

I want to put my cards on the table early. There is a huge difference between being captivated by someone and being captivated by what someone can do. Those are not the same thing. I'll use this since it's this time of year. Last night was the Final Four. And if you watch basketball, there are things some of those guys can do that are captivating. A guy who can hit a three-point shot over and over again, three feet behind the arc, coming full speed off of a screen and sink it is captivating. If you're not captivated, you've never tried to make that shot. The fact that that can happen that consistently blows my mind. And if they're on fire, if the basket looks like a hula hoop to them, if they just can't miss, it becomes even more captivating. You're drawn into the fact that that guy can make that shot like he can make it. I've never been as captivated by the dunk. It's always like a seven-foot guy doing it. That's not spectacular to me. That's putting your hands over your head. But the three-point shot is a different animal. Now what would be different is for me to wonder about the kid and think about the kid who is making the shot. I wonder where he grew up. I wonder if his dad is a bit of a freak. I wonder if his mobile had a basketball and a rim hanging over his crib. I wonder if his dad's god wasn't basketball and he was going to enroll his kid into that religion early. I wonder if his mom was really annoying in the stands. I wonder if she screamed that pitch that can only be a mom who is proud of her baby. If I started thinking about the kid, I wonder why he wants to major in what he's majoring in. If I started thinking about and dwelling on the kid as opposed to what the kid can do, those two things are different, aren't they?

Like I said, I want to get my cards on the table early. I think as believers in Christ, the call is to do both, to both be captivated by what our God can do but also to be captivated by who our God is. I think we excel at one and we stink at the other. I think we excel at what I will call horizontal theology. We are great at going, "Oh, God did that. . . God did that. . . God did that. . ." And some of us ascribe things to God that are good and lovely things. But for some reason it's a rare thing for that horizontal theology to flip and go vertical, for us to take the blessings God has bestowed upon us and around us and have that make us believe something about the nature and character of God, that in turn transforms us so then our affection for God isn't just predicated on what He has done but rather who He is. Now that's different, right? So yes, let's celebrate Him. When the Spring rolls in from a cold Winter, tell me everybody doesn't get all geeked up about Spring. . . unless you have allergies. We love Spring and go, "Oh, isn't God amazing! Look at what He can do in this." When it snows, we just shut the city down and just marvel and go, "Isn't God amazing?" We marvel in those things, but I have to wonder if it ever turns back and is just God for God, that we marvel in Him.

Now I think for the first few years of my faith, I was almost exclusively horizontal. "God saved me. . . God did this. . . God did that. . ." Please hear me. I'm not saying those things are bad. They're good, they're necessary and they're commanded. But it wasn't until January of 1997 that that flipped for me. In January 1997, I went to this deal and a guy got up and preached the Word in a way that I had never heard before. Because it wasn't practical, it wasn't pragmatic and it wasn't, "Here's your takeaway." It was just, "This is God. This is who He is. And the Holy Spirit, in a great act of mercy just pulverized me that night. I could hardly function. I just sat in that chair and wept, because how I had viewed Him, how I had taught Him and proclaimed Him was so small and tiny in comparison to who He was. I had this real, sweet confrontation occur in my soul where God said, "I'm not going to let you walk down this route anymore. This isn't your road anymore." So as I looked back on the journey I walked through the last year and a half, as I looked back on the time I've been able to spend with you as your pastor, in January of 1997, God said, "We're going to go a different route than the route you're heading right now." And in a divine act of mercy, He took that horizontal understanding of Him and absolutely flipped it around so that it went vertical.

So yes I still celebrate horizontal blessing. Yes I'm still well dialed in to what God does, but in His mercy He has dialed me in to who He is. And that goes a lot farther than what He does. Through that, God opened up a whole other set of authors, a whole other set of ideas, a whole other set of men who talk about God vertically and horizontally, and I began to be drawn to those men and, to this day, prefer them to most modern stuff. All these guys have been dead for quite some time, but let me just read some of these quotes. I'll try to show you horizontal/vertical, and then I've got to get to the text. Because these guys are not inerrant or authoritative. They just are smart and Spirit-filled. This is a famous quote from Augustine. "How sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which I had once feared to lose!" Now I want to stop there and unpack just a tiny bit of history. For Augustine, primarily this is a woman issue, not a singular woman, but our boy had a bit of a lust problem. So tell me what he's saying isn't true. Again, he is not authoritative and not inerrant, but what he is saying is true. So many of us don't want to fully surrender our lives to Christ because we're holding on to this thing that we don't want to lose and we think that if we follow Him fully, we are going to lose it, despite the fact that it has never delivered what it promised to deliver to begin with. So we don't want to lose it. And do you hear Augustine celebrating here? "How sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which I had once feared to lose! You drove them from me, you who are the true, the sovereign joy. You drove them from me and took their place, you who are sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood." So what he's saying is true, but not for the unregenerate man. If you're not a believer in Christ in here, the idea of Jesus is not going to drive out all other pleasures. Because you are fleshly. You are not born again. You have what the Bible would call a heart of stone rather than a heart of flesh. Let's keep reading. ". . . though not to flesh and blood, you who outshine all light, yet are hidden deeper than any secret in our hearts, you who surpass all honour, though not in the eyes of men who see all honour in themselves. O Lord my God, my Light, my Wealth, and my Salvation." Do you see it happening? "You drove them from me, you who are sweeter than all joy. You drove them and You took their place." Do you see this happening?

Here's a quote from Martin Luther. I love Luther. There has always been this part of me that wishes Luther was here and now, because he's so brash, so aggressive and has a tendency to say things that get him in a lot of trouble. I just think he's be on CNN all the time. He called the Pope the devil in the 1500's. "I wish to devote my mouth and my heart to you; I shall teach the people. I myself will learn and ponder diligently upon Your Word. Use me as Your instrument – but do not forsake me, for if ever I should be on my own, I would easily wreck it all." I have always loved that. Luther is brilliant. He is charismatic. He was headed the "law" route before. In a misunderstanding of what God had done for him in Christ, he thinks God is out to get him. So in the end he goes, "No, I'm going to the monastery. Just don't kill me." It's way too long of a story to unpack in the time we have. But he is brilliant and charismatic. And do you hear his prayer? "Let me dwell on You, think on You know You, and don't leave me to my personality. Don't leave me to my mind, or I will easily wreck this all." How many of us build our relationship with God on our own personalities, on our own abilities and fail to trust in the work of Christ on the cross.

And then there's John Calvin. Now everybody gets nervous when you mention Calvin. Listen, you have Jesus Christ and John Calvin. John Calvin is dead. So just relax. He talks a lot about Jesus, and he says good things. Listen to this. "Christ was given to us by God's generosity, to be grasped and possessed by us in faith. By partaking of him, we principally receive a double grace. . ." Now I want to stop, because I love grace. So if I can get seconds, yes please. If I can have two scoops, then yes and amen! That's what Calvin is going to say here, and we talk about this stuff all the time. By partaking of him, we principally receive a double grace; namely, that being reconciled to God through Christ's blamelessness, we may have in heaven instead of a Judge a gracious Father. . ." Now we talk about this every weekend. Because of the righteous life of Christ, the cross and resurrection of Christ, the perfection of Christ is imputed, given to us so that we are seen as blameless and spotless before God, by no act of our own, but by an act of God in Christ. It is very important that you get that right. So that's the first part, but the second part is where I press on you and want to make you question your salvation. So in heaven, we don't have a wrathful judge; we have a Father. But look at the second part. ". . . and secondly, that sanctified by Christ's spirit we may cultivate blamelessness and purity of life." Let me just say this to you

as humbly but as graciously and aggressively as I can. If you are a man or woman who hears the message of grace and says, "Oh, is that right? I love this message. I'll do anything I want to do because there will be grace for me," I want you to hear me say that if you can think that way, act that way and live that way, you are not saved. "Well I went to RA camp, and they did a scary sketch about going to hell. That night I prayed for Christ to come into my life." We've said this for years here. Heaven is not a place for those who are afraid of hell. That's not what it was built for. If you can believe, walk and live like, "I'll do whatever I want, because God is going to forgive me," you are not a believer. Christ has set us free to pursue and become what we are in the sight of God, blameless, holy and perfect. And I love the way Calvin ordered it, because he says we are called blameless by the Father, through Christ and then set free to pursue what we are in Christ. So it starts with a regenerate heart, and that regenerate heart leads to a pursuit of blamelessness. A perfect pursuit of blamelessness? No. You're going to stumble and fall along the way. That's the whole point of the cross.

Let me give you one more. If there is a more difficult guy to read than John Owen, I haven't found him. Maybe you're just smarter than I am and can kill it, but I have to read him sentence by sentence. I cannot fly through him. But I love this quote probably more than any of the other ones. He makes this vertical point and really hones it in. "O to behold the glory of Christ. . .Herein would I live; herein would I die; herein would I dwell in my thoughts and affections. . .until all things below become unto me a dead and deformed thing, no way suitable for affectionate embraces." Did you hear what he said here? "Might I know Jesus, stare at Jesus and walk with Jesus in such a way that everything that is not pointing me towards more of Jesus is a dead and deformed thing." And I really want to point out to you that he's not pointing to bad things, dark things or negative things. He's not saying, "O that I might behold Christ so much that pornography becomes a dead and deformed thing." He said "all things." So my relationship with Lauren, my beautiful wife, makes me grateful for and pushes me into Jesus. My beautiful children, my affection for them doesn't terminate on them but makes me desire, want and long for more of Jesus.

So there is this kind of yearning and desire in these men. You're going to see it actually in Habakkuk 3. Habakkuk has come a long way from chapter 1. So let's look at Habakkuk 3. We're going to pick it up in verse 1. "A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet, according to Shigionoth. O LORD, I have heard the report of you, and your work, O LORD, do I fear. In the midst of the years revive it; in the midst of the years make it known; in wrath remember mercy." Now that is horizontal. "I have heard of Your work, I have heard what You do. I have seen Your acts. In Your wrath remember mercy." Now let's recap where we've been with Habakkuk. Habakkuk starts out with, "Why do You put up with injustice among Your people?" What's God's response? "Oh, I'm not putting up with injustice among My people. I'm sending the Chaldeans." What's Habakkuk's response? "Surely You're not sending the Chaldeans." What's God's response? "Oh, I'm sending the Chaldeans." In fact, He tells Habakkuk, "Hey, if you think I'm going to be late, just get your calendar. I'm coming. At the fullness of time, My will will be done." And you have this unpacking to Habakkuk of how God sees and how God operates. And He handles Habakkuk a lot more gently than He handles Job, who says some of the same things. Do you remember His response to Job? "Dress for action like a man." To Job, He basically says, "Put on your cup and stand before Me and ask those questions again." But with Habakkuk, He deals very gently. He's explains that there is a difference between wrath, what is coming for the Chaldeans, and discipline, what is coming for Judah and that God disciplines those He loves. We talked for an hour that week about the difference between those two ideas. And far too many of us, when we think about the word "discipline," think about a spanking or being put in the corner. But discipline is far more than punishment. I have three small kids. Everything we're doing is discipline. It is a vision of the future that has work to do today. There is a shaping and a molding about discipline that sometimes isn't because you've done something wrong, but is there to keep you from straying into harm. So you've got this God unpacking to Habakkuk, "Here's what I do. Here's how I'm working." And you've got Habakkuk here, no longer asking a bunch of questions, no longer worried about what God's going to do. He's now saying, "As You do what You do, remember mercy. As You work that which You work, remember Your people."

And then look at verse 3. "God came from Teman, and the Holy One from Mount Paran. His splendor covered the heavens, and the earth was full of his praise. Selah." Now it's not just what He does. Now it's who He is. "Your splendor covers. This is who You are." So now we've gone from horizontal to vertical, and Habakkuk is rejoicing, not just in what he has heard God does, but now in who God is. And in the middle of all of this, you've got this deep yearning in his heart for God. You can feel it. And you see the same thing when you read Augustine, Owen and these guys that we've read. You see now in Habakkuk this yearning and this desire. And I think that yearning is birthed out of two places. Number one is the things God has spoken to Habakkuk. God answered Habakkuk. Think how crazy that is. Just think of the scope of the universe and just how large it is. The thought that God would hear this tiny, little speck in His creation that isn't even aware of the width and breadth of the planet he's on, that only knows of the people around the immediate vicinity of Judah, how crazy is that? And then He answered him. How crazy is that? And then God reminds Habakkuk, "You're My covenant people. I made a promise, and I'm going to lead you into exile. And there I will purify. My purposes will come to pass." The second reason there is this yearning for God is they are getting caught up in the goodness of God, even if things don't work out how we think they should. Life for Habakkuk is not pleasant. This whole idea that if you follow God, everything just irons itself out and you're never going to get sick and that there's always going to be money in your pocket is crazy. We already showed you that Josiah died. He got killed in battle. We talked about that in week one. And now here we are in week nine, and real people are about to be invaded by a godless, horrific, violent, oppressive country. They're going to be overrun and they're going to be dragged into captivity. So life hurts. And between the splendor and glory of a God who has not abandoned His people and the weight of a fallen world, Habakkuk wants and yearns for God.

Now there are some things that have always bothered me the entire time I have been your pastor. There are two things namely, not just about us but about Evangelicalism at large. The first one is the rampant biblical illiteracy. It's insane to me how little we know about the Scriptures. People quote to me constantly Benjamin Franklin or Martin Luther King Jr. and think they're quoting the Bible. "You know, Matt, cleanliness is next to godliness. That's what Jesus said." No, He didn't. He didn't say that. That was Benjamin Franklin. "Well I have a dream." No, that wasn't Him either. We are so easily swayed to think wrongly about the nature and character of God because we don't know the Bible. So people say stuff all the time about God that is grossly offensive to the nature and character of God. It's not offensive to man. We'll eat it up. It sounds right to us. But there is a way that seems right to man, and how does it end? Everybody dies. Selah. So that bothers me. But here's the second thing that bothers me, and this is where I think we need to talk. This type of yearning, longing for more of the inexhaustible well of Jesus is just such a rare thing that, when you come across it, it seems weird, foreign and strange. How did it happen that church folk get weirded out by people who are really pursuing Jesus Christ? We want our Bible studies, we want our knowledge, we want our church services and we like that stuff, but get somebody who is after the Lord and we just kind of file them under "weirdo." Don't we? We absolutely do.

So why this lack of longing? Why this lack of desire? Why this lack of zeal? Well I think there are two primary reasons. The first reason we don't yearn, long for and pursue Christ with all our might is gospel-assaulting lies. There are two of them. The first gospel-assaulting lie, why we don't pursue, why we don't chase, why we don't run after, why there is not more of a passion, more of a desire in us to really know Him, walk with Him and experience the depths of that kind of vertical understanding of Him is we believe we're not good enough. I have a quick news flash for you. You have believed correctly. You are not good enough. And to really hammer this point home, I love that the Bible says it's not you at your worst that God has a problem with. It's actually you at your best. All your righteous acts are filthy rags. When you nail it, you disgust Him. When you got up early, read My Utmost for His Highest and you're doing all the things you're supposed to be doing, it's on that day when you nail it that God goes, "You're falling short. You don't measure up." And so I want to affirm that thought in you. The thought is not wrong. Your misunderstanding of the gospel as it relates to that is wrong. If the cross is anything, it's a scream to the universe that God knew that about you. Why are we able to boldly approach the throne of grace with confidence? The cross. Why are we able to run into the throne room and say, "Help me"? Because of the cross.

We believe in spanking at the Chandler house, but there are certain rules around it. We will only spank our children when they literally ask us to. My kids have to go, "Will you please show me there are boundaries?" And then we'll do it. Just a couple days ago, Norah was eating her oatmeal. I walked into the kitchen, she looked up at me, grabbed her bowl and pulled it off to the side. I said, "Norah, don't do it." But she just dropped it and smiled. What she did right there is, "Father, will you please show me that you love me?" So I went over there, grabbed her hand, smacked it and said, "No ma'am." And her lip started quivering and she looked over at Lauren as to go, "Seriously?" And then she screamed. Do you know what happened after that? She lifted up her arms to me, the one who just smacked her hand. Why? Because she understands. What does she understand? That I deeply love her. She does not run from me when she's in trouble. I didn't spank her hand and have her run up to her room and hide from me. I smacked her hand, and she immediately shot her arms in the air. And while she was still crying, she wanted me to hold her. Why? Because she knows her daddy loves her. So I'm going to say this to you till I die or you fire me. You can tell whether or not a man or woman understands the gospel by watching what they do when they sin. If they run from God, they don't understand. If they run to Him, they get it. So the first gospel-assaulting lie is, "Man, I can't come to Him."

We had a family come to our house for lunch a few weeks ago. We had been praying for them for a long, long time. We had a great chance to pray for him, just for Christ to come, rule and reign in his heart. He was saved long before that moment on my couch, but the man just asked the Lord to come into his heart and reign and rule in his heart. We had already began to see a lot of changes in his life. Years ago, I had done this Friday morning devotional group at Lifetime Fitness for a bunch of the trainers and some other guys. He was invited into that and didn't want to that. He was kind of like, "No, I'm not coming to that." And it came across at the time as brash. Like, "That's y'all's stuff. That's not my stuff." But it's funny to talk to him about that moment now because if you talk to him now, he's like, "Man, I'm not like that. I can't come in there. I've done this, I've been here and I'm not that guy. There's no way I'm worthy to get in there." Now he's right, but he's wrong. He's right. He's not worthy to be among the blameless. But he's wrong because God knew it and Christ paid the bill, and now he is blameless, spotless and has been set free to pursue that blamelessness. This is the first gospel-assaulting lie.

The second one might be even more prevalent in here. The second lie is the opposite of the first lie. You don't pursue Him because you don't think you need Him. Can I tell you who I worry about in here? Those of you who are the most disciplined and the most talented. You're who I worry about. If it comes easy for you, if you can look at the law and, by your will, just do it, if you can learn the game, if you can learn the language, if you can say the right things, if you can be the right things and not believe any of it in your heart, it can just be a game, an external action that you're playing. It has always happened. It's happening here. We are not immune from it. There are several of you in here. I worry about you, because some of it comes so easy for you and so you live as a functional atheist. Do you know why you don't pray? Do you know why you don't get into the Word? Do you know why you don't pursue? Because you don't need to.

I was in Chicago this last week for a quick conference. So we all had dinner Wednesday night. There were six other guys and myself. All of those guys have churches with 10,000+, and it was amazing that night at dinner to go around the room. One of those guys lost his son in a car accident last year. Another one has two class action suits against his church right now. They're constantly in court. Another one has a wayward daughter, and it's just devastating his heart. I've got oligodendroglioma. I could go around the rest of the table, but all of them have this thorn. It's like God so loved them and loved us that He wounded us. I think it was Luther who said, "He who God would use mightily, He wounds deeply." So that's why I keep telling you, (which is so unpopular here and really everywhere) if God loves you, if you are regenerate, if you are His and you're living like this, He will not let you stay there for long. The scary part is that if you're not, He might leave you alone altogether. And that aspect of God's wrath is far scarier to me than tornadoes and tsunamis. This is Romans 1, that you would say, "I don't need you. I'll do my own thing." And God goes, "Okay. Go ahead." So for some of you who struggle, who are wounded, who hurt, who are weary, I'm hoping that one day you'll be able to

see that as God's mercy on your life and not as some sort of punitive action on God's part. Although for some of you who are not regenerate, it very well may be. So I think we don't pursue Jesus Christ, we don't yearn, we don't long because we don't understand the cross fully and what Jesus has done in regards to our ability to boldly come before the Father. And for a lot of us, because we live where we live and we've grown up in church, you've learned well to play the game but you don't know anything of Jesus Christ personally. You know about Him, but you don't know Him. Those two things are different.

Here's another reason I think we don't think we need Him. We just don't know what we're missing. We watched a video testimony this morning. So you've got beautiful Melissa Smith who is beautiful and just married. Her husband actually was converted to Christ here at the Village. Josh is a great man. And did you hear what they're doing? They're leaving and they're going to a war-torn, busted up country that is nothing but hostile, not only towards Americans but towards the gospel. Now how many of you, if you were able to be honest, didn't feel like you needed to counsel them? How many of you felt like someone should pull them aside and go, "There's need in Guatemala. I don't think you should go into that window. Do you know what your life expectancy there is?" You see, you saw a modern, 2011 picture of this, that Jesus is better. He's better than a start-up home, He's better than safety and He's better than long life. If the Bible beats any drum, it's this drum that He is better. David in Psalm 16 is going to say, "You fill me with greater joy than when grain and new wine abound. So when everything is great, You're still better." Doesn't that kind of reek of what John Owen was saying? "When everything is great, You are better." We'll see here in a couple of weeks that Habakkuk is going to go the opposite way and say, "Though everything stinks, You're still what I want, You still sustain and You still empower." So you've got this whole biblical narrative of men and women saying He's better. What drives someone like Melissa and Josh to give up all they have and do this? Jesus. That's not horizontal. That is vertical.

Nobody says it better than C.S. Lewis. About 85% of what Lewis writes is tremendous, correct, doctrinally solid and biblically aligned, but about 15% is a bit crazy. And I'm not talking about lions and wardrobes and that kind of stuff. I'm talking off the reservation, not lined up to the Scriptures. So read him, but read him with a discerning eye, especially in these times. But he killed it with this in *The Weight of Glory*. This is a very well-known quote if you have any real church background. "It would seem that Our Lord finds our desires, not too strong, but too weak." Now he's talking about pleasure here. So Lewis is saying that he thinks God thinks that our desire for joy is not too strong, but it's too weak. "We are half-hearted creatures, fooling about with drink and sex and ambition when infinite joy is offered us, like an ignorant child who wants to go on making mud pies in a slum because he cannot imagine what is meant by the offer of a holiday at the sea. We are far too easily pleased." I love this quote. Because it's us! You don't yearn for Him, long for Him. Why? Because Bravo has some cool shows about cakes and dresses. Because it's March Madness time. That's why you don't yearn. Because after a long day's work, there is nothing you would rather do except sit on your behind and watch television. Don't give me that "I don't have time." You have all the time there is. You don't because you don't want to. There are not other issues. You sin because you want to sin, and you don't pursue Jesus because you don't want to pursue Jesus. There are other things to you that are more valuable than Him, and that is why you don't pursue. "Well I don't know how to read my Bible." You read it. And there is an unbelievable amount of resources we put out there for you. Everything from how you read it on a day-to-day basis to how you study it for free is on the website just for you. But here's the thing. You didn't know how to fly fish, but you do now, don't you? Do you know how you did that? Well you bought some equipment, you got a book and got all geeked up about it. Why? Because you love mud pies in the slums. You never see a grown man playing actively in the kiddie pool, do you? Not without his kids. Because if he's without his kids, don't we call the police? Why? Because grown men were meant for the deep end. They weren't meant for the kiddie pool. So it's a provoking thing to me that so many of us like to sit in that warm water when the deep end is right over there.

There's this great text in Luke 5. Some men came to Jesus and asked Him this question. They say, "Hey, we've noticed that the disciples of John and the disciples of the Pharisees fast a lot and pray, but not Your disciples. Your disciples don't do those things. What's up?" And so Jesus answers them by saying, "You don't fast at a wedding feast. The Bridegroom is here. Why would they fast?" So He's saying, "At a wedding, you drink, you eat and you celebrate. You don't fast at a wedding. I'm here. Why would they fast? I'm here. Why would they long? I'm here. The kingdom of God is in their midst. Why would they fast?" But then He adds that little back half of the text. "There will come a time when the Bridegroom is taken away from them, and then they'll fast." So here's my trouble. Why aren't we fasting? Why aren't we longing? Why aren't we more desirous? If He really is an inexhaustible well, why are we so satisfied with where we are? Why aren't more of us provoked? If there is more to be had, why don't we want it? If there is greater joy, more sufficiency, greater hope, deeper worship, if it's available, why wouldn't we pursue our guts out until He kills us or returns? Now I can only answer that question for me. But the weight is for you to answer it for you. Why are you so contented? What is it that keeps you from full on pursuing? Are you like our boy Augustine? Are there these things that aren't doing their job in your life right now that you're just so afraid to lose if you fully sold out, if you fully gave your life to the Lord? Whatever it is, that's your god. God is not your God. That thing, whatever it is, is your god. It's an idol. And I want to keep pushing you on this. It's not working for you. You've got a death grip on that thing, and it's not helping you at all. It's keeping you from the thing that can.

Do you believe that you wouldn't be welcome in the presence of God? I'm here to tell you that in Christ you are. Boldly approach the throne of grace with confidence. Are you just so good that you don't actually need Him? I know you would never actually say that with your mouth. I'm asking about your life. Do you just have it so good, you can do it, you can handle it and you can take care of it? "Well I don't know if I'm that guy or not." Do you pray? Do you dig in the Word? Do you seek His guidance? If the answer is no to those questions, you're that guy. So you've got some questions to ask yourself. You're either unregenerate, not a believer or you're in deep need of a wound. And God, who loves you, will give it to you. Do you believe in one of those lies, or do you just not get that He's better than everything else? My earnest hope for us is that everything in us would want to swim in the ocean and that the desires of our heart, for our marriage and our children would all be about the holiday by the sea, knowing Him, worshiping Him, imparting the glory of His name to our children and walking graciously with our wives so that the picture of what Christ has done in the creation of the church and reconciling it to God might be clearly seen. My hope is that you might grow into maturity and take the floaties off. And I'm not going to be able to preach that into being. We're not going to be able to sing that into being. The Spirit is just going to have to do a work in you, and you're going to have to come face to face with the dark reality that you're far more wicked than you think you are and God is far more gracious than you think He is.

Let's pray. "Holy Spirit, I ask that You would do what I cannot and what Bleecker cannot. I pray that You would move powerfully among us in this moment where our souls are dry and where the ground is brittle. Would You send rain? Will You confront us with us in this moment? Lovingly inflict upon us the ability to see us as You see us. And then in the middle of that breaking, would You make it sweet by lavishing Your grace upon us? So may we be captivated by what You do. But this morning, maybe for the first time for so many of us, could we be captivated by who You are, that You bring restoration because You're the only One who can. So where we have idols, would You destroy them this morning? Where we're afraid to let go, will You enable us to let go? Will You stir up our affections toward You? Will You stir up our hearts and minds toward You? And may we not just play the part, but may we leave this room loving You deeply, longing for more of You and wanting it enough to put grace-driven effort to our desires. Help us. We need You. If You leave us on our own, we will easily wreck this all. It's for Your beautiful name we pray. Amen."