



2026 VICTORY FAMILY CONFERENCE • DAY 4 • YOUNG ADULTS
SESSION

Dig When It's Dry

Faith in the Waiting Season

Ministers Joe Marshall & Brittney Vinson

Friday, August 21, 2026 • 8:00 AM Session • At Sea

*"Everybody wants the water, but nobody wants to dig the ditch." The season between the promise and the promised land is not a dry season. **It is a digging season.** God is after your transformation, not your comfort.*

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Key Quotes, Themes & Nuggets

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How This Applies to Us

You Matter

- ◆ The host asked God what to say to open the young adult session and heard one thing: **"You matter."**
- ◆ Older siblings are usually told to set the example for the younger ones. **In this scripture God flips it: you are young, YOU be the example.** Not just to those younger than you, but to those who have gone before you.
- ◆ Show what it looks like to do life with God with strength, power, and invigoration. Some people got tired along the way. "We gotta get some life back in this walk with God."
- ◆ Brittney and Joe were introduced as "two young people who are an example of what it looks like to do life with God."

1 TIMOTHY 4:12 • AS READ IN THE SESSION

"You are young, but don't let anyone treat you as if you are not important. Be an example to show the believers how they should live: by what you say, by the way you live, by your love, by your faith, and by your pure life."

The Waiting Season

- ◆ "The just shall live by faith." That is not an age thing. The moment you get saved you are placed into a body of believers called to live a life of faith.
- ◆ There is a part that happens **between when God gives you the promise and when you walk in the promise: the period of waiting.**
- ◆ The waiting season can make you reexamine whether the promise came from God, and reexamine who God is to you. **Did you begin to redefine God by your circumstances instead of who He is by His Word?**
- ◆ All of us are in some type of waiting season between what God has already said and what He has promised. It can feel like a wilderness. It can feel dry. It can feel like nothing is happening.
- ◆ The story not turning out the way I wanted does not get to determine how I view God, approach God, serve God, give, or run for God. God is good all the time, and we define Him by His Word.
- ◆ "I don't even get to call a situation not good, because if it puts me on my knees and brings me closer to God, I have to call it good. **My ways are not His ways and my thoughts are not His thoughts.**"
- ◆ The life plan: married by this age, kids by this age, the money, the house, the car. You look around and life does not look the way you planned it. **You are in your waiting season. So what do you do? Why does God call us to wait?**

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I don't get to decide that God is not good because I don't see anything good happening.

MINISTER BRITTNEY VINSON

Your Feelings Will Lie to You

- ◆ Everybody has experienced dry seasons with God. We love praying and feeling something immediately, going up for an altar call and getting a word and a goosebump: "Jesus is thinking about me."
- ◆ **Maturity with God is knowing He is always thinking about you, whether you feel it or not.** God is always moving, goosebump or not. God is always speaking, audible voice or not.
- ◆ Joe is an actor and a creative. His work is tapping into feelings to build an authentic performance, and the faith walk works almost the opposite way.
- ◆ When you accept Jesus, He lives in your spirit. Your feelings live in your soul (mind, will, emotions). **God communicates with your spirit. The devil communicates with your soul.**
- ◆ If you judge whether God is present, good, or moving by your feelings, you are judging Him in the one area where the enemy can manipulate you. You set yourself up to be misled.

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If you use feelings as your evidence of God's presence or His power, you'll be fooled every time.

MINISTER JOE MARSHALL

God Is After Your Transformation, Not Your Comfort

- ◆ In the waiting you think you are waiting on a thing. **You forget that God is more concerned about your transformation than your comfort.**
- ◆ We make the promise the miracle, the big shiny thing at the end of the rainbow. **"The miracle is not the presentation. The miracle is you."** Who do you become when the wait is over?
- ◆ "Let patience have her perfect work." You get to decide: in this season of waiting I will let God have His perfect work.
- ◆ **God is always on time.** If I am not walking in it at this moment, it is not my appointed time, because if it were, no devil in hell could stop it. So I can get comfortable in the waiting.
- ◆ **When you trust someone, you don't need all the details.** A two-year-old does not ask the route, the traffic, or what to pack. The child stretches out a hand: "Mama, I'm coming with you." But let a stranger say "get in my car" and you want all the information first.
- ◆ **Why do we relate to God like He is a stranger?** He is the same God yesterday, today, and forever. The God who delivered me before is the God with this situation now.
- ◆ If the promise has not happened yet, it does not mean the promise does not exist. **It means God is cultivating character on the inside of me.** So ask: God, what in me needs to change? What in me needs to die?
- ◆ **Delay has a way of trying to redefine God's character.** If it hasn't happened, maybe He's not faithful. If I don't feel Him, maybe He's not near. If the door hasn't opened, maybe He's not good. If everybody is moving ahead and I feel stuck, maybe He's forgotten me. Without realizing it, we let circumstances interpret who God is.
- ◆ **Your testimony does not start when you get the thing.** It starts the moment you decide to believe and trust God.

RULE NUMBER ONE

Do not allow the wait to change who God is to you.

The Middle: Brittney's Testimony

- ◆ About three years ago she went through a divorce she never planned and never wanted. "God, this is not my story. I've been following you, preaching for you, serving for you."
- ◆ God said: "I want you to begin telling your story about how I am a good God, and your circumstances don't determine my goodness."
- ◆ She thought she would share it later with a new man standing next to her, "wrapped up in a nice, pretty bow." God said no: **"People need to see what it looks like to be in the middle."** The middle looks like right here. You don't know how the story ends, but God promised a good future and works all things together for good.
- ◆ "The woman I am now cannot be compared to who I was before. Even in a season of uncertainty, I can say it's good. I can say it's worth it. I can say He's been faithful, He's been peace that surpasses all understanding, and He will never leave you nor forsake you. **That's what you learn in the wait.**"

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People need to see what it looks like to be in the middle.

MINISTER BRITTNEY VINSON

Faith Is Confidence in God, Not in the Route

GENESIS 12:1-4 • NIV, AS READ

"The LORD had said to Abram, 'Go from your country, your people and your father's household to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you.' So Abram went, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he set out from Harran."

- ◆ God told Abram to go to a place he had no reference for, at the first encounter he ever had with God. **At 75, his whole life was built there.** He had to leave his family, his way of life, and his way of thinking for a place he had never heard of, with a God he was meeting for the first time.
- ◆ Abram went because **his confidence was not in the route; his confidence was in the One who gave the plan.** So often we want the plan. God says go, and we ask how we will get there and what happens when we leave.
- ◆ Jesus said "we are going to the other side." The storm rose, but nothing stopped them from getting to the other side. "Peace, be still."
- ◆ Paul had to go to the other side for an assignment, and in the middle of the trip the ship broke apart. He grabbed debris and "doggy paddled" to the other side, **because his hope was not in the ship.**
- ◆ Even if the thing you put your hope and trust in breaks, it does not stop the plan of God. The Word is sure and will not return void. Even if you go to the bottom, God is still there.
- ◆ Her application: "I had hope in something that was supposed to be forever. **The boat broke, but it did not stop the plan God had for my life.** It did not stop the

Word. It did not stop ministry. I grabbed whatever I needed to grab and doggy paddled to the other side, because God is still God."

- ◆ That is faith: trusting God when it looks like nothing is happening, because my trust is in Him, not in the promise.

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Faith is confidence in the God. Faith is not confidence in the route.

MINISTER BRITTNEY VINSON

Dig When It's Dry: A Command, a Promise, and a Warning

- ◆ God gave you a promise, and the promise will come to pass. Scripture says "having done all, to stand," so endurance is part of the process.
- ◆ The enemy cannot stop the promise. What he can do is make you quit. And the main tool he uses to make you quit is your feelings.
- ◆ The backstory: Israel split into two kingdoms. Jehoram (the North) waged war on Moab and recruited Jehoshaphat (the South) and Edom to flank the enemy through the wilderness. They underestimated the trip, ran out of water, and after seven days were dying of thirst with their animals. They cried out, "God, did you bring us here to kill us all?" Elisha came with a word.

2 KINGS 3:16-19 • THE MESSAGE, AS READ

"He then said, 'God's word: Dig ditches all over this valley. Here's what will happen: you won't hear the wind, you won't see the rain, but this valley is going to fill up with water and your army and your animals will drink their fill. This is easy for God to do; he will also hand over Moab to you. You will ravage the country, knock out its fortifications, level the key villages, clear-cut the orchards, clog the springs, and litter the cultivated fields with stones.'"

THE COMMAND

Dig when it's dry. Some days the Bible is "like a podcast with Jesus" with ten pages of notes. Other days it is a struggle just to connect. That is a dry season, and the command is still dig.

THE PROMISE

When you dig, He fills the ditches. The thirst you feel, He will quench. And not just you: "you and your animals will drink." Everybody around you drinks from you digging in a dry season.

THE WARNING

You will not hear the wind and you will not see the rain. Those are your senses. You can smell rain coming, see the cloud, hear the thunder. God says: do not look to your senses as confirmation that I am about to move.

- ◆ God may not even fill it with rain. If you are fixated on one way you think God will do it, you can miss the way He actually fills it.
- ◆ "We walk by faith and not by sight." Sight is your senses. Faith is the evidence of things unseen, "and I'll also add unfelt."
- ◆ The stand-up comedy story. Joe used to do stand-up. You write new jokes and test them on strangers. He would walk off stage sure a bit did not land, and his friend would say, "What are you talking about? All that worked." So he recorded himself, watched it back, and every area he thought was failing was working. "My mind was telling me a different story. My feelings can lie to me."
- ◆ Fight or flight. Your brain detects a threat and sends adrenaline so you can fight or run. But the brain does not always interpret correctly. Public speaking can trigger a racing heart, short breath, and dry mouth, a response that is not accurate to the situation. Do not always trust your feelings when you are judging the season you are in.

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Your brain values safety over accuracy. Don't always trust your feelings when you're judging the season you're in.

Dig While It's Dry: What Has Your Heart?

- ◆ "Our feelings try to get us to reason out what the season is. **We don't get to define our season. God defines our season.**"
- ◆ Brittney is a history buff (World War II, Civil War). A trench is not a little hole; **it is six to ten feet deep, grueling, back-breaking work.** Here they are digging trenches while hungry and thirsty, with no evidence anything will happen, on nothing but a word from God. If they had used their feelings, it would have talked them out of seeing the manifestation.
- ◆ In the waiting, **God wants to see what has your heart.** We love Genesis 21 when Isaac arrives, and Genesis 22 when Abraham lays Isaac on the altar, **but we skip Genesis 12 through 20: the 25-year wait** between the promise and the walking into it.
- ◆ By Genesis 22 he could lay the promise on the altar because he reasoned that God was able to raise the dead, and nobody had ever been raised from the dead at that point. He could lay down his dream and his vision because **it did not have his heart. God did.**
- ◆ So often we are believing for a promise we do not have the heart posture to receive. God knows that if He gave it now, you would make it an idol and worship it instead of Him. "God, if you give me the job, I'll have security. If you give me the spouse, I'll be complete. If you give me the baby, I'll have true love." **God says: your completion can only come from me.**
- ◆ Transparency: "I'm watching my brother live the life that I prayed for, doing ministry with his wife, two little kids running around that I believed God for. And God said, 'Will you still serve me when it looks like people around you are getting the blessing you wanted, and it looks like you got skipped over? Do you know I haven't forgotten you? Do you know I'm still an on-time God?'"
- ◆ "I don't get to determine that my good outcome is another husband and more kids. What I do get to decide is I'm going to walk with God in the sunshine and in the

rain. **God is still good.** That's what the wait does. So when the blessing comes, I can lay it on the altar, because it doesn't have my heart."

- ◆ We run from the wait because we don't like the tension, **but it's in the digging that you know Him. It's when it's dry that you discover His character.** When you know Him, you can celebrate what God is doing in other people's lives: "Praise God for your wife. Praise God for your kids. That has nothing to do with me."
- ◆ Everybody else seeming to get your blessing is a trick of the enemy to cause **spiritual amnesia:** forgetting the goodness of your God.
- ◆ David stood before Goliath, a giant he had never faced, in a place he had never been, unafraid because he had **two memories: the lion and the bear.** "The same God that was with me with the lion and the bear is here before me."
- ◆ God told Abraham, "Look at the stars." Every time you try to forget the promise, look up. **What are your stars?** A scripture, a journal entry, a prophecy you are holding onto. Bring them to remembrance when the enemy makes you doubt who your God is.

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The miracle is not Isaac. The miracle is that along the journey Abraham became the father of faith.

MINISTER BRITTNEY VINSON

Dig Anyway

- ◆ So what do I do while I'm waiting? We keep digging.
- ◆ What do you do when you can't see, when it looks like nothing is happening? You pray anyway. You worship anyway. You forgive anyway. You serve anyway. You prepare anyway. You show up anyway. You do the Word anyway.
- ◆ At this point, what else are you going to do? Sometimes it has to be a line in the sand: **"For Christ I live. For Christ I die. There's nothing left back there for me."** Abraham got so far with God he could not go back to where he came from. All I can do is trust God and keep going forward.
- ◆ Memory is your fuel for faith.

THE LINE

"Everybody wants the water, but nobody wants to dig the ditch."

Secretly, Steadily, Suddenly

- ◆ The physical purpose of a trench is to carry water. **The depth of the digging determines how much water it can hold.**
- ◆ Wondering why your waiting season is lasting so long? **Could it be that God is calling you to dig a well so deep that generations after you will drink from it?** The digging season is preparation for the promise.
- ◆ If they had dug a shallow ditch and said "I feel like I've dug enough," the overflow God promised would have spilled over with nothing to contain it, because they did not dig in the season they were called to dig.
- ◆ God told them to dig, and the next morning the scripture says "suddenly it was full." **But it was not really suddenly: He told them the day before, they dug all day, and in the morning it was full.**
- ◆ There is an illusion around "suddenly." We want instant miracles and instant manifestation. **Suddenly comes on the heels of what you do steadily, and steadily comes on the heels of what you do secretly.**
- ◆ **Relationships are built secretly, steadily, and then suddenly.** Joe and his wife did not fall in love immediately: he slid in her DMs, they texted, they called, they elevated to FaceTime, then dates. Now married five years with three kids. From the outside it looks sudden; it was built steadily.
- ◆ The woman with the issue of blood: everybody around her saw a suddenly, but she spent her whole life and all her wealth looking for a cure before that moment.
- ◆ **Even Jesus did not save the world suddenly.** Born in a manger, then nothing recorded until His thirties except that He "grew in wisdom and in stature." He grew secretly and steadily, and then suddenly the signs, wonders, and miracles; suddenly raised from the dead; suddenly resurrection power given to us.
- ◆ "Let me dig deeper roots in who I know God to be, so that when the promise shows up I have room to receive all of it. **I don't want just enough for me. I want generations to drink off the digging season I'm going through.**"

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Don't despise the season you're in. I stopped calling it a dry season. Now I just call it a digging season.

MINISTER JOE MARSHALL

Surrender Is Not Settling

- ◆ Most miracles ask for our participation. He could have healed instantly; instead He said go dip in the Jordan seven times. **God is always after your transformation.** He could give you everything as soon as you ask, "but then who are you for Him?"
- ◆ The moment you follow Jesus you enter a new kingdom with new rules. **"The moment you said yes to Jesus, you said no to yourself."**
- ◆ **Your entire walk with God is a purification process.** Why wait? Because God is purifying me. Why dig? Because God is purifying me, so that when He looks at my reflection He sees Himself.
- ◆ You became the righteousness of God and a joint heir with Jesus, but now you have to renew your mind so your soul lines up with the Word.
- ◆ Danger: laying down your will and then slipping into **settling**. Because the promise takes so long, we get comfortable not experiencing the promises of God, because disappointment feels like too much. **That is not faith either.**
- ◆ "Our faith is not in the thing. Our faith is in the One who promised it. If it doesn't come the way I think, I know something is coming and something is good, because I know who my God is."
- ◆ **The fight: "I will not settle for living below what God has promised me."**
- ◆ Guardrail: make sure the promise you are standing on is one God gave you, not one you made up. **"You don't get to create the story and then ask God to come bless it."** Nowhere in the Bible did God say, "I'm going to give Brittney a husband and another baby." What she stands on: abundant life, known before the womb, "He who began a good work in me is faithful to complete it." My job is to follow and believe; His job is the outcome.
- ◆ **How you know you are settling (it is subtle):** you slowly stop expecting, stop praying, stop preparing, stop making room for God. You don't deny Him; you adjust your expectations to allow for disappointment. **You begin living around the promise instead of toward it.**

- ◆ Israel walked around the wilderness for 40 years, no longer moving toward the promise, comfortable with manna and occasional water. When that generation died out, God told Joshua: "As I was with Moses, so I will be with you. Be strong and very courageous." The obstacles did not stop (Jericho, the battles), but now they were on purpose toward the promise.

SURRENDER VS. SETTLING

"Surrender is not settling. Surrender says, 'God, I release my timeline.' Settling says, 'It's probably not going to happen.' Surrender still expects God to show up. Settling stops praying, stops preparing, stops hoping, and stops believing."

- ◆ Echoing Pastor Portia's women's session: fear can wrap itself up as wisdom, and **cynicism can wrap itself up as wisdom too**. "I'm just being realistic. I don't want to get my hopes up. I'm just keeping it real." Define your life by the Word instead.
- ◆ Abraham acknowledged the facts (his body as good as dead) and, **hoping against hope, still believed** God would do exactly what He said.
- ◆ His journey was not perfect: Ishmael represented leaning on their own understanding and creating their own testimony. "I know what it looks like to try to create your own cute testimony because the one God is writing is taking too long." By Romans and Hebrews, Ishmael is not mentioned. **God does not judge you by your mistakes. He judges you by how you end up.**
- ◆ You will falter and question. The goal is you do not stay there. Get up, dust yourself off, get back in the Word, remind yourself who your God is, and stand. **How long do you stand? Until you see the promise.**
- ◆ Whether it happens on this side of heaven or the next, God is still faithful. Abraham was promised he would be the father of many nations and saw only Isaac this side of heaven; now, from the great cloud of witnesses, he looks at all of us as his descendants. **The promise did not stop because he left the earth.**

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You don't get to create the story and then ask God to come bless it.

MINISTER BRITTNEY VINSON

Too Weak to Dig? Too Far Gone?

- ◆ Sometimes in a dry season you feel too weak to dig: a struggle to pick up the Word, go to church, turn on worship, lift your hands.
- ◆ Digging is just spending time with God, studying His Word, the secret place, worship. **"If you wait for the strength to dig, you'll be waiting your entire life."** God calls those things that be not as though they were. He says "be strong and do the work," **and it works in reverse: when you start to do the work, the strength comes.** Just like when you start to dig, the water comes.
- ◆ Joe's own dry seasons felt like dropping one grain of sand into an empty bucket. **That is the devil using your feelings to create the illusion of distance from God.** How can He be far when He is in your spirit?
- ◆ The time you felt Him the most, you were the furthest from Him: the day you got saved. "Now that you're wall-to-wall Jesus on the inside, you think you're too far from His grace, His love, His power? **That is a lie from the pit of hell.**"
- ◆ Sometimes we think our own actions put us in this season. **Strongholds build the same way suddenlies do: secretly, steadily, and then suddenly you are bound by something you never wanted.**
- ◆ Back to 2 Kings 3: Jehoram "did evil in the sight of the Lord." He did not consult God before the mission, ended up in a dry place, and cried out. Elisha said, in effect, "If it wasn't for Jehoshaphat, who seeks God, I wouldn't even look at you." **Because one righteous man was with him, the evil king still received the word and the water.**
- ◆ **Jesus Christ, the Righteous One, is on the inside of you, making you righteous.** Nothing you did in the past can stop you from receiving the grace and goodness God has for you. Jehoram received the miracle and never changed, but the point stands: **you are not disqualified.** Salvation is not based on what you did. "Just keep digging."

THE CLOSING PRAYER

"You prepare a table for us in front of our enemies. You anoint our head with oil in the valley of the shadow of death. We receive Your strength to continue to dig. I take authority over any spirit of deception telling these people they are far from You. I break the hold of any stronghold built secretly and steadily, and I release liberation now. A suddenly strength, a suddenly fire to chase after You. We don't have to wait for the rain to praise You. We don't have to wait for it to be filled to give You glory. It's already done."

The Host's Closing Charge

- ◆ "It's one of those messages where you want to take notes, but you also need to play it later and marinate on it."
- ◆ Take time with God today and ask Him to show you what ditches you need to dig. "What does that look like for me in this time? Don't allow me to just stay in that place."

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You are not disqualified. Salvation is not based on what you did. Just keep digging.

MINISTER JOE MARSHALL

CAPTURE THIS

Key Quotes

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MINISTER BRITTNEY VINSON

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"Suddenly comes on the heels of what you do steadily, and steadily comes on the heels of what you do secretly."

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MINISTER JOE MARSHALL

"Surrender says, 'God, I release my timeline.' Settling says, 'It's probably not going to happen.'"

MINISTER BRITTNEY VINSON

"If you wait for the strength to dig, you'll be waiting your entire life. When you start to do the work, the strength comes."

MINISTER JOE MARSHALL

"You don't get to create the story and then ask God to come bless it."

MINISTER BRITTNEY VINSON

"We don't have to wait for the rain to praise You. It's already done."

MINISTER JOE MARSHALL

Themes

The wait is a test of theology: delay tries to redefine God, and the Word defines Him

Transformation over comfort: the miracle is who you become

Feelings are not evidence: God speaks to the spirit, the enemy works the soul

Dig when it's dry: the command, the promise, and the warning

Depth determines capacity: dig deep enough for generations

Secretly, steadily, suddenly: every suddenly has a hidden history

What has your heart: a promise held loosely can be laid on the altar

Surrender is not settling: release the timeline, never the expectation

You are not disqualified: the Righteous One inside you is why the water still comes

Nuggets

- ◆ A two-year-old does not ask for the route. Stretch out your hand.
- ◆ Don't look for rain. God may fill the ditch another way.
- ◆ A trench is six to ten feet deep. Faith is back-breaking before it is refreshing.
- ◆ "Having done all, to stand" means endurance was always in the contract.
- ◆ Your testimony starts at your yes, not at your breakthrough.
- ◆ Spiritual amnesia is the enemy's trick. Memory is your fuel for faith. What are your stars?
- ◆ Cynicism dressed up as "just being realistic" is still unbelief.
- ◆ God judges you by how you end up, not by your Ishmael.
- ◆ Strongholds are built the same way suddenlies are. Dig in the other direction.
- ◆ Jehoram got the water because Jehoshaphat was in the camp. You have the Righteous One inside you.

Reflection Questions

1. Where has the length of my wait quietly changed what I believe about God's character?
2. Am I judging this season by my feelings or by the Word? What is my brain calling a "threat" that is really just a stretch?
3. If God gave me the promise today, would it become an idol? What has my heart?
4. What are my stars: the scripture, journal entry, or prophecy I return to when I am tempted to forget?
5. Have I surrendered my timeline, or have I settled? Which settling sign describes me right now?
6. What are the ditches God is asking me to dig today, and where have I been waiting for strength before starting?

How This Applies to Us

- 1 Settle the theology before the timeline.** Write down who God is according to His Word (good, faithful, near, on time) and refuse to let a delay edit that list.
- 2 Name the season correctly.** Stop calling it dry. Call it a digging season, and expect a suddenly on the other side.
- 3 Dig anyway, on the "anyway" list.** Pray, worship, forgive, serve, prepare, show up, and do the Word whether or not you feel anything this week.
- 4 Dig deeper than you need.** Build a secret-place rhythm sized for generations, not for your own thirst: daily Word, daily worship, consistent and unseen.
- 5 Run the feelings check.** When a feeling says God is distant or the season is hopeless, treat it as a fight-or-flight misfire, not as evidence. Check it against the Word.
- 6 Write down your stars.** Keep one list of the scriptures, words, and memories of God's past faithfulness, and read it when spiritual amnesia shows up.
- 7 Audit for settling.** If you have adjusted your expectations "to avoid disappointment," that is settling. Surrender the timeline, keep the expectation, and start preparing again.
- 8 Lay the promise on the altar.** Ask God to make you the kind of person who can hold the promise without it holding you.
- 9 Refuse disqualification.** Whatever was built secretly and steadily against you, the Righteous One inside you is the reason the water still comes. Keep digging.
- 10 Ask the host's question today:** "God, what ditches do You want me to dig, and what does that look like for me in this season?"



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Notes compiled from the live session by Rick Pina. Scripture quotations noted by translation as read in the session.