

Worship: 2 Songs

Baby Dedication:

*This morning we are celebrating 25 years of God's faithfulness in allowing us to enjoy life together as a local body of Christ.

*I often reflect on what God has done in the past...history at large, our past as a church, my own personal past...this reflection on the past encourages my faith going forward.

*We are going to focus our attention more fully on the future.

*The church on earth is an inherently future oriented organism.

*Our faith is grounded on what Christ has done in history but our hope is centered on what Christ will do in the future.

*The future, both in the ultimate sense of when he wraps up human history, but also the future in the temporary sense, as we seek to be faithful with the stewardship of our lives.

*In keeping with this future focus we have selected today to celebrate our annual child dedication.

*Normally we do this in a separate service:

-The advantage there is we can take more time, the disadvantage is the larger church family misses out.

-So this dedication will be shorter in duration, but broader in scope...it's a good tradeoff

*Scripture teaches that each person must choose for themselves in regards to following Christ.

*This dedication is not a guarantee of your child's future choice...but what is it?

*It is a public commitment before God and each other to fulfill this sacred trust of raising our children in a way that makes the pathway to a life of knowing and loving God as accessible and compelling as possible.

*It is a public commitment of ourselves and our children to God...and to one another in community.

Here is how we will proceed:

1. Parents will line up here in front with your children.

***Pictures

2. I will ask you as parents to make your commitment in unison (it will be on the overhead at the rear of the sanctuary)

3. The Church body will stand and make their commitment to you in unison.

4. I will pray for our children...no pictures at this time...join us in prayer.

5. Parents, at that time I'm going to ask you to take your children to the childcare area.

*Please do not keep the children here in the service; it is important that you and those around you are able to fully concentrate on what God wants to communicate.

Parent commitment:

"Father I commit myself today to serve you faithfully. I commit to put away any idol that threatens to take the place of Jesus in my heart. I ask for your grace to live in a way that will make the path to loving you accessible and compelling for my child. I give myself and my child fully to you today and ask that you would empower me to be found faithful with this sacred stewardship."

Church commitment:

"I commit myself to walk alongside you in your sacred stewardship as a parent. I will not judge, condemn, or attempt to control you. I will encourage, serve, and put your interests ahead of my own. By God's grace I will live in a way that will make the path to loving Him accessible and compelling for your child."

Prayer by name:

Amariah Carol	Jonathan & Michelle Van Winkle	Girl	1st
Caroline Alice Ledbetter	Doug & Judy Ledbetter	Girl	1st
Emory Townsend Lewis	Wes & Katherine Lewis	Boy	1st
Heidi June Karber	Donnovan & April Karber	Girl	1st
Nolan James Pearce	Josh & Kim Pearce	Boy	1st
Walker Daniel Ochs	Jeff & Stephanie Ochs	Boy	1st
Christopher James, Eva Gene, Haddie Lee	Neil & Crystal Satrom	Boy	2nd
Cora Evelyn Merrill	Robert & Sara Merrill	Girl	2nd
Daniel Matthew Ruby	Joshua & Becca Ruby	Boy	2nd
Declan Ansel Belsan	Jon & Hannah Belsan	Boy	2nd
Evie Sue Kane	Tyler & Amy Kane	Girl	2nd
Gracelyn Christine Joy	Moore		
Isabelle Christine Stanton	Andrew & Sheersty Stanton	Girl	2nd
Jacob Mason Wedel	Taylor & Rebekah Wedel	Boy	2nd
Lilly Christine Rosendale	Stephen & Lauren Rosendale	Girl	2nd
Melanie Ann Russell	Brian & Amber Russell	Girl	2nd

Welcome & prayer: Jim**Worship: 1 song (OFFERING)****Looking back:**

*River began with about 30 adults and children in our basement the summer of 1990.

*Our biggest question was..."Why another church in Wichita?"

*Our conclusion was..."It's what God wants from us."

*I could go a number of directions in a brief look back...in particular we could look at the lives of people who have been transformed and then their children were transformed, now those children are grown.

*Or people who came to Christ who led others to Christ.

*That would be a lot...so I'm going to use geography as a way of "mapping the past."

1. Basement

-As I said, we began in our basement in West Wichita.

-Looking back "We didn't know what we didn't know."

-But we did know God and we became confident this was his will for us.

*Faith was key then (as it is now)

2. Downtown warehouse

*We rented a warehouse downtown the fall of 1990.

*It was not an ideal setting or situation...but it was what was next for us.

*For me what stands out about that time was learning how to live together in community and obeying God with what is next.

*Often what was next was not exciting or glamorous...but we experienced God in the little things of life together.

*People did what needed to be done.

3. Olivet Gym:

*The next stop was to be a temporary one. We had to leave our rented warehouse because the owner sold it.

*Olivet was gracious enough to allow us to use their gym to hold our worship services on Sunday evenings.

*This temp stop lasted 3 years.

*That was the time we first learned what it means to "See where God is moving and join him."

4. Dandelion Building

*At that time what's known as the "Dandelion Building" was owned and operated by Youth Horizons.

*We purchased the building from them, and they used that money to open the first group home.

*The theme for that time was "open up our lives, homes and hearts to other people....make room for others."

*God began to grow our church numerically and we began to pray for God to lead us to a new facility.

*Some, in particular, Earnest, began to pray for this location.

*I received a call one day from the pastor of what was then University Baptist Church.

*He said that their church believed our church should have this location.

*We paid them 300,000 dollars (150,000 of which they gave to YH).

*The theme here has been multi-faceted but what stands out for me is an ever-growing application of people "seeing where God is moving and join him."

*We have seen people leave Wichita to take the gospel to the nations, churches planted, ministries started...

*But mostly followers of Christ at home and at work engaging God and people right where he has placed them.

***WSU innovation campus.**

*Contacted by man expressing interest in our property.

*"We are happy with our location."

*"I suspected you were."

*If we could choose anywhere in this city to locate, it would be this location.

*In our community, in every community...the future is on campuses...schools and universities.

*We celebrated the youngest generation at River in the children dedication.

*I want to give you a chance to hear from some representatives of the emerging generations at River.

Interview Jaminson

-Who are you?

-How has being a part of River changed your perspective/values?

-What do you hope to see God do through your life in the future?

Interview Lauren

Message:

INTRO:

*One afternoon in a deployed location a military member came to see me because he was struggling.

*He had a real conflict in his heart and mind over the morality of what he was being asked to do.

*It was not an unlawful order; but it did create an internal conflict inside of him.

*There are many situations in combat (and some non-war settings, but not as often) when a person has to do something that feels at odds with their own morality.

*This can sometimes cause lasting mental/emotional distress.

*It is what experts call a *moral injury*: the pain that results from damage to a person's moral foundation.

*This is another example how everyone moves through life with a "worldview" a set of presuppositions about reality.

*The pegs that we hang our lives on...how we view the world and move through the world.

*Ideas have consequences...these pegs are the ideas that shape who we are, what we believe, value, do.

*Then something happens and there is no peg, or a existing peg doesn't hold...our view of the world is inadequate.

*Doesn't have to be trauma or combat.

*Any number of breakdowns can cause a person's life to turn into a question mark.

*Intellectual malfunction of their current system..."this doesn't make sense."

*Emotional breakdown..."this doesn't work."

*Practical breakdown...relationship, bodies, careers...don't work.

*Prior to the breakdown people often live unexamined lives...they may not have thought deeply about what they believe...they have a worldview...just not a well-reasoned, or coherent one.

*When life becomes a question mark...they become seekers of answers.

*Some become open to the gospel.

*God often uses this process to bring people to faith.

*Sigmund Freud said that this kind of faith is "wish fulfillment"

*It is manufacturing a belief in response to a need.... so although it may offer emotional relief...its not real.
-So, he termed it "wish fulfillment"

*Os Guinness wrote about Freud's position... "People don't believe because of questions and needs...they disbelieve because of them."

*In other words when life becomes a question mark it first unhinges their existing belief system.

*They disbelieve what they believed before because it no longer answers their questions.

*When life becomes a question, the search is on for answers.

*Today we look at the story of a seeker, but as far we can tell...it did not turn out well for him.

*His question led to what was for him an unacceptable answer.

Three parts to our Mark 10 narrative today:

1. 17-22: The heart can have one King

2. 23-27: The impossibility of the Kingdom

3. 28-31: The reward of the Kingdom

*In the NT, the Kingdom is the reign of Christ in the hearts of men and women.

*At the coming of Christ the eternal kingdom of God invaded the temporal kingdom of men.

*This kingdom is taking over hearts one person at a time.

*However, in the human heart only one King can reign supreme at a time.

1. 17-22: The heart can only have one king

Mark 10:17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. "Good teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" **18** "Why do you call me good?" Jesus answered. "No one is good — except God alone. **19** You know the commandments: 'Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.'" **20** "Teacher," he declared, "all these I have kept since I was a boy." **21** Jesus looked at him and loved him. "One thing you lack," he said. "Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." **22** At this the man's face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

*Elsewhere this man is called a "Rich young ruler"...he had money, he had power, he had prestige.

*We can also infer that he is passionate, respectful and a man of character.

-He runs to Jesus

-Falls on his knees

-Jesus doesn't refute his claim to have kept the commandments

*Mark tells us that Jesus "looked at him and loved him"

-Something about that phrase touches me.

*How would Mark or anyone know this happened?

*Jesus had to tell them.

*Maybe weeks later they were sitting around after a meal and Jesus began to reflect.

*"Hey, Fellas, remember that young wealthy man?"

*"I felt deep love for him...my heart went out to him."

*Jesus was himself a wealthy, young, ruler.

*He was around 31 years old at this point.

*He is rich beyond anyone's comprehension...rich in glory, wealth, love, power, and relationship.

*He left it all behind him.

2Cor. 8:9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

*He loved this young man, he understood him...and yet he did not say..."your okay where you are."

*Remember last week...truth and love are friends not enemies.

*Jesus looked at this man with love; then he told him a very hard truth.

*"Okay, you are squared away except for one thing...sell everything, give it away...then follow me."

*See that one thing was everything for that young man.

*This is not about earning its about understanding.

*A heart can only have one King...and every heart has a King.

*There is nothing inherently wrong with wealth and to follow Christ does not require dispossessing yourself of all earthly goods.

*It does require vacating the throne of your heart...only Jesus can reign there.

Matt. 6:24 "No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money.

*Money itself is neutral but it is a common idol...and it is the idolatry that is destructive.

*An idol is what humans worship in the place of God.

*Evidently the trip point for this young man was that his identity was tied up in his position, power...maybe it was the security that his money could buy.

*Whatever it was...Jesus knew one thing about every heart.

*There is only one throne there.

*So in love he tells this man the truth about his situation...

"You have put your faith in your wealth and accomplishments...imagine your life without these props, no servants, no mansion, no money...just me...can you live like that?"

*The answer was "no"

*"His face fell"...he became "gloomy" (used of dreary weather)

*He went away "sad"...the word is better translated "grief stricken"

*The same word is used to describe Jesus in Gethsemane as he began to sweat drops of blood.

*He was grieved in great distress because he was about to experience the cross and God the Father turning his face from him...Jesus would be separated from the spiritual center of his being.

*This man was grieved because money was for him what relationship with the Father was for Jesus.

*It was the center of his identity...for him to lose his money would be to lose himself.

*Jesus was offering the man a great deal...he didn't see it as such.

*He wanted both what he had, and what Jesus had to offer.

*This was an impossible desire.

2. 23-27: The impossibility of the Kingdom

23 Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, "How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!" 24 The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God." 26 The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, "Who then can be saved?" 27 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God."

*Why does the Lord single out rich people here?

*Because the fact is that money is notorious for fooling people into believing they are okay.

*It blinds them with its temporal power of provision to their real eternal need.

- *But it doesn't mean it's easier for poor people or middle class people to become Christians.
- *He singles out rich people because they were believed to be double blessed.
- *Lots of stuff now, because God in heaven loves them more than the rest of us.
- *The disciples were especially confused because in the prominent view of the time (and ours) wealth was a sign of God's blessing.
- *It was not, and it is not true.
- *Jesus turns this view completely upside down...
- *Wealth is not a de facto evidence of God's blessing...in fact it is often a barrier to God.
- *Then he uses a shocking figure of speech to fully capture their imaginations...
- *"It's easier to thread a needle with a camel than for a rich person to enter the kingdom."
- *There is no evidence for a gate in Jerusalem that a camel had to kneel to enter.
- *The point of this extreme statement is in the actual impossibility of it happening.
- *He wanted to lead to the question..."Who can be saved?"
- *Ahh...that is the right question..."With man this is impossible, with God all things are possible."
- *No one can be saved, even the one's you believe to be blessed because they rich...all are hopelessly lost.
- *But with God, its a different story altogether.
- *Anyone can be saved who ceases self-reliance and transfers trust to Jesus.
- *I wonder if this Rich young ruler lived long enough to see what Jesus was trying to show him?
- *Maybe the day came when he was no longer rich or no longer young...or his money no longer mattered to him.
- *Maybe the time had come when his riches and his youth had failed him...and he drank fully of the cup of emptiness that was his life.
- *Maybe then...he gave his life to Christ.
- *Hope so.

3. 28-31: The reward of the Kingdom

28 Peter said to him, “We have left everything to follow you!” 29 “I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel 30 will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields — and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. 31 But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

*Peter, being Peter wants to highlight the fact that they have left everything.

*Jesus doesn't rebuke him or dispute him...he affirms the fact that if that's true, then Peter made a great trade.

Threefold promise:

1. He will receive 100 fold what he has lost
2. He will experience persecution
3. He will receive eternal life

*To understand the Lord's point, we must stick with what normal written or verbal communication is like.

*Its not wooden...it is mult-facted and designed to get a message from one mind to another.

*The Bible is God's word and God uses normal kinds of communication in it...here's what I mean by that.

*Peter, for instance did not literally give up "everything"...he still wore clothes, had a family, etc.

*But he wasn't lying and the Bible isn't in error...he was using commonly understood language..."We have left all that mattered most to us....vocation, time with family, security, etc."

*Jesus is not saying..."You will get exactly 100 homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children."

*And in addition, 100, count them, 100 persecutions.

*If I say "I'd a hundred times rather kill a spider than change a dirty diaper."

*You understand my point..."I don't like changing diapers at all and killing bugs is mild in comparison."

*Lord is saying..."Spiritual rewards far outweigh any sacrifices made for me."

*But notice...Jesus includes...persecution as a promise.

*The cost of discipleship is ongoing...but so are the rewards.

*And finally...in the end, when history is turned right-side up and what is truly valuable is revealed to everyone...then the first will be last and the last first.

*Rich, young, rulers...who refused to allow Jesus to take the throne of their hearts...will be seen to have "kept what doesn't matter and missed what does."

*Because Eternal life...God's kind of life in us...will be the ultimate good trade for anything lost in this life.

CONCLUSION:

***On our overhead, the wall, our bulletins, the website...**for 25 years somewhere it has been written..."knowing and loving God, making God's love known to others."

***I suppose this could be seen in a variety of ways:**

1. Arrogance (you think you have it figured out)
2. Cliché (turning life into a bumper sticker)
3. Intrusive (what if we don't want your religion)

*Then again I suppose just about anything can be seen in a variety of ways.

*I can tell you what for 25 years and longer it has meant to me...

*It has meant that in my life my search for purpose ended when Christ found me.

*I was not in a trauma by age 19...but my life had turned into a question mark.

*OBE...military acronym for "Overcome by events."

*I was OBE, and those micro events...unhinged my own meager belief system...and it was it was inadequate.

*I grew up in church but I had a "me-ology" rather than a good "theology" of the gospel.

*Since that time, the pegs have held...

*I have had my dark nights of the soul...times when I felt like I was at the very end of myself.

*But then again, there's a peg for that...

*The longest book in the Bible is not a set of rules, but a book of poems, songs, and emotional cries from the heart of the distressed.

*There is a peg in the Christian worldview...to hang mystery, confusion, doubts on, even misery on.

*Because the pegs are fixed on a "peg board" the Gospel...Jesus; his life, death, resurrection makes sense of everything in the end.

*My search for purpose ended but in another sense my real search began at that time.

*You see for some the search for meaning becomes the meaning of the search...the search goes on forever.

*But when the seeker finds Jesus it is not the end of all searching but the beginning of the greatest search possible.

- *Augustine "Even when he is found, he must be sought."
- *The search to know and love God is an infinite, joyful, never lonely adventure.
- *Yes there are troubles, heartaches, unknowns.
- *I sat with my own daughter this week...and we talked of these things and not in the abstract but in tears.
- *There is a lot of mystery, sometimes confusion...
- *But we explore the infinite greatness of God in relationship with God and with God's people.
- *God has graciously made himself know to me, to us...there is nothing greater, nothing more fulfilling...than knowing him more as time goes on and being used by him to make him known.
- *This is what we want to spend our lives on.
- *Anything less is to waste rather than to spend our lives.
- *God revealed himself to me when I was 19... and it was not because I was smart, useful, or good.
- *He has allowed us together to live in community as a church for 25 years.
- *And its not because of our brilliance or efforts...but his own goodness and his purposes
- *So there is no cliché in knowing and loving God... for me, no arrogance, no judgment of others.
- *I am still a mess, still in need of a Savior...but he has captured my heart and many of yours.
- *This journey is joyful but it is no game...we will not play church or pretend to be what we are not.
- *Neither will we dishonor him by denying what we are...we are loved by him and called by him...we are enjoying his grace in community.
- *I am grateful.

3 Songs

SMALL GROUP NOTES

Intro:

- *Worldviews typical contain certain beliefs about reality such as:
 - Who or what is ultimate reality?
 - Who or what are we?
 - How do we know what it true/real?
 - What happens when we die?
 - What is our problem?

- What is the solution to our problem?
- What is our purpose?

*Use these categories to discuss some different worldviews you have encountered, or had, or heard of.

*What are some things that have turned your life into a question mark?

*How did you come through that time?

Read:

Mark 10:17 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” **18** “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good — except God alone. **19** You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’” **20** “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.” **21** Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” **22** At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth. **23** Jesus looked around and said to his disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” **24** The disciples were amazed at his words. But Jesus said again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! **25** It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” **26** The disciples were even more amazed, and said to each other, “Who then can be saved?” **27** Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.” **28** Peter said to him, “We have left everything to follow you!” **29** “I tell you the truth,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel **30** will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields — and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. **31** But many who are first will be last, and the last first.”

Discuss:

1. 17-22: The heart can have one King

- a. Why did Jesus ask this man to sell everything and give it away?
- b. How do we know this is not his call for every life?
- c. What are some examples of idols and how do they take the place of God in our lives?
- d. Why do you think Mark wrote "Jesus looked at him and loved him"?

2. 23-27: The impossibility of the Kingdom

- a. Is it harder for rich man to be saved than a poor man? Why or why not?
- b. Its impossible for anyone to be saved apart from the work of God. This was the Lord's point in his "camel through a needle" comment. Why do you think he used this figure of speech?

c. Why were the disciples amazed and puzzled at the Lord's comment?

3. 28-31: The reward of the Kingdom

a. What is the "three-fold promise" Jesus gives here?

b. What do you believe he intended to communicate in this promise?

c. What are some ways this could be misunderstood or misrepresented?

d. What does he mean by his statement "But many who are first will be last, and the last first"?

Apply:

1. Consider how well thought through your own worldview is? Have you seen your life turned into a question and did the "pegs" hold? Will they hold in the future?

2. Part of a resilient life is doing the work before life turns into a question to ensure your worldview is adequate for the real world. Spend some time contemplating the gospel and how it is indeed adequate for real life in the real world.

THE GOSPEL OF

MARK



Mark 10:17-31

**“FOR EVEN THE
SON OF MAN
DID NOT COME
TO BE SERVED,
BUT TO SERVE,
AND TO GIVE
HIS LIFE AS A
RANSOM FOR
MANY.”**

MARK 10:45

J. STILL

Mark 10

- 1. v. 17-22 "The heart can only have one King"**
- 2. v. 23-27 "The impossibility of the Kingdom"**
- 3. v. 28-31 "The reward of the Kingdom"**

"The heart can only have one King"

Mark 10:17-22 As Jesus started on his way, a man ran up to him and fell on his knees before him. “Good teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” “Why do you call me good?” Jesus answered. “No one is good — except God alone. You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not give false testimony, do not defraud, honor your father and mother.’” “Teacher,” he declared, “all these I have kept since I was a boy.” Jesus looked at him and loved him. “One thing you lack,” he said. “Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.” At this the man’s face fell. He went away sad, because he had great wealth.

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"The impossibility of the Kingdom"

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"The reward of the Kingdom"

Mark 10:28-31 Peter said to him, "We have left everything to follow you!" "I tell you the truth,"

Jesus replied, "no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for me and the gospel will fail to receive a hundred times as much in this present age (homes, brothers, sisters, mothers, children and fields — and with them, persecutions) and in the age to come, eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last first."

Knowing and Loving God

Making God's Love Known

O.B.E = ?

**"Even when He is found, He must be
sought."**

