

12Stone Church
Kevin Myers
Series: Home Run Life
February 16, 2014

Home Run Life – Week 3
Ephesians 5:1-2

Good morning. How is the 9:00 service doing this morning? It's great to see you. I'm so glad you're here. As most of you know, we are a multi-campus congregation, one church in many locations. Every weekend, we literally have 16 different services at 4 different locations, and we're synced up on the same weekend teaching, week of.

Normally what I would do on a weekend is teach five services live here. Today there's going to be a little unique twist, and I'm going to ask for your grace. Last night I taught live here to our growing Saturday night service. Hello. It's 6:00 Saturday night. Awesome. It may be an option for you. Anyhow, I taught live in that service, and a couple of hours after the service... I'd been in conversation with my inside team, and we made a conclusion and a decision.

The reality is there is a segment of the teaching that has such spiritual and emotional intensity and is so demanding in authenticity it would be extreme for me to carry that four times today consistently. I'm not sure I would deliver it well all four times repeatedly. What we don't do here is performance. We stay pretty honest to God and personal when we communicate here, and I don't want to stumble.

We actually concluded we think you will be best served if we just play last night's teaching live here in the services today. This will all make sense by the end. You'll say, "Oh, okay. I get it. That makes sense." In fact, it won't be weird for you, because you don't look at me anyway; you watch the screens. It's no different for you. It's weird for me. I'm introducing myself.

Then I'm going to sit down right there, take notes on my own teaching, because I think I need it, and then come right back up after my own teaching. God has something for us today, and I still have something myself to learn a little bit. So as the bumper plays and we jump right into the teaching, grab your bulletins, get to your teaching notes, and grab the Bible. Let's see what God has. Dive in.

[Video]

[Bumper]

Male: In life, we all step up to the plate hoping to hit a home run in our marriage, business, or family. What if the key was following a simple pattern: four words, four life-changing principles? There's only one way to get power at the plate: connect with God. Once you trust

God, you're able to win battles within yourself. Secure in your identity, winning relationships with others is next. Rounding third means winning results in whatever you do. Excellence matters. God created this game plan, a pattern different from the world, so we can have the full life he intended.

[End of bumper]

Welcome to *Home Run Life – Week 3*. How do you get in scoring position for a home run life? Everybody wants a home run kind of life, but you have to get to first and then to second without being thrown out. How do you do that? In the game of baseball, they call second base being in *scoring position*, meaning the next base hit can get that runner all the way home. That's how you win. How do you get in scoring position?

I'm going to have to be candid with you, 12Stone. I would prefer not to be teaching this weekend, because I barely qualify to teach. I'm saying that because I sent out a tweet in social media that said, "Something just happened w/ Home Run book that is so awesome & so bad; I'm elated & furious! So I'm gonna say it ALL this weekend, LIVE!" And I will. By the time we get to the third point of the teaching, this will all make sense to you. I'll confess. I barely qualify to teach, but I'm teaching anyway. Here we go.

Let's catch up on where we've been. If you're a guest, thanks for being here. It's a joy to have you. We want to catch you up. Let's remember where we've been. To get a home run life, you have to know how God grows you up. There is a pattern God uses. Romans 12:1-2 tells us, "I urge you, in view of God's mercy, to offer yourselves as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. It's your reasonable act of worship. No longer conform to the pattern of this world."

There's a pattern of the world, and there's a pattern for the way God grows us up. We're learning this together, and we have to get it deep in our souls. We not only want to learn it; we want to live it. So here we go. Draw a diamond somewhere on your teaching notes. Hopefully by now some of you have been in this series for the last two weeks and are now coming to the third. You're able to do this yourself, so you can kind of say it with me, if you remember it.

Home plate is all about *connect*: getting on God's purpose by God's power. I'm not going to re-teach all that. Then we talked about first base. First base is *character*. That's the personal base where you win within. We spent some time on home plate to first base last weekend. Second base (here's where we're going today) is about *community*. That's the people base. It's where you win within.

Then we'll go to third base, which is *competence*. That's the performance base. It's where you really win results. Then everything has to be brought back to our God-given purpose. Everything begins and ends with God, and that's where *we* begin. It's where we connect. God has given us a pattern. Baseball identifies four bases (hey, there are only four things you ever have to win in life), and the order matters.

Of course, what we're aware of is if there is a pattern God uses to grow us up, then the world has a pattern as well. The world runs the bases backwards. We live in a performance-driven society where, as a rule, we wake up in the morning and we're ready to go get stuff done. We're like, "I'm under pressure. I have to get stuff done." Therefore, we end up, even though we don't really set out to at the beginning, cheating the most important things in life.

We cheat relationships of the time, effort, and energy they need. We'll often cheat our character to get ahead over here on third base. We'll cheat our relationship with God. We don't have time for prayer and the Word and worship. My goodness, we're busy in life. When you run life backwards, as we've talked in greater detail, you end up undermining the very life God has for you. You get thrown out.

So how do you get in scoring position? I'm glad you asked, because that's where we're going today: first base to second. Now there's a principle you need to know, and then there are some things you need to practice. Here's the principle: *Figure out what counts on the last day so that you know what to count every day.* You need to know this right off the top. If you get this right, you're going to have a chance to get in scoring position.

Think about it. Your last day on earth is your first day in eternity. That's a very big day for you. Now let me ask you... what's going to count on that day? People often say, "Well, you'd better know what counts on the day you die." Listen. It's more than just the day you die. It's more than just what counts on earth. It's what counts on earth because of what counts in eternity. The art of life is knowing that now so you know what to count every day.

What matters, what counts, every day of your life? Well, what counts is what ultimately is going to count. This is what gives you perspective in life, perspective on God and perspective on people. That's why second base sits where it does, before the pressure of performance. See, there are things that give perspective. I jotted a couple down in my own notes. Like this, for example: "God is great; I'm not."

I don't know what helps you get perspective, but that's one of them for me. "God is great; I'm not." In Isaiah 46:9 God declares, "I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I tell you at the beginning what will happen at the end, and it happens. My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please." Isaiah 40, verses 15 and 17: "Surely the nations are like a drop in the bucket. Before him all the nations are nothing." God is great; I'm not.

Perspective on me. James 4:14: "You do not even know what will happen tomorrow." I can insert my name. "Kevin, what is your life? You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes." This is perspective. I have to know things like, "God is great; I'm not." Here's another perspective I jotted in my notes: "Stuff is temporal; souls are eternal." There are things you have to know in life, things that produce perspective so you know what's going to count on the last day, and then you know what counts today.

Stuff is temporal. Second Peter, chapter 3, tells us that in the end everything is going to burn. So just know this: every material thing you invested in, built, and produced is going to burn. A great thought that is deeply discouraging to my son is every Lego thing he has ever built will someday

burn. You know this, right? Everything you build will eventually burn, materially speaking. But Revelation tells us that every soul will live forever.

Now where that soul lives forever has everything to do with how they respond to God and the offer of Jesus Christ and what they do on earth. When you figure out there are only two things that last... Do you know what they are? The moment I say, "Hey, there are only two things that last forever," do you know what they are? God's Word and people. Those are the only two things that last forever. It's why the Bible gives us perspective.

That means you have to love people and use things, not love things and use people. That has to become a principle in your life. You have to figure out what counts on the last day so you make it count every day. We're all at risk of being Linus, from *Charlie Brown*, if you remember the old Charlie Brown cartoons. I love this quote. He said, "I love mankind; it's people I can't stand." We all get that. We're all at risk of that.

So there's the principle. Now how do you put this stuff in practice? I want you to turn in your Bibles to Ephesians. I want you to see two verses. Paul is going to help us here understand how to put some things in practice. In fact, he gives us an overriding practice. Once you understand the principle, you begin to put this in practice.

I've been sitting in the book of Ephesians for a while, and this kind of stood out. It kind of shouted at me. We need to sit in this for a moment. Chapter 5, verse 1: "Follow God's example." That's it, right there. "Well, how do I put things in practice?" Follow God's example. He gives it to you. "Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children and walk in the way of love..." Second base. Follow God's example. Walk in the way of love.

"...just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God." Do you know what we practice? Loving like God loves. How do you love? Like God loves. What is love? Like God loves. How does God love? Well, I want to give you at least three things that are obvious about how God loves.

1. *Keep your word.* Oh my. God keeps his word. When God says something, he does it. If he makes a vow, he keeps it. It's how God demonstrates love. What he says he will do he does. Do you? You tell somebody, "You know I love you." Well, do you keep your word? The entirety of relationships is founded on the character of people who keep their word. Trust is the foundation of relationship, which is why you have to win at first base in order to win at second base.

When trust breaks down, you're thrown out on the way to second because you never crossed first. It's how you get in scoring position. This is true everywhere in life. Every contract in life is based on trust, that you will keep your word. All economic and business transactions are based on this. Our entire world is sustained on this. You slide a credit card and you just made a promise. Do you keep your word?

Are you casual with debt? Have you joined the world? "I just get what I want and somebody owes me a bail-out." It's based on keeping your word. You're in business and you make promises to customers. When you sell a product, you have a product promise. How are you doing keeping

your word? Marriage is based on trust, that you will keep your vow. We bring kids into the world under a promise. Take care of your kids.

You understand that cities and countries spend hundreds of billions to trillions of dollars cleaning up after people who don't keep their word. When employers don't keep their word, when employees don't keep their word, the whole thing crashes. Do you understand how large this is? It collapses. Let me ask you, how many of you are fans of cool cars? Everybody isn't, but how many are? Hands up across the campuses. Everybody look around. Fans of cool cars.

Then you join in the grieving with me this week. Oh my goodness. What happened at the Corvette Museum is heart sickening. There was a sinkhole, and at the center of the cathedral of these cars, the floor opened up and swallowed eight priceless Corvettes. If you haven't seen this online, I'm going to put it on the screen. Thirty seconds, and you watch it. It's slow. This is the security camera that caught the sinkhole happening. Check it out.

[Video clip #1]

Go ahead; give a hankie to your neighbor. It's okay. In fact, when it was all done, it's a 40-foot-wide, 30-foot-deep crater with eight priceless Corvettes in it. They flew one of those little mini-helicopters with a mini-camera over it. Fifteen seconds. Check this out. They look like matchbox cars.

[Video clip #2]

Do you know what the blue one is? That's the Blue Devil. That's the 2009 ZR1, the fastest production car in the history of the United States. How does that happen? I'll read it for you. Here's how it happens. Are you ready? "A sinkhole is caused by groundwater eroding underground [where nobody can see it] limestone over many years, forming a void underneath the surface of the earth. Eventually the soil that was above the dissolving limestone has nothing to support it anymore and it collapses."

That's a picture of many marriages, families, businesses, churches, and nations. That's what's happening. See, keeping your word is the foundation of trust. It's what builds second base community. It's what makes it work and allows us to win. If you don't keep... When somebody watches a marriage just crater and they go, "What on earth just happened?" nothing *just* happened. It had been eroding for years. Trust had been eroding. You just finally saw it.

That's why God says, "Practice loving like I love. Keep your word." Do you know what our tendency is? Do you know what some of us are doing right now? Here's what we're doing. "I wish so-and-so was here. Oh, they need this. I hope my spouse is listening right now. Dear God, I hope my spouse..." Here's a thought. How are *you* doing keeping your word? *You*. It seems that when we start winning this, we start helping the whole.

2. *Keep your calendar aligned with your relationships.* Here's all I'm saying. If you're going to keep your word, you're going to end up having to change your calendar. Right? If you make commitments to a relationship, then you're going to have to change your calendar to

accommodate them. That's what it means to get in marriage. That's what it means to have kids and a family.

That's what it means when you get in business. That's what it means when you engage in partnership. That's what it means when you come in community. That's part of what it means. You have to change your calendar. When my parents divorced, I was about 11 or 12 years old. My dad, soon after that... He left, and my brothers left, and the whole thing was just ugly. It cratered. There was a whole lot of not keeping word.

My dad began a habit of saying to me over the next two or three years, "Son, you know I love you." I remember saying to myself, "No, I don't. In fact, I think you keep saying it because you don't. You don't have time for me. You haven't changed any calendar for me. I'm obviously an interruption. No, I don't know."

It's not the saying it that's convincing; it's the living it. Love will always translate at some point in your calendar. Right? We're getting quiet. That's part of the tension in life. Nobody escapes this tension. If you're going to love like God, you make time for the ones you love. You can't say to God, "God, you know I love you. You know I love you. I'm busy this year, but you know I love you.

I don't have time for your Word. I don't have time to be in prayer. I don't have time to talk to you. I'm busy. I have to get stuff done. Help me, Lord. Help me. I don't have time to worship. I'll get to it when I have time, but God, you know I love you. I don't have time to serve, but God, you know I love you." No, he doesn't. It's hollow.

Oh, our marriage. Good gracious. We had some challenges in that first 5 to 10 years. That's the beauty of being married over 30 years. You get to talk in bulks of time. Oh my goodness. So the team thought it would be nice for you to have a moment of perspective on our marriage from Marcia instead of from me, so here's Marcia.

[Video]

Marcia Myers: My name is Marcia Myers. I'm PK's wife, if you don't know that already. We first met at a roller rink. In my tradition of Christian schooling, dancing and any of those kinds of things were not allowed. However, running around, skating, and holding hands to music that way was okay. I noticed him because of his outgoing personality, we'll say. I thought to myself, "Oh man, he is so obnoxious. I would never look twice at him."

My roommate and I decided to go to this small church one Sunday. He was leading some of the worship, and I was like, "Oh, that's the same guy. Wow. He actually has a serious side too." Then he was our college-age Sunday school teacher, and I thought, "Well, okay. There's a little bit more to him than I thought."

I would say he is definitely by nature a third base runner. When we were first married, he would work from morning till night. A lot of time was spent away from home and from me. His tendency to run to third base, or to always be working or trying to get results, started to break down in our marriage and break down with the children.

We would be waiting for him. Sometimes it would be an hour. It was always a good reason, because in the ministry, how could there be any bad reasons? Those kinds of issues became even more difficult. The priorities really are God first, then your spouse, your family, and then your work. So we just started trying to balance all of those principles and put them together, and the way we did that was to set up a schedule of putting those principles into practice.

We decided, "Okay, well, in order to make our marriage a priority, we're going to have to schedule a date night that isn't negotiable." We said, "Okay, these are our priorities. We're going to work together for those priorities." Then it took care of a lot of the butting of heads we used to have. For the first 15 years of our marriage, I think God was actually showing us all of these things, and slowly but surely we would add a piece.

One night he came home with a napkin. He said, "Oh wow, this is awesome. You just can't believe this. This is gold." I kind of laugh when he calls something gold. On the napkin was the home run life sketched out by him that had just really come to him. It wasn't like it was something he had been working, working, working, but when he was talking to Josh about how you should do life, it just kind of all came together.

[End of video]

No man adds to what his wife says, so I'll just leave it with this. Where do you need to get your calendar aligned with your relationships?

3. *Keep short accounts.* In the *Home Run* book, I write about second base relationships, and in there I talk about a major breakthrough for me, which was *forgive what you can't forget*. It basically reads, "Everyone has been disappointed, let down, or hurt by other people. Further, this world is full of injustice. What do you do with those things? Do you keep score? Do you nurse grudges? Do you focus on the pain? Do you work to forgive others and release yourself from the toxic waste of bitterness? What do you do?"

I go on a page or two later. "It wasn't until I entered into a mentoring relationship with John, however, that I realized what someone looked like who had no baggage of bitterness. At first, I was skeptical. I thought there must be something. Without John's knowledge, I investigated how he dealt with so many people in life and ministry who vomited their anger, betrayed his trust, stole from him, or lied to him. I found nothing. What was his secret? Again, it was simple: 'Keep short accounts.'

John's advice was pure gold. I cannot tell you how it changed everything in my life. Before, I had kept score with everyone. Now I let things go. Why is that so important? People who keep short

accounts don't carry a wounded spirit, so they are not easily hurt. They don't lash out. They trust and keep adding value to others. Curiously, they end up living freer than others! I wish I could give this gift to you: *Let it go, forget about it, and what you cannot forget, just forgive!*"

The reason I wrote that is that in Hebrews, chapter 12, verses 14-15, it tells us, "Let no root of bitterness get settled in your soul and therefore defile you." That brings us to what I tweeted in social media on Friday. What I said in that tweet was "Something just happened w/ Home Run book that is so awesome & so bad; I'm elated & furious! So I'm gonna say it ALL this weekend, LIVE!"

Here are the facts. The writing of the book for me was a 12-year journey. To eventually have written the book and get it out and to be so grateful that God along the way gave me a mentor like John Maxwell, for God to let me be a part of 12Stone Church where God is moving so mightily among us... Church, a movement of God is a very precious, fragile, high-favor thing.

Candidly, somebody who comes from my more humble roots has no reason to ever expect to be part of what God has let me be a part of. He has been very kind. We wrote the book in hopes of helping people. I didn't buy into the early hype of people who were saying, "Man, this is going to be a bestseller." We didn't. We didn't assume a bestseller. We didn't even really believe that would happen, let alone a *New York Times* bestseller or anything like that.

All we really wanted to do was help people. That's why we wrote the book. Now fast forward. Something kind of cool has happened recently. The thing that got cool is it started to get traction as it was coming near release on Amazon.com. People started explaining to me how books work on Amazon.com. I didn't know. I was just being educated. It was getting #1 in the church leadership category from time to time. I said, "Okay, wow."

Then you as a church blew the minds of people in New York and in the book industry. I just need to explain something to you you wouldn't otherwise understand. You bought into this vision of who we're becoming. It's not a book; it's our DNA. It's God's Word around a diamond. It's what we carry in our souls and we're growing up into as a church, but we're going to take it out and take it to a bunch of other people.

You bought so many books you messed up their metrics. They don't know what to do with it. It elevated the book to a level where something fairly miraculous happened. We got noticed. We got so noticed that by the end of the first week (which is how they calculate a bestseller: on the first week's sales) we were so high in the sales that publisher and agent told me, "There's no way you're not on the *New York Times* bestseller list. It's not possible for you to be off it." Oh my gosh.

So I'm like, "I can't wait to tell everybody this weekend. I don't know what it's going to do. I don't even understand it all yet. I'm a neophyte. I'm catching on. And we don't know where it's going to be, but oh my goodness. What that's going to do is actually going to get it above the radar, and that's going to get it out to a lot more people. It's going to give us momentum. I can't wait to tell you about what you guys have done. All this is so cool. It's not just you buying the books; it's people across the nation. It had momentum. It's cool stuff. Okay, awesome."

So the facts came in. The indisputable facts came in and we got the stats at the end of the first week. The stats are that they gave us credit for over 11,000 books. For those of you who are not in the book industry, we actually sold more than 11,000 books. They're guessing 18,000 to 20,000 books got sold, but you get credit for a certain amount. There are no bulk sales in that 11,000. Blah, blah, blah. Okay, fine, whatever. I don't even know. They're educating me. I'm like, "Okay, what does that mean?"

What it means is, as a rule, people who sell 3,500 books end up on the *New York Times* bestseller list in one week. This is just blowing our minds. I'm like, "Oh my goodness. I can't wait to tell people." I got excited. I got very excited about it, but we had to wait to see how it translated. You have to wait for the official numbers, because we didn't know where on the list. I'll tell you what they *did* know.

They said, "You are number three in sales in all nonfiction books in the US." Not number three in Christian; number three in *all* nonfiction books in the entire US. That's for BookScan. "Secondly, when it comes to the *New York Times*, if they put you in the Leadership category, which we think they will, you will be the #1 *New York Times* bestselling book in Leadership in your book launch." Mind boggling. That's what all of the numbers say.

See, here's the problem. You're doing all of the things I was doing. It was awesome, but you can't say anything until they release the actual categories. When they got early release, because booksellers have access to the material, we looked for *Home Run* and it was not on any lists. It had been erased. It was gone, as if the book had never been sold. As the publisher and the agent were irate and chased it down, New York does not know what to do with you and wrote off the book and does not want it on their list.

We are nowhere, and they know full well and will admit. David dropped Goliath and they gave Goliath the trophy. I'm as serious as a heart attack. They erased us. We don't exist. We're nowhere. I was livid. Unfortunately, the week before I had just taught you that I have three vulnerabilities. Do you remember the first one? Oh, thanks for remembering.

I was so angry. I said, "God, I just taught them that this doesn't have dominion in my life. It does now. I haven't been this angry in a decade or more. Furthermore, I'm kind of ticked at you, God, because I've already written my message for the weekend, and the third point is 'Keep short accounts. Let no bitterness rise up in your spirit. Forgive others for the wrongs they do to you.' Blah, blah, blah."

I'm so angry. I'm like, "God, you screwed me. You set me up. You let this happen. What on earth? This is wrong. I'm beside myself. No, sir. Something just got stolen from us and we earned it and it's a raw deal. I don't even want to teach this weekend, because I am disqualified to teach. This stuff about writing a book and then living it publicly I'm not all that interested in anymore at all. That was a dumb idea."

So the end of the story with the publisher and the agent was, "Literally, you have been erased. You will not appear. You won't go above the radar. It'll never be known. They don't want your

book getting attention, they don't like that so many churchgoers are buying your book, and they don't want people reading it."

He said, "What you ought to do is tell your people to get on Twitter and the airwaves and say, '*Home Run* banned from the bestseller list. Read the book the *New York Times* doesn't want you to read.'" That's what he's suggesting. I said, "I'm in. I would love to just, in the name of Jesus, cram it in their face. In a gracious way, of course." But that can't be the way we do it. We can do it, but we can't do it in a spirit of anger or bitterness.

We can't let bitterness get underneath righteous indignation or it will undermine every good thing God is doing in us. True? We just can't. We are the people of God. We've been forgiven by God and we have to love like God. It doesn't mean we can't fight for right, but when wrong happens and we get a raw deal, you fight, and then when you hit what you cannot fix, you forgive what you cannot fix and what you cannot forget. Yeah? Because we have to love like God loves.

I don't like this. I'm not even quite there yet. I was so livid I was sitting in my prayer room on Thursday morning, not sleeping again, and I was venting to God. I felt like what he said to me was, "When you get a raw deal, deal with it right. When you get a raw deal, deal with it right." I felt like he prompted me to pick up a book by Corrie ten Boom.

Corrie ten Boom's book is a story of a lady who lived in Holland (I've read this book before) during the time of the Hitler occupation. She was hiding Jews and got turned in by somebody close to her. She lost family members, was thrown into a concentration camp, and suffered unbelievable indignities a thousand times any raw deal I will ever know in my life.

When she was released and got out, somehow surviving that, she started teaching the message of forgiveness and "Be like God, love like God." In the course of that, she had a moment where she was speaking at a church in Munich. After teaching people to forgive like God forgives, a man walked up to her, and she realized who he was. He was the SS guard who stood there leering at women he made strip and shower. He was the one, and she hated him with everything in her.

When he walked up, he said, "Aren't you glad that God forgives everything?" She said, "I could not shake his hand." I can't imagine. She said, "In that moment I prayed, 'God, help me to live my message.'" Oh, what a great prayer. "God, help me live my message." She said God melted the hate in her heart and she shook his hand and said, "Yes. Isn't God's forgiveness amazing?" I've never had that raw of a deal, but all of us feel like we've had raw deals in life.

Maybe you feel like you've had a raw deal in marriage, maybe in business, maybe in family, maybe in church. The only answer is to love like God loves. The only hope of healing is to love like God loves, to keep short accounts, and just maybe to pray the prayer, "O God, help me live my message." The campus pastors are going to step up and offer that prayer over you. That may not be the prayer you need, but you have to answer for yourself, "What is getting me thrown out on second base?"

[End of video]

Let's bow our heads together and let's pray.

Father, each one of us has our own arena where either privately we carry it, like, "Man, we got a raw deal..." Maybe, Father, we carry that into our relationships, into the edge of our personalities, into our cynicism, into justifying our hatred and building up our bitterness. It's just in us, and it will be quite something for us to offer to you the prayer of Corrie ten Boom. "God, help me to live the message, the message I claim, the message you have set in my soul."

In other words, "God, help me to love like you love." I pray for any marriage that needs to say inside their own soul, "I need to keep short accounts, God. Help me to forgive." Things that were carried from our past, Lord, that limit our present and our future. God, we need you to help us to live our message, even in some of the most practical things, as we talked through the teaching, even something like a book. Whatever it is, God.

For others of us, that's not the burden. For some of us, God, we have to change our calendar. You arrested our attention today, and we have some long, loving conversations in front of us in order for us to love well in our families, in our marriages, with our kids, with our friends, business, and the like. For some of us, it's just keeping our word. You've spoken to us today.

If you're among those he has spoken to, then settle it with God. "God, forgive me. I've been sloppy in keeping my word. So Holy Spirit, by your strength, restore my soul to keep my word."

Father, may you give us favor on second base. May you build a strength and a depth of relationship that causes the world to turn to your people and say, "What do you know that we don't know?" May we be that good. May we be that strong. May we live out the message you gave us and love like you love. I pray in Christ's name. And everyone agreed, saying, "Amen."