

You may be seated. Awesome worship this morning. My name is Pastor John Lawley. I'm the pastor of students and it's always a blessing and an honor to bring the Word to you this morning.

We're actually going to be going into our offering time this morning. If you're new with us and you're sitting on the edges on the left-hand side, the offering buckets should be underneath your chairs. You just want to pass those across. And as you do that, I would ask you to do me a favor. For those that are able to, if you have your phone with you, if you could go to our YouTube channel —

<https://www.youtube.com/user/CFDowningtowntown/videos>

— and since our series is called VIRAL, if you could share this message with your family and friends, maybe on your Facebook, that would be really helpful because this is a topic that everyone has questions about and everyone's talking about. I know in my world of student ministry this is a topic that is really heavy on a lot of students' hearts, so if we can allow God's truth to spread this morning I think it would bless them. So if you'd like to do that, I'm going to open us up in a word of prayer as we finish our offering time.

SUICIDE AND SALVATION

Father,

We love You. And Lord, I need You this morning. Lord, I am your vessel and I am not qualified to speak on this, but Lord, You qualify the unqualified and your truth penetrates the deepest hearts. You bust down our walls. Father, You change us. You bring us hope. So Lord, I pray that this sermon would bring hope, it would strengthen those that need strengthening, it would speak light into the darkness in this fallen world and that we would see clearly our need for Jesus in all things.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

If a Christian commits suicide, is he/she still saved?

So, a couple weeks ago Pastor Lee asked me if I could teach on this question and as soon as he asked me I was like, *Oh, wow, like, this is gonna be tough.* And so I've just been in the last few weeks just been in prayer and just—any time I teach a topic I always try to just surround myself in it so I read a lot of articles and books and watch a lot of movies and TV shows and I just kind of surround myself with, *Okay, what is it that God's wanting to say about these things?*

And I tell ya, I just want you to know that I'm coming with a heavy heart, but I know that you also have one as well because the issue of suicide is one that touches everyone in some way; whether you've had something happen in your family, I've had families come up to me after the service just saying how hopeful the message was, but also just how fresh the pain is of loss. You may even be in a situation

right now where you're even considering suicide or maybe you have in your past, and so I know that we are all on different places and so I want to make something very clear here. There is tremendous hope in the Word of God for this. And I also want to say that I don't believe the church should not talk about things that the Bible talks about. I think the church needs to run after those things because the world is dying and we have life and we have light and we have hope. And so that's my prayer this morning as we engage in these conversations, but I'll be addressing two topics this morning, two questions. The first is this: If a Christian commits suicide, is he or she still saved? And then the second question that I'll be dealing with is: What is the unpardonable sin, the unforgivable sin? And so this morning I'll be spending most of my time on the first question and then I'll address the second.

But as we get into this, I also want to just say that as a student pastor here I feel like I get to associate with a lot of students and understand their culture really well. And one of the things I found out is that this issue is very much being attacked in our young people's minds; this idea of their life and whether it's valuable or whether it matters, what their purpose is. And a lot of our society is glorifying things that they should never glorify because they're dark and they're lies. And so in my life, one of my jobs I feel is to speak truth and love into students' lives and to help them understand their identity in Christ.

But I would just challenge you guys as parents and grandparents and siblings that you never should not speak life into somebody's life. You should never not speak the hope you have in Christ. Don't assume that just because somebody's okay on the outside that they're not battling with darkness in the inside. And as a believers, we are to speak life always—to our co-workers, to our families, and we are to point people to that which truly satisfies which is our relationship with Jesus. And so as we embark on this conversation, I just want to challenge you as the student pastor of this church that your kids desperately need to know their identity in Christ because the world is teaching them that they don't matter. And God says no, no, no, you are immeasurable in your worth. And that you have incredible value. We need to always be speaking this, and so let's get after this first question.

In Romans chapter 8 is where we're going to start; if you guys are wanting to turn to in your Bibles, Romans chapter 8, verse 38. In Romans 8:38 it says this:

I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. ~ **ROMANS 8:38-39**

Let me tell you, what a foundation to stand on this morning. Now Paul said, "Listen, in spite of your life and how it will go, nothing for those who have trusted in Christ and have put their faith in Christ, nothing will separate you from that love." And I want to make something very clear this morning as we embark on this: You are saved by grace and you did not earn what was given to you. It was given to you. It was a gift you received by the blood of Jesus when you put your faith and trust in that, so it cannot be taken away if you did not earn it. This is what it's talking about. Listen, that love that God is pursuing you with, it cannot be taken away because it was not earned. Nothing in this world will separate you from that love. It is an everlasting pursuit of you.

So let's look at other Scripture passages when it deals with this question because I want to bring clarity to this. In John 3:16, one of the famous passages in Scripture, it says:

16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. **John 3:16**

**The moment of true belief,
you are guaranteed salvation.**

And so we see in Scripture this idea that the moment of true belief—*true belief*—it says you are guaranteed salvation. And so that's, for those that are in Christ Jesus, that is our guarantee, that is our promise.

It says in 1 John 5:13:

13 I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life. **1 John 5:13**

**Christians can know they
possess eternal life with Christ.**

Again, for Christians who have truly put their trust in Christ, they are to know that they possess eternal life. They are to cling to that promise that it is in the blood of Jesus that I'm saved. It is not through my works that I am right with God. And Romans 8 again, just a beautiful declaration of how nothing separates us from the love of God for those who are in Christ Jesus. Nothing.

And so the simple answer to this question—and I'm gonna peel this question back a little bit—but the simple answer is this: For a *true Christian in a season of darkness when the enemy's lies are being believed and they take their own life*, in that season his or her sins are still covered by the blood of Jesus. But as we see in Scripture, there's this question that a lot of us have which is not, okay, if I'm truly saved then I'm covered, but am I truly saved? Like, am I really, did I put my trust in God or did I just acknowledge Him? And I want to make something clear and I do this with our students a lot, there is a difference between acknowledging the existence of God and the existence of Jesus and putting your trust in Him. The Bible says that even demons understand Jesus for who He is, but it's for those who recognize not only who He is but to say, "Father, I put my trust in You; that You died for my sins, both my past, present, and my future." For those who not only confess it with their mouth but believe in your heart, these promises are true for you this morning. And for those who have not yet done that, truly put their trust in Christ, you are always welcome to do so right now. He's waiting for you to do so with open arms.

I'm going to talk about what He gives you, too, in Christ, which is a transformed heart, a new life, a new way to think, a new way to act, a new way to live.

John 3:18 says:

18 Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. **John 3:18**

So some of you would say, "Okay, well, John, in Scripture there's some verses that tend to reference this idea of faith, enduring faith." I want to bring those to light, Mark 13:13 and Hebrews 3:14. In Mark 13:13 it says:

13 And you will be hated by all for my name's sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved. **Mark 13:13**

And then in Hebrews 3:14 it says:

14 For we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our original confidence firm to the end. **Hebrews 3:14**

And so some would say, "Okay, does this mean that, like, our faith if it's tested and we're not faithful then we lose our salvation?" And that's not what this is saying. I want to bring something to light here. Any time you sin it is a mistrust in God. That's what sin is. Sin is *I know better, so I'm going to make this decision apart from you*. And so in our faith, listen, in my faith there is imperfection in my trust in Jesus. I don't always trust Him the way I should trust Him. That's why Paul says Father, help me in my unbelief. And so there's imperfection in our trust, but that doesn't disqualify us receiving the sacrifice that Jesus had on the cross for us. It just means that we are going to be imperfect in our pursuit of Him. Meanwhile, His perfect pursuit of us will cover all of our imperfections.

And so in Scripture I want to address two things that I think bring this theology to light; this idea that if a person commits suicide, then they can't be forgiven. The first is this; I think it's the issue of confession. So the idea is, okay, if somebody commits suicide they can't confess about their sins. And by the way, I want to say this because I see it in your eye, I know this is deep. I know this is deep. You are loved and we are going to end in such hope. So bear with me. Okay? But the person who commits suicide, they don't repent for their sins, well, then how can they be forgiven? So it's this idea of confession and we see in Scripture that it talks about the idea that it's not sin that makes you not saved.

It's like, here's what I thought about this week: How come we don't say this about things like lying? Or stealing? Like, if I would steal something and then die, does that qualify as a sin that's unrepented? Or if I lied and then died? Or what about if I was in an angry conversation with my wife and I stormed off and I got in my car and I took the bend too fast and I hit a tree and I died and my anger caused me to die, do I go to Hell because of the unrepented sin? Is that what confession is? Does confession make you right with God? The Bible doesn't teach that. The Bible says you know what makes you right with God? The blood of Jesus; the atoning sacrifice that covers all your sins.

What confession is and it's important, confession brings you into fellowship with God. Meaning when you are in sin you are allowing shame and guilt to make you think that you cannot be with God. That's why a lot of times in student ministry I can tell when kids are struggling with sin because they have an awkward presence about them when they're worshipping or when I'm teaching a message, they don't want to look because they feel like—sin creates shame and because of that shame they feel like they can't be in relationship with God. So what confession does is say, *Father, I don't want to hold this. I want You to forgive me so that I can be in fellowship with You. That I can worship You. That I can serve You and I can read my Word and not feel guilty and not feel shame.* That's what confession does. It gives it to the Lord so that you can have fellowship with Him and you don't feel that shame or that separation. And you recognize that forgiveness, it draws you back into that relationship with Him. That's what confession is. It doesn't save you because Jesus saves you.

Another thing I think is often misunderstood is the idea of righteousness. In Scripture it talks about in Romans 5:18, when a person comes to Christ not only are their sins forgiven—and this is important—Paul says that they simultaneously receive the righteousness of Christ. So it's not this idea that as I come to know the Lord then I'm clean of my sins but I gotta make sure that I stay clean or I lose my right standing with God. No, no, the Bible says that when you accept Christ, righteousness is given to you and you live in that righteousness. God sees you as perfect because of Jesus despite how you see yourself. The Bible says that God delights in you. So righteousness is not living a perfect life so that you can stand before the Lord and somehow have a good resume.

I want you to hear this because this is something my mentor used to always say to me and it humbled me every day. He said the Bible is very clear; God could send everyone in this room to Hell and be completely right in doing so, completely just, which means that there's nothing we can do to make us right with God outside of the blood of Jesus. That when we stand before the Lord in judgment, God will see us and if we are in Christ He will see none of our sins and He will see the things that we've done for His glory and His Kingdom and He will praise those things and usher us into His Presence forever. But if we are not in Christ, He doesn't see the good. He just sees the sin and we are separated from Him forever. One thought, one sinful thought separates us. So righteousness is not something that is earned, it is something that is given so it cannot be taken away. Are you guys following me?

As we get into what Scripture teaches I want to change a little bit to this angle of I think we also need to be, as a church, very slow to pronounce judgment on people. Even those that would be in a dark place and have taken their life or those that are unbelievers that have passed away and we say, "They're in Hell." The Bible talks about this idea that, listen, you don't know that. God, He sees the heart. It says in 1 Samuel 16 that:

7 But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not look on his appearance or on the height of his stature, because I have rejected him. For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart."
1 Samuel 16:7.

What I mean by that is there could be a deathbed conversation that you didn't know about. It could be God continually pursuing His grace and mercy and that person before they passed had cried out and received that grace. I know my God persistently pursues people in love until it's too late. He ultimately

wants you to be drawn to Him and He takes every direction, every relationship, every angle to make sure you know that He loves you and He wants a relationship with you, so I slow to cast judgment on those that have passed. My God is bigger than the circumstances that I've seen. So I cling to that hope that in the midst of the darkness God could have penetrated that and gave them life. Eternal.

And so we see another area, another layer to this idea of suicide. I want to address this because I think this plays a huge part in it, is the role that Satan plays in suicide. The Bible talks about in John 8:44 that Satan is a murderer from the beginning. That he seeks to destroy you with lies. And let me tell you, this is something I see all the time. The enemy is in a place where he is rejected by God and all he wants for you is to be in that same place, and so he takes the thing that is most sacred to you—which is life—and he says, *It doesn't matter. You're not loved. No one loves you. You won't be missed. See, you don't find satisfaction in your relationships or in your job because this life is meaningless. Why live it?* These are the lies that he puts into your head and he wants you to believe it.

We talk about this to students all the time. The enemy cannot, for those who believe in Jesus, he cannot make you do anything. He puts thoughts into your mind and he hopes that you believe him. I want to



say something, church, because I think this is really important. The reason that we are walking, believing those lies is because we are not in our Word. It's not a Sunday school thing when we talk about the armor of God. This is real. You're in a battle and if you do not know truth and you have lies come into your mind, there's nothing to say, *That's a lie! And I will not live that way. That is not who I am. I've been saved. I've been set free. You have no place in my mind because my heart is sealed. And the promises of God is how I live my life. It is not how I feel. It is in the promises that I walk out obedience.* Your job as a believer is to stomp those lies out every time they come into your mind.

Now, I'm going to end this message in a couple of minutes talking about who you actually are; like who the Bible says you are. And for those who cling to those, man, I can promise you right now that you will have a weapon against the enemy as you leave this room. He has no shot, but we have to run towards truth. We have to use truth. If not, we're in a battle unarmed. I don't want anybody to be unarmed because you don't have to be. So Satan seeks to attack and destroy with these lies that he produces.

I want to say this, too. I don't want you to say, "Okay, well, Pastor John said that if you commit suicide, that's not the unforgivable sin, so that's an option for me." Let me tell you something: It's not an option. And murder, which is what it is, is a serious thing. It's sin and God hates it. And He was hung on the cross and He was beaten and He was whipped because of sin because He had to pay the price for what sin is. It destroys and it separates, and the Bible says stuff like one sin the just punishment is eternity in Hell, which means we do not understand what sin is. It's a big deal.

And I was watching this pastor and he said something that really stuck with me. He said, "I don't want to be before Jesus after I just took a life." It's a terrifying thing. So I do not want you to think that it's an option just because the grace of God covers it. What I want you to know is that you can overcome it and that you have victory over it. And it's not an option because you're in Christ Jesus and you are on a mission and that you have a purpose in this life until God takes you home. And your purpose is eternal. That's what I want you to know this morning. I don't want you to feel empowered to take your life. I want you to see how precious it is.

So then, if this isn't the unforgivable sin, what is? I love the psalmist and this just came to my mind. In Psalm 43 it says, 43:5:

5 Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you in turmoil within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my salvation and my God. **Psalm 43:5**

And so we see in this psalm it's just like this dark place the psalmist is in and in that darkness he says, "Okay, I'm not going to stay here. I'm going to hope in God." And so in this sermon we're moving towards hope. Heavy, because the world will offer you things that will not satisfy you; they will offer you distractions. But the Word of God offers you true hope and true life and true joy so we don't have to fear this topic; we can run towards hope and overcome it.

What is the unpardonable sin / unforgivable sin?

And so here's where we want to go, an unpardonable, unforgivable sin. This concept of unforgivable sin it actually comes from a couple Scripture passages in which Jesus talks about this idea of blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. So we're going to look at two, Mark 3, verse 28-30, and Matthew 12:22-32. I'll kind of deal with this situation, this scenario that Jesus was in with the Pharisees. I want to pull out something from Mark 3:28. Jesus says:

²⁸ Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter,

Then He gives one exception. He says:

²⁹ but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin."

~ MARK 3:28-30 (NIV)

And so in this it kind of creates a little bit of *Okay, so if I have, if I do something, if I blaspheme the Holy Spirit, then I'm not forgiven?* Okay, what is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit? I mean, what is it because I don't want to do that. That's kind of what comes into our hearts and then we have this idea that we could lose salvation because it says it something that we can do that's unforgiven. So I want to explain this to you so there's clarity.

Jesus is performing miracles in front of the Pharisees and He's face to face with them and they're seeing that clearly He was the Messiah not only by who He was but what He was doing. And the Pharisees saw this and understood it, and yet still rejected it and said, "You are of the devil." And so Jesus' response to them by saying, "You are seeing me and you are rejecting Me." You are blaspheming the Holy Spirit which is right in front of your face." And so in context of blaspheming the Holy Spirit was specific to that time because we have not at this time been able to see Jesus face to face. Where is Jesus? He's at the right hand of the Father and He's coming back. But we have the Spirit of God in us and so we cannot reject Jesus face to face, but we can deny the Holy Spirit and the gospel of Jesus Christ. So the answer to What is the unforgivable sin? is simply this: It's continued unbelief. It's a life that rejects the

cross and what it means to be a follower of Jesus. And it's simply this: *God, I don't need You. I don't want You. I don't want your sacrifice. I don't need it.* The Bible says that's the unforgivable sin and I'll explain why. Because when you stand before your Creator and you say, "Okay, now that I see You I need You" —too late. The Bible is very clear that you have sufficient evidence in this world.

And so He will look at you, and I've heard this explained and I think this is a really powerful right way to explain this, God will look at you and He will give you exactly what you want. So if you say, "Father, I lived a life saying I don't need you," God will say, "Let me show you to the depth of what that means." And then all the things that we've experienced in this world that we take for granted—I'm talking about friendships, laughter, community, love, taste, breathing—God says, "All good things come from Me." And He turns His face and we realize that even the things that we thought weren't God were; and Hell is just human depravity... and loneliness.

And so that's what unbelief is, saying "Father, I reject the need for You." God says, "Here's what that is," and He turns His face and in that moment we realize just like the rich man, "What did I do?" That's why I don't like when the world says, "Well, Hell is a party! It's a sin party with laughter and" —no it's not! There's friendship in party, there's joy—they don't exist apart from God—let's not deceive ourselves. And so that's the unforgivable sin, continued unbelief, and I do not wish that for any soul because every soul I know is eternal. Every person I meet is eternal and I desperately want them to be in the presence of God forever. This is why we need to speak of the hope that we have in Jesus always. And do not fear men. It is God who overcomes any fear that we have. And so that's the unpardonable sin.

And I love Francis Chan, he has this quote and it always sticks with me and I want to share it with you. He says:

Anything you do not for God is ultimately a waste of time.

~ Francis Chan

And I love this, because in light of that truth, that's so true. Anything you spend your money on, your time on, your efforts on, with your family, with your work, anything you spend on that is not for God will be burned away. But everything you bring to the Lord and say, "Father, I did this for You," will be rejoiced, will be celebrated. It will matter forever. And so that stirs my affection. I don't know about you, but it stirs my affection to say, "My life is about Jesus. It's not about how I feel. It's not about what job I have. It's not about what relationships I have. It's about giving Him glory and making His Name known and building His Kingdom because I am not home."

So in Genesis 1 I was reading last week and I was like, *Father, help me to understand what You say about this darkness, because for the grace of God I haven't experienced some of the depths that I know some of these people in the room, some of you brothers and sisters in Christ have experienced, and I want to connect to that.* And so I've turned to Genesis 1, I'm not kidding here, and it says in Genesis 1 that the Spirit of God hovered over the dark abyss. And I just remember thinking, *Wow.* Like, in our darkness we are never to mistake the fact that God is still not present—He is. In our darkness God is present. He is there. And the Bible says, and I love this, it says in John 1:5 that:

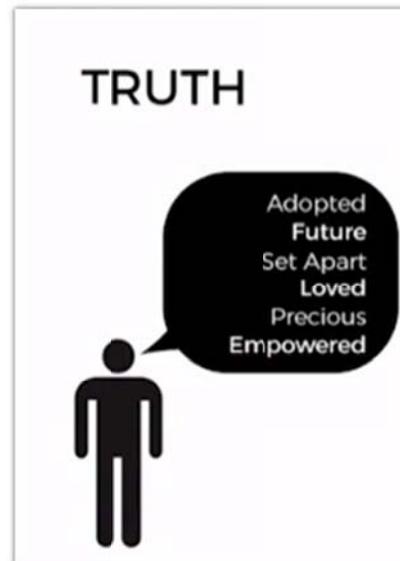
The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. ~ JOHN 1:5

So imagine, the Spirit of God hovering over the darkness and He says, "Light." And boom! There's light. And the darkness ran because it cannot overcome the light. And I was thinking of our life, that is who we are. If we are in darkness and we allow Jesus to come in, all of those things that we don't think will change * BOOM! * He'll make new. The way we think, the way we act, the way we see ourselves He will make new. So here's what I want to do, I want to take those in this room that are in darkness right now, in your thought, in your heart, wherever you are, and I'm going to speak light into it. That's what the Word of God is, it is life. And I want you to receive this because this is who you are if you are in Christ. If you are not in Christ, please give your life to Him. Find your identity in Him. If you think your life doesn't matter, wait to find out how much you matter. And I want you to receive this, okay church? So I want to speak what God says you are and I want you to just say this, "Yes! Yes, I believe this!" When you read the Word of God and you don't make justifications for your sin and you don't think yourself not worthy, you need to say *YES* and let it just be something that's deeply rooted in who you are and it will change everything. It will. I promise you. So let me go through a couple.

WHO YOU ARE	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE
<p>You are an image bearer of Jesus . . . That you are not a mistake . . . You are not like animals . . . You are not like the things of this world . . . That you are an image bearer that God took time to create you, and that you reflect Him in a way that nothing else in this created world does.</p>	<p>GENESIS 1:27 <i>So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.</i></p>
<p>He said you are an image bearer . . . that you are no longer slaves to sin.</p>	<p>ROMANS 6:6 <i>For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—</i></p>
<p>That you have been appointed a prophet to the nations.</p>	<p>JEREMIAH 1:5 <i>"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."</i></p>
<p>You are adopted to sonship.</p>	<p>EPHESIANS 1:5 <i>he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—</i></p>
<p>You are a child of the living God.</p>	<p>JOHN 1:12 <i>Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—</i></p>
<p>You have been accepted by Christ to bring praise to the Father.</p>	<p>ROMANS 15:7 <i>Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.</i></p>
<p>There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, you are one in Him and in the spirit, you are part of the body of Christ, you have been brought to the fullness through the blood, you have been chosen, you are a royal priesthood, you are God's special possession</p>	<p>1 PETER 2:9 <i>But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.</i></p>
<p>You are the temple of the Holy Spirit, you have been raised with Christ, so we are called to set our mind on the things above.</p>	<p>COLOSSIANS 3:1-2 <i>Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.</i></p>

That's who you are. That's who you are. And I thought about, *Okay, how do I make this known because I don't want these just to be words to you?* I'm going to use this example so that you hopefully you connect with this.

Imagine I lived in a kingdom, right? I'm walking down the street of this kingdom and I see this homeless man begging for food on the side of the road and he's got dirty hair, he smells, and his clothes are ripped. Imagine me walking up to this homeless man and I look and I notice something. Imagine me noticing that it's the prince and I say to him, "What are you doing here? And he says, "I'm useless. I don't matter. I have nothing to offer. I have no possessions. I have nobody that loves me. I'm just here because I don't know where else to go. I don't know what to do. No one loves me. I don't have purpose." And I say to him, "Don't you know? Like, don't you know that you're the prince? And that everything the king has is yours? And that you could get up right now and dine with the king and be in his presence and all the things that he possesses are now yours. Do you not know who you are? You are living a life, prince, that does not reflect who you are. So stand up and walk in the truth of who you are."



That's what the Word of God just said to everyone in this room. Everyone is struggling with who they are. God says, "Listen, you don't know who you are because if you did you would never question your worth. You are my child. You're the child of the King." I don't want anyone here to be thinking that's who they are. That's not who you are. And the Word of God talks about this idea of taking the enemy's thoughts captive. And I remember having conversations with people in my life, loved ones, family members, and having conversations about this topic and some were like, "Listen, when I sin, whatever reason the enemy attacks me with this, my value, my worth." So I thought, okay, if somebody came to me and they asked, "What should I pray in those moments?" I thought about that and this is what I would share with you. I'd say, "In those moments here's what I want you to pray to the Lord. I want you to say 'Father, I will give You my life, all of it. Wherever You have me to go, I will follow You, and if that means that I have to lay down my life for You, I'll do it.' "

Listen to me, pray this prayer, "I will never give it to the enemy. Father, I'll give You my life but I will never give it to the enemy. It's too precious. So in my darkness, Father, I will run to You. And the more he attacks me, the more I will pursue you." And then he [Satan] will look upon my life and say, "I cannot penetrate that because every time I try to leave a lie, they [*he snaps his fingers*] squash it with truth." This is how you have victory. You walk in truth regardless of how you feel and know who you are. You are precious. You are a child of God.

So in this moment we're going to transition into a time of communion and I think this is perfect because what communion is is Jesus saying in your times of darkness, in your times where you're battling, remember what I did for you. Remember how precious you are. These things represent the sacrifice that God freely gave so that you could be right with God. And so we do this in remembrance of Him; that we are made right through the sacrifice and the blood of Christ. And that those who are in Jesus there's no condemnation and we walk in hope and joy despite all our circumstances. As the ushers come forward with the communion—these are going to be both bread and the cup together so you're going to have to take both—I'm going to pray us into communion and then we're going to have a little song and then I'll lead us in taking it.

Father God,

We thank You so much that You are life. Father, right now in this room I pray for those that have not yet put their trust in You that they would do it right now. That during our worship time that they would respond, however You ask them to obedience. Father, I pray right now for those that have been impacted by this that You would grant them tremendous hope and peace in the midst of darkness. And I pray that we would rest in our identity as we leave here and we love and we live out your purpose in our lives. We pray as we enter into communion that our minds would reflect on the truth that is the Gospel.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

[Worship break]

At this time I just want you to join me in just thanking the Lord. The song just in my heart is to have such gratitude.

Father,

Thank you. You've paid all the sins, all the punishment, your blood covers it all. Father, your body was shed so we thank You that we are made right with You.

Jesus with His disciples took the bread before He gave His life; He said this is my body that will be broken for you—*for you*—He says do this in remembrance of me. Let's partake in remembrance of the sacrifice Jesus made.

[*They take the bread.*]

Jesus likewise took the cup and—I love this, man, this answers the question that we raised this morning, doesn't it? He said this is my blood poured out for you, your sin, it covers all of it. That's why we give Him praise. It's through Him. So do this, He says, in remembrance of me.

[*They take the cup.*]

Thank you, Jesus.

Father, we thank You and in the midst of darkness there is great hope. Thank you that You are a living God; let your Spirit move in this room and speak. Father, let us trust You more. Let's lean not on our own understanding, but on your truth, every Word of God. We pray for this last song that it would be a celebration of what You've done for us, and the life that we can now walk in because of Your Son.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

Vimeo: <https://vimeo.com/216397541>

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/CX6jpv0CKKg>

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