

Sermon Notes

Life Notes

Never Beyond His Reach #3: Restored by the Fire John 21:15-19

Opener:

What smell or place instantly brings back a strong memory for you?

Go Deeper: *(Exploring the Bible)*

1. Why do you think Jesus chose to restore Peter beside a charcoal fire, the very setting that would have reminded him of his denial?
2. What stands out to you about Jesus asking Peter three times, "Do you love me?"
3. How does 2 Corinthians 5:21 help you understand what Christ has done for sinners like Peter and us?
4. What do Jesus' words, "Feed my sheep," show about the purpose of restoration?

Live It: *(Applying to Our Lives)*

1. Is there a past failure or painful memory that still has too much power over your heart?
2. Where do you most need to remember that your standing before God rests on Christ and not on your performance?
3. Is there someone you need to forgive, even if that forgiveness feels beyond your natural strength?
4. What would it look like this week for you to hear Jesus' words, "Follow me," in one concrete area of your life?

Daily Bible Readings (April 26-May 2)

| | | |
|--------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Sun: | John 21:15-19 | Restored by the Fire |
| Mon: | John 18:15-18, 25-27 | Peter's Denial |
| Tues: | 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 | New Creation in Christ |
| Wed: | Ezekiel 36:25-27 | A New Heart Given |
| Thurs: | Ephesians 4:29-32 | Forgiven People Forgive |
| Fri: | Psalms 103:8-14 | He Does Not Treat Us |
| Sat: | Luke 22:31-34, 54-62 | Broken but Not Beyond Reach |

Upcoming Week

Sunday, April 26

8:30-11am Morning Fellowship, FH
 8am Worship & Communion, WC
9-11am Farewell Reception for Kathy Michel, FH
 9:30am Worship, WC
 9:30am Children's Church, NR
 11am Contemporary Worship, WC
 11am Children's Church, NR
 12:30-2:00pm Discovering Victory, C4

Monday, April 27

9-11:30am Food Pantry
 12:30-2:30pm GriefShare, C4
 4pm Confirmation Class, C1

Tuesday, April 28 - OFFICE CLOSED

1:30-3:00pm Book Club, B7
 7pm AA Men's Meeting, C5

Wednesday, April 29

9-11:30am Food Pantry
 10am Men's Bible Study, LR
 12:30pm AI-Anon, C4

Thursday, April 30

10am Prayer Group, B7
 11am AI-Anon Meeting, FS

Friday, May 1

OFFICE CLOSED

Saturday, May 2

8am Men's Bible Study, FS
 4pm Worship, WC

CH = Chapel
 FH = Fellowship Hall
 C5 = Fireside Room
 NR = Nursery
 WC = Worship Center
 C4 = Community Room

JOIN US PRAYER & PRAISE

🕒 4pm - courtyard Chapel

📅 Wednesday, May 6

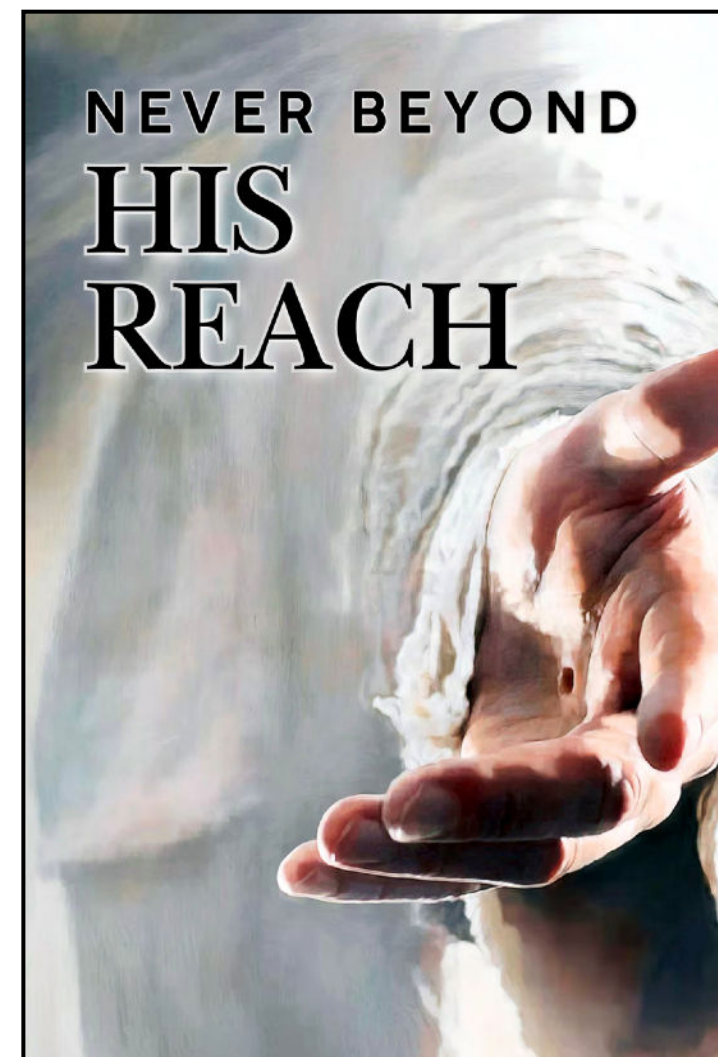
A welcoming space to worship in song and experience God's presence.

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 Password: Victory_46

NEVER BEYOND HIS REACH



APRIL 25 & 26, 2026

Restored by the Fire John 21:15-19



Todd Mathison, Lead Pastor
 Denton Bennet, Associate Pastor
 Dirk Duhlstine, Chaplain
 Kristin Holton Prouty, Director of Worship & Music



Connect with us!



GOD TIME: Why Cross Yourself?

Todd Mathison, Lead Pastor

I did not grow up with liturgy or with gestures like crossing myself. To be honest, it seemed to me like something "religious" people did, but not necessarily something deeply Christian. I assumed it was ceremonial, maybe even hollow. Wow, was I wrong.

The sign of the cross is actually an ancient Christian practice. Tertullian, writing around A.D. 200, described believers marking themselves with the cross in the ordinary moments of daily life. That tells us this was not a late invention. It was part of the church's lived devotion from very early on. And Martin Luther did not set it aside. In the Small Catechism, he wrote, "In the morning when you get up, make the sign of the holy cross," and gave the same instruction for bedtime.



That is why this practice has become so meaningful to me. Now I cross myself first thing in the morning as I rise from bed, and the last thing at night as I lie down to sleep. I make the shape of the cross over my heart as a visual reminder that my whole life is under the cross of Jesus. My fears, regrets, plans, and future all rest beneath His mercy.

And I need that reminder. It comforts me because it brings me back to Christ. It instructs me because it re-calibrates my focus away from myself and my circumstances and back onto Jesus.

If you have never done this, try it during worship. When the cross is spoken of, when the blessing is given, or when you begin to pray, quietly make the sign of the cross and remember whose you are. And if that feels too public at first, begin in private: first thing in the morning and last thing at night. Sometimes the simplest acts preach the Gospel to your own heart.



GATHER TIME: Restored by the Fire

John 21:15-19

Beside another charcoal fire, Peter learns that not even his denial has placed him beyond the reach of the risen Jesus, who comes not to shame him, but to restore him.

With each question and each word of forgiveness, Jesus reaches into Peter's failure, calls forth love where there had been fear, and entrusts him once again with the care of His sheep. That is the hope of this Gospel: our sin may wound us deeply, but it cannot put us beyond the reach of the Savior who still forgives, restores, and calls His people forward.



Peter denied Jesus by a fire. Jesus restored him by a fire. Grace has a way of returning to the very place that hurt.

GO TIME: Go on a Trip of a Lifetime!

What would it take for you to say "YES" to the trip of a lifetime?

For some, that means finally visiting a place you have always wanted to see. But sometimes the trip of a lifetime is not mainly about where you go. Sometimes it is about what God does in you while you are there. This **September 4-14, 2026**, Victory will send a mission team to South Africa with our long-time mission partner, Orchard: Africa (orchardafrica.org). Orchard's mission is to equip the church to care for the vulnerable, with the local church as the platform, practical programs as the tools, and the hope of Christ as the message. Their work centers on Food and Agriculture, Care, Education, and Ministry.

This is not a construction trip. It is especially well suited for adults and seniors who want to serve in meaningful, relational, hands-on ways. Our team will help with Vacation Bible School and also an economic development program that helps people — most who have very little hope — begin thinking about how they can take greater ownership of their well-being and discover possible income streams — truly life-changing! We will also visit a preschool, a feeding program, an agriculture program, worship with a partner congregation, and take in some of the beauty of the Cape Town area, including the beach, a penguin preserve on the ocean, and Table Mountain, one of the New7Wonders of Nature.

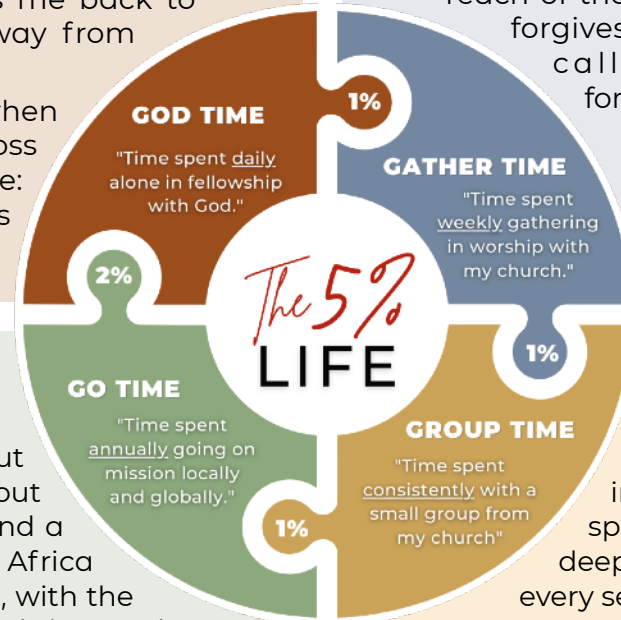
ORCHARD: AFRICA
Cape Town, South Africa

Be On A Mission Team That Changes Lives!
September 4-14, 2026

Anne and I would love to have you join us on what truly could be a life-changing trip — for you! The cost is about \$4,000, including flights, mission programming, and some meals. If the Lord may be stirring your heart, I would truly love to hear from you. Talk to me in person or email me: tmathison@victorylutheran.com. I hope to hear from you soon.

Pastor Todd Mathison

Brochure/Registration Form available in the Welcome Center.



GROUP TIME: With Grateful Thanks for the Gift of Music

As we reflect on the season just past, we offer heartfelt thanks to the many musicians who make worship possible at Victory. Through choir anthems, handbell ringing, instrumental offerings, and solo voices, you have given your time, talent, and spirit so that our congregation might pray, praise, and encounter God more deeply. Your faithfulness behind the scenes and your joy in sharing music enrich every service and help proclaim the gospel in ways words alone cannot.

Scripture reminds us: "Make a joyful noise to the Lord... come into His presence with singing" (Psalm 100). Thank you for answering that call week after week. Your music is a true gift to our worshipping community, and we are deeply grateful for each of you.

