

Sermon Summary: Pastor Rich Wilkerson Jr. preached from Hebrews 6 to show us that even though we can forget God, He promises never to forget us. God knows us, and He keeps receipts, but it's not to shame us; it's to save us.

#### Sermon Highlights

- Faith fades when memory fails
- Even though we forget God, He promises not to forget us
- God doesn't keep receipts to shame you; He keeps receipts to save you
- God keeps receipts on who you are
- He is a God of individuals
- God is in the business of working through broken people
- God keeps receipts on what you do
- It's not hard to have faith at the start. It's hard to have faith in the middle.
- Repetition creates reputation
- Your gain is in your again
- If you build anything worth building, you'll attract critics worth ignoring
- God keeps receipts on how you do it
- The difference between a relationship and religion is motivation
- If we're not careful, we'll just assume someone else has got it
- What you behold is what you become
- You're not called to a life of convenience. You're called to a life of conviction.

#### Scriptures:

Hebrews 6:10-12: 9 Even though we speak like this, dear friends, we are convinced of better things in your case—the things that have to do with salvation. 10 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. 11 We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. 12 We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. The Certainty of God's Promise: 13 When God made his promise to Abraham, since there was no one greater for him to swear by, he swore by himself, 14 saying, “I will surely bless you and give you many descendants.” 15 And so after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was promised.

Hebrews 12:1-2: Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

#### Sermon Discussion

- “God is in the business of working through broken people.” Pastor Rich shared a long list of people God used in the Bible who seemed unqualified (see below). How does this encourage you that God wants to work in your life, too?
- “Repetition creates reputation.” What do you think God's calling you to put on repeat right now?
- “It's not hard to have faith at the start. It's hard to have faith in the middle.” What are you in the middle of that you need to have the faith to stay in?

- “You’re not called to a life of convenience. You’re called to a life of conviction.” What has God given you conviction for that you think He may be calling you to act on?

Prayer Prompt: Dear Lord, thank you for your faithfulness. Thank you for seeing us uniquely and for loving us for who we are. I pray that you help each of us to become more aware of Your presence in our lives this week, and that we don’t allow any outside voices or previous circumstances to dictate how we allow You to use us. I pray that You help each of us to stay near to You this week. Amen.

Here’s the list Pastor Rich shared of broken people in the Bible who God used: Noah was a drunk, Abraham was too old, Isaac was a daydreamer, Jacob was a liar, Joseph was abused, Moses had a stuttering problem, Gideon was afraid, Samson was a womanizer, Rahab was a prostitute, Jeremiah was too young, David was a murderer and had an affair, Elijah was suicidal, Isaiah preached naked, Jonah ran from God, Naomi was a widow, Job went bankrupt, Peter denied Christ, The disciples fell asleep while praying, John the Baptist ate bugs, Martha worried, The Samaritan woman was divorced, Zacchaeus was too small, Paul was too religious, Timothy had an ulcer, Lazarus was dead.

AI enabled sermon recap:

Sermon on Hebrews 6: God Keeps Receipts

Jun 1, 2026

Overview: A worship gathering featuring an announcement for Elevation Nights 2026 and a sermon centered on Hebrews 6:10–12. The message, titled “God keeps receipts,” urges believers to remember God’s faithfulness, persevere with consistent service and right motives, imitate faithful predecessors, and fix their eyes on Jesus. The service includes corporate praise, honoring leadership, personal anecdotes, scriptural exposition, prayer for the weary, and a salvation invitation.

**Elevation Nights 2026 Announcement: Dates: October 9th through October 18th, 2026 - Cities: Lubbock, Dallas, Oklahoma City, Houston, Kansas City, Memphis, Birmingham, San Antonio.**

Call to Praise and Service Context: Exhortation: God “inhabits the praises of his people,” not their complaints, fears, or worries. Despite receiving “difficult, sad news” that morning, the speaker chooses to give God “my best praise.”

Scripture posture: The gathering stands for the reading of God’s word and acknowledges a “sweet sense of God’s presence.”

Honor and Gratitude

- Recognition of Pastor Steven and Holly Furtick for “20 years” of faithful service; call to give “double honor” to those who labor in teaching and preaching.
- Personal note: The speaker celebrates his “20-year wedding anniversary,” met his wife “when I was 17,” mentions “four little children,” and affectionately references his wife “Dawn Shree.”
- Scripture Focus and Sermon Theme
- Primary text: Hebrews 6:10–12, written to persecuted, fatigued believers tempted to revert to old ways; reminder they have “everything they need in Christ Jesus.”
- Title and thesis: “God keeps receipts” — God remembers individuals, their works for His people, and the manner in which they serve.

Remembering God’s Faithfulness: From Passover to Communion

- **Warning about forgetfulness: “Your faith fades when your memory fails.” “Yesterday’s miracle becomes today’s minimum requirement.”**
- Old Testament remembrance: Passover as “memory training” — annual retelling of deliverance from Egypt to cultivate gratitude for freedom.
- **New Testament fulfillment: At the Passover, Jesus institutes communion — “Do this in remembrance of me.” Emphasis: “There’s a lamb at the table,” pointing to Jesus as the Lamb of God who delivers from spiritual slavery; His blood secures eternal salvation.**

#### God Keeps Receipts: Who You Are

- Personal remembrance: “God is not unjust. He will not forget your work...” addressed to individuals — God sees fears, worries, doubts; He cares for persons, not just crowds.
- **Matthew 1 genealogy: A record of “names” across “42” generations signals God’s attention to individuals. God works through “jacked up people,” using the broken so His glory shines.**
- **Examples of flawed people God used: Noah (drunk), Abraham (old), Jacob (liar), Joseph (abused), Moses (stuttered), Gideon (afraid), Samson (womanizer), Rahab (prostitute), Jeremiah (too young), David (murder and affair), Elijah (suicidal), Isaiah (preached naked), Jonah (ran), Naomi (widow), Job (bankrupt), Peter (denied Christ), disciples (fell asleep), John the Baptist (ate bugs), Martha (worried), Samaritan woman (divorced more than once), Zacchaeus (too small), Paul (too religious), Timothy (ulcer), and “Lazarus was dead.”**

#### God Keeps Receipts: What You Do

- **God records service: He sees “your work,” your love for Him “as you have helped his people and continue to help them.” Emphasis on “continue.”**
- **Consistency over intensity: “Repetition creates reputation.” “Your gain is in your again.” Apply to marriages, parenting, business, church attendance, and serving. Stated another way: “Practice makes permanent.”**
- Elevation example: 20 years of persevering ministry by Steven and Holly underscore long-haul faithfulness.
- Nehemiah’s rebuild: A burden can be an assignment. Despite critics (Sanballat and Tobias), Nehemiah stays on the wall with resolve: “I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down.” In “52 days” the walls are rebuilt; not through spectacle but a “submitted man.”
- God’s meticulous record: “Nehemiah chapter three, verse 14. The dung gate was repaired by Melchizedek, son of Rechab.” If God remembers who rebuilt His “toilet,” He remembers unseen, faithful service (e.g., parenting, ushering, parking, kids ministry).

#### God Keeps Receipts: How You Do It

- Heart posture: “Show this same diligence to the very end... Do not... become lazy.” God cares about attitude and motivation, not only actions.
- Illustrations: Marriage lesson — “It’s not what you say, it’s how you say it.”
- Cheesecake Factory anecdote: A group forgot to pay due to assumptions. Application: Don’t assume “somebody else” will pick up the bill in church life; “play my part.” Reflective challenge: “If everybody behaved like you at Elevation Church, would we be better or would we be worse?”
- Imitate the Faithful and Run with Perseverance - Be imitators: “Imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.” Understanding history fuels care for destiny.
- Church progress: Advances “from sacrifice to sacrifice,” “grace to grace,” “strength to strength,” “glory to glory.”
- **Hebrews 12:1–2: Though you may feel secluded, you are “surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses.” Hall of Faith saints (e.g., Abel, Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, Samson) cheer believers to “run... with perseverance,” shedding hindrances and sin.**

- **Family voices: The speaker recalls mentors and relatives—Fulton Buntane (“It’s always too soon to quit”), Mark Buntane (with Mother Teresa: “It’s not about being successful. It’s about being faithful.”), David Wilkerson (to gang threats: “You can cut me into a million pieces... every one... will... say, I love you and Jesus Christ loves you as well.”). Call: live by conviction, not convenience.**
- Grafted into God’s family: Through Jesus’ blood, Abraham, Moses, Samson, and others become part of the believer’s spiritual lineage. Emphasis: “It is about how you finish.”
- Fixing eyes on Jesus: He endured the cross “for the joy set before him” — relationship with believers — and is seated at God’s right hand.

Ministry Moment and Prayer: Encouragement for the weary: God “will never leave you nor forsake you.” Hands raised across the room for prayer: request for “peace, refreshment, encouragement,” and renewed identity as God’s remembered children. Salvation invitation: A call to surrender to Jesus; references “For God so loved the world...” and “God did not send his son... to condemn the world but to save the world.” Response on a three-count, followed by confession of faith: “You’re my Lord. You’re my Savior.”

#### Upcoming Steps and Actions

- Tour: Purchase tickets now at [ElevationNights.com](https://ElevationNights.com); comment if you are “coming, thinking about coming, or going to regret not coming.”
- Worship posture: Choose praise over complaint, fear, and worry; remember God’s past faithfulness.
- Service: Continue helping God’s people; avoid assumption and apathy; “play my part” in the church.
- Formation: Value consistency; “do it again” in marriage, parenting, work, and spiritual practices.
- Imitation: Learn from faithful predecessors; throw off hindrances; run with perseverance; fix eyes on Jesus.
- Decision: If not yet made, respond to Jesus in repentance and faith; confess Him as Lord and Savior.

#### Elevation Church sermon transcript – AI generated:

- Elevation Nights 2026 October 9th Through October 18th What is Elevation Nights? It's only the greatest night of your life All your favorite songs Believe in God You have thousands of brothers and sisters in Christ I'm going to bring a word Holly's going to bring a word And I'm bringing you Elevation Rhythm We're going to go to you. All right. Give them the cities, Daveen. We're going to Lubbock, Dallas, Oklahoma City, Houston. Kansas City, Memphis, Birmingham, San Antonio. That's October 9th through 18th. Now, you've got to get your tickets right now. [ElevationNights.com](https://ElevationNights.com). And in the comments, let us know if you're coming, thinking about coming, or going to regret not coming for the rest of your life. [ElevationNights.com](https://ElevationNights.com). We'll see you soon.
- I'm worshipping, I'm reminded how the scripture says he inhabits the praises of his people. Notice what it doesn't say. It doesn't say he inhabits the complaints of his people. It doesn't say he inhabits the fears of his people. He doesn't inhabit the worries of his people. I don't know what your week has looked like. I don't know if it's been a good week, bad week, or tough week. In fact, I woke up this morning with some difficult, sad news. But today is Sunday. And it's the first day of the week. And I'm going to give God my best praise. I'm not going to tell God all about my problems.
- Come on. I'm going to tell my problems all about my God. Somebody worship him here today. He's here. He's going to speak to us. If you have a Bible, quickly reach for it. Hebrews chapter 6 is where I want you to turn. I've got a word on my heart. I'm excited to share it. We're going to stand for the reading of God's word. What a sweet sense of God's presence in the house today. As you turn in there, let me just say what a huge honor it always is to stand behind this pulpit, to come back year after year, to be here with all of you.
- When I come to Elevation, I just feel like I'm at home. I love you. And I just, I think it's just important that we just always take some time, week in and week out. I'm just more convinced, the older I get, I'm more and more

convinced that the greatest blessings in life, they walk into your life on two legs. A lot of people praying for miracles and breakthroughs and resources. None of those things are bad to pray for.

- I just wanna remind you that the greatest breakthroughs, the greatest miracles tend to be people. It's why it's important to come to church because you don't know who's sitting in front of you. You don't know who's sitting next to you. You don't know who's sitting behind you. In fact, just nudge your neighbor and say, are you here for me? Maybe just, did God send you for me?
- **Because God blesses our life through people, through one another. And I would just be remiss if I did not tell you that one of the greatest gifts in my life is the friendship and the mentorship of Pastor Steven Furtick. Can we just thank God for Pastor Steven and Holly? Here's what the word of God says. It's important that you get this because this is not just what preachers do. It's not just cliché. The word of God says that those that labor and teach and preach God's word, they deserve double honor. And I just want to say 20 years later, here they are still serving faithfully. Come on, whatever you were going to do, can you just double it right now? Can we tell Pastor Steve and Holly, we love you. We love you. In the chat. I love you so much. Thank you for making my life so much better. And thank you for teaching and leading all of us. We're all better because of you.**
- Today, I've got a message on my heart. Hebrews chapter six is what I want to read from today. I don't know what you
- walked in here with today. I don't know what it is that you're carrying. The book of Hebrews is one of these interesting books of the Bible that we don't know who the author is. But that's okay because we know who the audience is. And the audience is believers that are being persecuted, that are tired, that are fatigued, that are thinking about going back to their old way. And here comes God. And he wants to remind them of the fulfillment of who Jesus is. He wants to remind them that they are never alone. He wants to remind them that they have everything they need in Christ Jesus.
- This is Hebrews chapter six. I'm gonna start in verse 10. "God is not unjust. He will not forget your work. and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, so that what you hope for may be fully realized. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. I like that line. Imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised."
- I want to take the next few moments if I can. And I want to preach to you from the subject, God keeps receipts. Sometimes you could just close after the title because it's a word for someone. God keeps receipts. Would you pray with me? Lord, we thank you for your word. God, we thank you that today, Lord, as we read it, Lord, it reads us. God, we've come into this place for one reason, which is to lift you up. is to make much out of your name, the one name, that at that name of Jesus, every knee will bow and every tongue will confess.
- Today, Lord, I pray that you would remind some people who they are in you. I pray that your word would jump into our hearts and we would leave here different from how we came. We thank you in advance for what you're about to do. We praise you in this place. And if you agree with that prayer, all of God's people said? All of God's people said? Hello, make some noise if you love Jesus. High five two or three people and say, God keeps receipts. God keeps receipts. Put that in the chat. God keeps receipts.
- This is a very special year for me. I know at Elevation, you guys have been celebrating 20 years as a church. Can we put our hands together for 20 years of faithfulness and service? But it's also a special year for me because not only does Elevation turn 20, but this year I will celebrate my 20-year wedding anniversary. I met my wife when I was 17 years of age, and we got married young. I said, girl, if you ever leave, I'm going with you. And I just, I love being married. She sends her greetings. My wife, Dawn, she and I are four little children.
- And it's funny, I want to say to all the guys, like, fellas, women remember anniversaries. In fact, like, women remember everything. Like my wife makes me laugh. She's like, Rich, do you know what today is? I'm like, Tuesday? She's like, no, four years ago, we sat in the parking lot after brunch and we drank sparkling water together. Remember that? No, I don't. I remember some years ago, I was away preaching and teaching. I think it was in England, and Dasha was back home, and we were on different time changes. It was actually our anniversary day, and

somehow we got on the phone that morning. We were talking, chit-chatting. All right, girl, yeah, I love you. No, I love you. Shut up. Just Christian toxic flirting. We got off the phone but never said happy anniversary. Dawn Shree immediately called me back. She said, Rich, did you forget our anniversary?

- I had to think quick. I said, girl, every day's our anniversary. Come on, somebody. That will work one time and one time only. How many of you know we are a forgetful people? And we don't just forget earthly relationships. Oftentimes we have a tendency to forget our heavenly relationship. And what I want to remind you is that forgetfulness is expensive. Because your faith fades when your memory fails. A lot of us, we just have a tendency to forget all that God has done in our life. Over and over and over again, our faith begins to suffer when we forget. It's funny because you go back into the Old Testament and you see time and time again, the Israelites, they had the same problem.
- I mean, how many of y'all know that yesterday's miracle becomes today's minimum requirement? I mean, the Israelites, God parts a Red Sea. And then a couple of days later, they are actually complaining about the menu. What are we going to eat? Dude, he parted the Red Sea. I think he can take care of breakfast. But we're so quick to judge them, but we do the same thing. God pays a bill. Next thing we want, what about the next bill? God heals your body, but now you're panicked about the future. God opens up a door. Now you're worried, will he open up the next door? So often in life, we are so good at remembering what hurt us, but we forget what held us.
- I wonder, I'm not trying to come with shame today, but like, how much more does God have to bless you before you can be happy? How many more prayers does he have to answer before you don't have to go to the next season with anxiety? How many more times does God have to pull you out before you can trust he's going to pull me through this one? Come on, somebody. Am I preaching to anybody today? We don't need more proof. We need a better memory. We have selective memory and God knows this about us. Have you noticed that?
- Like when you read the Bible, what is God trying to do over and over again? God's like, remember, remember the covenant. Remember the Sabbath. Remember, I'm the one who brought you out. In fact, so much of the Old Testament is stories of traditions and rhythms and systems of God trying to systematically help you not forget. What do you think Passover meal is? What do you think? Passover meal is a systematic moment. It's not just a meal. It's memory training. God says, hey, for 400 years, you were in slavery, but I brought you up out of Egypt. Not just brought you out. You plundered the Egyptians when you left that place. So here's what I want you to do.
- Every year, I want you to put lamb on the table. I want you to drink the cup because I want you to tell your kids once we were in slavery. But our God, he's the God who makes a way out of no way. Anybody thankful for a God who brings you out? Don't forget it. because your faith's gonna suffer if you forget. But then Jesus shows up on the scene and all of a sudden he reenacts this entire moment. It's called communion. What does he do? He says, drink the cup and do this in remembrance of me. What I love about the New Testament version is that Jesus is at the Passover meal, but for the first time, there's not just lamb on the table.
- There's a lamb at the table. Is that not what John said? Behold the lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. And as Jesus holds the cup and says, do this in remembrance of me. What is he saying? He's saying Moses brought you out of physical slavery. But I'm getting ready to bring you out of spiritual slavery. Ooh, lamb's blood on the doorpost protected you for the night. But when my blood is slain and scattered across the cross, you will be saved for eternity. I need you to take a moment right now and thank God for his grace.
- Thank God for his goodness. If he doesn't do one more thing, come on, he's been good to you. I just came to say thank you, God. A generation who forgets deliverance is a generation who will quickly lose gratitude for freedom. And freedom forgotten is entitlement. May we never be entitled. If all we did today was just remind you of what he's already done, it would be more than enough. I feel like preaching a little bit today because I could just land right there and just take you down memory lane. But I want to try to get personal with you. And I'll just use me as an example. I don't just forget my wife's anniversary or our anniversary.
- I forget God. But here's what's so good about the gospel. Anybody thankful that although we forget God, God promises not to forget us. Anybody grateful that even when we're faithless, he is still faithful. Does anybody have a

testimony of the faithfulness of God? In so many ways, that's what's happening here in the book of Hebrews. You see, there is this phrase in society, I got receipts. Have you heard this before? This isn't like grocery store language slang, okay? I got receipts mean I got proof, I got screenshots, I will expose you, I will go Candace Owens on you. But God, he's got receipts. But God doesn't keep receipts to shame you.

- **God keeps receipts to save you. The Bible says it this way, that he forgets our sins. As far as the east is from the west, if you are in Christ Jesus, your sins are no more. But another Bible verse says that every one of your tears, he captures them and he puts them in his bottle. Who is this God who forgets my sins but records every one of my tears? He is a good father who loves us even when we don't feel lovable. No, God keeps receipts not to expose us, but to exonerate us. God keeps receipts not to punish you, but to promote you. God keeps receipts not because he wants to condemn you, but because he wants to commend you. Anybody thankful for a God who says, I will not forget you. I won't forget you.**
- Today, I don't know who I'm preaching to, but I just have a sense in my heart that people have walked in and maybe you're tired or you're fatigued and maybe you're on your faith journey and you're having a difficult time. You're in a hard place. You're in a tired place. You're in a place about, you're thinking about giving up. I don't wanna remind you of your strength. I wanna remind you of his strength. I wanna remind you of a God who promises if you're in Christ Jesus to remember you. I wanna show you three things that God keeps receipts on. Number one, God keeps receipts on who you are. This is encouraging to me. This is Hebrews chapter six, verse 10.
- **God is not unjust. He will not forget your work and the love you have shown him. He doesn't look at these tired people and say, I won't forget the church. I won't forget the crowd. I won't forget the gathering. He says, I won't forget you. God is the God of individuals. Yes, he loves the world, but you are what make up the world. And I think today you've got to get some confidence in the fact that he sees you. He knows what's going on inside of your life. Every fear, every worry, every area of doubt today, he sees you in that place and he cares about you. One of the greatest examples of this is that as you read the New Testament, if you ever get to the book of Matthew, Matthew chapter 1 starts with the genealogy of Jesus.**
- Now, a lot of us, if we have like a Bible reading plan, some of us, we skip that part. It's like, I don't know anybody who goes to the movies and the movie ends. You're like, hey, stick around. Why? I love the credits. No one really does that, but I guess God likes the credits because God lists out 42 different generations. 40 different names are enlisted in Matthew chapter 1. What is he letting us know? He's letting us know, I remember you. I remember names. I remember individuals. And the best part about Matthew chapter 1 is not just the names. It's the names that are in Matthew chapter 1. These are jacked up people.
- You think... You think your family's dysfunctional? Check out God's family. God is in the business of using the jokers, the smokers, even the midnight tokers sometimes he will use. Because God didn't just come for sinners. Come on. He came through sinners. He's saying, I do not call the qualified, but I qualified the called. God loves you. He loves every part of you. He loves you just the way that you are, but he loves you too much to let you stay the way that you are. God's greatest priority is to get his glory. But the way that he does that is by working with broken people. It's pretty practical. If you're not broken, how will his glory ever shine through? In fact, I'm going to be careful today because I don't want to get into trouble. God is borderline good. Obsessed with you.
- Like read the scriptures. He knew you before you were in your mother's womb. He niched you are fearfully and wonderfully made. All the days for you were written in his book before one of them came to be. The scripture says he watches you while you sleep. What? The scripture says, he knows every hair on your head. Even the extensions. Even the weave. Even the turkey transplant. Come on, how about a God who loves you and sees you and cares about you and if his eye is on the sparrow, come on, his eye is on you today.
- God's in the business of working with broken people and to the Hebrew people that are tired and fatigued and walking away. He says, I'm not unjust. I will not forget you. Go through history and see I'm the God who works with dysfunctional people. Anybody who says God can't use me is somebody who's never read the Bible. You've never read it because the whole book is a story of broken people being used by a perfect God that when his grace comes



upon you, even in your weakness, he is strong. I mean, for goodness sake, Noah was a drunk. Abraham was way too old to be used by God. Isaac was a daydreamer. Jacob was a liar. Joseph was abused. Moses had a stuttering problem. Gideon was afraid. Samson had long hair and was a womanizer. Rahab was a prostitute. Jeremiah was too young. David was a murderer and he had an affair. Elijah was suicidal. Isaiah preached naked. Jonah ran from God. Naomi was a widow. Job went bankrupt. Peter denied Christ. The disciples fell asleep while praying. John the Baptist, he ate bugs for goodness sakes.

- Martha worried about everything. The Samaritan woman was divorced more than once. Zacchaeus was too small. Paul was too religious. Timothy had an ulcer. And Lazarus? Lazarus was dead, everybody. He died. Come on, I'm trying to tell you about a God who's dying. Take it back. God died to use you. He sees you. He's got receipts on who you are. He knows who you are. We forget, but he don't forget. God keeps receipts on who you are. But look what the passage says because it continues. This is just good, good Bible study. God is not unjust. He will not forget your work. I love this. And the love you have shown him as you have helped his people. God's heart is for his church and his people. His priority is his glory. The vehicle and how he does that is through his body, his people. So God doesn't forget your work or the love you've shown him as you have helped his people.
- And here's the key word, and continue to help them. See, God keeps receipts on what you do. And this is very, very encouraging to me because he doesn't just see me, he sees what I do. He's recording what I do. God cares about what I do. He says, I see your work. I see your love for me. I see your love for my people. And I see how you continue in it. I think the key word is continue. Because how many of y'all know, we're good at starting things, but we're not always good at continuing things.
- It's not hard to have faith at the start. It's hard to have faith in the middle. The middle. Nobody likes the middle. We like the beginning of something, but this is where perseverance sets in. I think this is so important because we live in a time right now that we overestimate intensity, but we underestimate consistency. Let me say to all my Gen Z friends and all of young alpha out there, you wanna be taken seriously in life, be consistent. I need some parents to clap their hands a little bit. Where's all the boomers at? Come on, yes. Preach the word, pastor. It's not what you do occasionally. It's what you do consistently. In fact, I would say it this way.
- Repetition creates reputation. You will be known for what you repeat. Repetition. Do it again and again and again. Watch this. Your gain is in your again. You want gains in life? Do it again. You want to grow in life? Do it again. You want to get stronger in life? Do it again. You want your faith to increase this year? Do it again. Are there any do it again people in the house today? Do it again. Anybody can start something. Anybody can start a marriage. Can you continue in a marriage? Anybody can start a family. I don't want to break down how that works, but anybody can start that. Can you continue being a father? Shout out to all the dads out there that are just in the middle of it, staying in it. Come on, can we applaud every man in this house, every man watching online? We salute you. We honor you. Great men of God. Anybody can start a business.
- Can you continue? Anybody can start going to church. Can you continue faithfully serving? I've got to be honest with you. Like when I come to Elevation, I'm always blown away by just the beauty of this place and the people that come from all over the world and how this ministry touches the world. But the thing that I can't get over is a man and a woman. Stephen and Holly, some 20 years ago, got a vision from God. And they said, we're not just going to do it one Sunday. But 20 years later, we're going to continue to persevere.
- Because we believe God is watching what we do. One more time. Let's thank God for godly leadership. What a blessing. Wisdom will be proven right by all her children. I'm sitting here and I got a vision for my life. My son Wyatt's with me, eight years of age. Billy Graham Furtick walked up here. I said, Jesus, I'm going to get Graham to lay hands on Wyatt after this service. Because it's people that are persevering, not just starting, but continuing. God keeps receipts on what you do. Even if you think it's small, even if you think it's insignificant, even if you think it's mundane, even if you think it's average, even if you think it's mediocre, he's watching.
- One of my favorite illustrations is the book of Nehemiah. If you know the story, Nehemiah, well, Nehemiah was living in a time that Israel had been sieged and they were no more. And he was actually a cup bearer to the king. Now, if



you don't know what a cup bearer is, a cup bearer was somebody who would test the king's drink for poison. So you think your job is bad? Hey, Nehemiah, man, how's your job going? So far, pretty good. This dude was a cupbearer. And one day he hears the news that his walls and the temple have been destroyed. And although it had happened hundreds of years before, his heart begins to break. And he finds himself before the Lord and a passion begins to emerge. And he has this desire to go back to Jerusalem and rebuild the walls.

- I want to encourage some people out there that many times your burden is actually your assignment. the very thing that's moving your heart, the very thing that feels like frustration is actually vision in disguise. God is telling you that I put you on the earth to solve that. And the Bible says that Nehemiah, he goes back to Jerusalem and he begins to survey the rubble and the ruins. And people are walking over the walls day in and day out because oftentimes... We live in a place that we just begin to lower our standards and you get what you allow. You cannot change that which you tolerate. And so people have just been walking over the walls, but Nehemiah said, no, it can't happen this way. And so he assembles a team and he puts people together.
- And the Bible says they start building the walls. And as you would understand, a great vision always comes with great opposition. As Nehemiah is building, here comes the critics, Sanballat and Tobias. And they come over there and they try to put fear. They try to put comments out there. They try to make videos. They try to hate on Nehemiah. And I like Nehemiah because Nehemiah is up on that wall. He's got a sword in one hand and he's got a hammer in the other. Sick skin and soft heart. I want to encourage some people, if you ever build anything worth building, you will attract critics worth ignoring. And they say, Nehemiah, come down, we gotta talk to you.
- But I like Nehemiah's response. I'm sorry, I am doing a great work, and I cannot come down to you. Some of y'all need to tattoo this on your soul this year. I'm sorry, I'm building something great. I can't come down to your pettiness. I can't come down to your drama. I can't come down to your issues. Come on, somebody. Anybody building something worth building? And the Bible says in 52 days, they rebuild those walls. Here's what's interesting about the book of Nehemiah. There is not one supernatural miracle. All there is, is a submitted man. Sometimes the greatest testimony and the greatest miracle that people are looking for. is that when you step out and you start and you begin something, when you face all hell and high water, when you face backlash, when you begin to face things that are trying to oppose you, the fact that you stay standing and keep on building, let me tell you what, that is a work of God. In the summer, I was studying the book of Nehemiah, and I never noticed it before, but I got to Nehemiah chapter 3.
- In Nehemiah chapter three, this is interesting. It records, it's God's receipts on everybody who was a part of rebuilding the temple and the walls. And one guy stood out to me. This is Nehemiah chapter three, verse 14. The dung gate was repaired by Melchizedek, son of Rechah. Let's just stop right there. Do you know what the dung gate is? That's God's toilet. The Dungate is the bathroom. And I had to stop. I said, oh my God. If God keeps receipts on who rebuilt his toilet. If God's got a record of his plumber, don't you think he sees you today raising those kids? If God remembers who built his toilet, don't you think he sees you ushering today? Don't you think he sees everybody in the parking lot? Every person who's in our kids ministry right now.
- Every person who's persevering and continuing. Come on, why don't we clap our hands and thank God that he keeps receipts on what we do. What you repeat is what you become known for. And today, as we often can forget God, God says, I remember you. I see you for who you are, but I also see what you do. Look at it as the passage continues. He says it this way. We want each of you to show this same diligence, keyword, to the very end so that what you hope for may be fully realized. We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised. So God keeps your seats on who you are. God keeps your seats on what you do. Lastly, God keeps your seats on how you do it.
- He says, we don't want you to become lazy. We want you to be diligent. He's saying, it's not enough just to do the right thing. There's a right thing to do in the right way. That God doesn't just care about what, he cares about how. I'm 20 years married and I'm still learning this principle. I'm 20 years married and I'm still learning this principle. My wife taught me early on, Rich, it's not what you say. I want to help some of the single guys in this house today. It's

how you say it. Ladies, can you help me? Is that true? It's not just what you say. It's how you say it. Listen to a man who's been married for almost 20 years. I remember. When I first got married to Dawn Shree, we would go shopping. In fact, it happened just this past week, but I'll take her shopping somewhere.

- It's always kind of a strange deal, you know, as a dude, like going shopping with your wife, you need picking out some jeans and she gets three pairs of jeans and you go over to the dressing room and then you have to sit there on that little stool outside the dressing room. People walk by, you look really creepy. You're like, no, I promise. I'm here with somebody, you know? Like there's a guy, I know my wife. And this is what my wife does. My wife comes out of the dressing room barefoot and she's always on her tippy toes. Babe, babe, babe, babe, babe. How do the jeans look? I'm like, why is she standing on her tippy toes? And as a young man, stupid man, I used to respond, babe, the jeans look good. Because good to a man means good.
- I mean, if good was good for God. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. And he said, it is good. You would think good is good for girls. But good does not mean good to women. Good to women means average. Mediocre. Oh, so you think I look fat in these jeans? Jesus. I've had to learn that it's not just what I say, it's how I say it. So now when we go shopping and she comes out in a pair of jeans, baby, they look good. If I like the jeans, I have to lose my ever loving mind. Whoa! There is a God somewhere! I gotta go. I gotta do a praise break in the department store.
- My wife, babe, you like them? Yes! Yes, yes, yes, I love them, get them, get them all. Because it's not just what, it's how. And I'm telling you, our God, this is our God. He wanted to know the difference between a relationship and religion. It's the motivation of your heart. It's the intention of why you do something. And here's God. He said, I want you to be diligent. I want you to do it with the right attitude. Do not be lazy. Lazy doesn't mean that you couldn't do it. Lazy means you could have done it, but you chose not to do it. Lazy means you chose not to put forth the effort. It was within my power, but I stayed back. I could have, I should have, but I didn't. I was lazy.
- I was apathetic. And sometimes, to be honest with you, sometimes lazy is just unawareness. Sometimes lazy is just assumption. Some years ago, I was with some pastor friends after church. And we were couples and we were eating some dinner afterwards at the world famous cheesecake factory. because I like to drink my calories, strawberry, lemon, hey, shout out, and we're having the best night. You know those nights where you're just hanging out and just talking and we're just enjoying each other and we had been at a meeting and we're laughing and we're reminiscing and wow, God moved and we're telling jokes and we get up from the dinner table and we walk out and we're still laughing when all of a sudden we hear, excuse me, and we turn around and there is the waitress holding the receipt. And she said, you forgot to pay your bill.
- To which I'm quickly mortified because I can just already see the Miami Herald pastor and his friends skips out on meal ticket. But we looked at each other. Whoa, I thought you paid for it. Oh, I thought you were going to take care of it. I thought you had paid it. No, no, no. And all of us, watch this. All of us had the ability. We all reached for our wall and said, no, no, no. Let me pay. We had just assumed that the other had done it. Can I just speak at the 20-year mark of Elevation Church? If we're not careful, we will just assume that somebody else is going to pick up the bill. We'll just assume, man, the parking lot, they got the workers. That's already good. They don't need any more help in the kids ministry. I want to say it this way to you.
- If everybody behaved like you at Elevation Church, would we be better or would we be worse? Come on. May we be a church that we say we want to play our part. I want to play my part because God's paying attention to how in which I do it. How's your soul today? Where are you at with God? I know we came out praising God loudly, but sometimes we can gather corporately and we can worship him with might and strength, but we can walk out of these doors and we can begin to live these quiet lives of desperation. Does my life matter? Do I have purpose? What's going on? How do I fit into the story? And I love what the writer of Hebrews does here. Because as he is reminding them that God doesn't forget them, he gives them a practical application.
- I want to give you the practical application today. He says, be imitators. Important word. Imitate those who've come before you. Important principle in life. What you behold is what you become. He says, imitate those who have gone

before you. One theological Christian writer said this, that the great demise of the day is that we are going through a time of what we call historical dislocation. Let me just make that statement very, very practical for you. All that simply means is, is that if you don't understand your history, you will not care about your destiny. If you don't know where you come from, you will not care where you are going. And so what we must do is we must imitate those who've gone before us.

- The church of Jesus Christ at large has not moved forward from success to success. It hasn't moved forward from event to event. It hasn't moved forward from concert to concert. It hasn't moved forward from thing to thing. It has moved forward from sacrifice to sacrifice. It's moved forward through blood, sweat, and tears, from grace to grace, strength to strength, and glory to glory. And we got here because of the faithfulness of many who went before us. Many who know exactly how you feel today. Many who are in a hard place even right now. Many who felt the discouragement, who were tempted to go backwards, but instead they leaned in and they moved forward. The question is, do you know your story?
- And maybe you're here and you're like, oh, but Rich, I don't have a story like yours. I don't come from four generations of Pentecostal preachers. Maybe you're like, I see Graham Furtick up there on the stage, but that's not my story. I didn't have a dad like Stephen Furtick. I didn't have a family of origin quite like that. I hear you, and that is important. And I'm sorry you did not get that gift. But I want to remind you that equally powerful is not just your family of origin, but it is your family of choice. And that is the power of the body of Christ.
- That is the power of the church. that maybe your daddy wasn't there, but I'm grateful for this writer in Hebrews. As he moves on from chapter six, he gets to chapter 12 and he gives us a picture of who to imitate, he says in chapter 12, therefore, since we are surrounded by a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that's so easily entangles. Maybe you feel alone today, but can I remind you, you might feel secluded, but in reality, you are surrounded. All of heaven is watching you. All of heaven is looking down upon you. All of heaven is seeing you run this race. I don't know if you ever ran a race before. It's one thing to run a race in the woods with no one looking. It's another thing when you're getting close to the finish line and the crowd is out there, you start running with a whole brand new swag. Hey!
- And all of heaven is watching you. Well, who's watching me, Rich? The Bible tells you in Hebrews chapter 11. It's called the hall of faith. It's men and women who died before us. They die without ever seeing the promise. Enoch is watching you. And Abel is watching you. Father Abraham, he's watching you. And Isaac's watching you. And Jacob's watching you. And Joseph's watching you. And Moses is watching you. And Samson is watching you. And they are saying, run your race. Press on. I know you're tired, but do not grow weary in doing good.
- **For at the proper time, you will reap a harvest. God is faithful. weak, sometimes when I'm tempted to quit. I pray to Jesus, no doubt, but I can hear the voices in my head of my grandfather, my uncles. I could hear my grandfather, Fulton Buntane, pastor of the same church. You don't know his name, but for 40 years. He preached really simple messages, short sermons. He preached the message, cry a river, build a bridge, get over it. And I can hear the voice of Fulton Bunting when I feel like quitting, when I feel overlooked, when I feel not seen. I can hear him saying, Rich, it's always too soon to quit. I can hear my uncle Mark Buntane, who gave his life in Calcutta, India, worked with Mother Teresa, built a hospital, built a church. You don't know his name, but he gave his life for the gospel and for the mission. I can hear him quoting the words of Mother Teresa Rich. It's not about being successful. It's about being faithful. I can hear my uncle David Wilkerson, who started Times Square Church, who initiated and began Teen Challenge, the world's largest drug rehab program in the world, went to New York as a young man, stood in the face of adversity and opposition, looked at gang members, one time with a switchblade to his throat, they said, preacher, if you don't stop preaching, We're going to cut you up into a million pieces. But with the conviction and the courage of the Holy Spirit, he looked back and said, you can cut me into a million pieces. But every one of those pieces will look back up at you and say, I love you and Jesus Christ loves you as well. I hear his voice. Rich, you're not called to a life of convenience. You're called to a life of conviction.**

- These voices are cheering me on. Although at times I get tired and weary, I'm reminded God is not unjust. He will not forget us. And so today, it's out of his strength and out of his reminder and through the power of his Holy Spirit that we move forward. And you're saying, but Rich, that's not my story. I know, but you've been grafted into the family of God. And because of what Jesus did on a cross 2,000 years ago, when his blood was shed, that became your spiritual DNA. And now you've got a great, great, great, great, great, great, great granddaddy called Abraham who stepped out into the unknown. And it was there in the unknown that all things became known. Moses is a part of your legacy. I can't do it. I'm not qualified. But here comes God. He's looking at you and saying, all I need is somebody who's available. I've made so many mistakes.
- Yo, Samson. Samson made it in to Hebrews 11. Because it reminds me, it's not how you start. It is not about how you start. Come on, somebody. It is about how you finish. Bring up that verse. Therefore, since we are surrounded. By such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance. Someone say perseverance. The race marked out for us. Fixing our eyes on Jesus. The pioneer and perfecter of faith. Watch this. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross. You know what the joy set before him was? Relationship with you. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning the shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. If you're grateful for Jesus today, can you go ahead and clap your hands and give him praise all over this house? Come on, stand up on your feet.
- This is a God who keeps receipts. This is a God who doesn't forget. This is a God who will never leave you nor forsake you. He's with you. Today all over this house, can we just shut ourselves away? If you're at home watching right now, if you're at one of our other locations, I just believe it's a sweet moment in God's presence. And God is faithful, God is just. He knows your name. He picked you. Don't you know that when he picked you, he knew your flaws? He's not surprised by you. Oh, but Rich, I feel like I let him down. You can't let him down. You were never holding him up to begin with. Some of us, our God's too small. He's big, man.
- He sees what you're doing. Don't grow weary of doing good. He's faithful. He loves you. He sees how you're doing it. Holy Spirit, would you begin to move in this place, even right here, right now? Just if you're here in the room today and you'd say, Rich, you're preaching to me today. I'm tired. I feel overlooked. I don't know what the scenario is or the sequence. If that's you, would you just lift both your hands? I just want to pray for you right where you are today. If that's you, yep, hands are going up. That's me. Rich, you're preaching to me. I need God to remind me today. I want God to remind me. That's what the Holy Spirit does. He's a reminder. He will come in and remind you. Thank you, Holy Spirit. God, I thank you for every hand that's lifted right now at the sound of my voice. I decree and I declare, Lord, peace, refreshment, encouragement, Lord, from the inside out.
- May they sense you even here right now, that you are close, God, that when we're broken, God, that's when you get really close. God, today we've come into your house to worship you, that God, we might be going through something bad, but we still declare you are good. So Lord, when our words run out, we lift our hands as a sign that we are surrendering, that we need a supernatural touch today. Holy Spirit, would you rush through this room like a rushing wind? Fire of God, fall on this place, redefine priorities. Remind us, remind us, remind us. We are your children. We're not forsaken. We're not forgotten.
- **Closing Prayer: We are remembered. Sin is forgotten, tears reported. Who is this God? Hallelujah. Today with your head bowed, your eyes closed, if you're here in this room today or you're watching online and you've never given your life to Jesus, before we worship, before we sing, if that's you, if that's me, I want to surrender my life to Jesus. For God so loved the world, you're in the world. He gave his one and only son that whoever believes in him will not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send his son in the world to condemn the world but to save the world. God wants to save your soul. but he doesn't just want to get you to heaven. He wants to walk with you through every trial and every challenge. The gospel is not a promise of a problem-free life. The gospel is a promise that every problem you come up against, he will be there with you.**
- **So your head is bowed and your eyes are closed. If that's you today, you say, Rich, that's me. Would you pray with me? I want to be included in this prayer of salvation. I want to be in the family of God. I believe Jesus is my Lord**

and Savior. If that's you on the count of three, would you be bold with your hand up high enough and long enough? And I'm going to lead you in a prayer, and then we're going to give glory to God in this place. Ready? One, the Bible says today's that day. Two, don't look at your neighbors. It's not about your neighbors. It's between you and Jesus. Ready? One, two, three. That's me. That's me. That's me. That's me. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus. Thank you, God.

- Come on, elevation. Can we lift our hands towards heaven? The Bible says, believe in your heart, confess with your mouth, and you will be saved. That you are who you said that you are. Forgive me. I receive your salvation. Today I declare, I am yours. You're my Lord. You're my Savior. In Jesus' name. Everybody said. Come on, church. Let's give God praise.