

The *Next* Chapter



10.01.23

INTRODUCTION

In another edition of our *Next Chapter* weekends, we had the opportunity to celebrate the installation of Prairie Lakes Church's new Lead Pastor Jesse Tink! Over the past 25 years, God has been faithful as we've leaned into His No Matter character. As we begin a new chapter, this same character of God is what will continue to shape us as Pastor Jesse steps into his new role.

DISCUSSION

1. **Revisit and read Matthew 9:1-8-13.** Jesus calls Matthew the tax collector to follow Him – someone who would have been written off in ancient society. But Jesus sees him and invites him in regardless of his story. How did God meet you in your story before you knew Him?
2. Whether it's the forgiveness of sins or healing a man's legs, what Jesus says goes. As a No Matter church, it means we're going to keep being a place where people don't have to get cleaned up before they show up. Apart from Matthew's story, how do you see this in Jesus' life, and how have you seen it practically in the life of PLC?
3. **Revisit and read John 15:13-17.** In this next chapter, Pastor Jesse makes it clear we're going to "keep the main thing the main thing." Worship style, carpets, and strategies change, but the heart of Jesus' command for us is the same – to be known for our love. Take a moment to reflect on your life – would people describe you as increasingly loving? Why or why not?
4. Why does your Little Iowa need to see your love rather than simply "playing church"? What's at stake in your circle of family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers?
5. What's most likely to get in the way of your pursuit of living as a No Matter Follower – the type of person who looks at their Little Iowa and says, "No matter... God loves you, and so will I."

APPLICATION

- **Know them by name.** Whom do you have the opportunity to love in your Little Iowa? Write their names down and begin praying for them and asking God to grow your heart's interest and love for them.
- **Get ready.** Don't be surprised when you run into neighbors outside or when you sense a co-worker having a difficult day. These are opportunities to build relationships and display God's love by making taking time and interest in them.
- **Go first.** You may be the one that needs to initiate the conversation. Don't ignore the people that come to your mind throughout the day – reach out and catch up. It's a simple start to loving them and you may be surprised who needed to hear from you.