

**THIS IS CHURCH.**  
**Travis Mitchell**

**Part 1**

I... read somewhere once  
that the gates of hell, they'll  
never stand against.  
So then my friend from  
outside these walls said  
"so what in the hell is stopping  
you then?"  
Now those weren't my words,  
they his  
and he wasn't even a Christian.  
But he clearly understood  
something that I didn't.

The old, the new  
we begin forge the two,  
yet at the same time, the old  
ain't all that old,  
and the young ain't all that  
new.  
See the global church has had  
us both  
since the preacher invented  
the pew.  
And me, well I've been a  
pastor's kid  
for the past 22...

So I've seen most of it  
what our church has been  
through.  
I loved the old days  
and I'm looking forward to the  
new.

Chances are we've probably  
met  
but if not I'd love to meet you.  
You can catch me in the lobby  
or even better catch me over  
coffee.

Man we gotta be the family  
that we the church still claim  
to be.  
And best believe  
if God is in you  
and likewise that crazy dude  
(James Wilson, what it do?)

then you both are  
the same to me.  
You both are my family.

It's that transitive property.  
It's transformative probably.  
It's not rocket science.  
And it's definitely not  
Socrates.  
But that's something half of  
y'all already knew.  
That's something you probably  
taught me.

So there's no need to preach to  
the choir  
know what I'm saying...

(And to you)  
Well, I'm here to listen.  
You've got a lot to teach.  
Nothing to prove  
but you have a lot to be.  
And I hope you still believe  
you are exactly what this  
church needs  
(cause you're exactly what I  
need).

You've been here for a minute  
and in my language that  
means a long time.  
My friends and I  
are looking to you to show us  
what church is like.

Cause this is a big one  
and this is my first one  
so we kinda expect you  
figured out how to do it right.

Whether that's true or not  
I don't know your opinion  
lately.  
Maybe like most  
you've just learned along the  
way, and maybe...

Maybe like most  
I'm headed for that same

journey.  
I appreciate your patience  
your guidance, your faith in  
me.

I respect the way you hold  
onto Jesus  
even when the ground gets  
shaky  
when it seems like our friends  
get flakey  
and our hearts get weighty.

When I say things I didn't  
really mean...  
When I do things that divide  
us into teams...  
Still your love  
is all that you bring.

I respect you.  
I really love you.  
And ya know, at the end of the  
day  
you're the church I wanna be  
with when my days are  
through.  
So thank you.  
I mean it -- thank you.

**Part 2**

My mind has been going back  
to the e-teams  
I guess most of y'all probably  
don't even know what that  
means

e-teams were groups of people  
from this church  
that went out to nearby church  
plants and communities  
help provided whatever they  
needed  
with a lot of fun, games, family  
feel (it was real)

I remember watching mom  
spend hours and hours  
making puppets, doing drama

with the Jones, Tuckers, and  
Bowers  
I love looking at that treehouse  
gang set  
what comes to mind is all the  
hours that we spent...

here in the building literally  
building the kingdom  
free time, overtime, with our  
own money and children

the preaching was so good  
but what I thought was even  
better  
was what we did with the  
preaching  
we internalized and became  
better  
now if you look close  
if you keep your ear to the  
ground  
if you keep your eyes wide  
open  
you'll see the same is still  
happening now

small pockets of people  
young old and in-between  
from prophets to singers  
they're bursting at the seams

the very hands that built  
the mezzanine beams  
are itching to build more  
things  
for the King of kings  
(ya feel me)

I know of young kids  
that just wanna pray for you  
gets me thinking if Jesus  
requires faith like theirs  
to enter his kingdom  
then what on earth or in  
heaven could he do  
if they simply had the  
opportunity to pray for you  
[ accidentally skipped ]  
I know of teenagers who just  
received the gift of tongues  
I love watching to see what

they've become  
through high school they  
matured  
rising up like the sun  
armed and ready to run  
filled with faith and love  
knowing that Jesus saved their  
soul  
but he sure as heck ain't done

I know a young adult or two  
that want people to run with  
they want the freedom to move  
they want to start doing  
church and  
it's cool watching the ones who  
do  
opening up their lives, their  
homes,  
their time, for you... ya just  
gotta ask  
I know some kid-parents who  
are still on mission  
they don't let kids crowd out  
their vision  
instead they pass on the vision  
trusting God for their kid's  
decision  
...now that's faith at work  
to work hard till ya faint  
and in the morning rebirth  
get up and go to work  
and then pray for grace to still  
seek God first  
(it's amazing to watch)

I know some people my  
parents age  
they pray up a storm  
and let the storm stir them to  
pray  
we've become friends in recent  
days  
holding hands all the way  
they're honest about their faith  
where they fall short  
never shifting the blame  
but at the same time  
never having to bare the  
shame

I knew Miss Kisiel briefly  
a legacy of love  
a 99-year-old nun

with faith like a child  
in fact, you'd think she was  
I bet when Jesus said let the  
little ones come to me  
he was thinking of her in 2015  
now she's gone  
as we all soon will be  
but she ran the race well to the  
end  
to truly rest in peace

I wanna be like all them  
I wanna be like you  
I wanna pray for you  
I wanna rise like the sun  
I wanna open up my home to  
you  
I wanna pass the good news to  
my kids  
I wanna stop and pray first  
thing when the storm hits  
I wanna run the race well with  
childlike faith

I wanna be like you all  
So I guess I'm in the right  
place...  
(ha idk, what do ya think?)  
I think I'm in the right place)

### Part 3

Jesus asked his father for one  
thing, not two,  
and that's unity between him,  
me, and you  
I know we're all different  
we sing in different ways  
sometimes scream when we  
pray  
or dance a lil cray  
or read a Bridges book in a day  
or believe for bigger things  
but at the end of the day  
we're all just saints

but we're also sinners  
I'm reminded everyday  
but we're also saints  
would you remind me every  
day?

can you remind me  
what heaven is going look like?  
that I'll be standing shoulder  
to shoulder  
with people I don't look like

or sound like, or talk like  
or think like, or believe like  
or vote like, or hope like  
or follow our leaders like

please remind me about the  
first thing Jesus prayed  
when he taught us to pray, I  
think I remember him say

"Father...  
Hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come, your will  
be done,  
on earth *as it is in heaven*"

so remind me that this church  
is his  
and should be  
*ideally*  
just as diverse as heaven

And PJ's right,  
a whole roll can be ruined with  
a little leaven  
but also Paul charges us to  
bear with that leaven  
charges us to love each other  
with absolutely no condition  
in the words of someone I  
respect "to love hard is hard  
living"  
and I might add, on this side of  
eternity,  
"that hard living that's the  
good living"

cause to live is Christ and to  
die is gain  
even Jesus endured that pain  
but if we too have been  
counted worthy to suffer  
we too will be given a reward  
like no other (that's the real  
gain)

#### Part 4

I've been looking in the mirror  
more  
I don't know who I'm  
disappointed in more  
the leaders I've tried to  
become  
or the person I've become  
instead

thoughts in my head  
start flooding with fear  
fear of what you'll think  
fear of what they'll hear

fear of never being able to  
figure out church  
fear of never being able to  
truly keep Jesus first  
fear of any call to leadership,  
it's a trap to fail  
fear of dropping everything at  
once to bail

but then my man big T told me  
something that really helped  
when I asked how could I ever  
get it right? how could I ever  
do it well?  
he said why does it matter?  
why you always need to get it  
right?  
that kinda pressure ain't on  
you  
remember, that's why Jesus  
died.

and so I realized that I thought  
God was my master  
but instead I was slave to  
doing it right, better, faster,  
whatever

my new goal is to give God and  
you all my love  
not to reach that perfection I  
started chasing after

I'm free to release, I know  
the pressure ain't on me

to keep leaders in line  
to keep my friends in the seats  
to even make sure I'm as close  
to perfect  
as I can possibly be

it was truly shocking when I  
realized  
whom the son sets free, he is  
free indeed  
and it's amazing man  
to think that's me

(yeah I'm free from fear)  
free from fear of finances  
free from fear of process  
God sure lets us control the  
input  
but he sure controls what the  
result is

yeah he does that with his  
church  
I'm mediocre at my worst  
and still mediocre at my best  
but that hasn't stopped God  
yet

I'm watching God use our very  
participation  
to build a perfect building on a  
messed-up foundation  
that gives me confidence for  
the long road ahead  
to run it with people I'll like  
butt heads with

to encourage the folks building  
up a separate building  
but in the same kingdom...  
because we're in the same  
kingdom  
I love the ones I run with, the  
ones that are here  
I love the ones I pray for, the  
ones who are near

I've been chatting with my  
man Jack Smyth lately  
I see you're on fire and on  
mission, go get em baby

I see my mom itching to use  
her creative gifts  
God's been preparing you for  
this with all the work you do  
with the kids

I see Morrie, David, and others  
praying for revival for a long  
time  
truly thirsting for  
righteousness, and like Simon  
you'll be satisfied  
I see Sidney as the fierce lion  
to be reckoned with  
a force of fierce love,  
protection, and new initiatives

I see the Depps, Stephen  
Payne, Mary, Emily, James  
Gui  
y'all have been a steady stream  
of love, encouragement, family  
I see that only continuing  
with more following your lead  
(keep going)

I see Aunt Sherry  
and I see Uncle Van  
to count the ways, the people  
you've loved  
I'd need a couple dozen more  
hands

I see people who've been  
pushed to the side and under  
I see you hurting on levels I  
couldn't begin to speak  
you know who you are and if I  
could just say what I see  
I see you shaping the  
compassionate culture we're  
about to be

I see the many misfits in our  
midst  
I see your quirks, your  
obsessions, your ticks  
I need you to know right now  
something big  
God looks to people like you as  
his earthly champions

I see the people on staff in  
support roles  
Lisa being a backbone, hashtag  
relational goals  
Howard is kind, and the kinda  
guy you'll miss  
so if you ever see him, please  
never take him for granted

I saw Eryk doing the most  
what most could probably  
never do  
our talks were deep and real,  
sometimes with tears, but  
almost always about you  
he was funny and quick, he  
was witty and cool  
I learned a lot about politics  
and Jesus too

I see God keeping a hand on  
my generation  
but I think he wants to show  
us first that we can never run  
too far from him  
that his eyes will never turn  
away out of impatience  
he's sticking with us, not the  
other way and...

I see from those who are older,  
a massive download of  
knowledge  
I'm not talking life tips — I'm  
not talking like college  
I'm talking divine impartations  
of heavenly wisdom  
straight from the lips of God,  
through you to my spirit

I see the goldmine that we're  
sitting on  
the entire spectrum of spiritual  
gifts  
once we tap into yours  
who knows what will give

maybe more light in MoCo  
maybe lifelong heaven-  
pilgrims  
only one way to find out

and maybe I'm here to help  
out with that somehow

so many things and people I  
see, I just can't believe  
that I get to be you with while  
I'm here living in the burg,  
and now I know that the gates  
of hell, they'll *never* come  
between,  
you and me... cause... this is  
church.

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