

We're not in the middle of it, but we are still working our way through the book of Hebrews. Hebrews 4:13, "there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." There is a recurring dream, a recurring nightmare that a large portion of humanity has. The recurring dream or nightmare is that we show up at school or work naked.

Anybody got that dream? Don't raise your hand because it reveals all kinds of things about you. There is a recurring dream and I don't really know what the underlying thing is, but a bunch of people have it, that they show up at school, show up at work and they're naked and no one else is and they can neither get out of there nor find some drawers. And so, they wake up in a cold sweat, check themselves and go back to sleep. And this is a dream that some people have over and over and over again. Well, look right at me: you are living that dream. You can put secrets right up there with the unicorn and the oompaloompa, because they don't exist. They don't exist. No matter how dark, no matter how well hidden, no matter how crafty or clever you are, He knows. He knows. This is what David is both rejoicing in and lamenting in the Psalms when he says, "Where can I go from You? Like, if I climb up to the top of a mountain, You're there. And if I put on my scuba gear and dive to the depths of the sea, You're there. And if I go over there, You're there. And if I stay here, You're here. No matter where I am, there You are. I cannot get away from You. So, if I'm in crowd, You're there, but if it's just me, You're there. And if it's something I'm speaking verbally and everyone knows what I'm thinking, then you're there, but if it's just something I'm thinking and haven't said anything, then You know. If it's the part of my weaknesses that people see, You know, but if it's the part of my weaknesses that I spend all my energy, time and vitality on to hide, You know those too." He knows. Yeah, He knows. There's no like kryptonite or lead, or whatever it was that Superman couldn't see through, that blocks it off. He knows. No matter how dark or deep the trail goes, He knows. No secrets. Now, you can hide from me; I can hide from you.

One of my favorite parts of this church is that we have rough enough people here that nobody knows they probably shouldn't talk to me in certain ways, because I'm a pastor and clergy. And so, you might not want to be dropping F-bombs around me, but a lot of our people are just so raw and so new to this whole thing, they don't know it. They don't know it, so they just spill out. So, some of you don't even try to hide certain things from me, because I guess you haven't learned that maybe you should try, but you shouldn't. It's just, historically in churches, that's what you do. You put your best foot forward for the pastor, but not here. I don't know what to do with that. "You gotta light?" I love that about this place. If we ever get away from that, then we've probably gotten self absorbed. So, we'll pray that we're always a little rough and dirty.

So in this, you might be able to hide from me, you might be able to hide from your spouse, you might be able to hide from your kids the dark things inside of you, the secrets, but you can't hide from Him. There's not a room in your house that He cannot see into. There's not a motivation of the heart, no matter how cleverly you justify it to yourself, that God doesn't sniff out. He knows. Horrifying idea really. And although, you and I, we might have lost our respect for His presence, it's here nonetheless. You and I living the dream, naked, unable to get pants on.

Verse 14, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest..." Now, that's probably confusing language to those of you who haven't grown up in church. High priest is an Old Testament reference of the man who was responsible for carrying the sins of Israel into the presence of God to ask for forgiveness. So in essence, a high priest is a mediator between God

and man. A high priest is one who goes in and pleads your case. So, think of it in terms of the law, this is your defense attorney. This is your attorney that goes in and says, "This is the case, this is what happened.." He is the high priest, but in Jewish terms the high priest would go in and slaughter an animal for the sins of Israel and himself. And so, it's saying that even though we live in the New Testament era, we have a high priest. So, look at this, "Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens..." Now, I wish I had more time to get into that, because there's something really amazing about "through" space. Because you and I could hop in a rocket, and we could fly to Mars, but we would still be in space. We're not "through" space, we're "in" space. In fact, we could take that rocket to Pluto, and we're still "in" space. "Through" space means that Jesus is outside the time space continuum. I don't even know what that means, I just heard it on "Back to the Future" and thought I'd throw it out there. I don't really know what that means except that in this language, in the Greek here, Jesus is not in space that He's outside of it, which is pretty hard to get your mind around. So, like you and I could never get outside of space; He is through it and outside of it and everywhere. It's pretty...I thought I didn't have time for this. Let's go, "...who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession." Do you know what our confession is? Our confession is, "We cannot make ourselves right for you God." I mean, bottom line, our confession, which is so opposite of what you see about Christianity on television, our confession is not, "We're right. You're wrong. Better get right or die." Our confession is this, "We cannot fix ourselves. Help us Jesus." That's our confession, right? So, since everything is seen, since there's no secrets, since all your junk, all of it is clearly seen by God as in the daylight, then praise God, "Let us hold fast to You. Yes, I am a mess and I need Your help. Let us never drift away from, let us never get away from "I am a mess. I need Your help." Let us never ever, ever, ever get away from "I am broken and need Jesus." Let us never get away from that. Because if you get away from it, then you have a lot of things that are happening, but you don't have the gospel of Jesus anymore. You have a lot of institutional stuff that starts creeping in.

So, let's keep reading. Verse 15, I think this is where it really starts to get complicated. "For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses..." Let me try to explain this; sin brings about weight. Here's what I mean: with sin, comes shame, comes guilt, comes despair. There's this weightiness that occurs when we do what we hate. Have you ever had that moment where your junk finally catches up to you? Have you had that moment where all that you hate about yourself goes public? No? You're on the clock; it's just a matter of time, because there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed. That's not a threat; it's just the way things are in the universe. Your sin will find you out. So, maybe you don't know this moment where your junk finds you out. Maybe you just know the fear of the moment, how embarrassed you'll be, what kind of shame there'll be there in front of your wife, in front of your husband, in front of your kids. Maybe you're just aware of the fear of that moment where your junk finds you out. Well, what just happened in this text, is it says that in that moment when shame, despair, guilt, when all that weighs on your soul, we don't have a high priest who cannot sympathize with us. It's saying that Jesus can sympathize with in that moment. In that moment when we feel guilt, when we feel shame, when we feel overwhelmed, when we feel distressed, the Scriptures say that Jesus, the Son of God, can sympathize with you, that He's not going, "Oh, when are you going to get this right? Am I going to have to kill you? Am I going to have to destroy something down here to get you right? Okay, you got it. (kaboom)" It's saying that that's not what's happening here, but that Jesus, our high priest, looks at the guilt, looks at the shame, looks at the distress, looks at the desperation and sympathizes with us. Let me show you why He sympathizes with us. He can sympathize with us because he is "...One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin." So, now the Scriptures say that all the temptations that you face and that I face, all of them, every one of them, all of the temptations that befall you and befall me, Christ knew them. Christ knew them. Now, try to get your head around that. Christ knew them.

And then, He's going to roll us into something that I've always had a problem with. Look at verse 16, "Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace..." Now, "throne of grace" is kind of an oxymoron. Because throne means power, right and rule, and grace means mercy. Throne means justice; grace means mercy. You go an oxymoron

going on here, a pretty beautiful one I think. Because here, I don't want karma, I want grace. If the world works "eye for an eye, tooth for a tooth," we all end up blind and toothless. I do not want karma, I do not know who's keeping score and I don't know who weighs out the scales in the end. Plus I'm a scoundrel. I am not looking for karma. I am looking to do good so that good is returned to me. I am looking at laying my life at the foot of the cross and resting it under grace. You can chase karma if you want, but it's risky man and it doesn't work. Listen to this, "...let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need." So, here's what the Scriptures say, that when you and I sin, that when the weight of guilt and shame and distress and that overwhelming pressure that sin puts on the soul, that you and I should not flee from God, we shouldn't run, we shouldn't go, "Ah, I blew it, so I might as well stay on this course of action...Well, I blew it again. I'm sure He can't be patient with me anymore. How long can He extend..." Instead of running from God, we instead are to run boldly towards Him, because He can sympathize with our shortcomings, because He Himself was tempted in all things. Can I tell you what always happens to me when I try to actually live this out? This is the thought process that always, always, always happens to me, and it's going to take us down a tough road. The argument is this, "You can come to Jesus because He understands, because He had to be tempted too." I always go, "Yeah, but He was God. I'm not. He's part of the Trinity. I'm not." You know, they're trying to make this comparison to Jesus and me. Yeah, it's a tough comparison, is it not? "Jesus the Son of God and You. We're tempted in all things together, Him without sin." You're like, "I don't know if He was tempted like me. He was God. I mean, He didn't have the sin nature. It wasn't given to Him by His father; it was imparted to me." It started showing up about a week and a half in. So, I'm going, "Yeah, He was tempted, I don't know if He was tempted like me because He's God; I'm not."

Now, the text that we're in in Hebrews feels this argument coming on. It feels it coming on, because it's going to try to unpack the answer for you. So, he's not just throwing this out there and going, "Just deal with it;" he's going to try to unpack it for you. And let me tell you, we're about to dive, headfirst, into mystery. And I'm going to do my best at trying to explain to you how Jesus can be 100% God and 100% man, but in all my readings, I've never been able to find anybody who could adequately get my head around that. So, I'm going to do my best, but at the end of the day, we're going to walk out of here and go, "That's mysterious and beautiful," or just "Huh?" So, I'm hoping to save you from the "huh?" part.

So, let's keep reading in Hebrews. What happens next is, we start getting a list of what's necessary to be a high priest. This next part is not about Jesus; it's just about what's necessary to be a high priest. And some of it we don't have a problem with, and one in particular is the the problem that we're trying to work through today. Starting in Hebrews 5:1, "For every high priest taken from among men is appointed on behalf of men in things pertaining to God, in order to offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins; he can deal gently with the ignorant and misguided..." Thank You God. Right? He can deal with the ignorant and misguided, as I find myself on those paths most often. "...since he himself also is beset with weakness;..." Do you see where we're starting to have a problem with....yeah. Okay, let's keep reading, "...and because of it he is obligated to offer sacrifices for sins, as for the people, so also for himself. And no one takes the honor to himself, but receives it when he is called by God, even as Aaron was." Okay, here are the four things in that text that the Scriptures are going to say are necessary for you to even be considered as a high priest: 1) You have to be a man. So you can't be like a cow or a monkey to be the high priest. You have to be a man. That's why Jesus had to leave high glory. 2) You have to be called by God. You can't just show up and go, "I'm the high priest." Just like you can't show up here and go, "I'm the lead pastor." "I thought I was. Was there a vote I didn't know about or something? Has there been a coup?" You can't just declare yourself the high priest; you have to be appointed, according to the text, by God. 3) You have to understand the guilt of humanity. That's what it says here; you have to deal with misguided and ignorant, the sin of mankind. You have to get that we're all guilty. And then the fourth one; this is the one that causes all the trouble. 4) You have to be beset with weakness yourself, so that you can extend mercy and grace instead of judgment and wrath. So okay, Jesus becomes a

man, Jesus was appointed by God, Jesus dealt efficiently and effectively with the guilt of mankind, but Jesus beset with weaknesses? That's a tough one.

Verses 5-10, in Chapter 5, deal with Jesus meeting these criteria. I don't think I have to spend time on the three of them; I think I've got to take my time on the one. How can Jesus be fully God and be beset with weaknesses? Verses 7-9 are going to try to unpack this for us, and they are going to take us headfirst into mystery. So, look at 7-9 with me, "In the days of His flesh..." which means when He was alive, here on earth, walking among us, "He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation." So, they're referencing a time period here. There is a reference to a time period in Jesus' life in order to show us that He was beset with weakness. They are referencing a point in His ministry where He is crying aloud with tears and a desire to not have to endure. What are they referencing? The garden of Gethsemane. What we're about to look at is unbelievably unique in the life and the times of Jesus, in that there was no warning about it in the Old Testament. You've got hundreds of prophecies in the Old Testament that talk about the cross; you have not one that mentions the garden and what would happen in the garden.

So, flip over to Matthew 26. I want you to look at a really interesting night, mysterious night in the life of Jesus. The garden of Gethsemane was not this one time trip. Apparently, it was the habit of Jesus, when in Jerusalem, to have dinner and go to the garden. I don't know that for sure; I'm telling you that because Judas showed up with men in the garden, and Jesus did not say, "Let's go to the garden" until after passover. Judas had already left. So, it leads me to believe that we've got a consistent pattern of Jesus, after meals and after large events, disappearing to be with himself, to be with the Lord, to take His disciples to do some teaching. And so, it just makes sense here that this is just something they always did. They have a beautiful passover meal. If you're thinking, "Yeah, but it had to be kind of weird. Jesus is washing their feet, He's saying, 'This is My body, this is My blood.' I think that passover meal had to be pretty weird." Have you read the Gospels? The whole deal was weird. I mean, Jesus is an enigma to walk with. The disciples come up to him and go, "Um, nobody understands Your stories," and He goes, "That's why I'm telling them." "What'd he say?...He said He's saying them so they wouldn't understand...Go tell Him...I'm not going to tell Him...I'll tell Him (Peter of course)." So he runs over and tells Him. So, this whole walking with Jesus, He goes to try to find a fig in a fig tree, He can't find one, so He curses the tree and it dies. These hyper-religious men, He has no patience for, but the drunk thief, Zaccheus, He loves to hang out with two or three times a week. He tends to be brutally hard on the religious and loves loves loves the glutton and the drunk, specifically the ones that hated that they were. The whole thing must have been confusing. I can't get my mind around the three years of following Jesus around. He walks into the pool of Bethesda, thousands of people sick, He heals one...walks away. The whole thing is nearly impossible. So, don't think they're going, "This night's a little unusual." I mean, remember, He's like, "Go to the other side; I'll meet you there." "But You don't have a boat." "I'll walk," literally across the sea. So, don't think...we always read the passover and we're like, "Oh man, that must have been crazy." I think it was just another night of following Jesus.

So, in what is just as normal as a night as it can be following God in the flesh, they eat a meal together, celebrating God's deliverance of His people, and they head to the garden like they always do. And it's in the garden that things get really, really weird and really hard to lay against His deity. Let me show you what I mean here. Verse 36, "Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and said to His disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.'" So, the twelve... remember, we always talk about Jesus having this crew of 120 that he ran with, but inside of that, there was this other crew of 72 that He was closer with, and inside of that group, He had this group of 12 that He was really tight with, and inside that group of 12, He had 3 that He was really tight with. And I always try to tell you, you've got to get past knowing everybody on the surface level or you never really have friends, and you never have people who'll hold you accountable and walk with you deeply. So, He tells the twelve, "Hey, just sit here." And then He goes farther, but He takes the big

three with Him. And He took with Him, Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be grieved and distressed. And then He does something that He doesn't do in any other place in the New Testament. Look in verse 38, "Then He said to them, 'My soul is deeply grieved, to the point of death; remain here and keep watch with Me.'" Let me try to pull this in '06, so you can get your mind around it. He pulls His closest friends together and says, "I am so overwhelmed, so afraid, so distressed and so overcome, that I feel like I could die at any second. Please, please, please pray for Me." Nowhere else in Scripture will you find Jesus asking for prayer, but here He's asking for it. I'm telling you, this is the most mysterious text that I know of in the Scriptures about Jesus.

Verse 39, "And He went a little beyond them, and fell on His face and prayed, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; yet not as I will, but as You will.' And He came to the disciples and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, 'So, you men could not keep watch with Me for one hour? Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.'" I've always been real hard on the disciples for falling asleep. I mean, they had to know when they got to the garden, because you have no other instance of Jesus acting like this. They had to know in the garden that something's wrong. I've always been hard on them, like, "How do you fall asleep on your boy like that? The one time He asks you for prayer, you can't even stay awake?" So, I'm always hard on them, but you know what I read this week? I read this week on the passover meal, specifically in the 1st Century could involve up to, if not exceeding, four glasses of wine. Yeah, I'd be out. So, these guys might have had four or five glasses of wine, which we all know, as Baptists, in Scripture there wasn't any alcohol. I don't know if you could see me roll my eyes, but I did. There wasn't alcohol in that wine, which is why wine leads to debauchery because grape juice just makes us go crazy. So, let's keep reading; that's a whole different sermon. I don't time for it this morning.

Verse 42, "He went away again a second time and prayed..." Now watch this; He prays the same prayer. It's the same prayer; He doesn't change it. It's the same prayer. "My Father, if this cannot pass away unless I drink it, Your will be done." Did you hear what He's inferring? "I would rather not drink this. I don't want to drink this." "Again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy." I don't know what that means there. I'm guessing that they're, "No, we weren't sleeping." "And He left them again, and went away and prayed a third time, saying the same thing once more. Then He came to the disciples and said to them, 'Are you still sleeping and resting? Behold, the hour is at hand and the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!'" So Jesus, God in the flesh shows up in the garden and becomes overwhelmed, distressed, fearful and exhausted, so much so that the weight of the stress makes Him begin to sweat blood. The Book of Hebrews is saying to you and me that in this moment, all the weight that accompanies sin, all the shame, all the guilt, all the despair, all the overwhelming force of our own failures falls on the soul of Jesus and begins to crush Him.

Flip back to Hebrews 5 starting in verse 7, "In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered." Now historically, I've been taught that that's referencing the cross, but it's not referencing the cross, is it? It's referencing the garden. He's not referencing the cross there; he's referencing the garden. He learned obedience, and even Jesus learning is mind boggling alright, but Jesus learned obedience through what He suffered. So, let me try to get this to you. What's happening in the garden is that every cell in Jesus' body is saying, "Let's get out of here." Every cell, every neuron, every nerve impulse, every thought, every idea ravaging through His body is that "just 10 minutes from here, they're lighting torches and grabbing chains, and if I don't leave now, I am going to be slaughtered tomorrow." And everything in him is, "Let's go. Let's get out." And all the guilt and agony and shame and and weight and pressure of sin is befalling His heart; and yet He does not sin. He doesn't climb up in a fig tree and hide; He doesn't run and decide He'll deal with the consequences later; He prays and He prays and He prays and He gathers around Him his closest half-drunk crew and gets them to pray also; and they pray and they pray and they pray until it's time to be obedient; and He steps forward and let's Judas kiss Him. The very lips He created,

the very muscles in the face that won't function unless He lets them betrays the Son of man. So, He knows all the weight, guilt, shame, hurt, He knows. And because He knows, according to Hebrews, He can be merciful and gracious in our time of need. Because He knows, He doesn't go, "Aw, when are you guys going to get this right?" He says, "Come to me."

I've learned to not like the word "repent," not because I don't like repenting, but it's like that word always conjures up in mind some guy standing on a soap box on the corner of New York City on a bullhorn telling everybody they're going to Hell. You know that guy? The guy that I always search the Scriptures to find the missing hole to whoop him or, I'm gangly, have him whooped. It always conjures up this idea of, "Repent!" It always conjures up, in me, the idea that it's a threat. Are you tracking with me on that? Like the idea of repent always sounds like a threat to me. Like, "Repent! Or there's Hell for you!" It always just sounds threatening, but maybe through these lenses, the call to repent isn't a threat; maybe it's an invitation. Maybe repentance isn't a threat; maybe Jesus isn't up in heaven going, "I did it. Why can't you? I swear, one more morning without a quiet time, and I'm destroying this city." Maybe repentance isn't a threat at all; maybe it's an invitation. Maybe, "repent for the kingdom of God is at hand" means "hey, walk away from that junk, because there's a better way that's here." Maybe repentance is God's way of saying, "I have such deeper waters for you to swim in." Maybe repentance is Jesus' way of saying, "Listen, you can live that way, but it's just going to bring you pain. There's life over here if you want it. There's healing over here if you want it. Won't you walk this way? Oh, I know, I know, I know. I know your shame; I know your guilt; I know your despair; I know you think that I heal everybody else, but you've just gone too far; I get it. My yoke is easy, My burden is light. Come on. Walk away. Come to Me. Approach My power with confidence that it can heal you. Approach My power, knowing that that guilt and shame and despair that you feel, I felt, and I long to lift it from you. I long to lift it from you." That's the Gospel.

Let me ask you a question. Why do you think I stand here and unpack my junk all the time? Hmm? A month ago, I stood up here and said, "I'm really struggling with God right now. I'm really wrestling with Him, having a hard time with Him." I have a good friend down in Cali whose 8 year old daughter's not doing too well with cancer. Why do you think I want to show up on Sunday and confess that I'm really struggling with that versus "(humming 'Superman' Theme) All things work together for the good of those that love Jesus. (whoosh!)" Fly around the room; land back up on the baptistery. Why do you think I do that? Hmm? Maybe it's for you, but maybe it's for me. The most damaging thing that ever happened in my journey of following Jesus was to see men and women stand on stage and pretend that they knew everything and they were already there. Because then I always thought something was wrong with me. I'm like, "Man, that guy didn't even touch the ground when he walks; he just flutters. I don't flutter. Something must be wrong with me. Jesus might not work for me." I'm trying with all the grace Jesus will give me to approach His throne of grace with confidence, confidence that who I am today doesn't have to be who I am tomorrow. See, I believe that you and I have choices in the kinds of people we're going to be, which may mean that for a lot of you that are in this room, it's a miracle that you're in this room because you've seen things in the church and things within Evangelical thought in life that just burned you so bad. And you made the choice not to be bitter and angry against it but to try to...I'm wondering how many of you in here are carrying a lot of shame with you this morning. I know shame; he used to be a really good friend of mine. That shame when you can't get out of the sin, it just sucks you back in. No matter how bad you kick, fight or scream, it just keeps bring you back in. And I wonder how many of you are walking in guilt. I'm wondering how many of you are about to just give up. And the truth is you never tried Jesus; you tried church, and church ain't Jesus. Church is Jesus' bride. So, in the middle of the shame and guilt and confusion and despair that might be haunting us in here, there's this invitation to come and be healed by the one who has felt it and survived, one who held on to God, being faithful even when everything else looked dark.

The worst part of my job is that I can't choose for you, that I can't do anything but use my mouth and then pray. It's horrible. Because I want to shake somebody, you know, "Believe!!!!" But...yeah...not very effective. So, here's how we're

going to end today: I'm going to pray for us, and Shane B is going to come up here and play a little more. And can I invite you to do something? Let me invite you to not rush out if you don't have to. I know what the parking lot's about to be. You ain't getting out of here quickly anyhow, right? So, if you've been running, maybe it's time to quit running. If you've been thinking, "Oh no, you're junk's just so much more problematic and so much deeper." If you're doing the, probably the darkest night of the soul, the self loathing pity party, maybe it's time to lay that idolatry down, because the thing with the pity party is it's like you're the guest star. "Me, me, I, me, me, poor me, poor I, poor me, I, I, I, me, me, me...." Maybe even that needs to be laid down today at the foot of the cross. And I just want to extend the same offer to you that Jesus offers to you and that's that you don't have to carry the shame and the guilt and the despair. You don't have to. Confess, pray, get help. "Oh, you don't know how dark that will be." No, I don't. You're right, but I know historically, phenomenal things have happened to men and women who'll just trust Him with it. So this is my prayer, this is my hope for you: that you would run, but you would run to the throne of grace with confidence, so that you might find help in this time of need.

"Father, I thank You for both my brothers and sisters in here and those who are just kind of taking a look at You right now. I thank You that we can just come into a place and sing some songs and open up the Scriptures and see what You have to say to us. I can remember time periods on my life where my junk just kind of owned me, and my "secrets" and my struggles and my lusts and my ambitions and my pride created a real sense of despair and hopelessness, even though I kept sitting in Bible studies and kept taking notes. I think the consistent message I have for these men and women that you put in my heart is just that we would be honest before you and honest with one another, maybe You would just take us to the deep of the pool. And the more we try to hide who we really are and the more we try to hide from You, which has to be comical to You, the dimmer the world looks. So, I don't know if we all head to the Center for Christian Counseling and get help or if we just join up with Celebrate Recovery or just, on the way home, lean over and say, "Hey man, I've really got some stuff I need to work through." But God, I pray that maybe this morning, we can begin by not running from You anymore, just not going, "Oh well, I've blown it, so I'll just keep running this way," but that, Father, there would be genuine and real repentance, that turning away from what is dark and running towards what is light.

I know that, at least for Jesus, that involved this horrific night of wrestling through all that is dark. And so, maybe today is our garden of Gethsemane, maybe today we spend the day on our couch, laying on our carpet asking for strength, asking for courage, asking for You will to be done, asking for other ways. I pray that, when all is said and done, we would trust You. When all is said and done, we would be obedient. I am such a believer in grace, and there is not a topic I am more fond of discussing but I also know that You have called us to some responsibility and You've called us to some actions and You've called us to position ourselves under the waterfall of that grace. And so, today I pray we would take those steps, that we would accept the invitation of repentance and we find the wholeness and healing that You offer to us. Thank You. Thank You. Thank You. It's for Your beautiful name I pray. Amen."