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Series: Proverbs: Living Wisely in a Fallen World
Message: The Grass Isn't Greener

Transcribed Message
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Proverbs 6:20-7:27

It was August of 2017 and a group of evangelical leaders met in the city of Nashville in response to things that were happening in our country with regard to marriage and human sexuality and the whole realm of the gospel and its impact. They wrote this in article 1: "We affirm that God has designed marriage to be a covenantal, sexual, procreative, lifelong union of one man and one woman as husband and wife and is meant to signify the covenant love between Christ and His bride, the church." Article 2 said: "We affirm that God's revealed will for all people is chastity outside of marriage and fidelity within marriage. We deny that any affections, desires, or commitments ever justify sexual relations before or outside of marriage, nor do we justify any form of sexual immorality." In the preamble they make this statement: "The secular spirit of our age presents a great challenge for the Christian church. Will the church of the Lord Jesus Christ lose her biblical conviction, clarity, and courage and blend into the spirit of the age? Or will she hold fast to the word of life, draw courage from Jesus, and unashamedly proclaim His way as the way of life. Will she maintain her clear countercultural witness to a world that seems bent on ruin?"

There was a very wise man who lived a long time ago and he would have agreed in large measure with everything I just read. His name of course was Solomon and he wrote the book that we're studying. The book of Proverbs. so let's turn again to the 6th chapter of the book of Proverbs. We're going to finish out the 6th chapter by beginning at verse 20 and going into the 7th chapter. This is what we want to see. In a culture that glorifies sexual pleasure as the greatest good, we must immerse ourselves in God's truth to resist the lies.

I want to begin by simply making some observations about what to me looks like a society that is simply saturated by sex. I want to bring to you four different points. The first one is that secularism has eliminated God from every area of life. In so many

subjects that are out there today, it really ends up being a clash of worldviews. That's what this is. This is really a clash of worldviews. This is the secular view of man at the center of everything. With man at the center of everything, the secular world view looks at the Christian worldview and says you people are repressive. You're regressive. You're against all joy, all fun, all pleasure. You're rigid and uptight about matters of human sexuality. Yet what has the secular viewpoint given us? We'll touch on this a little bit later but it looks to me like it's given us a lot of heartache, a lot of loneliness, a lot of brokenness.

Secondly, personal privacy is the clarion call. It could easily be expressed as this is my life. This is my body. These are my choices. How many different ways do we hear something like that today? This is my life. I get to do what I want with my life. It's a worldview. This is my choice. I can do whatever I want. Their attitude generally speaking is that this is a cardinal doctrine of the secular world view, this idea of my own personal privacy, personal choice. So what I do, when I do it, how I do it, with who I do it really doesn't matter to you. It has no impact on you. I don't even know why you're talking about it. That would be very often their perspective and that flies directly in the face of what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6. Don't you know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit that has been given to you by God? You're to glorify God in this body. This body doesn't belong to you. This body belongs to Him. It speaks very directly to this challenge again of how it is that we even look at life.

Thirdly, every avenue of media is used to promote these messages. and I say again that they are relentless and they are oftentimes unwelcome. TV, movies, advertising, music, sports, Internet. It is just a relentless message. I wasn't even going to mention this but I talked to the guys in our Friday group about it. Here we have the women's national soccer team winning the fourth gold cup. No nation in the world has won four gold cups. They were at the Espy's, which I didn't watch, but I saw a picture or a video clip of however many ladies were on the platform, and I say this because here is an incredible platform. There has to be millions of young girls and young ladies that are looking up to these incredible athletes and what they've done. I didn't count and I didn't linger but there was five or six of them that were dressed in a way that you would have wondered what exactly is it that you're doing in this particular outfit in this particular

occasion. It was just a little bit mind-boggling to see a group of ladies that have a staged impact in a positive way and I'm sure there are many ways that they are impacting young ladies in a positive way but in that regard, in my personal opinion, it was a big fail.

I don't share these statistics because you don't know them. I share them because I don't want us to ever forget that one of the key realities of the media age that we live in is accessibility. In 2016, the largest pornographic website in the world, one site, logged 4.6 billion hours of viewing. There are thousands, probably hundreds of thousands of these sites. 4.6 billion views. Age 11 is the first point in time average wise so it's got to be younger in some cases and older another. 57% use their phone. Parents, if your children have a phone they have been given access to the most utilized means of viewing pornography that's going on in our world today. It is an epidemic. 25% of all searches are pornographic in nature. Unbelievable. 62% of teens have sent a sexually explicit message of some kind.

I remember hearing of a seminary student and he was reflecting back on his time in seminary. This was more recent than my seminary years. He was kind of pushing back against all of the conversation that he was hearing about pornography. He was almost like why are you guys talking to us about this all the time? He said then I went out into the ministry and I realized that the church is awash in this epidemic as well. so here we have this avenue, this media that promotes this worldview and this distortion of God's gift in a way that was never available before which brings me to the fourth point.

The church must be a place of honesty and it must be a place of repentance. I said a couple of weeks ago that everybody in this room that understands the nature of the topic that we're dealing with has failed in this area. This is not anything that we should be unwilling to acknowledge and admit. We're human beings. We're strugglers. This is an area of the flesh that people frequently struggle with. That's okay to acknowledge that. What's not okay is to stay stuck, to stay there, to forget of all the glorious truth that we sung about that, that God's grace has washed over our life and that we've been forgiven and there is redemption and reconciliation and freedom in Christ. Christ desires to have lordship over every area of our life and certainly this is an area that He longs to express and have lordship over.

So let's look at the folly of adultery this morning. I said these are hard verses. These are hard words in some respects and I understand that. But we're going to pick up in verse 20 of chapter 6 where we see the consequences of sexual folly and then into chapter 7 you see the strategies of sexual temptation. We'll spend a little less time there but we will not look at all of these verses. There's an introduction that is given to us in verse 20 to 24. I'm going to read that and then over to chapter 7: "My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck. When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you. For the commandment is a lamp and the teaching a light; and the reproofs of discipline are the way of life, to preserve you from the evil woman, from the smooth tongue of the adulteress." Now drop down to chapter 7: "My son, keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you; keep my commandments and live; keep my teaching as the apple of your eye." The most precious thing about your eye is the pupil. You protect it. It's precious. "Bind them on your fingers; write them on the tablet of your heart. Say to wisdom you are my sister..." which is an expression in Hebrew that would speak of one's wife, someone that you are intimate with, not biologically speaking as we would maybe use that. "...and call insight your intimate friend, to keep you from the forbidden woman, from the adulteress with her smooth words."

We start off and there is a preparation that Solomon is expressing to us here. That preparation tells us that sex education begins in the home. Sex education begins at home. I think it should be supported by the church. I think the wise men and the wise women of this Old Testament covenant relationship under God's covenant umbrella, it would have been expected that sex education would be done in the home and it would be supported within the religious community and would be supported today within the church. The very fact that we have these passages, and we've already spent a couple of Sundays looking at this topic in some regard. We have a whole book as we mentioned – Song of Solomon. Clearly God wants us to engage in this in our homes, but He wants us to engage in it in other places as well, like right here. God expects these things to be discussed. He expects these things to be dealt with. You cannot as a parent entrust this passing of information on to your children to anybody else with that.

That is your opportunity to communicate to your children this amazing and marvelous gift that God has given to us and to enlighten them about how it is that this other worldview abuses it, misuses it, mishandles it and misrepresents it. You surely cannot hand this off to a school system that may largely bring a totally different worldview to it than you have. It's incumbent on parents and you see that he speaks here in verse 20. I love this reminder again that it is fathers and mothers. You can just picture this happening in this candid, bold, clear conversation this is going on within the home as you teach them of these wonderful realities.

What do we need to teach? Well, obviously there are biological truths that have to be passed along. He is not dealing with that in this passage. He is dealing with foundational truths. He is laying foundational truths that are going to impact the biological realities. That's what he's doing here. As he does that, he says first of all keep my words. Verse 20: "My son, keep your father's commandment; and forsake not your mother's teaching." This idea is that you need to guard this stuff. These words need to be guarded because it is under attack. That's the idea of this word. Every perceptive teacher, every perceptive parent knows that the truth, whatever truth you're talking about in our culture and our day, is under assault. That is the very nature of the fallen world that we live in.

That's why the Nashville statement begins in this way and says, "Evangelical Christians at the dawn of the 21st Century find themselves living in a period of historic transition as Western culture has become increasingly post-Christian. It has embarked upon a massive revision of what it means to be a human being. Many deny that God created human beings for His glory and that His good purpose for us includes our personal and physical design as male and female. It is common to think that human identity as male and female is not part of God's beautiful plan, but is rather an expression of one's individual, autonomous preferences. The pathway to full and lasting joy through God's good design for His creatures is thus replaced by the path of shortsighted alternatives that sooner or later ruin human life and dishonor God." That's where we are. That's where we live. That's the world we live in. that's what we should expect from this world that has rejected God and turned away from His counsel and from His truth. This statement rings true to our day. If we don't guard it, somebody's

going to take it. They're going to twist it, and they're going to change it. They're going to malign what it is that God has said with regard to this matter of marriage, human sexuality, and the Gospel.

He says secondly you are to treasure my commandments. Treasure my commandments. You can just visualize this dad and mom. They're sitting down with the child at this age appropriate time and they're having this conversation. They're following this admonition of keeping my words, of treasuring my words. Here is the Word of God. This is what God says about the subject: that you were made in His image and likeness. God created you as a male. He created you as a female. This is what this looks like and so you are communicating that which has great value.

Then, on the other hand, you're pointing out those that teach a very different perspective and you're bringing that to them. You're warning them about the world that they're growing up in and living in. We see this contrast between the Word of God that you're communicating to your children and the word and the opinion of men. You're impressing upon them the question of which of these has greatest value? Which of these paths are you going to follow? Which of these are you going to give the greatest consideration to?

What you need to know is that there is an enormous difference between these two paths. Even in our graphic design, you've got this picture of this path. At the point of convergence, you're saying you're either going to follow what God says about human sexuality, what God has said about marriage, what God has entrusted to us by way of the picture of the gospel. Or you're going to reject that and you're going to go down this other path that is a path of human viewpoint and man's opinion. These are very different perspectives of life and of this matter of human sexuality. The reality is that as a follower of Christ, you and I are faced with a choice. You cannot walk both paths at the same time. You can't accept what they're saying about this matter and what God says about it. You have to choose.

Look at verse 21 and again at verse 1. "Bind them on your heart always; tie them around your neck." "My son, (verse 1) keep my words and treasure up my commandments with you." They're within you. Treasure them within you. These are not just theories to be discussed. These aren't things that we just sit there and nod in

agreement about. These aren't notes that we write on an outline page. These are realities. These are things that we are to treasure as truth in our heart. As parents, if we're not treasuring them, how in the world are our children going to treasure them? So here's the parent communicating how much they are engaged in this word, this truth. Zac mentioned a couple weeks ago something about going on a 17-hour Netflix binge. He was talking about it in the context of spiritual disciplines. I don't have time to be in the Word. I don't have time to grow. But you can do 17 hours of NetFlix binge? If your children don't see you treasuring the Word, how in the world are they supposed to treasure the Word? That doesn't mean that every time a kid walks in the room that you have an open Bible on your lap so you impress them with that open Bible. That's not the point at all. Let them see that you love God's Word. Parents need to be communicating this great love for God's truth.

Notice the motivation in verses 22 to 24: "When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; when you're awake, they will talk with you." It's a guarding of one's life first of all. There is a guarding of life. This truth is going to guard your life. That's what this word means. It means to protect. It means to shepherd. When temptation comes, and it will, it's this word that you have hidden in your heart that you will not sin against God. This word is going to be there. These teachings that are going to be used by the Spirit of God to awaken your conscience and your mind and say no, I don't need that. It's similar to Deuteronomy 6:7 when they're teaching their children when they're rising, when they're walking. All of the different aspects of life. It's the totality of life that is in view here. Verse 23 indicates something of the difficulty, the challenges, the reproofs of discipline in the way of life. This is not an easy road. This is not an easy task that we take on, but we take it on because there is a motivation here that it is going to guard our life. So we live in this world that is awash in sexuality. All of these unwelcome and unrelenting messages are coming. What are the walls of your life looking like? Are they in disrepair? Is there enough of a barrier there to protect you and your heart as we saw in Proverbs chapter 4:23? Guard your heart with all diligence for out of it flow the issues of life.

Secondly, he says it's going to add to your life. Verse 2 of the 7th chapter: "Keep my commandments and live." When the writer of Proverbs uses these expressions, it is

often times used in two different ways – sometimes both/and. It is often times with the idea of adding to your life length of days. He is saying in verse 2 keep my commandments and live. Live a long life by keeping God's commandments. Remember, that's not a promise. These are proverbs. It's a principle that is in view. That principle is expressed elsewhere in Proverbs. The way of the transgressor is hard. You live a life of dissipation, of immorality and sin, and the hardness of life is going to shorten your life generally speaking. You drive 100 miles down the interstate rather than the speed limit and your ability to react changes drastically. Why do they call that reckless driving? They call it reckless driving because you've just narrowed down the opportunity that you're going to have to respond to something around you in a safe manner. That is going to shorten your life. So he is saying that in general, in life, choices, that's true, but it's also talking about the quality of life. So the quantity of life but also the quality of life.

There's no quality of living apart from the wisdom of God. There is no quality of living apart from the wisdom of God. You and I have to ask ourselves every day what is it that we want out of life? Do we want to just exist? Do we want to just check off another box? Do we want to just pass the time or do we want to live life in some measure to the fullness of which God has for us? In the 8th chapter and verse 35: "For whoever finds me (wisdom) finds life and obtains favor from the Lord." Who doesn't want that? If you know what that means, that's John 10:10, the abundant life that Jesus promised. You find wisdom and you find life, not just in terms of the length of life but the quality of life. It is really living.

Here's the thing, here we live in this world in which sexual freedom is one of the cardinal doctrines of the secular world view. It's my body. It is my choice. I do whatever I want. I'm not bothering you. You don't have to tell me that that's wrong or that's right. Your opinion is of no interest to me. Here's the point of this. You would think after 60 years of the sexual revolution starting in about the 1960s when everybody just started throwing off restraint and we thought we had discovered a new path of wonderful living. Would you not think that there is this large body of evidence that there is this large body of truth that supports that this other life choice, that this path so many are choosing wouldn't you think that there are all kinds of studies that show that this is just a wonderful life? That what's waiting out there is in fact what has been promised, that it

couldn't get any better. You jump in and out of bed with whoever you want and do whatever you want. Life is great and you can't wait for the weekend to do it again. What is the reality of that? I said before there's a lot of brokenness and a lot of pain. There is an incredible amount of sorrow and heartache that is inflicted on everybody around that circle.

Just let me offer one counterpoint to the nonexistent body of evidence that this other worldview has got so much to offer and it is so wonderful. It is in the area that you might expect of sexually transmitted infections, STIs. One in 2 sexually active persons will contract an STI. One in 2. Your odds of getting a sexually transmitted infection, stepping outside of God's design for sex within marriage, is you've got a 50/50 chance of getting a sexually transmitted infection. The CDC estimates that 20 million, if you think that that information is out there and is resonating, the CDC estimates there are 20 million new cases in the United States every year. Most of those, half of those, are between the ages of 15 and 24. The CDC estimates that undiagnosed STIs causes 24,000 women every year to be infertile for the rest of their life. Who's telling them that? The total estimated cost of STI's in United States is estimated to be \$16 billion a year. 16 billion. Researchers estimate that at least 80% of sexually active people will get HPV infection at some point in their life. 80% will have HPV. Herpes, the most common infection, one in eight between the ages of 14 and 49. Now, my friends, there is no body of evidence on the other side that says if you choose to live life by this cardinal doctrine of I get to do whatever I want, to do with whoever I want, to do whenever I want to do it, however I want to do it, there is no body of evidence that says that's a wonderful life. The overwhelming body of evidence is that it's a painful, lonely, difficult, hard life. Sure, as I said a couple weeks ago, the Bible acknowledges there is pleasure in sin for a season, but it does not last. Here he tells us, if you want to add to your life, this is the motivation. To guard your heart.

Look at the lesson. The lesson – verses 25 to 35. We have the temptation in verse 25: “Do not desire her beauty in your heart, and do not let her capture you with her eyelashes.” This is a command. It's the same word that is in the 10th commandment. It means to not covet. The 10th commandment says don't covet your neighbor's house. Don't covet his wife. Don't covet his servants. Just don't covet anything that your

neighbor has. Same exact word. It is just a strong word for desire. Would to God that temptations that come to us physically and spiritually would have a sign on them that would say danger ahead, right? Would to God that the temptations that come our way would come with a skull and cross bones and say poison. Don't pick this. But that is not the way temptation comes. That's the whole point of verse 25. Don't desire her beauty in your heart. Outwardly she looks beautiful to you, but you need to understand there is great harm in this choice that you're making. Satan is described as being an angel of light. We're not surprised the temptation that the world offers us looks incredibly attractive. In Ezekiel 28, Lucifer, who is no doubt a picture of Satan himself, was the highest of all of God's created beings, the most beautiful of all God's created beings and yet now he presents himself as an angel of light. But what he brings into lives is brokenness and death. We have this command and we also have the choice. There's a choice. What begins as a look quickly leads to lust. What do we read in 2 Samuel chapter 11? David, who should've been out on the battlefield, we read in 2 Samuel 11:2 that David is out in his balcony garden looking over and he sees a beautiful woman bathing. He should have turned and went right back into the palace but he didn't. He decided he would stay there and the look turned to lust. Right there David had a choice to make and David failed to make the right choice. He didn't see that the mark on that choice said poison. Your life is going to be impacted forever by making this choice.

Look at chapter 7 verses 6 through 9: "For at the window of my house I have looked out through my lattice, and I have seen the among the simple, I have perceived among the youths, a young man lacking sense, passing along the street near her corner, taking the road to her house in the twilight, in the evening, at the time of night and darkness." The simple one that we've seen before. He's naïve. He thinks he's a man of the world, right? He thinks he's a man that can handle anything. He's sophisticated. He's smart. He's got the world by the tail. Solomon says he's a fool. He's stupid. He lacks sense. He's naïve. He's unaware.

So why should we resist? The reasons to resist. Verse 26 gives us a summary statement and it says this: "For the price of a prostitute is only a loaf of bread, but a married woman hunts down a precious life." Now that's a very difficult verse to translate but I think what it is saying to us is really a contrast between the prostitute and the

married woman. The contrast between the perceived cost and the real cost. The idea that the prostitute might lead you to financial poverty. The married woman engaging in adultery is going to lead to something far more costly, much more difficult and much more trouble in your life. He's not saying pick the prostitute because it will only end in financial poverty. He's saying don't pick either one because there are the inevitable consequences.

Those inevitable consequences? Look at verse 27: "Can a man carry fire next to his chest and his clothes not be burned? Or can one walk on hot coals and his feet not be scorched?" Verse 29: "So is he who goes into his neighbor's wife; none who touches her will go unpunished." The questions are almost offensive in their simplicity. Here. Let me take fire and hold it to my chest. It won't burn me. Let me take my shoes and socks off and walk on these burning coals. It's not going to have any impact on me. And yet that's what the deceptiveness of sin does in our life. We make a choice and in any other circumstance we would see clearly that bringing fire to one's chest is going to result in a severe burn. But in this case... oh no. It's not going to have an impact on me. That's the point he is making here. How it is that sin causes us to not see with clarity. That's what we go back to: guard your heart. Treasure my truth. all of these things fit together when you see it put together. That is exactly his message to us.

Now look at the practical cost of this in verse 30 to 35: "People do not despise a thief if he steals to satisfy his appetite when he is hungry, but if he is caught, he will pay sevenfold; he will give all of the goods of his house. He who commits adultery lacks sense; he who does it destroys himself. He will get wounds and dishonor, and his disgrace will not be wiped away. For jealousy makes a man furious, and he will not spare when he takes revenge. He will accept no compensation; he will refuse though you multiply gifts." Look over chapter 7 verse 24: "And now, O sons, listen to me, and be attentive to the words of my mouth. Let not your heart turn aside to her ways; do not stray into her paths, for many a victim has she laid low, and all her slain are a mighty throng. Her house is the way to Sheol, going down to the chambers of death." Solomon, as he goes through this argument, doesn't deal in the ethical side of this. He is not trying to convince us of the rightness or wrongness. He is digging right into the practical

realities of what happens when we foolishly make these choices. He is saying this is the reality. This is the cost of the folly of adultery. It is self-destructive by its very definition.

I remember in seminary a professor saying to us: Guys, when you get out there in the ministry, you're never going to have anybody call and make an appointment and come into your office and sit down and say pastor, I just want you to know I've made a choice and a decision to commit adultery. It was really the best decision I ever made. I can't believe how it positively affected and changed my life. I'm so glad I did it. What you have is people who call and make an appointment. They come in brokenness to your office. They acknowledge that if they could do anything, they would love to go back in time, to rewind that clock, and have a different outcome. That's what he's talking about here. He's talking about the practical realities that if you and I do not cherish lady wisdom, madam folly will get a hold of our heart. That is why he is building all of this chapter after chapter of treasuring the Word in your life. Guard your heart with all diligence for out of it flow the issues of life. Keeping our way pure by taking heed according to God's Word. Hiding God's Word in my heart that I might not sin against Him. All of that, right?

I want to wrap up by looking at stopping an affair before it starts. This is from Tommy Nelson, so it is not original with me. He puts together six words. He talks about the ease with which one can fall into this trap that clearly our culture has embraced. Our culture doesn't even see it as a trap. Our culture glorifies this. Find a TV show that doesn't glorify adultery. Find a movie that isn't involved in some kind of illicit relationship. You can't hardly. They're almost nonexistent.

Tommy Nelson says the first thing you do if you want to have an affair is to eliminate. Eliminate all intimacy from your marriage. He's not just talking about sexual intimacy. He is just saying eliminate intimacy from your marriage. Don't share tender moments. Don't converse together. Don't date each other. Don't pursue each other. Make sure that you eliminate all of that and the joy will fade and the discontent will begin to rise.

Secondly, encounter. Somewhere sometime you are going to meet somebody and it's going to click. I remember hearing a speaker one time that said there's somebody in this world that if given the opportunity and your guard is down, the enemy

is going to have them click with your soul in a way that you didn't think was possible. That's what this is saying. There's an encounter that happens and what's missing from your marriage suddenly begins to click with this person that you're attracted to.

Thirdly, enjoy. You find yourself enjoying this relationship. These conversations, this empty space in your life that is not being filled? They're being filled by somebody other than your spouse.

Fourthly, expedite. Now you start looking for opportunities to be together. Instead of just waiting for these things to happen, you arrange for them to happen. You pursue these things instead of just hoping they'll happen.

Fifth, express. You express these growing emotions. Now you're saying stuff like you're so easy to talk to. I wish my wife was like you. I wish my husband was like you. I think I could live with you forever. You begin to express things that you should never be expressing. Pretty soon, you've got yourself a bridge that's built right to Fantasy Island, because now all of the consequences of which Solomon has already told us, those things are a distant memory. Now you actually believe you can take fire and hold it to your chest and you're not going to get burned. You think you can take your shoes and socks off and you can walk right across those coals and nothing is going happen to you.

Then finally, he says experience. All that remains is for physical consummation. All that remains is for a sexual encounter to occur. Affairs don't happen when two people meet, take their clothes off, and jump into bed and have sex together. There is a trail that leads up to that, of choices being made that cause us to follow that. John Owen, remember our Puritan friend, said, "Sin always aims at the uttermost." Sin always aims at the uttermost. Listen. The smallest sin is but one step to the biggest and most treacherous sin. Remember the other thing he said? "You be killing sin or sin will be killing you." That's what we've got to do. We've got to be killing sin. We've got to be running. The overwhelming testimony of Scripture in this regard is run from sexual temptation.

So in a culture, my friend, that glorifies sexual pleasure to the greatest good, we have to immerse ourselves in this truth. We have to engage in community with each other. We have to acknowledge that we're strugglers, and that we sometimes are in a

battle but we are not going to stay stuck in that place. By God and His grace and with the help of others, we're going to move beyond.

What we take away is this. The great lie of the enemy in this whole scenario is there's no way back. The truth is the way back from any sin, the way back from any sin always begins with humility. It always begins with brokenness. It always begins with a repentance. It always takes us to the cross. It always includes the Father's embrace because He's the prodigal Father. He is waiting on the road to see the son. He is the prodigal Father. He's the Father. The word prodigal, being the idea of giving more than we could ever imagine. So here is that gracious Father waiting for us. The writer of Hebrews says there's a besetting sin in our life. What do we do? In humility and brokenness, we acknowledge it. We run to the cross and we receive the Father's embrace.

My friends, what Jesus did for us on that cross was to make it possible for us to be forgiven people, to experience grace, to experience mercy which we do not deserve. There isn't anybody here that is a worse sinner than anybody else. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Don't you leave here this morning without an opportunity of that gospel being embraced in your heart, in your life, and knowing the forgiveness of sin, and knowing that your eternal destiny has been determined on that cross as you believe and put your trust in Christ.

Let's pray. Gracious Father, thank You for speaking truth to us. Thank You that You just tell us what we need to hear. Lord, I pray that we would be receptive to that Word, that truth. I pray that Your Spirit would work in each of our hearts, Father, to bring us to the point of brokenness and humility and gratitude for all that You've done. Father God, we love You. Jesus, thank You for Your indescribable, incredible gift. Holy Spirit, thank You for opening our hearts and our minds to these truths that truly guard and preserve us. We're grateful. In Jesus's name, amen.