

WHO IS THE GREATEST

SERIES: REACH | WEEK 8 | 3.14.2021

I am who You say I am. Wow! Those are powerful words, powerful song.

You know, we're at the end of our REACH series, this is our last sermon, our last talk on the REACH series and we're going to be talking about identity. How important it is for us to know as God's children where our identity comes from. We're going to be in Matthew 18. You guys remember the story where the disciples asked Jesus who's the greatest? That kind of cringy moment where it's like how could they possibly be asking this question? There's a lot the Lord has to say to us this morning.

But welcome! Hey, if you're joining us online, we're so glad you're here. Good job getting up early with the – man, the sun wasn't even up this morning when I got up. We lost that whole hour, but – so good job everyone, give yourselves a pat on the back for making it here. Hey, if you're new here as well, we'd love for you guys to come to our Connect class today. If you're in the room, if you go to the back of the seat you can just use your little phone and go on that QR code for Next Steps. Connect class is a time where we can get all the pastors get together; we do it on Zoom, just about 45 minutes long, just to get to know you, you get to know us. So if you haven't done a Connect class yet, it's a very low bar, very easy thing to do, you could actually have kids running around in the background, you could have your PJs on if you'd like. Very easy time just getting to know one another, so we'd love for you guys to join us.

So we're in this REACH series and we've been going through Matthew 18, so I'd love to just open up right there and that's where we're going to start, Matthew 18, it's gonna be [verses]1-5. What we're gonna do this morning, we're actually just gonna, we're gonna look at just one verse at a time and we're gonna go verse by verse through the Scriptures. I've been mulling around this passage for about a month now, my quiet times in the morning and I come back and forth from it, there's so much there. There's a lot of surprises that come out that really have been speaking to my own heart, my own life: Where's my identity found? Because as we want to be a people—found people go and find people—that's what this REACH series has been all about.



We challenged you guys to do the door knockers. We actually have a pretty sweet announcement at the end of the sermon, I'm gonna be bringing Pastor John up. Something we've been working on for over six months now to help our church take some next steps in our local ministries. I'm really excited about it, but you'll have to wait just a few minutes. But in order for us to be a found people that finds people, our posture—there's a certain posture we need to have—and that posture is rooted in Christ. How can we, can you imagine being a people, can you imagine being a church that's known for having our identities be not in all the different things that this world has to offer but our identity is in Christ? If you are that person on a daily basis—I want to be that person, daily basis I find my identity in Christ—it would change everything. It would change how we interact with one another. It would change how we interact with our neighbors, how we interact with people at work, if you just had the security and the stability that comes from knowing who you are. I am who You say I am, that's a wonderful song. Thank you worship team. You know, before we get going, clap for the worship team because they just led us wonderfully this morning. [APPLAUSE]

Let me read it for us and then we're going to get into this, Matthew 18, verse 1:

¹ At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" ² And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them ³ and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the

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kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

⁵ "Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me,"

– MATTHEW 18:1-5 (ESV)

First verse, first point: *"At that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?"* First response emotionally when you hear the disciples asking that, it feels a little abrasive, doesn't it? On one hand, it's like how could you even ask this question to Jesus, "Who's the greatest?" Haven't you been spending time, haven't you been seeing Jesus? We've been just going through Matthew and listening to the stories of how Jesus is changing lives and how clearly He's Messiah. They were living it face to face with Jesus. In another account in the gospels¹ it says what? It says they were arguing about it. So Jesus' disciples at this moment are arguing amongst themselves saying who's the greatest. Like, how dare they on one hand; how dare they ask that question. Right?



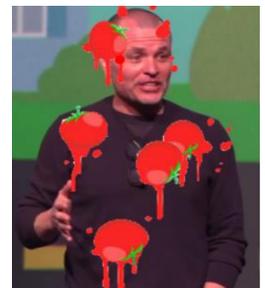
Think about it on the other hand though, think about who they're asking, they're actually asking the right person. They're not going to Rome, they're not asking Caesar or Herod who's the greatest, they're actually asking Jesus.

They were pretty close, they were very close to asking the right question because they were asking it to the right person, but this creates a warning in my own heart for us as believers.

Even if we're coming to church and even if we're going to Scripture and we're asking Jesus, "Who do You say that I am?" you can still just get it a little bit wrong. It's a slippery slope, it's very easy to mistakenly ask the right question but get the wrong answer. If you notice, Jesus doesn't even rebuke them. Wouldn't you think that the story would have been that they asked, "Hey, Jesus, who's the greatest?" that maybe like, "Get behind me, Satan. Stop asking those foolish questions." That's, I kind of, my initial response intuitively, that's what my expectation would be, the next sentence would be. But He doesn't rebuke them, He redirects them.

Do you remember Dani was up here last week and Dani was telling the story of his rich friend and the rich man, going through the eye of the needle and how difficult that is to do? If you go, that's in Luke,² and if you go to the next sentence, good old Peter, the Apostle Peter, what he does is he goes to Jesus next and he goes, "But Jesus, what about us? We gave up everything to follow You. We gave up homes and we gave up our jobs."³ And do you remember what Jesus did next? He says, "I rebuke you, Peter. Get behind me, Satan. Stop asking those questions."

Okay, you should be throwing tomatoes at me if, you know, because that's not what Jesus did. You would imagine that He would. Jesus doesn't rebuke Peter for asking that question. He says, "No, Peter, you're right. You will receive tenfold everything that you give up in this world." Peter, the disciples, even though our first thought is, this is, *How could they be asking this; arguing about this?* Our God is a God who rewards. That is part of His character, God will reward us. Imagine if we're a people who went to Jesus to ask this question, think of all that God did with these disciples. Asking Jesus who's the greatest and who do You say that I am, Jesus, how can I be great in your Kingdom is not all bad. Jesus knows



"Okay, you should be throwing tomatoes at me"

¹ See Luke 9:46-48

² See Matthew 19:24, Mark 10:25, Luke 18:25

³ Luke 18:28-30 (ESV): ***And Peter said, "See, we have left our homes and followed you." And he said to them, "Truly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or wife or brothers or parents or children, for the sake of the kingdom of God, who will not receive many times more in this time, and in the age to come eternal life."***

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our hearts; He knows how finicky our hearts are. Each one of us looking for validation, we want identity, we're constantly looking for identity in all sorts of places. You think for yourselves right now, I'm sure you could come up with a whole bunch of different ways that you might find your identity; whether it's work, whether it's through the size of your house, whether it's through your job title, all sorts of ways for us to find our identity—easily slippery slopes. Jesus knows our hearts and the crazy thing is God knows how we tick and He's like, "It's okay. Rob, it's okay."

Imagine if I lived my life what kind of person I would be if all I cared about was God's rewards in Heaven. I would be – how would my day change? Imagine if we as a people cared about those sort of things. It's close though. The strange thing about Christianity—who's the greatest—another thing that makes me think with these disciples as they're asking this question, you can still get it wrong in a Christian subculture. Just because we're Christians doesn't mean that we still can't get it wrong in our own culture. Christianity might not be popular to pop culture, but there's enough of Christians, enough Christianity out there, enough church, that it's very easy for us to fall into finding our identities within the church. Close, but no cigar. Instead of finding our identities in Jesus, we find our identities in maybe the talents that He's given us, find our identity in our abilities, or even our titles or what position. Am I a good teacher? Am I a good mentor? Very easy.



The first time I remember thinking this, about the Christian subculture, I was at this Christian festival in New Jersey. So I lived in Jersey for a number of years. A number of you have probably been to Creation Festival here in Pennsylvania, there's one in Jersey called Revelation Generation and it was great. I knew the owners and, you know, a couple 10,000 people would show up for it. And one way or another I ended up getting up on the stage to give an announcement and say a few words and I got to interact with some of these some of these Christian stars, some bands that we would all know the names of. And the fellow that was emceeding, I won't say his name, it just struck me because as I got up there and I was interacting with him up on stage I could just tell that he just reeked of alcohol.

I'm not going against drinking alcohol, everybody, I'm just going against that he was an emcee up on stage at a Christian festival, just reeked of alcohol. And it struck me, I was like, *Wait, okay, I'm not judging him, that's fine, drinking alcohol, but as an emcee – something's wrong here.* My – it just didn't compute in my brain. I went to my little booth again, I'm standing at my little booth, I was running a ministry in Jersey, just standing there watching and thinking and the Lord is just striking me at the heart. Like, *Rob, there is still a lot of false identity that you could find within Christianity, that you get close, but no cigar.*

How about all these fallen speakers? Ravi Zacharias, I know many of you guys know about Ravi, how Ravi fell. He was this great, great apologetic theologian, like, below Billy Graham, like one of the most well-known Christian speakers in the world and he fell, sexually he fell. For years the pressure, where was he finding his identity? I'm not trying to give a full example exhaustive understanding what happened to Ravi, but part of it for sure had to do with identity. Part of it had to do – we've had history of speakers falling and great names, Christian stars out there, who have fallen one way or another. Get close, but no cigar. Let's bring it home a little bit though, from the guy standing on the stage that everyone's listening to [FORCEFULLY EXHALES], let me get personal. This is, it can be hard getting up on stage and speaking to everybody. It's a funny thing to be able to do in a church to get up front and speak and have some level of confidence and open up Scriptures to you all. It's a funny wrestling match that goes on in the speaker's heart.



[FORCEFULLY EXHALES]
...let me get personal

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I'll tell you another story, it was back in Jersey at my old church and I hadn't yet spoken up on the stage. And there was a fella that I was trying to get to know, he was a friend of a friend, I was new to the church. And I went and I introduced myself three or four times to him, "Hey, my name's Rob. I'm friends with so-and-so, you know, we should be friends, too." Just never remembered my name, like, didn't even recognize me three or four times, I was just this young guy walking in. And then I spoke for the first time and all of a sudden he's like shaking my hands, like, "Hey, let me introduce myself." I'm like [WITH OUTSTRETCHED ARMS], *Bro! I'm the same guy! I'm the same guy here, just because I could speak.* There's so many ways that each one of us can fall into that trap.

That's not what the church is meant to be about. There's so many traps that we could fall into just like the disciples because our hearts are prone for validation and identity. It's great if you teach a Bible study and people tell you, "Man, you're a great teacher." Or, "Oh, man, you guys, you serve so much. Thank you for serving. You're one of the best servers I know in the whole church. You're constantly here serving." "Oh, the doors are open, you're always here. You must be a great person that you're always here at the church." How about this one, "Oh, I will never pray like you. You pray so eloquently."

Judgment – anytime we judge somebody else it's an identity issue as well. Much of our issues in our culture right now have to do with identity. The race issue: Is our identity in the color of our skin or is it in our relationship with Jesus? If we got this one right, we could have much more intelligent conversations about this one as long as we're basing it on this one. What about our politics? "I cannot believe you voted for that guy, I would never do that." "I can't believe you wear – or you don't wear – a mask, I would never do that." There's self-righteousness in identity issues. I'm not saying we don't talk about masks, I think we should be the best talking about politics amongst ourselves. Christians should be able to talk about politics. Christians should be able to talk about race. Christians should be able to talk about the pandemic—together—because we're not basing our identity on these things. If we're basing our identities on who Jesus says that we are, the whole conversation changes and it brings freedom, it brings life.

If you're good at something out there, I'm not saying I'm a good speaker but you don't see me running away from a gift that God has given me. It's like if there's a color, if there's a room in your house, ladies, many of you love to paint the rooms in your house. My wife loves painting all our rooms. If there's a room in your house that you hate the color of it, the thing you don't do is shut the door and leave and hope that miraculously the color of that room will change. You open up the door, you get out the paint cans, you go to Home Depot, you drag your husband along, you look at the splatches, you tape them up on the wall, you spend a lot of time strategizing. What color will the couches be? What color will the trim be? You think about it and then you get in there and you get dirty, that's how things change.



So if you're sitting here right now and there's something, whether it's in the church or it's at work or it's in your neighborhood, if there's something that God is poking on your heart about that you're finding your identity in this area, which I imagine it should be every one of us because that's our fleshly sinful nature, what you don't do is just say, "Forget it. I'm gonna stop doing that thing." You say, "No, Lord, You've given me this ability, You've given me the strength, I'm gonna stay in there but I'm going to keep a close watch on it because I know it's a slippery slope." Continue to go to Jesus to ask who is the greatest, He's the only one that can answer that question for us. That's the posture as Christians for us to have with one another as we communicate and connect, but as we interact with the world out there.

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Let's go on. Verse 2: "*And calling to him a child,*" —you see, Jesus is going to redirect their question, He's not rebuking them— "*And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them.*" My first observation is this sentence could have, it seems like it could have been left out of this narrative. He could have gotten right into the answer because the next words are gonna be *truly*, "*Truly*," Jesus says; when Jesus says "truly" you listen up. Truly – listen up. But we have this sentence in there where it says Jesus called some children to Him. There's a color commentary that Matthew's giving us about Jesus that gives us some insight into the character and nature of Jesus who knows who He is, He knows His identity, and He's the example of masculinity that all of us men should be aspiring to.

If you get the identity issue wrong, often what men turn into is these fearful-looking guys that are intimidating and they're putting up walls to protect who they are because they don't know who they are. But this picture we have of Jesus is a man who children freely come to, that's a man. His identity, He's not concerned that little kids have fun with Him and enjoy Him. Have you guys seen *The Chosen*? Oh, this picture of Jesus and the chosen, His interaction with the kids; I thought it was going to be a chick flick and whatever, but my wife and I watched it just in tears this picture of Jesus who just loves children. This picture of Jesus that they were all getting wrong thinking there was going to be this conquering Davidic Messiah who's coming to take over the world with horses and cannons or whatever, bows and arrows, that they're going to do, but you have this meek Man who's strong. That's this picture of Jesus where the kids are coming to Him and He enjoys the kids. Just a little side commentary, a little color commentary on Jesus.



Going on, He says, "*Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*" Truly – listen up. As a church we say we're Christ-first church, the importance of Scripture and Jesus and everyone having the opportunity to hear about Jesus. Years ago I was in a little church in Upstate New York, it's a little Presbyterian church, and a little, old lady in my church was my Sunday school teacher, Aunt Dottie we'd called her. She hated when we call her Aunt Polka Dottie, that was very rude, so we didn't say Aunt Polka Dottie too often. She was a farmer's wife and she asked me this question as a young man, she's like, "Rob, what does the Bible say about getting into Heaven? Explain to me how somebody gets into Heaven." I was frustrated at the moment. I was a young teenager. I was like I've been going to church for a long time, seems like I should be able to answer this question—help little, old ladies across the street, don't say the f-word, [THROWS HIS HANDS UP] I didn't know, I was frustrated. But the beauty and the simplicity when someone explained the simplicity and the beauty of the Gospel, my mind was blown and forever changed. It reshaped my whole view of reality and it has ever since.

We're getting a beautiful picture right here. He says, "*Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*" Becoming like a child, the dependence. If you're out there right now and you can't for sure say that you know Jesus, it's a simple beauty that will change your life. It's not about following rules, it's not about helping little, old ladies across the street, or coming to church every Sunday, or knowing when to stand up and sit down, or how to pray eloquently, or how to study the Bible or teach the Bible—that's not Christianity. That's not the basis. The basis is a pure and simple dependence on Jesus where you look at Scripture and you look at the way that we're supposed to be living and you're just able to say, "I can't live this way. I am broken." And the only way to be in the Kingdom of Heaven is if, like a child, I say to my Daddy, "Please save me. I can't do it." The simple beauty of Christianity in one sentence. Jesus, like a child, like a child crying in the back and on cue perfectly [LAUGHTER], says thank you.

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"Whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven." So what does this really mean – humbling himself like a child? For sure we're not talking about every characteristic of a child here, we're talking about the humility, we're talking about the dependence. Children are not pure and sinless. If you're a parent, you know that you've never had to teach your child how to be bad, [HE LAUGHS] it just comes naturally, it just comes naturally. You have to teach them how to share. You have to teach them how to be helpful. Some kids are more compliant than others. It's an issue of dependence; it's an issue of humility. If you heard what David was saying earlier about worship and the freedom to worship, a child has freedom in life. Become like a child, Jesus says, live with freedom. No worries. No concerns over social status, don't care about what other people think about me.

How many of you guys had kids that loved to run around naked? Just freedom running around naked. We had a meeting back in the back room a couple weeks ago, some of us who were talking about how we could be a more friendly, inviting church when new people come, and it was a family-friendly meeting. We had food together, it was a crazy mess, and the kids sat well for about 10 minutes and we had a nice conversation, a little longer than that, they did great. But then once the parents stood up and the kids went into the room right next door, as the parents are chatting and you've got all these toddlers running around, all these little kids, and we looked over and the ring leader's got them all standing on a round table. They all got up on a round table and they were jumping off the table into a bean bag. Just pure unadulterated, unawareness of everything going on, just pure freedom and joy that had no wisdom associated with it at all. And so, hey parents, you can do whatever you want but those are your kids, you're here with them. But these kids just had freedom to run. And half of them if they were allowed would probably be naked jumping off the table because there's this freedom.

When we know who Jesus says that we are there's a freedom that we'll experience, a satisfaction in life that's available to you daily. Freedom. Jesus is powerful. God is powerful. We're His children and He's not a Father who's a deadbeat. Our God is not a deadbeat. He has power. He has authority over all things. You can trust in Him today. Even if you became a Christian like I did when I was seven years old, daily you can trust in Him and have freedom. You are who He says you are. When you receive Him, you become His child adopted for eternity.

Imagine if we were a people who found our identity in Jesus, that freedom that was associated with it but we didn't mix it with just recklessness or an unawareness of our surroundings that we're jumping off the tables into the bean bags. But if we mixed it with wisdom and careful thought over how God might use us as a church, us as individuals to impact eternity forever and ever. Imagine if that's who we are. Might we be that people in the midst of this pandemic as hungry hearts are walking out of their doors and are waking up right now just disheveled and unaware. I have people who haven't left their house in over a year that I know. This is a moment when people are gonna utterly understand their need for Jesus and usher into them their identity. The freedom that comes with that—what might that look like?

Verse 5: ***"Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me."*** How we treat those who are in humble circumstances shows what we think of the nature of Jesus. As a church we've been hard at work for over six months now. March 14th was the deadline, we needed to be prepared and do our hard work to unveil to you all how we as a church are going to put every effort into being a church that cares and partners well in our local community. This is just one way. We want to be a church that cares well for our neighbors and reaches out to them. We want to be a church that cares well for one another and when we have needs, when one of us is in humble circumstances, how can we help one another do that? But we also want to be a church that partners well with good and faithful local ministries in the area. There's a lot of great ones. Pastor Johnny, come on up here. I love calling Pastor Johnny, we're like brothers. I'm the only one allowed to call him Johnny besides his mom, and, uh...

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John: Good morning, church! [CHURCH REPLIES: "GOOD MORNING!"] Thanks, guys.

Rob: We've been working hard, right, John? We gotta show everybody we not only had an idea, we had staff come together and key volunteers come together. We interviewed all the local ministries in the area, there's a lot of great ones, we interviewed them, brought them in, had Zoom calls with them. We based it on five criteria. We said they [COUNTS THEM OFF ON HIS FINGERS] need to be: (1) Christ-centered, Gospel, (2) meet a foundational need, (3) the ability for you and our small groups to get involved, (4) a place that you would bring non-Christian friends with you to join, (5) and then a posture where they're willing to collaborate with us and have a conversation. Those were our five criteria.

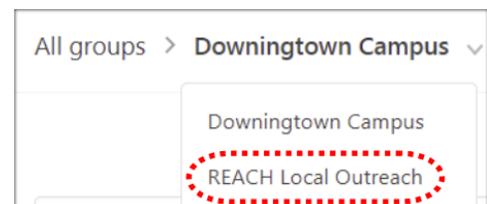
So we interviewed Chester County Women's Services, Chester County Gospel Mission, Good Sam, Good Works, BACC [Bridge Academy and Community Center]. And so our goal was to come up with two of them that we as a church can say yes, we're behind them, how can we help them serve our community? The Lord has provided many people and many resources in our church, so what can we do? We wanted to make it easy and so that's where John came in. John came in easy, I haven't even told them who we chose yet, John. Can I give you the big honor to let them know?

John: Yes. So we

Rob: So I'll hand it to you.

John: so we've really, out of those criteria, we really landed on two that we're really excited about, Good Works, which has already been an amazing partner for years with our church, and the BACC in Coatesville, which actually was birthed from Calvary and just doing amazing things within the City of Coatesville. And so with that said, all throughout the REACH series we kind of had an ask in the beginning individually to say hey, listen, we would like you to use these door hangers to reach out to your neighbors, reach out to the people around you. And now we're going to say listen, we would love for you to reach out to the needs of our community as well as the needs of our local outreach organizations and to partner with them. And really the question that we're asking you is: Are your small groups, are your families, are you available to do the work of Jesus?

And so that's really what we're going to do and we're going to have tools to help you, we're gonna show them real quick to you. So we have two tools we want to introduce to you. One is our Care page, and two, is kind of how you're gonna be able to see the needs of these local communities through our partnership. And so what you see behind me is actually our group platform, so if you have an app or if you go to our website under Communities you can see all the different groups. We actually started a brand new category called REACH Local Outreach in which you can go on and you can see needs from Good Works and BACC. And so we partnered with the leaders and we said hey, listen, this is going to be a place where we're going to ask you what your needs are and then we're going to empower our people, our communities, to sign up for those needs.



Communities → All Groups → drop-down menu – select REACH Local Outreach

John: And so for some of these they only need 10 people, for some of these they're looking for just 5 or 10, but as a family or as a small group you can go onto our platform and just call out an opportunity to maybe meet a need. So whether it's with Good Works and you want to sign up for a day, you can just sign up right there on the app and you'll be able to connect with the Good

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Works representative and they'll plan your small group to come for a day and help with the – we actually have a house for Good Works that we're building right now.

Rob: Yeah, our Calvary church has a house that a bunch of guys—maybe you're watching out there, maybe you're in the room right now—are actually coming alongside a family and helping to rebuild a house locally and we've been doing that for a long time. I had no idea. And then BACC, like you were saying, that started back with the Bridge ministry a number of years ago.

John: Yes.

Rob: They started the Bridge Academy in Coatesville. So we have a rich history here that we're all rediscovering—why can't we just come alongside them and help them out in amazing ways? So, the easy thing to do, this is the easiest way to keep track, we're going, to have a Cares Message Board on Church Center. So if you have the Church Center app, you're halfway there. If you haven't yet downloaded the app or gone on the website, download the Church Center app and all you have to do is look for Cares. Type in "Cares" in the filter and then join that group. And so this Message Board is going to stick around for a long time, it's not going away, just like our Prayers Message Board.

If you have a prayer request you want people to pray about, you can go on there and you can shoot prayer requests out there. And people have been using it constantly. It's been amazing. This Cares Message Board will be hey, somebody in your small group has a real critical accident going on and our group can't cover all their needs, but we should get this person on a food, you know, where everyone makes dinner for them.

John: Right.

Rob: And so that's what we could do with this. Or there's a little, old lady in your neighborhood who needs help moving a refrigerator, or somebody in our church who needs help moving a refrigerator and you can't help her, put it on there, maybe there's a small group, maybe our millennial group up in Spring City will say, "Okay, come on, boys, this Saturday let's go help grandma move a refrigerator." There's no way.

I've also had a number of times where people have called up and said, "Hey, I'm moving across town and I have a great set of couches, is there anybody in your church in need of couches?" And we haven't had any way to distribute that information, so this Cares Message Board will now be a way to distribute that information. Hopefully it's fairly intuitive to you. It's not going to go away but I just invite you to go take a look and just hit "Join." It's not going to make you buy anything or do anything, you're just going to get to see the Cares Message Board from now on. Cool, John? Any other thoughts?

REACH Local Outreach – Overview

- **Adopt a Night for small groups/individuals**
Mondays and Wednesday 5-7pm
- **Good Works Construction Day #1**
Saturday, April 10, 8am-4pm
- **Good Works Construction Day #2**
Saturday, April 17, 8am-4pm
- **Good Works Construction Day Lunch #1**
Saturday, April 10, Noon to 1pm
- **Good Works Construction Day Lunch #2**
Saturday, April 17, Noon to 1pm
- **Monthly Distribution Collections**
Distributions: 3rd Thursday each month
Donations: 2nd Thursday each month
- **Spring Work Day at the Bridge**
Saturday, 8am-Noon
- **Spring Work Day at the Camp at Old Mill**
Awaiting potential dates
- **Women's Retreat Service Opportunities**
Dinner: Friday, May 7
Breakfast: Saturday, May 8
Lunch: Saturday, May 8
Dinner: Saturday, May 8
- **Work Evening at the Bridge**
Late May, early June

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John: Yeah, and really, from our small groups this page is going to be something that if you're small group, really, we want our small groups to care for each other. We want to have church in a smaller environment

Rob: Right.

John: where we're taking care of each other, taking care of our needs, but if you are in your small groups and you're having a discussion and you find a need that's maybe greater than what your small group

Rob: Right.

John: can meet, let the church know so we can rally behind each other. Really, the Acts 2 model of everyone taking care of everyone, and then also spreading into the local communities. And so these are the tools. This is actually, behind me, this is the Care page, what it looks like, how you join, uh, you get opportunities to have different conversations within that tool, but really, our biggest prayer is that, again, we would be available. Let me just put on a little convicting thing. I was praying the other day about, like, my availability and how many of you have ever had this conversation? Like, I know God wants me to serve but I just don't have time. Anybody have that? Be honest. Okay. Here's what I want you to do because this is what happened to me. Go to your phones and go to how much you spent on entertainment and social media.

Rob: [GROANS] Oh-ho-oh.

John: All right?

Rob: No, John.

John: Just look at that and then say that prayer again and say, "Okay, God, you know what, I have time. Shape my heart" – seriously, right? – "shape my heart to want to do these things, to be drawn out, to reach out, to share."

Rob: And this is just a one-time thing.

John: Yes.

Rob: If you're joined to help out with BACC,

John: It's a one-time thing.

Rob: It's a one-time thing, that's all you're signing up for.

John: Right.

Rob: So encourage you guys all to do that. John, can you pray for everybody?

John: Absolutely.

Rob: And worship next.

Father,

We pray right now for You, Lord, and You know my heart goes back to this availability, Father. We know that we're busy but we know that we're called. And Lord, I know that there are times where we don't want to, we don't want to spread the love of Jesus, the hope of Jesus, we just want to stay comfortable, stay safe. But Lord, I thank You that Peter didn't do that. I thank You that You didn't do that, Jesus, that You came down and rescued us. And so Lord, I pray for a spirit of busyness that's for the Kingdom to come over our church. Lord, I pray that



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we would meet our needs; that no one in this church would be without a need met. Lord, I pray that our local organizations would fill a flood of people that love Jesus to come over and meet their needs as they're spreading the Kingdom throughout our community. Lord, make us available for the Kingdom, Jesus. So we worship, we praise You, and we reflect on as Pastor Rob shared, Lord, You are the greatest and we are privileged to be part of your story. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

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