

Not Afraid to Be Hurt

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[0 : 00] Carl, for your prayer for us this morning, and it's my prayer, too, that God will open to us his word and make known his son, Jesus Christ, to us. Last week, when we were here, we took a look at the first few verses of Luke chapter 12. We looked at the book of Luke in our Bible in the New Testament, and we saw there the heart of Jesus. We saw there the heart of Jesus Christ as he warned us against hypocrisy, as he warned us against the danger of hiding who we are, against the danger of trying to hide when others see through us, when others are trying to humiliate us.

But that wasn't all that Jesus had to say. We kind of cut Jesus off in the middle of his talk with his disciples. We're going to do that again today. Really, this should be a three-part sermon series, but you're just getting the first two parts. I guess you'll have to bring me back to the third if you want it. In a moment, I'm going to read Luke chapter 11, verses 53 through chapter 12, verse 7. Now, when I do that, we're going to be confronted with two questions. The first question is about God. The first question is a question that not only we often wonder about God, but our culture wonders about God. Is God a God of wrath, or is he a God of love? Is God a God of wrath, or is he a God of love? The second question is a question about you and me. It's a question about what it means to be human. Should our lives be characterized by fear or by fearlessness? Should our lives be characterized by fear or by fearlessness? Let's hear what Jesus thinks about God. Let's hear what Jesus thinks about us.

Jesus is facing a threatening situation that could potentially end his ministry, and for him, this is an opportunity to speak into our lives the truth that we need to hear. Beginning in chapter 11, verse 53, I'm reading from the English Standard Version. Follow along with me in your copy of Scripture.

As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples first, beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed or hidden that will not be known.

[2 : 46] Therefore, whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops. I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear.

Fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God.

Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not. You are of more value than many sparrows. This is the word of the Lord. So what does Jesus think? Does Jesus think God is a God of wrath or a God of love? Well, the answer is yes. Yes. He is both. He is a God who has authority to cast into hell, and yet at the same time, the God who watches over sparrows. Should our lives be characterized by fear or by fearlessness? I'll tell you what, the answer is yes. Our lives should be characterized by fear, and they should be characterized by fearlessness. This is hard for us to wrap our minds around, and this is what, isn't just amazing who Jesus is. Don't you find yourself amazed as you look at who

Jesus is, as you study who he is, as you learn to know him and to understand him? Jesus is so remarkable. In the space of a few seconds, he tells us, don't fear, fear, fear, don't fear.

In one breath, I guess maybe a very long breath, but one breath, he speaks of a God who casts people into hell, and the next he speaks of a God who cares about sparrows. Jesus has this amazing three-dimensional picture of his Father. When we just look at God as though he were just a one-dimensional being, we want to reduce God down so that he's just a God of love, or for a few people, just a God of wrath.

[5 : 22] We want to reduce ourselves and our lives down and God's expectations of us to this idea that we should be fearless and never have fear, or that we should be living in fear. But Jesus wants us to have both. And Jesus wants us to worship the true God who is both. Jesus is not afraid of paradox. Jesus is not afraid to affirm things that you and I think contradict each other. And I want to talk about that for a minute, because this is just a classic example of how Jesus communicates to the people that he loves. This is how Jesus communicates to you and me. The way he communicates, it looks crazy. It looks crazy at first glance. I mean, if you're reading this, you're thinking, wow, Jesus is probably bipolar here. He just starts out ridiculously harsh, overbearing, saying, you know, I know you guys are afraid for your lives. Tell you what, you're not afraid enough. It's way worse than you think. And then in a moment's notice, he becomes incredibly gentle, incredibly tender. Jesus knows exactly what he's doing.

Jesus is the perfect example of a loving leader. Jesus sets the standard for how a genuinely righteous leader communicates to the people that he loves. Now I'm going to digress for a little bit. It's going to look like I'm digressing. But the reason I'm doing that is because sometimes it's hard for us to grasp why this is so important. To be, on the one hand, affirming this side of the paradox, and on the other, affirming the other side.

We have to really get the way that Jesus shepherds you and me. If you want to know Jesus, if you want to love Jesus, you have to understand the way that he relates to you. And I think one of the best ways to do that is to use an example of a modern leader as sort of a doorway to lead us towards seeing how Jesus leads us. Author Jim Collins wrote a business book called *Good to Great*. It's a classic in the field.

And he describes in this what he calls the Stockdale Paradox. He calls it the Stockdale Paradox. Collins names this after American Admiral Jim Stockdale. Now Jim Stockdale was imprisoned by the North Vietnamese during the Vietnam War in the Hanoi Hilton. Collins writes this about Jim Stockdale.

Tortured over 20 times during his eight-year imprisonment from 1965 to 1973, Stockdale lived out the war without any prisoner's rights, no set release date, and no certainty as to whether he would even survive to see his family again. He shouldered the burden of command, doing everything he could to create conditions that would increase the number of prisoners who would survive unbroken.

[8 : 34] While fighting an internal war against his captors and their attempts to use the prisoners for propaganda. Now this man was a real hero to Jim Collins, and he finally got a chance to meet Jim Stockdale after reading his autobiography. And here's what Collins writes about the book and about his subsequent interview.

As I moved through the book, I found myself getting depressed. It just seemed so bleak, the uncertainty of his fate, the brutality of his captors, and so forth. If it feels depressing for me, how on earth did he deal with it when he was actually there and did not know the end of the story? I never lost faith in the end of the story, he said when I asked him. I never doubted not only that I would get out, but also that I would prevail in the end and turn the experience into the defining event of my life, which in retrospect, I would not trade. And at that point, Collins works up the courage to ask Stockdale a very difficult question.

I asked, who didn't make it out? Oh, that's easy, he said. The optimists. The optimists?

I don't understand, I said now, completely confused. The optimists. Oh, they were the ones who said, we're going to be out by Christmas. And Christmas would come.

[10 : 07] And Christmas would go. Then they'd say, we're going to be out by Easter. And Easter would come. And Easter would go. And then Thanksgiving.

And then it would be Christmas again. And they died of a broken heart. Then he turned to me and said, this is a very important lesson.

You must never confuse faith that you will prevail in the end, which you can never afford to lose, with the discipline to confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be. And so what Jim Collins does is he distills this down into what he calls the Stockdale paradox. And this is a principle that he applies not only to business, but also to our own personal lives.

Retain faith that you will prevail in the end, regardless of the difficulties. And at the same time, confront the most brutal facts of your current reality, whatever they might be. Now what Jim Collins is describing there is he's describing the way that a good leader must communicate in times of hardship.

[11 : 12] This is the way a righteous person thinks in times of suffering, in times of trouble. A righteous person doesn't shy away from the truth.

They look it in the eye. And Jesus is the ultimate righteous man. Jesus personifies this way of thinking and leading. Jesus never shies away from the brutal facts.

And at the same time, he never doubts that he will prevail in the end. And he never doubts that by the power of the Holy Spirit, his followers will prevail in the end. Let's go back to Luke 11, verse 63. Sorry, 1153. And see the facts of the situation that Jesus and his disciples are in. Verse 53. As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things, lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together, that they were trampling one another. He began to say to his disciples first, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.

[12 : 19] Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known.

Therefore, whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops.

So, the situation here is that Jesus and his disciples, they are in a lot of danger right now. They are in danger from powerful religious leaders. These leaders are trying to see through them and to humiliate them publicly.

And Jesus and his disciples are in danger from a mob of people that are trampling each other to get to Jesus. That mob will turn on Jesus at a moment's notice if he says one wrong thing.

That's the way a mob works. Now, how does Jesus respond to this situation? Last Sunday, we saw that Jesus gathers his disciples together.

And the first thing he does is he warns them that the greatest danger isn't outside of them. The greatest threat isn't the religious leaders. The greatest threat isn't the mob.

[13 : 24] The greatest threat is what's in their own hearts. The greatest danger is hypocrisy. And he warns his disciples they must fear God, who knows who we are and who will reveal our secret words on the day of judgment.

But Jesus isn't done yet. Because Jesus has more words of counsel for his disciples. He continues, verse 4. I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body and after that have nothing more that they can do.

But I will warn you whom to fear. Fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell.

Yes, I tell you, fear him. Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies?

And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

Fear not. You are of more value than many sparrows.

Now notice here that Jesus, right at the beginning of verse 4, he makes an assumption. Jesus assumes that there are those who will kill the body.

[14 : 34] None of this teaching matters if that's not true, right? There are people out there who want so badly to stop Jesus.

There are people out there who want so badly to stop his disciples that they are even willing to kill Jesus. They're willing to kill his disciples. And we know that's true because that's exactly what happens to them.

Jesus is put to death by the collaboration of the Jewish authorities and the Roman authorities. An entire empire is turned against him.

And as for his disciples, those who become the twelve and who spread the gospel message of Jesus' death and resurrection, of those twelve core apostles, all of them except for one are put to death for their faith.

And that one they tried very, very hard to do it. So Jesus confronts the brutal fact of the situation. Here's what Jesus is telling you and me first of all.

[15 : 35] There are people who want to hurt you and destroy you. There are people who want to hurt you and destroy you. Now, when I say words like that, I don't know about you, but when I say those words, that makes me feel a little paranoid.

Like I'm just being ridiculous, right? I mean, we're, you know, there are millions of Christians in Canada. There are millions of Christians in the States who are able to gather on Sunday mornings. We're not sitting here worrying that there might be a government spy among us.

Well, I know, maybe there is. We're not worrying that there is an angry mob out there that might show up and burn down the building with us inside.

We're not worried that a hostile government is going to gather us up and send us to a labor camp or execute us one by one. There are millions of our brothers and sisters around the world who do have to worry about that.

This passage is incredibly relevant to them. Remember, God's word isn't just written for us. It's written for all believers across all times.

[16:43] We're not the center of the universe. And there are millions of Christians who are suffering. And they need to hear this. They live in places like Syria and Iraq, North Korea, China, Eritrea, Egypt.

They are suffering and they are dying for the sake of the Lord Jesus. Those are the real heroes. Those are the real men and women of faith. Jesus knows that there are people who want to hurt them and destroy them.

But what about us? I think even apart from the persecution for our faith, which, you know, we're not guaranteed that we're going to live in this persecution-free environment forever.

All good things come to an end in this age. But even apart from persecution for our faith, there are some of you, I'm sure of it, in a room this size, I guarantee you, there are some of you who have experienced abuse at the hands of other people.

Maybe you were abused as a child. Maybe you were physically, sexually, verbally abused. Maybe you were abused or are still being abused as an adult.

[17:54] Maybe you live in terror of a person who is close to you. Someone who is every day gunning for you. Who is every day finding ways to hurt you.

Who every day is finding ways to destroy you. I want to say to you, first of all, before we say anything else, this is what God gave the church for.

Because God has brought you here to protect you from harm. If you're in that sort of relationship right now, please, please talk with the elders of this church about it.

They'll help you. They're going to help you report your abuser to the authorities. They're going to help protect you from further danger. God has given them to you for this very reason. To help you and to support you.

And there are many other things that we could say about persecution and abuse. Because God, in his word, there are just so many different approaches to this subject.

[18:50] Each person often needs to hear something different. And God's word has so many avenues, so many inroads to our hearts to help us with this. So I want to say that and make that clear before we continue.

Because sometimes when you say what Jesus has to say next, you'll get people who will come up to you and say, how could you say that?

That's so harsh. As though this were the only word on the subject. And it isn't. God's word has so much more to say about this. But this is what Jesus has for us this morning. And I firmly believe there are those among us who really, really need to hear just this message this morning.

Here's what Jesus says. Verse 4. So talk about confronting the brutal facts, right?

Jesus is not afraid to shy away. Jesus is saying to his disciples this. Do you think that you are in great danger? You must realize that you are in far greater danger than you thought.

[20:14] You are in far greater danger than you can even imagine. These religious leaders, yes, they can kill your body. But they cannot touch your soul. However, God, he has authority.

Not only to kill your body. He can do that. But he has authority to also throw body and soul into hell. And Jesus says that there are people who want to hurt you and destroy you.

But the greatest danger is what lies beyond death. The greatest danger is what lies beyond death. You really can't confront the brutal facts anymore than giving a mini-sermon on the danger of hell, can you?

That's what Jesus does. He doesn't hide from it. He doesn't sugarcoat it. He doesn't try to be culturally relevant. In fact, Jesus speaks about hell more explicitly and more often than any other person in the Bible.

I am absolutely convinced that if Jesus came and spoke the words today that he spoke then, in the streets of Vancouver, he would be dismissed as a fire and brimstone preacher.

[21 : 33] And he would have been killed a lot faster than he was then. Our culture finds the concept of hell to be offensive, to be hateful, evil, unjust.

We're convinced, and I say we're, because do you ever find yourself deep down feeling the same way? I do.

It's hard. It doesn't, it just feels wrong. We're so raised in our culture. We've so absorbed its values and its light perspective on sin. That hell is just such, it seems so offensive.

It seems so wrong. It doesn't seem to mesh with who God is. We think it contradicts the loving character of God. We're not comfortable with that paradox. We're convinced that hell is not a subject you bring up in polite conversation, or any conversation.

But Jesus doesn't think that way. Jesus thinks different. Jesus is convinced of the reality of hell.

[22 : 39] Jesus is convinced of the reality of eternal punishment. Jesus is convinced of the reality that there are people who will spend eternity separated from the goodness and kindness of God that we experience every day.

This goodness and this kindness that we take for granted as part of our normal existence. And Jesus firmly believes our sins against God are so tremendous, so immense, so absolutely, despicably evil, that God must respond.

If he is the least bit good, God must respond by driving out of his kingdom everyone who will not turn away and repent of that sinful way of life. He cannot let it corrupt his kingdom. That is the way that Jesus thinks.

We may not like it, but maybe we wouldn't like Jesus either. Here's why Jesus brings up the subject of hell.

He knows it's exactly what his disciples need right now to overcome their fear. Now isn't that incredibly astonishing? Isn't that amazing?

[23 : 52] Because, I don't know about you, but whenever I've heard, and a lot of times I've heard caricatures of fire and brimstone preachers, you know, railing about the dangers of hell and commanding people to repent and believe, and they use hell as a threat, as a motivating factor, people use this doctrine to bully and badger others.

That's so much of what our culture reacts to. Jesus uses this doctrine not to instill, not merely to instill fear in people, but to deliver them from it.

Have you ever heard a preacher preach hell in a way that delivered them from fear? That's what Jesus does. I've never heard it before. This is so amazing.

Jesus knows something that's true. Jesus knows this. Sometimes you have to fight fire with fire, don't you? You have to fight fire with fire. In this case, you've got to fight fear with fear.

You've got to fight a big fear with an even bigger one. Do you see this pattern in his words? Look again. We saw this earlier, but look closely at this.

[25 : 07] Verse 4. Jesus says, Do not fear. Then he says in verse 5, Fear. And then fear. And then fear again.

And then verse 7. Fear not. It's just unmistakable. The only way to escape fear is by a greater fear. Jesus knows that we are all afraid of something or someone. That is what it means to be human. This is not just what it means to be a fallen human. This is what it means to be even a perfect human. A perfect human being.

Our lives are controlled by fear in many ways that we don't even notice. Their fingerprints are all over our lives. We've just become accustomed to it. Aren't you always worrying about the right things to say to people?

You try to wordsmith what you're going to say to your boss when you arrive late. Right? Aren't you always worried about whether other people will accept you?

[26 : 12] Or what your spouse might say to you when you get home? Aren't you worried whether someone could hurt you? Aren't you worried about what will happen to your children? Don't these thoughts consume your mind all the time?

Do you ever lie awake at night thinking them? All of our lives, almost everything we do, every action that we take, fear plays a part in it.

And Jesus says, the only way to stop being consumed by this worry and fear is to find something greater to fear. That's why he says this, verse 5, I will warn you whom to fear.

Fear him who after he has killed has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him. There is absolutely no mistaking it.

Jesus gives us no way out, no loophole. Jesus wants you and me to fear God. There is no question. He wants us to be overwhelmed by the authority, by the power of God, to be staggered by the significance of God.

[27 : 21] Jesus wants all of our thoughts to be captured and captivated by God until we're barely even thinking about ourselves, until we stop thinking of ourselves as this giant, significant person who is at the center of the universe and at the center of all my thoughts, and that place is occupied by the Lord God.

God is meant to be the Sun at the center of our solar system so that everything revolves around him. Everything is dominated and controlled by his gravity.

That sheer gravity of God, the one who made the heavens and the earth, the one who alone has the right to judge the living and the dead. That is Jesus' secret.

That is the secret to a happy life. That is the secret to a fearless life. Have you ever noticed this about Jesus?

Is Jesus at any point ever afraid of people? Is he ever afraid of anybody? Is he ever controlled by what people say? Does he ever worry about what they're going to do to him?

[28 : 28] Never! Do you know anybody like that? I have never met a person like that other than Jesus. Jesus fears God, his Father, and so he doesn't fear other people.

He isn't controlled by other people. He doesn't long for their approval. Jesus has broken the handcuffs of fear. He has broken those chains, and now his hands are free to draw his disciples in, to love them, to care for others.

He's no longer bound. And this, this is the beautiful half of the Stockdale paradox, where you see the unshakable faith of Jesus.

Because Jesus now comes to his disciples in tenderness, in gentleness, in kindness. When we hear about a God who has authority to cast into hell, it's easy to wonder, does God care about me? That's going to be the next question in my mind. If God is this great, and this powerful, and this big, and this awesome, and I'm this big, on a tiny little speck of dust, drifting around the cosmos, easily forgotten, if I'm easily forgotten by the people who actually have met me and known me, what about God?

[29 : 53] You know, maybe, to God, casting someone into hell is just like flicking an ant off this platform. It's that easy for him. Maybe it carries no more weight to him than doing that.

And Jesus tells me that this is not the way that God thinks about you. This is not the way that God thinks about me. It's not the way God thinks about his children. Here's what Jesus tells you and me. Verse 6.

Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered.

Fear not. You are of more value than many sparrows. These are some of my favorite verses in the Bible. Not just because of what they are, but because of what just came.

And I want to tell you, I have a lot of trouble believing God's love and grasping God's love.

[30 : 57] Do you ever find that hard to believe? Do you find it hard to believe that God loves you? Do you find it hard to believe that God likes you? When, you know, we sing these songs about God's love, we talk about God's love, and oh man, it's like, it's so annoying too.

And I read newspaper articles talking about loving God. Like, you have no idea what you're talking about. It's just a word to you. Love is almost like this big nebulous concept that floats off in the sky and it doesn't mean anything to me.

When I'm doing the dishes, when I'm talking with a friend, in my real day-to-day life, what difference does God's love make? It doesn't feel real. It doesn't feel like a thing.

And so verses like these, this is something I can hold on to. This is something precious to me because it shows the heart of God. This is what it looks like for God to love. Pay, pay close, close attention.

Jesus says this about God. So here's a solid fact about God that you're going to learn this morning. God loves sparrows. Isn't that neat?

[32 : 06] When was the last time you ever paid attention to a sparrow? I mean, besides the one that's chirping outside of your bedroom window at five in the morning? Nobody does.

I was yesterday at a bus stop in Coquitlam, sorry, New West. It was New Westminster. And I was sitting there at the bus stop waiting for the bus.

And I looked around and there's about a dozen people just standing around on the platform. And there's a little sparrow. A couple little sparrows just hopping around looking for something to eat. How many people of those dozen or so people do you think were paying attention to the sparrows? None of them. They were looking at their phones.

They were probably on Twitter. They were so busy paying attention to Twitter they weren't paying attention to the birds twittering at their feet. We don't pay attention to sparrows.

[33 : 05] I have probably before I studied this passage a few weeks ago and really just started thinking about it I probably had spent a grand total of two minutes out of my entire life thinking about sparrows. Right?

Sparrows are these drab little brown birds. They've got house sparrows have the most boring song in the world. It's just like this chirp, chirp it's just so boring.

They're so commonplace. You know if you I can't blame the people for looking at their phones. If someone offered you I will give you an iPhone 6 or a sparrow.

Which would you pick? What if they gave you a dozen sparrows? I'd still go with the iPhone. What if they gave you a giant basket full of sparrows?

I would still go with the iPhone. God wouldn't. You know we think of sparrows they're not even a dime a dozen Jesus says. They're worth even less than that.

[34 : 08] But God thinks about sparrows. God really likes sparrows. And at every moment in time even right now God is thinking about sparrows.

Like all the sparrows. Not one of them ever leaves his mind. These stupid little drab birds that you can buy for a nickel and God loves them.

He loves them so much. And it's just it's been so neat over these last few weeks as I've been thinking about this because I've had a couple different situations with two different friends where we meet outside of a coffee shop.

We're sitting at the tables on the sidewalk on the patio and this friend is in each situation a friend is pouring out his heart to me. It's been a challenging time in his life. And as we're talking out of the corner of my eye there's a sparrow just hopping along among the tables looking for something to eat.

And and I've looked at that sparrow and I've thought God is thinking about that sparrow right now. and he really loves it.

[35 : 19] He loves that little sparrow and then I look back at my friend sitting across the table from me and I think you are of so much more value than many sparrows.

God would not trade you for all the sparrows at all the bus stops in New Westminster. For every thought that God has sparrows he has a hundred thousand thoughts about you.

Jesus tells us this even the hairs on your head are numbered. Do you count the number of hairs on your head? It's getting easier and easier for me every day.

But you know maybe a couple times a day I think about the hair on my head and my thoughts are usually hmm my hairline is receding it's thinning out on top.

I don't think about hairs I think about the whole thing right? God thinks about hairs. God knows exactly how many hairs you have on your head he knows exactly what color each individual hair on your head is and he knows when it falls out in the shower.

[36 : 48] None of this ever escapes his mind. It makes me think of Psalm 139 Psalm 139 just a beautiful Psalm verse 17 through 18 of the Psalm the poet king David writes this how precious to me are your thoughts oh God how vast is the sum of them if I would count them they are more than the sand now I used to think as I read this well you know David is talking about just all the things God is thinking in general right?

God thinks so many things more thoughts than the sand and how precious that is to David that's you know it is kind of funny right at the same time as I started thinking about these sparrows a friend of mine posts on Facebook and makes the observation completely separate from this it's not God's thoughts in general that David counts as precious it's God's thoughts of him and you can know this take some time to read Psalm 139 today start at the beginning you know when I sit down and when I rise up you discern my thoughts from afar you are acquainted with my path and lying down even before a word is on my tongue behold oh Lord you know it all together you hem me in behind and before and lay your hand upon me such knowledge is too wonderful for me it is high I cannot attain it these are God's thoughts of David how vast is the sum of them if we were to

paraphrase these verses

David might be saying how precious it is to me that you are thinking of me oh God how enormous is the number of things how vast is the number of things that you think about me right now if I would try to count your thoughts of me one by one they are more than all of the grains of sand on all the shores and all the deserts of the world I don't care how self-obsessed and self-absorbed you are you cannot think about yourself more than God thinks of you isn't that hard to believe God is more obsessed with you than you are which is very obsessed because we just think about ourselves all the time non-stop all the time we just can't stop thinking about ourselves because we don't fear God but God thinks about us all the time and Jesus wants us to remember that and this friends this is why fearing God is so liberating if at the very center of your solar system is a

God who has authority to cast you into hell and yet he can't stop thinking about you and loving you and he likes you so much and he will do anything for you even if it means giving his own son what more do you have to be afraid of God will never leave you God will never abandon you God will never stop thinking about you for even half a second Jesus said my God my God why have you forsaken me so that we won't have to because even though we feel forsaken we never are this is something that you can say and you can believe and you can hold on to if you're a Christian if this is something that you can say with confidence and assurance if you believe that Jesus Christ is Savior if you believe he is Lord of all if you've repented of living your own way if you've turned from your sin against

God if you've trust in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ if you trust that the goodness and the righteousness have you seen how good and righteous Jesus is like no one else who ever lived if you trust him that this is the basis for your acceptance into God's family and God's kingdom if you believe that Jesus is the one who holds you out of hell he is the one who welcomes you into heaven true and oh friends consider what Jesus is saying and you will find as you learn to believe it you will never again be afraid to be hurt now some of you I know there's got to be some of you in this room you don't know what it's like to relate to God this way you don't know what it's like and let me ask you this do you want this sort of relationship with

[41 : 41] God do you want to live this kind of life what if you were never afraid do you want the son of God do you want Jesus to call you friend the way that he called his disciples friend in verse four do you want to fear God and be freed from the dominating power of fear the dominating power of sin in your life so just please after the service come to me come to one of the elders of the church speak to one of us and we will listen we want to hear what you're thinking we want to pray with you our God and our Father