



# *MEN AND THEIR ALTARS*

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All right, you guys ready to go? Yes. Alright, let's go. So good to have you, man. I am so excited to see you every week. We get together. It's the highlight of my week. Amen. Amen. Outside of this building, there's no hope in this building. Here's all the hope God's men gathering together, opening the word of God, praying for one another, getting built up to bless women and children. Welcome to real men. Love you guys. Very good to see you. Very good to see you. And just a little encouragement, spring training season weather's amazing. I got the top off the Broncos so Jesus can see how happy I am to be living in Arizona right now. And I went to multiple, uh, spring training games this week. Every time I went, both walking in, walking around and walking out, I kid you not multiple women stop me and said, thank you for the ministry to men. My husband is going, my father is going, my brother is going. I had multiple women in tears. I had one gal tell me, she came up and she said, uh, my husband came home from real men and he prayed for me. She said, we've been married for decades. He's never once prayed. And I, I said, that's amazing. She said, the minute at the table made him, uh, So thank you for making him, uh, pray for her. It it healed their marriage. So what you're doing here is very important and very significant. And you men need to know that I'm here pretty much every weekend. Our leaders are here because you matter. Your life matters, your marriage matters, your children matter, your grandchildren matter, your business matters. And you are important to us. And you mean the world to us. And we are proud of you because of the progress that you're making. And we have great hope for your future. And I'll just, I'll say this and then I'm gonna jump into my topic. I'm in the best season of my life. I love what God is doing. And here, here's just, here's a snapshot in my day and this is what I want for you. I love my wife with my whole heart. Next week we're gonna celebrate 36 years from our first date, okay? Um, first date, been faithfully married to this girl and I adore her more than ever. Uh, in addition, uh, this morning I got to go for a walk with my oldest daughter and my grandson. And, uh, he looks at me and just starts laughing. And, uh, and not everyone has that response, but he's got sermons. So he looks at me and thinks I'm a good type. So this morning though, I'm just walking with my daughter and going out to breakfast just thinking, how blessed am I? My daughter loves the Lord. She's happily married. I love my son-in-Law. They got a beautiful baby boy. And I get to hang out and know my grandson. And then I get a text from my other son today, it's his wedding anniversary, and he's at a spring training game with my other grandson. And he met his girl when they were 14 years of age. And, uh, and they, they're now happily married and got a beautiful baby boy. I'm in this season of my life where, here's what I'm telling you, the Bible is true. Jesus is God. And if you seek to obey God, he is happy to bless your life. And life isn't perfect, but it can be pretty awesome. So this leads me to my topic and the time together. And if you're new, uh, we're in a book of the Bible called Judges. And we're looking at the life of a man named Gideon. So we're gonna look at his life today and one theme from his life. And we're gonna look at worship and what the Bible calls alters. I'll explain that in a minute, but what I'm talking about is here we are in public and we're worshiping and we're praying. I want this also to be happening in private. We're here in God's house and I want you to be doing these same things at your house. And in this house, I'm the senior pastor, but at your house, you are the senior pastor, okay? You're the senior pastor of your house and of your family. And when the Bible refers to this, it uses a, a word called alter. Alters exist throughout all religions and cultures and nations and histories. But altars were a sacred place where you would either publicly or privately, but often privately gather to worship God. And there was something in the Wall Street Journal recently that I thought was pretty interesting. It was a headline. It said, home chapels are blessing backyards across America. What we're seeing in the United States of America as churches become more weak and woke and

progressive and apostate tragically, as we're seeing our culture in decline, what people are deciding is we need to not just worship God one day a week at church. We need to worship him every day of the week, including at home. And we need to find ways to worship God individually and as a family where we live, not just where we go to worship, but bringing worship home with us. That's kind the big idea of what it means to have an altar. We get this theme from judges chapter six. And uh, we see this guy Gideon. He starts a little timid and he's hiding and he's withdrawn. He's a little isolated, little discouraged, little depressed. Everything changes once he meets with Jesus Christ. Jesus comes down from heaven to meet with him. And we want you to be meeting with Jesus Christ. And all of a sudden his life changed. When he had a meeting with Jesus, we want you to be meeting with Jesus so he can change your life. So here's the record of the story in, uh, judges 6 22 through 24. Then Gideon perceived that it was the angel of the Lord. Angel means messenger and angel of the Lord is a created being. The angel of the Lord is Jesus Christ, the messenger or word of God. And Gideon said, alas, oh Lord God. So he realizes that he's been meeting with Jesus. For now, I've seen the angel of the Lord face to face. Usually he died when that happened. But God gave him grace. But the Lord said to him, peace be to you, do not fear. You shall not die. Then Gideon built a what He built an altar. That's what we're gonna talk about thereto the Lord. And called it the Lord is peace. All he had was anxiety until he met with the Lord. All he had was depression until he met with the Lord. All he had was fear until he met with the Lord. And then he had peace. And once you have peace with God, you have the peace of God. And he responds by creating an altar. And so this is the number one word in the Bible that usually refers to worship. And what I wanna talk about here is personal, private worship outside of church. And what we see in the Bible, this concept of altar, what Gideon builds here, it appears more than 400 times. And so it's a major theme. And as we'll see, uh, in another scene in Gideon's life, an altar is also a stronghold. And we talked about this last week. The Gideon's father had an altar to bail an asura demon. Gods in his house. He worshiped, uh, money and success and pleasure and and sex. That's what his dad worshiped like most men. And so Gideon was told by God, you gotta tear down that altar. We'll look at this in a moment and replace it with another altar that honors me. But God uses the language and says, tear down that stronghold. And we looked at it last week. A stronghold is a military concept. A stronghold is a safe, secured, fortified base or position from which to plan and execute military operation. Your home has a stronghold. And that stronghold either belongs to God or Satan. You're inviting either God in to have a stronghold in your family or Satan to have a stronghold in your family. And it all comes down to do you build an altar and who do you dedicate it to? The altar is the stronghold and the altar is the place ultimately of worship. And so what we see in the Bible with altars, Noah builds the first one in Genesis eight, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob all build altars. And there they worship God as Gideon did Moses, Joshua, Saul, and David also built altars. So over and over and over, I want you to see that altars are strongholds and they're usually built by the men and they're built for the family. All the men I just talked to you about, they're patriarchs. They are fathers and grandfathers leading generations of families. And so when a man builds an altar and he worships God, now all of a sudden God becomes the stronghold in his family. God starts to plan to protect them and to provide for them. And you guys need to know this. A man who will worship God will have a family that follows him. Statistically, if a woman converts and starts going to church, but the husband does not, the children follow the father, not the mother. They don't go to church. Conversely, statistically, if a man belongs to God and worships God publicly and privately at church and at home, almost in every occasion, eventually the wife converts and the children follow because the husband is the head of the family. You are

the leader. You are the priest or pastor of your little flock called family. And what we see these men in the Bible doing over and over, they stop. They build an altar and they worship God and their whole family is watching and the family is watching this man be humble in the presence of God. This man who is otherwise strong and courageous in the presence of God is humble and teachable. And all of a sudden it invites God's presence into the family. And it blesses not only the man, but the women and the children. And now this altar becomes the place where they as a family worship God together. It's very practical. This leads to, uh, an altar that was the center of Old Testament worship in the temple. So there was a temple and the altar was the place of sacrifice. And it was the literal connection point between heaven and earth. And it's where sacrifices were made for sinners by a priest. All of that points us to Jesus. He is the veritable presence of God on the earth. He is the high priest who intercedes for us, and he is the sacrifice who died for our sin. So today, uh, the sacrifice is nothing that we offer. We just trust that Jesus sacrificed himself and died in our place for our sins. And then like the priests would intercede for the people. We wanna be the husbands and fathers and grandfathers who intercede for people, starting with our wife and our kids. And we want our homes to be a little bit like that temple, that place where people come to be in God's presence and to sing and to worship and to pray together. So this whole concept of an altar is something that the Celtic Christians, I'm Irish, we were O Driscoll. Uh, o Driscoll means messenger of God, of all weird things. That's my last name. Um, and uh, and so they called these thin places. And so an altar is a stronghold and it's also a thin place. There's heaven and there's earth. And then the altar is the place between them. Like the temple was in the Old Testament. And it's where you come to meet with God and God comes to meet with you. And it's where heaven and earth get a little bit closer. And those are the places that God tends to speak and reveal and unburden and heal. And he shows up in supernatural ways. So what we see, first and foremost in the life of Gideon, everything changes when he meets with Jesus and he builds an altar so that he can worship God privately. The story then continues the next scene. Uh, he's gotta deal with his father's altar. Not only does Gideon have an altar, so does his dad. Judges 6 25 and 26 that night, the Lord said to him, take your father's bull. So this was the sacrifice on his father's altar and second bull, seven years old. And pull down the, the altar. His dad had an altar of Baal that your father has and cut down the Astra. Those are two demons that are being worshiped. They're powerful, but they're counterfeit that is beside it. And instead build, here's our word and an altar to the Lord your God, on top of the stronghold. So the key for men is this. You've gotta tear down the wrong altars and you gotta build up the right altars. If you're worshiping sex, you've gotta start worshiping God and take down your sexual addiction and then be faithful to your wife. If you're worshiping alcohol and you're an alcoholic, you gotta tear down that altar. And then you've got to build an altar of sobriety and faithfulness to God. If you're a man who only lives for comfort, you've gotta tear down that altar. And now you've gotta worship the calling that God has on your life, not just the comfort in your life. And so what we're talking about here is ultimately worship. And so you need to know that worship is what all men do. Two things that are sort of misnomers. Some think that worship is just for Christians, it's not for everybody. And number two, something that worship is just for church. It's not. It's for all times and places. And it's not just a genre of music that includes that you can come to church for a service, sing with a band that is worship. But worship is more than that. It's also how you treat your wife. It's how you work your job. It's how you handle your finances. It's what you do with your liquor cabinet. It's what you do with your internet browser. It's what you do with your anger and that is dedicating the totality of who you are, what you believe, and how you behave to your God. And so at the end of the day, what we're

talking about here is worships. Lemme ask you some questions. Who or what is most important in your life? That could be your object of worship for some of you. Um, you just literally worship your wife. You do whatever she tells you. You should worship God and then lead your wife and not just follow her. For some of you, the worship in your life is for a career or for, uh, a status, or it's for an income or it's for a certain kind of house or lifestyle. And what happens is good things become God things and then they become bad things. And so what happens for men is we don't stop worshipping, but we start worshipping the wrong things. We worship someone other than God. They become too important to us. We fear them, we revere them. We obey them in a way that should only be suitable for God. We then commit ourselves to something that is pleasurable or purposeful or successful, but all of a sudden we're compromising our integrity and character and our relationship with God to pursue this other thing. So the question is not do we worship, but how do we worship and when do we worship and where do we worship? And we worship our way into trouble. And as men, we worship our way out of trouble. So the alcoholic worships alcohol, right? The guy who is irresponsible, he worships comfort. Uh, the guy who just keeps stacking bodies and dating, relating and fornicating with gals who, you know, don't have good discernment. Uh, that guy just worships sex. And some guys are just flat out selfish. They just worship themselves and they will not sacrifice for anyone or anything. Part of worship is sacrifice. And the question then is, who do you make sacrifices for? What do you make sacrifices for? And if all you make are sacrifices that benefit you, you're probably not worshipping him. And I just feel inclined in the spirit to say this to the young men, younger guys in the house, twenties and down. Can we honor those young guys for being here? Thank you young guys for being here. But we live in a world that is just custom built for you to be nothing but selfish, to be a taker, not a giver, to be a consumer, not a producer, and not to make any sacrifices for God, your wife, your kids, your grandkids, your life or your legacy. If you live that way, you will be a broken, worthless self-destructive man in air quotes. You're gonna be a boy who can shave. And ultimately what makes a man is he gives, doesn't just take, he produces not just consumes. And he is selfless and not just selfish. And this is what the Bible means by worship. It means that God is worthy of you devoting all you have and all you are to obey him. And that he will bless you. The concept is like a father and a son. God's a father. You're a son. Your father says, I made you, I made you for a purpose. I gave you some rules. If you will abide by what I'm instructing you to do, I will bless and help you as my son. That obedience to the Father, that's what the Bible means by worship. It's saying, I want to obey my heavenly Father. And ultimately I wanna become like him. And I think he's worth it and I'm proud of him. And hopefully day by day, I want to increasingly look more and more like the Father who loves me. And so you just need to see this man. An altar is about worship. And for some men, their liquor cabinet is their altar. For some guys, their man cave is their altar. For some guys, their country club membership is their altar. For some guys, their bass boat is their altar. For some guys, their orgasm is their altar. For other guys, their bank account is their altar. And every day they bow down and make sacrifices. And it's an act of worship. And the key is to have God ruling and reigning over everything so that my sex glorifies God. My money glorifies God. My work glorifies God. My marriage glorifies God. My parenting glorifies God. Therefore I'm not taking anything that God made and creating it into an idol that I worship instead of God. It's a means by which I honor God, by obeying him. And so this is, this is what the Bible means by all this language of, of altars. It's not just a place, it's a place where a man comes face to face with God and he kneels down and he literally says, you're my father. I'm your son. I'm here to obey. Help me, help me to be an obedient son. Okay? And I say this all the time to the men, but I'll ask it to you now. How many of you're fathers And

you've got a son. A son? Okay. How many of you, if your son came up to you and said, dad, I heard every word you said, I trust you. I believe you. I'm not sure how to obey you. Will you help me answer Yes. Yes. And go tell your brother to do the same thing, right? Okay. So an altar is literally where God and the, the son and the Father, God the Father, and you as his son, you come together. And it's literally where you're saying, I believe in you. I trust you. I honor you, I admire you. I respect you. I hear you. I wanna obey you. I'm inviting you to help me be a good son. That's what it is. And in that moment, the the father's heart is just like any father. So he is like, if you wanna be a good son, I wanna be a big help. You need to know that if you wanna do what is right, God is absolutely overjoyed to help you in doing that. And so what we see here as well is that ultimately this becomes a pattern in lifestyle of worship in Gideon's life. So his whole life pivots in judges six. He goes from cowardly to courageous, from retreating to advancing, from fearful to faith-filled from not worshipping to worshipping, tearing down strongholds and then building up altars. And this continues in judges seven 15, as soon as Gideon heard the telling of the dream. So there was another supernatural provision in his life and its interpretation, he worshiped. Lemme just talk to you a little bit about worship. 'cause this is the secret to Gideon's success in ours. Worship is external and it's also internal. It is in your heart. See, religious people and how many of you don't raise your hand, but like we've all met those religious guys, like they cry. I love God, praise the Lord. But then like they beat their wife and they're mean to their kids and they cheat on their taxes. And you know, privately, they're just total hypocrites. So worship starts internally. It's like, you know what? Jesus died for me. Jesus forgives me. Jesus has changed me. I love Jesus and I want my life to follow him. That's what I want. That's what I want in my heart. And then it's not only internal, at least to external, right? It's, it's what you do with your time and your money in your hands. And it's what you do with the life that God has given you. So worship is internal and external, but the external shows up in a variety of ways. I'll just give you some, uh, sometimes in the Bible, when guys are worshipping God, they just go face down. And that's getting as low as you can. And it's being humble and it is showing in the presence of God, you know what, I'm, I'm made from the dirt and I'm a lot closer to it than I am to you. And how many of you guys have been in battle, right? Been in battle. Thank you for serving by the way. But, uh, and we'll thank those who do serve. And Gideon here, he's a soldier. He's literally gonna lead an army to war in judges seven. So if you're in war, uh, would you rather be standing up or face down? Safest place is face down. Sometimes not just physical war, but spiritual war. You're getting shot, you're getting attacked, you're getting hit. Sometimes it's good just to go face down, just get low. You know, if you're getting shot, it's just good to get low. And then do, to invite your father. Father, I need you to go fight for me 'cause I'm getting shot right now. So I'm gonna make myself low. And you make yourself big sometimes as well. Uh, worship of God in the Bible. It, it is internal, but it leads itself to the external. Some guys clap. I'm a clapper when I worship. 'cause I, I wanna play an instrument, but I can't, I don't have any rhythm. And so I, I like to clap. But how many of you guys, if you're at a sporting event, something good happens, you jump outta your seat. Like that's worship. That's worship. Men worship all the time, right? I was at a spring training game today, and you know, d backs look pretty good. Praise the Lord. Um, pray for the cardinals, you know, the last shall first. So in heaven they're gonna be incredible. So, um, but you could tell as soon as soon as there was activity, you would see the fans jumping out of their seats, cheering, raising their hands, clapping, enthusiastic. That's worship. That's worship. And so for us as men, it's like, well, if you can yell at a football game, you can yell at church. If you can clap at a baseball game, you can clap at church. If you can raise your hands. 'cause some large man carried a dead pig over a chalk

line, you know, then when the tomb is empty, you can get at least that excited. Okay? And so, so it's, it's excitement for the things of God. Sometimes it's reverence, sometimes it's silence, sometimes it's bowing, sometimes it's kneeling. And sometimes it's good as a man just literally to take a knee, you know? And just to say, you know what? I'm just gonna surrender here. God, I'm just letting you know I'm not here to fight. Right? This is a, this is a, this is a position of someone who is submitted to authority and it's really good for men. 'cause we're in authority. You lead at home, you lead at work. Sometimes it's good to remind yourself, I'm also under authority. That's why oftentimes when I pray, I get down on my knees, I can be a very arrogant person, uh, can be, um, that's my default. Humility is not something that I wake up and tend to be very good at. I, I need to constantly be reminding myself like I'm a man under authority and I'm under his authority. And by taking a knee, what I'm saying is ultimately I'm acknowledging and honoring that authority. How many of you I just inclined to say, ask this. How many of you, it would've been an amazing thing in your life if you would've walked into a room and your dad was on a knee or on his knees, you're like, oh, my dad's a man under authority. My dad doesn't just take orders. Uh, doesn't rather just give orders, he takes 'em. My dad's not just the boss, he's also got a boss. He's not just the father, he is also got a father. How many of you, it would've been life changing just to see your dad just take a knee and just be under authority and, and humble himself. See, the Holy Spirit reminds me. The Bible says over and over, humble yourself. A lot of guys will be like, circumstances will humble you. No they won't. Circumstances will humiliate you, but only you can humble you. I've seen men go through horrible circumstances, but it didn't humble 'em. It just humiliated him. So that's why the Bible says you gotta humble yourself. That's a decision a man's gotta make. When you worship God, you're humbling yourself. When you take a knee in prayer, you're humbling yourself. When you build an altar and you meet with God and you're like, you're in charge, I'm not. You give the orders, I take 'em. You're humbling yourself. Other things include, um, laying on of hands. That's an act of worship. And uh, we do this. And at the end, if you're new, uh, we huddle up and every guy gets prayed for 'em. And ultimately what we want is we want the men to know like we care. You're not alone. We're here. God sent me here right now to make sure that you're not an isolated, abandoned man. The God of the universe is your father. He knows you by name. And he sent me here to extend my hand on his behalf to know that you are a son and he cares for you. And when we just literally lay hands on people, that's what we're doing. That's why as men, we want our hands to be the safest place on earth for women and children. Amen. Like if you're gonna use these hands for war, use it against the bad guys to protect women and children. But when you're dealing with women and children, these should be the safest place on earth. And so the laying on of hands, it is the blessing and it is the consecrating of the blessing. Sometimes worship includes musical instruments. How many of you guys are musical? You could sing, you could play an instrument. You need to join the band. Uh, for the rest of us, we try, we try our best. A couple other things as well. Shouting, amen. Serving and also giving. And so this is what it means to have an altar and to meet with God and to worship God. And that's what we see Gideon doing. We see him tearing down strongholds and altars to false gods. We see him building altar to his genuine, true real God. And then we see him regularly worshiping God. He does this in judges six and seven. And his life gets better and better. He leads an army to victory. God provides for him, him blesses him. He becomes a national hero. Supernatural things happen. And then what we see in chapter eight, and that's where we'll be this weekend in church, what we see is get in. He stops worshipping. He, he in chapter eight, he doesn't build an altar. He doesn't take a knee. He doesn't worship God. He doesn't pray to God. He doesn't listen to God. Guess what? He does

what he wants, not what God wants. He ends up murdering some guys. He ends up fathering 70 sons. I dunno how many daughters he had. 70 sons with a whole bunch of women, many of whom were unbelievers and concubines. How do you go from a guy who leads an army to victory, to deliver a nation on behalf of the Lord, quote unquote clothed in the Holy Spirit to a bitter angry murderer? Pervert answer. Just stop worshiping. Stop meeting with God. Stop kneeling at your altar and just start assuming I'm a man now. I don't need to listen. I have some success. I know what I'm doing. I have some victories. I am now ready to act independently. How many of you men, uh, don't, don't shout their name, but you can think of a man. You're like, he was doing great and then he just self-destructed. He just cratered. I'll tell you exactly what happened. He stopped worshiping privately before he started self-destructing publicly. Your public life is just a reflection of your private life. Once he started worshiping God privately, he started self-destructing publicly, he could read Judge's eight, literally bitterness, vengeance, murder of his own countrymen, repeated sexual sin, fathering 70 sons. And here's the rest of his story. His sons grow up to be many like him. One's named Ab Bialek. I'll just tell you the rest of the story. Ab Bialek is a guy who doesn't build an altar and doesn't worship God. So Gideon isn't set an example for his son, ab bialek. And so ab bialek grows up not worshiping God, but worshiping demons in power and sex and fame and money. And so if you go to judges nine, Abimelech decides that he wants to be king. He doesn't want to be under king Jesus. So what he does, then he of the 70 sons, he murders every single one of them except for one. And that guy ran for his life. And then he named himself king for a few years in Israel. The point is this, if you stop worshiping, you start self-destructing. And when you stop worshiping generations, generations start self-destructing. Because sons so much want to be like their father, that even if their father is a bad man, they'll become like him. That's the the story of Gideon. The way we tell our stories in the West is this, uh, things were hard. They got better and they lived happily ever. And the Bible says, not unless you keep worshiping. Not unless you have an altar at home. Not unless you're spending time in God's presence. Not unless your private life with God is in order. Can you possibly keep your public life in order? So let me make this as practical as I can. Um, here's some tips. I'll make this super practical for building an altar, uh, for you and your family. Okay? Just practical. Number one, make sure everyone in your family has an age appropriate Bible to read. Okay? Question. Does everybody in your family have an age appropriate Bible to read? If you go to real faith.com, there's a recommended reading list and it actually lists and the reading list, um, age appropriate Bibles for your kids. When our kids were little, I really liked the Jesus storybook Bible for the little guys. It's, it reads great. Uh, my sons, they all of a sudden they got into some of the, the boys' bibles and they have like cartoons of action heroes and dead guys and beheadings. They got to all the gory parts of the Bible in the Old Testament, my boys are like, that's it. My daughter's not so much. So I got them a princess Bible. As your kids get older, they need an age appropriate Bible. Do you have a good Bible? If not, we'll give you one. Uh, does your wife have a good Bible? So part of it is if you're gonna have an altar at your home, that's where the word of God needs to be open. Not just in this house, but in your house. 'cause I'm the pastor here, but you're the pastor there. In addition, uh, number two, pray through your home and other places to consecrate them to the Lord. For those of you guys that are moving into a new house, you, you don't know not only what people lived there before, but what spirits. So go pray over the bedroom and pray over the living room and pray over the property and just consecrate it to the Lord. 'cause you're the, you're the head of your household. You're the priest, you're the man of God. You're the pastor. You're like, holy Spirit, we cast away in Jesus' name. We command anything unclean away. And we invite you. Holy Spirit. Holy Spirit live here.



Please, we invite you. Please live in my kids' room so that they have dreams and not night terrors, right? That they're prayed for and they're loved and they're healthy and they have joy. Holy Spirit, please come to our living room so that we can have laughter and make memories and enjoy our family. And Holy Spirit, please, please bless our dining room table. Let this be a place where we turn our phones off, right? We, we have fun together. We read the Bible, we pray, we check in, we get time together as a family. Lord, here's my bedroom. The Bible says to keep the marriage bed pure. Let this marriage bed with me and my wife, be an altar. Where we offer our bodies is a living sacrifice. Holy and acceptable, like Roman says. And let this be a bed that is consecrated to you. Lord, we welcome you into our marriage. We welcome you into our home. We welcome you into our dining room. We welcome you into our bedroom and consecrating the space in your house to the Lord. In addition. Number three, uh, use your commute to listen to scripture, worship, uh, and sermons in prayer. So most of you men have got a commute. Some of you, it's very long. Some of you guys, you're like my brother who's a HVAC mechanical guy. He's on the road all the time running jobs. He's in the truck all the time. My dad was a union, drywaller and general contractor in the vehicle all the time. You can turn your vehicle. This is gonna sound crazy. You can turn your truck into an altar. In fact, a truck is a better place to have an altar than a Prius. By the way. Just a, just a little shout out. It's very hard to have an altar and a Prius. It's very hard. Um, but it, let's say you're in your truck and you're like, you know what, today I'm gonna pray on my way to work. I'm gonna pray. I'm gonna pray for family and friends and coworkers and people. Now you've turned your truck into an altar. You're like, you know what? I'm not gonna listen to talk radio. Uh, 'cause it's just politics. And I get angry. So instead I'm gonna put on the Bible app, you version, they're gonna read the Bible to me, or a sermon, um, or maybe a podcast about God and his word, whatever, maybe something marriage for my wife and our family. And just ask yourself, how can my vehicle become an altar? How can it become a place where, how can it become a place where I meet with God and God meets with me? And when I'm there, it's a holy place. It's set apart, it's sanctified, it's different. Um, I, I quite frankly, I like to, I like to turn on music and sing in my Bronco. I got a terrible voice. Um, but I, when I have a long road trip, I just like to sing and pray. And sometimes on a long road trip, um, especially going up to Prescott where I like to hike, go up, try to go up there. Every week when I'm in the Bronco, I'll just start praying, talking to the, just conversational, Hey father, lemme talk to you about this kid. Lemme talk to you about that kid. Hey, thanks for this. Oh, well I'm thinking about it. Here's all the things I'm thankful for, and here's what I'm working on. And, and I'm just talking to him 'cause he's my father and I'm his son. And so the Bronco can be an altar. It could be a place just to meet with the Lord. How about this one? Dedicate your place of work, uh, as a place to have routines of prayer and Bible reading. You know, what would it be like to have an altar at your work? And some of you're like, well, I'm gonna get in trouble. Well then be wise. But you know, when you show up to work, you sit at your desk and do you just pray like, okay, God, my work is my worship. Okay, so, Lord, I work for you. I have a boss, but over my boss is the Lord Jesus, my boss's boss. Lord, help me to work for you today and to do a good job for you. And I'm inviting you to be here at work with me and to help me to do my job. And it's amazing because that's part of your witness. Now, you don't wanna be that religious annoying guy. You know, the guy who's like in the cubicle praying in tongues, yelling hallelujah a lot, running around with a praise banner. Um, those guys are weird. Um, but I'll give you an example. In high school, one of my high school teachers was a man named Mr. Meyer. He's, uh, gone home to be with the Lord. And, uh, he was a former, uh, military guy, stout strong. He was the toughest teacher in our public high school.

He taught English. Uh, getting an A from him was almost impossible, but his class was always filled. And at commencement, the students always asked him to speak. 'cause he was the most regarded, respected, revered, uh, teacher in our public high school. But he was a, he was a very put together man. And he also loved Jesus and was on the teaching team at his church. And he kept a big old Bible worn out Bible on the corner of his desk as a public school teacher. And they said, well, you can't read the Bible. He is like, well, I could just, you know, put it on the desk, see if anybody has any questions. So that's what he did. Um, and I remember we always saw that and we're like, okay. He, we respect him and he respects the Bible. Okay, that was good to see. And I'll never forget I wasn't a Christian at the time. And I walked up to him, I was like, yeah, Mr. Meyer. 'cause uh, he also was a umpire. And I played baseball and I was a catcher, so he was often behind me. So I got to know him a little bit. And I was like, so Mr. Meyer, what's up with the Bible on your desk? He's like, well, I'm a Christian. I love Jesus. I I teach the Bible some at my church and you know, I pray for all of you students and you know, I'm here in the public schools and I know I can get in trouble or fired, he said, but at the end of the day, I just want everybody to know that I love 'em and Jesus is real. And if they want to talk about the Bible, I wanna talk to him. I was my, my teacher and I thought I respect him because he is not ashamed. I respect him. So I became a Christian reading the Bible. And I came home, uh, from college. And, uh, the first person I wanted to tell Mr. Meyer, I drove to the school. It was after school. He was in his classroom. The big old Bible was on the corner of his desk. And I walked up and I said, uh, Mr. Meyer, I wanna let you know I've been reading the Bible. I became a Christian. I said, thank you for putting the Bible on your desk. I said, I figured if you were reading it, I should read it. And I started reading it and I became a Christian. One of, he's just a strong man, burst into tears. He said, I pray for every student. And he said, I've been praying for you since you graduated and I've been asking the Lord to save you. He said, thank you for coming to sho. Gave me a big hug and prayed over me. And I was just like, thank you Lord for that man. But all he simply did was he went to work, he was a public school teacher and he just decided, you know what, I'm gonna make sure it's real clear what I believe. Right? And so what you don't wanna do is you don't want to turn your job into a place where you're annoying people for Jesus, but you're also not ashamed of the gospel. And we have freaking pride month. Everybody else is pretty excited about their team. Alright? Just throwing that out there. Something to think about. Alright, number five, a safe, uh, a place in your home without technology for prayer, reading and singing. Do you have a living room that you need to say, you know what, no technology in there, no television, no phones, no tablets. This is where we read. This is where we pray. Maybe we play board games, we hang out as a family. You know, is there a place, um, on your property where it's just kind of set apart? We've always had a place in our house where it's like, this is the room where there's no technology, there's no television, there's no phones. If you want to visit, great. If you wanna pray, great. If you wanna read, great. But this is the offline room so that your soul can be connected to the Lord. It's, and the technology can take over your whole home to where there's just no place to listen and to think and to pray. A couple more, uh, real practical. Number six, A place in creation where you can meet with God outdoors. How many of you guys, when you hear altar meeting with God, you're like, I like being outdoors. I like fresh air. I like sunshine. I like going for walks and hikes. I've got a place at our house that I sit outside to study and pray. 'cause I love the sunshine and the fresh air. Um, I like to walk my neighborhood when I'm talking to Jesus. I put my earbuds in so I don't look crazy. They think you're on the phone. If you just walk around the neighborhood talking to yourself, like, okay, yeah, that guy put your earbuds in. You're like, well, this is a very long distance call, you know? So, um, and, and I like

to, and you guys know, I like to go into the woods and just prayer hike. I, I I like to prayer, hike in the woods and talk to Jesus and listen to him. I just that. So for me, sometimes an altar doesn't need to be a static place. You can be in God's creation and God's creation could be your altar. In addition, a couple other thoughts as we near our end dining room table with family members, uh, and an open bible for dinner discussions. And you can turn your dining room table into an altar. You can, 'cause you could say as head of household, Hey everybody, dinner time, turn off your phones. Turn off your phones. We're all gonna sit down. All right. Lemme pray. Lemme pray for dinner. Maybe there's a Bible open. How's everybody doing? See the stuff that we're doing here? We want you to do this at your house. You guys are gonna talk and pray here around a table. Go home and do that with your family. What do you guys, how can we pray for you? What are you guys learning? You know, you heard the sermon this week. Do you have any questions? Or maybe even his dad, you're like, Hey, I was reading the Bible today and God really showed me this. Let me share with you guys. They're like, oh our dad read the Bible today. That's good to know. And he shared with us what God showed him. And sometimes at our dining room table, our kids would have questions. Sometimes it wasn't super serious. Kids just want to have fun and mess around and that's fine too. But what would it be like if your dining room table was an altar? Like, oh, we talk about God there and we pray. And lemme say this too, one of the most powerful things you can do, even at the dining room table is just ask everybody, Hey guys, is there anything we could be praying for? And then your kids' hearts all open and they're telling you about things you didn't know about. Okay, great. Just put a hand on 'em right there, laying on his hands and say, great, lemme pray for you. Just be the pastor. Be the priest in your home. Just pray over your kid. Pray over your wife. How about this one? Uh, kneel at your bed or in a chair. I've got a chair in my study at home. I kneel at it and that's my altar where I talk to the Lord. I told you before, I've got a chair in my office. I kneel there and I pray before I preach. I just did that here. And you know what? Sometimes it's not bad to just kneel at your bed. It kind of seems old school, but it's good. It's good. It's like, you know what, Lord, I'm gonna spend a lot of time in this bed and if things go well with my wife, maybe not as much time sleeping, you know, uh, so I'd like to talk to you about that. You know, so I dunno, just something about, okay, so, um, nine, if you have holy spirit's, like, uh, move on. Okay? Uh, number nine, if you have a musical family time together, writing, singing, playing music. How many of you grew up in musical families? Some of you came from musical families and it's sometimes good. You're like, we're gonna buy instruments and we're gonna get together and you know what we're gonna do? Family time where we're making music or singing songs or singing hymns. And, and it's kind of a fun time 'cause we're a musical family. Well now our living room is a little bit like church and it's practice for heaven. A couple more. Uh, 10, uh, home chapel or designated rumor space that's for personal family devotional and prayer time. Maybe there's a place in the house. You're like, guys, we're not playing video games in there. We're not wrestling in there. That's sort of a, that's a tucked away place. That's where mom can go just to get her tea in the morning or a coffee and read her Bible and give with Jesus. That's where dad's gonna go when he's got some prayers and he needs to work some stuff out with the Lord. And then what the kids will do, they'll realize, oh, I've had a hard day. Well why, why don't you go meet with the Lord? Well I'm working about something. Why don't you go do a Bible study with that once? Don't you go to that quiet place that we've tucked away that can be the altar for the family members to meet with God. And then, uh, last couple of family journal for prayers and answered prayers in the living or dining room. One of the things that we kept on our dining room table with all the kids growing up, um, especially when they were little, was a prayer journal. And I, we would ask, Hey, anything we

could be praying for? And we'd write it down and then we'd tell the kids, Hey, if and when God answers that prayer, let us know and we'll check it off. And what was really cool is over the years, guess how many things we checked off Thousands of things. And my kids learn like, oh, if you pray for stuff, God answers. And it builds this anticipation and this hope like our God hears and answers, uh, just, I'm running outta time so I'll keep it quick. But lemme just tell you a story. So I just feel like I'm supposed to share this. Before there was Trinity Church, we would get together for dinner at our house and we would ask the kids, what could we be praying for? And one day, uh, the son said, uh, pray that we can plant a church. You guys are the answer to that prayer. You guys are an answer to that prayer. Um, hey guys, what can we pray for now that we're gonna plant church? We need to pray for a building. So every night at dinner, one of our family prayer requests was, God, give us a building. This building is an answer to prayer at the family dining room table. And so just over and over and over, our kids have prayed and then we see God answer prayer and we check it off. And guess what? I don't need to convince my kids that there's a God and he answers prayer. They're like, we've seen it every dinner. Okay, now if you'll keep that, how significant is that journal? This becomes one of the most valuable things in your whole family. This is the record of God's faithfulness. Okay, couple other thoughts in closing, uh, nor 12. Spend time in worship and prayer at bedtime with your children to create a calming bedtime routine. Sometimes kids have a hard time calming down. Other times they have night terrors or bad dreams. So turn their bedroom into an altar. Um, when our kids were especially little, I really loved bedtime. I would, well Grace would give 'em chamomile tea. Oh, calm 'em down with a little honey in it. And then I would snuggle with the girls. I'd pray with the kids. I'd read the Bible to them as they got older. I'd have them read the kids' Bible to me. Sometimes we'd sing songs together. And so bedtime was worship time. It's like, let's pray, let's sing, let's read. Let me hold you and always kiss my girls on top of the head. Like, this is for the husband but this is for the dad. Okay, let me make sure you're prayed for and you're snuggled with. And make sure that you're kissed on the head before you go to bed. 'cause I want their bedroom to be a place of God's peace and presence. And I want my kids to sleep with restful hearts and souls. And I don't want them having night terrors and demonic attacks and bad dreams and anxiety. I want their bed and their bedroom to be an altar. Lastly, um, have a family library with basic resources to help people answer their questions and do personal study. If you don't know what that even means, ask one of the nerds at your table about bible commentaries and bible dictionaries or go to realfaith.com and look at the recommended reading. One of the things I did, I always kept my library at home. I've got a ridiculous library. I've got like five, 6,000 books on the shelf and two or three times that on my laptop. But I've always had my books at home so that anytime my kids wanted, they could just go. And what I found was over the years, different kids, they just go grab the books and sometimes the kids are like, dad, I got a question about this. Great. Lemme teach you how to use a Bible dictionary. You know, they talk about this here or Dad, I wanna know this. Okay, great, great, great. You're in a part of the Bible. Okay, let's go grab a commentary. They're gonna help explain that and just a basic library at your house so that as your kids have questions, you can go find the answers. I love you guys. You're doing a great job. I'm very proud of you. You mean the world to me. And I think you're ready to be the pastor of your family. And I think you're ready to build your altar at home. And I thank you for being here. Our church is an altar for public worship. You're ready to do private worship. The things that we're doing here, um, God has now prepared you to do with your wife and your kids. And let me say this, if you're a single man, um, if you put these habits into practice early in your marriage and parenting, it's gonna change everything for generations. And I love you guys

and I want the best for you. Lemme give you some discussion questions before, uh, we move on. What did the Holy Spirit highlight for you? When you think of an altar for yourself, do you have one currently or does something come to mind for you going forward as a new place you can meet with God? And then lastly, how can we pray for you? Father, as we go into discussion time, release the guys online. Lord, I thank you for every man in the room and I thank you for every man in the room. There's a thousand men online. And Lord, we just say, yeah, we wanna worship you publicly, but also privately. We want to, we wanna meet with you at your house. We also wanna meet with you at our house. And Lord, I thank you that I get to be these men's pastor and I thank you that their family gets to have them as the pastor of their home. In Jesus' name, amen. Love you guys. Thank you.