

This week, I had a number of spontaneous meetings. The handful of people wanted to express concern about, um, The upcoming election. And they wanted to make sure that I knew what I can and can't say. I've been told that every once in a while I get a little uh, my opinions aren't what everybody else's are. And I understand that, and I appreciate that. And I sat through a number of meetings this week on what we can say up here, what we can't say for legal reasons, what we can do, what we can't do. And I told one person specifically that today I am going to talk about something that most people do not agree with me on. And I'm going to say it from me. This is my opinion. This is solely my opinion. It does not reflect anybody else's opinion. It does not reflect the vision of God. It is my opinion and I'm going to say it.

I hate August. I do; I really do. And I don't like August because everything that happens. It's the end of the summer. And I am reminded that I have forgotten to do 90 of what my goals were this year. I'm reminded that school is starting back up, so I'm going to be missing out on some of my morning time. It's just me and Wednesday. I'm also glad that I'm going to be missing out on some of this time. But it's a great opportunity for the two of us. And I'm going to miss that.

I know some people, it's their birthday this month, and they appreciate that. And they love it and other people, it's their anniversary and very great on that as well. But for me, August represents failure in my mind. Everything that I have done up to this point, no matter how good it is, no matter what we've done, because we did great things this summer, with the kids feeding the kids program, I'm still reminded that there is so much that I didn't do. I am reminded that there's so much left for me to continue doing, and I've got about 10 days to get it done. And that's hard.

And we all feel like we don't, we all have those moments where we think that no matter what we've done it isn't good enough. No matter what we do, We're still going to fail, And it's hard because we don't want to fail. We don't want us to fail. We don't want others to fail. We want to accept and succeed.

Today's reading James is talking to us about those trials. The temptations that we have that we don't succeed at those moments in life. Our expectations and reality are two different things and he's telling us that it's okay to fail. We can't always succeed. We can't always be the best at everything, But it's okay to fail. It's all right for us to not meet our expectations. It's hard. Now we don't always want that Because if we set that bar so low, what are we going to do? It's like yeah, we failed. Forgive us.

That's not what this is about. This is what God, loving us, no matter what, loving us for, who we are. Loving us for what we do, for what we accomplish, for trying, for simply trying. We can't always succeed. If we always succeed, then we wouldn't learn how to fail. That's just as important as succeeding. But we know He's going to love us. No matter what, He's going to be there for us, no matter what. Especially if we ask him.

There are some times just getting out of bed is hard. It really is. And I have to ask God, I have to pray. Say hey I need help today. It's going to be a hard day for a number of different reasons. Why do these things happen? I know I'm not alone at that, and it's okay to do that. It's okay to feel that way. It's okay to ask God for help. It seems so small asking for help to get out of bed, but it's not. It's a huge step. That's a huge opportunity. For some of us, we get up every morning, just like everyone else. But sometimes we don't want to. We don't want to get out of

bed. It's easier staying in bed and hiding. But it takes great courage within ourselves to get up every morning. It takes great courage within ourselves to say God, I need help. I need help today. And that's okay. It's a great thing to know that God is there to help us. To know that he's there to be with us during these times.

And if you look around the room, or if you're up on TV and you're watching us, and we're waving, we're here for you too. We're here for everyone. I don't think there's anybody in this room that if I asked that I needed help with something, they'd tell me no. There are some that some days would be more likely than others but we all know we can lean on each other here.

We know that there are other Christians, there are other Jews, there are Muslims, there are Hindus. There are all kinds of people in this world that we might not see as we see ourselves, but they'll help us. If we ask, we just have to have the courage to do it.

And James is telling us that it's okay to have that courage. We need to have that courage. That God has already set it up. If we ask him in our faith He will take care of us. He will find people to help us because we're all there. The last part of it, he's explaining that a little more. He's telling us that if we are the poor, poor in whatever, poor in heart, poor in faith, poor in riches. But if we ask, We will become rich. Will become rich on the other side. We all have more given than the people who already are rich and don't ask. If they have everything and they don't ask God for help, then they'll just wither away because there's nothing else for them. They don't have God's love. They don't have his grace. They don't have his wisdom. They're simply there worshiping false idols, being a part of different things, and forgetting that the rest of us are here too.

And when our time comes, we'll all be together. We'll all be in heaven and the rest of it won't matter. Whether we're rich, whether we're poor, whether we're hungry, whether we're well fed, whether we're arrested, whether we're tired, in the end, we're all God's children and we'll all be together. And we have his strength in his lovingness. Let us pray.