

All right. Good morning, everyone. My name is Trentell, I am the student ministries director here. And I'm super excited today. Today is a special day, not only because we have 24 students choosing to follow Christ Yes, that's something to celebrate. Today is a special day. Not just because we're gathered here all together in one room. Or the fact that they've cut my sermon at 10 minutes.

So we'll be quick. But today is a good day because we believe and follow a God who has risen from the dead, who has taken a sin besides our sin. And that made yesterday great. Today great. And tomorrow even more special. So a man to that. So what happened? As I've gotten older in my 23 years of wise living, my wife and I have started looking at reviews of restaurants, apartments, churches that we should work at.

And all these reviews have something in common. It's not food price. It's not atmosphere, but it's interactions they have with people. And based off those interactions, they'll go in there and they'll pick how many stars they have and I'll look at that Yelp review and I'll say, OK, we're going to eat there. OK, we're going to go work there.

But it's always the interaction, and we base what we do and where we go. Kind of how people are treated there. And in the same way as chosen people of God, we have to live in a certain way. And this morning, read talking about if we were to have a Yelp review right up on our lives what would that say?

And where are we turning to Colossians three verses 12 through 17 and let's see what God has to say. And it says this verse 12, Since God has chosen you to be holy people He loves, you must clothe yourselves in tender hearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience and make allowance for each other's faults and forget anyone who offends you.

Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Before we go on, Paul comes out guns blazing here, and he says like, hey, like, I need to do the exact opposite of what you think you probably should do to someone you don't like. And it's very easy for me to read this and kind of just turn off like I.

If someone wrongs me, I'm going to treat them a certain way. I'm going to turn my back on them, like, I'm not going to do it. And I, like, shut down, like, and I'll close this bad boy up and I'll continue on my day but this morning, I want to challenge us to keep our hearts and minds open to what God has to say.

The Scriptures are very clear and I love it. And how Paul writes this and on the topic of forgiveness, you won't get into that much this morning. But last week Jason preached a great message on what that looks like and how to walk through that. And if you haven't, definitely go check it out. So with our minds and our hearts open to this, let's read on verse 14 says, Above all, clothe yourselves with love that which binds us all together in perfect harmony and let the peace that comes through Christ rule in our hearts.

For as the members of one body, we are called to live in peace and always be thankful. Let the message about Christ in all its kindness live and fill our lives and teach counsel one another. And the wisdom He gave singing songs and spirituals songs with thankful hearts verse 17 here is important and says this. And whatever you do or say, do it as a representative of Lord Jesus giving thanks through Him God the Father.

So there's a lot in those five verses and in my notes here I have this whole following Jesus thing is hard and all caps. It's hard in all caps. And when we are living our lives and we are pointing to these things, it's hard. It's hard to be nice to someone. It's hard to love someone that you don't necessarily like or someone who has wronged you.

And God knew that God knew it'd be hard. And He sent Jesus as himself to live as an example, someone that we can look to and follow. Jesus gave up His spot in heaven to live like you and I, and he clothed himself in these things that are listed out. And He chose to go to the woman at the well and offer her everlasting water.

He saved the woman who was caught in adultery. He went and he chose Zacchaeus to come down that no one wanted to have dinner with him. No one wanted to be his friend. And he went into his house. He called Fisher Men to be his best friends. Jesus lived in a way that wasn't for himself, but glorifying and honoring to God the Father.

He live by example in example, we get to choose to follow, and when we follow in his footsteps, we become a new creation not going to get deep into that today, but we become a new creation. And when we choose to take that step, we choose to take that step our minds and our hearts shift from one that's focused on ourself to one that has the eternal mindset because now that we've loved, we've been loved to receive the grace of God, we are now able to respond to others in that same love and grace and church this morning.

That's why I want to call us to do. I want us to call us to love everyone that we come encounter with that eternal mindset. And if you're sitting here this morning and if you haven't responded to that love before, I want to give you that moment now. God loves you with open arms and he's accepting of you no matter who you are or what you've done.

God wants you. And I also want to ask a hard question this morning, a question I've been asking myself all week since I've prepared this is if you claim to be a Christ follower, do you live your day in, day out as a representative of Christ? If so, where to go up and ready Yelp review of your life?

Is that review going to say Come follow the God I follow, come where I know you will be loved? Is that what your review is going to display? And I'm a share a small part of my story and for long story short, I was the guy you didn't want your kid to bring home you didn't want me to be their prom date.

You didn't want me to be at the barbecue. You did not want me there. I was the guy that was always at the wrong place at the wrong time with the

wrong people because I was probably the wrong person and I was the wrong time and I was the wrong place to be with and I was mixed in with the wrong crowd.

If you've heard my story, you know that I was involved with gangs and drugs all throughout high school, and I was just in trouble literally all the time. But I somehow got tricked into showing up at a lock in at a church. And I'm sitting in the car of my best friend and I'm like, Man, we shouldn't go in.

He's like, No, your mom finally let you out of the house. Like, we're going to go we're going to go into this church. Like, you're not ruining this for you or me. Like, we're going in and we walk into the doors. The first person I meet ended up being the best man at my wedding. The next two people I meet were two adults that were teachers at Northstar, and they knew my GPA.

They knew I had lied about not turning in assignments. And they said, Shantelle, I am super excited you are here. This morning. And I was like, OK, that's, that's kind of crazy or whatever. But they're adults. They're supposed to do that. So, yeah. And so I walk into the sanctuary, there's rap music going on, which really was confusing.

There wasn't pews, which was also confusing. And there were students in there that I've gone to school with, and every single one of them came up to me and said, Trent, so I'm excited you're here. Like, this is going to be a blast. Like you will not regret this. I am excited you're here. And I had over nine adults.

There's pictures of them at over nine adults that poured into my life. And the far right is one of my best friends weddings. These guys took me in and after I graduated, they said, Turns out I still love you. I care about you. And when I was engaged to McKenzie, they let me sleep on the floor for free.

Great guys. Great guys. But the story is, when I walked in there and to this day, I can look at all these guys and I look at the class I graduated with, and they clothe themselves in these things. They didn't care who I was or what I've done. They knew I needed to experience the love and the grace of God.

I already knew what I was doing was wrong. I still didn't know that there was a chance for me to be forgiven and change. And it's because of the love and interaction of these people that I encountered. I'm on stage today. I get to pour in and love other students in church. What would this town look like? What would our state look like?

This is what we did day in, day out. What would it look like if we close ourselves in these things?

And I know we're not perfect, I know I'm not perfect, and God meets us with that forgiveness. He meets us with that love and because of that, we can respond to other people in the same way Jesus has responded to us and

our I'm excited to make Jesus known here in Lincoln, Nebraska, here in Horizons, and I'm ready to celebrate God.

Thank you so much for your word. Thank you for your love and your grace. I pray that this morning would be one of celebration, would be one of just you and pray. Amen.