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Series: For the Time is Near
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No More Delay!
Revelation 10

This morning's message is titled: *No More Delay!* Let's make up our minds about some things and do what we're supposed to be doing. Sometimes we procrastinate so much that we find ourselves in the same place one year after we've said that we were going to do something. If we don't make it a point to follow-through and just be people of action, we find ourselves a year later still in the same place! Who wants to be in the same place a year from now? Nobody does! Nobody actually wants that and yet we do it.

"I'd like to go through the Bible and read through it in one year." Have any of you wanted to do that? Yeah, definitely, right? I have. But many times we find ourselves three months later saying, "Have I started that?"

We're coming into a section of Scripture where this is the last of the last days. This is like the final portion, the final breath of the judgment that's going to be coming upon the earth. The Lord is saying at this time, "No more delay!"

I pray that throughout this message that that just resonates in your heart, that it is something that you think about, not only in your spiritual life, your walk with the Lord, but also how you live out your days, what you do on a regular basis. That it would just reverberate, the one thing that just sounds in your heart, that "this is the moment that I need to do that one thing that I'm thinking about right now". Not for later because you'll forget about it, but that there's no more delay! For anyone who has been kind of meandering along the path of Christianity, I pray that today would be the day to where you just get on the path and you stay on it! No more delay!

And for those of you who have heard the voice of God calling you, that today there would be no more delay. "Hey, you know what? I'm full of myself, and I know that. But today Lord, just take me as you find me. I can't do anything more. Today is the day that I completely surrender to you. No more delay!"

There are these parenthetical pauses that we have seen between the 6th and 7th seal. That is when we took that chapter and we identified the 144,000 who were sealed by God, set apart and all identified. It was this pause. We are in another pause here in Chapter 10. It's kind of just set apart and what I want to do is to read through the first seven verses of Revelation Chapter 10, and then go into and explain what we have before us.

So let's begin reading in Revelation 10:1:

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Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire. ² He had a little scroll open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the land,³ and called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring. When he called out, the seven thunders sounded. ⁴ And when the seven thunders had sounded, I was about to write, but I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Seal up what the seven thunders have said, and do not write it down." ⁵ And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven ⁶ and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay, ⁷ but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.

[Prayer] *Father, we are always thankful for your Word. I pray this morning that You would help us understand what Your Spirit is saying to the churches, and what Your Spirit is saying to the church here, this specific one, with these individuals, right here in these chairs. I pray Lord that we would listen to what You have to say to us. That we would understand that the point of these first seven verses is that word has finally come of the consummation of the history of mankind. It is coming quickly to its crescendo. I pray that we would live expectantly of Your return, and live purposeful lives, not wandering down the path of least resistance, but that in spite of the influences we have externally around us, we would listen to that still small voice and understand that there is a work You want to do in and through us, but it has to first come from a place of surrender in every one of our lives. And that our will would be submitted to Your will, that we would seek Your wisdom and discernment, that are lives would reflect You, and we would truly be ambassadors representatives of Jesus Christ to this sick, dying and perverse generation. We were once there! I pray that You would help us to live purposeful lives. No more delay! No more delay! Help us to understand that. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.*

So Revelation, Chapter 10 is a pause and we see that the voice from heaven is speaking about the seventh trumpet that is to come. There's been this delay, a pause, that allows for the communication to come forth from heaven. It's not just words of information to store up. It's so that you will know them as a voice of warning to the earth. There's been a delay up to this point of the final consummation of history of mankind. Soon enough it will be eternity for everyone. The Lord is perfect in His love and we always hear from those who don't know the Word of God, for those outside of the knowledge of the Bible, they say, "God is love." You hear it all the time. "God is love. He's accepting of everything and everyone."

Let me tell you that that is true. He accepted me just as I was. Unbelievable, right? And He accepted you, just as you were. But He's also a just God, not just a loving God. He is a perfect God, and that is the reason why Jesus Christ hung on the cross because although you couldn't pay for your sins, He did and He atoned for them. You are justified, you are sanctified, and one day you will be glorified. That is absolutely amazing, but it's grace!

He's loving, but He's also just. And being perfect, He had to judge sin. Therefore, as I submitted to Him, as I surrendered to him, as I came under His lordship, there were many things in my life that had to be done away with. I had to come in line with His will. It was not a burden. There were things that hadn't been revealed right at the get-go, but I'm telling you that no one had to tell me, "Hey, listen, *that* needs to not be done anymore. You need to change *this*. Your way of thinking needs to kind of shift a little bit." I just knew that.

As we read through the Bible the Spirit gives us understanding of what we have before us – the Word of God. He begins this sanctifying work. Yes, He receives us, but then there's this work that is done in our lives.

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So there's this pause, a Divine allowance for mankind to respond to His offer of grace. 2 Peter 3:9 says, "***The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.***"

God pauses with us. He's very patient with us. I do that with my boys. I give warning after warning after warning.

"Ok, I'm gonna count to 3. 1...2...2 ¼...2 ½...2 ¾..."

Why do we do that? What do we hope from them? What did I just read? 2 Peter 3:9. What are we hoping that they would do on their own? Repent! That's what we want them to do! It's this picture of our Father in heaven to all of earth and He's saying, "2 ¼...2 ½...2 ¾...c'mon guys, you can do it!" He wishes that none perish, but that all should reach repentance! That's it!

It's not like, "I enjoy bringing the wrath of Raul down on my kids. I enjoy it and gives me this feeling of power and authority!" No! It doesn't happen that way.

"Man, I sure wish my child would obey more; I wish my kid would just come to his senses; I sure wish my son would just fall in line with the way things are laid out for him." That's our heart, and we're imperfect.

If we know how to give good gifts, can you imagine our Father in heaven who is perfect? It's a gift! This pause is a gift that we have been given.

Even though all of this stuff has been taking place, His hand of mercy is being extended out to the earth. Take this into consideration:

"Hail and fire mixed with blood" causing "a third of the earth to be burned up" -- FIRST TRUMPET.

"Something like a great mountain, burning with fire" was thrown into the sea causing a third of the sea creatures to die and a third of the sea vessels to be destroyed -- SECOND TRUMPET.

After a third of the earth's fresh water having been made bitter and undrinkable, it caused many people to die – **THIRD TRUMPET.**

After a third of the earth's light was extinguished and an eagle in the sky warns of three more woes – **FOURTH TRUMPET.**

After a wild looking locust-like, horse-faced monsters that were numerous and had tails like scorpions that could cause unbelievable pain and torment, the people on earth (except for those who had been sealed by the seal of God on their foreheads) endure that for five months – **FIFTH TRUMPET.**

And after 200-million horses with riders who brought forth plagues that killed another third of the earth's population -- **SIXTH TRUMPET**...we are told that "***The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshipping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, ²¹ nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.***" Revelation 9:20-21

After all of that God sends another angel. He doesn't have to do all of this! He can end it all in one fell swoop – done! "You guys deserve condemnation. You reject me anyway." But He doesn't wish that any should perish.

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In Revelation 10 God does warn us of impending judgment. It's for the very reason that I've been saying -- because I believe that God wants those on earth to know that things will now move very quickly and there will no longer be a delay in judgment. This is it! I believe that God wants to give people every opportunity to respond to His grace in the affirmative to say yes to eternal life through His Son Jesus Christ. That's what He desires.

We notice here that the whole time, up to this point, we've been around the throne room of God, before His altar. That's where everything is taking place up to this time. But the scene shifts from that place to back on earth. ***"Then I saw another angel coming down from heaven..."***, as it says in verse one.

The Mighty Angel's Description (v. 1)

So let's take just little chunks at a time. ***"Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven, wrapped in a cloud, with a rainbow over his head, and his face was like the sun, and his legs like pillars of fire."*** [Revelation 10:1]

Now turn back with me to Revelation Chapter One. I want to show you something. ¹⁵ ***"his feet were like burnished bronze, refined in a furnace, and his voice was like the roar of many waters. ¹⁶ In his right hand he held seven stars, from his mouth came a sharp two-edged sword, and his face was like the sun shining in full strength."***

Wow! That's a pretty strong resemblance of the Son of God, of Jesus Christ. They are similar and there are some people who have identified this angel as Jesus. And there are distinctions, though, that we need to understand that are there. Details that I believe tell us otherwise. He's described as having ***"called out with a loud voice, like a lion roaring."*** [Revelation 10:3]

We can go back to Revelation 5:5: ***And one of the elders said to me, "Weep no more; behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals."*** This little scroll is already opened. It's been given to Him and it's in His hand.

It says here in Revelation 10:3 that "he called out with a loud voice like a lion roaring". He's not identified, and all throughout Revelation it's very clear when Jesus is identified. Here he's *not* identified as the Lion of Judah.

And there was another voice that came from heaven Who was giving the commands being followed by all, including this angel that came down from heaven on earth. His right foot went on the sea, his left foot went on the earth. He received and followed the command of this Voice from heaven.

Another distinction is that when John saw Jesus, in Chapter One. What happened in Chapter 1:17? ***"When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead."*** He fell on his face like he was dead! But John did not fall at the mighty angel's feet as though dead. So those are the things that we also need to pay attention to.

Now, it does say in verse one, ***"Then I saw another mighty angel..."*** Have you ever seen an angel? I have. If you go to Lifeway or Berean, or just Google "angel" and you can see them all over the place. Their gentle and meek; they have wings; their white. I'm just playing with you, right? Of course. But isn't that the picture that we have? These little angels flying around. Some of them are made to look powerful like Gabriel or Michael.

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They're just absolutely amazing, but let me tell you that none of those pictures or painting come even close to what they are, or look like.

This is a mighty angel. The description is beyond anything of what we can even think or imagine. He puts his right foot on the sea, he puts his left foot on the earth and he's wrapped around like with a cloud and a rainbow. What?! How do you put that into words? That's the best that John could do! He's a mighty angel, unlike any cute, gentle angel that we have ever seen painted. He's enormous and powerful.

When this mighty angel roared like a lion, he was calling out the seven thunders. He was given this command, "Come down to earth and do this."

Have you ever been out in the desert and been in the midst of a thunderstorm? Oh, my gosh, it's amazing! I remember the first time that it happened. My family and I were going up towards the Grand Canyon and we camped along the road and I remember hearing thunder. Not like Southern California, like someone beating a drum; a little tap, tap, tap. No, it shakes everything! It shakes the earth! It's like, "Oh, wow! I'm gonna die!" And then you see the lightning that just fills up the whole sky! Oh, man, it's just absolutely awesome! Awesome! That is one word that applicable to God and everything that He does. That is just Divine.

But have you ever deciphered what the thunders say? Never, right? These seven thunders were all intelligible. They were understandable. John was about to write down what they said, but was stopped and told to seal it up for a later time, not now. Why? Because it was so awesome and I believe it wasn't the right time. God's timing is perfect.

Sometimes we get sidetracked on other things. "Wow! That's so amazing!"

"No, no, no. Get back over here! What's the point? No more delay, that's the point. That's what I want you to write down. No more delay."

I also want to point out how it is that this angel swore on heaven and all of creation. He swore starting in verse five: ***⁵ And the angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven ⁶ and swore by him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and what is in it, the earth and what is in it, and the sea and what is in it, that there would be no more delay, ⁷ but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets.***

Warren Wiersbe said, "*...if this angel is our Lord Jesus Christ, why would He take an oath in order to affirm the solemnity and certainty of the words spoken?*"

So the point here, the words to listen to, are the ones that I've been saying all along, "No more delay!" That's it! No more!

John F. Walvoord said, "*The mystery of God which is declared as subject to fulfillment is unfolded therefore in the Old Testament in the many passages which speak of the establishment of the kingdom of God on earth.*"

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So we see there in verse seven: **"...but that in the days of the trumpet call to be sounded by the seventh angel, the mystery of God would be fulfilled, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."**

This fulfillment is now quickly approaching, **"...there would be no more delay."** The extending of God's mercy is quickly coming to an end, and that is now...

God's Word – Prophecy – Reveal God's Word (vv. 8-11)

Then we have verses 8-11, in which God continues to speak to John:

⁸ Then the voice that I had heard from heaven spoke to me again, saying, "Go, take the scroll that is open in the hand of the angel who is standing on the sea and on the land." ⁹ So I went to the angel and told him to give me the little scroll. And he said to me, "Take and eat it; it will make your stomach bitter, but in your mouth it will be sweet as honey." ¹⁰ And I took the little scroll from the hand of the angel and ate it. It was sweet as honey in my mouth, but when I had eaten it my stomach was made bitter. ¹¹ And I was told, "You must again prophesy about many peoples and nations and languages and kings."

Of course anyone would look at these instructions and think they were a little odd. "Take this scroll and eat it; it'll be sweet to your mouth, but it will be bitter in your stomach."

I don't know about you, but there have been times in my life to where I've had a lot of something to eat because it's been in front of me and it was so good! There are certain things where it's hard to hold back from--all you can eat sushi. It's like a \$25 temptation to absolutely sin! It goes down really good, but then later on you're like, "Oh, I don't feel very good. I think that rice is expanding. I drank a little bit too much water."

What we have here is another point that God is making with respect to the contrast of how God's Word is received. There are times when you go through God's Word and as you receive it as it comes, it's described in many different ways, and I'm going to go through some of those verses with you. But we see God's love, and His grace, and His patience, and His mercy. We also see God judgment. We see the building up and the strengthening, the rejoicing, the joy, the love. We see all of that, but we also see the cutting away; of the doing away with; we see the fire as being refined by as gold.

We have the sweet, and we also have the bittersweet. Let's see what the Bible has to say about the consumption of the Word of God:

Matthew 4:4 - **"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."**

It's likened to milk in 1 Peter 2:2-3 - **"Like newborn infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up into salvation— ³ if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good."**

It's likened to meat, or solid food 1 Corinthians 3:1-2 - **"But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ. ² I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready,..."**

And then the Psalmist in 119:103 likened it to honey - **"How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!"**

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And then the you have the prophet Jeremiah, who knew what it was to eat the Word of God. Jeremiah 15:16 - ***"Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart, for I am called by your name, O Lord, God of hosts."***

When I first came to the Lord there was nothing sweeter than sitting down with my Lord and opening the Word of God and reading it. It was like there was nothing else. I'd wake up a little earlier, I wouldn't think it was a burden or a sacrifice, it was just what I did. There's nothing sweeter. Every opportunity I had I wanted to read the Word of God and I wanted to get to know Him better.

For believers reading the Word of God should be like that all the time. It should be like eating your favorite foods, but even better! It tastes so good and you can never get enough of it! As God's wonderful Word comes alive to you you'll want to read more. "You're absolutely amazing, God! This is wonderful!"

But to the unbeliever, the Word of God is like taking nails to a chalkboard. That sound! It's like that but even worse! "Don't tell me what's on your heart. I don't want to hear it!"

2 Corinthians 2:15-16 - ***"For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, ¹⁶ to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life."***

You know, you stink to those who are perishing. You come in and they can't wait until you leave. If you're living for Christ and you come into a gathering and they're telling dirty jokes, and there's silence. As soon as you leave, they go back to what they were saying. It should be like that! I hope they don't ask you to join them because you're one of them.

1 Corinthians 1:18 - ***"For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."***

What is the power of God like? Initially, it's right there at the cross, it's salvation. We have a cross, but it's empty. He's not there. Thank God He's not there. That's where the power lies, in the cross. And for us who are being saved, for us who understand a relationship with Him, for us who understand grace through Jesus Christ, by faith in Him, we understand that power! We've been relieved of our sin and the burden of sin, and the separation from God, and we know a relationship with Jesus Christ.

But for those who are unbelievers, those who are perishing...nails on a chalkboard.

"I don't want to hear it."

You can talk about all kinds of other religions who are open and accepting; reach certain levels of nirvana; but talk about Christianity?

"Oh, you guys are so narrow-minded!"

No, that's God's mercy! He's extending His hand. Jesus said, ***"I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."*** [John 14:6]

Can you imagine a father that would say, "From here to the other side of the freeway, are so many ways to get there. Yeah, I know there's a bridge, but hey, listen, play Frogger! You can get there!" That would not be a good father.

A good father would say, "Listen, there's only one way to get across. You will not succeed any other way. Only by one path. By the way, that bridge is called Jesus Christ; that's the only way."

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That's why no one else is offended by any other religion. They're like, "Hey, just get there. Everyone go his own way."

To many the idea of judgment is difficult to accept and has given the opportunity for many to scoff at. Today there are many scoffers. I want to read with you in 2 Peter 3:1-15. I'm not going to teach on this portion, I just want to read through:

"This is now the second letter that I am writing to you, beloved. In both of them I am stirring up your sincere mind by way of reminder,² that you should remember the predictions of the holy prophets and the commandment of the Lord and Savior through your apostles,³ knowing this first of all, that scoffers will come in the last days with scoffing, following their own sinful desires.⁴ They will say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from the beginning of creation."⁵ For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God,⁶ and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished.⁷ But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly.

⁸ But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.⁹ The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.

¹¹ Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness,¹² waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!¹³ But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.

¹⁴ Therefore, beloved, since you are waiting for these, be diligent to be found by him without spot or blemish, and at peace.¹⁵ And count the patience of our Lord as salvation,..."

Patience. No more delay. "...count the patience of our Lord as salvation..." There are many scoffers, many people who are saying, "Nonsense! It's been as it's been since day one, that you say from the day of creation. It's been the same, nothing's happened!"

But yet, Peter is reminding them, "Remember what the prophet's have taught. Remember what they said." It's all coming about. We're in those days.

Yes, there will be those who don't believe, but this delay also gives us an opportunity to do one more thing: Declare the message of forgiveness to a sick and perverse generation, to a dying, dark generation. It gives us the opportunity to proclaim the gospel and tell others about the same good news that you heard and responded to. It gives us that opportunity.

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No more delay in living lives that glorify God. No more compromising, but wholly living to honor God with our lives. That's the opportunity that today give us. Let us rejoice and be glad in it, for this is the day that the Lord has made, right? To honor Him.

No more delay in telling others about Jesus Christ. That has to stop! When we don't tell other people, we ask for boldness and confidence, but rarely do we open up our mouths and just talk about Jesus to other people. We need to be those people who testify of His love, and His grace in our lives. Yes, by example, but also by word.

This delay, this pause, can be seen as an urgent call for everyone who knows salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ to tell others about Him. This last moment, right here where he's saying, "No more delay." For us now, we have an opportunity. No more delay in responding to the message of salvation. Individual response is what will matter. My boys, they're not saved because they were raised in a Christian home. We need to have an individual response, we need to understand what God is telling us. We need to understand that there's grace through His Son, Jesus Christ, extended to each and every one of us.

Hebrews 9:27-28 says, ***"And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment, ²⁸ so Christ, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time, not to deal with sin but to save those who are eagerly waiting for him."*** Man is appointed to die once, physically. But after that comes judgment. That is as sure as the sun rose this morning.

So I'm placing before you an opportunity to delay no longer. Choose today. No choice *is* a choice. I hope and pray according to God's will that you will respond today because He wishes that none should perish, but that everyone comes to a personal understanding and a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

It's simple, and yet it is so difficult, because we have to surrender our own wills. We have to say, "I give up; I surrender; I agree that my sin is an offense to a righteous and holy God and I surrender. I ask for Your forgiveness, Lord, and I ask You to be my Lord and my Savior." The moment you do that, you surrender your life to the Lord, He says that you will be a new creature, and you will know that. You will begin to walk with Him. I pray that you don't delay anymore.

For anyone here who has been compromising, just meandering through that narrow path...in and out, in and out...that today is the day for no more delay! "I'm not waiting another year! I'm not going to be here a year from now, even if that's promised to me, and be in the same place! I'm not going to do that and play anymore. Today is it and I'm going to commit!" I pray that for anyone who's doing that, that today be that day!

Are you eagerly waiting for Him, or are you dreading His appearance? That's the question. If you're eagerly awaiting Him then you know you have that confidence, you have that right place with Him. But if you're dreading His return, you're like, "I hope it's not today because I just want to do this last thing. I just want to decide tomorrow." What if tomorrow doesn't come? Then what? It's too late. It's too late to repent.

No More Delay!

I'm going to pray for all of us, but I'm going to ask the elders and Pastor Chuck to come up. I'm going to do an altar call. This is the safest place that you can respond to a message. Everyone will encourage you, will welcome you, and will come alongside you.

I'm going to ask if there's anyone who would like to surrender their lives to Christ to just stand to your feet and come up. If anyone needs strength in their walk with the Lord, I'm going to ask you to stand up and come forward and allow us to pray with you. And if there's anyone who has turned away from Christ, compromised, come up and be prayed for. No more delay! No more playing around! Just do it. Just don't be ashamed of honoring the Lord here in front of the church. Like I said, we'll all be here encouraging you.

[Prayer] *Father, we so appreciate your delays. But there's a time in our lives that You call us to action. There's a time when we need to respond to simply come near to You and to be received by You with open arms, just as I'm reminded of the father and the prodigal son. When that prodigal son, after having wasted all of his inheritance after having lived with the world, and ended up eating with the pigs, he came to his senses, is what the Word says, and he thought, "You know what? It's better to be a servant in my father's house than to be out here." Lord, I'm reminded that how the father saw the son from afar that he didn't wait, but he ran. He pulled up his garments, and he ran to his son! He welcomed him and threw a party on his behalf. That is the Father that we serve. That is the Father that is calling us unto Himself this morning. I pray, Lord, that You would move in the hearts of each and every one of these people. I pray that they would respond to that love and would openly acknowledge You before man, and that You, Lord Jesus, would openly acknowledge them before Your Father in heaven and call them Yours. I pray that You would help a response to happen. In Jesus' name. Amen.*