GOD'S RESCUE PLAN

A Journey Through Exodus

The Punchline

Prioritize God first, and He'll prioritize the rest

Recap

- ★ Israelites held captive by Pharaoh
- ★ Moses called to lead the people out
- ★ God sends the plagues
- ★ God parts the Red Sea for the Israelites escape
- ★ Israelites had struggles
- **★** God gave the 10 Commandments

Catch Up

- ★ God gives more details on the commandments
- ★ Moses goes up to the mountain to confirm the covenant
- ★ Moses has the tablets with the laws
- ★ He has been gone for a long time

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."

Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me." So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt."

When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD." So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry.

Then the Lord said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, 'These are your gods, Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.'

<u>Israel's Idol</u>

- ★ They want a god they can see
- * Aaron "fashions" a god from gold
- ★ Young bull symbol of strength and power
- ★ They also have a festival to "honor" the god

<u>ALGEBRA</u>

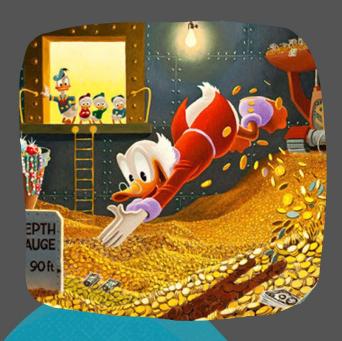
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"TO SOLVE IT BE LIKE A MIDDLE
SCHOOLER AND DO THE OPPOSITE"
-MR. LECHNER

Our Idols

- ★ Idol image or representation of a god used as an act of worship
- ★ Idolatry extreme admiration, love, or reverence for something or someone
- ★ We prioritize our idols before prioritizing God

MONEY



POSSESSIONS





Possessions

- **★** What
 - Lots of something
- ★ How
 - All our time is about getting more or keeping up what we have
- **★** Why
 - Desire to want more or be better

Money

- **★** What
 - It's everywhere in society
- * How
 - Everything is about getting more or keeping what we have
- **★** Why
 - Lack of trust

Money and Possessions

- **★** What happens
 - We lose trust in God
 - We lose contentedness in God
 - Put trust in God and take it away from God

"Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me?"

Lifestyle/Routine

- **★** What
 - The way you live your life
 - The focus on someone else's lifestyle
- * How
 - Chase these before chasing God
 - NEED to check the boxes
 - Lifestyle becomes our identity

"DOIN THIS"



"I'D STILL BE DOIN THIS
IF I WASN'T DOIN THIS"



Lifestyle/Routine

- **★** Why
 - Control
 - Need to know what happens
 - Peace and comfort
- **★** What happens
 - Confine Jesus to a box
 - Seek peace in a lifestyle rather than peace in Jesus

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

NO RUSH





TIME

JUST SIT AND BE



Time

- **★** What
 - How much we have and use it
- ★ How
 - Covet it and obsess over it
 - The factor behind many decisions

Time

- **★** Why
 - We don't believe we have enough
 - It's valuable
- **★** What happens
 - We miss things
 - We miss God's actions, words, and presence

"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens."

Wrap Up

- **★** Think about your priorities
- ★ Where do you put God?
- ★ What keeps you from putting God at the top?
- **★** Put God at the top of the list
- ★ Prioritize God and He'll take care of the rest

Audio file Idols Audio.mp3

Transcript

First priority, when I get up in the morning, usually I have to go. I try to go like Ninja Stealth mode and get out of the bed without waking Stacy up. I'm the early riser of the family, plus I like my alone time in the morning when it's. So I try to like slither out of bed and grab like my hoodie and my warm sweatpants. And then I had right, it's to the coffee pot. It's to turn the hot water out of my. Compressor. So turn the hot water on. Let that get hot. Get the coffee going. And then I go out to my dad chair in the living room and start the day. Right. We all have priorities when we get up in the morning. When we realize it or not. Maybe we just want to stay in bed. Maybe we're going to get going. Whatever it is, there's something that we do to start. There's a priority to it. They're also priorities. In life, we all have these as well. Priority lists are important, right? I remember specifically, we moved in to our House 10 years ago now and it was like prior to what are we gonna do? First is we're unpacking or what do we gotta do? We gotta set a list. Right. Priority lists are important. We all have. Priorities. So if you haven't guessed by the number of times I've said the word priority this morning already, that's what we're going to focus on today. Except I'm attack a word on with priorities or what we make priorities. That's going to be the word idle. We're gonna talk about idols today because the Israelites are going to struggle with idolatry and the fact is the Israelites struggled with. It but we struggle with it today as well. It may not be in the same way and we're going to get to that in a little bit, but we also struggle with idolatry and I think where I came up with as I was thinking about this is that we tend to sometimes turn the things that we prioritize first or at the top we can turn them into idols if we're not careful. So what I want to kind of hit is the punchline today is is prioritize God first, and he'll prioritize the rest. Prioritize God first. He'll prioritize the rest. So make God your top priority and let him prioritize the rest. Alright, so we're going to hit that today. In Exodus, we only have two weeks left in kind of our overview of Exodus. It's this week and then next week then after Thanksgiving we will jump into a traditional themes of Advent series as we head towards Christmas. But let's recap Exodus up to this point. Again, I would encourage you to read the Book of Exodus. There's a lot there. Super good. We've just done kind of a broad overview, but to catch you up, we started out with the fact that the Israelites were held captive by Pharaoh in Egypt. They were slaves, not. Right. Moses was called through the burning Bush to lead God's people out of slavery and captivity. As he's going to fair to approach fair to say, let us go, Farah won't do it. God sends all the different plagues, 10 in total. Eventually they leave. They're out there in the wilderness. They have to cross the Red Sea. They look trapped. God opens the Red Sea. Kind of the backdrop here to our our slides here the sea parts. The Israelites go across the Egyptians. Greg, catch up to him. The sea fills back up. The Egyptians are killed, right? Should be all good here. God just saved their lives. But. As human nature kind of goes, the Israelites have struggles and they start to grumble about it. They don't have any food. They're low on water. It things were getting difficult, but God's presence was still with them in the desert. Right. And then last week we talked about the 10 Commandments. God finally got his people to himself. He finally was going to clarify what it meant to be his chosen people. And he gives these commandments, which are, like kind of moral ways of living as a response to the fact that God saved them. Right. And that's what we had on last week. Now last week the 10 commanders

were found mostly in Exodus 20. Today we're going to jump all the way to Exodus chapter 32. So I'm going to do a quick little ketchup, kind of what happens in those 12 verses that we're not touching on and really what hits is God expounds on the 10 Commandments a little more. He talks more about idols. Talks about other laws and guidelines talks about how to handle Hebrew servants and what happens if you unintentionally injure somebody in the protection of property. So he's talking about all this. Then an exit is 24. Kind of starts setting up today. Moses heads up the mountain to confirm the covenant with God, and God starts giving instructions on the building of the Tabernacle, which will be the place of worship for the Israeli people. Now there's a lot of detail in these sections about how to construct it, what it should look like, all this good stuff, but it finishes. With Moses having the tablets with the laws and instruction on them, the issue and where we get to today is this. Moses has been gone for a long time. He's been gone for a long time and this starts to get at the Israelites, so that's we're going to dive into today as Exodus 32. We're going to read verses one through 8 and kind of see what's going on here. It'll be up here on the screen behind me. Also, bookmark there in your Bibles. But let's read. Exodus 32 versus one through 8. It says this. When the people saw that Moses was so long and coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, come make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us out of Egypt, we don't know what's happened to him. Aaron answered them. Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and daughters are wearing. And bring them to me. So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a. Cool. Then they said. These are your gods, Israel. Who brought you? Up out of Egypt. When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced tomorrow there will be a festival to the Lord. So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. After where they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry. Then the Lord said to Moses, go down because your people whom you have brought up out of Egypt have become corrupt. They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idle cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said these are your gods, Israel who brought you up out of Egypt. We will stop there. Moses has been gone up the mountain for a long time. The people get impatient. Wears this leader who let us out, right. And they're not saying this nicely. Like, hey, where's this great leader who led us? It's like, where's this guy? It's a coarse, indignant tone towards Moses. They're getting frustrated with him. Also, they said Moses, who brought us out of Egypt, they've already are not recognizing the fact that it was God that brought them out. So they're all ready straying. Right. What they want is they want a visible God. They want a God. They can see a God with a face. That's right there in front. Of him, but they. Also pluralize it. It says gods. This gives way to the fact that the worship of multiple gods for them is coming. This was the old way that the Egyptian way, not the worship of God. So Aaron tells him all right. Bring me all the gold jewelry that that you've been wearing. This is probably gold taken from Egypt. He then fashions it into a calf from the goal. Now, this isn't shouldn't be thought of like, oh, this is a cute little baby calf. No, this is better. Translated to a young bull. This is a symbol of strength, a symbol of power. A young. Bull in its prime. Aaron then builds an altar and claims that the next day they're going to have a. Festival to the Lord. In front of this altar with this golden calf. Let's think about this for a second. You're going to have. A festival to the. Lord, with an idol that they made themselves to honor it. Right now, maybe Aaron is trying to couch this whole thing like, no, it's still about God. Even though we have this idol. But that's totally off. Right. They had made their own idol and they're going to worship it. On its own. So they get up the next day, they have their burnt offerings and then it says they ate, drank and engaged in revelry. Basically, they got

drunk and it was a free for all that day. Right, this is all flying in the face of what God wanted for them, what God wanted from them. He wanted them to do something. They did the opposite. Doing the opposite, as I thought about that phrase, I remembered back to 7th grade math class with Mr. Lechner. He was my first ever algebra teacher and he would say to start to solve an algebra equation, he said be like a middle schooler and do the opposite. That's what he's told us. So if we take this equation here. There the first thing you have to do is subtract 4 from both sides so it says +4, he said. Now do the opposite, -4 take four away, be a middle schooler, and do the opposite. That's what the Israelites are doing, except they're not doing basic algebra, they're not in Mr. Lechner's math class. They're in God's class. God said don't have idols. Before me, don't make any idols. They did the exact opposite. Something else had their devotion now and it wasn't God. They're prioritizing something else over God. This young bull calf, whatever that they made, they made something into an idol. We make things into idols. The definition of idol, an image or representation of a God used as an act of worship. Whenever I think about idols, when we talk about in the Bible where you hear this golden calf, it reminds me of things like these two trophies that I have up here. These are not mine, they're not mine. These are my wifes power lifting trophies. If you did not know. Lacey and Lindsay were both high school power lifters, right? So we have two different trophies. She can explain what they're all for. I know this one's name is Bertha. That's it. I won't lift them up. They're old. They're like, she can explain it. But then I think, like these, right, these big, strong golden or bronze types of trophies. We think, oh, I don't have any of those. Right. I'm good. Don't make idols. Then look at a Dollar Tree. That word, extreme admiration, love, or reverence for something or someone we may not be physically bowing down to. Things like this. Our idols may not be statues or trophies, but we have things that we give extreme admiration, extreme devotion to things that we prioritize above anything else, including God. Sometimes things that get so much of our attention. Can be idols, especially because we prioritize them before prioritizing God. So today I'm going to bring up. Three that I see, I can see him in my own life, which is probably why I bring them up. But I can guess some of you can relate to these. Not an exhaustive list by any means, but things that we can make into idols. The three I'll bring up today are also not inherently bad things. I want us to see how we can even take a good thing and turn it into an idol. If we prioritize it over God and over other things. So the point in the end will be not to get rid of these things, but to prioritize God first and then him help us work out how to use these other things. So we're going to look at the, what, how, and why and then also what happens when you make things idols. All right. So we're going to start with money and possessions, money and possessions. I have a picture here. We go money. I think of this Scrooge Mcduck from the old like ducktail stuff, where he's like literally swimming in all his money and his gold. He just loves it. He loves it that much. And then for possessions, sneakers, there's a phrase sneaker head out there. There are people that are obsessed. Sneakers. The guy. That's PJ Tucker, an NBA player who's got. A whole bunch of shoes believe this picture here is DJ Khaled's house in Miami. He's got this massive room of just his sneakers, right? They're all about getting sneakers, getting more and rare and expensive sneakers, making idols out of this stuff. We can make idols out of money and possessions, even if it's not at these levels. Even if we know the amount of money to literally swim in it or rooms full of our possessions, we can still turn them into it. So for possessions, just having lots of stuff, even if it's not expensive, just having a lot of something that can be an idol. So how do we do it? If we spend our time just getting more and more or keeping up what we have, if we're looking for these items constantly on a on a secondary market or looking for sales or selling other stuff just to buy more, right, I look all the time I find myself looking. At gym equipment, what weights or machines or what can I add to my gym? We can do this with anything. If it dominates your time, your thinking, or your spare

moments, you're just looking to get more. OK, well, why, why? Why do we think we do this? I think it comes down to the fact that we're not content with where we are and what we have there is a human. Higher to want more and just be better. The phrase of some is good, more must be better, right? This is over indulgence to want to be the guy with the most this or the best this. We can turn those things in to idols. Money isn't all that different. Money can easily dominate our time and our thinking. It is everywhere in our society. Money is constantly talked about, shows, podcasts, books, everything about how to save, how much to save, where to spend, what to spend on, how much things cost. Then versus now, living wages and salaries, it's everywhere. And that's all really important, right? I'm not saying it's not. It is. We have to have some type of money to live and survive in today's world and there's nothing wrong with having a lot of money. There's nothing wrong with. Having a little money. But we can still make it an idle. If everything we do is about how much money we have, either getting more or keeping what we. You have. Right. There's nothing wrong with saving or planning and being secure, but when it's your constant devotion and it's keeping you from God and others becomes an idol. But when it's all you talk about, every conversation is I just got my bonus or here's my salary, or here's what I invested in. Here's my raise, right. Those are good things. But when we prioritize that first. That easily becomes an idol. And with money, I think we do it in large part with a lack of trust in God, we feel like we need more. Because we don't feel like God has provided enough. Or we keep holding on to what we have and maybe not being generous with it because we're worried. I don't know if God's gonna provide enough later. Right. That's back to the man. A scenario from a few weeks ago where God told the people don't keep the mana overnight because he's going to provide every day. So what happens when we keep money and possessions as idols? We prioritize them. We lose our trust in God. We lose our contentedness in God, and we start putting our trust in ourselves and take it away from God. Hebrews 13, five through 6 says. Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have because God has said never will I leave you. Never will I forsake. Thank you. So we say with confidence the Lord's my helper, I will not be afraid. What can mere mortals do to me? The Lord is my helper, not my money, not my stuff. It's God. Trust God not your money and your stuff. Trust God first and then trust God to help you use your money and your stuff. So that's money and possessions. The second one I want to bring up is lifestyle and routine. Lifestyle the way you live your life now, we all have some type of lifestyle, whether we really focus on it or not. These are part of the things that just make. Us, who we are a little bit. Now, for many it involves some type of routine, maybe some love, a strict routine, some rather fly by the seat of their pants and have zero routine either way. That's something that involves routine. Think about routine. The things you have to do, the way you organize your day. I have to do XY and Z, no matter what that routine part I am speaking to me more than anybody else. I am a routine oriented. I love my routine. I want that in my life, right. I get up, I have my coffee. I shared some of this earlier. Have some time with Jesus. I make breakfast. Jeremiah goes to the bus, I get a workout in. I take joella to school. I'm the parent. All the parents roll up their cups of coffee. I roll up with my protein shake after the workout. Then I go. Back home and I get to work. That's my routine. That is every day. I get messed up when that gets shook up. Maybe you say I eat out X number of. Times a week. Or I watch the show event consistently. I have to vacation here every year. That becomes part of your lifestyle and inherently that again, there's nothing wrong with having a good lifestyle or routine. But are you giving it too much priority and devotion? Maybe you focus on somebody else's lifestyle and make that the ideal. Wow, they're like, man, that they look like they're just having fun or. That looks stress free. That looks relaxing or that looks flashy, or that looks quiet. It's just something. That we turned into an idol because it just dominates. We put the priority on having that. And these easily become idols, lifestyle and routine

because we chase them before we chase God. Use my routine as an example. We'll we'll go back to me. We'll call myself out because I need to now note my routine that I shared in the morning. It involves spending time with God. It also involves a big part of my team writing these sermons every week, but I can still make that an idol. Because I chase it. I chase the routine because I need to check all the boxes. I need that familiarity with it. It makes sense, it's comfortable, it's nice and safe in the box that I live my life and leave me alone in my box. That's where I want to be. Right. But I can make that in idle if that's all I'm focused on. For lifestyle, if the look of your life or the comfort matters more than anything, it's almost like you make that lifestyle your identity rather than making your identity a child of God right, you start saying things like this is me without this thing. I'm not me. It becomes an idol when we put so much more focus and effort on it becomes this is me. This is what I do. This is who I am rather than being. A child of God. Right. I thought about that phrase. This is me. This is who I am. There's a song by country artist Luke Combs. I love Luke Combs and song called doing this. And the whole thing, the song kind of comes from you learn about him because in the song he's asked if you weren't doing this, being a country star, what would you be doing? And he says. I'd still be doing this if I wasn't doing this. The whole point is I'd still be doing the music. I'd still be playing with the band. I'd still have shows big or small because the lifestyle, everything would be a musician. That's just him. It's a part of who he is. We can do this with our routines and lifestyles, feel like they make us, that they make us who we are. Why do we do this? To a large degree, I think it's because we have some control over this. We can control our routine. We have some control in our lifestyles. We want control in our lives. That's normal. It's normal to want control of your life and your lifestyle and your routine. I get that, I said when my routine that morning of those 6-7 things I'm going to do every morning doesn't happen. I get messed up. It messes with me. I get it. We have this need to want to know what's going to happen and not want things out of the ordinary. A lifestyle lifestyle can also bring us peace and comfort. You know, thinking this is my life, this is the life. I'm at peace, my comfort. Is what I need some type of lifestyle and I get all that. But when we do that, what can happen? Is we can confine Jesus to that box. Our box, that same box we're in to try and only allow Jesus to move within the confines of our box. And what will allow or to seek peace in our lifestyle rather than seeking peace in Jesus. But if we chase Jesus first. Well, then we're safe when he does lead. Us out of. The box and take us somewhere that we wouldn't usually want to go from our routine. I don't love it. I don't. But I'm safe with Jesus when he does it. If we seek peace in Jesus, first we have peace and comfort in a way that doesn't let us down, John 1427 says peace. I leave with you my peace. I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. Finding peace and comfort in a lifestyle will work. For a little while. And then eventually it lets us down. But Jesus doesn't Jesus. Can't so prioritize Jesus before your lifestyle and your routine, right? So there's money and possessions. There's lifestyle routine, and the third one that we turn into an idol is time we want to talk about time. How many of you feel like you can frequently say the phrase? I got nothing but time. I see no hands. That's kind of the point. I can't say it either, I'm this is just a demonstration. I'm not raising my hand. There was a time this was back in May of last year. We had a leadership retreat at a little place outside of town. And we actually had time because we were just there for an overnighter, and I remember specifically Stacy in the middle picture. We're sitting in this hammock and the guy facilitating the retreat walk by. And he's like, that's just look relaxed and like, yeah. Because we had nothing but time, we have to go pick up the kids. You have to go to karate or gymnastics or I didn't say dad. I'm hungry. Dad. I need a snack. Dad wears this toy. None of that. We could just sit and these are other examples. They were benches there. People were just sitting on there. Was nothing but. Time is so easy to turn into an idol because of how much attention we give it. How

much time we have and how we use it time is. An asset trust. Might be one of the most valuable assets out there. We always talk about it. We always say I'm busy or I don't have enough time or I'll try to make time for that or it took me this long to get here. It took me this long to do that thing many of you have to track the number of hours you work for your job. I take time, I time out these sermons. Believe it or not, I do prepare for these. And I time them to see how. Long they take. Time it's everywhere. Time is huge. So how does it become an idol? We covet it. We hold it tighter than anything we obsess over it. We track it, we schedule our time down to the minute. It becomes our first response when people ask us something. I don't have time or how long will it take. It becomes the factor behind the decisions we make. We can make time and idle when that becomes that solo factor behind decisions. And I think we do it because we in, by and large don't believe we have enough time and I understand that 100%. I feel that way too. We feel like we just want more time. I'm reading a book by a guy named down. Blank on the name John Mark. Homer. A book called The Ruthless elimination of Hurry. Basically trying to convince everybody to slow down a little bit and he said we always think the solution to this issue is just having more time. He's like no, it's not that at all because we're just going to fill it with more stuff and feel like we don't have enough. But we still feel like we want more of it. It's not so different for money and stuff because time is valuable, and that is so true. Time is really valuable. And it gets hard because people. Want it from us? People want our time, right? Friends, family, kids, job, you name it. So we might hold it. We protect it. But we can do that without thinking about God and what he. Wants us to do with that. What happens when we turn our time into an idol? When we prioritize our time before prioritizing God? We get rushed. We get stressed, we might do more, but actually accomplish less. When we focus on that, we miss things. And one thing that tends to get. Missed is God. When we idolize our time, we might cut them out of the equation completely. Maybe it's like. Ohh Nope, I can't take that 1015 minutes to pray and read my Bible anymore. Maybe this is the one I run into. We prioritize our time with him. We build it into a schedule, but without prioritizing him, it's like, OK, I checked the box of reading my Bible. I prayed. I did it. We are actually looking around to see what he's doing. Listening to hear what he's saying, we're so focused on our own time, we miss his actions. We miss his words, we miss his presence. We miss what he's trying to show us right in front of us because we're so focused on. Our own time. Ecclesiastes, 31, says there's a time for everything and a season for every activity under the heavens. There is time for what we need to do, believe it or not, I don't love saying it. The solution isn't more time, it is prioritizing it. And it's hard. OK, to say that you don't want to hear me say it, I don't want to say it, but that's what it is. It's prioritizing God. First, it's prioritizing that time and say God, OK? Spend my time with you. I'm gonna look for you. Help me figure out. The rest. Prioritizing time with God, first time with God, but also prioritizing God himself and what he's doing. So this week, Edward, what are we, a week and a half away from Thanksgiving, which then? Launches this into Christmas. Super busy. Time I love Thanksgiving more than any. Other holiday. I'm ready. But think about your priorities this week. Even as things start to pick up, think about your. Priorities. Where do you? Put God's not just the time with them, but everything he wants to do in your life. And then look at everything else. What's keeping you from putting God at the top? I understand there's not an easy exercise. It may not be easy to figure out. I don't think it's supposed to be. But we can. Do it because I'm going to focus this week to make sure that God is a top priority. And I would encourage you to do that same thing. Do that with me, because when you prioritize God first, he will prioritize the rest. Let's pray. Gotta thank you for today. God, I thank you that we just we have the opportunity to make you our top priority and God, that when we do that. You show yourself. God, we can see you. We can hear you. We can feel. So I pray that this week got through all the craziness and business routines and money and stuff and time and work and

sickness and all of it. There's a lot and I know in this room everybody's got. A lot going on. I pray that all of us would prioritize you first. Looking for you hearing from you, seeing you and spending time with you and God, I pray that you would. Really be a parent. In how you want us to prioritize the rest of the stuff in our. Lives. God help us see that. All of it. So, God, I thank you again for today that that even though in this section is really screwed up and God, we we make the mistake too of making things into idols. I thank you that, that we're forgiven for it and then we can try again and we can prioritize you first. We thank you your name. Amen.