

A Man Is A Son

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[0:00] Tonight I'm going to be talking about sonship, man as a son.! So basically to start I want to give a quick intro, a little bit of background.

So I actually moved here in January 2012. I was living in Mexico at the time. I had just kind of gotten right with the Lord. And I didn't have much direction. I didn't have much of a plan for my life.

And I was talking to my older brother Tony, who was in Mexico. He's been friends with Josh for a while. And he was like, hey man, Josh is about to start doing some men's training in Kansas City with a bunch of guys.

And he's going to be born into a small, back then a small group of guys, probably five, six guys or something. And he's like, hey, consider moving to Kansas City and jumping in with those guys.

They were just starting a new church plant at their house. And so I moved in with them. And that was January 2012. And then shortly after we did our first man camp.

[1:19] And I don't know how many we've done since then, 15 years, almost every year, maybe. There might have been a few years we've skipped or whatever. But anyway, I've been a part of all the man camps. I've attended all of them.

And one of the things about man camp, or one of the things about men's training and talking about what it looks like and what it is to be, what it means to be a biblical man and live in accordance with what God says in his scriptures is, every time I went to man camp, there's always something new. Like you can hear it. It doesn't matter how many times you hear it. You're in a different stage of life. There's always something new. Like it's wild. Like you think, I've heard it all. No, no, no, no. It's really, really sweet material. Very curated. And so, really excited about this man camp.

So, anyway, that's a little bit of the back story. I've been very blessed. I've been very blessed by man camp. And I can actually confidently say that it is, attending, being part of men's training has actually changed the course of my life.

Like I've, it really has. It's, I've been very blessed to benefit over and over and over from this material. So, if you can, if you're here tonight, you should really try and make it to the other eight weeks because it's awesome.

[2:45] And invite your friends. We've got a bunch of flyers back there. So, grab them, invite your friends. So, to kind of get into this, I'm going to give somewhat of a brief overview of what we're going to get into.

Kind of an opening statement. This is kind of what I'm going to be focusing on is, so, we have a great need today for men to understand what it means to become sons, then brothers, then fathers. Right? This is a great need in our culture, in our society, in our lives. This is an incredible, incredibly great need. We, men, today, we as men need to get this right.

We cannot treat this lightly. We shouldn't. Yeah, we really, really, very, very important. To start off, I want to kind of, I actually want to, I want to give some statistics.

I'm sure a lot of you know, or have heard a lot of these statistics, whatever, but, I kind of want to talk about the fatherlessness problem we have before we get into sonship. Because I think it really, it's kind of a foundational reason for why we're even doing this.

[3:58] So, we have to understand what it means to be a son first, then brother, then fathers, eventually. So, I'm just going to start off by just reading some statistics about fatherlessness in our country, in our culture.

So, fatherlessness affects approximately 18 to 24 million children in the U.S. who live without the relative fathers. Crisis linked to higher risk of poverty.

So, this, the, the, the, yeah, it, it leads to all kinds of chaos and destruction when we, when men miss it on this topic, okay? Behavioral disorders, incarceration, substance abuse.

It's just a huge social problem here in our, in our society, culturally. And, so, a few statistics. Again, this is roughly 33% of children in our country, 24.7 million, live in homes without their biological father.

Behavior, this is behavioral and mental health. 85% of children with behavioral disorders and 60, 60% of youth suicides come from fatherless homes, okay?

[5:10] Incarceration and crime. Boys and father, father absent homes are twice as likely to serve time in jail by age 30. With fatherlessness being a stronger predictor of incarceration than poverty.

So, education, 71% of high school dropouts come from fatherless homes. So, girls face an eight times higher risk of teenage pregnancy and higher risks of depression overall.

Boys often struggle with direction, discipline, and emotional regulation, okay? So, lack of a father in our, in our lives is, it just greatly impacts our culture, our society, everything.

Again, it's going to, it leaves, it causes men to abandon, leave their, leave their wives, leave their kids. Non-marital child, non-marital childbearing, incarceration, all this stuff.

Unbelievable, the ripple effects of when, when men get this wrong, okay? So, we, we want to combat that. This is, so, to, but to start, we need to understand what it is to be a son, what it means.

[6:20] So, we're going to get into it. Isaiah 43, verses 6 and 7 says, Bring my sons, this is God speaking, Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, everyone who is called by my name and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed, even who I have made.

So, whom I have created for my glory, this is key. Man is the glory of God. Man was created to glorify God with our lives. It's the purpose of man, to glory, glorify God.

So, we need to point and give glory with our lives to God. This is our aim. This is our purpose. This is our reason for existence, okay? So, if we get this off, our lives are utterly, like, we will have missed the mark, okay?

Very, very important. Apart from coming into a bright relationship with our Heavenly Father, our lives will add up to a big pile of nothing.

We will have missed the mark. We just wouldn't have. We will not fulfill the purpose for our existence. Big, big thing here. So, again, so what is it?

[7:36] Quickly defining sons, okay? What does it mean to become a son? To come into a right relationship with our Heavenly Father and gain a spirit of sonship, okay?

Come into a right relationship with our Heavenly Father and gain a spirit of sonship, okay? This is going to affect our identity. It's going to affect everything about how we go about our lives, okay?

Brothers. Brothers. So, once we establish, once we find our identity as sons of our Heavenly Father, then we learn to become brothers.

We're brothers. And we serve. So, what this means is we learn to love our brothers in the way that Christ loves us, loved us, and wash each other's feet, okay? Serving one another, serving our wives, serving the people around us.

It says, Christ did not come to be served, but to serve and give His life a ransom for many. So, this is what He calls us to as well. And so, and then the next layer would be fathers, okay?

[8:40] This leads us to become good fathers. So, what it means is, this is just a brief definition. It means to impart our Heavenly Father's love for us to sons in the same way that we have received it, okay?

There's a responsibility that we have. It's a weighty one. So, the problem we're going to get into, the problem is there's sin in the world, okay?

And sin derails and corrupts our design and our relationship and our communion with our Creator. It disrupts it. And we see this right away in Genesis 3, okay?

Before we go to Genesis 3, I want to kind of reiterate. In 1 Samuel chapter 30, verse 22, it talks about worthless men.

So, this is a thing that the Bible says, it's a possibility that you could be a worthless man. You could be worthless. This is a thing. This is, it's really brash and it's very kind of in your face, but the Bible, God's Word, says that this is a thing.

[9:42] We can be worthless men if we're not careful. So, we don't want to be worthless men. We want to fulfill our calling, okay? So, sin.

Sin corrupts us. We're going to look at, we're going to look at Genesis chapter 3, verses 7 through 13. So, again, sin and the fall corrupted our relationship with God.

And, man, we lost our, in the fall, we lost our identity and our sense of value and purpose. And we were left with the shame of our inadequacy.

That's what we were left with in the fall. We're left with shame, okay? And we don't know what to do with it. Unless we, unless we look back to His Word, right?

So, I'm just going to, I'm going to read, I'm going to read this section of Scripture here in Genesis 3, because I'm going to kind of keep going back to it and referencing it as the whole time we talk, okay?

[10:43] So, and this is what it says. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

And then, and they heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, Where are you? And he said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked.

So, remember back in the beginning, they were naked and unashamed before sin, before the fall.

They were naked and unashamed. But now we see sin corrupts this relationship, right?

It says, I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself. And he said, and God said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree which I have commanded you not to eat?

[11:51] And the man said, The woman you gave me to be with me, she gave me the fruit of the tree, and I ate. And the Lord said to the woman, What is this that you have done?

The woman said, The serpent deceived me, and I ate. Okay? We're dodging responsibility. That's another topic we're going to talk about man is responsible. I'm not going to get into that. But we see that right away.

Okay? And this is kind of, the thing about Genesis 3, it's really, there's a lot of, this is deep. There's a lot of insight into human nature, who we are.

We were born into Adam. Right? We were born into sin. Okay? So, basically, what we're going to look at is we're going to look at the difference between orphan heart spiritual slavery.

So, an orphan heart, it's a spiritual slavery. There's a spiritual slavery that we're, by default, what sin is caused. We're going to look at that versus a heart of sonship.

[12:52] A servant heart of sonship. Okay? So, we're going to get into some characteristics of an orphan heart. Okay?

So, Adam and Eve, and us, in our nature, in our flesh, we were tempted to doubt God's goodness. If you think about this. So, God laid it out in the garden, and then the enemy comes and tempts.

Basically, it says, it caused, another prescription, John 8, 44, it caused the devil, Satan, the father of lies, i.e., a counterfeit father.

So, they believed the father of lies. They believed this lie. And one of the things that's kind of baked into this lie is that God is, God is actually withholding dead from you.

He doesn't, he's actually withholding something. And he, he lies to them. And he says, nope, you can actually be like God. You don't need to glorify God. You can, you can be like God.

[13:53] You can live for your own glory. Right? And so, baked into this, like I said, there's a subtle lie, an accusation of God's goodness.

So, getting into it, the result of believing the father of lies is all kinds of confusion about our identity, who we are, and what our purpose is.

And there's all kinds of shame. We try and cover us, cover ourselves up. So, I want to kind of share a little bit of a, um, personal, personal kind of experience. So, I, for, I don't know how many years, a good chunk of my life, probably, maybe 17 to like 22 or so, about five years, I lived in a spirit of orphan thinking.

I lived in this, because I believed this lie. I actually believed that God wasn't good. I did. And the ramifications of this, the implications of this, were absolutely terrible. Like, um, I did not believe God was good.

So, my mom died when I was seven years old, okay? And, I kind of, at the time, I didn't really, you know, whatever, just kind of going, going through the most of whatever.

[15:04] Well, it kind of fleshed out, by the time I came of age, to start making my own decisions, I, I had bitterness in my heart towards God. I did not believe He was good. It was like, you know, I didn't understand why He took my mom.

But, here's the thing about, here's the thing about this. It's very important to take what the Bible says, and expect what, take God's promises, and expect them to be true. So, He, God never promises understanding, right?

In, in, in, in relation to hardship, necessarily. But, He does promise peace, that surpasses understanding. And then He says, that peace, that He promises, will guard our hearts.

It'll guard our hearts, and our minds, okay? Very, very crucial, very, very important point here.

Because, our hearts, and our minds, need, to be guarded, from the Father of Lies.

And, we need peace with God. This is what we need. So, it was a corrupted. So, I didn't understand why He took my mom. I didn't understand why, a few other things, you know, that cause shame, and guilt, and condemnation, things happen.

[16:17] Sin happens. Hurt people, hurt people, right? So, sin, is a thing. And, people are sinners. And, people sin against us. And, we don't know why.

We don't understand why. But, God promises peace. Okay? Very important. Expectations are everything, right?

You expect God to give you, perfect understanding of why He does everything He does, and allows, that's our problem. That's the problem of expectations. He'd never promised, but He did promise peace.

Okay? So, anyway, this leads to, confusion, confusion, about who we are, and our purpose. So, we try, what do we do with this inadequacy?

What do we do with this shame? By default, we try and cover up. Our go-to, is to cover up, in pride, and, we try to clothe ourselves, with, you name it.

[17:14] I mean, there's so many, the list is endless. So, we see this, I'm not going to go back into it, a whole bunch, but, a lot of it, if you want to study this, again, Genesis 3, but we see, man and his wife, hit themselves, from the presence of, of God.

Okay? They hid. They hid. You hide, and then you well up in pride, and you try and cover your inadequacy, you try and cover your shame, by yourself. And, the thing is, that's an impossibility.

You can't. We cannot cover, our shame by ourselves, because we're sinners. Okay? We need another. We need another to cover us. This is what we need.

We need a bad. Okay? So, we, well, I mean, there's all kinds of examples. We withdraw from things that expose us. We pull back from, we withdraw from things that expose our inadequacies.

We isolate or distance ourselves, and close ourselves off to other people. We say, you know, if they actually find out who I am, they're not going to love me.

[18:17] If they knew who I was, they knew this about me, they'll reject me. So, I've got to hide. I've got to pride. I've got to try and cover up. This is what we do, by default.

We escape to sports. We escape to games, hunting, work, alcohol, drugs, whatever this, one of my problems is basically, I had this reality. I had this weight of inadequacy and sin, and I knew I wasn't, I was God.

I knew it. I knew it. So, what did I do? I ran into drugs. I literally said, my reality made me very uncomfortable. I didn't like my reality. I knew, I was under the wrath of God.

I was living under the law. The law is a schoolmaster. It exposes our sin. It exposes our inadequacy. Right? Well, what did I do? I was like, I don't like this feeling.

I got to just run around, try and fuck. Anything. Take this feeling away. Whatever. So, I became comfortably numb. I used substance. I mean, comfortable, quote unquote, comfortably numb, right?

[19:17] Substance. Running from my reality. You can run down high at the end of the day. Like, I was not sober for years. I mean, there's, anyway. Well, that's exhausting.

Sin brings, unbelievable pain. And it, every time, sin over promises and under delivers every single time.

There's a, we're left with a hole in our hearts. A void. Okay? We need that communion. The only thing that satisfies, the only thing that comforts, truly comforts, is a great relationship with our Heavenly Father.

Okay? This is what it is. And I've lived for years of my life under this. Okay? So, shame. There's sin. There's this problem. Okay? We look for counterfeit affections.

We look for passions. We look to pleasures. We look to possessions. We look to position, performance before other men. We look for relationships. We look to other people to fill this gap.

[20:17] Surprise, surprise doesn't work. It doesn't, and it's, it's temporary. It does not fulfill. Okay? So, but we're, we're still in that, we're just, this is baked into all of us.

And so, during this time, I love, I'm going to drink a water real quick. Um, I'm going to go to drink a water real quick. Um, during this time in my life, I'm living as an orphan.

Okay? I kind of idolized Bob Dylan for a long time. I wanted to be him essentially. So, I saw it fit for tonight to read a poem by Bob Dylan because I think he really beautifully describes it.

So, forgive me in advance because I might not make it without crying a little bit. but, that's what we're talking about, right?

Like, I don't, I'm fine being presented as weak because Christ is my strength. I don't care. Right?

He's, I'm, I'm secure in who I am in Christ. I'm, I'm a son now.

[21:14] Okay? But, the reason I get a little bit emotional on this poem is because it, it, um, kind of describes how I was living and, and, anyway, I'm going to get into it.

So, here we go. It's called Last Thoughts on Woody Guthrie. Some of you probably heard it. Have you read this, Adam? No? Alright, anyway. Alright, the poem's actually really long.

Way longer than would make sense to read. So, I've chopped it down to two pages. So, just stick with me. Just, just track with me. It's not that long.

They're short lines. Alright? Alright. When your head gets twisted and your mind grows numb.

When you think you're too old, too young, too smart, or too dumb. When you're lagging behind and you're losing your pace.

In a slow motion crawl of life's busy race. No matter what you're doing, if you start giving up, if the wind don't come to the top of your cup. The wind's got you sideways with one hand holding on and the other starts slipping and the feeling is gone.

[22:18] And your train engine fires and your train engine fire needs a new spark to catch it. And the wind's easy finding, but you're lazy to fetch it. And your sidewalk starts curling and the streets get too long.

And you start walking backwards, though you know that's wrong. And lonesome. Sorry. Sorry. Sorry.

Let me find my place. I gotta hit. And lonesome comes up as the day goes down and tomorrow's morning seems so far away and you feel the reins from your pony are slipping and your rope is a slide because your hands are dripping and your sun deck deserts and evergreen valleys turn to broken down slums and trash can alleys.

You need something to open your eyes. You need to make it, you need something to make it known that it's you and no one else that owns that spot that you're standing in, that space that you're sitting in, that the world ain't got you beat, that it ain't got you licked.

It ain't, it can't get you crazy no matter how many times you might get kicked. You need something special, alright? You need something special to give you hope but hope's just a word that maybe you said or maybe you heard on some windy corner around the wide-angle curve but that's what you need, man, you need it bad and your trouble is you know it too good because you're looking and you start getting the chills because you can't find it on a dollar bill and it ain't on Macy's windowsill and it ain't no rich kid's road map and it ain't no fat kid's fraternity house and you yell to yourself and you throw down your hat saying, Christ, do I gotta be like that?

[24:07] Ain't there no one here that knows where I'm at? Ain't there no one here that knows how I feel? Good God almighty, that stuff ain't real but that ain't your game, that ain't your race. You can't hear your name, you can't see your face, you gotta look some other place.

Where do you look for this hope that you're seeking? Where do you look for this lamp that's burning? Where do you look for this oil that's well gushing? Where do you look for this candle that's glowing?

Where do you look for this hope that you know is there and out there somewhere and your feet can only walk two down, walk down two kinds of roads and your eyes can only look through two kinds of windows.

Your nose can only smell two kinds of hallways. You can touch and twist and turn two kinds of doorknobs. You can either go to the church of your choice or you can go to Brooklyn State Hospital. You can find God in the church of your choice, you can find Woody Guthrie in the Brooklyn State Hospital. And though it's only my opinion, I know it may be right or wrong, you'll find them both in the Grand Canyon, sundown.

[25:13] So, basically what we see here is we see a vagabond. We see a hobo. He's identifying. He's got no place.

There's no place on earth where he's found to be home. Right? So, he's looking to Woody Guthrie. Okay? He idolized Woody Guthrie. I idolized him. I idolized Dylan.

We're looking. We know it. We know it's there. Okay? So, this is what he did. So, Dylan did. He idolized him. He's actually, I mean, Woody Guthrie was on his deathbed when he wrote it.

And he goes, I don't know if you guys have seen that new Dylan movie, he goes and visits him. But he's looking at Woody Guthrie for affirmation. We see Bob Dylan opens his heart up wide and he beautifully describes this void in his heart.

Right? What he needs, he needs sonship. Woody Guthrie doesn't have it. Okay? Nobody has it. Where do you look?

[26:10] Where do you look for this hope? So, um, in the day, no one can love us like God can. No one. All other loves are insufficient.

All other loves will not do it. Your wife's love is not going to satisfy. It's not enough. I one time watched this, uh, this YouTube video of, uh, this live performance of Whitney Houston singing, I will always love you.

And I'm like, it, something hit me about it. I just like, broke down weeping and tears. Man, that's powerful. You know, I will always love you.

God, it's incredible. Well, Whitney's dead. Okay? She, that's, that's temporary. Okay? That, that, that feeling, whatever feeling you get from temporary love, it's fading.

It's grass. It fades away. It's mist. It's not everlasting. We need an everlasting love. Okay? We need the rock of ages that was cleft for us. Okay?

[27:15] We need to hide ourselves under the wing. Okay? Of all sufficient God. Okay? Unconditional love. This is the way God loves us. Okay? Moving on. So, we fight.

We fight for this. We look for this everywhere. I mean, I'm kind of exhausting this orphan tendency. I'm exhausting this. We've kind of established a foundation here.

This is fleeting. You can look anywhere else. You can try and find your identity and your approval from men. It's not going to work. It's going to leave you still in the same spot.

It's going to leave you worse off. It left me in a bad spot, man. It left me bad. Basically, I got to the point where I'm like, all right, either this thing, this right relationship with my creator is a possibility or I literally don't care to carry on.

I'm ready to pull the plug in the whole thing. I literally was. So, anyway, that's what orphanhood does. That's what slavery does. I was a slave to sin. I had no power to stop sin.

[28:18] I needed another. I needed someone else to cover my shame. Not only cover my shame, but actually give me the power to walk in victory over my sin.

I can't do this. I'm not righteous. I need the righteousness of Christ. I'm going to move on. Yeah. This is the ripple effects of sin.

This is what believing the Father of Lies does. This is what gets us. Utter despair. Overpromised. Undelivered. Every time. Okay. We look to whatever.

We look to women. We look to pornography. We look to whatever it is. And then we feel bad about it. And then we try and cover it and run from it. We do everything under the sun. But it's not enough. It doesn't work. Okay. So, we're going to step into sonship. Okay. What does it mean to come into this right relationship with our Heavenly Father?

[29:16] What is this? Okay. Sin broke our relationship again. So, Matthew 3, 16 and 17. So, we see Jesus was baptized.

And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water. And behold, the heavens opened up to him. And he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him. And behold, a voice from heaven said, this is my beloved son with whom I am well pleased. Okay. Side note, important detail. Jesus hasn't done any miracles. He's not done, there's not any performance that earned this well-pleased disposition from the Heavenly Father.

This is the first account that we see Jesus show up on the scene in the Gospels. So, before he lived, I mean, he lived a sinless life.

[30:26] He was perfectly obedient in every way. He lived without sin. But there's something here to be said about he didn't, there's no, I think that's intentional. Right?

God the Father was well-pleased in his Son. They had perfect fellowship from the beginning of time to the end, Alpha and Omega. They had perfect fellowship with one another. And what Christ did on the cross, he came, lived the life we couldn't live on our behalf.

And they opened up and he gave us the right to become sons of God. He opened it up. Spirit of adoption. This is the spirit of adoption that adopts the orphan.

It sets the captives free. Okay? This is what Jesus has the ability to do in your lives. Okay? He can set you free from your besetting sin.

He can and will give you purpose. Okay? This is the power of God for the salvation of all who believe it. This is the Gospel. We have sinned. We've tried to cover up our own sin.

[31:28] We've tried to cover up our shame with anything and everything under the sun. And it leads to utter despair and restlessness. No peace.

Okay? No dignity. We need to be clothed by God with the dignity of sonship. Okay?

We need to be clothed by God with the dignity of sonship. Right after this we see the counterfeit father come in.

He goes out to the wilderness. His sonship is tested. Okay? Matthew 4 The devil says if you are the son of God command these stones to become loaves of bread.

He's been fasted for 40 days. Okay? Command these stones become loaves of bread. Jesus answered it is written.

[32:32] Okay? I'm not going to go through that whole scripture. The point here is we need to learn to answer the father of lies with truth.

Where is truth? Truth is absolute. I am the way the truth and the life. No one comes through the father except through me says Jesus speaking. Okay? We answer we silence the voice of the enemy the accuser that says you're not enough.

You'll never make it. You'll never add up to anything. You're nothing. You can't do it. How do we silence this? We silence it with the word of God. We counteract the lies with truth.

It is written. We need to get into our work. We need to know the word of God. There's power in the word of God. Okay? He can set us free from this. He invites us into this perfect fellowship.

John 15. It's one of my favorite verses. It's one of my all-time favorite verses. John 15. Jesus talks to the disciples. He says, Just as the Father has loved me, so I have loved you.

[33:39] Now remain in my love. And another part of the scripture he says, If you've seen me, you've seen the Father. I and the Father are one.

Okay? We need perfect love. Okay?

It says, Perfect love casts out all fear because fear has to do with punishment and the one that fears has not been perfected in love. Okay? Very, very important.

We need a revelation of God's love for us. Okay? It's His kindness that leads us to repentance.

Right? It's His kindness that leads us to repentance. Your masculinity comes from an unchanging, unconditional, loving Father.

Unconditionally loving Father. Okay? When God gave me a revelation of His love for me, I was undone. It was game, set, and match. I had confusion. I had all kinds of thoughts. Right? It was done. It was done. It was over.

I was running around. I moved to Mexico. I got caught up in, like I said, I got caught up in a bunch of crap. Just drugs. Trying to look here, there, and everywhere. And basically, I literally got to the point where I probably could have overdosed on cocaine.

[34:42] Probably. I tried a few times. Kind of. Not intentionally, but I did not care. I didn't have, I didn't value my life. I didn't know why I should because I didn't have the value of, I didn't know my worth.

I forgot I was created in the Mijics God. I lost sight. Right? I lost sight of this. It drove me to the ground and hard. Okay? I moved to Mexico.

I'm like, all right, I'm trying to do all this good stuff for you. I moved to the ministry. I'm like, I had a bunch of street kids. I'm like, I had this idea. All right, God, I'm doing all this good stuff.

Where's the warm and fuzzy feelings? Where are they at? Like, look, can't you see everything I'm doing for you? I'm doing all this stuff. Look. Check it out. Look what I did. And it's like, nope.

You can't do anything on your own accord. We can do nothing to merit and deserve God's love.

Nothing. It's actually, the Bible says, filthy rags.

[35:41] Our attempts to be righteous on our own, apart from Christ, filthy rags. He's disgusting. So it drove me. I got to the point. I was sneaking out. I was sneaking out. I was still an addict. I was sneaking out. I was saying, I'm walking the dog.

Oh, I'm going to go walk the dog. Slam 240. It's in 20 minutes. 240 up here. Slam. Come back.

Pass out. Whatever. I had a problem. I had a heart problem. You can change your externals, but until we let God change our hearts, we're going to get the same ourselves.

There you are. Wherever you go, there you are. Right? So, I got to the point where I was about to roll. I was looking at flights. I was going to go back to Madison. I was like, what am I doing? I'm drinking with a dog then. I got friends that needs to do this.

Like back in Madison. I'm looking at flights and doing dishes after dinner, having a conversation with the pastor's daughter.

Not going to go into all of that. Anyway, Lord used her in that season to speak to me a prophetic word. I believe it was a prophetic word that I needed to hear. She basically prophesied over me.

[36:43] Basically said, this is, she actually challenged my character as a man. She actually challenged my character and it was exactly what I needed. It was a time and season.

She challenged my character as a man. Oh, you're going up, she goes, you're going up a mountain, right? You get to a point where it's hard, right? Are you the type of man that gives up? You're just going to give up, throw in the towel, give up?

There's a summit at the top of the mountain. There's a summit. She's prophesied. She says, for no plans I have for you, declare us, Lord. Probs me not to harm you. Plans to give you a hope in the future. Are you a man that gives up?

All right? It says, if you seek him, you'll find him. If you seek him with all your heart. She prophesied over me, prayed over me. And I'm like, okay, is this true, God? Is what she's just said true about me? Could that be true for me too?

So I go up on the roof down there. I got these flat roofs. I go up on the roof and I'm calling out to the Lord and he just totally reveals his love to me. I'm calling out, is this true? It's just, Michael, he just met me where I was at.

[37:41] I've known you. I've loved you with an everlasting love. I love you through this. I love you. She kind of showed me pictures. I knit you together in your mother's womb. You thought I wasn't there. I was there the whole time. I had a picture.

There was a picture of my mom was getting raised. Her casket was going on into the ground.

Funerals. It happened to me on my seventh birthday. I had a picture of Christ holding me as a seven-year-old boy weeping over me.

He was there. He is there. He's not absent. He is not an absent father. He is very much here. He loves us with an everlasting love. He spoke over me.

I was there. I was loving you then. I'm loving you now and I'll never leave you or forsake you. That's what he said. And it was game, set, and match. It was done. I was like, okay. All right. That's it. A few months later, whatever. Fast forward, then I moved to Kansas City and all that. But anyway, we need to revelation to God's love for us. He loves us. Unconditionally. While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

[38:39] Okay? And he invites us into sonship. He invites us into fellowship. Perfect fellowship with him. Okay? Sonship. We need sonship.

We need to know who we are in Christ. We need to know. He gives us dignity. This is my son in whom I am well pleased. Christ in us is our only hope of glory.

Okay? That's it. It's Christ in us. Okay. I'm going to talk a little bit more about the fruit of a sonship heart, spirit of sonship.

Okay? So sons are accepted in the son. Okay? Fruit of sonship makes secure men. It makes us secure in who we are. Not by anything, not because we've done anything good.

This is not performance. It's because of what Christ has done. And only that we are secure in his love. Okay? He makes us emotionally stable.

[39:40] Our wives, people around us need to be, they need us to be emotionally stable. We need to be stable men. We don't need to be tossed to and fro. The only way that we have stability or we'll ever get stability is by coming into right relationship with the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and end.

Okay? He's unchanging. He is constant. Nothing else in this world is constant. It's all fluid. It's here for a minute. It's gone.

It gives you fleeting hope. It gives you fleeting pleasure. Whatever you think is going to make you happy or fulfill you, apart from Christ, it's a lie. It really is. It just is. And it's unreliable.

Let's say, let's do a thought experiment. Let's say you perform perfectly all the goals and all the things in your heart that you have, all of your ambitions, everything. Let's say you succeed perfectly. You get the trophy wife. You get the million dollar house. You get the whatever. You get the salary. whatever. You're going to die. Okay?

[40:52] Not even your life is reliable. It says we need to learn to number our days and gain a heart of wisdom. Not another guarantee, not a day, not one more day is guaranteed.

Nothing is guaranteed. What is guaranteed is if we remain under the wrath of God with unrepentant hearts, we will rightly be under the wrath of God and separated from His presence.

That's a guarantee. That's reliable. That is a reliable truth. Another reliable truth is that we have been given the opportunity to be adopted into His kingdom, into His family.

Okay? everlasting, unchanging love, new identity as sons secure in who we are in Christ. Amen.