



Hey Traders Point. It is so good to be with you wherever you are on the other side of that screen.

As we get started today, I just want to acknowledge up front that, as a church, we are grieved over the event that happened this past week with George Floyd. We are mourning. We are sad and we are also committed to not look away and to continue speaking up and fighting for justice together.

So, I just want to invite you to spend some time today praying—praying for those who are hurting, praying for justice, and just asking God to help us as a church walk through this together.

Stay tuned in the next couple of weeks as we're going to feature some conversations online and on social media about this to help educate our church family as we walk through this together.

Well, back in January when Aaron asked me to bring this message to our church, I was humbled and honored and also, to be honest, pretty intimidated. To talk about the value of *healthy*, well, it's not something that necessarily comes naturally for me. It's something that I have to really fight for. Health isn't like the most natural part of who I am. Actually, I can be kind of garbagy in a lot of areas of life.

And over the last couple of months of COVID that's shown even more so. I have adapted some habits, some good and some bad as you likely have too. I've discovered that I love Utz cheese balls just as much as I did when I was 10 years old.

I've also found that I've met more neighbors in the last two months than in the past two years. We've just started walking around our neighborhood as a family.

I've discovered that I love slower mornings with my kids and with my husband, where we're not rushing off to school and to work, while simultaneously I miss it all so much.

I've also decided to learn how to make bread. I know, that is so basic. But, at first when I saw this bread making trend on social media—like COVID bread—I was like, “Seriously?” And to be honest, to the two-working-parent-house where we're also doing e-learning at home I'm like, “Learning how to do something new is the last thing on my list of priorities.”

But I kept seeing all of these pictures and my friends were telling me about how soothing bread making was. And I was like, “Alright, I'm going to try out this bread situation.”

So, I went to the store and looked for yeast, and flour. And, as it turns out, you all have been making bread too. The whole country has. There is a national shortage of yeast and flour everywhere. So I texted my friend Jerah who I know loves to make bread and makes a lot of it at home.

And I was like, “Hey, can I borrow some yeast?” And he was like, “Well, no because it's a precious thing that I won't give to you. But I'll give you some of my bread starter.”

For those of you who have made bread, you already know what a bread starter is, but for the rest of us, it's basically just a way to grow yeast in your own house. So he graciously lent me the bread starter and I've been in the process this last week of learning to make bread. And it's still not even done, because, as it turns out, it takes many, many, many days, because I'm making this bread from sourdough bread, which you can make from your house without any yeast at all.

What's interesting is that a lot of people have been talking about how this act of making bread has actually been a soothing practice that people have been picking up in this time. *The Washington Post* posted a piece last week about how when you're feeling anxious try baking bread. Like, it's this thing we're all learning how to do.

You know, it's funny because not so long ago, sourdough bread was really the only kind of bread. Like, everyone was making bread and making yeast in their own homes. But we've gotten ourselves in a bit of a hurry over the last century and now that's largely a thing of the past. When you can buy a loaf at a grocery store

or even buy instant yeast, why go through the process of days and days of making your own bread?

What does all of this have to do with being healthy? I get it. It's just a story about bread. Well, what I didn't tell you is that when I originally wrote this message in March, I was going to start this message with this story about how I was going from place to place and on a really jam-packed, full day. I was running out of the church parking lot one day after work because I was late to pick up my kid from school—yeah, it's true. And I was running so quickly to my car that I just bit it in the parking lot.

And I was going to tell you this story about how I feel like our pace says a lot about our spiritual health and how as a society and as a church, if we're living too quickly we can be in a really big danger of not developing ourselves spiritually, relationally, or emotionally. But then, COVID hit. And we're not really in the same type of hurry any more.

When I asked Jerah what I really needed to make bread, he said, "You need time. And that's it." And now I have time. I have a lot of it.

And I get where many of you right now might be tempted to give me some side-eye, because, "I am not you." And you're right. Like I only know my circumstances. And maybe you're thinking, "That's cute that you've got a little story about bread. But that is like the last thing on my mind right now." And I get it. And I'm not you.

I'm not a front-line worker. I don't own a business. I'm not a single parent. I'm not an executive making impossible, no-win decisions. I'm not a teen-ager who's lost so many milestones in the last two months he'll never get back. I am not an empty nester who misses grandkids and the power of human connection. And you're right, I don't know your circumstances. I only know mine.

But today, I don't want to teach from the things that I've learned from my experience or the latest quarantine trend or time management tips of working from home.

I want to come to you today with what I only know how to do in crisis. And that is to actually look at the way that Jesus lived. To not just read the words that he said or that he taught, but to see the way that he lived. And I just want to pass along some of the best things that I'm learning about Jesus.

So if you have a Bible with you, I would love to just invite you to get it out and turn to Mark, chapter 5. And today we're going to be looking at a story where Jesus performs a healing and when I read through this, you might be tempted to think that at some point that your going so see: Then Jesus took off. And then he just sprinted to the next place.

But what I want us to see and remember in this story is this:

Jesus did not run.

In the words of Kanye:

Jesus walked.

He did. He walked.

We're going to start in verse 21 of chapter 5, "*When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. He pleaded earnestly with him, 'My little girl is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.'* So Jesus went with him."

And then what happens next, I find so fascinating. Scripture says, "*A large crowd followed and pressed around him.*"

Just visualize that for a moment. A large crowd followed and pressed around him. See, for a large crowd to follow you and press around you, you have to be going at a pace where others can keep up with you, which is just so Jesus. He could have left everyone in the dust to complete this miracle that was really important, but instead his priority was for people to be with him.

He walked. Slowly enough to not only have people follow him, but also to know when he had been touched.

Let's keep reading in verse 25, "*And a woman was there who had been subject to bleeding for twelve years. She had suffered a great deal under the care of many doctors and had spent all she had, yet instead of getting better she grew worse. When she heard about Jesus, she came up behind him in the crowd and touched his cloak, because she thought, 'If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed.'* Immediately her bleeding stopped and she felt in her body that she was freed from her suffering.

“At once Jesus realized the power had gone out from him. He turned around in the crowd and asked, ‘Who touched my clothes?’”

So let’s just call this what this is—complete misery. This woman had to be desperate beyond what anyone can imagine. But that’s not even what sticks out to me. What sticks out to me is more of Jesus’ pace and his response. He was moving slowly enough to not only be touched by someone, but to stop and notice her. On his way to a dying girl who is in need of an actual healing he stops for someone else.

Can you imagine being Jairus in this moment and how he felt? His daughter is about to die. Like I imagine Jairus just being like, “Let’s move, Jesus. Come on. Pick up the pace.” And Jesus is just not in a hurry.

On his way to this critical mission to literally raise a girl from the dead, he walked at a pace that was in tune enough with God and with those around him to know when he needed to stop and heal someone else too.

I’m struck by just how fiercely present Jesus was. How he just wouldn’t let anything or anyone, even a medical emergency, rush him into the next moment. He was not going to hurry his way through this.

And so I think that some of us right now are trying to microwave a process that God has us in to try to get through the hard thing, get over the hard thing as quickly and efficiently as possible. And God is trying to remind us that it is actually about the process. It is actually about how we come to know him and be like him through the hard thing.

Let’s continue in verse 35, *“While Jesus was still speaking some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. ‘Your daughter is dead,’ they said, ‘Why bother the teacher anymore?’”* And then I love what Jesus says next. Overhearing what they just said Jesus told him, *“Don’t be afraid; just believe.”*

He then goes in and he only let’s a few people follow him, because only a few really have enough faith for him to do this miracle. And when they come to the house of the leader, he walked in and he took the child’s mother and father and the disciples, and he told the little girl to get up. And immediately she stood up and she began to walk around. She was 12 years old.

So, just as a recap, the woman that he had just healed had been sick for 12 years. And the girl he just healed was 12 years old. And by God's providence, he healed them both on the same day.

Just to clarify, Jesus waited 30 years to preach his first sermon and he only had three years to complete his ministry. And at this point he still had healings to come and he had the cross to endure.

I don't know about you, but if I knew that I had that little time to accomplish that many things, I would not be walking. I would have my google maps out, I'd be texting Jairus my eta, I'd be seeing if anybody else could come heal this woman, because I don't have time for that. I'd be looking around to make sure that I knew when dinner was going to be, because you have to have food, you know, at all times. I would not just be walking.

Can you imagine a stressed-out Jesus? A frantic Jesus? A multi-tasking Jesus? He stays present in the moment with the person right in front of him. And:

Jesus just walked.

Throughout the gospels you'll never see, "And then Jesus picks up the pace and ran." The only animal we even see Jesus on is a donkey. And donkeys do not run, they walk. Jesus took slow, deliberate steps that were toward his mission and he let himself be stopped along the way—not distracted or taken off course, but he was paying attention.

Half of the stories in the gospels are interruptions. And he's never agitated. And Jesus calls us to walk. His rootedness in this moment is because of his connectedness with God. It was the overflow of who he was. He put forward a new way to be a human being.

Jesus even went to retreat and to be alone with God when the pace of ministry picked up, during the busiest seasons we see him retreat and then we see him keep walking. This is the man who after one day on the job as Messiah went off to pray in the wilderness for 40 days.

I don't know what your current season of life looks like right now, and I don't know what the last two months have taken from you. And I imagine that it's been heart-breaking.

I also imagine that so many of us are in kind of one of two spectrums. And maybe some of us are in both on the exact same day. I imagine a lot of us are either stuck or we're striving.

When I say stuck, I mean"

At a standstill. You can feel the undercurrent of anxiousness, but stuck and unable to move. And maybe you're numbing with entertainment, addiction, and distraction so you can avoid taking a step, because it's all so hard.

And it is.

And maybe some of you have found yourselves striving:

Running at a frantic speed, unfocused, anxious. Numbing with busyness and more activity so you can avoid what's going on in your internal life.

But we see Jesus practiced this third way:

We can walk: We can go at a pace of presence, the Jesus way.

We can put one foot in front of another at a pace that others can keep up and keep us dependent upon God. And I've been both over the last two to three months. I've let fear hold me back from taking steps forward and I've been frantic at how much there is to do and how much there is to know.

But Jesus didn't shrink back, and he also didn't run. He walked in step with the Father through the power of God's Spirit.

See, I think our pace is usually a sign of something else. I think it's a sign of something deeper. It can be a symptom of something we're running away from—a childhood wound or a fear of the unknown, insecurity, or even simply just being bored and being terrified to let your own thoughts wander.

Or, maybe it's something that we're running to like a status or the next achievement or experience—searching for something that nothing on earth can give us, which is love, acceptance, and rest.

It can be scary to look at what's inside. And I imagine if you're anything like me, you've avoided it with some form of stuck or striving.

John Ortberg said it this way, "For many of us the great danger is not that we will renounce our faith. It is that we will become so distracted and rushed and preoccupied that we will settle for a mediocre version of it. We will just skim our lives instead of actually living them."

Let me ask you, what tendencies do you have that push you toward a life of striving or being stuck? Maybe you'd even be brave enough to share it in the chat or share it with the people who you are watching with right now.

I know for me in my core, from my own story, I somewhere deep down believe that no one is going to take care of me like I can take care of me. That somewhere I formed this belief that I have to hustle to prove my worth and to be okay. But a life of Jesus and a life with Jesus is this daily battle for me where I say, "Jesus, you own me. You own my rhythm, and my pace. I can trust you and I don't need to prove anything to anyone because of what you've done."

Not doing for God but being with him will be a daily struggle for probably the rest of my time on earth. And if I've learned anything over the last few years it's that life does not get easier, but God makes us stronger. We are not meant to strive or push or numb out until we get to heaven. We are meant to walk with and alongside Jesus, even, and especially, when it is hard.

So, I think we have two options in front of us today. I think we can continue to live and stay in a place of being stuck or striving, or I think we can practice a present, healthy, Jesus way of life. And that it is easier said than done.

But, some of you right now I know are like, "I am in. I am in. I want this Jesus way of life, but tell me how." If you are anything like me, you are like, "Yeah, that sounds beautiful, but just tell me how. How do I do this?"

And the best news is that Jesus taught us how. See, I notice time and time again in the gospels, Jesus is obsessed with our hearts. He is obsessed with our motives and why we do the things that we do. Even the most efficiency, ordinary things that we do, he wants to know, "Why? Why are you doing that?"

And Jesus knew that the place of all of this begins is when we are quiet, between just us and God. And he shows us this in how he prayed. Some of you are probably familiar with the Lord's Prayer. And I want to read the beginning of it for us to remind us, this is how Jesus taught us to pray. And in his prayer, he teaches us how to live, and he teaches us how God communicates with God. Here's just the beginning:

Our Father in Heaven,
May your name be kept holy.
May your Kingdom come soon,

May your will be done on earth,
As it is in heaven.

See, in Jesus' prayer, he reorders our desires so that we're not just thinking of ourselves first, but the first priority is God and his way, that his name would be the most important thing in our lives.

Our perspective shifts. We learn to seek God's glory and for his will to be done more than our own. But then he goes on to teach us how to learn to ache for the good of others, which is why the events of this last week hurt so deeply. Because when you follow the Jesus way you ache for the good of other people, you fight against injustice.

He teaches us how to pray that each person would have sufficient food, that everyone would find reconciliation with God through forgiveness of sin, and that we would be preserved by God's grace.

So, I just want to encourage you to ask yourself this week:

What would Jesus do if he were me?

Seriously, what he would do if he were you? And this doesn't have to be really complicated. It comes down to the very ordinary parts of our lives.

See, when we ask ourselves this question and we've been in a place of striving, we no longer have to keep working when the work day is done. We can choose to walk away and trust the good day's work because we know that God is in control.

We can choose to rest and go to bed when we need to because our bodies need sleep. We can choose to walk away from the constant stream of news, acknowledging that the more we know is not going to help us beat the pandemic, that more knowledge of this will not give us more control. And we can stop working because we can acknowledge that we cannot out-work this crisis.

And then on the other end, when you choose to not be stuck, you can get out of bed to face the day. You can choose a morning routine that will start your day in a place of trust and surrender and move you out of despair. You can choose to reach out to a family member or a friend or even one of us. We would love to talk with you and pray with you and care for you. And you can choose to not stay stuck, because you don't have to run, you can just walk.

See, I really believe that what we really need right now is not just a night out with friends, even though I think that would be incredible. We don't just need a time to

zone out on our phones, or a new exercise routine, or a new meal plan, or the perfect e-learning schedule, or even a stiff drink. What we need right now is time with the Father.

Even Jesus withdrew. The busier that ministry became and the more in demand he became, he withdrew and went off to a quiet place.

See, I think we have to remember where our ability to actually live spiritually healthy lives comes from. And I think the danger in this entire conversation is that we can either be incredibly depressed by how far we have to go. Or we can be deceptively inspired by how much we can achieve on our own.

Even Jesus knew where his power came from, and that was God. And when you choose to follow Jesus, the most beautiful part is that you receive the Holy Spirit so that you don't have to live by your own garbagy self anymore. You get to live with the power of the Holy Spirit.

One night a couple of years ago, it had been just one of those days in our house where everything was a mess. My husband was travelling for work. And I was juggling the kids and work and food and baths. I went up to put my daughter to bed and on my way up I just asked my son to pick up the downstairs, because it was a mess. And I put my daughter to bed and sang 5,000 *Frozen* songs.

And I came downstairs, and you already know that the living room was an even bigger mess. And I just snapped. Like, I lost it. And I yelled at him in a way that I'm not proud of and, to be honest, I had like a really scary mom voice—I'm sure that's not surprising to you, actually.

He immediately broke down and started crying and I knew I was wrong. I knew that I wasn't yelling at him because of his disobedience, but because of my sin and wanting to spend time alone and the inconvenience that this was causing me, that I had to pick up and to put him to bed.

So, on our way upstairs I knew, I'm like, "Okay, God I have to apologize." And my husband and I have just tried to say, "We know that we're not perfect parents, and that we are forgiven ones. So we are going to be people who apologize to our kids, even though that is really, really hard."

So I put him to bed, and I laid him down and I just said, "Kean, I'm so sorry. I was wrong and I should not have yelled at you." And he just looked at me and said,

“It’s okay, mommy, you’re just a sinner.” And I was like, “Fair. True. Thank you Kids’ Ministry for that.”

And then he just kind of paused and he was like, “Well, that’s why you need Jesus.”

And it’s true. That’s why I need Jesus. And you do too. We need the power of the Spirit of God. And the best part is, when we follow Jesus, we get to live a life with him.

See, one of my fears for those of us who are in a place of striving or being stuck is that we are in danger of losing our kingdom imagination. And what I mean by that is that in the Lord’s Prayer when Jesus says, “Your kingdom come,” it is an invitation to dream, to imagine a different way of life, and being.

It’s an invitation to imagine a different way than what currently is, to imagine a different way to think about people when they offend you, to think about money, to think about purity, to think about work, to think about our jobs—a new way to see our communities and our neighborhoods. A new way to think about pandemics.

God is looking for people that he can prove himself through, and we do not have to run. He’s called us to walk with Him. And this is good news because like really good bread, beautiful, real, and true things take time.

And our next season, whatever it is, is going to take some time. It’s going to require us to be people who will play the long game, who practice the way of Jesus, who go at a pace that is in step with him and with other people. We want to be people who can play the long game in our marriages, in our communities, in our fight against injustice, in our church. And to do this is going to require a healthy pace and a Jesus way of life.

And so, as we bake bread, as we have slower mornings, as we walk quieter streets, and as we go to bed at night because we’ve done all that we can do in that day and a new day is going to come tomorrow, let us remember this. The God of all creation goes before us, he is behind us, and he is within us. And we can just walk with him.

Let me pray.

Father God, I pray that we would be people who walk and live at a pace of presence with you. God, I pray today for those who are in a place of striving, that

they could take a moment to just examine what is going on inside and let you minister to their hearts.

And, God, for those who are stuck, I pray that they would know that you are with them and that we are with them.

And, Father, we just thank you for the opportunity to continue to learn from your word and to gather as a church all across the city and the world. And, Father, I pray that you would give us the power and the strength that we need to live at a healthy pace with you. In Jesus' name. Amen.