

**Pastor Jon Engler – May 31, 2026 for EAG Church**

**TITLE: When You've Got Nothing...**

**TEXT: 2 Corinthians 1:1-10**

**BIG IDEA: Our “nothing” is the door for God’s “everything”...**

It is a joy and a privilege to open up God's Word with you today.

This morning, I invite you to turn with me to **2 Corinthians 1**. That's in the NT in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of your Bible; it's a letter that Paul wrote to a church in the Greek city of Corinth. Today's message is all about, “***When You've Got Nothing.***”

Let's look at what God has to say to us through Paul as we read **2 Corinthians 1:1-10**.

<sup>1</sup> This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy. I am writing to God's church in Corinth and to all of His holy people throughout Greece.

<sup>2</sup> May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

<sup>3</sup> All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. <sup>4</sup> He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. <sup>5</sup> For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with His

comfort through Christ. <sup>6</sup> Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. <sup>7</sup> We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.

<sup>8</sup> We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. We were crushed and overwhelmed beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. <sup>9</sup> In fact, we expected to die. But as a result, we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, who raises the dead. <sup>10</sup> And He did rescue us from mortal danger, and He will rescue us again. We have placed our confidence in Him, and He will continue to rescue us.

**Let's PRAY...**

### **STORY INTRO: The Thunder Run Waterslide**

When I was 7 years old, our family was on vacation in another city, and we were having fun at an indoor public pool. This particular pool had a waterslide which, to this day, is one of the coolest waterslides I have ever experienced. It was called the "***Thunder Run***".

- **65' tall...**
- **568' long...**

- It was ***fast***...it was ***exciting***...
- There was even one section that went absolutely ***pitch black***, and then you saw these ***rope lights*** in the ceiling that you'd go shooting underneath...

I'll admit, at first I was ***too scared*** to ride the Thunder Run...but then my ***younger sister*** rode it, and I couldn't afford to be outdone by ***her***, so I ***rallied my courage*** and went...and ***I fell in love with this waterslide*** right away.

- That first time...it was awesome.
- So I went a second time...it was awesome.
- Then a third time...it was awesome

Then on about the fourth or fifth ride in a row, I was about a quarter of the way down the slide when I had the ***weirdest sensation***...and it felt like the ***water pressure was dropping***...as though I wasn't moving down the slide as fast as I should've...

At first I thought, "***No big deal***; it's just my imagination; everything's fine..."

...then I ***stopped***.

I physically ***stopped moving***; the water stopped ***carrying me***, and started ***going around me*** instead.

“Well, this is kind of **odd**, but I’m sure it’s nothing; I’ll just push myself forward...”

So I pushed forward a bit...slid about **10 feet**...and **got stuck again**.

Pushed forward...got stuck...pushed forward...got stuck...pushed forward...got stuck.

All this time...

- the **water level** keeps dropping **lower** and **lower**...
- the **pressure** keeps getting **weaker** and **weaker**...

...until finally, the ***last bucket of water sloshes*** around the corner...

...and there I am, **stuck** in the deepest, darkest part of the Thunder Run Water Slide.

And at that moment...***I had nothing. There was nothing I could do.***

- I couldn’t ***turn the water back on.***
- I couldn’t **escape** out of a ***trap door*** or ***emergency hatch.***
- and because it was so ***humid*** and ***hot*** without the water flowing through, I couldn’t even crawl out.
- No ***ventilation***...no ***fresh air***...that slide became like a ***human pressure cooker.***

- I ***tried*** to crawl out of the slide for a bit...I got as far ahead as where those rope lights were in the ceiling of the slide...but after that, it was just ***physically impossible*** to go any further.
- Couldn't ***crawl forward***; couldn't ***crawl backward***.

I was ***absolutely stuck***...and I had ***nothing***...

## TRANSITION to CONTEXT

We just read in **2 Corinthians 1** where the Apostle Paul had his own “***Thunder Run***” ***moment***...a time where ***he*** was ***absolutely stuck***, and ***he had nothing***.

If you want to know ***why*** Paul begins **2 Corinthians** this way, we have to go back to **1 Corinthians** and learn the ***backstory*** of ***that letter***.

## BACKSTORY + CONTEXT

The New Testament, the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of your Bible, contains **13 letters** that Paul wrote. Of those **13, 9** letters were written to ***specific churches***, or organized regional groups of believers, in different ***cities / areas***.

Each letter was either ***personally written*** or ***personally dictated*** by Paul to ***answer questions***, ***provide direction***, or ***address issues***...and the church in city of Corinth had a ***ton*** of issues.

“What kind of issues?” you ask. Well...

- There was **division**; believers in the church were ***joining up*** and ***pairing off*** into different **cliques**...think high school, but ***worse***...
- There was **drama**; Sunday morning was ***out of control***...there's just a lot of ***unhinged weirdness*** going on in public worship...
- There was even **debauchery**...***sexual sin*** that the church was ***celebrating***, instead of **censoring**...

In response to all of the division, drama, and debauchery, Paul wrote the book of **1 Corinthians**. It's an **extremely severe** letter.

If you're old enough to remember your mama getting you in trouble and telling you to, “Go cut me a switch...” That's basically what **1 Corinthians** is. It is a **disciplinary letter** and one of the **harshest rebukes** that Paul gives.

Now with **2 Corinthians**, what we're in today...this is the **follow-up letter**, written about **6-18 months** after **1 Corinthians**.<sup>1</sup>

**Some** of the issues from **1 Corinthians** have gotten a ***little*** better...

- There's been a ***modicum*** of progress...

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<sup>1</sup> Robert James Utley, Paul's Letters to a Troubled Church: I and II Corinthians, vol. Volume 6, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, TX: Bible Lessons International, 2002), 200.

- But there's still a ***contingent of troublemakers***...
- ...specifically some ***naysayers*** who are ***questioning*** Paul's ***authority*** and ***authenticity***.

We see one of their comments in **2 Corinthians 10:10**: "Paul's letters are demanding and forceful, but in person he is weak, and his speeches are worthless!"

In other words, "Paul, ***you've got nothing!*** Who do you think you are? You're just a ***spineless keyboard warrior***, Paul; you wouldn't be so tough if you were here in person."

In response to those naysayers, among other issues, Paul writes **2 Corinthians**.

And Paul's approach in **2 Corinthians** is quite ***counterintuitive***:

- Instead of starting with ***toughness***, he starts with ***brokenness***...
- "You guys are accusing me of having nothing," Paul says, "and you know what, you're kinda right...because in and of ***myself***, I've got ***nothing!***"
- For the majority of **2 Corinthians**, even as Paul ***intersperses*** some ***continued rebuke***...
- He also gives ***deep self-reflection*** about his "nothing". It's ***gritty***.... It's ***raw***.

I even heard one pastor describe **2 Corinthians** as “*Paul’s personal journal...*”

- More than *anything else* he wrote, *this* letter is where Paul gives us the deepest look into his joys, his sorrows, his questions, and his frailties.
- Over and over, *Paul emphasizes* to the Corinthian church: “*I’m not writing this to highlight my own strength.*”
- “Whatever self-sufficiency you think I’m operating in, or whatever self-made narrative or agenda you think I’m trying to push, that’s *not the case at all.*”
- “I am not the *super-spiritual hotshot* you’re accusing me of being. I’ve got nothing.”

## **BIG IDEA: EXPOSITION**

And here’s the *core message* that Paul is saying in **2 Corinthians**: “I’ve got nothing...but my nothing can open the door for God’s everything.”

Think about that: *Our nothing can open the door for God’s everything.*

Take heart with that today.

## BIG IDEA: EXHORTATION

So often, you and I will look at great people of the Bible like Paul...we **compare their stories** with **ours**...and we get **discouraged**, don't we?

- "God did **so many** amazing things through Paul."
- "So many people got **saved, healed, delivered** under his ministry."
- "Paul had one **miracle** after another...one **victory** after another..."
- "Paul got to do everything, and ***pooooooor little old me***, I'm stuck with **nothing**."
- "Would to God that I could have the **miraculous, victorious** life that ***Paul*** lived!"
- "'Cause ***Paul*** never had to deal with **nothing**..."

***You sure about that?*** Do you **really** want to live the life that Paul lived?

## PAUL'S "NOTHING"

In the passage we read earlier, and throughout the **rest of 2 Corinthians**, Paul makes it clear that serving Jesus is **not** an **endless parade** of ***sunshine, roses, blessing, and breakthrough***...

But if anything, serving Jesus will have its moments where it's less **"breakthrough"** and more **"break-you"**.

Go back and look at **vv. 8-9a**:

<sup>8</sup>We think you ought to know, dear brothers and sisters, about the trouble we went through in the province of Asia. [BTW that's *not* modern Asia; this 'Asia' is referring to the ancient Roman province of 'Asia Minor' where Turkey is today] We were **crushed** and **overwhelmed** beyond our ability to endure, and we thought we would never live through it. <sup>9a</sup>In fact, we expected to die.

**We're not entirely sure** what Paul's trouble in Asia specifically was, but if you study his life in the book of **Acts**, and if you read **other letters** Paul wrote, you'll figure out pretty quickly that Paul went through **multiple episodes** of trouble...all kinds of seasons where "he had **nothing**."

Just look at **some** of the **real-life scenarios** that he describes later on in **2 Cor. 11:24-27**. **If you really want to be like Paul...This is what you're signing up for...**

<sup>24</sup>Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes.

<sup>25</sup>Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. <sup>26</sup>I have traveled on many long journeys. I have faced danger from rivers and from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the Gentiles. I have faced danger in the cities, in the deserts, and on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. [You ever gone through 'church hurt' and been burned a hypocrite/faker? Paul's right there with you.] <sup>27</sup>I have worked **hard** and **long**, enduring many

sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone

without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm.

Try to find a song about **that** on “***positive, encouraging K-LOVE***”!

Paul is very ***straightforward***: “If you follow Jesus long enough, you **will** experience ***trials*** and ***hardships*** where you’ve got **nothing**.”

And here’s what caught ***my*** attention as I was preparing this...

By the time Paul was discouraged in Asia, he had ***already experienced God*** in some miraculous ways...but the ***implication*** from the text is that **not even the MEMORIES of Paul’s past experiences with God** were enough to keep him going.

**Remember: This is the guy who saw the risen Jesus Christ in PERSON on the road to Damascus...and now he’s ready to quit...** How do you make sense of **THAT?**

Paul’s **past experiences** weren’t enough for his **present “nothing”**.

**If that reality applies to Paul—then how much MORE does that apply to you and me today?**

## ILLUSTRATION: Cancer Diagnosis

I remember the day 3 years ago when my parents texted me to let me know that my Dad had been diagnosed with prostate cancer. ***When I got that text message, I didn't have anything to overcome the "nothing" that surrounded me in that moment.***

Just like Paul...

- My ***skills*** weren't enough...
- My ***ministry credentials*** weren't enough...
- Even the ***old memories*** of experiencing God at ***youth group, Bible College***, and ***other places*** weren't enough...

It was one of those ***surreal moments*** where ***time stood still*** and I had ***nothing***.

## TRANSITION to POINT 1

All of us will experience the "***nothing***" that Paul describes here.

But even after sharing about being ***broken*** and ***overwhelmed*** in Asia, look what Paul says in the second half of v. 10: "**We have placed our confidence in [God], and He will continue to rescue us.**"

That should make us ask: ***How can you and I get there?*** How can **we** say, along with Paul, that we have placed our confidence in God?

- When we're ***down and out...***
- When ***all seems lost***
- ...and ***when we've got nothing...***

...how can we respond to God in such a way...that our ***nothing*** opens the door for God's ***everything?***

## TRANSITION to QUESTION #1

From this passage, I believe that Paul gives us **3 Prayers / 3 Questions to ask God when we find ourselves with “nothing”**.

The first question is: ***“God, I’ve got nothing...what do You want to CHANGE?”***

## QUESTION #1 – GOD, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO CHANGE?

Immediately after describing his struggles in Asia, Paul says this in the first part of v.9: ***“But as a result [of this season of nothing], we stopped relying on ourselves...”***

***God used the “nothing”*** in Paul’s life to bring him to a ***turning point...*** a place where change was Paul’s ***only option.***

- “Paul, you won’t get through this by relying on yourself, like you’re used to doing.

- “You can’t rely on your ***experience***, your ***skills***, your ***wisdom***, or even what you’ve ***done for Me in the past***.
- “But Paul, in order for Me to turn ***your ‘nothing’*** into ***My ‘everything’***, you’ve got to ***allow*** Me to ***change*** you.
- “I’m asking you to change by stopping this ***self-reliant business***.”

***How many of you know that “change” is one of the key catalysts that God uses to accomplish His purpose in our lives?***

### **ILLUSTRATION: DEADHEADING**

If you’ve ever done gardening, you know that some plants require a process called “***deadheading***” where the old, dead ***flowerheads*** are ***strategically trimmed off*** of the plant stems. (Let’s use ***roses*** as our example. This is a rose at the church that I just deadheaded on Friday.)

***If the rose does not undergo change***—if those dead flowerheads are allowed to stay on the stem—all of the ***nutrients*** that the rose’s roots are soaking up from the soil are going to go to ***waste***. All you’re going to get is a ***bunch of fruitless leaves and thorns*** with ***no flowers / no growth***. If you go ***long enough*** without deadheading, the rose can actually ***lose its ability to produce any flowers*** until the next spring cycle. If there’s no change, there’s no growth.

But, if you ***deadhead*** the rose—if you ***enact change*** by ***cutting off*** those dead parts all the way back to where the ***fresh growth*** is on the stem—that

**cutting** / that **change** is the **catalyst** which **maximizes** the plant's **nutrients**.

So that way, instead of nutrients getting **wasted** on **dead flowerheads** and **fruitless leaves**, those nutrients are now **redirected** to produce **fresh, new flowers**.

**Roses are not the only living things that need deadheading**; Jesus talks about "**spiritual deadheading**" in **John 15:1-2**:

<sup>1</sup>"I am the true grapevine, and My Father is the gardener. <sup>2</sup>He **cuts off** every branch of Mine that doesn't produce fruit, and He **prunes** the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more."

Tie **that in** to the context of **Paul's** "nothing" in **2 Corinthians 1**.

## QUESTION 1 – APPLICATION

These seasons of nothing are where God **compels** us to **make changes**...**necessary changes**, but changes that we probably wouldn't make otherwise if we weren't going through a season of nothing.

That's why this first question is so important. "**God, I've got nothing...what do You want to change?**"

- "God, what do You want to **add? Subtract? Increase? Decrease?**"
- "Is it a change in my **behavior**...my **priorities**..."

- "...My relationships with others / with You?"

And **not just**, "God, what do You want to change," but **more specifically**, "God, what do You want to **change in ME?**"

All of us can think of change that we want God to do in **others**...but what does God want to change in **your life?**

- Not in your **spouse**...not in your **kids**...not that idiot **boss** or **coworker** or **in-law** who drives you crazy...
- "God, what do You want to change **in me?**"

## TRANSITION to QUESTION 2

If we want our "nothing" to open the door for God's "everything"...the first question to ask is, "**God, I've got nothing...what do You want to change?**"

Then, still in the same verse, the second question:

**"God, I've got nothing...what do You want to TEACH?"**

## QUESTION #2 – GOD, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO **TEACH?**

Second half of **v.9**: "**...we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God...**"

The **Christian Standard Bible** says it like this:

“Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death, **so that** we would not trust in ourselves **but in God**...”

Look at the **shift** in those three words: “**but in God**”.

Not only did God want to **change** Paul’s source of reliance...He also wanted to **teach** Paul what the **right source of reliance actually was**.

When we’re in a season of nothing...**not only** are these great times for **change**...they’re **also** great times for **learning**...times where God can **teach** us **powerful truths** about **Him**, about **us**, and about **His plan**.

**We see this all over Scripture:**

- **Joseph** went through a season of nothing...and God **taught** him **humility, discernment, and resourcefulness**.
- **David** went through a season of nothing...and God **taught** him **leadership, perseverance, and faithfulness**.
- And of course, **Paul** went through multiple seasons of nothing...in **this** season that we’re reading about, Paul says that God **taught** him **trust**.

## QUESTION 2 – APPLICATION

Aren't you ***thankful*** this morning that God doesn't expect us to figure out life on our own? ***Instead***, God is ***always inviting*** us ***to learn*** from Him and ***be taught*** by Him.

Listen what the Bible says about learning and teaching:

- **Proverbs 1:5a (CSB)**: ...let a wise person listen and ***increase learning***...
- The prayer of Moses in **Exodus 33:13b (NIV)**: “[LORD]...***teach*** me Your ways so I may know You and continue to find favor with You.”
- **James 1:5 (NLT)**: If you need ***wisdom***, ask our generous God, and ***He will give it to you***. He will not rebuke you for asking.

So that's what God says ***generally*** about teaching...***but now let's take it UP a notch*** and listen to what God says ***personally*** about teaching.

Receive these Scriptures as though is God speaking to you by **name**:

- **Psalm 32:8 (NIV)**: “I will ***instruct*** you and ***teach*** you in the way you should go; I will ***counsel*** you with ***My loving eye*** on you.”
- **Matthew 11:29b (NLT)**: “Let Me ***teach*** you, because I am ***humble*** and ***gentle*** at heart, and ***you will find rest*** for your souls.”

**“You will find rest...”** Isn’t it interesting how the **offer of rest** is **directly connected** to **God’s desire to TEACH** and **our willingness to LEARN?**

When we’ve got nothing...when our backs are against the wall...this is the **perfect opportunity** to pray, “God, what do You want to **teach** me in this season of nothing?”

- “What do You want me to learn about **myself?**...about **You?**...about **us?**”
- “God, what do You want me to **see?** What do You want me to **hear?**”
- “Lord, how can I **grow?** How can I be ‘deadheaded’? How can I go to the **next level** You have for me?”

“Because right now, God, I’ve got nothing...what do You want to **teach?**”

### **TRANSITION to POINT 3**

“God, what do You want to **change?** What do You want to **teach?**”

And finally... **“God, I’ve got nothing...what do You want to DO?”**

### **QUESTION #3 – GOD, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO?**

**Paul’s nothing opened the door for God’s everything.** And because Paul gave God **access** to **change** him, and **teach** him...look what God **did** in his life:

## 2 Cor. 1:9b-10:

But as a result [of this season of nothing] we stopped relying on ourselves and learned to rely only on God, ***who raises the dead.***

<sup>10</sup> And He ***did*** rescue us from mortal danger, and He ***will*** rescue us again. ***We have placed our confidence in Him,*** and He will continue to rescue us.

“God, I’ve got nothing...what do You want to ***do?***”

Paul’s life demonstrates the ***whole spectrum*** of what God wants to do, and how He can turn “our nothing” into “His everything”.

### **SUBPOINT 3A – HE WANTS TO RESCUE US**

What does God want to do? Sometimes, He wants to rescue us!

Paul celebrates God’s rescue in **v.10**. And the book of Acts records multiple times where God miraculously intervened to save Paul’s life. We ***really*** love God’s rescue, don’t we?

- We love the ***miracles***;
- We love the “***God-stories***”;
- We love those ***powerful faith-boosters*** that lift our spirits and encourage us in our walk with God...

***...yet sometimes...sometimes...***

...what **we** want God to do and what **God actually** wants to do can be ***two very separate things.***

### **SUBPOINT 3B – HE WANTS TO COMFORT US**

Sometimes God wants to ***rescue*** us, and other times, He wants to **comfort** us. Not ***take us out*** of the struggle, but ***comfort us through it.***

Before Paul gets to that **one verse** about rescue (**v.10**), he first takes **five verses** to talk about comfort:

<sup>3</sup>All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. <sup>4</sup>He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us. <sup>5</sup>For the more we suffer for Christ, the more God will shower us with His comfort through Christ. <sup>6</sup>Even when we are weighed down with troubles, it is for your comfort and salvation! For when we ourselves are comforted, we will certainly comfort you. Then you can patiently endure the same things we suffer. <sup>7</sup>We are confident that as you share in our sufferings, you will also share in the comfort God gives us.

That **tension** of ***rescue vs. comfort*** was a struggle that ***touched Paul*** on a **personal level.**

- Paul just told us how God rescued him in **v.10**...

- Yet he also tells us later on in **2 Cor. 12** of ***another time*** when God did ***not*** rescue Paul in the way that he was praying for...
- Paul was being tortured by a “***thorn in his flesh***”, some kind of Satanic attack that was hindering him.
- **3 separate times**, Paul prayed, “God ***do*** something! Take this away!” And each time, God told Paul, “***My grace is all you need***. Instead of doing for you what you ***want***, I want to do for you what you ***need***.”

Sometimes, what God wants to ***do***...looks like ***rescue***...

...other times, what God wants to ***do***...looks like ***comfort***...

...and finally, in **AD 67**, God did something ***completely different*** for Paul. He ***took him home to heaven***.

### **SUBPOINT 3C – HE WANTS TO TAKE US HOME**

These are some of the last words Paul wrote before he was beheaded under Roman persecution (**2 Tim. 4:16-18, NLT**). Listen to what God ***does*** here:

<sup>16a</sup> The first time I was brought before the judge, no one came with me... <sup>17</sup> But ***the Lord stood with me*** and ***gave me strength*** so that I might preach the Good News in its entirety for all the Gentiles to hear. And He rescued me from certain death. <sup>18</sup> Yes, and the Lord will deliver me from every evil attack and will bring me safely into His heavenly Kingdom. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.

Paul knew that going home to heaven was really the ***ultimate rescue from death*** and the very best thing God could do for him.

Someday, for those of us who have received Jesus as our Lord and Savior, God's going to do that for us too.

### ***What does God want to do?***

- Sometimes God rescues...
- Sometimes He comforts us...
- Sometimes He takes us home...

***But at the end of the day, no matter what God does, He always promises His presence. He promises that His "everything" is bigger and stronger than our "nothing".***

### **CONCLUSION – WATERSLIDE WRAP-UP**

I started off telling you about getting stuck in a waterslide. What I ***didn't*** tell you was that my **Dad** was ***next in line*** to ride after me.

Two riders before I went down, someone had chipped a tooth on the waterslide, and the lifeguards shut off the water for safety. Once the water was turned off, my Dad, from where he was at the top, could hear me calling for help. "Dad!" "Dad!" "Somebody!" "Help me! I'm stuck! I've got nothing!"

With the permission of the lifeguard, my father **entered** that waterslide...**crawled** over 200 feet on his hands and knees...and **he met me where I was.**

- He didn't ***turn*** the water back on (a lifeguard did that about 5 minutes later)
- He didn't ***make*** the oppressive, humid air ***go away***
- He didn't ***magically teleport me out*** to the bottom

But **nevertheless**...in that ***deepest, darkest place*** where I had nothing...**my father met me there...and he gave me his presence.**

## **APPEAL**

Hear me today! Some of you came to church this morning ***feeling stuck*** in the ***deepest, darkest, place of nothing*** that you have **ever found yourself in.**

- You're out of ***options***
- You're out of ***answers***
- You're ***crushed***
- You're ***overwhelmed***
- You've got ***nothing***

But listen to what God tells us in **Romans 5:6:**

<sup>6</sup>When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners.

***When we had nothing... God gave us His everything!  
He's given you His Son, and He's given you His presence!***

***This season of "nothing" that you find yourself in right now; THIS is the door for God's "everything"!***

- ***Your nothing*** is the door for ***Him*** to ***change*** you...
- ***Your nothing*** is the door for ***Him*** to ***teach*** you...
- ***Your nothing*** is the door for ***Him*** to ***do something incredible***...

And what God ***chooses*** to do...

- ...we might not ***understand*** what He does...
- ...it might not ***look*** like how you or I want it to look...

...but ***whatever*** God ***chooses*** to do...out of our nothing, God wants to do ***SOMETHING*** that will bear ***life*** and ***hope*** and ***resurrection***, all for the ***praise*** and ***glory*** and ***honor*** of the ***Lord Jesus Christ!***

***Our nothing is the door for God's everything!***

**CLOSE**

I believe that God wants to do **something** with the **nothing** that you brought in with you today.

But the only way for God to even **begin** that...is if we are **bold enough** and **humble enough** to **surrender our nothing to Him**.

### **INSTRUCTIONS for “PRAYER IN THE CHAIRS”**

Instead of an altar call today...I want to have “***prayer in the chairs***”. If you find yourself in a season where “you’ve got nothing”, I want you to be ***bold enough*** and ***humble enough*** to raise your hand.

- All over this room, if you see someone with their hand raised, as you are ***physically able***, I want you to surround them in a “***prayer pocket***”... We don’t want ***anyone*** to go un-prayed for...
- Let’s get **prayer pockets** around those individuals.

**As you gather, LISTEN to these instructions.**

### **HAND RAISERS / PEOPLE WHO NEED PRAYER:**

- If you’ve raised your hand for prayer, in a moment, I need to you go ***one step more*** and be ***bold enough*** and ***humble enough*** to **verbally open up** to your prayer pocket about the “nothing” that you’re facing.
- This is ***not*** because we’re trying to **embarrass** you or **intimidate** you...

- ...but it's because there's **something** that ***boldness*** and ***humility unlocks*** in prayer...
- ...and your posture of ***boldness*** and ***humility*** can give ***greater access for God to move*** in your life.

***For the rest of you*** in the prayer pocket...

### **FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE PRAYING for NEEDS:**

- When a ***hand raiser*** opens up to you, just ***listen***.
- Don't ***interrogate***; don't ***play "counselor" and give them unsolicited advice or stories about yourself***;
- Just ***wait***, just ***listen*** and ***then pray***.
- ***Wait*** for the ***individual*** to share; ***listen*** to the ***Holy Spirit***.
- And then ***pray*** in such a way that you're not praying ***aimlessly***; you're not praying ***mindlessly***, but pray ***intentionally***.
- Pray in such a way that you put the focus on ***God*** and ***what He wants to do***.

We'll take about ***5-7 minutes*** to pray in ***prayer pockets***...and then I'll eventually close us out. But for right now, let's go to the throne of grace and start praying for one another...

**DISCLAIMER:** This manuscript was written and preached by Jon Engler for the morning of **May 31, 2026** at EAG Church in Rocky Mount, NC. This manuscript has been published online for reflection and deeper study. The reproduction and/or distribution of this manuscript, either in part or in full, without the author's express written consent, is strictly forbidden.