

Acts 18:24-19:20

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- [0 : 0 0] The following sermon is from Grace and Peace Church in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Grace and Peace is a new church that exists for the glory of God and the good of the northeast suburbs of Hamilton Place, Collegedale, and Ottawa.
- You can find help more by visiting gracepeacechurch.org. Our God, it is a beautiful day.
- Today, I was just reminded of that as I was outside. It was cool outside. The birds chirping. It's beautiful sunshine. It's a day that reminds us of new life.
- And in our culture, we celebrate mothers on this day and we're thankful for them. We give you praise for the kind of nurture that many of us had from our mothers.
- We give you praise that they were often the ones who saw the best in us, even when we didn't see that. They were consistent many times.
- [1 : 0 7] A consistent gift from you. They mirrored the nurture that you have. The Bible all over the place uses feminine language to describe you, our God.
- Because you are men and women are both made in your image. You are the fullness of what it means to be a man. The fullness of what it means to be a woman. The fullness of what mothering looks like.
- And so, in our mothers, we knew something of you. But we also live in a fallen and a sinful world. And we realize that that wasn't the story for many people.
- For many of our friends, their mothers have passed. And there's a hole that is left for many of them. For some of them, we pray for those who have been orphaned emotionally or physically by their mothers.
- For those mothers who feel like they have failed in their mothering. And for them, today, it feels shameful. For those who have a strained relationship with their mother or their children.
- [2 : 1 4] For women who have an abortion in their history and that haunts them. Father, we lift up all of those for whom this day is difficult. As a reminder that we serve a God who both grants the gifts of grace that we see.
- But is also the one who brings redemption in the midst of our difficulties. And so, Lord, we pray that you would make us people that could follow your nurturing heart.
- For our neighbors and our families. Whatever our situations are. That we would reflect your heart. Even if we have not had the opportunity to be a mother. And we long for that.
- We pray that we might be those who follow your heart for people. That we would honor one another. Even as we honor mothers today. So, Lord, we ask that of you.
- And we pray that you would help us. In Christ's name. Amen. Okay. All right. I wanted to look at, continue on in our series looking at the book of Acts.
- [3 : 2 0] And we've been talking about the story of the early church being born in the book of Acts. We're looking at Acts chapter 19 today. And this is actually kind of a longish passage.
- Which I'm going to read all of. And there's a point to it being long. We have seen a number of stories where Paul is out planting churches.

And he'll be in some city where he's preaching the gospel. And there's a riot. Or some sort of pushback or attack. This is the longest of those kinds of stories in Acts.

It's also, there's a point to it. For Luke, this is kind of a central story. It sets up, in fact, in some ways, it is kind of the climax of Paul's ministry in Asia Minor, in Turkey.

So, let me read this passage for us. So, Acts 19, starting at verse 21. Now, after these events, Paul resolved in the Spirit to pass through Macedonia and Achaia.

[4 : 22] That's Greece, is Achaia. And go back to Jerusalem, saying, after I've been there, meaning Jerusalem, I must also see Rome. There's foreshadowing there.

If you're in middle school literature, foreshadowing. You just learned that, I'm sure. And there's foreshadowing here. Luke is telling us where the rest of the story is going to go. It's all about Paul going to Rome.

Verse 22. And having sent into Macedonia two of his helpers, Timothy and Erastus, he himself stayed in Asia for a while. About that time, there arose no little disturbance concerning the way.

For a man named Demetrius, a silversmith who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in no little business to the craftsmen. These he gathered together with the workmen of similar trades and said, Men, you know that from this business we have our wealth.

And you see and hear that only in Ephesus, not only in Ephesus, but in almost all of Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods.

[5 : 32] And there is danger, not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence.

She whom all Asia and the world worship. When they heard this, they were enraged and were crying out, Great is Artemis of the Ephesians! So the city was filled with the confusion.

And they rushed together into the theater, dragging with them Gaius and Aristarchus, Macedonians who were Paul's companions in travel.

And when Paul wished to go in among the crowd, the disciples would not let him. And even some of the Asiarchs who were friends of his, Asiarchs were like local leaders kind of thing. They came from kind of the upper classes.

Who were friends of his, sent to him and urging him not to venture into the theater. Some cried out one thing, some another, for the assembly was in confusion. And most of them did not know why they had come together.

[6 : 36] Some of the crowd prompted Alexander, among whom the Jews had put forward. And Alexander, motioning with his hand, wanted to make a defense to the crowd.

But when they recognized that he was a Jew, for about two hours they all cried out with one voice, Great is Artemis of the Ephesians! And when the town clerk had quieted the crowd, he said, Men of Ephesus, who is there who does not know that this city of the Ephesians is temple keeper of the great Artemis and of the sacred stone that fell from the sky.

Seeing then that these things cannot be denied, you ought to be quiet and do nothing rash. For you have brought these men here who are neither sacrilegious nor blasphemers of our goddess.

If therefore Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against anyone, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. Let them bring charges against one another. But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly.

For we really are in danger of being charged with rioting today, since there is no cause that we can give to justify this commotion. And when he said these things, he dismissed the assembly.

[7 : 53] Amen. That's God's word for us. Okay, there is a lot going on in this passage. I kind of came up with about three different sermons that we could talk about, which would be horribly boring for all of you, so I'm not going to do that.

There's just a lot here. I want to simply spend our time looking at the riot. And this kind of city-wide freakout that happens with the people in Ephesus.

It's kind of comforting to see that another culture has these freakouts sometimes. You know, we've seen a little bit of that in our country over the last year. But the reality is, is that all of us from time to time have some sort of freakout.

In fact, the last year, I imagine with the kind of anxiety and fear and isolation that all of us have been living through, you might have seen one or more of your own kind of irrational freakouts in your own life.

And so, here's what I want you to see. I want you to see what is going on in this scenario. So, here's what we'll look at. We'll look at why they freaked out in Ephesus.

[9 : 03] Why in the world are they rioting? Secondly, what that reveals, not just about them, but about us. What it says about our hearts.

And then third, how the truth of the gospel of Jesus frees us for a truer life. So, why did they freak out? What does that reveal about us? And then how do we deal with that?

Okay? That's what we want to look at. Okay. So, why did they freak out? Well, the riot started with this guy named Demetrius. He was some sort of a large employer or a contractor for these influential silver workers in the city.

They made these small little silver statues. Actually, they were replicas of the temple to Artemis that was kind of at the center of the city.

It was one of the seven wonders of the world. And they made these little silver replicas. And it actually, they found terracotta versions of these little replicas. You can't find silver versions because silver was so valuable that they would melt it down and use it for other things once they were done with it.

[10 : 11] And Ephesus was famous for this. This was a central trade in Ephesus. And these guys had a lot of influence because of the worship of Artemis.

So, the worship of Artemis was part of their identity as a city. And their jobs played into that identity as a city. Their identity was deeply rooted.

In fact, we could call their identity an idolatry. More than just the statues that they might have worshipped or the fake goddess that they might have worshipped.

Yes, that's idolatry. But there was something deeply rooted about their identity that we could also call idolatry. And so, you see that idolatry in their identity because of how threatened they get.

And how they begin to freak out and riot. There's three threats to them. Let me just walk through these. The first one is, and you see this in Demetrius' argument and the argument that the crowd is having.

[11 : 14] The first one is financial stability. Okay, so the argument that they made is that, okay, if Paul and these Christians continue to grow, people are going to stop buying silver Artemis replicas.

And apparently they were familiar enough with the kinds of things that Paul was saying that they knew that this was a danger. You remember back in chapter 17, Paul actually said, that we ought not to think of the divine being as like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of men.

Paul had been in Ephesus for three years teaching and planting this church. They no doubt had heard him talking about this. Word was getting around and business was drying up for them.

And they were in danger of losing not just their financial security, but what went along with their profession.

Because of their profession and the kind of central financial security it gave them, it gave them this social standing in the city. And that was what was at risk, was their social standing because of their finances.

[12 : 26] It's idolatry. The second thing, so financial stability, bringing social status. The second thing is that they would, at risk for them, was the actual Artemis religion.

The actual idolatry that they were participating in. So here's what you need to know about Artemis. Artemis in Latin is called Diana. That's what she was in the Roman mythology.

But in Greece, Artemis was, in their imagination, was the daughter of Zeus. And she was believed to be like the founder and the protector of their city.

Her image was put on all the coins that they used in the area. And people talked about her as their own personal protector. You know?

Maybe like a St. Christopher or something like that. In fact, she was thought to have authority over all supernatural powers. And her name, Artemis, comes from this Greek word that means safe and sound.

[13 : 30] So you could literally say that in the worship of this fake goddess, people found themselves to feel as though they were safe in a world that is unpredictable and troubled.

Their own sense of comfort and well-being in the world. That's what makes sense of the fact that these people riot, that they freak out. It's because they were really threatened by this.

The entire city poured out into the streets and were yelling. They're screaming. They end up going into the arena or the theater in Ephesus, which held probably about 25,000 people.

And then they spent two hours chanting, Great is Artemis of the Ephesians. Now, I love going to soccer matches. I went to, when we lived in San Antonio, I went to a number of U.S. Mexico, like national games.

And they were amazing. And people cheered. That's the best part about going to soccer games, is the way that people cheer. Nobody screamed for two hours straight. The same thing.

[14 : 31] And that's what they're doing here. See, there was such a deep identification between Ephesus and what they worshipped. Artemis was Ephesus.

So if Artemis was threatened in some way, that meant that who they were as a people was threatened. For them to be okay in the world, they had to preserve that sense of identity.

Okay? So financial security, Artemis religion. The third threat that you can see is this political stability. So this city official steps up.

And he's like trying to calm the crowd. I kind of imagine one of those Scottish lords in Braveheart, one of the bad guys who's kind of constantly like, guys, guys, it's not that big a deal.

You don't need to freak out. I'm just going to go, you know, over to the king and get, you know, get stuff for me. And that's kind of what's happening here, is he steps up to quiet the crowd, but he actually contradicts Demetrius.

[15 : 35] He looks up, he talks, he says, you know, Paul and all these Christians, they're not that big a deal. You know, we know that they're, you know, Artemis is not in danger. She's like this eternal goddess.

There's no problem here. He kind of minimizes the danger. He says that there's actually a greater danger. That the greater danger was what was happening with the riots, because if they kept up this rioting, here's what was going to happen.

Rome was going to treat them the way that they treated every uncivilized city out there. They were going to send in the Roman legions and Ephesus would lose its freedom and its reputation as being a civilized city.

You know, it was the chief city of Asia Minor. They were in danger of losing that kind of credibility and loyalty to Rome. And so for him, it was important to maintain the city's reputation.

He didn't really care all that much what sort of challenges the Christians made to their local culture. They needed to continue to be important. So those are the three things that were threatening the people of Ephesus.

[16 : 49] Financial stability, Artemis religion, political stability. And see, when those things were threatened, here's the key point of all that. When all of that was threatened, the people freaked out.

They went crazy. Because that's what idols do. Idolatry promises that it can give you a life where you will be okay.

If you just have this thing, then life is going to be okay for you. And when that thing then is threatened, you feel like life is going to spin out of control now.

I don't know what's going to happen. And so people, most of the time, freak out. That's the root of those freak outs. So that's the first thing.

That's why they were freaking out. The second thing is, what does that say about us? What does that reveal about us? Well, here's why I said that you could preach multiple sermons on this passage.

[17 : 52] Do you see how there's this interesting interplay between what's happening in the individual people? Demetrius, you know, he's feeling threatened. His financial security is at stake.

But that begins to get played out society-wide. There's this interesting interplay between the individual idolatry and social and society-wide idolatries.

It's really important to see that the things in your individual heart can often come out on a societal level. You know, we can see this as our entire society in the U.S.

We can see that as subsets, you know, Chattanooga or the South or even the church or even a subset of the church, evangelicals, Presbyterians.

We could say it this way. When we freak out publicly and rally around certain causes or certain people or certain ideas, what you can see is that they will very often reveal very particular idols that are deeply rooted in all of our hearts together.

[19 : 10] Now, that's worth an entire sermon and discussion, which I don't want to do today. I want to actually focus away from the corporate, the society-wide, and I want to just dial right into our hearts.

But I want you to see that that's there. When you begin to look closely at your own soul and your own freakouts, what you'll start to see is you'll begin to see these connections between your own rioting and your heart.

I've seen this countless times in my own life, in my own soul. One time, we used to have a dog named Finn. We now have a dog named Sawyer, Finn and Sawyer.

And Finn died a couple of years ago. But I used to absolutely freak out about Finn when he was a younger dog. And I think that was really confusing for my family and for me in some ways.

I mean, I would like, flew off the handle a number of times with this dog. And it was, I remember the day, though, that I put together why this dog was driving me crazy other than just being a dog who lives in a house.

[20 : 36] I thought for the history of the world, we've been trying to build houses to get away from animals. And now we decide we have these beautiful houses. Why don't we bring animals inside? Which doesn't make sense to me.

But we have dogs because my family likes dogs. Anyway, but I had an irrational freak out about Finn. And I couldn't figure out what it was until finally one day I realized. So we bought Finn around the time that we moved into a new house.

We were living in Austin, Texas. And we had bought this house. We planned for this to be our kind of long-term house. We thought we'd stay there a couple of decades, raise our kids there. That was two houses ago.

Plans of Men. And we did this major renovation on this house. I mean, almost everything got touched. And as a part of that renovation, we did this massive landscaping project.

And as part of that, I had built this kind of side, you know, dog run area. And had this new fence put in. And it was super nice. I was very proud of all the work that we had done.

[21 : 42] And within a week of Finn hanging out in that dog yard, he had torn the fence down. He dug up and torn this fence down. And I lost it.

Lost it. And a couple of hours after things settled down in our house, I realized that what was underneath there had a lot more to do with me than it had to do with the dog.

I could have blamed it on the stress about my job and the stress about the house renovation. All of that was true, and I could have blamed it on that. But that wasn't the root of it.

There was something deeper. I was finally able to articulate to Natalie that what really set me off was a sense of threat. I had internalized this conglomerate image of what it meant to be a good husband and a good father and a manager, a homeowner.

You know? That one of the markers that I would be able to show my maturity is by handling my money well, by handling my stuff well, by caring for the house.

[22 : 55] That, you know, I thought that we'd grown up, we'd bought a big boy house. I thought I was going to be a big boy. And all of a sudden, this dog is threatening my status as a big boy, as a man.

I mean, the dog was threatening my manhood at that moment. And it took a lot for me to actually see that. That might seem obvious to my wife that that was going on, but it took a lot for me to see that.

And for me, there was a sense of fragility. If I couldn't even control what was happening in my house, how would I be able to control the harder things of the world?

And I felt super threatened. I took a good image of what it means to be a responsible homeowner, a responsible husband and father, and I built it into this identity that I was responsible to maintain at all times.

I was going to be okay so long as my house and my marriage and my kids and our world was okay. As long as I made that okay.

[24 : 03] And when that image was threatened, I freaked out. And you know what that's called? Idolatry. Taking a good thing, it's good to manage your house well.

But I linked that to my identity. I made it an ultimate thing. And that's idolatry. That's exactly what that looks like. And the reality is, is that each of you have in your own ways bought into various forms of 21st century American, you know, values in such a way that you have elevated them to a very center part of your own identity.

If you, you will be okay if you have these things in your life. And if you don't, then you will be filled with fear and anxiety and anger.

And you might just find yourself in a stadium yet screaming for two hours. You might just freak out. Let me just give you a few examples. See if any of these things touch you.

The academic or athletic success of your children. your body looking or feeling a certain way.

[25 : 21] Taking Insta-worthy vacations. Not just a vacation, but a vacation that you would want to share with people. Having a beautiful home that is well decorated.

That your sexual desires are fulfilled. that you deserve to be happy. That you have the image of the perfect wife or mother or father or husband fill in the blank.

That there's a number in your bank account that makes you feel safe. Feeling that you deserve to have comfort in your life.

feeling that you deserve to have your children be happy with you. Feeling that you deserve to have fun.

You know, I could go on because I know all of these things. They rest in my soul and I know that they rest, some of them rest in yours. Some of you are clinging so tightly to one or two of these images for your own life that it is you are freaking out.

[26 : 42] Whether anybody else sees it or not, inside your soul you are crushed with anxiety and fear because you brought into the same, you brought into some of these and it reveals, it's revealed in your freak outs.

Find your freak outs and follow the trail back to your heart. Okay, why did they freak out in Ephesus? What does that say about us?

And third, how do we deal with this? How does the gospel help us with this? Well, the gospel of Jesus is so good. It's so good because the Christians were the focus of this riot in Ephesus.

And what was interesting is that the riot kind of proceeds without really hardly any interaction with the Christians at all. I mean, they seem to rough up a couple of guys.

Paul wants to go in and everybody keeps him away. But what's being revealed is that this wasn't really about their anger about the Christians at all.

[27 : 50] It was about their hearts. See, Paul was already dealing with the idolatry of the hearts of his people in Ephesus at this time.

That's part of the reason I had you look at the 1 Corinthians passage. So I want you to take a look at that 1 Corinthians passage. Paul wrote the letter of 1 Corinthians from Ephesus.

So during the time where all of this is going on, what you can hear or read what is on Paul's mind that he's no doubt teaching the Ephesians as well as teaching the Corinthians.

And I just want to, I want you to see a couple of things from this passage. We're just going to look at the end of this. Verse 26. I'm going to actually break it up into three little things that I want you to see here.

So look at this. Verse 26. For consider your calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise according to worldly standards. Not many were powerful. Not many were of noble birth.

[28 : 54] I mean, how about that for a compliment? I mean, you guys weren't a whole lot when I found you. How's that for encouragement? What Paul is saying, he's giving us that in the gospel a radical humility gets developed.

Okay? See, Paul went and he gathered this church of regular folks. People who are of every kind of socioeconomic stripe, every kind of place that they're coming from.

We know that the poor were attracted to Paul's work, but we also know the rich. The Asiarchs we read about during the riot. They were the rich and the powerful. So Paul is talking to all kinds of people and he's saying who they really are.

You really are weak. You really aren't all that impressive. Paul says that about himself, but he also says that about them.

Paul's point in saying that was not to like criticize them. His point was to say that your identity, the identity of his people was not in their financial status or in their financial stability, in their social status.

[30 : 09] He was tearing down. He had already been at work tearing down the first idol that we saw of the Ephesians, financial stability. He's already entering in this radical humility.

See, the process of getting free of our idols begins with telling the truth about who we really are. It begins with repentance.

You see, we have to be able to recognize and repent of and turn away from all of the images and expectations that we have that fill our minds.

We have to name them. We have to refuse the lie of them. See, humility, we have to have the humility in saying that we cannot and we will not build our identity on anything else outside of Christ.

So humility is the place to start. Paul is the most, you know, Paul is the guy who will tell you exactly how weak he is. It's one of his calling cards.

[31 : 17] He's not attempting to impress you and he doesn't expect anybody else to. So that's the first thing. There's a radical humility. The second thing is that there's a radical clarity that he shows.

Let me keep reading. But, but God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise. God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong.

God chose what is low and despised in the world, even the things that are not, to bring about the things that, to bring to nothing things that are so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.

God. See, Paul was saying that's okay that you're weak. It's okay that you're sinful, that you have to repent of all kinds of things because God is at work in you.

And in fact, did you catch the repetition there? Three times Paul repeats something. Did you see it? Verse 27, God chose. Next sentence, God chose.

[32 : 22] Verse 28, God chose. Do you see the distinction here? For the Ephesians, Artemis had, Artemis' reputation, who held up Artemis' reputation?

Who was in charge of making sure that Artemis kept getting worshipped? The people. Do you see who's in charge of God's reputation?

God Himself. It is God who is the actor here. God chose you, weak and foolish to shame the wise and the powerful and the strong.

God chose to enter in by His Son to bring about redemption in you. God chose to humble Himself so that He might lift up His people. It is God Himself who is upholding His own reputation in this world.

We can say this with the greatest humility and greatest confidence in the world. God doesn't need you. Not one of you. He doesn't need me.

[33 : 26] God is by Himself upholding and furthering His own power and His own glory in this world. God is achieving His own purposes in this world.

And you know what God's great delight is? To use you and to use me. But He's not waiting on us. God is waiting on us.

There's a radical difference and a radical clarity about who God is when we compare that to the Ephesians. And what that means is that everything in your life right now is exactly the way that God has designed it to be.

That doesn't mean He'll stay that way. There may be lots of problems. It doesn't mean your problems are going to be there forever. But it does mean that God has chosen to put you in this place right now.

There's a radical clarity that goes with what Paul is talking about here in the Gospel. Okay. A radical humility. A radical clarity. And then third, a radical security.

[34 : 34] Look at this. This is amazing. Totally amazing. Verse 30. And because of Him, because of God, because He has chosen, you are in Christ who became to us wisdom from God.

He became righteousness and sanctification and redemption so that as it is written, let the one who boasts boast in the Lord. That because of the work of God, you are freed from trying to meet your own internal idolatrous expectations that you have placed on yourself.

You no longer have to achieve an identity in this world. You can receive something better. You can receive because of the work of God righteousness and sanctification and redemption.

That is what God is giving to you. That's amazing. You no longer have to freak out because your identity is at risk.

What Paul is saying is your identity is not at risk. It can never be at risk because God has accomplished an identity for you and has given it to you.

[35 : 56] You don't have to go to try to figure it out. Okay. I want to put a little flesh on this. How does that actually work out in our real lives?

This process of repentance, radical humility, a radical clarity about who God is and a radical confidence and security because of what He's done.

How do we actually live that out? Can we put some flesh on it? You know, it's Mother's Day. Why don't we put this into that weird ball of feelings that we all have about our mothers?

Most of it good. We love you mothers. But it's complicated. It was complicated with your mom. We know it was. How do we put that into that frame and let it free us from our deep idolatries?

That idolatry to have or to be the perfect mother. Well, here it is. There's a radical humility because none of us is or has the perfect mother.

[37 : 06] No one does. You may write a card that says that you're the perfect mother but you don't believe it because it's not true and that's okay. That's okay.

As much as we love them and as much as we are thankful there is not a perfect mother out there. The moms that you admire and the ones that you aspire to be like the ones that you appreciate have all their own flaws as well.

And it's okay to be realistic about that. It's okay to love someone who isn't perfect. Because don't you want to be loved that way?

Don't you want to be known for who you really are? Even in your imperfections and loved anyway? That's how God loves us. Because in our humility He sees us for exactly who we are and He shows it to us and He loves us anyway.

So there's that radical humility. But there's clarity because God is with each of us. Each of our mothers. See, every single mother is exactly the mother that God has designed them to be.

[38 : 19] Your mother is exactly what God wanted you to have in a mother. You as a mother are exactly the mother to your children that your children need because of God's design.

If you are not a mother yet, it is because God has not wanted you to be that yet. you lack nothing because of the failures of your mother.

Your children lack nothing because of your failures because God is not outside of our pain and our circumstances. God, three times here, Paul says, God chose to do it this way.

God is in the very center of your most tender places. God is at the very center of the pain in your life. God has not withheld himself from you.

He has entered in to the very places where you need him most. There's clarity. And finally, there's stability, there's radical security because the promise is is that God is going to show up and bring his glory and goodness and redemption in the midst of your own mother story.

[39 : 45] You see, what Paul is doing here, what Paul is saying is, is in the very place where you feel like it is broken and it doesn't match your own internal expectations, the very place where your idol has failed you, the idol of the perfect being or having the perfect mother and that has failed your soul, that is the very place where God himself shows up to bring about the redemption that you really need.

That's where he meets your heart to give you what your mother could never give you. That's where he comes in and transforms the idol that you have there into something beautiful.

You see, God is at work most in your most broken places. And that's not what we believe. What we believe is we've got to go out and achieve for ourselves an identity.

We've got to go figure life out so that we can present to the world and to God that things are okay, that I'm not that needy and what God says is, I know better. I know exactly where you need me.

And I'm not going to allow you to live with these idolatrous expectations anymore. What you see in God's grace with this riot, this riot revealed exactly what was going on in the Ephesians hearts.

[41 : 18] Every one of your freakouts, whether it's you getting angry and blowing up like me, or whether it's crumbling into a puddle like some of you, it's in that place that God reveals your heart and offers you the opportunity to be healed.

That's what God's grace is all about. That's why Luke is writing this entire story. And that's why I changed our service today to have repentance right after this as we go into communion.

Because I think there are just some Sundays that we just need to sit with our own brokenness a little bit. And so here's what I want you to do. I want you to, I'm going to give, I'm going to open us in prayer and I'm going to give you a couple of quiet moments.

And I want you to reflect on this and here's what I'd like you to try to do. Try to name one or two places in your life that you have undue expectations.

That you have idols that you're clinging to. That if you have them life is going to be okay for you. And if you don't have them you might freak out. Okay? Think about one or two of those places.

[42 : 40] I spent some time doing that this morning it was really helpful for me. And then I'll bring us back together with prayer with as you can see in our bulletin here. I'll bring us back with this confession of sin.

So I'll start us in prayer. I'm going to give you a couple of quiet moments and then we'll come together with our confession of sin. And then we'll look to continue to praise the Lord for His grace.

Okay, let me pray. Our God, we come to You because we don't have anywhere else good to go. Because what we see in Your Word is that sin sticks so closely to our hearts things.

That we make idols out of all kinds of good things. Even motherhood we make idols out of. Isn't that crazy? Take a good gift that You've given us and we make it into an ultimate thing.

And Lord, we all have moments where that is revealed. And so I pray, Lord, that You would help us to see with clarity. Help Your Holy Spirit to give us clarity, clarity, even in this moment, as we pray silently.

[43 : 56] We pray. We pray.