

EMOTICONS OF MINISTRY

35th YEAR CELEBRATION

Today, more and more, people communicate with one another by text - emails, posts, tweets, text messages.

Actually, using your phone to talk to someone is becoming a rarity. I have family members I'll call, and they won't answer their phone, but if I shoot them a text I'll hear back from them instantly. People prefer to text.

We live in a world of text-based communications. And one byproduct of it is something we call an "[emoticon](#)."

An [emoticon](#) is a symbol added to a text to convey the sender's emotion. The word "[emote](#)" is the conveyance of emotion. And "[icon](#)" in computer jargon is a prompt that helps you move around within a software program.

So an [emoticon](#) adds emotion to computer text.

Originally, emoticons were made with punctuation marks - a semi-colon, a dash, and half-a-parentheses makes an online smiley face - a symbol for fun and light-heartedness. Of course, turn around the parentheses and the smiley becomes a frown - a symbol for sadness.

In recent years, emoticons have become more elaborate. The combination of punctuation marks has been replaced with graphical and pictorial emoticons.

And if you do a lot of text-based correspondence you know that these *emoticons* are not just cutesy - they've become important. With a text you don't have space or time to always articulate your feelings, so the message can come across as incomplete at best - rude at worst.

Mere text - words and letters only - don't always say what we want said. An *emoticon* gives us the ability to add a "tone" or convey the "feeling" behind our words.

I'm not a touchy-feely guy who likes to excessively emote, but I find myself using these *emoticons* more and more. If I text something tongue-in-cheek - or make a laughable comment - the reader can't hear me chuckle, or see my smile, through the text. Thus, an *emoticon* keeps me from being misunderstood, or from offending.

This morning, our church, and me as your pastor, celebrate 35 years of ministry. CCSM started the last Sunday of September, 1980... Kathy, myself, 5 single adults, and an 18 month old met for the first time in our rented duplex - just a few miles from where we sit today.

The first year our total **offerings** were a mere \$11,000. I worked a warehouse job as we launched the church... Today, *I no longer work at the warehouse*. The Lord has provided. *Where God guides, He provides.*

We've never passed an offering plate - or pressured folks to give - or had a pledge campaign... yet in 2011 we wrote the last check to Brand Bank on our mortgage.

Our church is now *debt free!* My son, Mack, tells me, “[Dave Ramsey would be proud.](#)” Well, I appreciate Dave, but it's God I want to see glorified! He is faithful!

And I could speak in lots of ways about this wonderful journey... I could take you through the **places...**

We met in our home for six months, before we moved to a store front in Stone Mountain. We rented an upper room that seated 120 people. Since the church in Acts 2 consisted of 120 folks in an upper room we thought we were being biblical. And the same Holy Spirit filled us!

A year later we moved into a dilapidated warehouse that we eventually renovated, then purchased, then sold back to its original owner. That's when we purchased property and built the building we're meeting in today.

Over the 20 years we've been here we've added more land, two parking lots, 200 seats to our sanctuary, three classrooms, another upper room to meet in, a baptismal pool, and a volleyball court. Most recently a pavilion. And we planted another church in Winder... *Calvary 316.*

I could also talk about our church's impact on **people.**

How much fun it would be to list the literally thousands of folks who have been saved over the last 35 years?

And they found a family here... a home at CCSM.

Just one example would be Roy Albea. Roy was a truck driver for over 40 years. When he parked his truck his sons brought him to church. One Christmas Eve he asked me, [“How does a person get saved around here?”](#)

We prayed together right then and there, and his life was transformed. Roy is in heaven today as a result.

We could tally up a long list of people who's lives have been changed... who's Christian faith has been rooted and grounded... who's wounds have been healed... who God has raised up to serve... some even sent out...

And no doubt many of you would be on that list.

Or we could discuss CCSM's **mission** beyond these four walls... The thousands of folks we've encouraged through radio and internet... the effect our school has had on hundreds of kids in our community... numerous outreaches at home and mission trips abroad...

And that's not to mention the regional leadership that's been thrust upon us by our place in the CC family of churches. We now provide counsel, encouragement, and conferences for churches all throughout the South.

There are many ways that I could talk about CCSM's first 35 years of ministry... but if I only talked about finances, and buildings, and tallies, and endeavors... *I wouldn't be communicating what was really on my heart.*

Some of you who've been with us for a while... *you know... you've had a taste...* you've also experienced some of the emotions that have come with the journey.

People who just pick up a CD, or log on to listen to this, might misunderstand. I could come across shallow or even proud. *Facts alone are insufficient storytellers.*

So how do you capture 35 years in 35 minutes?

This is where I need some *emoticons*. Compared to 35 years, one morning is 140 characters. Today, I want to talk about the emotions behind the ministry, *and there are plenty!* Being a pastor is an emotional rollercoaster.

You're up. You're down - a person gets saved, another falls away - you read a letter of thanks, then a critical email - a guy grows, another guy goes... And that's just one day. You figure at least you're making a difference.

Trust me, the emotions behind our service are a mixed bag. I've titled today's message, "*Emoticons Of Ministry.*"

And the first emoticon I want to attach to ministry is the most recognizable - a *bright yellow smiley face... joy!*

I want to start with *the joys of ministry!* A pastor tastes more than his share of happiness. He sits at the epicenter of what God is doing in the lives of His people.

He sees firsthand God's grace, greatness, and glory.

Jesus told His disciples in Luke 15:10, "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God when one sinner repents." A pastor gets to rejoice with the angels.

To see a person repent of their sin; then ask God for His pardon - and right there in front of you watch their burden roll away, and a smile sprout on their face...

The prettiest smiles appear on faces that haven't done much smiling in a while - their facial lines get rearranged.

Turn that person's frown into a smile, and it lights up the room. It causes great joy in the people around them!

In the 35 years I've been a pastor I've never lost my excitement over the new birth. Actually, my confidence in the Gospel has grown, not lessened. I believe the cross of Christ is the most powerful change agent on Earth.

It replaces hearts of stone with tender, loving hearts.

I'll never forget Lingey. His wife and daughter got saved and were scheduled to be baptized. She warned me in advance to beware of her husband. He didn't like churches and pastors, but he would be at their baptism.

He was probably suspicious of what was happening to his family. This tough guy was coming to check us out.

I was in the water, while people were standing around the pool. I was just about to baptize the daughter, when all of a sudden I heard a splash. *It was Lingey!*

The love of Jesus and the power of the Gospel had gripped him. He jumped into the pool still wearing his street clothes. Tears were rolling down his cheeks, as he asked me if he could get baptized with the rest of his family. He prayed to receive Christ in the pool, and was baptized. His life changed then and there. *It was cool!*

Of all Jesus' disciples, the Apostle John lived the longest. He was a pastor of pastors... *John the aged.*

In one of his last letters, he wrote (3 John 4) **"I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth."**

And this brings me great joy as well, to know that the people who are coming to our church have embraced God's truth - they're growing and walking in God's ways.

Psalm 119:9 is one of my favorite verses, **"How can a young man cleans his way? By taking heed according to your Word."** There are no shortcuts to spiritual growth. **It takes a whole Bible to make a whole Christian.**

This is why we planted a church that teaches the Bible *verse by verse, chapter by chapter, cover to cover.* We need to know God's whole counsel, not bits and pieces.

Romans 10:17 tells us, **"Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God."** It's brings me great joy to see folks fall in love with the Bible. It's what feeds faith!

It's also a joy to get a vision from God... a new idea, a new emphasis, new marching orders. Then see it come to fruition. To watch *others jump on board, and God to fund it, and the Holy Spirit bless it*, and then one day *it come to pass*. What a joy to be part of a work of God!

There was a time when this building only existed as a drawing on a napkin. When we agreed to purchase the property we were short \$70 grand. *But we had verses...*

God had personalized some promises. He told me this building would be **“a place of peace”**... I'll never forget coming up one night to check on the construction and finding a brother sitting out back. He said he was here because he needed to seek the Lord and this was just such *a peaceful place*. It was one of many confirmations.

What a joy it is to take a step of faith, watch God provide, and even see God's people climb on board!

I've always said the unexpected joy of ministry are the relationships I've built with the families of our church.

This is the blessing I didn't think about when I became a pastor. But for some of you who've been around awhile, I baptized you, I officiated your marriage, I dedicated your child, then I baptized your child, I even officiated your child's wedding... We've wept together over a miscarriage, or mourned the loss of a love one.

I'm honored to have been there at the crossroads of your life. I feel a connection - like I'm part of your family.

And this all brings me great joy!

But joy is not my only emotion. A second emoticon I would attach to ministry is *the upside down smile - the frown-y face*. For **sorrow** is also a part of being a pastor.

You don't know how often I've grieved over the soul of a brother or sister who's faith became shipwrecked.

A few months earlier they were among us. We laughed together. We labored for the Lord together. Only to watch temptation, and sin, and pride get an upper-hand. I've lost friends in the faith. I've seen people abandon their spouse, and damage their kids. *It's sad.*

Certainly, no one is perfect. I sin and fall short of God's glory more times than I'd like. But a Christian admits his failures, and is quick to repent... You don't quit on God and bail on His church. Faith is always pressing forward.

A pastor grieves when he sees a Demas walk away from his faith, because he **"loved this present world."**

He mourns when he sees two Christians, like the ladies in Philippi, quibble over insignificant issues, and allow personal preferences to rob the church of its unity.

What grieves me most is the pettiness that sometimes exists among Christians. The guy who's never happy. Who can't see beyond his own nose. The gal who's

always complaining. It sad to see **people minor on the major stuff and major on the minor stuff.**

A pastor sees the seeds that people sow, and he knows God is not mocked - *we reap what we sow.*

A pastor knows that sin carries consequences.

I once prayed with a man to receive Christ on his deathbed, but that sure didn't stop him from dying from a liver poisoned by alcohol. The wages of sin is death in more ways than one! It's heartbreaking to watch people reject wisdom and truth, and make destructive choices.

We live in a fallen world and with it comes inexplicable sorrow. As the book of Job teaches us, *not all heartbreak is traceable to poor choices.* Life can throw you a curve.

Why does a faithful Christian end up with a cancer?

Why does a hard-working husband get laid off?

How often as a pastor have I been asked why?

I believe it does pay to be good and godly, but I've learned that pay-day doesn't always come in this life.

Life isn't always just. Situations aren't always fair.

And while we grieve over these injustices, God uses them to stretch our faith, and cause us to lean on Him.

Realize, it's in the muck and mire of life that a person's faith matures. It's sorrow that waters the seeds of faith.

We love the joyful times, but it's in grief that we grow.

As I've said many times, "It take the manure for us to mature." Ultimately, this life is a test. It's only a test.

Here's a poem, "I walked a mile with Pleasure, she chatted all the way, but left me none the wiser, for all she had to say. I walked a mile with Sorrow, and ne'er a word said she, but, oh, the things I learned from her, when Sorrow walked with me!" Sorrow is felt by a pastor.

There's a third emoticon I'd place after the word "ministry" - how about **frustration**. We forget that after Adam sinned God cursed his work. That he'd never get out of his work all he'd put into it - he came from the dust and he would work himself back to dust. *Dust to dust*.

And even the work that goes under the banner of "ministry" doesn't escape this curse. Light bulbs blow out in the church the same way they do at home. Concrete cracks, toilets clog, windows smudge - even at church.

You'd think since we were serving the Lord, God would make it a little easier - *and don't misunderstand, God blesses His work* - but He doesn't remove the normal frustrations. He wants us to live above them.

In the parable of the sower Jesus spoke of a farmer who sows his seed... Some of it falls by the roadside and the birds eat it up... Some of it lands on stoney ground, it dies out under the hot sun... And some falls into the weeds. It gets choked out by the thorns...

Only one quarter of the seed nestles into fertile soil, takes root, and grows. The farmer ends up with a 25% success rate. A kicker who only makes a quarter of his field goals - or a baseball player who only gets a hit a quarter of time - will soon be looking for other work.

Yet according to Jesus a person in Christian ministry may only be successful 25% of the time. It can make for a frustrated pastor. *Why don't more people get it?*

Another frustration in ministry is the lack of tangible measurements by which you can gauge your success.

In business it's all about the widgets you sell, and the dollars you bank. But not so in ministry... Just attracting a crowd doesn't equal success. Jesus told us to make disciples. Making disciples is a multi-faceted process.

How do you measure a person's spiritual maturity?

What about a pastor who has to till up rocky soil to plant the seed? It takes longer. It's more difficult, than sowing in fertile soil. *But is that man any less a success?*

Jesus told His disciples in Luke 17:20-21, "The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say, 'See here!' or 'See there!' For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you." God's Kingdom in the world today is *invisible not tangible* - it's *spiritual not political* - it's *grace and truth not brick and mortar*.

In today's world, God's Kingdom reigns over human hearts, rather than human governments and institutions.

I think a lot about what I'll leave behind when my time at CCSM is over. *Who'll be the next pastor? What will happen to this church?* As if the Church were an institution! *But it's not!* The Church consists of people.

God's work in today's world is not defined by buildings, but by the building up of people. Romans 14:17 tells us, "the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

As far as I've spread God's righteousness, and peace, and joy through my ministry, *then that's my legacy*.

The titles we hold, or books I write, or ministries we launch are just byproducts. You can't gauge *spiritual success* by *physical criteria*. What matters are the lives we touch while we're here. God's Spirit is responsible for carrying on God's work after you and I have moved on.

Another frustrating aspect of ministry is that the job is never over? *A builder gets a certificate of occupancy. A salesman closes the deal. A banker finalizes the loan.*

But a pastor's job isn't done until the whole world comes to know Jesus. There's always more to do.

In ministry, we're always facing *unlimited needs* with *limited resources*. God gives us a thimble and tells us to fill the ocean. It keeps us trusting and leaning on Him.

And this is why everyone in ministry should know their calling. *What specific task has Jesus called me to now?*

In Matthew 25 Jesus commended the faithful servant not for doing lots of things. He said to him, **"Because you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things."** A person or pastor who tries to do it all will burn himself out. You'll end up dog tired - exhausted.

The key to overcoming ministry frustration is to realize *the few things* God expects from you at any one time.

Remember, not even Jesus did it all! In John 17:4 He prayed to His Father, **"I have finished the work that you have given Me to do."** There were still sick folks to heal, and lost people to save, and wounds to mend - but on the cross Jesus finished His part in God's plan. Now we're called on to be His body and carry on His work.

There's another emoticon I would attach to Christian ministry and that's **rejection**. If your goal is to be liked *on earth, by people* - then get a cotton candy machine, or go to clown school, or man the Ferris wheel - but don't become a pastor. You'll end up gravely disappointed.

The world crucified Jesus - now don't expect the same wicked world to roll out the red carpet for His followers!

Mankind wants to go his own way - do his own thing. This is the nature of sin. And the pastor is called on by God to confront his rebellion. A pastor calls on people to repent, which means to turn and go another way.

This puts a pastor between sinners and sin - that's about as safe as eating your lunch in the middle of 1285.

Often times, people take out their hostilities toward God on His representative. It's easier to reject and get angry at the pastor than it is to dislike God. Folks may not even realize they're doing it, but, *"There's something about that guy I just don't like. Who does he think he is?"*

It's been said, *"A pastor needs a soft heart, but thick skin." "The heart of a child and the hide of a rhinoceros."*

If you're in Christian ministry you can't take everything personally. Never forget that our real enemy is spiritual.

Ephesians 6:12 reminds us, “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age...” It's a spiritual battle. We fight an unseen foe.

Over the years people have asked, “*Pastor Sandy what’s the greatest trial you’ve experienced in ministry?*”

And I answer that question without the slightest hesitation... the wounds I’ve received from people who I thought were my friends. There’ve been people with whom I was really close. We laugh and cried together.

Yet something happened... A misunderstanding... A perceived slight... A jealousy perhaps... I was betrayed.

If I took off my shirt and you saw my back, you’d see some scars. I’ve got some stab wounds. *I think my wife has more than I.* Here’s a quote, “Against a foe I can defend, but heaven help me against a disloyal friend.”

This is why every Christian needs to learn how to handle rejection. *You don’t get bitter - you don’t get angry - you don’t try to get even - you just love!* You love your enemy, your attacker, the way Jesus loves you!

Here is where you take your cues from Jesus...

You remind yourself that you’re His follower. You return good for evil - and trust Jesus with what happens next. You love and let God deal out any vengeance due.

I'm just saying, if there's anything I've learned over the last 35 years it's that **the healing is in the loving**. If you close off and get bitter the only person you harm is you.

But if you remain a channel for His love - even toward those who don't deserve it - you'll find greater grace.

John 13 prefaces the cross and the rejection of Jesus by His own disciples. Verse 1 reads, "**He loved them to the end.**" Jesus had every reason to wash His hands of these men, but He didn't. He refused to give up on love.

This is what I've learned about ministry - *don't give up on love...* Yogi Berra died this week. And I love one of his famous sayings, "**It ain't over till it's over.**" This is how I feel about people. As long as a person has breath to breathe, God can turn that person around. There's hope.

I don't give up on people and I don't give up on love.

Realize, "**love always flows downward.**" Parents love their kids, more than kids love their parents. God loves us, more than we love God... And this is true in ministry.

Teach a SS class, or work with youth, and the people you want to help won't love you as much as you love them. A shepherd loves the flock, more than the sheep love the shepherd. It's the way it is - *love flows down*.

When I think of Christian ministry there's another emotion that comes to mind. How about the emoticon of **uncertainty**? We could call it *apprehension*, even *fear*.

God's promises are many! And the fulfillment of His promises are sure. It's what comes in the meantime - in the in-between time - that tests us and proves our faith.

Will we succumb to our fears? Will we buckled under to the smorgasbord of short-cuts the devil offers us?

God wants to see how we handle *uncertainty*. After we've locked on to the promise, and while it's fulfillment is still off in the distance - *will we believe? will we trust?*

In farming you never reap in the same season that you sow. You plant in the spring, and harvest in the fall, but in between there's the long, hot, dry, difficult summertime.

It's ironic, a farmer's sowing is done in a matter of days. His reaping doesn't take long either. It's the summer that drags on. It takes patience and endurance. You weed and water all summer while the fruit ripens.

And so it is with Christian ministry. We relish the harvest. What a joy to see folks saved and the church grow. It's even fun to plow a field, and plant the seed, and start something from scratch. But it's the in-between time that decides the fate of a ministry. *Will you stick with it? I'm thankful that some of you have stuck with me!*

Years ago, my brother-in-law gave me a book for Christmas. Its title became my motto for ministry. It's called, "A Long Obedience In The Same Direction." And this is what I've learned in ministry. This is what it takes.

Not just a short burst, but a long obedience for years.

And not a heart that bounces all over the place, but a heart focused in the same God-led direction. This gives God an opportunity to bring His promises to fruition.

Usually at the pastors conference we do in the spring and at the youth conference we do in the summer, I'm super busy running around taking care of preparations.

But not so much last week during the Women's Conference. While Kathy taught Friday night I stood in the upper room and looked out the window over a sanctuary packed with ladies from 30 different churches.

It was a scene I envisioned 35 years ago, but it took time for God to pull together such a wonderful team of servants! God turned a dream into reality, but it took a *long obedience in the same direction*. It testifies to Hebrews 6, "*faith and patience inherit God's promises.*"

I've got three more emotions that are produced by serving God. One emotion of ministry is camaraderie.

It's been said, "No man is an island." That's especially true in the Christian life. The Church is evidence that God intends for Christianity to be lived out in

community with other Christians. I love the definition for the word “fellowship” - it means “two fellows in the same ship.”

Have you seen the new Atlanta Falcons commercial? Samuel Jackson narrates. He says on Sundays we're not black or white - not young or old - not rich or poor - not from the city or from the burbs - we're all Falcons!

That is until we try to get out of the parking lot. Then we're yelling at each other, and shouting obscenities.

I watch that commercial and don't know whether to laugh or cry... Jesus died on a cross to break down our distinctions and make us one - and we trust in a football team to unify us? Maybe sports has become our idol?

I believe it's not at a Falcons game that we find true camaraderie, it's at church in the shadow of the cross.

It's amazing to watch old soldiers who shared a fox hole together 50 years ago get reunited. Instantly there's a bond. They haven't seen each other in five decades, but they're able to pick up right where they left off.

This is the camaraderie I share among the people with whom I've served the Lord. There is a special unity.

If you're tired of flying solo, and doing life alone, get involved in this church. Serve the Lord with others.

In some ways ministry isn't just about what gets done, but that we do it together and learn love in the process.

There's another emoticon I've learned goes with ministry, and it's **surprise**. When you fully follow Jesus hold on to your hat! Your world will be anything but boring. Life becomes one surprise after another.

Twelve times in Luke's 24 chapters you read the word "**marveled**." They marveled at what Jesus did. They marveled at what He said. The Pharisees marveled. The disciples marveled. The multitudes marveled. Everyone marveled... Like a Roman Candle, Jesus lit up the dark skies of this world. He was a splash of light and color.

If my life gets boring it's because I'm not open to His surprises. Jesus does new things. He sings a new song.

In Christ old things pass away - all things become new. We're told, "**His mercies are new every morning**."

I've been a pastor now for 35 years and my Lord continues to surprise me... *The money comes in the nick of time... A person I didn't think of steps up to help... An answer to pray comes out of the blue...*

You'd think the fact that God is faithful would get boring, but He finds new ways of surprising us with His faithfulness. He spices it up by working serendipitously.

Jesus is a God of newness. He loves putting new wine in old wineskins. For years we talked about **bringing the changeless Gospel to a changing world**. But to do so, we have to be faithful to what's changeless, *and* flexible with what's not. God wants us open to new methods.

I've learned that the call of God is the call of the wild.

God works in new ways, charts new paths, breaks old patterns, shatters stereotypes. We need a flexible faith.

I love what hockey great, Wayne, once said, "**I skate to where the puck is going to be, not where it's been.**" This is a big part of following Jesus. Are we willing to move where His Spirit moves... go when He goes?

Who knows the wonderful surprises God has for CCSM over the next 35 years? I know it won't be boring.

I'm waiting on *the surprise of all surprises!* When the trumpet blows and we rise to meet Jesus in the clouds!

Well, the final emoticon I'll attach to ministry is that of quiet **satisfaction**. The feeling of a job well done. After a season of frantic activity, there's a moment when you can kick back and smell the coffee... *a wonderful feeling*.

You could call it "**peace**" or "**rest.**" It's assurance - it's a calm confidence. The Hebrews use the word, "**shalom.**" It speaks of an all-encompassing peace - a well-being.

In a world full of frenetic busyness and spinning your wheels serving God evokes a sense of real fulfillment.

I love the 16th Psalm, and particularly the way it closes, “In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore.” In God’s presence you sense a fullness - a fulfillment - a deep satisfaction.

And it’s not necessarily that you’ve created anything big, or outlandish, or impressive in the eyes of this world.

It could be a simple thing like feeding a hungry man, or getting a homeless person a room for the night, or discipling a teenager, or opening your home up for a Bible Study - but to hear God say, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” That’s what makes life worth living!

Recently, I got a letter from a former staff member here at CCSM. He’s since gone on to other pursuits. He started a business - got involved in high dollar ventures.

But he wrote in his letter that the time in his life where he felt his work had the most significance were the years he spent working with the young people of our church.

And I agree, I know it’s not for everyone, but there is something unparalleled about bringing God’s Word to God’s people. To be on one end of a text, while the Holy Spirit holds the other end - directing it to people’s hearts.

Minds are enlightened, consciences are pricked, hearts are being pried open.
I'm holding on while the Holy Spirit tugs, and works in ways that only God can.

There's a peace that comes over you when God gives you a word to say, and that message gets delivered.

It wasn't just another of man's opinions. It was eternal.

It was *God's Word*. It's the truth people need. *Whether they obey it or not...* at the very least, now they know.

When I first told my dad I wanted to be a pastor, he cautioned me, *"Sandy, being a pastor will be a hard life."*

I remember hearing that and walking away puzzled...

How could spending your life serving God make for a hard life? Well, he was right! Of the eight emoticons I've attached to ministry today, four of them are negative.

Who wants *sorrow, frustration, rejection, uncertainty?*

But after 35 years I can honestly tell you, the *joy*, and *camaraderie*, and *surprises*, and especially the deep *satisfaction* more than make up for the difficulties. Even through *the negative emotions* I'm now more Christ-like.

And I'm looking forward to the next 35 years.

When we celebrate our 70th Anniversary, I'll be 92. Maybe I'll still be around, and my grandson can roll out my wheelchair, and I can mumble a few praises to God.

Who knows what emotions God will pack into 35 more years of ministry... I know for now, I'm a thankful man!

I'm grateful to God for letting me to do what I do, and I'm thankful I can do it with you. You guys are a great church! Together, let's all give thanks to our great God!