

How to Be Human: A Jubilee Spirituality for All of Us - Spread the Love

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Preacher: Christopher Anderson

[0 : 00] Great. My name is Tover Anderson. I am the Director of Prayer here at the Table Church, and I am so excited to be with you all this evening. A little bit about me, I've been a resident of D.C. on and off for the last 10 years. I've been a member of Table Church for the last three. I am a queer non-binary person who uses he, they pronouns, and I'm full of joy tonight, so I'm excited to be able to share a little bit of the word with you. So, for anyone who is at home, welcome from on home. If you see me going like this, that is not at you. That is for our slides. I am not giving you the fawns on purpose. And with that, I want to start with a question. Have you ever been in a place that suddenly you realize you're part of something bigger than yourself? For me, it was a few weeks ago. For those of you who know me, I am training as a chaplain resident at Georgetown Hospital, and about a month ago, we had a pretty big incident that happened in our emergency department. The emergency department is one of the four units that I've been assigned as a resident, and so when this event happened, my director came and got me and said, you're going to want this one. And he and I and a few other people were fortunate to be able to be part of a large team, a interdisciplinary team that spent the next six to seven hours working through this situation with the folks who were involved.

The amazing thing was about halfway through in which when it started and Tom, my director, had said to me, you're going to want this one, I hit that like chaplain mode. If you have a job that you're super passionate about, and I want to say first, if you have a job that you're not passionate about, I love you very dearly. But if you have one that you're passionate about and you know that you know this thing, you'll know that mode. That mode you get into that is just hyper-focused, and it's exactly what God's called you to do. So there I was kind of hitting all of my marks, talking with people, finding what's going on, and there was a little bit of a lull in the moment.

And I looked around and I realized all of the nurses and doctors and technicians and EMS personnel, police, security, even our guest services team, and then us chaplains, we were all doing the jobs that we had been called to do, and not one person was getting in someone else's way. I can absolutely say it was a moment that the Holy Spirit was in this place in order that we were going to provide care, and it completely changed and kind of grew how I understood my role as a chaplain.

So, with that, remember that story will come up later. Tonight, as part of our Jubilee spirituality, our topic for tonight is spread the love. We're going to be looking tonight at Luke 10, 1 through 12.

[2 : 54] Before we do that, I just want to say a couple of things. I want to start by first instilling that Table Church is a place of safety. And should you at any point, if you take time for yourself, please know that you are welcome and have the agency to do so.

Tonight, I'll be reflecting on my own social location. I am a white, queer, middle-class, male-passing, non-binary person who has privileges that members of my own community do not necessarily have. I will be mentioning members of various civil rights and justice movements tonight, as well as black and queer artists of the past. And I cannot do so without first saying that this sermon is first and foremost a sermon I'm preaching to myself, that I have work to do against my own biases, and that I share in the hope that Jubilee, as we discuss it tonight, can draw us towards real equity by dismantling the systems of oppression that affect so many people. So, with that said, if you have your Bible or a phone that can access the internet, I invite you to open to Luke 10, 1-12.

So, to set the scene, this is the start of chapter 10, and Jesus has gathered 72 of his followers with him that he is sending out. And it says, after this, the Lord appointed 72 others and sent them two

by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out the workers into the harvest field. Go, I am sending you out like lambs among wolves. Do not take a purse or a bag or sandals, and do not greet anyone on the road. When you enter a house, first say, peace to this house.

If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them. If not, it will return to you. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages.

Do not move around from house to house. When you enter a town and are welcomed, eat what is offered to you. Heal the sick who are there, and tell them, the kingdom of God has come near to you.

[5 : 23] But when you enter a town and are not welcomed, go into its streets and say, even the dust of your town will wipe from our feet as a warning to you. Yet be sure of this, the kingdom of God has come near. I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than it was for that town.

So I want to start by saying that is a lot, and we will go through it. I also want to say that I want to start, when I started wrestling this about a month ago for preaching, later now when you Google this and put the word commentary next to it, the first like six that come up on Google really talk about personal discipleship in 2023, and I wanted to try to avoid that for a couple of reasons.

I was raised Catholic in Philadelphia, and so this has been a passage that has been kind of read and misread a lot in my life, and I wanted to do it some justice. Also, if you notice, he doesn't use the words, go make disciples in this at all.

So I want to take it back to the base of what it really says there and what we can learn about it tonight. The question we're going to be posing is, what does this have to do with Jubilee spirituality? So, with that, we're going to start at the word go. Jesus says in verse 3, Go, I'm sending you out like lambs among wolves.

[6 : 52] Do not take a purse or bag or sandals, and do not greet anyone on the road. Has anyone besides me grown up anywhere near farmland? Cool. Does anyone know what a lamb is?

What is it? What type of sheep? A baby sheep. That's great. So a little bit of context.

So in Jesus' time, sheep, well, if you've been anywhere near a sheep, and I apologize to any shepherds in the room or online, sheep are stupid. They'll eat anything.

They will literally walk off a cliff, and not just one, but all of them. That's why shepherds had a job, because you literally had to not only keep them safe from predators, but also sometimes from themselves.

I was in Italy when I was 15 or 16, and we were kind of traveling south of Rome, and our tourist guide told us a story about how on the kind of smaller hills in southern Italy, towards Assisi, how shepherds to this day have to make sure that sheep don't get their heads lodged in between rocks, because they will just like, ooh, what's in there, and then not be able to get out.

[8 : 02] So lambs are infant, really dumb animals. And so Jesus tells them this, and then says, oh, by the way, not only are you infant, dumb animals, but I'm also sending you among wolves, which is the primary predator of a sheep.

Or, as Pumbaa from The Lion King puts it, she's going to eat me. And then he tells us, or he tells us afterwards, but by the way, I am sending you there, but don't take anything with you.

You're not going to need anything. Which leads me to feel like, this is fine, it's fine. So let's look at 6 through 9. So you get to town.

You have survived getting to town. Great. When you enter a house, first say, peace to this house. If someone who promotes peace is there, your peace will rest on them.

Sounds fair. If not, it will return to you. Stay there, eating and drinking, whatever they give you, for the worker deserves his wages. Do not move around from house to house.

[9 : 10] So we get there. We pick the first house we can find. These people seem nice. And we're going to focus on them. But in, like, three weeks' time, when they're tired of feeding us, we're going to go hungry.

And also, like, God forbid if they're annoying, like, bless them, but, like, God forbid if they have, like, one annoying uncle that we have to live with for three weeks. And then what's the opposite?

Oh, we'll get there in a minute. So what's the opposite? So in 10 through 12, he says, oh, and by the way, like, if they're not peaceful to you, you can just, you know, tell them that, like, it'll be better

for Sodom and Gomorrah than it is for that town.

When I was doing a slow read of this, I got to that line and was like, damn, Jesus, he's spicy. So the town has one bad morning and they get to go hard, you know, bye, Felicia.

So put yourself in the shoes of the 72 for a second. What might they be feeling when they get around Jesus and he tells them all of this?

[10:14] You are a baby dumb sheep. I'm sending you among predators. Stick with one house, which has its own faults. And then if it doesn't go well, basically tell them all that, like, it's going to be better for Sodom and Gomorrah, a.k.a.

raining holy fire on them. How might the disciples be feeling? Scared? How about another? I think it's one that begins with a U.

Confused? How about another? Unwilling? Close, yes. Or generally feeling uncomfortable.

Uncomfortable. All of those work, too. But I picked uncomfortable because... I picked uncomfortable because Jesus is sending them into what we call a limital space.

Which is a space that's naturally against the nature of how we understand the world to be. Believe it or not, there is a website called inalimitalspace.org. I thank them for this.

[11:14] Limital, the word liminal, in case you haven't heard this before, is from the Latin word limon, which means threshold. A limital space. It's the time between what was and next.

It is a place of transition. A time of waiting and not knowing the future. This website goes on to quote one of my favorite theologians, Richard Waugh, who describes this space as where we are betricksed and between the familiar and the completely unknown.

The alone in our old world is left behind, while we are not yet in a new existence. That's a good space where genuine newness can begin. So, Jesus gets the 72 together, says to them, good luck. And what's the point of all this? What are we trying to learn from this story? And what does this have to do with Jubilee? Is there any good news that we can find here? Or is this one of those hard teachings of Jesus that we just have to accept?

Tonight's thesis... Tonight's thesis is when we think about Jubilee spirituality, we find that it is a liminal space. Okay. Not just spiritually, not just as in spirituality, but also in our daily lives.

[12:27] That God shows us what he is capable of. Jesus puts the 72 into such a liminal space in Luke 10 and calls us to do the same. So, when I preach, I always try to have three things.

I try to have a vignette, I try to have a piece of art, and I try to have a music lyric. So that folks from all different kind of walks of life can grasp onto something. And so tonight, for the art...

So we have the emergency department. Remember that story? For the art, I'm giving you an example from modern classic cinema. It's in the style of spaghetti western and kung fu dramas. And so, I present to you John Wick's three Parabellum. And the people who have seen the movie, thank you for laughing because this is not a movie that necessarily would have anything to do with the Christian gospel.

So, I was talking to my best friend about a week and a half ago. His name is Andy. And I said to him, bro, I have been reading this passage for three weeks.

[13:27] I have no idea how to make this work with Jubilee. Andy is an aeronautical engineer who went to Catholic University with me. And like many of those who went to Catholic University in the 2010s, you could get basically what we call a free minor in theology.

Because you had to take four classes in anyway. So, just add an extra two and you get a minor. So, Andy is also a very faithful Christian. And actually, at some point, he's a better theologian than me. And as I say this to him, and I am purely complaining at this point, he says, can I give you an example?

Sure, I say. And he goes, John Wick three. I was like, go on, say more. He had just watched John Wick one, two, and three in a row while on a work trip.

He was stuck in his hotel while there was tests being run. And for those of you who haven't seen the movie, very briefly, John Wick is the main character. And he is an orphan turned assassin. You learn this at the beginning of the first movie. This happens before the movie begins. And he lives at the behest of the high table. That is, they are a secret cabal of assassins.

[14:35] They dictate his every move through power, pressure, and a series of rules that all members must live by. John, at the start of the first movie, tries to leave that life after being raised in it because he meets his wife.

But he's forced back in by the powers that be. As the movie develops, we come to realize that they're never really going to let anyone out of that life. Because any defiance of the high table would instantly remove all of their power, and they grasp onto it.

By the third movie, John's on the run. John's on the run. He's fighting to stay alive. He has zero resources. And yet, every middleman, every person he's encountered in the first two movies, even the hotel concierge at the hotel he frequents, they all help him because he's shown a certain restraint and kindness that is rare in his line of work.

He is what we call in literature the everyman in this story. And in John Wick 3, we see that he's never really alone, even at his darkest moments. It culminates to what is seen as the particular scene in the movie.

When asked what he needs, John answers, guns. We need lots of guns. Jesus sends them out in twos.

[15:59] Growing up Catholic, when I heard this, I was like, oh, it's 72. Cool. I'm sure there's a reason he picked 72. That seems like a lot of people. I actually think the gospel writer does us a little bit of a disservice.

I would have written this as Jesus sends out 36 pairs of people because no one goes alone. In Boy Scouts, we call this the buddy system. I was an Eagle Scout.

I did scouting since six years old. And if there was one thing they drove in us from the day you started as a tiger to the day you graduated as an eagle at 18, it is the buddy system.

Mostly because she's going to eat me. Or even better, but either way, we're taught from the start that you never do anything alone.

Same rules applied in the time of Jesus. Predators and bandits were common occurrences of someone who traveled between towns. Safety comes in numbers. And so does the power to overcome any obstacle.

[17:01] Any Whovians in the room? Yeah, you're welcome. That last line will come up later. So, what does this tell us? The buddy system. That we're never alone, even our darkest moments.

As Christians, we would say that we as humans are made for communion. I love this quote from the philosopher Nicholas Gomars de Vaglia. Faith is not knowledge of an object, but communion with it. And further from the author of *The Alchemist*, Paulo Ejo. I hope I got that right. To love is to be in communion with the other and discover in that the spark of God.

Jesus sends out these 36 pairs because this work, the work of being a Christian, cannot be done alone. To take it a step further, by having to depend on one another, Jesus is showing the 72 a new spirituality, a jubilee spirituality.

And how different is this from the culture that we live in here, especially in DC? Haven't we all heard about the person at work who will step on everyone to get ahead?

[18:09] The boss who pins folks against each other? Or the narrative we hear about the in crowd and the out crowd? In politics, in our neighborhoods, the perfect job, the right salary, marry the right person, fit in the right school, wear the right brands, know the right people, be successful, belong.

Did I write that so I can do jazz hands? Yes. What our culture teaches us is that we really never do belong. It's a bit of a rat race. And then we end up being more alone the further we enter into that culture.

Even in Jesus's time, this idea of communion and equity in jubilee upended the ideas of the world that Jesus's followers lived in. To the Jewish population, there was power.

We have the Sanhedrins and the Pharisee who used religious power to assert control over the majority of their own people. And the Roman Empire, which was the political arm holding the same folk down, let alone with half of the world at that time, literally had emperors who proclaimed themselves to be God.

So jubilee becomes a way for us to dismantle those lies. Jesus shows the 72 that even in this liminal space, this uncomfortable space, they're never alone.

[19:22] What I loved about Daniel's sermon two weeks ago was just how drastic jubilee was to the power system that would develop over the 50 years prior. It was truly a complete reset.

The marginalized are brought up and the world is made equal again. Why? Because we're all one. We begin again with systems of oppression dismantled, forced to face that we are children of God, and that God's plan does not include othering others.

Not yet. Not yet.

That slide's only coming in a minute. Oops. So he says, forgive me, we missed a slide. So he says in Leviticus 25, And you shall hallow the 50th year, and shall you proclaim liberty throughout the land of all inhabitants.

It shall be a jubilee for you. You shall return, every one of you, to your property, and every one of you to your family. You shall not cheat one another, but you shall fear your God, for I am the Lord your God.

[20 : 28] You shall observe my statutes and faithfully keep my ordinances, so that you may live on the land securely. The land will yield its fruit, and you will eat your fill and live on it securely.

Peace about this. Those words themselves, the adjective fly, are kind of opposite of the curse that comes at the end of the fall, when Adam and Eve are kicked out of the Garden of Eden.

When God says, you will toil the earth in order to produce fruit, he is now saying, in the time of jubilee, that this will be a section in which you can fully trust in him again. And so, it leaves us with an important question.

Here's this great idea of jubilee, that all of us will be equal, all will be one, and that we can trust in our Lord. But how do we know that's what Jesus is doing with the 72? He never actually says jubilee in the passage either.

So as much as I started by saying I wanted to avoid the idea of individual discipleship, he also doesn't say jubilee. He calls it something different. He calls it the coming of the kingdom of God.

[21 : 28] The promise of jubilee, that ideal that Daniel told us, never really happened in the time of the ancient Israelites because those with power rarely want to give it up.

Now Jesus is welcoming the reign of God, who is powerful, and reminding us all that we're all children of God, equal in God's eyes. Jesus expands this in Luke 10 by showing us that jubilee should happen every day.

These 36 pairs are called into a liminal space of already slash not yet. Thus, he says in verse 2 and 3, The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few.

Ask the Lord for the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his field. Go, I'm sending you out like lamb among wolves. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals, and do not greet anyone on the road.

So to go back, why lambs before wolves? These 36 are already in the not ready. They all ready. Forgive me. They all ready. They know the truth, that they are children of God, and that Jesus is coming, is doing something to change the world.

[22 : 33] They've answered Jesus' call that is later told to the rich man in chapter 18 of Luke, Sell everything you have and give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come follow me.

What does that sound like? Like, sell everything, give it to the poor, and come follow him. What does that sound like? Jubilee. Sounds like Jubilee. In Jubilee, the rich gave back so that all would be equal again.

Jesus is putting that into practice with his followers. And why wolves? Because power tends to corrupt. How easy is it for us with privilege to forget the meaning of Jubilee in order to preserve our own individual interests?

When we talk about the disciples being in a liminal space of already and not yet, that's the not yet. Or, phenomenal cosmic power.

Easy-dizzy living space. That really has nothing to do with that. I just wanted to put it in there because it's Disney. And to chop up a lot of talking. So, all of this leads to one more passage I want to talk about tonight from Matt 5, 38-42.

[23 : 44] That I actually think is reasonably connected, even though it comes from a different gospel. So, in Matthew, Jesus says to his disciples, and he's in the midst of teaching them. This is after the Sermon on the Mount.

He's doing this long set of teachings. And he says, You have heard it said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I tell you, do not resist an evil person.

If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn them the other cheek also. If anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand them your coat over as well. If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them too.

Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you. So, I told you before, I grew up Philadelphia Catholic. And this passage was used as a long list of

priests and pastors to tell us that fighting, especially among young lads like myself, was bad. This passage was meant to quell teenage angst, schoolyard conflict, and in some ways, demonize standing up for yourself. And rather recently, on the theological tone that is TikTok, I learned exactly how wrong I was with that impression.

[24 : 51] To quote Tyler Huckabee's article from a 2022 edition of Relevant Magazine, this isn't the hook of a ballroom brawl. This is a backhanded slap, an insult.

A backhanded slap is a master punishing a servant or a soldier demeaning a civilian. It's the sort of slap you give when you're not expecting someone to resist.

But what Jesus teaches here is resistance of a different sort. Turning one's left cheek is an act of defiance. To backhand them would require, using the left hand, a tacit admission of the uncleanness of your actions.

To hit them directly would be to treat them as an equal. So, in case that isn't clear, when you turn the other cheek, you're either going to use the hand that's considered unclean, or you would have to fronthand them, making them an equal.

Turning the left cheek in this framework is to do far more than roll over and accept injustice. It's to defy the violence of the world, but to do so from a place of active resistance.

[26 : 00] So these sayings, turn the other cheek, are meant to empower his Jewish brothers and sisters who live under the power and the tyranny of the Roman Empire, that they literally can embarrass those in power into how ridiculous they're actually being.

These are Jesus saying, Jubilee comes when we remind people in the midst of power the actual truth, that we're all one, and that we're all children of God. So, we have John Wick, never alone. We have the emergency department. And now finally for a lyric. So, if the John Wick thing wasn't polarizing enough, this next sentence will absolutely be, I confess to you all tonight, I am a diehard fan of the band U2.

That's right. I love me some Bono. Don't worry. There's none of the U2 lyrics today. They're often way too on the nose. But I have recently found that the, what I call the spiritual grandchild of the band, who is a singer-songwriter, who is also an Irishman, and has a huge amount of soul, is a singer, Hosier.

Does anybody know the song, Nina Cried Power? Oh, somebody does. Oh, sweet. Somebody does. That was amazing. So, it's from, it's the opener from his previous album, Wasteland Baby.

[27 : 18] And in it, he is exploring the question, why do I write music in the first place? His music's emphatic, if you've heard it. Take Me to Church is about queer love, and about supporting queer love, in the midst of, so often in religious context, it says that it is something that's unclean.

Work Song is about people who ultimately save us and give us meaning, even at our darkest. And his newest song, Ninth, speaks to loving someone past the pain of their choice to cheat.

He creates music that is culture-changing, and protest, and anthem. He wrote an interview when Nina Cried Power was released as the second single, and he talked about how he thought about his musical inspirations, and he realized that those he followed as influences all had one thing in common.

In the midst of being musicians, they also worked in movements of justice, like the Civil Rights Movement, Live Aid in the 80s, Farm Aid, and Eco Awareness, just to name a few.

And this realization led to the lyric, Cool word. It's not the song, it's the singing. It's the heaven of the human spirit ringing. It's the bringing of the line.

[28 : 32] It's the bearing of the rhyme. It's not the waking, it's the rising. And I could cry power. Power, Lord. Nina Cried Power, Billy Cried Power, Mavis Cried Power, and I Could Cry Power.

So, I remember sitting in my car about two months ago, the first time I heard this song, and it's a banger. If you've not heard it, I encourage you to, on your drive home tonight, or your walk home, feel free to download and listen to it. And my first thought was, who's Nina?

And the moment I asked it, I kind of smacked myself in the back of the head, and I was like, oh, it's Nina Simone. I'm not going to be a good one. Famous for songs like, Sinner Man, House of the Rising Sun, Young, Gifted in Black, and Why the King of Love is Dead, Nina Simone was a powerhouse of musicians of her time.

She changed America forever and became one of the perennial voices of the civil rights movement through her music. The last lyric of Hosier's refrain is a nod to her song, Sinner Man. In it, she sings the lyric, I cried power.

The other names Hosier mentions throughout the song, Billie Holiday, Mavis Staples, John Lennon, James Brown, B.B. King, they all took up mantles for justice, uniting American communities with their music.

[29 : 46] And this makes sense for Hosier. As a millennial Irishman, he has the troubles in his bones, which for people from Ireland, and I and myself, of Irish heritage, would be like a millennial from the United States remembering where they were on 9-11.

The troubles were a turning of faith and religion between North Ireland and the Republic of Ireland against one another to other each other. And this eventually led to similar calls for peaceful uprising in the 80s and 90s in both parts, both countries.

This song is a self-reflection of a musician realizing that he is not alone. He writes societal changing music because others did it before him, and in that he finds his power. So what does that have to do with our 36 parents?

Well again, imagine you're standing there. Jesus is commissioning you. You've all gathered around to get your marching orders. He starts with this teaching. So ask the Lord to go of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

He's not praying that, but he's literally telling you like that's what he wants you to do. And then he says to them, go. He doesn't promise them anything. He simply tells them.

[31 : 02] He's transferring his authority onto them. He then tells them how to live and that they'll be able to heal the sick until folks in that town of the kingdom of God is near. Because Jesus has already done these things himself.

We can assume that each of these disciples have seen him work this type of miracle. In the previous chapter of Luke alone, Jesus has fed the hungry, released the possessed, and revealed to Peter, James, and John his identity as God's son.

These 72 have seen Jesus slowly changing the lives and communities around him, ushering them back into Jubilee. And thus, to quote Hosier, they themselves realize that they can cry power.

Oscar Romero, Bishop Oscar Romero, who is one of the champions of liberation theology and liberation movement, was quoted as saying, the church that does not provoke any crisis, preach any gospel that does not unsettle, proclaim a word of God that does not get under anyone's skin, or a word of God that does not touch the real sin of a society in which it is being proclaimed.

What kind of gospel is that? And so again, why lands before wolves? That liminal space. And I was left wondering, what would it look like if Christians today cried to that same power?

[32 : 27] What would Jubilee look like in our own lives? I think it's important to suggest what Jesus has done with the 72 is entirely possible in our lives as well. That each of us has an opportunity to live our lives in a way that welcomes Jubilee.

What might that look like? Using our choice of morning coffee to lift up sustainable practices and fair wages for farmers. Driving the speed limit. Driving the speed limit.

To ensure that we and those driving around us remain safe. And even, for some of us, working towards having more mercy and self-care for ourselves. Instead of listening to the systems that tell us that we have to be everything for all people, we have to work our jobs constantly, we have to drive ourselves into the ground.

So again, quickly, look at what Jesus tells us 72. Do not take a purse or bag or sandals and greet no one on the road.

This is boundaries. He's releasing the 36 pairs from anything beyond what they're called to do. When you enter a house, first say peace to this house. If someone promotes peace there, your peace will rest on them.

[33 : 32] If not, it will return to you. Again, authority. They're not alone. Jesus is already doing this work. He's bestowing his power as son of God onto them. Stay there, eating and drinking whatever they give you for the worker deserves his wages.

Do not move around from house to house. Again, boundaries. He's not telling them to make disciples of everyone in the town. No, no, no. Just pick one house and stay there. There's no need to stress. The rest will work out as it's supposed to.

And how? Heal the sick who are there and tell them the kingdom of God has come near you. When you enter a town and are not welcomed, go to the streets and say, even the dust from your town will wipe away our feet as a warning to you.

And yet, be sure of this, the kingdom of God has come near. Either way, the kingdom of God is near. Jubilee is in your midst, whether you know it or not.

And Jesus will be coming back to that town in spades soon enough. So the 72 discover what Hosier says in one of the last lyrics of his song, Need of Christ Power. Because power is my love when my love reaches to me.

[34 : 37] We can do the same. When someone demands too much of our time, our peace, or something from our marginalized siblings, we can reach into the knowledge of Jesus' already not yet and stand for what is right.

So, that was a lot. So what do we do with all this? A couple points to take home. The very point of Jubilee or the coming of the kingdom or kingdom of God is that we are not alone.

On a base level, this idea topples the ideals of modern radical individualism. And the spirituality of Jubilee is living our lives working towards freeing ourselves and others from the things that other us. The 72 or 36 pairs and us Christians today are called into a liminal space of already not yet. We're called to be witnesses for the reality of all of us being called to God's kingdom against systems of oppression that other us every day.

And in this space, this uncomfortable space, this space that is starting but is never really finished, we find power. Power to change the systems around us and to change the privilege that lies in our own hearts.

[35 : 50] We can look to each other, to those working in our community to promote equity and change, and to the great cloud of witnesses that went before us to see personal and societal work Jesus calls us to do.

And finally, like Jesus' example to the 72, we can do that safely. We can take time for self-care and return to the fountain of his grace when we need time to be healed in order to do the work of his kingdom.

So, I mentioned the emergency department in the beginning. Had this moment in which I realized that I wasn't, that I was part of something bigger and that we were making sure that none of the people who were involved thought that they were alone.

And in this same moment, had this grace of realizing that I wasn't alone. And a nurse came up to me later, a good friend of mine and colleague, who said to me that how incredible it was the work we were all able to do.

And she said, did you see God in this moment? And I absolutely did. The work of our everyday lives is that jubilee spirituality.

[36 : 58] It's that call to be the human that God calls us to be. I was lucky enough to have my colleagues, my community, and even the folks like my parents and grandparents who've gone before me, who rest on my shoulder every day when I walk into my office, freeing me to the work that God's called me to do.

And in that moment, I was profoundly humbled. Because it dismantled the us versus them. Or as my therapist says, to me, the us versus thou of patients and hospital staff.

And instead, in that moment, whether it was someone who was sick and ill or the president of the hospital, we found communion. One of the life-changing things for me at Table Church when I first went here is that we celebrate, and we will tonight, an open table.

That all are welcome to the feet of God's mercy and love by being in communion with one another every Sunday. No questions asked. This is the work of kingdom in a radical way that, unfortunately, doesn't get practiced all that often.

And so tonight, I leave you with this heartfelt invitation. If you're feeling alone tonight, if you're fighting pain, grief, tough situations or emotions, I invite you to this table as a table of healing.

[38 : 09] That God might remind you you're among the great cloud of witnesses and friends here, and that you already have the safety to be supported as you need it. If you're feeling burned out, tired, or worn tonight, I invite you to this table as a source of rejuvenation.

That God gives you the blessing to know what can come off your plate, what you can release yourself from, and that you find joy in this jubilee season. And for those of us who are in a good space, I invite you to this table as a reminder of the communion that we all enter.

We are not alone. And to topple patriarchy, misogyny, racism, homophobia, transphobia, to bring jubilee is to not be alone, but to be one.

I pray that this table helps you to cry power, to turn the other cheek, to look systems of oppression in the eye and say, I am not alone. We can choose differently.
God bless you. God bless you.