

Sunday Gathering Liturgy

How Do We Grow? Mark
4:26-32 - Bradley Bell

February 13, 2022

Membership: Unimpressive
But Authentic

**Length
in mins**

0:00 Call to Worship - Isaiah 55:6-11

Last Sunday we ended our gathering with these words: “May you go into a world of imposters kicked out and show them that there’s now a way back in.” That was so good—why don’t we start there today? Do you know that there is a way back in today, back into God’s presence? There are probably only a few in this room who already—right now—feel a deep sense of closeness to God. There is so much in a week’s time that can distract us, distance us from his presence. So strain your ear, and hear his call for you to enter back in:

6 “Seek the Lord while he may be found;
call upon him while he is near;
7 let the wicked forsake his way,
and the unrighteous man his thoughts;
let him return to the Lord, that he may have compassion on him,
and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.
8 For my thoughts are not your thoughts,
neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord.
9 For as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways
and my thoughts than your thoughts.

Now listen to the power of God’s word, the word that is being sent right now, inviting you to enter into his presence again:

10 “For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven
and do not return there but water the earth,
making it bring forth and sprout,
giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater,
11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth;
it shall not return to me empty,
but it shall accomplish that which I purpose,
and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it. Isaiah 55:6–11

--Short background on A Mighty Fortress Is Our God

0:00 *A Mighty Fortress Is Our God* [Boswell Arrangement in A]

**Length
in mins**

0:00 Confession - Psalm 126:5-6

Church, at this time I want to invite you to take a seat for just a moment. Over the past month we have emphasized how Family Groups are at the heart of our church. But what does that look like in someone's life? As an ongoing part of our worship this morning, Rayanne Turner is going to give testimony to how God has used her Family Group in her life:

Rayanne: I have been attending Antioch for about 10 years now. Most of that time I have been blessed by being a part of the Hunsucker family group. After coming to Antioch for about 2 or 3 years, I went through a very rough divorce. But God in his great goodness had woven together and surrounded me with this beautiful family. So, when the floor fell out from under me, I was held. I thought I would shatter into a million pieces, but I was held. This family, working as the hands and feet of Christ supported, loved, and accepted me. I felt the darkness surround me and they lifted up the light of Christ. I thought I was unlovable, but they showed me the love of Christ. And every time I thought, "Surely, they are tired of hearing about my pain, my problems, me, because I sure am" they welcomed me. Brad mentioned last week in his sermon that the cross doesn't waver. That we have to cling to the cross so that we don't get tossed to and fro by the waves of life. There were many times I didn't think I could hold on any longer, but my family group held me there. They picked me up, took me to the cross, and wrapped their arms around me and my arms around it. Every week we hold fast and are held fast because at the center of this family is the great unifier, Christ. We love each other because Christ. We bear with one another because of Christ. We are strong together because of Christ. And because of that history of strength and love and intentionality, I know I can walk in the door of my family group with whatever mess I've got. And now because they helped to strengthen me in Christ, I in turn get to help strengthen them. My dad once told me that God loves to fill empty things. What a blessing to take part in filling each other up in Christ week after week. Praise be to God!

Now let's respond by standing together and confessing this truth from Psalm 126. There the psalmist gives testimony on behalf of Israel about God rescuing them from their mess. Church, when we are faithful to sow into one another life and word and prayer, at first it may not seem like anyone is being transformed. But in time, God will cause those seeds to grow.

Those who sow in tears
will harvest with shouts of joy.
They weep as they go to plant their seed,
but they sing as they return with the harvest. Psalm 126:5-6, NLT

0:00 *Psalm 126* [Default Arrangement in C]

0:00 *He Will Hold Me Fast* [Default Arrangement in G]

0:00 **Sermon - Mark 4:26-32**

0:00 **Communion - 1 Corinthians 11:23-28**

0:00 *There Is A Peace* [Default Arrangement in A]

0:00 *I Will Wait For You (Psalm 130)* [Default Arrangement in A]

**Length
in mins**

0:00 Benediction - John 12:24; Mark 4:27

You may be seated. Thank you for joining us in today's gathering! We hope that you have experienced the welcome of Jesus.

Family Groups - This gathering is only a secondary part of the life of Antioch. We would love to have you in one of our Family Groups, where we seek to be transformed by the gospel through relationships. If you would like to join one of them, there is info in the hallway, or talk with one of us and we'll make a direct connection for you.

Giving & Visitors - Also now is our time for giving—ushers please come forward. If you prefer to give digitally, visit our website or find us on GivApp. Antioch members, we encourage you to give joyfully. If you are a visitor with us this morning please grab a visitor card from the basket so that we can get to know you more. You can give it to someone with a lanyard or leave it in your seat, and the pen is yours to keep.

For everyone, here are a few ways to take next steps (which first and always includes specific ways you can serve—see the servants wall in the hallway and take something off the plate of current leaders):

1) Membership Covenants - Membership covenants are still available on the side table. Previous members, we encourage you to read and reflect on the membership covenant and then sign and submit it. If you are interested in Antioch membership for the first time, let us know and we'll help you begin walking through the process.

2) Baptism emphasis - Baptism is the first step of obedience to Jesus for those who have put their trust in him. So we will have a baptism class next Sunday, February 20th at 9 AM in the Saplings Room for those interested in baptism. Please let us know if you're coming so we can prepare—there's a sign up sheet on the side table.

3) 9 AM Classes - We are excited to announce that 9 AM classes will start back next Sunday. That includes Young Disciples and Youth. Let me read an excerpt from the updated vision for these classes (which is also posted outside the Training Room):

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. (2 Tim 3:16-17). At Antioch believe the Bible invites us to see all of life through the lens of the gospel. Scripture also instructs us and the Spirit equips us to build one another up (Eph 4:16). Thus, in order to add to our faith virtue, knowledge, and ultimately love, we use Sunday morning classes to learn about the way of God through disciplined and collaborative study of Scripture (2 Peter 1:5-7)." (end quote)

The adult 9 AM class for the next several weeks will be a study through the book of Ruth facilitated by a couple of Antioch members. It will meet in the Training Room. There will be coffee and childcare available.

4) Food Pantry - Food Pantry is this coming Saturday. This is an important opportunity to develop relationships with our neighbors, and everyone is invited to come and serve. We need volunteers to arrive at 9:30 AM. Also, we need some servants to help pick up food and pack boxes on Friday. If you can help either day or have any questions, please see Bill Stayton.

We begin each gathering with a call to worship and we end with a benediction which simply is a reminder that we are blessed to be a blessing. I invite you to hold out your hands as a posture of receiving this blessing:

Church, Jesus Christ is the seed that fell into the ground and died, so that it now bears much fruit in you. Therefore, may you go out among hearts as hard as bunkers, sowing and sleeping and waiting for the day that they will explode to life in Christ. Based on John 12:24 and Mark 4:27

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Let's say this together: We are sent.

0:00