

## The Name of the Game

John 15: 11-14 – 16:4

May 1, 2011

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### Prayer

Father, we ask that you would help us to preach your Word. We ask it in Jesus' Name, Amen

Clip from the movie *The Jerk*

[Navin (the Jerk) is pumping gas at a gas station. He has just finished serving a customer.]  
[There is a man in a distant field pointing a gun at the Jerk.]

Man shooting gun: *Say your prayers, half-breed!* [Sounds of gunshots]

Navin: *Harry! Look at this!*

*What's the matter with these cans?* [Oil is pouring out from a hole in a couple oil cans]

Man shooting gun: *Die, milk-face!* [Sounds of gunshots]

Navin: (Laughing) *These cans are defective.*

*They're springing leaks.*

*Come and look at this.*

[(Sounds of gunshots) Now multiple cans are spilling out oil]

Mechanic: *You better run for cover or you'll spring a leak!*

*We don't have defective cans; we have a defective person!*

[The mechanic motions towards a man shooting at Navin from a field across the road. He's aiming at Navin but keeps hitting oil cans instead.]

Navin: *He hates these cans?*

Mechanic: *Stay away from the cans!* [Navin runs away from the cans]

Man shooting gun: *Die, gas pumper!*

Navin: *I've got to get away from those cans! There's cans in there, too!* [Navin runs away from the cans. Glass shatters as the man shooting aims for Navin and keeps missing.]

Mechanic: *Run! Run!*

Navin: *There are cans in here too!* [Navin runs to another location looks down and sees more cans.] *More cans!*

Man shooting gun: *Die, you bastard!* (More gunshot sounds)

Mechanic: *He doesn't want to put holes in cans. He wants to put holes in you!*

Navin: *What?*

Have you ever felt like that? Just surprised by hatred? That's Navin and of course the great Oscar winning, the critically acclaimed movie, *The Jerk*, and he's just ventured out into the big world.

He was raised in a very loving family, and now he's coming to terms with the fact that people hate him. He is surprised that people would hate him. He thinks the cans are defective and then has to wrestle with the fact that maybe he's defective.

I was raised in a very loving home with a father that really loved me, and I just remember being so surprised to find out that there were people that hated me.

In 1 John 3:13 John writes, *“Don’t be surprised, brothers, that the world hates you.”*

In our text for this morning, Jesus says, *“Because you are not of the world, and I chose you out of the world, the world hates you.”*

In John 7, Jesus told his brothers: *“The world cannot hate you because you’re of the world.”*

So, it’s a bummer if you’re not hated by the world.

So, this week, I tried to think of occasions on which I have I been “hated?”

There haven’t been many, but I did manage to think of four.

The first occasion explains why I hate basketball—why I revert back to an insecure and wounded 7<sup>th</sup> grade boy every time Frances Forgone is so deeply insensitive as to go on and on about her great skills and her love for basketball. Well thirty-six years ago, I loved shooting hoops with my friend David who lived across the street. I wasn’t that good at shooting hoops, but it didn’t matter. I just loved shooting hoops with David, but I didn’t love it at school.

Well, this particular day, thirty-six years ago, we played basketball in P.E. We played in the gymnasium in the basement of Grant Junior High. The gym looked exactly the same at both ends of the court.

Normally, no one would pass the ball to me. However, for some reason, this day someone did pass the ball to me. And for some reason, I didn’t immediately pass it away (which was my practice). For some reason, this time, as if by magic, a lane just opened up—nothing, no one between the basket and me. And so I seized my opportunity for glory. I dribbled down the court, shot a layup and it went in.

I think it was the very first basket that I ever scored in a real game. It was beautiful and I turned around ready to receive adulation and congratulations from my teammates, and all I received was hate—I mean absolute hatred.

I thought the name of the game was shooting baskets and I shot a basket, but apparently you have to shoot them at a particular end of the court. And I chose the wrong end; I scored for the wrong team.

See?

The name of game is not shooting baskets.

The name of the game is shooting more baskets than your opponent.

The name of the game is winning.

Well, I decided to hate basketball, and yet I did learn the name of the game.

In school, I learned:

It isn't really about learning.

It's about learning more than somebody else.

I learned that you didn't really win unless somebody else lost.

I learned that it's really not about singing, jumping, and running.

It's about singing louder,

jumping higher,

and running faster than somebody else!

Have you every stuck around here at the end of the second service? This is what usually happens. Most of the adults leave and Wesley Sullivan, Finley Bullis, and Elliott Sullivan—4, 3, and 2—will just start running, jumping, and yelling. They'll just start running as fast as they can around the church, apparently for no reason. I mean they're not racing each other. Apparently, they just, run, jump, and yell for the sheer joy of running, jumping, and yelling together in the sanctuary—before God. Can you imagine that!

Well anyway, my point is that Jesus says, *"Don't be surprised when the world hates you."*

What do you do when you discover that you're hated?

Well...

1. You can agree with the hatred and begin to hate yourself.

You can never, run, jump, or yell ever again.

Never shoot baskets ever again.

Be offended when other people shoot baskets better than you.

You can agree with the hatred.

OR

2. You can fight the hatred with even more hatred.

I mean you can hate the haters with even more hatred.

And yet it's often hard to hate the haters because they are bigger than you, stronger than you, and seemingly less defective than you. But no matter what, you can always find somebody to hate.

One of my earliest memories was of a day when I must have been about 5 years old. I was at my friend Ray's house, and Ray and I went to school together—kindergarten—where I was learning to be insecure about jumping highest and running fastest. I'd gone to Ray's so that we could run and jump together—so that we could play together, and the neighbor boy that lived behind Ray, wanted to play, too. And he was crippled.

I still remember the braces, the crutches and he could not jump as high as me or run as fast as me. I remember Ray said something mean, and I said something mean, and then we said more and we did more, and then I remember this crippled boy lying in the dirt with his crutches and braces weeping.

I knew that it was something that my father would not do. And yet at the same time I felt this new exhilaration. This exhilaration that I was better—we were better at something than someone else. I mean, it was like Ray and I had become a team—unified by a

common enemy—taking pleasure in the idea that the defects weren't in us, but in him. Exhilaration, and yet later that night, just being in the presence of my father, I never felt so defective or so ashamed.

In the words of social anthropologists, what Ray and I did that afternoon was discover a scapegoat or perhaps religion. Social anthropologists, like Rene Girard and Gil Bailie, have argued rather convincingly that this is how societies actually form, by identifying a scapegoat—a sacrificial victim on which all the defects of that society are then placed. And we all know this intuitively.

We all know this. That's why we enjoy going to Bronco games. I mean 70,000 people are immediately unified by a common hatred of the Oakland Raiders. 70,000 chant together in unison. I mean where else can you get 70,000 people to chant together in unison? Chant together in unison because they all agree beating the Oakland Raiders, humiliating the Oakland Raiders, is the name of the game.

I remember the year the Broncos went to the Super Bowl. I was driving in the car with my son, Coleman, who was four at the time, and out of the blue, Coleman just said, "Dad." "Yeah, buddy," I responded. "Dad, 'um are the Green Bay Packers evil?" I said, "Oh, no, buddy, they're not evil. It's just a game."

Is it just a game? Or is it the way that this world operates?

Many say life itself is created by violent competition. And so love itself is just a means of beating common enemies. That is, love itself is a creation of hate.

Well maybe it's not just a game. Maybe it really is the way that this world is. Jesus said, "*The world will hate you.*" You know, as I got older, the world seemed to hate me less. In fact, I found a group in which I really fit. We called it "church."

About 17 years ago, I was sitting on the lawn down at Denver Seminary. I mean it was just a beautiful day sitting on the grass, having a devotional, and I wrote this in my journal:

I'm more respected than Jesus was.  
I'm more honored than He.  
People speak better of me and  
I live in a far nicer house than He.  
I'm more popular than Jesus was when He hung on that cross for me.  
And that ought to concern me.  
Because a servant is not better than His master.  
And He said if the world hated Him, they'd hate me.

"Hate." That's confused me at times. Yet, all this week, I had a pit in my stomach because I'd think, *I've gotta talk about this*. It doesn't confuse me so much anymore.

In John 15, Jesus has been talking about being at home—abiding in the Father's love.

Verse 11:

*“These things have I spoken unto you (says Jesus) that my joy (sheer joy) may be in you and that your joy may be full. This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this that someone lays down his life for his friend.”*

Who does Jesus lay His life down for in the Gospel of John? John’s already told us: “the world.”

Does Jesus transform the world into his friend? He’s already taught that we are to love our enemies, but now He says, *“There is no greater love than...(love for a friend).*

You know I can love enemies and feel kinda pompous about it: *“Yeah, I’m lovin’ my enemies,”* but loving my friends, that’s a privilege. Maybe the love of Jesus turns enemies into friends.

Verse 14: *“You are my friends if you do what I command you.”*

Did any of those guys do what Jesus commanded them? Not much, especially not that night, and yet one day they would. Maybe, they weren’t a friend to Jesus that night, but Jesus was a friend to them. He’s called a *“Friend of sinners.”* Maybe the love of Jesus turns enemies into friends.

Next verse (15):

*“No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, **so that** you will love one another.”*

They didn’t choose Jesus to be their friend; Jesus chose them, and turned them into friends. You know, our choice doesn’t save us; Jesus saves us.

We have been saved: *“...by grace through faith,”* and this faith—this choice: *“is not of ourselves lest men should boast.”* It’s the gift of God. Jesus is the gift of God. He’s Grace. Why would anybody hate that?

Verse 18: *“If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you.”*

Why did the world hate Jesus?

You know, Jesus laid down some incredibly challenging ethical standards, and yet it wasn’t prostitutes and drunkards that hated Him. Actually they seemed to have really admired Him.

Why did the world hate Him?

Remember in Luke 4, Jesus goes to his hometown in Nazareth where He stands up in the synagogue and reads from Isaiah—announcing the Year of Jubilee and claiming to be Messiah. Do you remember what happened?

Verse 22: *“They all spoke well of Him.”*

*Until* He points out that there were many widows in Israel, but Elijah was sent to a widow in Sidon, which is not in Israel, and there were many lepers in Israel, but Elisha was sent to heal Naaman, the Syrian—the Arab—scapegoat. And at that, all the synagogue was filled with wrath and they tried to run Jesus off a cliff and kill him.

They hated Jesus because He turned enemies into friends.

And that reminds me of the second occasion on which I felt truly hated. It was six and a half years ago when I preached some sermons on the idea that God loves Gentiles just as much as Jews, for in fact He turns them into Jews, grafted into the family of faith.

Well this man of Jewish ancestry, from a nearby church, got so angry with me. He sent letters to all kinds of people in Denver and all over the country claiming that I was a Jew hater.

I tried to tell him: “You’re hating me without cause. I want to take nothing away from the Jews. I only want to add: me, and Syrians like Naaman, and Palestinians on the other side of that wall. I wanna take nothing away but only add to the family of Abraham. You know he was blessed in order to be a blessing to *ALL* the nations of the world.”

And honestly, he would get so angry, I feared for my life. Finally, I met him a room where our prayer team took communion together and then covered the doorposts with the communion wine and that day, he seemed like my brother.

I wasn’t his enemy, and he wasn’t/isn’t mine.

Next verse (19): Jesus says, *“If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.”*

In John, the world doesn’t simply mean the earth. It means the sociology, anthropology, and psychology of humanity. Paul refers to it as the *“the principalities and the powers.”* And he writes, *“We battle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers and the world rulers of this present darkness.”* See? I do have an enemy, but no man is my enemy.

Next verse (20): *“Remember the word that I said to you (says Jesus). A servant is not greater than his master. If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours. But all these things they will do to you on account of my name”*

Hated because of his name—*Yehoshua*. His name means *Yahweh*—God is salvation. The name of his game is salvation.

Verse 21: *“But all these things they will do to you on account of my name, because they do not know him who sent me. If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin.”*

Literally, in the Greek, Jesus says, *“If I had not come, they would not have sin.”*

So then, Why did He come? If He didn't, we'd not have sin. You know, a rock doesn't have sin. Maybe the name of the game is not simply “not having sin.” The name of the game is salvation.

Saint Paul wrote, *“God consigned all to disobedience (that's sin) that he may have mercy upon all.”*

Rocks don't sin, but rocks are not made in the image of God who is Mercy, who is *Khesed*—steadfast, relentless, endless, consuming, all-powerful love, grace.

Verse 22-24: *“If I had not come and spoken to them, they would not have sin, but now they have no excuse for their sin (You know, it only becomes forgivable once it becomes inexcusable, but now they have no excuse for their sin.) Whoever hates me hates my Father also. If I had not done among them the works that no one else did, they would not have sin, but now they have seen and hated both me and my Father.”*

What are the works that no one else did? Old Testament guys did some pretty cool miracle kind of works, but Jesus just washed the disciples feet. In other words, the very First made Himself the very last. In the morning, He'll wash the entire world of its sin with his blood. The very First will become very last in order that the very last, like the chief of all sinners, will become first: winners losers, losers winners, and that's the name of the game—Grace.

John 15:25-16:4

*“Now they have seen and hated both me and my Father. But the word that is written in their Law must be fulfilled. They hated me without a cause. But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning. I have said all these things to you to keep you from falling away (Literally: to keep you from being scandalized—scandalizo.) They will put you out of the synagogues. Indeed, the hour is coming when whoever kills you will think he is offering service to God. And they will do these things because they have not known the Father, nor me. But I have said these things to you, that when their hour comes you may remember that I told them to you.”*

*“They will put you out of the synagogues.”* Not the capital building, not abortion clinics, but the synagogues, said Jesus. You know what synagogue means? That's what most of us usually mean by the word church. Synagogue literally means “assembly.” In

Scripture it means a religious assembly. And I was kicked out of the general assembly—my assembly. Three-and-a-half years ago, I was literally kicked out of my synagogue—Evangelical Presbyterian Church. And that’s the third occasion on which I truly felt “hated.”

1<sup>st</sup> when I scored points for the wrong team.

2<sup>nd</sup> when I referred to Israel’s enemies as God’s friends.

3<sup>rd</sup> when I suggested He just might turn all of us into friends.

I won’t go into details, and I’m sure “hate” was mixed with all sorts of other things, and maybe some hated me because sometimes I can just be a jerk, And I know hate is a strong word, but I don’t know how else to describe it. I do know that at the time, I kept asking God, “Why? Why do they hate me?”

Over the years, really digging into Scripture, I’d become convinced of two things that I’d always somewhat believed.

- (1) God will *not* torture people endlessly. Some will languish in “outer darkness” in Hades and Sheol, which is often translated “hell.” And some will be reduced to ash by the eternal consuming fire. But the idea that God tortures people endlessly is just *unbiblical*.
- (2) *Jesus really may: “make all things new,”* just like He said. Jesus, whom Paul calls the Savior of all men, who descended into Hell and set captives free. Jesus, who said He will draw all people unto Himself.

I said to the synagogue, “I realize that there are nuances involving time and eternity, being and nonbeing, the new man and the old man, etc., etc., etc., but maybe, maybe God saves everybody that’s anybody! Maybe.”

And when I’d said that, some would just grow furious and they’d say stuff like: “Well, if everybody gets saved, what’s the point of a Savior? What’s the point of a cross?” And I found the comment thoroughly bizarre. You see? I was a lifeguard in high school, and if at the end of the day I said, “Good News, I saved everybody in the pool today.” Nobody said, “Well, then what’s the point of even having a lifeguard?” Or “You should have let some drown so that others would be grateful. Or “You should have let them perpetually and endlessly drown so others would be super grateful.”

Do you realize that nobody wants to be saved at first: “*No one seeks for God. No one is righteous, no not one,*” says scripture. We didn’t choose Him, He chose us. That’s why He, and not I, is the Savior. It’s our will—it’s our want—our chooser that’s crippled and defective. That’s precisely why, exactly why, we need a Savior.

We need saving.

The cross is how He saves us.

The cross is not a test that we can pass and so save ourselves.

The cross is a test that Jesus *has* passed and so saves us. God is Salvation.

That’s the name of the game—Grace.

But now if you don’t think that’s the name of the game, you might find yourself a bit perturbed with Jesus. Imagine playing basketball with Jesus. You’re on His team and

you're pumped because you're playing with Jesus and nobody shoots baskets better. And you're on His team.

It's the championship game, you're down by two, there's ten seconds left and you pass to Jesus. He plants, He looks, and He sees someone sad on the other team. And He hands them the ball, and He says "Good luck, friend." Or worse yet, He turns around, He dribbles down the court, and He scores for the other team, and He throws his fist in the air and says, "Yes, I saved them."

You might get mad at Jesus: "Jesus what the heck? You sacrificed the game. I mean it's not like you play poorly; you're not even playing the game at all. The name of the game is winning. And He looks at you and He says, "Oh, I guess I don't play that game."

You know, people think Christianity is about better rules and better techniques for winning the game. And so love is a means, God is a means, to beat your neighbor and win the game. And Jesus says, "Sorry, I don't play that game."

Imagine the Oakland Raiders are in town, they're down by 2; they have the ball on Denver's 15-yard line with 3 seconds on the clock. Sebastian Janikowski kicks a chip shot, it sails just wide right of the uprights. The stands erupt in joy and celebration, and all at once you notice that the referee, the head referee—down on the side, is throwin' a flag out on the field. The players are lining up again and over the intercom the referee explains the call: "We will kick again because...well, umm, I forgive Sebastian."

Oh man! Talk about a riot. Even if the ref ran out onto the field and said, "Tell you what—I forgive you all and love you all! No one loses, let's have a party!" Well there wouldn't be a party...just a referee crucified at midfield.

And you say, "Well, that's just a game." Yeah. But what if you thought the game was LIFE and the ref was the JUDGE.

If you think *winning* is the name of the game

(that is scoring points and beating your neighbor).

If you think winning is the Name of the Game, you'll end up hating Grace, and God is Grace.

But if you think that Grace is the name of the game, the more that are saved, the better the news—The Good News—*evangelian*—good news.

Perhaps some hated me cause they thought I was on their team, and a good player, but now I was scoring points for the opposing team.

But what's the name of the game?

Beating my neighbor?

OR serving by neighbor?

Damming my enemies?

OR turning them into friends?

Keeping score?

OR forgiving all?

Fighting to be first?

OR choosing to be last?

Is it using God in order to save myself? Let me say that again because I think that this is what most of we think it is:

Is it using God in order to save myself?

OR being used *by* God in order to save others—*“Blessed to be a blessing.”*

Is it winning?

OR is it Love?

Now that might be a bit confusing, if you think about it, because last week I preached a sermon titled “Love Wins.” And love *does* win, but check this out:

Love wins by choosing to lose for another.

Love wins through sacrifice.

God is love, Jesus is love in flesh and on the cross He is sacrificed.

God sacrificed Himself and: *“in this is love...”*

*“He who knew no sin became sin that we might become the righteousness of God and the Lord has laid on him (like the priest would place his hand on the scapegoat) the iniquity of us all.”*

He’s the sacrifice.

He’s the scapegoat.

On the cross, He bore all our sins and the sins of all—*ALL* our defects.

As if to say, you need someone to hate? Hate me.

You need somebody to lose? I’ll be last so you can be first.

Peter and Ray, you boys need a scapegoat.

Here I am; look at me.

I’m your scapegoat crippled for you, broken for you, cursed for you.

Why? Because I love you.

Now, look at me boys.

You don’t need anymore damned scapegoats.

You don’t need anybody else to lose in order to feel like you win.

I lose, so you can win.

I am Love poured out for you.

I forgive you.

I create you.

This is how I win.

Scripture says that on that cross God: *“disarmed the principalities and powers, triumphing over them in Christ.”* And John writes that Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. And what is the work of the devil? Well, it’s a lie that can be traced back to a garden where the snake said to the woman, who is us, “You know, God really cannot be trusted. You know, I think you really need to make yourself—create yourself so why don’t you go over there and take some good? There’s only a limited amount of good. Compete. Go to war. That’s the name of the game because you are salvation.”

That’s the lie and *this* is the truth: God is salvation. In a word “Jesus.”

And that reminds me of the fourth occasion on which I’ve truly been hated. I can’t go into details here, and believe me the details are really even kinda hard to believe, but

I've had numerous encounters with the devil, with Satan, and he is no man—not a somebody—a nobody, and yet he really is my enemy. And he really, really does hate me. But I know this. Communion wine burns him like fire. The blood of Jesus burns him like fire. Grace burns him like fire because it is fire, eternal, consuming fire. It's the truth that destroys the lie. It's the truth that says: "I am not my own salvation; God is Salvation."

God is Salvation! And there's an endless supply. So I don't need to steal the good. I don't need to compete with anybody. I don't even need to go lookin' for a scapegoat. And although, I'm hated by some, I'm no longer a prisoner to hate. I cannot beat hate with more hatred. I can only beat hate with Love. And God is Love, and God is Salvation, and God is my Father.

In 1966, I had started to listen to the lie. I looked down on that crippled boy and I thought, "I won!" But later that night, when I saw my dad, I knew I had lost. I knew I was crippled. My heart was the cripple. But saving *me* was the "name of the game" for my dad. And saving you is the name of the game for your Father.

God is Salvation—in a word Jesus.

And once you see Him, really see Him and his salvation, you'll want salvation for all.

Salvation is not a matter of running faster than anyone.

Salvation is a matter of running *with* Someone.

You've probably seen this video. 15 million people have. It's Dick Hoyt swimming, biking, and running the Ironman Triathlon with his disabled son Rick.

Let's be clear: I'm Rick and my Father is Salvation and this is how Love wins.

Clip of Dick and Rick Hoyt

[The song "My Redeemer Lives" (see below) plays throughout the following scenes.]

The father exits a house early in the morning with his disabled son, who is in a wheelchair.

The father runs in the dark while pushing his son in a wheelchair.

The scene changes and we see the father putting his son in a raft.

The father has attached the raft to himself and is pulling him behind him as he swims. The son smiles and enjoys the ride. The father then carries his son out of the raft.

He carries him through crowds of people to his wheelchair; he gets them dressed, puts on their helmets and puts his son on a bike.

The son smiles in pure joy as his father bikes up a hill and he enjoys a beautiful view.

It becomes dark, the father and son cross another finish line.

They then switch back to running, the father running while pushing his son in his wheelchair.

By the time they cross the next finish line it is light out again.

Crowds of people cheer, a man walks over and hugs the father, the son takes everything in. The camera gets a close up of the son's eyes.

The scene changes to the son in a room, in a wheelchair, typing out "CAN".

The clip ends with: "*I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.*" Philippians 4:13

“My Redeemer Lives” (Played during the above clip)

Who taught the sun where to stand in the morning?  
And who told the ocean you can only come this far?  
And who showed the moon where to hide till evening?  
Whose words alone can catch a falling star?

Well I know my Redeemer lives.  
I know my Redeemer lives.  
All of creation testifies  
This life within me cries  
I know my Redeemer lives  
Ye-e-eah

The very same God  
That spins things in orbit  
Runs to the weary, the worn and the weak  
And the same gentle hands that hold me when I'm broken  
They conquered death to bring me victory

Now I know, my Redeemer lives  
I know my Redeemer lives  
Let all creation testify  
Let this life within me cry  
I-I-I know  
My Redeemer

He lives  
To take away my shame  
And He lives  
Forever I'll proclaim  
That the payment for my sins  
Was the precious life He gave  
And now He's alive and  
There's an empty  
Grave!

And I know  
My Redeemer lives  
He lives  
I know  
My Redeemer lives  
Let all creation testify  
Let this life within me cry  
I-I-I know my Redeemer

I know  
My Redeemer lives  
\*I know my Redeemer lives\*  
\*I know, That I know, that I know, that I know, that I know  
He lives  
\*my redeemer lives\*  
\*Because He lives I can face tomorrow

He lives  
\*I know, I know\*  
He lives  
\*I spoke with Him this morning!\*He lives  
\*The tomb is empty\*  
He lives  
\*He Lives! I'm going to tell everybody!!\*

### **Communion**

When I believe that, I don't have to beat anyone. And I can love everyone; for on the night that I delivered Him up, He took bread and He broke it saying, "This is my body given to you. Take, eat, and remember this. Do this in remembrance of me. And in the same way, after supper and having given thanks, He took the cup and said, *"This is the New Covenant in my blood, poured out for the forgiveness of sins. Drink of it all of you, and do it in remembrance of me."* Jesus said, *"The one forgiven much loves much."*

You've been forgiven much, so love much.

And when the world hates you,  
Don't fight back with hatred,  
Surrender to love.  
In Jesus' name, Amen.

### **Benediction**

Scripture says that we have come to the end of the ages in Christ Jesus. I think that means the Father has pushed your heart, your spirit across that finish line, and you're beginning to see it. You're beginning to believe it. And soon you will have new arms and new legs, and you will run faster, and jump higher, and sing louder than you ever thought possible before. But even now, you have a new heart so you're standing on the other side of the finish line. And if Jesus is right, there are people that hate you.

This is what I'd hope you'd take a moment to do (maybe later tonight or in the morning). Just go to a quiet place, sit there with the Lord, and picture the people that might hate you. Picture them in that wheelchair. Turn to your Father and say, "Father, go get 'em. And if you want to use me, I'm your arms and I'm your legs—your church." In Jesus' name may you believe the gospel and live the gospel. Amen.

*Disclaimer: This document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*