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BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH
ELKHORN, NEBRASKA
FEBRUARY 19, 2006
PASTOR WENDA FRY

1 PASTOR WENDA FRY: We have been doing a series on
2 launching a volunteer revolution and our first ever Ministry
3 Expo.

4 And we had such a wonderful response to that that
5 we'll probably do that once a year at some point, launch a
6 volunteer revolution, so that you have an opportunity to
7 re-up, as it were, or move in your serving.

8 As we do that, today I want to talk about the power
9 of doing good.

10 And as we begin to think about that together, I
11 have a little quiz for you.

12 I'm going to read some information about a couple
13 of people.

14 And when you know who it is, whisper it to someone
15 next to you, or you can shout it out if you want to, that's
16 fine, too.

17 This is a man, and he was born the son of a
18 Lutheran pastor in 1875.

19 He became an acclaimed organist and world-wide
20 authority on Bach by the time he was thirty.

21 Later he earned a doctorate's in theology and
22 philosophy.

23 In 1905 he enrolled in medical school so that upon
24 receiving his degree he would no longer have to, and this is
25 his quote, "Merely talk about the religion of love, but put

1 it to practice with his hands. "

2 In 1913 he moved to Africa and stayed there for the
3 rest of his life.

4 He was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1956 and
5 died in 1965 at the age of 90.

6 Who is he?

7 Dr. Albert Schweitzer.

8 The next one, this is a woman, she was born the
9 youngest of three children in 1910.

10 She joined a youth group and by the age of 17 she
11 knew that she wanted her life to be God guided.

12 She became a high school geography teacher and was
13 promoted to high school principal in 1944.

14 In 1948 she started an unofficial school for young
15 children in the slums and she combined teaching and medical
16 care to nurse them toward health.

17 In 1950 she rented a house with her own money so
18 that people who were dying in the streets could be
19 transported there with dignity.

20 She received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979.

21 Who is she?

22 Mother Theresa.

23 Now, when I read those tidbits of information, it
24 strikes me that these people aren't extraordinary.

25 They are not born of parents that are an elite

1 class of society.

2 They are just born of regular parents, a Lutheran
3 pastor, a mother of three children, they went to school,
4 they played the piano, they did music, like a lot of us do,
5 and they wanted to help people, and one did it as a doctor
6 and one did it as a nurse.

7 They are really not extraordinary people, but what
8 sets these two people apart is that they wanted to put their
9 faith into action.

10 That's what I like about Dr. Schweitzer's quote.
11 He didn't want to merely talk about the religion of love,
12 but put it to practice with his hands.

13 And Mother Theresa, she wanted to be right in the
14 streets, and she helped people that were struggling with
15 AIDS before the disease was even called AIDS.

16 So they are not extraordinary people, but they did
17 extraordinary things.

18 They did extraordinarily good things in our world,
19 and they will be known throughout all history.

20 Dr. Schweitzer will be taught in schools, what he
21 did, his compassion for the people in Africa, his good deeds
22 there.

23 Mother Theresa, she will be known the world over
24 and forever.

25 The question is, will the 21st Century, or the 22nd

1 Century, produce a Christ-follower that desires to do good
2 deeds of compassion and service?

3 Will this century, and the next century, will they
4 produce a follower like that?

5 We don't really know that, but according to the
6 scriptures there ought to be a few of us that by what we do
7 and by what we say we inspire others to compassion and deeds
8 of love and service.

9 A couple of weeks ago thirty-seven 7th graders were
10 introduced to a young woman.

11 Her name is Allison and she came to our 7th grade
12 baptism and communion class in the youth garage on the west
13 side.

14 She came with her mom. She's a remarkable young
15 woman.

16 She is in 8th grade and she was born with some
17 serious medical challenges.

18 She has had brain surgery. She has had several leg
19 surgeries, and she's given over to epileptic seizures.

20 She doesn't know when they are going to come on,
21 and neither does her family.

22 And she spoke to those 7th graders. She's their
23 peer. She's only in 8th grade.

24 You could have heard a pin drop in that class as
25 she said to the 7th graders, "I'm like you. I'm a lot like

1 you. I like computer games. I like to go over to my
2 friends' houses and sleep overnight and talk way late into
3 the night. I'm a lot like you. I'm not normal like you, I
4 really would like to be normal like you, but I'm not, but I
5 am really a lot like you. So don't let the first question
6 you ask me be, what is wrong with your arm? Or why do you
7 walk like that?"

8 When she said that, there was absolutely no
9 movement in that 7th grade classroom.

10 "Don't let your first question be to me, what is
11 wrong with your arm?"

12 She said, "Ask me what I like. Ask me over to your
13 house to play computer games with you. Get to know me.
14 Don't let the first question be, why do you walk like that?"

15 I believe in this century and on that night she
16 inspired every single 7th grader in that classroom to
17 compassion, to acts of service and good deeds.

18 What we were trying to do that night was to teach
19 the 7th graders that when they are baptized it's supposed to
20 make a difference in their everyday living.

21 It was Mrs. Baumert that invited our guest and I
22 couldn't have thought of a better person to teach us that we
23 are to live out our faith, to put it into action.

24 It was amazing. That's what the scriptures teach
25 us.

1 It teaches that our faith is supposed to be in
2 action, it's supposed to inspire others to deeds of
3 compassion and to good works.

4 That's what the book of Titus is all about. So I
5 think we are going to look at that today, because all over
6 the book of Titus there are verses about what our faith is
7 supposed to look like.

8 So, if you wouldn't mind, turn to that with me and
9 we are going to look at some verses, and we are going to
10 look at the whole book, since it's so short, and I don't
11 think we have ever done that here before.

12 Titus, first we are going to look at the first
13 chapter and learn a little bit more about what this letter
14 is about.

15 It's written by Paul, and we know that because in
16 Chapter One, Verse 1, it says, "Paul, a servant of God and
17 an apostle of Jesus Christ."

18 So he's writing it. He's writing it to, "To Titus,
19 my loyal child in the faith we share."

20 That's a huge compliment. What he's saying is,
21 Titus has done well, he's quite the disciple, he's learned
22 from me, and now I want to remind him of some of the things
23 that I taught him so that he can continue the work of
24 leading the church on the island of Crete.

25 And that was quite a job, because there were five

1 different ethnic groups present on the island of Crete in
2 the Christian church on the island, so they had their
3 struggles that way.

4 And Titus was a non-Jew and he was the first
5 Gentile convert actually.

6 So for Paul to say to him "my loyal child in the
7 faith we share" is huge.

8 In other words, he's saying you've learned well
9 from me, and now do what I have taught you to do, and I want
10 to give you a few more things to do.

11 Here is where we learn that he is on the island of
12 Crete. Verse 5.

13 "I left you behind in Crete for this reason, so
14 that you should put in order what remained to be done."

15 And a special theme in the book of Titus is the
16 role of God's grace in promoting God's people to do good
17 works, and we really get to the heart of that at the end of
18 Chapter 2 and the beginning of Chapter 3.

19 Look with me at the end of Chapter 2, Verse 11.
20 Here is the theme in a nutshell.

21 "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing
22 salvation to all."

23 It came unannounced, really. It came foretold, but
24 it was certainly a surprise in the baby in the manger, so
25 that is what he means.

1 The grace of God appeared suddenly on this earth,
2 "bringing salvation."

3 Remember, that's what the angel is saying, for to
4 you this day in the City of David, I tell you, there's going
5 to be a savior.

6 So, that's what that is referring to, bringing
7 salvation to all.

8 Verse 12, "training us to renounce impiety and
9 worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that
10 are self-controlled, upright, and Godly," Verse 13, "while
11 we wait."

12 We are waiting for the perfection of this world,
13 and the promise, according to scripture, is that we will be
14 with Jesus forever.

15 For those who believe, we'll be with Jesus forever,
16 and that's going to be awesome, it's like that song, "I Can
17 Only Imagine".

18 We can't really imagine what that is going to be
19 like, but while we wait for that we're supposed to be doing
20 these things, according to Paul, and this is his
21 encouragement to Pastor Titus.

22 Verse 14, "He it is," referring to God and Savior
23 Jesus Christ, right before that, "He it is who gave himself
24 for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify
25 for himself a people of his own who are zealous for good

1 deeds."

2 We rarely read these verses in the Bible about
3 doing good deeds, because we are afraid about that, we think
4 that we have to be careful around those, because we don't
5 want anybody to think that we're saved by doing those
6 things, and we're not.

7 We are going to look at a verse about that in a few
8 minutes.

9 But right there it says that we were redeemed,
10 which means we were bought with a price.

11 When you redeem a coupon at the store or at a
12 restaurant you got something that someone gave you as a
13 gift.

14 Mark and I just redeemed one of our Christmas
15 gifts.

16 Thank you, by the way, to all of you who gave us
17 Christmas gifts. Thank you so much.

18 We just redeemed one of those coupons at the
19 restaurant Jams. We cashed that in for a gift.

20 And that's what our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ
21 does. It says he redeemed us.

22 He gave himself so that we could have the gift of
23 being saved, of being free to do good works.

24 That's what it says right there in Verse 14, and
25 how about that Verse 14?

1 "Purify for himself a people of his own who are
2 zealous."

3 You know what zeal is, don't you? It's passion.
4 It's the desire to do good things, "who are zealous for good
5 deeds," and we have been freed by Christ Jesus to be like
6 that. That's what he's saying.

7 Now, on to Chapter 3. Remind the people to be
8 ready for every good work.

9 That makes me think that we are supposed to be
10 doing good works, not like in here, but like out there,
11 wherever we are.

12 So, when we are on the road, or in the office, or
13 in the home, we are supposed to be ready for every good
14 work.

15 And then he gives a couple of lists, which I think
16 are helpful, and maybe if you have a prayer chair, or prayer
17 space at home, maybe take this section of scripture this
18 week to your prayer chair and ask the Lord to give you some
19 help with this.

20 Speaking evil about no one; avoid quarreling; be
21 gentle; show every courtesy to everyone.

22 That's one thing about that 7th grade class. It's
23 such an honor to teach them.

24 They are a very, very special group of young
25 disciples.

1 When I speak, they listen. They don't interrupt
2 me.

3 When one of their classmates speaks in the class,
4 they listen.

5 When Allison was talking that night, you couldn't
6 hear anything.

7 Showing every courtesy to everyone. That's one of
8 the good works that we're supposed to be inspired to do.

9 And then he goes on in Verse 3 to say, because we
10 have not always been freed from this.

11 And then Verse 4, "But when the goodness and loving
12 kindness," what Paul is doing here, he doesn't want the
13 Christians on the island of Crete to think that, now wait a
14 second, just because you do these things, or attempt to do
15 these things, it doesn't mean that you are saved by those
16 things.

17 So he writes, "But when the goodness and loving
18 kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not
19 because of any works of righteousness we have done, but
20 according to his mercy through the water," et cetera.
21 That's a beautiful verse there.

22 Look at 8. "I desire that you insist on these
23 things, so that those who have come to believe in God may be
24 careful to devote themselves to good works."

25 Can you believe how many verses there are in here

1 about doing good works?

2 I think sometimes we don't do them because we are
3 afraid that if we do them, someone will think we're trying
4 to get saved by them.

5 We can't get saved by them anyway, but there are a
6 lot of verses.

7 Another list there, things to avoid, great idea,
8 and then I like down there in Verse 14.

9 "And let people learn." We're lifelong learners.
10 That's what it means to be a disciple.

11 "Let people learn to devote themselves to good
12 works in order to meet urgent needs, so that they may not be
13 unproductive."

14 We can take this all the way back to Genesis,
15 Chapter 1 and 2, when we were created God said it's good.

16 You're good. I love you, and what I created is
17 good, the sun is good, the moon is, I like those alligators,
18 I like everything. I think these spiders are even good, and
19 he called everything good, including us. That's how much he
20 loves us.

21 In Titus Paul wants the people there to understand
22 that the gospel of grace, the good news about God's favor on
23 each of us is what helps us to do those good works.

24 We don't do them because we are saved by them; we
25 do them because we get it that we are loved.

1 Our son Adrian, when he was like in 2nd, 3rd, and
2 4th grade, right up through junior high, some of you
3 probably remember this, he has beautiful red hair, and he's
4 not here so I can talk about him like this, he would get a
5 buzz cut.

6 And when he first got that cut it was just awesome
7 and he would go to school and he would come home and he
8 would have a certain look on his face and I would go, "How
9 was your day at school?"

10 He goes, "They did it again, mom."

11 See, because what they did is they touched his fur,
12 because for the kids it was just irresistible, when he would
13 get that cut, it was just like orange velvet.

14 I couldn't resist it, and the kids at school
15 couldn't resist it.

16 That's grace. That's how much God loves each and
17 every one. We are irresistible to him.

18 And when we get that, when we begin to understand
19 that we are irresistible, then he favors us.

20 Wear your stickers proudly today, students, you are
21 teacher's pet, each and every one of you, that's great.

22 You are his favorite and knowing that is to promote
23 the good works.

24 That's why he says, "Let people learn to devote
25 themselves to good works in order to meet urgent needs, so

1 that they may not be unproductive," because I created them
2 good and I created them, remember in Genesis, I created them
3 to be fruitful and multiply, and that didn't mean just have
4 large families; that meant be productive. That's a good
5 call today.

6 So why should we live beyond ourselves and why
7 should we go out of our way, step outside of the box, step
8 away from what the crowd does? Why should we do that?

9 According to Ephesians 2, Verses 8, 9, and 10,
10 which we don't often read, it's page 184.

11 "For by grace you have been saved through faith,
12 and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not
13 the result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are
14 what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good
15 works."

16 We were created for good works, according to the
17 scripture, "which God prepared beforehand to be our way of
18 life."

19 So it's not just for little tasks in the church.
20 Thank you for signing up for different things, like watering
21 the plants, thank you, but it isn't just for tasks in the
22 church; it's to be our way of life, disciples of God, in
23 everything we do, in our workplaces, and in our play spaces,
24 and in everything.

25 Sometimes we think we are just supposed to be nice

1 here. I overheard a lot of people saying good morning, good
2 morning, good morning, to each other this morning, smiling
3 at each other.

4 Try that at Target, or Kohl's. It's a little
5 harder to do there, isn't it?

6 Good morning. Good morning. Hello. Good
7 afternoon.

8 Try that at Kohl's the next time you're there.
9 They will think you're crazy.

10 You'll look nuts, but, see, in here we get so used
11 to how we look in here we forgot that this is just the
12 practice field for when we actually get out there.

13 And it's a challenge, it's a lot harder than we
14 realize sometimes, and I think that's why we get into a
15 paralysis, and we just don't even do things like that.

16 We don't say good morning, except for when we are
17 here, and that's supposed to be our way of life.

18 I received an email recently from the leader of a
19 cell group that said the purpose of this email is to invite
20 you to our meeting to help out with our study of
21 justification through works versus justification through
22 faith apart from works.

23 I checked my calendar in hopes that I would be out
24 of the country.

25 (Laughter)

1 I'm kidding. I see some of you out there, and I
2 was glad to be invited, but I have to tell you, I began to
3 prepare, and I went in there that night and I told them, I
4 said, "I feel like I'm preparing for my doctoral
5 dissertation interview, or some class in seminary. I'm
6 sweating."

7 I told the group, "My palms are sweaty and I
8 couldn't find my Book of Concord."

9 For those of you who have been around the Lutheran
10 church a long time, I wanted to carry that big book in,
11 because it has all the answers to everything.

12 It has the Large Catechism. It has the Small
13 Catechism. It has the Ausberg Confession. It has the
14 Apostle's Creed and all the meanings. I couldn't find it,
15 so I was totally without armor.

16 It was an older cell group and they were wrestling
17 with a great question. I was really honored. I thought
18 that was so awesome.

19 But I walked back there and I told them, I'm
20 sweating, I don't have any answers, but here is the great
21 thing.

22 I arrived late and by the time I got there they had
23 it all figured out.

24 That's what it means to be a disciple, is to talk
25 amongst yourselves.

1 What do you think this means? I think it means
2 this. Well, this scripture says this.

3 That's what they had done, and so I asked them, I
4 wrote the leader an email this past week and I said would
5 you please summarize what your group learned and so he wrote
6 me.

7 He said, "Here is what we discovered, Pastor Wenda.
8 You cannot earn your way to salvation through works.
9 Salvation is a gift given to us through grace, because Jesus
10 gave the ultimate sacrifice for forgiveness of our sins by
11 his death on the cross."

12 That's just exactly what Titus said, isn't it?

13 "So, once given the gift of salvation, God expects
14 us to grow in our faith and become closer to having a
15 oneness with him. As we become closer to God, we find
16 ourselves doing more of what he wants us to do, which
17 includes doing his work here on earth. If there are no
18 works, then faith must not be there, because with faith
19 there would be works. Because, as James said, faith without
20 work is dead."

21 All these people are going to be preaching soon up
22 here. That is fantastic. They discovered what the Bible
23 teaches, which is faith without works is dead.

24 And if you have faith, and you say you are a
25 follower, then you ought to be inspiring others to

1 compassion and good deeds, like Allison, like Albert, like
2 Theresa.

3 They are just ordinary people with particular
4 challenges.

5 Mother Theresa contracted tuberculosis, it nearly
6 killed her, before she bought the house and opened it to the
7 streets so people could die in dignity.

8 They all had their challenges. Dr. Schweitzer had
9 malaria several times. That's not a fun thing to have.

10 So they were just ordinary people inspired to do
11 good deeds of service and compassion, like you and like me.

12 Now, having said that, it's simple to say, but it's
13 not that easy.

14 I have been meeting with a group of 20 to 35 year
15 olds since the beginning of January.

16 Some of them have children, and some of them are
17 single moms, single parents, some of them are married
18 without children, some of them are not married at all.

19 And the way they talk to one another is just
20 awesome, and it's such a privilege for me to be able to be
21 with them.

22 If you are a 20 to 35 year old, or in that age
23 range and you want to be part of a community that is
24 emerging out of Bethany, just let me know, just talk to me
25 about that, because what we are doing is, we are meeting in

1 a home, like the first Christian church.

2 And we are eating. We eat all the time. We eat
3 every two weeks. Everybody just brings something.

4 And the kids get stuff all over them. I'm an
5 empty-nester, but it's really fun for me, because we are
6 just doing life together deeply.

7 They don't get baby-sitters for the kids, and they
8 have taught me what a good scream is and what a bad scream
9 is, because I had forgotten.

10 "Is everything okay?"

11 "Yes, that's a good scream, Wenda."

12 And we eat together and what we are talking about
13 is discipleship.

14 We are talking about the triangle. We are
15 beginning this new community according to the triangle.

16 Worshipping together. Our relationship to God us
17 important.

18 Spending time at the table with each other is
19 important.

20 And then out to the world is important.

21 And I had been talking to God before this last
22 meeting saying I'm just thinking we should go out. We have
23 been in, and Christians are really good at in, we don't
24 really like to go out.

25 So I said, "Should we go out?" I talked to the

1 lord about it.

2 He said, "Yes, why don't you go out this week."

3 "Okay. What should we do?"

4 "Well, what do you think?"

5 I said, "How about if we go door-to-door and tell
6 people we would like to pray for them."

7 He goes, "Ask Mark what he thinks about that idea."

8 So I asked Mark. Mark said that's a bad idea, and
9 he was right about that, I really didn't like the idea
10 anyway, because I just didn't want to -- I don't know -- I
11 didn't want to be Christians going door-to-door like that.
12 I wanted it to be a deep thing.

13 So I said, "Okay, so that is not a good idea. So
14 what should we do?"

15 "You know a lot of people in suburbia are busy,
16 they are really busy, they lead very hectic lifestyles, you
17 know that, because you have been here at Bethany for a few
18 years and you know that.

19 "So why don't you just go around the neighborhood
20 and see if anybody has any Christmas lights that are still
21 up, it's almost Valentine's Day, and see if they would allow
22 you to take them down and help them out.

23 I go, "You have got to be kidding?"

24 He said, "No. Wouldn't you like that? You're
25 busy."

1 "I guess I would. Okay."

2 So I get in the car, I'm going over to the house
3 for lunch, and I thought to myself, I'm going to drive
4 around the neighborhood first, because I'm not going to go
5 in there with this hair-brained idea, I have to check it
6 out, Lord, so come with me.

7 So I'm driving around the neighborhood. There
8 aren't any Christmas lights on any houses.

9 I'm thinking, what are you talking about? See, I
10 knew this was a crazy idea. I said it right out loud in my
11 car.

12 I turned the last corner and there was a house
13 right before me with all kinds of Christmas lights on it.

14 I go, oh, now I am going to have to go back to the
15 house, and so I go to lunch, I'm kind of nervous again, and
16 I say to the group, "You guys, I have been talking to God
17 about going out. We want to do it, remember, we are going
18 to do the basic community, based on up, in, and out,
19 serving, loving each other, eating, and worshipping."

20 They go, "Yes. We are doing great, aren't we?"

21 "Yes, we are. The Lord said that we should go out
22 today."

23 "Really. What are we going to do, Wenda?"

24 I said, "Well, he told me that there are some
25 Christmas lights in your neighborhood that maybe people

1 would want to take down."

2 They just looked at me like I didn't say anything.

3 "Pass the pizza. I'll have a few more grapes."

4 (Laughter)

5 And then they started to talk amongst themselves
6 about tithing, about their excitement about LifeShapes,
7 about things that they are doing in their life.

8 They were talking and talking and I said, "Okay. I
9 see what's going on here. You guys are talking thinking I
10 won't notice, that you are talking so much and fellowship is
11 so great so we won't go out."

12 And they all just kind of laughed and we got up,
13 put our coats on, it was cold, and we went out, because
14 that's what he tells us to do, go out into the world, and
15 this is our world.

16 So we go out there. We go up to that first house,
17 that house that had the Christmas lights, the family was
18 just getting back, the door rises in the garage and I think
19 thank you, Lord, they just got home, we are ready.

20 I think it was Tim that went up to them and said,
21 "We want to take your lights down, if you don't mind. We
22 would like to do something nice. We want to serve."

23 "No. That's okay."

24 I'm thinking, no, wait a second, you said we were
25 going to go there and take those lights down, or you said to

1 at least ask.

2 They shut the door and so we went on to the next
3 house.

4 This time it was another disciple and they knocked
5 on the door and we said, "We're just out in the neighborhood
6 today, we would like to serve, we would just like to take
7 your lights down."

8 "No, thank you, and you woke up my daughter."

9 (Laughter)

10 We are not doing very well, and I could see that
11 the air was kind of coming out of the sails a bit.

12 So then we went to the next house and the father
13 comes out and they had this really dried wreath, but they
14 still wanted it up. It looked bad. I thought this is a
15 sure thing.

16 "No, we want that up. We do."

17 Finally all the disciples are going, "Can we do
18 something for you," and they are standing there, and they're
19 happy, they are shining the light of Christ.

20 "We will shovel your driveway," even though there
21 was like three particles of snow on it.

22 So the kid comes out and the kid is really excited
23 and he said, "I'll get you the shovel."

24 So he goes into the garage, because he probably
25 didn't want to do it, and he comes out and we had it done in

1 short order.

2 And it was so fun to see the look on the kid's
3 face, and it's our first time going out, but we learned a
4 lot from that.

5 We are going to talk about it the next time we get
6 together, too, because it's harder than we think.

7 And this world is not used to religious people
8 wanting to help.

9 Remember the Good Samaritan? He's walking along
10 the side of the road and he sees this person that has been
11 mugged and beaten and left for dead.

12 Two religious people pass by. It has always been
13 that way.

14 This world does not expect religious people to put
15 their faith into action, to love and serve in the simplest
16 way, and it was a foreign person, it wasn't a religious
17 person that helped that victim.

18 That's what we are up against. Jesus says when you
19 go out now, don't take much with you, and go two-by-two.

20 That's one of the mistakes we made, disciples,
21 Scott, Tim, we have to go two-by-two, we have to be right
22 there together.

23 And Jesus said when you go, if they receive you,
24 let the peace rest on them.

25 If they don't receive you, then shake the dust of

1 your feet and let the peace come back to you.

2 What we need to do is we need to take an Easter
3 basket to that father whose children we woke up.

4 That's what we need to do next, because we don't
5 want to be like religious nut cases out there; we want to
6 really mean what we say.

7 So, pray for us as we go out, and I'm hoping that
8 that has inspired you to just go out, because that's what he
9 simply asks us to do.

10 We were created for good works. We are not saved
11 by them, but we were created to shovel walks, to help
12 someone with their groceries, to take that cart that is
13 almost going to bump into your nice car and put it into that
14 cart stand, to say good morning, good afternoon, at Kohl's.

15 To say how are you today, have you had a good week,
16 to the person serving you at Target.

17 It's easy to do it in here, but we were created for
18 good works.

19 We began this series with a look at Jesus's
20 teaching in the upper room on the last day. Remember?

21 Remember how he picked up the towel and knelt down
22 and he washed their feet, and then they weren't very
23 receptive to it.

24 No. No, Lord, and people out there are going to
25 say that, too. No.

1 That guy that we shoveled the walk for, "I'm
2 able-bodied."

3 "That's okay. We want to do something good."

4 The world is not ready for us to, because we have
5 never done well with that, but Jesus taught us how.

6 He taught us to kneel down, pick up the towel, and
7 to wipe up the dirt that's in this world.

8 So that this world knows that there is light and
9 there's love.

10 So we end the series the same way we began. Are
11 you going to be a towel bearer?

12 Are you going to get out of the bleachers, pick up
13 the towel, and serve?

14 Let's pray about that.

15 Jesus, thank you so much for Allison. Thank you
16 for the young emerging community that meets and is going
17 out, picking up the towel.

18 You told us that not everybody was going to receive
19 us. You didn't tell us to go to people who will receive us,
20 or who like us.

21 In fact, you taught us that what good is it to do
22 that to people you love.

23 So thank you for your teaching today and the
24 challenge and, Lord, inspire us today through the power of
25 your Spirit.

1 You told us that you would give us the power to do
2 it, to serve.

3 We are ordinary people like Theresa, and Albert,
4 and Allison, so would you use us in a mighty way.

5 We do love you, and we do want to make a difference
6 in this world.

7 Thank you, Lord, for teaching us today. In your
8 Name.

9 Amen.

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