



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of Dan Duncan

John 7: 1-13

Summer 2002

"In His Hand"

TRANSCRIPT

Well, we are in John chapter 7 this morning after spending a number of weeks in John chapter 6, which is basically one day in the Lord's life—from a day and a half or two days. He did two miracles in chapter 6, the fourth and the fifth miracles of this book. He fed a multitude which increased His popularity so much they wanted to make Him king. He defused the crowd; He sent His disciples away; then, during a storm, He walked on the water to them, calmed everything, and brought them safely to shore.

They were in Capernaum the next day when the crowd found Him, and He spoke to them, taught them, and said many 'hard things'. He spoke, really, of sovereign grace and spoke of the need to take Him in, to be saved through Him. And it disaffected so many in that crowd they all left, all of His 'disciples' stopped following Him there, (really they were more like 'fellow travelers' than real disciples.) And He's left with the twelve, and He concludes by saying, "...and one of you is a devil." (70b).

So now we come to chapter 7 and we learn that not even His brothers were believing in Him. We read,

7 After these things Jesus was walking in Galilee, for He was unwilling to walk in Judea because the Jews were seeking to kill Him. ² Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths, was near. ³ Therefore His brothers said to Him, "Leave here and go into Judea,

so that Your disciples also may see Your works which You are doing. ⁴ For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be *known* publicly. If You do these things, show Yourself to the world.” ⁵ For not even His brothers were believing in Him. ⁶ So Jesus said to them, “My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune. ⁷ The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil. ⁸ Go up to the feast yourselves; I do not go up to this feast because My time has not yet fully come.” ⁹ Having said these things to them, He stayed in Galilee.

¹⁰ But when His brothers had gone up to the feast, then He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret. ¹¹ So the Jews were seeking Him at the feast and were saying, “Where is He?” ¹² There was much grumbling among the crowds concerning Him; some were saying, “He is a good man”; others were saying, “No, on the contrary, He leads the people astray.” ¹³ Yet no one was speaking openly of Him for fear of the Jews.

John 7: 1-13

May the LORD bless this reading of His Word and bless our time in studying it together.

(Message) Well, that was wonderful. It's a great thing to hear children sing about the salvation that Christ obtained for us at the cross. And really, we want to understand the Bible, we want to understand the faith that we are a part of by God's grace as we understand the cross. Everything was moving toward that and everything has moved from that—it's the central event of history: That's where salvation was accomplished.

And that's why we celebrate it every Sunday with the Lord's Supper; with a small cup of wine and a small piece of matzoh that speaks of the body and the blood of Christ. We've been asked to do that, to remember that, and we do it weekly because it's so important to remember it. And it's great to hear children sing of God's love that was poured out on us through the cross and the death of Christ.

And I also want to thank all the helpers that were involved in Vacation Bible School this week: They did a great job. The children enjoyed it, they learned a lot, and we are grateful for that.

Well, we have all heard proverbial sayings like, 'Time flies'. And the older we get the more we understand how true that is; time passes quickly. But time itself, what it is, is something of a mystery. Augustin gave thought to that, (he gave thought to so many things), and he famously wrote about it in his *Confessions*. "What then is time?" he asked. "If no one asks me, I know. If I want to explain to someone who does ask me, I do not know."

Well, whether we can explain it or not, what we all know is, 'Time is real'. We exist in it, and as another proverb puts it, 'Time waits for no man'. So we may feel we are at its mercy, like a tiny twig on a great river. Time is unstoppable, and it is, it seems, against us, like our enemy.

But it's not. Time is really a great blessing for the believer. David knew that. He also wrote of time in Psalm 31, verse 15. He acknowledged to the LORD, "My *times* are in Your hand..." It's a way of saying that, 'All the events and experiences of life are under God's control.' And when we understand that God has us personally 'in His hand', that all our moments, our *times*, our experiences are in His hand, then will we be inclined to follow His will. He has a path for our lives.

The challenge is staying on the path. There are always temptations to get off. There are people or influences that try to change our *times* and draw us in different directions; and always draw us away from the blessing that God has for us. So we have to stay vigilant and faithful to God's leading.

The Lord Jesus did that always, and perfectly. He too, spoke of *time*. In John chapter 7, He talked to His disciples about their *time* and His *time*—the path of their lives and the path of His life. The *times* of His life had trials and trouble. He was rejected by the people of Galilee and when chapter 7 begins He had learned that the leaders of Jerusalem were seeking His life. Even His own brothers didn't believe in Him. The

chapter begins with uncertainty and danger. But His times were in His Father's hand and everything was on the right path—though a difficult path.

Some six months had passed since the events of chapter 6. Those occurred in April at the time of the Passover. Chapter 7 happened in the fall, around October. John passed over the intervening months in silence. He simply wrote that “Jesus was walking in Galilee.” (vs1). The idea is literally something like, ‘Walking around in Galilee, not aimlessly but still ministering there.’

But He was also being cautious. Ever since He healed the lame man by the Pool of Bethesda on the Sabbath, opposition against Him from the Jewish authorities had only intensified. He had not only ‘broken’ their Sabbath rules but He had also spoken of God as “His Father, making Himself equal with God.” And they understood that for that's what they said. So they plotted against Him; they “were seeking...to kill Him”, John said. (Jn 5:18).

Still, He knew Jerusalem was on His path, so to speak, and it would be required of Him that He go there soon because verse 2 stated, "Now the feast of the Jews, the Feast of Booths was near."

There were seven feast days that Israel observed according to Deuteronomy chapter 16, verse 16. Well, I should say, according to that verse there are three of those feast days that require all males of Israel, all men, to go up to Jerusalem and observe those feasts. And the Feast of Booth was one of them.

According to Josephus, the Feast of Booths, (or the Feast of Tabernacles), was the most popular of all the major Jewish feasts. It falls in the months of September or October. The feast lasts a week and during that time people build booths, small structures, out of branches and leaves. And they live in them during that week, or at least they live in them part of each day for a week.

Today in Jerusalem most people live in flats or apartments; and as you go along the streets you can see booths, small structures made with branches, set up on the balconies or on the rooftops. And you can see that here in our neighborhood, which has

a sizable Jewish population now: You go through the neighborhood in the fall, in the time of this feast, you'll see these booths set up in people's yards. Someone called it 'The Jewish camping festival.' It's a very festive time. It's a celebration that was and is joyful.

It's also deeply religious. It celebrated the harvest that God gave to them and recalls God's great provision; His faithful provision for the nation. It reminds them, also, of the time of wandering in the wilderness when there was no harvest, but God faithfully provided for His people every day with an abundance of food. He, as it were, set a table for them in the wilderness.

Now, we're not under the Law of Moses; we don't observe these feast days but we still learn from them. We learn from all of the Law of God because the Law of God is God's Word. And what the Feast of Booths, or Feast of Tabernacles, teaches us is essential: It is that God provides. He provides a harvest for those who follow Him. He provided for Israel in the desert, He will provide for us; be faithful. Well that truth was known by the Lord . It encouraged Him to go forward on the path the LORD, His Father had given Him.

But when was the right time; when was the opportune time for Him to go to Jerusalem, for Him to go into a hostile environment? And how can we know that? That's the question that the Proverbs ask. Proverbs 20, verse 24 asks, "Man's steps are *ordained* by the LORD, How then can man understand his way?" Well, how do we find the LORD'S will in these things? He's set forth a path for us, and we want to know that.

Well, the way we do that is by wisdom. And we do that by waiting upon the LORD. That's what Jesus did. The fact that God *ordained* a path does not preclude preparation, does not preclude prayer and deliberation. That's how God's path is taken. We live as free moral agents with minds equipped with doctrine and with the Proverbs, with minds armed with the truth of God's Word—and the wisdom that comes from it. And we're to apply that to all of the circumstances of life. We're to live wise and careful lives. And that's what the Lord was doing when His brothers told Him, "Leave here and go into Judea, so that Your disciples also may see Your works which you are doing." (vs3).

You'll notice, they didn't include themselves among His disciples. John wrote in verse 5 that, 'They didn't believe in Him', which accounts for that. They were likely aware of the large defection from Jesus in Galilee that had just occurred some months earlier. And they thought that His followers in Judea might be wavering, too, and that some miracles would be needed to reinforce their commitment. So that's what they 'recommended', that's what they were 'advising', that He do some 'self-promotion', some 'PR' work.

Verse 4, "For no one does anything in secret when he himself seeks to be *known* publicly. If you do these things, show Yourself to the world." In other words, 'It pays to advertise.' And what better stage for advertising than Jerusalem itself, which filled up with pilgrims for the feast day, for the Feast of Booths.—And filled up from people all over the land; but not just that, from all over the diaspora, from the Gentile lands. Multitudes were there. They thought that would be great place for Him to reveal Himself.

Well they thought like the world and didn't understand that the weak faith of those in Galilee, those Galilee 'disciples', was based on miracles—and not on the truth that the miracles revealed. 'Faith does not come from what we see, but from what we hear.' That's what Paul wrote in Romans 10, verse 17. We were reminded of that earlier in this service, "Faith *comes* from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ." —it's from the Scriptures; that's what we need.

Well, these brothers didn't have faith. They may have seen some miracles. No doubt they heard about the miracles; we know that from what they said. But at this point in the Lord's ministry they lacked faith, so they lacked understanding. In fact, their advice to Christ might even have been more sarcastic than serious—which only highlights the universal necessity of grace for faith, as Jesus taught in chapter 6. He taught the absolute dependence of man, of woman, of all of us, on the sovereign grace of God. No one believes unless the Father draws him, unless the Father has given him to the Son. We are all totally dependent upon Him.

And this is certainly an illustration of that. These are the Lord's brothers. These men had the greatest privilege: They were born into the home where He was. They grew up under the same roof with Him. He was their older brother, (half-brother according to the flesh), and the very best brother there was...ever.

Yet they didn't believe Him. In fact they seem here to even be mocking Him. They needed the work of the Holy Spirit to open their hearts to understand the things spoken and done by Christ. Until then, they were simply men of the world, no different really, from those men in Jerusalem who were seeking Him.

You know, we always come back to grace. Ultimately we always come back to the cross and we come back to the grace of God. It is essential if we're to have any kind of life that is pleasing to the LORD—any kind of fruit. If we're to have faith at all, it's going to be the grace of God.

Now, if this advice the brothers gave to the Lord conveyed any kind of temptation to follow the ways of the world for personal promotion, if it was a subtle appeal to human pride and a desire for popularity, the Lord didn't yield to it. They said, 'Go. Leave for Jerusalem.' But Jesus said, 'No.' "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune." (vs6).

Jesus often spoke of His death, of the cross, as His *time*, or His *hour*. (*hora*) You see that throughout the Gospel of John. But this is a different word here and more likely refers to His *time*, (*kairos*), 'to go up to the feast.' He knew the situation in Jerusalem; He knew the danger. He knew that His life was on a path set by the Father; that He was not living by chance. There was a plan. He knew that. The *times* of His life were in the Father's hand.

That fact is confirmed by other passages of Scripture. Paul wrote in Galatians chapter 4, verse 4 that the Lord's birth happened, "when the fullness of time came." All of the events followed a certain path and when the events were fulfilled, when 'the fullness came', that's when Christ was sent—at this precise moment of history.

In Acts chapter 2, verse 23, Peter preached on the day of Pentecost of Christ's death, that He "was delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God." And He will come again according to the sovereign plan of God. Whatever *time* is, it is not 'chance'—and it is not 'fate'. It's ruled by God; it is His creation. Time is His tool and He guides all of the events of it to His good and His glory—and to the blessing of His people. Jesus knew all of that.

But again, His response wasn't to live with indifference to the circumstances. His response wasn't to live carelessly or cavalierly with the notion that, 'Well, since it's all planned, it doesn't matter what I do. Whatever will be will be.' He knew that, as a man, He was to live wisely, cautiously, using common sense, and not live by tempting the LORD and playing into the hands of His opponents.

What we think, what we decide and do, really matters. Our decisions are important. They really matter because, as a good Calvinist knows, the God who ordained the end ordained the means to the end. And wisdom is the means for walking on God's path.

So, Jesus knew when not to go up. "My time is not yet here, but your time is always opportune. The world cannot hate you, but it hates Me because I testify of it, that its deeds are evil." (vs6-7). In other words, 'They were part of that world.' They didn't testify against themselves, they were a part of it. They were unbelievers. There was no threat to them, therefore, in Jerusalem and it didn't matter when they went up to the feast.

But it was different for Him, so Jesus told them, "Go up to the feast yourselves;" (vs8). When they left was on their own schedule and of no consequence; which also meant that their decisions, their actions, were of no benefit or eternal value. Don Carson described all their actions, or any actions that ignore God's *time*, His appointments, His will, as "insignificant". "Insignificant in terms of God's eternal plan." It didn't matter when they went up.

But Jesus was on a different path, He was following His Father's will carefully. And His decisions and His actions were significant—as ours are when we are obedient. What we do is treated as insignificant by the world which ridicules the faith and ridicules a life that is lived to God's glory. But such a life is the only life that is really meaningful, a life that Paul says in 2 Corinthians 4, verse 17, has “an eternal weight of glory.” The things we do matter: Great glory awaits us and our decisions are rewarded in that sense.

Well Jesus dismissed them and their advice, saying, ‘You go up to the feast for My time is not yet fully come.’ He didn't mean that He would not go up to the feast. What He only meant that He would go up at the right time—and not until it was the right time. And so, “He stayed in Galilee.” (vs9).

He was committed to His Father's timetable and to His Father's will, not to the demands of men. He waited on the LORD; and the result of waiting on the LORD was He was left alone.

And sometimes that's where we will be. The LORD's path can be a lonely path, the path that He has for us. If we're obedient, if we're waiting upon Him, we may find ourselves in an uncomfortable situation: a situation that challenges our faith. Waiting is difficult. It may even be very unpopular—unpopular with our friends. But that's what Christ did; that's what He chose to do; that was what wisdom directed. And that should give us confidence as we face difficult decisions knowing that God has a plan for us and that He controls the times and the seasons of our lives. Wait upon Him; He will direct us. Be obedient; He's in control.

That's how Daniel described the LORD early in that great book: In chapter 2, verse 21, he said, "It is He who changes the time and epochs." He creates time. He orchestrates time. He orchestrates everything within time. So He knows all the problems we will face; He has ordained them—as well as the solutions. Because of that, we can rest in Him. We can trust Him for ordering our days. We can wait upon Him.

And we can be comforted by the fact that even when people turn away from us, (and we become unpopular for following God's will), even when we're left alone we are

never really alone. Christ has been there; He learned from experience what it is to be rejected. And He knows what that experience is that you or I may experience. So He knows how to sympathize with all of His people in whatever circumstances they are in: when they are alone; when they are on the outside. He knows our hearts when we are isolated and deserted and He is touched with the feeling of His own trials—He's been there.

And so He can sympathize with us as our great high priest, (as the author of Hebrews explains, 4:14), and He knows how to pray for us. He prays for us with great sympathy. That's one reason He went through trials. And it is one reason that we go through trials, so that we can identify and sympathize with others and we can give help in times of their discouragement.

So when we are weak and discouraged, we should look to Christ for comfort: Pray to Him and lay our burdens upon Him; "...casting all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you." Peter wrote. (1Pe 5:7). As Bishop Ryle wrote, "He can help—as well as feel." And part of the help He gives is the assurance He gives that what we do for Him, in obedience to God's will, counts for eternity.

Our *time* is not like the world's *time*, (which is without real meaning and significance.) God has planned our days and as we obey Him and use the time He has given us for His glory and carry out His will, there are benefits to us in *time*: That's the best life, the ordered life, the orderly and fruitful life—but also for all eternity. There's an "eternal weight of glory" waiting for us.

Earlier I said that we may feel like we are helplessly at the mercy of unrelenting *time*; but we're not. *Time* is not our enemy; it is a blessing God has planned for us. It is a gift that He has given to us. Time is His creation, as I said. It is His tool for the lives of Christians, that like a mighty river is carrying us on to a glorious end, a glorious future, a destiny of glory. And the *times*, that David said, "are in His hand", are all designed by the LORD for the occasions and opportunities given to us to serve Him, to glorify Him, and be a blessing to others in the world of hard times.

So, time is no enemy. Our *times* are all a gift, an occasion to show ourselves faithful to Him. We need to guard those precious gifts that God has given us; guard our time and use them well and not allow others, or circumstances, to steal them from us.

So the Lord's brothers left, (they weren't able to steal it from Him), and He remained behind. But only until the right time—until His *time* had come. Then we read in verse 10, "He Himself also went up, not publicly, but as if, in secret." This is not a case of vacillation by the Lord, of changing His mind: 'I'm not going up. No, you go up. I'm staying here.' And then later, 'Well, maybe it's a good idea to go up. Maybe I will go up.' It's just the opposite. It showed His firm resolve to do only what the Father led Him to do, in the Father's time.

I think there are two lessons that we can take away from our Lord's example here. And the first is, we should never needlessly expose ourselves to danger. The fact that God is sovereign is no reason to tempt Him. He has given us minds; and as believers, He's given us new minds, regenerated minds, and we're to use them.

In Matthew chapter 10, in verse 16, He told the disciples, "Behold, I send you out as sheep in the midst of wolves; so be shrewd as serpents and innocent as doves." In other words, "Be careful." The Lord and His apostles never courted danger; they avoided it whenever they could.

But caution is not the governing principle of our lives; obedience is. And that's the second lesson; we must obey the Lord, even if obedience leads us into dangerous situations—as it did the Lord. He did go up to Jerusalem because the Law commanded that in Deuteronomy 16, verse 16, which required all males appear before the LORD in the place where He was worshiped on the Feast of Tabernacles.

So at the right time, the Lord obeyed. And He obeyed with confidence, not fear, because it was His time. And as David wrote, "My times are in your hand", what's there to fear if it's all in the hand of God? Again as I said, that gives us peace, that gives us confidence; nothing happens by chance. The LORD is in control of our *times*. All of our

days, our hours, our moments, every second of our life is in His hand—and all the events within those times. He is sovereign over our lives.

That's true in the best of times, that's true in the worst of times. It's true when we are prospering, when our health is good and our job is secure and there's peace in the home—that's all of the LORD. It's what He has given to you if that's your experience. So thank Him. Never take a blessing for granted or become self-satisfied. I think that may be a problem that we all have. We enjoy good health; a day goes by we don't have pain—we take that for granted. That's the way life is; 'That's the way life is supposed to be.'

Well, it's that way because God has given you that, at every moment. Recognize that every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father above—and thank Him. Thank Him for the smallest things; give Him the glory.

That's also true when we're without employment, or when we are alone, or when our health declines and time is taking its natural toll on us; all of that, also, is in God's hand. And I don't want to be glib about that—about a chronic illness or something like that. I'm in good health and so it's easy for me to speak about that. But it's true, that these things are in His hands. And while they are puzzling, and while they are discouraging to those who are experiencing it, the LORD has a purpose in them. And that's not a glib statement—that's a true statement. You can see that at the beginning of Romans Chapter 5, where Paul speaks of what trials produce in us. So, I would say this: Even, especially then, in those hard times, we are in His hand. And He'll make that known to us in His time and way.

Well then, there are times of risk as with the Lord here. Obedience can be risky. Going forward can mean going into danger. But if that's God's path for us, then He is with us and He will guard and keep us; and the end will be the best end, the end that He has for us; an end of blessing.

The Lord obeyed with that confidence in His Father. His delay was for the purpose of determining God's right *time* and going at God's right time—which was the right time because it thwarted the enemy. Verse 11 states that, 'They were looking for Him; they were plotting His demise.' And they were frustrated because He wasn't there. "Where is He?" they asked. Literally, "Where is that man?", which suggests contempt or exasperation with frustration.

So, by going up to Jerusalem at the last minute, the Jewish leaders were prevented from carrying out their plan to arrest Him and put Him to death. The LORD knows what's best. [I sometimes think about that, this is kind of an aside, but I'll be in a hurry to get somewhere, try to go the speed limit—but then I come to a red light. (It seems like there are more red lights in Dallas now than ever before!) And I'll sit at that red light and know that I've got to go. And I think, 'You know, maybe, in the providence of God, (which it is), I'm being kept from some danger down the road.' You never know: But you know this, God's will for us is perfect. So don't get frustrated.]

Well Jesus knew that His death, as the Lamb of God, would take place in Jerusalem at the next feast, in the spring at Passover, not during the Feast of Tabernacles. So by a wise walk, He avoided trouble.

But when He arrived in Jerusalem, the city was divided over Him. There was a lot of discord, debate, and strange opinions about Him. Verse 12 states that some thought He was "a good man", "a miracle worker", others, "a charlatan." "...He leads people astray" they were saying. So again, as in chapter 6, there was a lot of grumbling about Him, division over Him, which again fit the plan of God for His life.

30 to 33 years earlier, when the Lord Jesus was just an infant and His parents brought Him into the temple, Simeon, an old "righteous" man, saw Him, recognized Him, knew who He was, the Savior, and he blessed Him. Then, (this is in Luke chapter 2), he told Mary that her child was "...appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed...to the end that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." (vs34-35).

And the thoughts of many hearts were being revealed there in Jerusalem as they have been down through the centuries. Some continue to believe, even in our day, that Jesus was "a good man." That's how they explain who and what He is: 'He's a good man, a miracle worker', 'Well maybe He didn't do miracles, but He was a good teacher.' Others considered Him to be an impostor: In fact, that became the prevailing Jewish view after the resurrection.

Some today have even dismissed Him as a fiction—He never existed. He was 'invented by Paul', or He was 'invented by the early church.' But the very fact that so many have considered this issue of His identity for so long, for 2000 years, is an impressive legacy for a man who never lived—or who was just a carpenter from Nazareth.

Still, this is a question for modern man and a question for the ages: "Who is Jesus?" There's no more important question to ask than that one. But one answer that cannot be correct is, 'He was a good man.' We considered this in our studies earlier: No one can claim to be God and be 'good' or 'sane' unless He, in fact, is God. No one can make such statements as, "I am the bread of life", "I am the Light of the world", "I am the way and the truth and the life", and be 'good', or 'a great moral teacher' if it's not true.

Yet Jesus made those claims. And He made others just as remarkable: He claimed to be 'the judge of the world'; He claimed 'to be equal with God, His Father'; He claimed 'to be the Savior of lost souls', which is utterly preposterous unless He is God.

As a result, He was, and always has been, the cause of division among people. Wherever He went, wherever He preached, wherever He is preached today, He causes division among people. He is, as Paul said in 2 Corinthians chapter 2, in verse 16, 'an aroma of life to some, and of death to others.'

Maybe there are some here who fit in that aroma of death category, some here who have some doubts about all of this. And my counsel is, read the New Testament. Read a Gospel. Read John; and as you do that, ask the LORD to open your eyes. Ask Him

to reveal Himself to you. He can do that. In fact, only He can do that. He has done that to all of us here who have put our faith in Christ, all of us without exception. The only way one can come to know Him and believe in Him is if the Father opens your eyes and your heart to receive Him.

He did that for the Lord's brothers, who weren't believing in Him. But after the resurrection and ascension, we read in Acts chapter 1, verse 14 that the brothers were all together with the apostles in the upper room in Jerusalem praying. Mark chapter 6, verse 3 gives their names: James and Joses and Judas and Simon. Judas changed his name to Jude, (and you can understand why). James was the first leader of the church of Jerusalem and he was the author of the epistle by his name. Jude also wrote the book of Jude.

God's sovereign grace turned their unbelief into belief, their skepticism and sarcasm into devotion. And the lives that they had been living as insignificant men in unbelief were made very significant when God gave them new life and they used the *times* that God gave them to His glory—and for our good.

God can do that for you, regardless of how old you are, and work out His will in your life as you look to Him daily. So trust in Christ. Realize that you are a sinner, and that He is the Savior who receives all who come to Him. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, receive the forgiveness of sin and enter into a life of meaning, one that is destined for eternal glory. Time marches on—and each day brings us closer to that glory. Praise the LORD.

Father, we confess that's true. All we have is Christ, all we need is Christ. He's the one and only and all sufficient Savior. Thank You that You sent Him in the world to die for sinners and to purchase us, Your people, whom You have loved from the foundation of the world, loved from all eternity. Father, may we continually, daily, make Christ our life as we seek to live for You and please You.

We thank You for the time we spent in Your Word. We look forward now to remembering our Savior and His crucifixion, His sacrifice for us, and then celebrating the faith of one of our members. We thank You for that, and pray You'd bless the baptism as well, bless each of us as we participate in this. And we pray these things in Christ's name.

Now the LORD bless you and keep you. The LORD make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The LORD lift up His countenance on you and give you peace. In Christ's name, Amen.

(End of Audio)