

Preparing Our Hearts to Finish Strong

GRAY COMMUNITY CHURCH

A Note From Josh and Jordan:



Gray Community,

Last year, we began Whatever It Takes by asking a question: Are we willing to do whatever it takes until all of Jones County knows Jesus?

We prayed and we listened. We took steps of obedience, and along the way God has been working in the hearts of people. The testimonies and fruit we heard on Church at the Land Sunday tells of hearts being changed, marriages growing stronger, and families learning to trust Him with more of their lives.

Our yes is changing us.

As we prepare for Legacy Sunday on December 13th, we want to make room to hear from God again. Some of us need to keep doing what He has already asked. Some need to take a first step. Some need to surrender an area we have been protecting.

Money Talks helped us examine what we treasure and how we steward what God has entrusted to us. This devotional invites us to slow down in His presence, remember His faithfulness, and prepare our response.

We are still asking Him to form fully devoted disciples, strengthen ministry, raise leaders, and establish a permanent home where generations can know God and make Him known. Every part of that vision begins with people saying **yes** to Jesus.

We invite you to do more than just read these pages. Use these pages as a guide to open your Bible, pray honestly, talk with your family, and act on what God shows you. His Spirit gives us grace to obey every Word He speaks.

We thank God for you, and we are honored to walk this journey together.

Pastors Josh and Jordan

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Where Are We Going?

PRIMARY GOAL

DISCIPLESHIP

We're praying that every person at GCC would ask:
"Am I willing to do whatever it takes until all of
Jones County knows Jesus?"

As we all follow Jesus together and say yes to what He asks of us, we believe our secondary goals will be produced in Jones County and beyond.

SECONDARY GOAL

Kingdom Impact

Strengthen ministry for every generation so more people can know God and make Him known.

Multiplication

Raise up and send leaders and church planters, and support missionaries here, near, and far.

Legacy

Build a permanent home in Gray where generations can hear the gospel, grow in faith, and serve.

WATCH THE MIDPOINT UPDATE HERE TO SEE WHAT ALL GOD HAS PRODUCED IN YEAR 1

graycommunity.org/whatever-it-takes

How to Prepare for Legacy Sunday

Legacy Sunday – December 13th

Pray about what to bring

Ask God what He's inviting you to give on December 13. Talk it through with your household and make a plan for how you'll give.

Give through Whatever It Takes

Give in person or online through Church Center. Our regular giving and Legacy Sunday gifts support the same Whatever It Takes one fund mission.

Prepare your response

Use the next page to pray and plan. Check your giving history in Church Center so you know where you stand before you decide on a next step.

SCAN THE QR CODE TO GIVE YOUR LEGACY GIFT!

What Is Your Next Step?

Join the journey

Maybe you recently started attending GCC, or you weren't ready to make a commitment last year. Whatever It Takes is for everyone who calls GCC home. We invite you to join us on this journey as we ask the question, "Am I willing to do whatever it takes until all of Jones knows Jesus?" God is moving in our county, and we can't wait to see what He does next. We invite you to prayerfully consider making a generosity commitment to our Whatever It Takes Initiative.

God, what would a first step of trust look like for us?

Finish strong

Maybe you are one of those who made a commitment one year ago. Perhaps this journey has been more difficult than you had envisioned. Maybe you went to a completely new level in your generosity and are still adjusting your life, or maybe you have experienced unexpected financial difficulties. Commit to finish strong. God is faithful and He will provide for what He invited you to do.

God, what would help us stay faithful this year?

Take a deeper step

Some of us made our Whatever It Takes commitment one year ago, and we may have had an increase in faith or finances. Maybe God is challenging you to take an additional step in your generosity, and we invite you to do that by increasing your commitment. Generosity is not a one-time event; it is a journey. Pray and ask yourself if God is inviting you into another step of faith with an increased commitment

God, are You asking us to grow in generosity?

Important Dates:

Legacy Sunday: December 13th

Pray Through These Three Weeks

Before each devotion, pray, "Jesus, open my eyes to what You want me to see today."
After you read, use that week's prayer to put what you're learning into words.
Write down what keeps coming up.

WEEK 1

What has God done for me?

> Jesus, thank You for the grace You've given me. Help me see where You've been at work in my life. Help me to remain thankful. Show me who needs to experience that same grace.

WEEK 2

What has God entrusted to me?

> God, help me see my time, relationships, abilities, and money as gifts You've entrusted to me. Show me where I'm holding on tightly and teach me to trust You there. Help me to fully surrender my whole life for Your glory so that generations to come will hear the Gospel.

WEEK 3

What am I to do with it?

> God, show me one step of obedience. What could change in how I use what You've given me so more people in Jones County can know Jesus? What would it look like to take that step with my giving?

After Day 12, look back through your notes. Use the final response page to write down your next step before you fill out your commitment card.

And remember - we are walking through this jounrey to learn to trust God more so that our children's children may know the hope of eternal life and the reality of abundant life.

The Size of God's Grace

READ Ephesians 3:1–12

Have you ever been left out of something? Maybe it was a group chat, an inside joke, or a party that everyone else seemed to know about. Being excluded can make you feel small, unseen, and unwanted.

In this passage, Paul reveals something incredible: through Jesus, no one has to feel left out anymore. The mystery hidden for generations has now been revealed, and that mystery is: the gospel is for everyone. Both Jews and Gentiles are now part of the same family. They can now receive the same promises of salvation, grace, and belonging in Christ.

In this passage, Paul calls himself "less than the least of all the Lord's people," likely because he persecuted Christians before he himself became a follower of Christ. Yet God chose him to share this message of inclusion and hope. That's the beauty of grace. Throughout the New Testament, Jesus displays this by constantly choosing the unlikely, welcoming the outsider, and uniting people who once stood far apart.

Because of Jesus, you are invited into this same story. You are invited to be a member of God's family, and we are called to extend that same welcome to others.

Respond

CHALLENGE

Think of someone who might feel on the outside of faith or community right now. How can you extend the welcome of Christ to them this week, whether that is through an invitation, a conversation, or a simple act of kindness? How can you practically show God's grace this week?

PRAYER THOUGHT

Thank the Lord for welcoming you into His family through Jesus. Ask Him to help you never take His grace for granted and ask Him to teach you to reflect that same grace to others. Pray for Him to show you how to include, love, and serve those who feel unseen or left out. Finally, thank Him that in Him, no one is too far gone to become a part of His family.

REFLECTIONS

The Size of God's Love

READ Ephesians 3:13–21

Have you ever had to explain how large something is to someone who had never seen it? Whether it was a mountain range, the ocean, or even the night sky, there are things so large that they're hard to explain to people who haven't seen them before. That's how Paul describes the love of Christ. He says that it is so vast and deep that it goes beyond what we can fully comprehend.

Paul writes this prayer from prison, yet instead of asking for deliverance or relief, he prays for the Ephesians to be strengthened in their inner being and to truly know the love of Christ. He reminds them (and us) that even in seasons of hardship or uncertainty, God's love remains unshakeable, steady, overflowing, and bigger than we could ever imagine.

When we're rooted in that love, we can face anything. It anchors us when life feels unstable and empowers us when we feel weak. Paul's words invite us to stop trying to measure God's love and instead to rest in it, and to let it fill every corner of our hearts until we are "filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."

What a blessing to have a love so big that we cannot fully understand. What a joy to have a Savior who does more than we could ask or even imagine. What an honor to be loved with an endless love.

Respond

CHALLENGE

Take a few minutes today to sit quietly with the Lord. Ask Him to remind you of His love for you and ask Him to show you His pursuit of you in a specific and personal way this week. Reflect on how His love has met you in the past and how it sustains you now.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Thank the Lord that His love is deeper, wider, and greater than you can imagine. Ask Him to strengthen you in your inner being so that you can live rooted and grounded in that love. Ask Him to help you to rest in His presence and to have confidence that He is able to do immeasurably more than all you could ask or imagine.

REFLECTIONS

The Heart of the Gospel

READ Ephesians 2:1–10

Have you ever been to a gift exchange and somehow left with a gift that was much better than the one you brought? Maybe you picked out something silly just for fun, but ended up with a meaningful, well-thought-out present after the exchange. Or maybe you forgot to bring a gift altogether, yet someone's kindness made sure you didn't leave empty-handed.

That's what grace feels like, if even in just a small way. Before Jesus, we were spiritually lost, and we were chasing our own desires, doing our own thing, and completely cut off from true life. But God, in His rich mercy and incredible love, didn't leave us there. Through Jesus, He made us alive again. He didn't just rescue us from sin; He invited us into a new life filled with purpose, hope, and meaning. This is the ultimate picture of grace.

Grace means we don't earn or deserve God's love. Grace is His gift to us, and while it's free to us, it came at a high cost to Jesus. And it's not just a gift that saves us; it transforms us. We are God's masterpiece, created to reflect His goodness and to walk in the good things He's already planned for us. God not only gives us the gift of salvation, but He also invites us into good works He has already planned for us. He invites us into eternal life AND into His kingdom work. How good is our God!?

Respond

CHALLENGE

Take a moment today to thank God for His grace. Then ask Him to show you one good work He's prepared for you, whether that is a word of encouragement that you give to someone else, a small act of kindness, or a quiet step of obedience.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Thank God for the gift of grace. Ask Him to help you to live today in awareness of His love and be ready to do the good He has called you to. Ask Him to make your life a reflection of His kindness and mercy.

REFLECTIONS

Together Because of the Gospel

READ Ephesians 2:17–22

Have you ever walked in somewhere and instantly felt out of place? Maybe it felt like everyone else belonged except you. Maybe it was a new job, a first day at school, or a gathering where you didn't know anyone. That feeling of being an outsider is really discouraging.

But in this passage, Paul reminds us that in Christ, we're no longer strangers or outsiders. Jesus came to bring peace to both those who were far from God and those who thought they were already near to God. Through Him, we all have equal access to the Father. We belong not because of where we came from, but because of who we've come to know, and His name is Jesus.

Now we're part of God's household, and His presence lives in us. And, as His people, we belong to Him, and we are in His family. Each one of us plays a unique role in what He's building. You're not just included in God's family; you're an essential piece of His divine design. What a privilege it is to be welcomed into a real relationship with God!

Respond

CHALLENGE

Reflect on what it means to belong to God and that the Holy Spirit lives in us. Thank God for His nearness and presence. Thank Him for how He has welcomed you into His kingdom work.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Thank the Lord for bringing you near and calling you His own. Ask Him to help you live like someone who belongs, and to welcome others into His family with the same grace He has shown you.

REFLECTIONS

A Trustworthy Promise

READ Ephesians 1:13–17

A royal seal carries binding significance on letters and documents, especially when they're used to mark ownership. In the past, when a king issued a decree, a seal made it legally binding. It was not a decoration, but rather a declaration of authority and ownership. So, what does it mean that we were "marked in Christ with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit"?

Once we put Jesus on the throne of our lives, the Holy Spirit begins living inside of us, and this is a mark of ownership. That we belong to the King of Kings. The Holy Spirit is the promise that you are fully His. Is your identity fully rooted in knowing you have been sealed by the King?

This identity is not the end of the story, but the beginning, as Paul prays that the same Holy Spirit who seals those who are in Christ will strengthen them in wisdom and revelation so that they might know God better. As we put our faith in this promise, we discover there is so much more for us in this life with God. It's not just that we are saved. We have been sealed and declared as belonging to God. Now, His power lives IN us.

To live a Whatever It Takes life, we surrender to the Holy Spirit and pray that He will give us the same wisdom and revelation every single day. This wisdom and revelation produces in us a desire to know God more and live out our purpose to make God known every single day.

Respond

CHALLENGE

Have you been living like this identity as a child of God is promised to you? What areas of life are you prone to forget that the Holy Spirit is living in you? Take some time to reflect on where you find your worth and remind yourself of the promise of the Holy Spirit.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Pray that the Holy Spirit would guide you in the previous challenge. Confess where you have been acting like you are sealed by the world, and take a moment of praise and thanksgiving to acknowledge that you are sealed by the King.

REFLECTIONS

Gifts of the Faith

READ Ephesians 4:11–16

Ephesians 4:14 paints the picture of a storm. As the waves churn, the water becomes aerated, full of bubbles and foam. It looks alive, but it can't hold you up, and you cannot hold yourself up in it. Even the strongest swimmers sink in storm-tossed, aerated water. Paul warns us not to live in this state, which is unstable and easily swayed by emotion or opinion.

The gospel has rescued us from that kind of instability. And now, as those who have been rescued, we are invited to become rescuers.

The beauty of the Gospel is that Christ never sends us into the waters unprepared. He has placed us together. He has also uniquely and generously gifted each one of us. Some of us have the gift of hospitality, leadership, generosity, and more. The Church is beautifully on display when we wrap and gift to others what we have been given from Christ. And as every part of the body does its work, the whole Church moves forward, linked together under Christ. The waves may rise, but He has prepared us to live for Him and to help others do the same.

GIFTS TEST

Respond

CHALLENGE

Spend some time today reflecting on the way God has wired you. Think about the gifts He has placed in your hands: your unique strengths, passions, and burdens. If you haven't already taken a spiritual gift test, scan the QR CODE above or text "GIFTS TEST" to 833-686-1503 to discover your spiritual gifts. Take time to pray, reflect, and consider how God might want to use you to strengthen and build up those around you.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Lean into prayer with honesty and curiosity. Share with God the things that uniquely burden you, the needs you see in others around you, and ask Him to reveal how He has uniquely gifted you to meet the needs you see around you.

REFLECTIONS

Living in the Wisdom of God

READ Ephesians 5:15–17

Have you ever gotten to New Year's Day in disbelief that 365 days have already passed since the last time you were counting down to midnight? With the busyness of life, routines, and distractions, time seems to rush by, and before we know it, another year has passed. In a world that adamantly fights for our attention, Paul urges the church of Ephesus to be intentional with their time: "Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity…".

This begs the question: how do we live wisely? Jesus tells us in Matthew 7:24 that "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock." We can live an unshakeable life if we not only hear the truth but put it into practice. This kind of intentional living requires more than good planning; it requires trust. Trust that Jesus' ways are better than our own. Trust that even our small choices today matter in light of an eternal perspective.

Let's take some time to reflect: Am I making the most of every opportunity God has given me?

Respond

CHALLENGE

Grab your calendar or planner and take a moment to reflect: How am I using my time to honor and glorify the Lord? Is there a way I am spending my time that I need to shift to build an unshakeable life? Perhaps this is saying "yes" to serving or "no" to a distraction that pulls you away from Jesus. Let this intentional reflection be a step toward living wisely and making the most of every opportunity God gives you.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Take a moment to enter into a time of worship. Listen to the song "Make Room" by Community Music and intentionally sing the lyrics as a prayer to the Lord. As you declare, "I will make room for You to do whatever You want to," ask Him if there are specific areas you need to lay down your time for Him to live more wisely. Let this be a moment of surrender, where you invite Jesus to reshape your schedule, focus, and priorities for His glory.

REFLECTIONS

What has God entrusted to me?

Giving an Account

READ Matthew 25:14-30

One day, each and every one of us will give an account to God for what we did with everything He gave us. And what has God given us? Everything that we have.

What did we do with the time He gave us? How did we love our spouse and care for our family? What did our children learn about following Jesus by watching us at home? Were we faithful in our work? How did we use our money? And what did we do with the greatest gift of all, the salvation we received through Jesus? Jesus saved us by grace, and we get to spend the rest of our lives trusting Him and putting that faith into practice.

Whatever it takes is a journey to learn what to do with our gift of salvation. What is God looking for when it comes to our gift of salvation? He is looking for faithfulness to the call to leverage EVERYTHING we have so that others have a chance to know Him.

The third servant let fear decide what he would do with what belonged to his master. We do something similar when we know what God is asking of us, and keep putting it off because it would cost us something. Maybe it's the apology we owe our spouse. Maybe it's putting the phone down and giving our kids our full attention. Maybe it's doing the right thing at work when it would be easier to let it slide. Maybe it's giving generously and sacrificially to the mission of God through His church.

In those moments, our choices show who we're serving.

Who are you serving with the things God has given you?

Respond

CHALLENGE

Where have you been putting off something you already know God is asking you to do? Write down one way you can be faithful with what He's given you. Take that step today, and ask God to use it to help someone else know Jesus

PRAYER THOUGHT

Jesus, thank You for saving me and for everything You've entrusted to me. Show me where I've been letting fear decide what I do. Give me the courage to obey You today, even when it costs me something. Use what You've given me so that someone else has a chance to know You. Amen.

REFLECTIONS

Living for God

READ Ephesians 5:1–2

There's something beautiful about seeing a child who resembles their parents, whether it be the same bright smile, familiar laugh, or gentle eyes. But what's even more special is when a child reflects their parents' character and those little quirks that reveal who they belong to. That's the picture Paul paints in Ephesians 5:1–2, "Be imitators of God, as beloved children." Just as children naturally take after the ones who love and raise them, we're called to reflect the character of our heavenly Father.

Imitating Christ and walking in love are not things that happen by accident; they require daily surrender and trust. They require fellowship with Jesus every day. You will not stumble into a whatever it takes life; rather, it's a choice to build your life on the foundation that Jesus laid before us. When the storms of conflict or uncertainty arise, you can trust in God's promise that He will never leave or forsake you. As you make the choice to imitate Christ and walk in His love today, remember: You are not doing it alone. God is there to strengthen, guide, and hold you every step of the way.

Respond

CHALLENGE

Begin in a moment of prayer and reflection. Ask yourself, "How can I be intentional in choosing to love others this week to reflect God's character? Is there something I can sacrifice (time, resources, energy) for the sake of loving someone else this week?" Consider a specific way you can live this out today.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Take what the Lord revealed to you in your previous prayer and bring it before Him. Ask for His strength and guidance to love others well in your interactions this week. Finally, pray that the Holy Spirit will reveal to you the areas you need to grow in reflecting God's heart and ask for the courage to repent.

REFLECTIONS

Reflecting God

READ Ephesians 5:3–6

You can't see perfume or cologne once it's sprayed, but even a quick spray lingers in the air long after it's released. Eventually, you might stop noticing it, but it's still there, changing the scent around you. Sin can work the same way in our lives. Even a hint of it can linger and quietly taint the purity of our hearts, without us even sensing that it is there.

This is why it is important to recognize that the call on a Christian's life is to be set apart. Holy. We should carry the "fragrance" of Christ wherever we go. This call to holiness isn't about trying harder; it's about trusting deeper because holiness begins with surrender to Jesus and His ways. When we trust Jesus and His way of living, He transforms what once tempted us into opportunities to honor Him. Thanksgiving becomes a replacement for greed. Worship replaces idolatry. Holiness replaces what's unholy, and we begin to live more like Jesus.

Respond

CHALLENGE

Take a moment to ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any hint of sin lingering in your heart. Sometimes it is the things we are willing to compromise that actually need to be addressed. Ask the Lord what you can actively do today to repent. For example, if you are caught in greed and materialism, make a list of the things God has blessed you with that you're thankful for.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Bring what the Lord revealed to you before Him in prayer and thank Him for His everpresent grace. Spend time reflecting on His holiness.

REFLECTIONS

Words of Faith

READ Ephesians 4:25–32

Before we could speak a word of truth, God spoke truth over us. Before we ever offered grace to another, He poured his perfect grace over us. That's the beautiful domino of the gospel, that everything we do begins with what He has already done for us. Because we have been forgiven, we can forgive. Because we are being restored daily by the power of God, our words now hold power to build, heal, and restore. Ephesians 4 reminds us that our lives flow from this grace. We no longer lie because we belong to truth. We no longer speak with bitterness because we've been washed in mercy. We no longer tear down because we've been raised up. We are now people of life who live in life and give life.

When we realize the depth of what we've been given, generosity becomes our natural response. The grace that has filled us can't help but spill out. So, we give not just in material ways, but also through our words, our forgiveness, our patience, and our presence. Every act of generosity is an echo of His generosity and love towards us. It is proof that His Spirit is still at work in us, multiplying what we've received so others might experience His abundance too.

Respond

CHALLENGE

Today, look for one way to intentionally pour out God's generosity towards you to someone around you. This could be speaking life into a conversation, extending forgiveness where it's needed, or offering your time and attention to encourage someone.

PRAYER THOUGHT

Take a quiet moment to thank God for His relentless love. Thank Him for never giving up on you and for pursuing you with a jealous, personal love. Reflect on the ways He has poured grace, mercy, and life into your story. Ask Him to show you how to mirror that generosity to those around you, through your words, actions, and presence.

REFLECTIONS

Open Our Eyes

READ Ephesians 1:18–23

Have you ever been blind to something that was right in front of you? Maybe you lost your keys and tore your house apart, only to realize they were on the counter you passed by a million times.

The same thing can happen spiritually. We can read a passage over and over, hear truth after truth, but until God opens the eyes of our hearts, we don't truly see it. That's what Paul is getting at when he prays that "eyes of your hearts" would be enlightened.

He prays they would see three powerful truths:

1. The hope to which God has called us, which is an unshakeable assurance that our lives are secure in Him.

2. The riches of what God has prepared for us, which is His glorious inheritance, reminds us that we have all we need for now and into eternity.

3. The power God has given us through Christ, which is the same resurrection power that raised Jesus from the dead.

Over these three weeks, we've asked what God has done for us, what He's entrusted to us, and what we're going to do with it. Before you turn the page, pray what Paul prayed for the church: "Lord, open the eyes of my heart." Then ask God, "What have You been showing me these last three weeks? What would it look like to trust You with what You've given me? What is my part to play in Whatever It Takes?"

Take a minute to sit with those questions. Then turn the page and write down one step you're ready to take.

Pray. Listen. Plan. Respond.

Over these last three weeks, we have asked God what faithfulness looks like with everything He has entrusted to us. It's time to make a plan to respond on Legacy Sunday, December 13. (This copy is for you to work through with God. We will have another card for you to turn in).

01 LOOK BACK

Review your giving history in Church Center since August 2025 and remember how God has provided.

My original Whatever It Takes commitment (if applicable) $ _____

What I've already given toward my commitment $ _____

02 CHOOSE MY NEXT STEP (Check All That Apply)

- ☐ **JOIN THE JOURNEY** — Make my first Whatever It Takes commitment.
- ☐ **FINISH STRONG** — Remain faithful to the commitment I've already made.
- ☐ **TAKE A DEEPER STEP** — Grow in generosity with an increased commitment.
- ☐ **MAKE A FAITHFUL ADJUSTMENT** — Revisit my plan as circumstances have changed.
- ☐ **MAKE A LEGACY OFFERING** — Give a first and best or year end offering to Whatever It Takes on 12/13.

03 MAKE A PLAN

My Legacy Sunday gift — December 13 $ _____

My planned ongoing giving December through August 2027 $ _____ / month

My updated total commitment through August 2027 (if making a new or revised commitment) $ _____

04 FOLLOW THROUGH

What is one practical change I need to make to follow through with what God is asking of me?

MY PRAYER: *Jesus, everything I have belongs to You. Help me trust You, faithfully steward what You've entrusted to me, and live generously so others have a chance to know You. Amen.*

WHATEVER IT TAKES













GRAY COMMUNITY CHURCH