

Harris Creek Baptist Church
Myles Olenski
Series: AWE – How to Fear God
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AWE – How to Fear God

Hebrews 12:18-24

“¹⁸ For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest ¹⁹ and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” ²¹ Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³ and to the assembly^[a] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” Hebrews 12:18-24

Guest speaker [laughs]...Got lost back there. Just kidding! But man I know exactly what you guys are thinking....”this guy looks a lot like Dale Wallace”. And I’m not Dale Wallace, I just happen to have the same haircut as him [laughs]. My name is Myles Olenski and it is a privilege and honor to get to be with you this morning, Harris Creek, for many reasons. One, my wife is on staff here. Which is just really fun that we get to be on mission with you guys in that way. Two, Waco is home. I’m the Executive Director over at Vertical Ministries, which Vertical Ministries is a Bible study on the college campus at Baylor University and we just get to help disciple a generation of college students by teaching them the gospel and teaching them the word of God. So that is where I get to be deployed full time. But this is also really fun and sweet for many reasons and another one is, I’m going to get to be a part of the young communicators that’s going to be happening in a couple weeks that JP keeps talking about. And have been so blessed by the leadership of this church to develop me, and disciple me, and shepherd me, in the ways that they have. But that’s again not the only reason why I’m excited. The other reason I’m excited to be with you this morning is because Harris Creek has been home for many years now. That I actually have gone to Harris Creek for almost 10 years. Which makes me feel old but that was the first time I stepped onto Baylor’s campus and Harris Creek was my home church for all of college. And I got to sit under the teaching here and be led by most of the people who are on this stage worshipping. I was led by them in worship. I got to serve with the youth ministry. Derek and Kathy were my leaders in youth. I got to have a small group for four years that I just got to faithfully got to follow as they grew up and went through middle school and high school. I have been disciplined by this church. I have been shepherded and cared for by this body. I am a product; I am evidence of the faithfulness of the believers here. So, it is so fun to get to be here. I’m so grateful and honored to get to serve you in this way this morning and to open up God’s word together.

But like I said, I'm not originally from Teas. I'm not originally from Waco. I'm actually from Connecticut. That's right frozen chosen, baby that's right! Come on where we at? Northerners? Nope. Okay. Just me. For those of you that have never been to Connecticut, it's not the warmest place. Summer probably lasts about 3 days. So, this was around little league season, and I was getting ready for the upcoming baseball season. I was around 7 years old, maybe 8 years old. Maybe first grade, something like that. So, I was like hey, I need to maximize on this good weather and I need to get some practice. So, I grab my bat and I grab my ball and I head out to my front yard. And I just start throwing this ball up in the air and taking some healthy cuts, healthy swings, missing every single time. I needed practice, that's why I was out there guys. And I finally tossed it up and I make contact. Which was actually surprising to me. I didn't expect that at all. I was there for three hours, and I hadn't made contact once. And I was excited and elated. I was like "Oh my gosh! I made contact this is the best day ever!" And then that excitement and awe turned into dread pretty quickly as I saw this baseball careening toward my house. Now not just my house but all the windows of my house and I don't know if you know this but baseballs and windows are not friends. So, this baseball hit this window and destroyed it. Smashed it. Broken, shattered everywhere. And I did what any reasonable 7-year-old would do in this moment. I dropped the bat and I ran. I just took off. I was like I got to get out of here as fast as I can. Leave the evidence. You didn't see me. And I did not stop running I ran all the way up to my room and I hid under my bed. And I moved some of the boxes in front of me so that no one could see me because I was terrified. I knew that I had made a mistake and I was worried that my dad might find out. And I was worried of what he might say, and what he might tell me. He might say "Myles you're a terrible kid. You are so bad; you made a horrible mistake. Why did you do that?" And I don't know if you were like me as a kid, but I could tell the difference between my mom's footsteps and my dad's footsteps. And there was a bunch of stairs going up to my room and sure enough I heard my dad's footsteps. And I said "Oh no." Like this is it, this is when I go to meet Jesus. Like this is the day that I die because the wrath of my father is about to be poured out on me because this window.

And the reason I tell you that story, the reason I start there this morning, is because I think we've gotten the fear of God wrong. I think most of us in this room would respond really similar to the way that 7-year-old Myles responded. Is that we associate the fear of God with being afraid of God. And that's why we're in a series titled AWE. So that we could truly learn what does it mean to fear God. You see the fear of God does not just mean to be afraid of Him it's so much more than that. We're not just little kids hiding underneath our beds, we're afraid of being separated from Him. JP said it last week – "the fear of God is the fear of being far from Him". It's the fear of being away from Him. The fear of God doesn't drive us further away from God, but it actually drives us closer to Him. Right? Adam and Eve in the garden they got it wrong. They thought that the fear of God was to be afraid of them. So, what did they do, they ate the fruit, and they hid, and then covered up. And they hid themselves from the presence of God. And their approach to God looked way different.

So, this morning what we're going to be looking at is three ways to approach God. Three marks of a person who fears God. Last week JP unpacked the question, answered the question, what is the fear of God? Well, this morning we're going to be looking at how can we approach the Lord with fear. We're going to be looking at Hebrews chapter 12. And in Hebrews chapter 12 we're going to see three things. We're going to see a person who fears God trembles, a person who

fears God listens, and a person who fears God worships. So that's where we're going this morning. If you have a copy of Scripture, you can pull out your Bibles now and look at Hebrews 12 with me. We're going to be in verses 18 through 29.

Hebrews 12:18 to 24 says this **“¹⁸ For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest ¹⁹ and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. ²⁰ For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” ²¹ Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” ²² But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³ and to the assembly^[a] of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴ and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.”**

Okay pause. Now I know why Dale and Nate are on vacation this week because that was a tough text. Okay so, but to explain to you what's going on, what is happening in Hebrews 12. What's going on in Hebrews 12 is that the author of Hebrews is actually giving us commentary on an Old Testament passage. He's actually giving us commentary on Exodus 19. Do you remember what happened in Exodus 19? It's okay if you don't. You might be more familiar with Exodus 20, which is the 10 commandments. Alright so God gives the 10 commandments. Holy, perfect, righteous God, instructing an imperfect, unholy, sinful, broken people, how to live in relationship with Him. Exodus 19 is right before that. But before we get to Exodus 19, we need a backup even a little bit further. How do we get to Exodus 19? Because you got to remember the people of Israel are in Egypt in slavery for 400 years. Haven't heard the voice of God, haven't seen God, haven't heard of the presence of God, haven't seen the power of God for 400 years. Until God sends and raises up a deliverer, a leader, named Moses. And Moses goes to this man named Pharaoh and he says, “Let my people go!” Why? “So that we may worship our God in the wilderness.” So, there's an exodus and the people of Israel, the people of God, leave Egypt, cross this Red Sea, and they get to this mountain called Mount Sinai in Exodus 19. Where the presence of God, the fullness of his deity is waiting for them on the top of this mountain. And the picture that they are before, what they are seeing, is Mount Sinai inflamed in smoke and fire and lightning and thunder. And everything around them is shaking. The entire mountain itself, the scripture says, is trembling. Not just the people, the mountain itself. And I could just imagine the people of Israel are like “Moses, are you sure you want us to worship that? Like I think you may have took a wrong turn at the Red Sea.” Like that's intense. And Moses is like “Yeah this is who we are to worship.” And Mount Sinai, for those of you who don't know geography, where it's at, what it is. It's an actual mountain. I've lived in Texas long enough that I've forgotten what a mountain is. It's not Cameron Park, okay? So, Mount Sinai is 7,497 feet tall. And Moses climbs all 7,497 feet. Inching closer and closer to this God. Inching closer and closer to fire and lightning and thunder and smoke. Why? Because Moses himself knows that it is better to be with God than away from Him. In Exodus 33:15 he says, this is Moses, and he said to him **“If your presence will not go with me, do not bring us up from here.”** You see Moses knows that the fear of God is not to be away from Him. that draws me closer to Him. Even in the fullness of his glory and power and his sovereignty and his authority.

And what the author of Hebrews is still doing in Hebrews chapter 12, is he's actually making a connection in the comparison for us. He's talking about two mountains, right? He said Mount Sinai, now Mount Zion. He's talking about two covenants, the covenants that God made with the Hebrew people on that mountain and the covenant that Jesus makes with us in the new covenant. As our mediator, he talks about the two testaments the Old Testament and the New Testament. What does he say? There's one God. Same God. And that the people of God are to relate to this God in the same way. We are to come to Him and approach Him with trembling. Point number one, a person who fears God trembles.

1. *A person who fears God: Trembles*

This Greek word that's used for tremble, also means fear. It also says that it's exceedingly frightened, full of fear, frightened out of one's wits. And apparently this Greek word is only used one other time in our entire Bible and in our entire New Testament. It's Mark chapter 9, the transfiguration. The transfiguration is when Peter and John are on the mountain with Jesus and Moses, and I think Moses and Elijah appear. I could be wrong, Abraham. Someone. Uh and they appear, and Jesus is fully transfigured. And they see the fullness of his glory. And their response is this Greek word tremble. It says **“for they did not know what to say they were terrified.”**

I actually learned about this Greek word on Monday. Because every Monday, Harris Creek the teaching team, gathered together, they have sermon prep. And I'm so grateful for that meeting because it is our leadership's example of what it looks like to tremble before God. To fear Him rightly. To come into a room, to want to make the most biblical message possible. All egos out the door. This is not to impress anyone; this isn't for anyone. This is to feed the body, so let's be biblical. Let's talk about this. Let's make the best message possible. I'm so grateful for the example of our leadership in that. But I don't know if you know this, sometimes those meetings can be kind of off the rails. They're not always the most productive. I'll tell you this Dale, and Nate, and JP together it can get kind of wild.

And fun fact, there's a weird obsession about snakes in that group. Like those people know way too much about snakes. Talk way too much about snakes. Have a ton of snake stories because we were talking about things that we fear, and of course snakes came up. And as I was in that room, just kind of taking this all in, watching this. I was like “Oh I remember one time that I felt this type of fear, when I trembled.” And “Oh yeah there was actually a snake that was kind of involved with it.” So, I lived in Frisco, TX at the time. And I had just come back home from work. I took my shoes off, even my socks. I don't know if you take your shoes off when you come home, or you leave them on. Whatever it's up to you. But that day I decided to take my shoes off and I was walking into my room, grabbed my laundry, walked back into the laundry room, put that there. Walked back into my room, grab something, went back to the kitchen grabbed a snack, went back to my bedroom. And the third time that I was going into my bedroom I saw a snake right by the door. I was like “Are you kidding me! Like I stepped over that thing three times and no one wanted to tell me anything? Like nobody. No roommate, nothing that there was a snake in my room!” Alright that's cool. You know fine, whatever. And then I just did what anyone would do. I panicked and freaked out and said “Not today Satan!” This servant of Satan was sent to destroy me, but I've read my Bible and I will crush its heel. So, I grabbed a bat and got rid of it. But I was changed. Like forever. Like that moment ruined me

because I couldn't sleep. I was like "There are more snakes in my house. They're probably in my walls, they might be in my bed sheets, like this is just not cool. This is actually the snake's bedroom now. I claim the couch." And I did, I slept on the couch with my bat, and I was like not messing around.

And the reason I tell you that story is because I genuinely think that that might be the last time that I truly trembled. Like I genuinely think that might be the last time I genuinely trembled. You see what I felt then, is not typically what I feel like when I sin. If I'm honest with you, it's not typically the feeling that I feel of being far from God. Of choosing something that would separate me from Him. I don't tremble in the same way that I did with the snake. And a snake pales in comparison, with the feeling of being far from our God.

So why should we tremble? Well, I think if we look at it biblically, people who have seen God, do tremble. People who have seen God, do tremble. Exodus 19, the transfiguration, Isaiah 6. All of these are examples of when people see the presence of God, not just His power, they tremble. And I think there's something that we've lost along the way. That that hasn't become a normal part of the believer's life, or walk, or faith. That somehow, we've forgotten and somehow we've become super casual with something that is super powerful. Why should we tremble? I think trembling helps remove our casualness. I think trembling helps remove our casualness. You see I was not casual with that snake. I didn't pick it up, I didn't put it around my neck, I didn't give it a cute name. I respected that and got away from it and knew that being in the presence of that snake was harmful for me. In the same way that being far from God is harmful and dangerous.

So how do we tremble? Man, to be perfectly honest I'm not exactly sure. Like I don't know if I can stand up here before you and be like this is how you tremble before the Lord. Like that's something I'm still learning and trying to figure out. Philippians 2:12 tells us to "**work out our salvation with fear and trembling.**" I'm trying to do that as best I can. I don't know how, but I think what we can do is we can get before the Lord, sit before Him, ask penetrating questions of ourselves. We can ask, "Hey do I love Him, but do I fear Him? I love Him but do I fear Him?" I can ask, "Man do I flippantly talk with God? Or do I seriously approach Him as holy? I love Him enough to carve out an hour of my Sunday, but do I fear Him enough to obey Him Monday through Saturday?" When making decisions, "Do I think more about letting people down, or do I think more about sinning against Him?" And I think those are ways in which we can begin to tremble before the Lord and to draw close to Him and to approach Him with trembling.

Let's look back at the text, Hebrews 12 verses 25 to 27 – ²⁵ **See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven.** ²⁶ **At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, "Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens."** ²⁷ **This phrase, "Yet once more," indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain.**

What's going on in this section of Hebrews chapter 12, well the first part is that the Lord is speaking. He's speaking to me, speaking to you, He's speaking to all of us. He's given us his revealed will through his scriptures, through God's word. 2 Timothy 3:16 tells us that "**All**

scriptures breathed out by God.” These are his very words to us. He's also speaking to us through His Son. The fact that He would send His own Son to die for us, and to pay the penalty that we deserve on the cross. He's shown us His love to us, He's explained it to us, He's demonstrated it. So, He is speaking. I want to make sure that I'm listening. And He's also coming back. That's what this passage is saying, is that, **“yet once more”** He is going to come back, He's going to return, and He is coming to see if I have refused Him. He's coming to see if we have refused Him, or if we've been listening to what He has been instructing and telling us. So, point number two, a person who fears God listens.

2. A person who fears God: Listens

I think most of us in this room know that there's a big difference between listening and hearing. Right, like all my married people are just shaking their heads because they know. Right, can I get an amen? Come on. There's a big difference between listening and hearing. Even my parents in the room are like “Hey I told my son not to throw his shoe at his sister three times this morning and he did it anyway.” You know? Like we all know that because we have two ears we can hear, but not everyone truly listens. Right, it's like have you ever been on a plane, you're sitting in the security section, safety section, extended section, the one with the more legroom? Exit row? Exit row. Thank you. And what do they say? You know they like come over intercom and they're telling you all these instructions that you need to be paying attention for. And how often do you actually listen to that, or do you actually just have your earbuds in and you're like whatever this isn't important. Now if the plane were actually to be in danger, would you listen? Would you hear? Would you be like “What did you say, tell me again because I want to know. Because I want to save all these people and specifically me!” There's a big difference between listening and hearing.

Right, in the same way that this looks out, looks like, and plays out in my marriage. It's me and my wife and we, for some reason, love to have conversations in different rooms. So, I'll be in the kitchen cleaning dishes, she'll be in the bedroom folding the laundry, and she'll be trying to tell me things and I'll be like “Uh huh. Yeah. Cool. Right. Totally.” And that looks a lot different, then when I sit on the couch with her and can read her body language, and can follow up with more questions, and I can hear the tone in her voice. There's a big difference between hearing and listening.

And why do we listen? James 4:17, **“Whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is to sin.”** You see we will be held accountable. Every single one of us. One day we'll stand before the Lord and give an account to whether or not we knew Him, served Him, loved Him, listened to Him, followed Him, trusted Him, obeyed Him. Hebrews 9:27 tells us that **“And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment.”** We all will stand before Him. And He will ask us if we listened or if we refused Him. And I think we don't always think this way, because we don't have right fear. And without right fear, we'll never have a right response. Without right fear, we'll never have the right response.

Do we have any Friends fans in the building? In the room? Two people, okay. Well, if you've never seen an episode of Friends, or don't know what the show Friends is, it's about six friends who live in New York and they do crazy things. But each episode is titled “The one where...” or

“The one with...” So, example, “The one where Ross gets a tan.” And there's a lot of laughter because you know exactly what happens when Ross gets tan. He's supposed to get a four, instead he gets an eight because they double dip him and now he's bright orange. Like that's a good one. I remember that one. Or the one with “unagi,” you know and he's just like “unagi.” And you're like I know that one, I've seen that one before. I've heard it. Or “The one with the blackout.”

And each episode is described this way, and I think we can sometimes tend to treat Scripture like an episode of Friends. Right, we can sometimes come to Scripture, or our Bibles, or our quiet times, with “Oh yeah, it's the one where he parted the Red Sea.” Like, “That was a good one. That was crazy. He did that.” Or it's, “The one where he fed 5000 people with a kid's lunch box.” Man, I read that one last week. Or it's, “The one where Jesus rose from the dead.” Yeah, I've heard that one a thousand times. And because we're not approaching Scripture with fear, we have a comfortability and a familiarity to the Scriptures. Where we dismiss and refuse Him. We've become so comfortable and familiar with the stories of the Bible that we are completely dismissing what the God of our Bible is trying to tell us. It's like the airplane instructions. We've forgotten that there's danger if we don't listen to these words. And I don't want to dismiss Him. I don't want to be flippant with what the God of the universe instructs me to do. I don't want to just shut Him off because I've heard it before. I want to approach Him with fear in my listening.

So how do we listen? I think we can do this with our time in the word right. I think you just have to ask yourself, “Am I creating time and space for Him to speak to me? For the Spirit to convict me?” Isaiah 66:2 says, **“But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.”** Do we tremble at His word? Or is it just something that I need to cross off from my checklist? Do I believe in it, that it's my guide, and conscience, and authority? And that it holds the words of life? And it's going to lead me to success in everything that I do here on Earth? Or do we do this with community? Do I make decisions based off of my own wisdom or experience or do I invite the wise counsel of others in? Or when I show up to community, do I just show up to report what I have to tell them and answer three questions? Or do I lean in more when other people are sharing? Or even with prayer. Right, prayer, at its most basic, is just communication. It's just talking with God. That we bring our requests, and we wait, and we listen to hear from Him. So, a lack of desire to pray is an indicator of a lack of intimacy with God. So, I don't want to be close with you. I want to be far from you. A lack of a desire to pray is a desire to be far from Him. I think these are just some of the ways that we can begin to listen.

Let's jump back into the text as we look at point three, Hebrews 12:28 to 29 says **“²⁸ Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, ²⁹ for our God is a consuming fire.”**

3. A person who fears God: Worships

So, what's going on here, well the author of Hebrews is telling us that we need to be grateful, we ought to be grateful. Because we are entering into a Kingdom that cannot be shaken. And the only way that we can enter into this Kingdom is because of Jesus Christ. Because of the blood of our Savior. There was nothing that we did, nothing we earned, nothing we could do, to enter into this Kingdom to win or earn an invitation into it. It was only because of Jesus. And what should

that gratefulness do? It should inspire, and grow, and create in us acceptable worship with reverence and awe. If there's acceptable worship, is there unacceptable worship? Probably. I'd like to think so. Was I actually worshipping this morning, I may have been singing but was I worshipping? Am I bringing acceptable or unacceptable worship to my God, and to my King? Today, this week? And then why do we bring reverend, awe, worship to Him? Because our God is a consuming fire. That's how he's described here in Hebrews.

Right, I don't know about you, I don't know how you picture God. Sometimes I picture Jesus as you know the lamb, the dove, washing people's feet. Very rarely do I picture a bonfire. Very rarely do I picture an all-consuming fire. I haven't been around many fires. I've been around a lot of candles. It's way different. But one time I was in Birmingham, AL on an urban mission trip. And part of our service projects that we were to do is to go to a cleanup of a house that got caught on fire. And this was a consuming fire that consumed everything inside the house. When we pulled up to their street, it was just black posts. Like everything was charred. Nothing remained. And it got really eerie as we were walking through their house and we were in their living room, or what was their living room, and everything is ash. All their books, all their trinkets, their TV stand, their couch. And then I go into their kitchen, and I was like, this is where they had family dinners but there's no table here anymore. And then I go into their kids' room where all their toys were and all the kids' clothes and all of their movies or whatever they had. And it was just all gone. Nothing was spared by this fire. And as we wrapped around one more time, our team actually found a Bible. Found their family Bible that was scorched on the outside but was actually completely intact on the inside. And I was like what in the world. And I actually have a picture of it. This is what that Bible looked like [shows scorched Bible]. I mean just completely scorched on the outside, but the word of God remained. And as we opened that Bible, it actually flipped up and opened to Revelation 1:17. Revelation 1:17-18 says **“¹⁷ When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, “Fear not, I am the first and the last, ¹⁸ and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades.”**

You see in that moment, man, I was just reminded that everything will pass away. And the only thing that will remain for eternity is the Kingdom of God. Not the stuff I collect, not the accolades, not the prizes, not the job titles. But the Kingdom of God will remain forever. And I was just asking myself, do I really think that an all-consuming fire wants my stuff? Does an all-consuming fire want my stuff? Does He want my church attendance? Does He want my church membership? Does He want my church service? No, I don't think he wants any of those things. I think he wants my heart. Psalm 51:16-17 says, **“¹⁶ For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it; you will not be pleased with a burnt offering. ¹⁷ The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.”** This is the type of worship that He wants. He wants our hearts. A heart that is wholly surrendered to Him. A heart that fully trusts Him. A heart that will fully follow Him. A heart that declares “Yes Lord, wherever, whatever, I just want to say yes to you, it is my greatest delight and my joy.”

And this is why Romans 12:1 tells us, **“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”** I want my life to be a living worship, a living sacrifice. And I don't want it to be worship to anything other than my God. I don't want it to be about my job. I don't want it to

be about how much money I could make. I want it to be in living worship for my God and my King. And I don't want that to be a foreign feeling. In Revelation 1, John says that he **“fell dead.”** I don't want the first time that I fall dead in the presence of God, because of my awe, because of my right fear in which I approach Him with, to be at the gates of Heaven. I don't want the fear of God to be a foreign feeling to me.

So, in summary, a person who fears God: trembles. A person who fears God: listens. And a person who fears God: worships.

Do you remember that story about the broken window and my dad? Well, I didn't finish the story. After my dad walked up all the steps, he made his way over to my bed. And he got down on one knee. And he lifted up the covers, he poked his head under my bed, and he said “Myles, what are you doing? Why didn't you come to me? I would have only wanted to help.” And you see in that moment, I realized that there was a way that my father wanted me to approach him. There was a way that my father wanted me to come to him, to draw near to him. You see I knew there was fear, but my father wanted me to approach him in my fear, and with my fear. But he wasn't put off by that, but that's what he wanted me to bring to him. And make no mistake my father had the authority and the power to discipline, but he also had the power and authority to make things right. And to clean up the mess that I had made. And it was going to be messy. The mess was everywhere. But it was far more dangerous to be away from my father. So, he wanted me to come close. You see the safest place for me to run was into the arms of my father. And the same is true for us, that the safest place for us to run is to the arms of an omnipotent, powerful God.

Let me pray that we would. Father, we can stand here before you confident, because we know what you've saved us from. We know what our sin deserves. We know the penalty of our sin, which is death. And you've rescued us from it. You've redeemed us, ransom us. And we no longer have to fear being far from you because of the gospel of Jesus Christ that brings us close to you. So, Father, we thank you this morning. And we also come before you and confess. I confess that I don't even know if I'm rightfully approaching you with enough fear that you deserve right now in this moment. We confess that our hearts too often wander and forget the fear and the awe of God. So, Father would you help us, would you create in us a heart that wholly wants to be yours. The desires to be obedient to you. Because we're terrified of what might happen if we're away from you. Father, would you create in us a heart that wants to be obedient and follow you and run to you. We're declaring one last time this morning, Father, that you alone, are true satisfaction and joy. There's no one better than you and nothing beyond you. Amen.