

Jesus Cares

August 18, 2024

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled Jesus Cares. Thank you to Earl, Amy, Paul and Heather for being involved in the service. Happy birthday this week to Ruth and happy anniversary to Lynn and Dave and to Kathy and Earl.

Welcome, Announcements, Prayer

Good morning everybody. Welcome. Of course, a holiday weekend. So many people, no doubt, are traveling from our congregation. But we're happy that you are here.

I'd like to begin with a few announcements this morning. Happy birthday this week. Sherry and Helen. Happy birthday. And Stacey has found an apartment. She is in need of some kitchen items, bed linens, and more. Adam knows exactly what she needs and you can speak with him. Job opportunity at Great Lakes. Hiring female dormitory parents. You can call the school if you have interest in that. Wednesday Bible study will begin on August 7th, 7:30 p.m. the Psalms of Jesus.

Alright, in addition to those announcements, perhaps some of you might know Madeline Cook. She passed away on Thursday. Madeline, of course, was the mother of Crystal, a longtime member here. And also Phyllis Kirkland, who had been in Vineland Mennonite home for many years. She passed away on Friday. We're happy that we can be here and worship our God. And let's begin with a prayer.

Our Father, we thank you for all the good things that you give us in this life. We recognize that there are challenges. There is sorrow. There's frustration. There's stress. But we know, Father, that you are an all-loving God. And that you know that we have these difficulties while living here on earth. We pray that you will help us to pass these forward to you. And we ask that you would be the great comforter of all those who have lost loved ones recently. And we pray that you will help us to be your hands and your feet as we minister to others. Help us to be attentive of other people's needs.

Whether they be financial, or whether they be emotional, or whether they be physical, or whether they be spiritual. Help us to be your messengers to them of your goodness, your light, your hope, and your love. We pray that you will help us this morning as we meet as your people. Help us to focus on what Jesus has done for us.

We pray that you will help us as we meet around the table to think about that. We pray that you will be with Paul as he speaks to us. Help us to find application for the things he speaks to us today about in our daily life. And we pray that you will be a blessing to him as he speaks to us. We pray all of this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Communion

Good morning. Paul is talking today about, I hope I don't have too many spoilers of what Paul's talking about today. Paul is talking today about how the story of the Bible is a great big story, but it's also a personalized story. And looking at several personal accounts throughout the Bible where Jesus interacted with people at a personal level. I think sometimes we see the huge story, and we

maybe forget to look at the details. Or we're so focused on the details that we miss the big story. God works like this in our stories. He works like this through the Bible. He also works like this through nature.

Often if we are standing in awe of God's creation, where are you standing? You're looking at the night sky and looking at all the stars and how big and magnificent it is. Or you've pulled off at one of the many lookout points and you're looking out at the oceans and the mountain and you say, "Wow, God is so big." I have been a chemistry teacher for nearly 20 years, and I find that I am often standing in awe of the details as well as the big picture. So I've got a couple object lessons for you just to get a sense of the details and the magnitude. We stand at the brink of how big he is, but we forget to stand at the brink of how small he is as well.

So I have a pencil, and I've drawn a line on my page. I don't know if you can see this line. Front row says yes, second row says no. So not a very thick line. This line is approximately three million atoms thick, three million atoms of carbon wide, and then I don't know how long it is because I didn't measure, but three million atoms wide. That is incredible. But atoms are incredibly small. I've brought a little bit of sugar with me today. I've put sugar in this container. It's a little bit north of two tablespoons worth of sugar, I want it to be sure. It is estimated that I have more atoms in this container than there are stars in the sky.

Let's get our heads around that for a minute. More atoms in this container than there are stars in the sky. So when you stand outside and look at the night sky and you are in awe of God and His creation, do you do that when you are measuring out two tablespoons of sugar? Probably not, but equally mind-bogglingly huge of a number. It's just in a very, very small quantity.

So atoms are ridiculously small, and right now we think that the business part of the atom is the electron, which is even smaller. If one of these atoms was the size of this entire building, an electron is estimated to be about the size of a speck of dust. Electrons are famous for electricity. They power electricity. They also power your heart and your nervous system and your cell membranes, and they gate things, and they power photosynthesis, and they are that incredibly small. God is a god of huge creation, but He's also a god of intricate details, and we miss both sometimes when we're living in this middle space in between, where we're not looking up and we're not looking down. We're just caught up in our own world. We miss that this story is this big, but we also miss that the story is this small.

This story of the cross is a huge story. It is a story of God redeeming the universe. It is a story of God sending His only Son, but it is also an intensely personal story, too. It was an intensely personal story for the people who gathered there. I can't imagine how intensely personal it was for His mother, who He called out to from the cross, but it's also intensely personal today to us individually as well. So I'm going to pray, and then I'm going to give you time to reflect on how big God is, but also how small and personalized God is to you.

Holy God, we thank you for your magnitude. We are in awe of you in both your big and your small acts. We are in awe that you take notice of us and that you are mindful of us, and we cannot comprehend the story you are telling, but we thank you that we are part of that story. God, we thank you for the cross and what it means, and all the things that we don't know that it means yet, but will unfold in our lifetime in infinity as we go on forever. In Jesus' name, amen.

Sermon

Jesus Cares

Good day. So how many avid RPG players do we have here? What? No one's into Zelda? Even saying Zelda, I'm 20 years out of date or 30 years out of date. There's an open world games, so games in which they give you an entire sort of universe to play in. And there's a storyline that you follow, but there's lots of things you can do just everywhere. There's two types of players. There's the people who go and do the things you need to do to win. So go to the village, get the weapon, defeat the bad guy, win. And then there's the people that do all the other stuff along the way. Go and talk to this guy, find his lost shoe, go over here, do fulfill this quest, side quests, do all the little thing, get all the little rewards along the way.

Okay, maybe that's not helpful. What about doing research? Does anyone relate to me on this? You're looking something up on the internet. Somebody's asked a question, you're trying to figure something out, you're on Wikipedia and you're like, how, what is the wingspan of the African swallow? There's a reference for you. And you're on Wikipedia and you're looking at it and there's something over there that you could click on that's a little, like it's not really about that, but it's about something else. It's like, oh, what about the North American swallow? I hadn't thought about that. And then you click on that. And then three minutes later, you're clicked on another thing. And now you're looking up the GDP of Germany. Do you do that?

Okay, well, what about and this is this one's perhaps more particular to me in my new job. I do a lot of figuring out how much something is worth. So someone's been in an accident, someone's had some property damage. And we're trying to figure out how much to pay, how much to offer to settle, that kind of thing. And I have a giant list of documents, you know, invoices, doctor's reports, blah, blah, blah. And I'm supposed to come up with some sort of number. And I'm going through them all. And I'm trying to figure out what is important and what isn't. So there's the big things, right? So if it's an injury, you know, the surgeries or lifelong compensation, blah, blah, blah, if it's a property damage, it's how much is to rebuild, blah, blah, blah. But then there's all these other things in the notes. Well, this was reported lost in the fire. And it's brought up several times. Oh, okay. Well, then I put a bunch of research into figuring out what it is and how much replacement value it's \$25. They paid more for me to look that up than the insurance company would that if they just paid it without any research whatsoever.

But perhaps even more so that you might identify with. Tomorrow morning, Heather and I and Ellis are going on our once a year big long camping trip. So we're driving up past Sudbury for our first camping spot, and then down to Algonquin and then up north of North Bay and then back home where if you plot out those dots on the map, we're making the most inefficient route as possible.

So when--are you the type of traveler that when you start out, you have your destination and you just go you go, you stop for gas, you maybe stop for food, stop for the washroom. That's it. Or you're driving along. Oh, it's a, it's an interesting sign. Let's go check that out. Or you know what? I've never been down that road before. I wonder what's down there. Heather and I have different opinions about this. Can you guess which is which? I am definitely the meander through the countryside. Look at all the stuff. Stop 50 million times. You know, get our third drink along the

way. Heather is we're not there yet. Why aren't we there yet? Let's get there yet. I have an opinion, but Heather's right.

So today we're going to talk about, as Amy talked about, God's attention on us. God's focus on us. Even when things even when the main quest, the main job, the main goal is this, he turns his attention to me. So we're gonna look at scriptures and look several narratives where Jesus does just that there are bigger things going on. There are bigger threats going on. And Jesus takes the time to stop and deal with the person in front of him.

So first, to start off with this, this may be this may be something that we might face a lot in life. In John two, one through 12, we're gonna read a couple, read some narratives, we're not going to look in depth at them. But we're going to look at the attention Jesus plays and the fact that he stops and looks. So you may have be familiar with this.

John two starting at verse one: On the third day, a wedding took place at Cana and Galilee. Jesus mother was there. And Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus mother said to him, they have no more wine. Woman, why do you involve me? Jesus replied, my hour has not yet come. His mother said to the servants, do whatever he tells you. Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing each holding from 20 to 30 gallons. Jesus said to the servants fill the jars of water, so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet. They did so and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it come from, though the servants who had drawn it the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, everyone brings the good the choice wine first, and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much drink. But you've saved the best till now.

In this case, it seems like this is an inconvenience. Jesus is doing his early ministry. They're going to this wedding. There's a problem with the wedding. The caterers haven't brought enough stuff. You know, this is the great nightmare of what wedding planning, right? And Jesus' mother says, help this bridegroom out. And Jesus says, okay, fine. And he changes the water into wine. For whatever reason, it doesn't seem like Jesus wants to be involved in this. It's not convenient. It's not the right time. It's not the right place. But he does it anyway.

In our lives, probably most of the time, that is the sort of area of attention where we can get tripped up in. It's inconvenient. I'm going through my life. I'm doing the things I need to do. I'm going to work. I'm getting supper ready. I'm paying attention to this, or I'm focusing on that. And some opportunity comes up, and it's inconvenient. It's just I have other things that I need to be doing. It's not like they're super important, but I'm just busy with something. I had a professor at Harding who would acknowledge that his own personality was just someone who was zero focused in on doing the next thing. And he had trouble even seeing those opportunities pop up, because he was focused on doing the next thing. And he had to he would say that he had to train himself to stop and say, No, stop, pay attention to this, and then move on to the next thing. But there's more serious consequences.

Mark chapter two, here we have some cultural, theological and political threats to Jesus as he encounters someone. Mark chapter two, starting at verse 13. Once again, Jesus went out beside a lake beside the lake. A large crowd came to him and he began to teach them as he walked along.

He saw Levi son of Althea sitting at the tax collector's booth. Follow me, Jesus told them told him and Levi got up and followed him. While Jesus was having dinner at Levi's house, many tax collectors and sinners were eating with him and his disciples. For there are many who followed him. When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples, why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners? On hearing this Jesus said to them, it is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call on the righteous but the sinners.

In that day and time, Israel is a conquered state by the Romans. The way that they did taxes, they didn't send out income tax every year or pay GST on everything. What they had was tax collectors. So people who would sit at a booth, people would go by and they would tax things you're bringing and going commerce, that kind of thing. And the way that the tax collector would make money is by if they could get a little extra. So their wage came out of, well, the tax is 10%. But if I think I can get 15% out of you, then that's how I make money. So on two fronts, tax collectors are bad. They work for the Romans, the conquerors, and two, they steal your money, which is worse.

There's a toss up. Here Jesus sees a tax collector Levi says follow him, which already is a dangerous thing to do. If you want to be popular in Israel, you don't go be friends or have followers disciples from the tax collectors. Then he goes eats at his house with his friends, the tax collectors, because of who they are, the business they're in who they work for. They, their friend group isn't the good upstanding Jewish folk. Their friend group is the people that are on the margins of society, as the text says the sinners. And Jesus has dinner with these folks and the Pharisees look on and say, Hmm, is this really a good idea? Are we really sure that you should be doing this Rabbi teacher, you should be associating with these people? Culturally, this was the wrong thing to do. Politically, this was the wrong thing to do on the side of the Romans potentially. Theologically, these are sinners. These are not upstanding God fearing Jewish folk. These are people that we don't associate with. And yet Jesus does it anyway.

John four. During a verse one, now Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that he was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John. Although in fact, it was not Jesus who baptized but his disciples. So he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. Now he had gone through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sikar near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there and Jesus tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well, it was about noon. When the Samaritan woman came to draw water, pause there.

Hey, we're in Samaria. Samaria. Israel is weird. Every place is weird. But if you think about it, but Israel is weird in that it's kind of in two bits. There's Judea to the south and Galilee to the north. In between is Samaria. Samaria is sort of the step brother. They're very close, culturally, religiously, in a lot of different ways, but they're not quite the same. And if you have who has siblings, okay, how energetic are your fights with your siblings? The closer you are in relationship, the more energy you have the argument about right? This is how it was with Samaritans and the Jews. They were very close in a lot of ways. And they were also passionately against each other.

So Jesus is already in Samaria. You're not supposed to do that. You're supposed to go around. You're supposed to walk all the way around. He's already in Samaria. So that's already a problem. But now he is at a well and a Samaritan woman comes to draw water. Did anyone catch what time the Samaritan woman came to draw water? Noon. Now, given summer, noon is the hot time. If

you're going to fetch water, you don't go at noon. You go in the morning, you go in the evening when carrying a bunch of water back and forth between the well and your home isn't so strenuous. The woman is going to catch to fetch water at noon because no one else is there.

So we already know something's up. Put that in your mind. The woman said to him, you are a Jew and I'm a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink for Jews to not associate with Samaritans? Jesus answered her if I knew if you knew the gift of God and who it was and who it is who that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would give you living water. Sir, the woman said you have nothing to draw with. And the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob who gave us the well to drink it from, as did his sons and his livestock? Jesus answered, everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again. But whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up in life.

Already early on, we have Jesus asking someone he shouldn't be talking to both because of ethnicity, Samaritan and Jew, also man and woman, and also as we'll hear more details later, probably social issues going on. But even in that conversation of hey, can I have some water? She very quickly brings up the fact that oh, how about a contentious contentious contentious religious debate? You know, I'm going to bring up the fact that this is Jacob's well in Samaria that we have particular value with. Are you going to go against this thing? Mr. Jew person? Already the ratchet is going up in the conversation. The woman said to him, sir, give me this water so that I may won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water. He told her go call your husband and come back. I have no husband. She replied, Jesus said to her, you are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is you have had five husbands and the man you have now is not your husband. What you have said is quite true.

If you go to any soft skills seminar, like how to talk to people, this you're not supposed to do this. This is a whole other. The other stuff was minefields. This is a different minefield entirely that you shouldn't be going into. And yet Jesus does. Woman, sir, I can see you're a prophet. Our ancestors worshiped on this mountain. But you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem. You can kind of see her backing away. Let's get more to a argument that I can win, or at least I think I can win. You know, where we should worship properly. You know, that's a safer topic.

Woman, Jesus replied, Believe me, the time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain or in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know. We worship what we do know for salvation comes from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and is now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth. For they are the kind of worshipers the Father seek God is spirit. His worshipers must worship in spirit and truth. The woman said I know that Messiah called Christ is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us. Then Jesus declared I the one speaking to you and he but notices just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked what do you want or why are you talking with her?

The list of threats here to Jesus is long, ethnic, religious, cultural, political, even although his disciples don't say anything, his own disciples are a little taken aback by what Jesus is doing here. Why are you talking to this person? We shouldn't be talking to this person. And yet Jesus does. He takes the time. He could have said, give me some water. She could have said what she did, either

given him water or not. And that could have been it. But instead, Jesus takes the time. He goes into the minefields. And we'll come back to the rest of that story later.

John eight, Chapter one, no, verse one. Here we have a situation where Jesus is threatened by the influence, the leadership, what we might call influencers.

At dawn, he appeared again in the temple courts where all the people gathered around him and he sat down to teach them the teachers, the law and the Pharisees brought in a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before the group and said to them, teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery in the law. Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say? They were using this question as a trap in order to have the basis for accusing him. But Jesus bent down and started to write on the ground with his voice. And Jesus started to write on the ground with his finger when they kept on questioning him. He straightened up and said, let anyone let anyone of you who is without sin be the first one to throw the stone at her. Then he stepped down. He stooped down and wrote on the ground at this. Those who heard began to go away one at a time. The older ones first until only Jesus was left and the woman still standing there. Jesus straightened up and asked her, woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you? No one, sir. She said. Then neither do I condemn you. Now go leave your life of sin.

In this case, Jesus is the Pharisees confront Jesus. They bring a posse. It's a trap. So they bring a woman caught in adultery or at least they say caught in adultery. Say, well, the law says we should stoner. They know Jesus is compassionate. They know Jesus tends to have unusual answers to the rules. And so they challenge him. What do you do? Do you're going to go against the law? And Jesus gives them a question back that they're unable to answer and it disarms them and they disperse.

One of the things that I found new about this story that I hadn't quite thought about before. Jesus is surrounded by a group of people who are ready to stone someone. Physical violence is on the table. I mean, they're they're intending on killing this woman right then and there. And he is also in that circle. The potential for physical violence to him is not zero. So not only is he going against the religious leaders, political leaders of the day, he's also making a pretty big risk of his own life. If he straight up and said, no, I refuse to enforce the law. What do you think those Pharisees would have done next? I mean, best case scenario, they would have hauled him off to court. But they're sitting there holding stones. I don't know for sure, but I think the threat is there. The fact that he stops, he puts his own neck on the line, whatever percentage of danger is there for this woman who he's never met before, who might have been, certainly might have been guilty of the charge. But he does it anyway.

Our final text that we'll look at this morning, Luke 23, starting at verse 32. And then we'll jump to 39. Two other men, both criminals, were also laid out with him to be executed. So Jesus is on the cross or about to be on the cross.

When they come to the place called the skull, they crucified him there, Jesus, along with the criminals, who were on the cross. One of the criminals who hung their hurled insults at him, aren't you the Messiah, save yourself and us. But the other criminal rebuked him. Don't you fear God, he said, since you are under the same sentence. We are punished justly for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong. Then he said to them, Jesus, remember me

when you come into your kingdom. Jesus answered him, truly, I tell you today you will be with me in paradise.

Why do I bring up this example? I mean, Jesus isn't on his way to anywhere. The bad things already happened. Ultimately, the good thing, but the sequence of events is put in play now. But what I what I get stuck on is Jesus is kind of busy right now. Without going into every detail, every breath he is taking on that cross is a huge amount of effort. Every word he gets out is a monumental amount of effort. He could very easily have just let the criminals be, you know, they can waste their breath. The one guy can raise his breath on this. He doesn't need to engage. He's got bigger things going on, literally physically in his body at the moment. And yet he stops. He takes care with the criminal. He says, you know, you're right. And he assures him in his literal dying moment that he will be in paradise with him. He does the most comforting thing you can possibly do, even at the pain and expense of himself in that moment.

One of the things that I have often struggled with is the difference between knowing a thing is true and feeling a thing is true. Do you understand the difference between a thing? You can know something is true, but sometimes it's hard to feel that it's that it's true.

In a classic example, and I don't bring this up to be controversial, but it's a good way to illustrate it, is in study after study after study in North America, if you ask people straight up right in front of their face, should you be racist?

The vast majority of people say, no, we know that you shouldn't. We know you should treat everybody the same. We know that you should give people the same opportunity, etc. We can argue about what those details are, but most people know that and are willing to admit it and agree with it. But study after study also shows that if you don't ask them straight up, but rather observe or give them scenarios and let their subconscious do the thinking, they often make different choices.

There's a difference between knowing and feeling. And what I would suggest is we can sometimes have that same difference in faith. We can know faith, agree with our faith 100%, but sometimes not necessarily feel the faith. So I was baptized. Oh, I didn't think about the year. Sometime ago, when I was 14 in the 90s, we went up north to my mother and her family, the Hotchkisses lived in Dwight. Anyone know where Dwight is? Near Dorset, north of Halliburton. There is a historic fire tower up there. I have a weird fear of heights. I don't know if anybody has the same thing as me. I can go up as far as you want me to go up if I can't see through the thing I'm walking on. Even if it's rotted out wood, if it's all there, fine, happy. If you can see through it, so you know those stairs that have the metal with the holes in them? You can see through them. Yeah, can't do it. I don't know why it doesn't make sense, but that's just one of my weird things.

We're going up to the top of this fire tower and I get about halfway up and I just stop. I can't do it anymore. And I'm sitting there on one of the landings and I'm just mad at myself because I can't go any further. Why can't I go any further? And I start doing the logic loop in my head. Well, you can't go any further because you're afraid you're going to fall off. But why am I afraid I'm going to fall off? I grew up in the church. I've heard many sermons, some pretty good. And I go, well, I fall off, I'll die. Why is that a problem? Well, because I know I'm not saved.

Well, Paul, you could solve this problem if you wanted to. Do you really want to? And that was the point where I said, yeah, I kind of want to. So we went home and did it. It became real to me. I felt the I knew all the details before that, but I didn't feel it until then.

What might we what might happen in our lives when we receive the type of attention that God can offer to us that same type of attention that Jesus offered to all those people? One bit is the last part of John four, the Samaritan woman, John four 28, turn it 20, then leaving her water jar. This is directly after she's talked to Jesus. The woman went back to the town and said to the people, come see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Messiah? They came out of the town and made their ways toward him. Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony. He told me everything I ever did. So the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with him. He stayed two days, and because of his words, many more became believers.

Lest we forget who is the Samaritan woman? Even if he was the Samaritan woman, the Samaritan woman would never know that the people that were saved. Amongst her own people, she probably wasn't that popular. She was going for water at noontime when nobody else was there. She had a checkered history, and she is the one who goes and basically converts her town. She introduces Jesus to her town, gets them to come, Jesus talks to them.

There is a chance if we accept this love of God, this individual personal love of God, that we will engage in ministry. Also, in Luke 2, in Levi, we have the ministry. Levi joins Jesus, becomes one of the twelve, is very involved in his ministry, but also he finds redemption. In Luke 8, the woman who was caught in adultery finds redemption, and of course, the criminal on the cross finds redemption. There are two predictable applications here, ministry and redemption, but there's also perhaps a more fundamental, more unpredictable application. The idea that God truly, specially, specifically cares about you and me, and it can lead to places that are hard to predict. The motivator that God positively finds attention to us can be very powerful.

In our text, Levi leaves his profession, leaves the tax collector business, and becomes one of the twelve. The Samaritan woman goes from intentionally going to the well alone to talking to an entire town. What in your and my life could use that positive, godly attention? That sort of power, energy, comfort, and love. As you may know, I've been on a journey learning the feel of the love of God. I've known the love of God, but struggled to feel it. This perhaps is an area where the motivator most applies to me, but there is an unsurprising pattern in scripture about ministry. What God wants to do through us, he first wants to do in us. Ministry evangelism service, outward expressions of love of Christ, is the same energy and direction and motivation as those things applied to my personal faith. Acceptance of the positive, individual attention of God in my life means that it will eventually, in some way, reflect on those around me.

For those of you who are sciency, we're like some sort of 3D shape with mirrors on the inside, with a hole on one side. It could be a sphere or some other shape. Light comes into that hole, bounces all inside, and then eventually, as things move and change, it'll eventually bounce out through the hole. Just like our lives accepts the light of God, it'll reflect in us over and over again, and as we shape change, it eventually bounces out towards someone else. May we individually accept this attention of God and see in general, and in general, see redemption in ministry, but also perhaps unpredictable specific results in our lives.

God offers this attention to you and to me today. He offers to those around you and me today, and through you to those people around us today as well. What would it look like to accept that attention in our individual lives, to our personal faiths this week or even today? What would it look like to express that attention of God to those around us this week or even today, as we leave today?

Closing

I taught economics for many years, and there's macro and microeconomics. So you have to see the big picture, and you have to act specifically. And so the same thoughts were brought to our attention this morning by Amy around the table. God is the big God, the God of the universe, and He's the God of the atom. And Paul reminded us that, yes, God is a macro God. There's the big picture, but He cares about individuals, and He stops and takes time to give each individual what they need in their situation. And He did it then to that Samaritan woman, and He does it today with us, and He asks us to be His hands, His feet, His servant, as we help others to feel His love, His kindness, His goodness in their life.

So we have a responsibility to act as Jesus would act with the people we come in contact with this week to make it personal that, yes, we have received God's love, His goodness, His kindness, but yet we can extend it to others that we come in contact with this week in some small way. But we never know how big a difference that might make in their situation. So let's internalize the messages of the morning as we go forth. Let's pray.

Our Father, we would help us this week to be Your servants, to be Your people in the various situations we find ourselves this week. Help us to be attentive to details in the lives of others so that we might be helpful. We thank You, God, that You care about each person, and we pray that You will help us to reflect that love to others this week. In Jesus' name, amen.

Have a good week.

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