end up rejoicing when they don't and that is scary right

[9 : 46] that shows in our hearts that something's off that something's off there and so um if we're weeping when others rejoice and we're rejoicing when others weep um i think we may need to take some time and reflecting and confessing that to the lord and asking for his grace and his help um to deal with that because at the end of the day we don't deserve eternal life and communion with god we've done nothing to earn that yet by his grace and through his mercy he freely offers us the most wonderful gift that we could ever have asked for and this should get you more excited than any news you could ever receive than any person asking you out than any positive pregnancy test than any boss sitting you down and telling you you're just getting a promotion like this news when we really sit with it should make us even more excited than the top five things on our list that we're asking for being like answered in a day can you imagine if you had five things you're asking for right now and in a day they just all happen how like what a good mood you'd be in right let's be in that mood today because we understand the amazing vastness and profoundness and just glory of the gift that we have in our salvation so when we start from that perspective in life when we consider our life and what we don't have yet and what we still desire

I think a lot of these verses make sense because if not it can come off as almost like unempathetic if you're just like well you know whatever you're not going to always get everything you want well okay yes that's true but like we also need to find a way of like really grappling and wrestling with some of these feelings that we may be like why am I dissatisfied in life right now I do feel like I'm languishing is there something off in my expectations so yeah I would just say like when we start understanding that like our cake of life is sweet salvation is the cake eternal communion with the Lord will be that cake and everything else is just icing on it the blessings in your life the promotions the spouses the spiritual gifts whatever that's just icing on the cake helps us live with perspective right I think that's really important to see that the blessings make life even sweeter than it already is it doesn't make it sweet so Sean actually has a sermon on this that I'm not going to go super in depth on but I am going to post on Slack afterwards some recommended listenings for resources for you guys he did the sermon on when we were going through Exodus

Exodus 20:17 is one of the commandments so I'm just going to quote his read his little quote and then we're going to go into some more discussion so he says so coveting is similar to envy are you guys all familiar with the concept of coveting okay and so the passage says do not covet can I actually have someone read Exodus 20:17 real quick and then someone else James 4:1 through 3 2017 okay Skyler's going to read Exodus 20:17 and then can someone else read James 4:1 through 3 and we're going to reference back to both of those later James 4:1 through 3 Lydia okay great Lydia's going to do James 4:1 through 3 okay so these two two scriptures we're actually going to reference later as well so Exodus 20:17 and James 4:1 through 3 hit it Skyler you shall not covet your neighbor's house you shall not covet your neighbor's wife or his male servant or his female servant or his ox or his donkey or anything that is your neighbor's what causes quarrels and what causes fights among you is it not this that your passions are at war within you you desire and do not have so you murder you covet and cannot obtain so you fight and quarrel you do not have because you do not ask you ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly to spend it on your passions you adulterous people do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God awesome so we're just going to again read what Sean wrote about this from his sermon because it's so good and coveting is a bitter root that brings forth many more bitter roots so it's a sin that leads to other sins

James 4:1 through 2 says what causes quarrels and fights among you is it not this that your passions are at war within you you desire and do not have so you murder you covet and cannot obtain so you fight and quarrel coveting what belongs to another leads to murder which is a violation of the sixth commandment coveting your neighbor's wife leads to adultery a violation of the seventh commandment coveting your neighbor's ox his donkey anything that your neighbor's leads to stealing a violation of the eighth commandment in this way coveting can lead us to break every single one of the commandments intended to help us love our neighbors as ourselves coveting is by its very nature anti-social so when we think about that God part of the relationship of envy and then we think about the horizontal relational part that's a lack of love for our neighbors when we covet it's by its very nature nature anti-social I love that concept and it can lead to so many other sins but having desires for good things isn't bad right having a desire to be able to share with others from scripture more quickly is like such a beautiful desire all the desires that you guys said again spouse baby job whatever it may be like those are beautiful things to desire so the question becomes what are we to do with the desires that we have if it's an issue of wanting something we don't have or that's not ours what do we do with those desires you just push them down and say well whatever that will be done do we just ignore it do we make 15 million Pinterest boards of like a vision and manifest it until like it becomes ours we're called to do two things ask okay three things really and then surrender and trust we are called to ask for these desires but then our response once we've asked should be surrender and trust so can I have someone look up

Philippians 4 6 through 7 Lauren and then Lydia I'm going to have you reread again when she's done just verses 1 through 3 from James 4 just verses 1 through 3 okay so this is Philippians 4 6 through 7 and back we're coming back to James 4 1 through 3 and so again we're talking about what are we to do with these desires we're called to ask and then surrender and trust so Lauren can you go ahead and read do not be anxious about anything but in every situation by prayer and petitions with thanksgiving present your request to God and the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus what causes quarrels and what causes fights among you is it not this that your passions are a role within you you desire and do not have you murder you covet and cannot obtain so you fight and quarrel you do not have because you do not ask you ask and do not receive because you ask wrongly suspended on your passions so what's standing out to you guys in these verses as it relates to your own desires and your own needs to ask and then trust and surrender how are you hearing those verses

[17 : 56] I'm hearing like what are your priorities and motivations behind those desires that's good why do you even desire it to begin with I like it too because when you bring something to the Lord it sort of forces you to check and make sure that it is a good thing that you're desiring that like you know it is a good thing that you want to bring and ask the Lord you don't want to just ask him for something that you're like oh this is actually maybe simple yeah yeah that's good I think it's a really big deal that you're taking it to the Lord not just sitting in silence you know afraid to ask yeah yeah like God wants us to come to him with all of our desires and wants and like yeah they can be unholy but like we'll work through it with God rather than like pushing it inside and kind of brushing it aside which is what I typically do and like I remember during the prayer seminar thing that Pastor Sean did like he made the analogy of like

God is our Father and like like y'all come to him with everything that they want and desire um yes I think that's a helpful comparison for me yeah yeah are you bringing everything to him yeah that's good anyone else I think like oh oh no no no sorry I was brushing my hair um I was gonna say like this um I think I'm a little confused about this because you asked wrongly to spend it on your passions mm-hmm is he saying um is that more I don't know if that's more talking about the motivation behind it because I think my fear would be that I would not bring requests before God because I like oh I don't wanna ask God for this because I know my heart behind it is I'm scared it's um it's like got gross motivation behind it or like

I'm kinda guilty of why I want this and um I don't know and so I'm not sure or if he's just saying you ask wrongly um because you're suspended on your passions of life I don't know mm-hmm it's a really good question it's the next point I was gonna highlight so that's great good job um it's basically kind of what Kendall was saying in that if the desire is rooted in selfishness God's gonna not necessarily answer that prayer but prayer has a way of making us aware of those desires so even if it's a desire rooted in selfishness you should still pray about it because prayer has a purifying influence on us and as we pray more and more and as like even prayers that go unmet you may be like wrestling with this and like God why not and he may bring conviction oh because you don't actually want this for my glory you want it for your comfort or you don't actually want it what it wouldn't be good it wouldn't be good for you yeah exactly um it's not my plan for you

I have something better for you I have something even better for you um so yeah it's not a call to only pray when you're holy pray in all things in everything bring everything before him but also be aware that prayer does have a purifying influence on our desires that the more you pray the more you're actually gonna pray God's will because there's a convicting aspect that happens to that um because at the same token prayerlessness can result in a lack of blessings there are things that we can miss out on in life because we either don't trust God to pray or we don't think he's gonna do it he's not willing um or that prayer just doesn't work we discount the power of prayer um so yeah I think it's both and there that's a good question this is slightly overrated but there's a really good analogy for like when you ask for things for God you might not give you exactly what you think um it's basically like this analogy of imagine you're asking God for like a small teddy bear and then behind his back he's holding a really big teddy bear ready to give that to you but you're asking for the smaller bear and so

I just thought that would be a cute picture yep yep and he's like no I'm not giving you that teddy bear and the girl's like I was too holding up he's like because yeah do we really understand that Abba father is that in every situation even when you don't realize the big teddy bear for what it is if he ever says no I'm not giving you that specific teddy bear it literally is always because he has something better for you and better for you may be continuing to wait where you grow in intimacy with Jesus and Jesus alone better for you may be a season in the wilderness because he's preparing you for incredible ministry I don't know yeah that's a good question is that answer satisfying yeah I think I struggle with the you're not going to receive because you asked wrongly and then that can get really almost like self condemning a little bit but I think it's going even that to God and being like

[23 : 44] I'm struggling with this yes he wants to love on that yeah and I don't think he's saying you ask wrongly so don't ask I think he's saying but where there are things that are motivations he may not give because it's not his plan for you or whatever you know did you have something you want to say no sorry okay so so if great awesome rock star I have I'm aware of these desires okay I do not have these things yet but I'm not coveting them in my neighbor so what do I do I ask and I surrender and trust awesome I'm four years in into asking and surrendering and trusting now what do I do what do we do with desires that continue to go on men with prayer requests that we believe are holy that we've prayed this prayer

Lord if it's not if my motivation's off if my desire's off let me know and I'll let it go and you continue to lean in and you're like no I think this is what you want me to pray for and I'm going to continue to pray for it but I'm not seeing any movement what do we do with those desires how many of you in one way or another big or small feel like you're in a season of waiting most of us I feel you let me tell you I feel your pain on so many levels some of you have been waiting longer than me I get it and I just think of like amazing stories of like Mina's family praying for their dad for what was it like 15 years you guys sought the Lord persistently what a good desire of course that God wants to answer that prayer but you didn't give up you didn't throw your hands up after 10 years and say well we're not going to break because clearly this man's heart ain't going to change 15 years they prayed for her dad's salvation what are you doing in between while you're waiting for those answers and you believe God is powerful and he wants to move but he's not yet for me this is the first time in my life that I have come to learn and grow and appreciate the beauty of the discipline of lament and lament is something we don't talk about a lot well actually in our church we talk about a lot but I would say in the big church big C big C church we don't talk about lament a lot something I love about our church we're actually very honest about it and so I had never been exposed to it before coming to Trinity no I literally knew lamentations of the book of the Bible didn't know anything about what lament meant and so lament is a beautiful spiritual practice that is absolutely 100% a part of every believer's life so if you've never been disappointed in life you've never had to work through the concept of lament

I promise you you will at some point between now and heaven you're going to have deep deep disappointments and deep deep things that grieve you on a deep level and promises you believe God's given you that you're waiting and waiting and waiting and he hasn't answered yet because it's a part actually it sounds backwards but again we live in an upside down kingdom it's how we grow in our intimacy with Jesus in our sufferings we get to know him in a way that you never will in all your answers your prayer requests being answered there is this element to suffering that is yes we know the word refining refining sounds so cold to me though there's this element of intimacy and sweetness and radical delight that comes from getting to your rock bottom and having nothing to look forward to and seeing that Jesus is holding your hands there so we have to learn how to lament because if we just cover our eyes and we're like no everything's fine

I'm fine everything's fine that's gonna take away the opportunity for you to grow in intimacy with him in that season so there's a couple recommendations I have I'm gonna post on the slack channel this is not a lesson on lament and some of you guys probably did not think we're gonna talk about lament when we're talking about mb in comparison but I really think it's an important part when we consider our desires and what to do with them so a couple recommendations is there's a book dark clouds deep mercy and in this book he basically fleshes out the four steps of lament Sean's had a series on this we've heard it from a couple different speakers at our church but the four steps of lament are turn to God so not turning to others and complaining not turning inwardly and getting depressed but turning to God second step is lay out your complaint let him have it he already knows you're only fooling yourself let him know let him hear it this third step is then ask God for help don't go to others don't pick up the phone and call your best friend don't you know look within you and how do I become my best self you know with this desire whatever it's ask

God for help because he's the only one who can help you and the fourth and this is sometimes the hardest declare your trust in him anyway even though I don't see you working I know that you are working even though I don't see a way that you can bring a husband bring a child bring a whatever it may be I trust you and I trust your plan for me so again I would recommend Sean has a sermon series from four psalms of lament that we did last summer phenomenal sermon series if you guys want to go deeper into this and then we also had a guest speaker named Dane Helsing he came and spoke on that if you guys heard his sermon that was so I'll link to that on slack in the dark clouds deep mercy so again we're not going to spend too much time on this but can I just have one volunteer to read psalm 130 I want you to hear the voice of this author he is not holding back he is not even kind of like trying to sugarcoat it psalm 130 and hear the passion and the emotion the honesty about his desires but also how he follows these four steps can someone read aloud psalm 130 for us okay go for it out of the depths

[30 : 11] I cry to you oh lord oh lord hear my voice let your ears be attentive to the voice of my please for mercy if you oh lord should mark iniquities oh lord who could stand but with you there is forgiveness that you may be feared I wait for the lord my soul waits and in his word I hope my soul waits for the lord more than watching for the morning more than watching for the morning oh Israel hope in the lord for with the lord there is steadfast love and with him is plentiful redemption and he will redeem Israel from all his iniquities love that there is another psalm psalm 6 that is a psalm of lament and in the psalm the author asks how long oh lord how long am I going to have to wait seriously

I have been here we have been through this and something I have shared this before in different settings but I think we need a mindset shift instead of asking how long how long am I going to be single how long are my kids going to be struggling with whatever how long am I going to be stuck in this job when I am really miserable instead ask what now what would you have me do in this season of life what are the opportunities in front of me that clearly you're not changing my situation that you want me to really take hold of and squeeze out all that is in this season before you answer my prayer so uh reading Lord of the Rings big Lord of the Rings fan so there's this quote from Gandalf oh it's just like oh it's so good huh I was already thinking of it yeah yeah you're probably sure you've already already heard the quote okay so imagine Gandalf gray cloak long beard and he says to Frodo it's so beautiful all you have to decide is what to do with the time that is given you you don't have to worry about all the other things and all the other storylines your life could have followed all you have to worry about is what's in front of you right now and that's so freeing some people could say well that's so limiting but I think that's so freeing when we think about these desires and we're tempted to live someone else's life or do do their job at work or be their friend to someone who are the friends in front of you that you're called to be a friend to or what's the job at work that you're called to do so something that's big huge for me because I've struggled with this my entire life when I am tempted to envy and compare myself to others is actually to journal and reflect on God's specific faithfulnesses to me and so

I'm sure you guys have heard about the concept of a gratitude journal I cannot emphasize enough the importance of being able to start grab a journal one thing a day wake up in the morning and write one thing a day I did this about eight years ago and it transformed the way that I even wake up in the morning the way that I'm walking through the day and then sometimes instead of writing down things I'm grateful for I'll actually pull out old journals from that time eight years ago when I was not even walking with the Lord I'll be honest and I'm like oh my gosh how much do I have to be grateful for that I'm literally not struggling with that anymore like praise the Lord oh my gosh when you really share your testimony with yourself wow contentment and joy is like the natural outpouring when you see how much God's done in your life how much he's provided for you and the big and the small you know that parking spot was awesome that one time like you know I was running late and you provided for me versus like you brought my dad to salvation like praise the Lord whatever it may be so yeah just another thing

I think that when we're contented to compare ourselves to others what they look like the life that they have we have to remember that God created each of us so specially and so uniquely that there is only one Aubrey Penn in this world right there's only one Natalie Ma and that he has a specific story and a specific work that he wants to do in each of us with specific skills talents giftings we each have a personal testimony to share and I think he's given us those specific things to bring glory to himself so when we compare ourselves with others and try and be someone else or live someone else's life you actually deprive the world of the person God created you to be and the talents he's given you to share right when you're trying to be you know sparkling in daisies and roses when really God's created you to be quiet and deep and contemplative whatever it may be I don't know you deprive the world of who he made you to be and that's a gift I just want to emphasize he has a specific calling and task for you to fulfill in your life to glorify himself through you that if you're trying to be someone else he gets less glory so comparison is always a losing game

I'm just gonna throw it out there you either compare and you come out on top you're feeling pretty good wait I actually do have a lot of spiritual gifts wait I actually do have like a smoking hot husband wait I actually do have like all my kids whatever they're not as bad as someone says or you become envious and jealous wait I don't have what they have I want all those things so like I really do think it's part of like taking every thought captive and being mindful of even when the comparing thought comes in just to be aware of that because oftentimes we tend to downplay the positive aspects of our life and overemphasize the positive aspects of other people's lives but at the same time overemphasizing how hard our life is and downplaying hard and challenging in other people's lives right so you can just get a show of hands how many of you single ladies feel at times life is really hard it's really hard how many married women feel at times marriage is really hard what about moms do you feel motherhood at times is hard unanimous consent what about working women honestly like is your job hard sometimes are there aspects to your job that are hard it's because life is hard it's never going to be better on the other side what God has given you in this pasture he's given you to tend is beautiful but it's also hard because we're in the already not yet we're in this space where we're saying

[37 : 05] Jesus come redeem this but I feel that pain of you not being here yet life is hard at any stage no matter how many things you have no matter how many prayers go answered it's still going to be hard because this life on earth apart from Christ isn't what is going to last or ultimately fulfill and satisfy and we see this in Jesus and the Samaritan woman there's only one thing that can truly satisfy that can truly fulfill all of our desires that can quench our thirst I'm reading from John 4 13 to 14 Jesus said to her everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again the water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life so I want to ask you guys how does that reality sit with you today that nothing this side of heaven will ever truly fulfill our longings or ever truly be enough and I want to hear what is there anything you find encouraging then about what we've discussed today how does that reality sit with you that nothing this side of heaven will ever truly fulfill our longings or ever truly be enough

I think when you said that if you got all the five things that you listed today like this I would just have another five things it would never ever be enough I would just keep coming up that list and like if I constantly get what I wanted every single time then I would not have a need for Jesus I think the image of a spring of water welling up is so freeing because it makes really real what you said earlier about how all your needs are met you get to live free and free from even these desires because what are they they're nothing compared to like you are being you're not just being filled up and poured out over and over you are you've had the water and now the spirit is in you and you are like overflowing constantly even if you don't realize it it's like you have like this is everything it's everything you need you're full yeah you're full yeah you have so much for others too yep so anyone anyone else how's that sit with you or what have you heard that's encouraging listening

This is fallad out, so you can shred until it goes away, so you'll get up- i never considered the like like how in the world you hear the trope like be you be yourself i've never really thought of that from like a spiritual perspective of like no if you're you're not being who god intends you to be you are withholding his glory from the world that that wasn't really yeah that was big yeah you're depriving your friends and family and everyone around you from being who god's called you to be yeah that takes a lot of like faith that god made you to be good enough yeah or that he's good enough yeah you know that you're not inadequate and that's hard to believe about ourselves yeah 15 10 let's go what is it by the grace of god i am what i am his grace to me is not in vain amen amen yeah that's good stuff guys um so just in closing i want to share um first corinthians 6 19 to 20 super straightforward first corinthians 6 19 to 20 it says you are not your own for you were bought with a price everything we have we have been given from god every dollar in your bank account every relationship you have every spiritual gift that you have every talent all of it and everything above and beyond our salvation is literally icing on the cake the cake is already sweet the cake is already sad the cake is satisfying the cake is already nourishing and when we live with that reality and that understanding at the forefront of our mind contentment and praise and thanksgiving are the natural outpouring it's that nat we can't help but be thankful and contentment praise and thanksgiving are the antidote to envy and comparison and it all leads to joy so i want to take a minute um just a couple minutes i'm going to ask a question you can journal it or think of think of it on your own or whatever but i want to take five minutes it's 11 27 so um groups to pray for one another so this is called the tend well prayer be content in the station he has appointed you to in this season and yet be ever ready to move at the impulse of his love tend well those things that are before you however humble they be and he will lead you in time to other good works he has appointed for you whether big or small is of no matter be liberated now from this burden of believing that anything depends upon you and so be liberated at last to give yourself to his joyful service in grateful response for the grace he has lavished upon you oh god of all the prophets you knew us and chose us before you formed us in the womb fill us with faith that speaks your word hope that does not disappoint and love that bears all things for your sake until that day when we shall know you fully even as we are known by you amen