

I'm Not Ok; You're Not Ok: Part 4, The Redemption of Our Hearts

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By Ty Blackburn

Bible Text: Psalm 24:3-4; Hebrews 5:7-10

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Providence Church

2146 Buford Hwy

Buford Hwy, Duluth, GA 30097

Website: www.providenceduluth.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/providencechurch

Please turn with me in your Bibles to Psalm 24. We're going to start there this morning. We're continuing to look at the theology of the human heart. We're taking a break from our study of James to really try to understand sanctification and how we are to grow in Christ, what God's will for us is in sanctification, relating to what we often refer to as biblical counseling. Biblical counseling trains really just applying the teachings of the Bible of sanctification to your heart and to your problems; learning how to follow Jesus in every area of our lives.

So I've titled the series of messages that we're working through, "I'm Not Ok, You're Not Ok," and so this is part 4 in that series. I'm not ok, you're not ok, but the subtitle this morning is "The Redemption of Our Hearts." I'm not ok, you're not ok, the redemption of our hearts. The problem with mankind according to the Bible is fundamentally a problem of the heart. The heart is the Bible's favorite word to describe the inner man. There are a number of words which are close synonyms that Scripture uses virtually synonymously, these different words: the soul; the spirit; the heart, and the heart is the favorite, favored word. It's used almost a thousand times in the Bible to refer to the inner man and Scripture posits that the problem with mankind in general and the problem with each human being in particular is ultimately a problem of the heart. It's not primarily, man is not a mess primarily because of biological or genetic deficiencies, chemical issues. These things contribute but they are not the problem, the root problem. Man is not primarily a problem because of his social or cultural environment. The heart is the issue. It's out of the heart that come the evil thoughts Jesus makes clear and the Scriptures make clear.

So we've been looking at this idea of the human heart and what the Bible says about that. I'm not ok, you're not ok, we have a problem in our hearts and so we looked a couple of weeks ago at the design of the human heart; that the human heart, the inner man as Scripture describes, is really composed of three sub parts. The heart is used to describe three different functions of the inner man. The thinking, you think in your heart, according to the Scriptures. It's the thoughts of the heart. Jesus discerned the thoughts of their hearts. So the heart is where we think. It's one of the functions. The second function is that of desire or wanting. The heart thinks, that's the first thing, the heart wants. The desires of the heart. Scripture refers to that aspect of the inner man, the heart. And thirdly, the heart chooses. The heart decides. And so in all three of these areas, we were designed

to think, to want, and to choose in the same way God thinks, wants and chooses. I mean, man was made in the image of God to be a replica, a reflection of who God is, and the Scriptures show us a God who thinks, a God who wants, desires, and a God who chooses. So we were made to operate in relationship to God reflecting him in the way we think, in what we want, in how we choose. That's what we were designed and wired to do and we will be most fulfilled, most human, when we are connected to God, wanting what he wants, thinking what he thinks, and choosing what he chooses.

That's what we talked about, the design of the human heart. That's the way you were designed to operate. Then last Sunday we talked about the corruption of the human heart. That's why the I'm not ok, you're not ok, our hearts are corrupt. Our hearts have been distorted. The doctrine of total depravity is really a summary way of saying what the Bible says about the inner man, the human heart. We see that our hearts are depraved, that is twisted, distorted. That's what the word means. Not as they were originally created to be. And how does that work out? It works out in all three functions. The thinking of our hearts is messed up. The mind is darkened. The thinking part of the heart, the mind, another word the Bible uses, it's an overlay, these different synonyms. So our thinking is darkened. Romans 1:21, when man turns away from God and does not worship or give thanks, he becomes, his foolish heart is darkened and he has empty speculations. His reasoning is now empty.

So that's what we looked at last time, that the heart is corrupted. The mind is darkened, the affections are alienated. What we want, what we desire is messed up as well. We become hostile to God. We ought to love God and yet we're born into this world in a state of hostility toward God. Colossians 1:21, the Apostle Paul reminds the believers in Colossae, those who have been saved, he says, "Formerly, before you were saved, you were hostile toward God. You were hostile and living in disobedience. You hated God. You were at enmity with God." Romans 8:7, "The natural man is at enmity with God." It's hostile toward God. People don't think they are hostile to God but they are hostile to the true living God. Then also it's not just the thinking and the wanting but the choosing. Our hearts are bound in sin. Jesus said that the soul who sins is a slave of sin, John 8:34; that if you sin, you're the slave of sin. The Bible pictures that, that we can't do anything but choose sin. Even when we do good things, there is sinful motivation.

So that's what we talked about last time and we might summarize the Bible's teaching on the heart by Jeremiah 17:9, "The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, who can know it?" So that's the disease of the heart, the corruption of the heart, the spiritual disease of sin has corrupted the heart and turned and distorted it, and this morning we want to talk about the redemption, the good news, that Jesus Christ has come to offer you a new heart and that the work that he has done is so glorious, it's so much more wonderful than we are prone to imagine. I want us to begin the discussion by starting in Psalm 24. This is going to be just a point of departure to start our message. We're not really going to be expositing Psalm 24 very long, we're actually going to spend more time in Hebrews 5. So we'll start in Psalm 24 and, Lord willing, we'll come back to it at the end. That's the plan. We'll see if we accomplish that, but we're going to go next to Hebrews 5.

But Psalm 24:3 and 4, this is a question that we might in our minds eye imagine an angel basically at the gate of heaven every day posing this question out across a fallen world. Okay? The angel outside the gate of heaven says in verse 3,

3 Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place?

Who can come into the presence of the living God? Who can dwell in his heaven, his holy heaven? Look at what he says in verse 4,

4 He who has clean hands and a pure heart, Who has not lifted up his soul to falsehood And has not sworn deceitfully.

To dwell in the presence of God, you have to have clean hands and a pure heart. We have a problem. Our hands are filthy and our hearts are corrupt. We need a Savior.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Our Father, we praise you that you are a God who not only tells us with real honest clarity the greatness of our need and the greatness of our problem, the awfulness of our condition, but you are a God who trumpets the good news, who announces peace and proclaims good news to Zion. How lovely on the mountains, Lord, are the Lord Jesus' feet who makes peace. We pray that you might help us this morning to see the glory of Christ that we might understand more fully the wonder of all that he has accomplished on behalf of those who believe. We pray in his name. Amen.

I'm not ok, you're not ok, the redemption of our hearts. I want us to consider two main points during our time this morning and the first is our need, and the second and we're just going to hit that quickly, is God's gift. Our need. Psalm 24:3 and 4 basically says how can you go to heaven. You know, if you ask people, the average person if you ask and get in a conversation about heaven, they believe in God, if they believe in God you ask them do you believe in the afterlife, do you believe in heaven, and you ask them then, okay they say yes, and you say do you believe you're going there? Most people will say yes. They believe they are. And you ask them why. Well, and they'll generally start citing, "Well, I try to be a good person. I'm not as bad as other people. I'm making a lot of progress. I'm working on things."

They basically have an idea that they're going to heaven but the Scripture is really clear that the only way that you can go to heaven is to have perfectly clean hands and a perfectly pure heart. In fact, James 2:10 talks about clean hands without using the word. It says this: clean hands is in the things that you do. Clean hands is your deeds and I would say your words as well. What you do. The things that you do in this life must be completely clean. James 2:10 says that if you keep the whole law and offend in one point, you are guilty of the whole law. That is, that if your hands are clean 99.99% of the time and .00001% of the time they're dirty, that's too dirty to go in the presence of God. One

sin. Now the reality is we sin all the time. Our hands are filthy. They're not even close to clean and the people who think they are clean are just demonstrating how blind they are because we sin continually in our natural state.

But it requires perfectly clean hands, but not only perfectly clean hands according to the psalmist, you must also have a perfectly pure heart. Your heart must be perfectly pure in the sight of God to go in the presence of God. This means you must love God with all your heart all the time. This means from what we see that the rest of Scripture says, that your thinking, your wanting and your choosing must be perfectly pure at every moment throughout your life; that you must always think God's thoughts after him; you must always want what he wants in exactly the way that you should want it in proportion; and you must always choose everything that he would choose. But what does the Bible say about your heart and my heart? It doesn't say it's 90% there, it says the verse we quoted earlier, Jeremiah 17:9, the heart is desperately wicked, deceitful above all things, who can even know it? We are helpless and hopeless according to the Scriptures but the good news is that God, who requires this standard of perfection, has looked at us in our miserable condition and has sent his Son to provide an answer. The Great Physician has come to heal us.

That brings us to the second point: God's gift, and this is where we're going to spend most of our time because we're talking about the redemption of our hearts. God's gift. We've seen our need, we need to have clean hands and a pure heart. God's gift is to give you perfectly clean hands through Jesus Christ, and God's gift is to give you perfectly, a perfectly pure heart through Jesus Christ. This idea of the heart is something that as I've considered this, is hitting me with new force. The clean hands part I felt like I had a little better understanding of, but the pure heart that he has given you through Christ, that Christ has accomplished for us, is something wonderful and glorious and I want us to see today the reality of that.

Now, for Jesus to give you clean hands, let's just talk about that for a moment before we get focused on the pure heart that Christ has, this means that Jesus when he comes and dies for our sins, he is a spotless lamb, he must be unblemished to offer himself as a sacrifice, there is no guilt in him, and he dies in our place bearing our sins. This is the picture of the whole Old Testament. This is what John the Baptist summarized when he laid eyes upon Jesus. Remember what John said when he saw Jesus? "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." Jesus will be the lamb whose innocence and whose perfectly clean hands will now become stained with our sins as he bears them to the cross. God imputes our sin to him, credits our sin to his account, and he suffers as if he had lived the wicked and evil life that I've lived and that you've lived, and he bears the rod for every one of our sins.

Not only that. So he takes our sins away but not only that, he gives us a perfect record of righteousness. He doesn't just make your hands clean in the sense of to remove the stains, he actually makes your hands clean in the sense of being exactly what God wanted them to be so that you now have not only no bad things that you've done, you have a record of perfect obedience. This is why he lived for 30+ years. This is why he came into the world

as a baby, as an embryo, conceived in the womb of his mother, and experienced the full scope of humanity, so that he could be tempted in every way yet without sin; so that he could offer to God a perfect record of righteousness; tempted continually, always obeying. Always obeying, never doing what he shouldn't do but always doing what he should do. So by faith, you come not only to have a record that's no guilt, it's not that the verdict is not guilty, if you belong to Jesus Christ, the verdict is you are now perfectly righteous. His record of perfect righteousness is credited to you so that when God looks at you he doesn't see that you're just not guilty, we're letting you in by technicality. No, you are robed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Every wonderful deed that he did is credited to you.

That's how God sees you. That's how God sees your hands. You have clean hands. But not only that, Jesus purchases for us a pure heart by fully embodying the purity of heart in human form to its perfection. That's why I want to turn to Hebrews 5. God's gift is clean hands but it's also a pure heart. This is what we want to focus on now.

The author of Hebrews in chapter 5 is showing us how Jesus is a perfect high priest. He is able to truly bring us back to God. He's basically showing how Psalm 24:3 and 4, Jesus is fulfilling. Who can ascend the hill of the Lord? Who can stand in his holy place? Only those who have clean hands and a pure heart. Hebrews 5 is saying Jesus is able as a high priest to bring you with clean hands and a pure heart into the very presence of the living God with your head held high, not ashamed, not drawing back because of the greatness of your high priest.

Verse 7,

7 In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety. 8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered. 9 And having been made perfect, He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation, 10 being designated by God as a high priest according to the order of Melchizedek.

This passage is absolutely astonishing. There are some things that if you're reading carefully when you read a passage like this, that ought to be arresting to you. I mean, think about these words, "He learned obedience." Who are we talking about? We're talking about the second person of the Trinity, the Son of God, the eternal Son of God, the man Christ Jesus. He learned obedience. How can God learn anything? This is a mystery of who Christ is, that he is fully God and fully man, and the author of Hebrews is saying that in his humanity he truly learned how to obey to the full. There was a growing learning process of learning to submit to God fully.

What he's basically saying is that Jesus' heart of obedience was being cultivated throughout his life and it wasn't just like an easy thing for him like we tend to think. I mean, we tend to mix, it's so hard for us to understand he's fully God and fully man, and

that's the clear teaching of the Bible. He's 100% God and he's 100% man. He's not half God, half man. No, he's fully God and fully man, but to be fully man means that he truly is very bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; that when he was in the womb of his mother, he was dependent upon her for his physical life; that when he was born, he had to be fed, he had to have his diaper changed. The Almighty had to learn to walk. He had to be taught his A, B, C's or his aleph, bet, gimels in Hebrew. He was dependent upon other human beings to care for him. That's mind blowing. What kind of God lowers himself down to do that? That is the mystery. That's the most, in some ways it's true what J. I. Packer says, in some ways the most amazing thing that's ever happened, the most amazing event that ever happened is not so much the resurrection, it's the Incarnation. How can God become man? Once you accept that, everything else just follows and the author of Hebrews is mining for us the vast riches of this, I think we will be wondering about this millions of years into eternity and growing in our awe and wonder and delight in this reality. We will never never measure it, never sound the depths of the wonder of this but it is so rich.

He's saying that he learned obedience, that there was a growth and a progression in his life. He's learning to obey. He's given more and more opportunities to obey. He never failed. Now please be clear. For us to learn obedience, we make a mistake and then we correct it. No, he never made a mistake. Not a sinful mistake. I'm sure he might have missed a nail, there were things he did humanly that, you know, he missed a basket. They didn't play basketball but if they did. Anyway, other things like that. Of course, he was human. He didn't go through life as a Superman and just jumping through life and doing whatever he could do. No, he lived full human life but he never sinned. Never once. And yet the obedience in many ways became more and more difficult as every day passed and he grew in his faithfulness and it was his obedience to God because he had new challenges and each of these challenges brought more and more surrender of his heart, his human heart. In this way he learned obedience.

There's an analogy in our own growth in grace. Those of you that have walked with the Lord for a long time, you think about different experiences that you've had, trials that you've gone through, and think about the benefit of those trials, how when you were shaken by a trial, you come to surrender to Christ more fully and there's a new level of fellowship and intimacy, a new level of surrender. That's analogous to what's happening in Jesus as he matures. He's never withholding, though, but he's growing in the fullness of what he's offering.

You see this progression even continuing, he learned obedience through the things he suffered. You see as he suffers, he is learning to obey and trust. Verse 9, "and having been made perfect," this word pictures reaching completion. His obedience reaches completion, the full extent. He learned obedience to the point of being made perfect, and having been made perfect, having reached the perfect fulfillment of all that man is created to be, he becomes the source of eternal salvation. He couldn't just come down, be created by God the Father as a 33-year-old man and offer his holy life as a sacrifice. That's not saving us. That would have taken our sins out of the way but that wouldn't have given us clean hands and a pure heart. Clean hands came through 33 years of being

tempted and not sinning. A pure heart came through 33 years of faithfully entrusting himself to God the Father. Moment by moment trusting God.

You think about this learning obedience. We have hints at it throughout the Gospels in different ways but I want to spend a moment, look at Luke 2. We'll look at verse 47 for the sake of time. This is the story where Jesus was 12 years old, his family went from Nazareth their hometown to Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover, and on the way home they realize they've left Jesus behind. You know, they're in a big group, a caravan of people that are going from Nazareth down together and they assume he's with somebody else, he's with an aunt or an uncle or something, and they think he's with them and they realize after they've gotten out of the city he's not with them. They turn around and go back and they find him in the temple. Verse 47, he's been talking to the people in the temple, a 12-year-old boy,

47 ... all who heard Him were amazed at His understanding and His answers. 48 When they saw Him, they were astonished; and His mother said to Him, "Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You."

"Why did you stay behind? Why did you not know that we would be worried about you?" they are basically saying.

49 And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" 50 But they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. [Here, look at this] 51 And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all these things in her heart. 52 And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom [isn't that amazing?] He kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

In fact, the word for "increasing," it's interesting. Actually, a couple of different things here, a couple of verbs here and they're important to note. He continued in subjection. At age 12, he is ready to begin his ministry. That's what's happening. "Why would you be looking? Did you not know I had to be in my Father's house? I'm ready to do my ministry." He's confounding, I mean, he's already able to confound the Pharisees and the teachers of the law. The chief priest, the Sadducees, they are baffled by him. But it's not at the Father's time.

So verse 51, he has to leave, even though he would rather stay and minister, start his ministry, he has to leave and go home with mom and dad. Mom and dad said, "No, we're going home. What are you doing here?" We don't know exactly what the interchange was but that's essentially the idea. "Why didn't you think about us?" Mary is saying, "I can't believe that you weren't aware that we were worried." Of course, he did nothing wrong. But he continued in subjection to them. The idea in the Greek was an ongoing subjecting of himself; an ongoing way, continual way; was continually subjecting himself. He was making a conscious decision continually to be obedient to his parents. And he goes back

from age 12 to age 30 and he does what they tell him to do. He works in his father's carpentry shop, we imagine. He takes out the trash. If they had yards like we do, and they probably didn't, he would have cut the grass. He would have cleaned up his room. He did everything his mother and father told him to do and even as a young man, he continues to take care of things in the house until finally the Father says, "It's time." And part of that was perfecting his obedience. He was learning obedience through the things he suffered.

Here he is the eternal Son of God learning to humbly submit to an imperfect mother and father and he kept increasing in wisdom and stature. Another interesting word, kept increasing. It pictures a process that's not easy. So in his humanity, he's having to memorize, he's having to think, he's having to learn. He's not borrowing from his divinity like, you know, sort of like transferring accounts. It's like I've got an account over here and whatever I need, I just transfer from over here. We sometimes might think that's the case. Jesus, you know, he wrote the whole Bible, the deity of Christ, right? So the human brain, can it not just borrow any time it wants to? "Hey, I'd like to download the whole book of Deuteronomy right now." There it is. No. He's apparently learning the way we learn.

Now we can't go too far here. We're on holy ground, we want to walk softly, but essentially the idea here of he kept increasing in wisdom and stature was he is making progress in the way he understands the world in his humanity. In fact, the word for "increasing, kept increasing," it's a word which means "to cut; to strike; to beat forward." So it means to make progress, to increase, but the word picture is really like somebody hacking through a jungle, beating, striking so that you can make forward progress. It pictures a difficult process. To keep increasing in wisdom, he's working at it. This is part of his record of righteousness. This is part of his heart development. He's working at his thinking, making his thinking, conforming his thinking to his Father's. He's working at conforming. Now it's different than you and me. Our thinking is sinful, our values are sinful. His are not but he's still, there is a process in which he's going through to bring continually his thinking in subjection to the Father; his values in subjection to the Father; his choices in subjection to the Father. He always does it perfectly, though.

Learning obedience and having been made perfect, back to Hebrews 5, reaches his completion, this process reaches completion so that he has fully offered to God the fullness of a human life lived and devoted to God, and through that he is now able to offer salvation. At the end of this long arduous process, he is now ready to become, as Hebrews 5:9 says, "having been made perfect," having reached the end, "He became to all those who obey Him the source of eternal salvation." And I think the author of Hebrews has in mind particularly the moment that that perfection happens is described in verse 7, "In the days of His flesh, He offered up both prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able to save Him from death, and He was heard because of His piety." He's talking about Gethsemane. He's saying that the life of Jesus, this growth in wisdom, this life of perfect, this heart of perfection that he is cultivating and presenting to God, comes to its full perfect expression in Gethsemane.

In fact, you can think of this essentially what Jesus lived out, remember I mentioned last week that the essence of our problem is sin, right, and what did we say the essence of sin is? Unbelief. That's what Eve and Adam were guilty of, they did not believe what God said was true. They did not trust themselves to the revelation of God. You can see that Jesus in his living out a perfect life, that the essence of that is actually faith. In his humanity, he lives a life of perfect faith. He continually trusts himself. Remember, faith is not just, it's not that he had to be convinced. No, of course not. He is always believing but as he comes to new challenges, his faith is growing in the same way our faith grows as we go through challenges. His faith is growing and the final culmination of this perfection of faith is Gethsemane. He's trusting God, submitting to God.

In fact, let's look over at one of the portraits we have of Gethsemane, a clear portrait in Mark 14:32-42. What we have here is a portrait of a human soul at the greatest moment of trial that any human soul has ever experienced. We have in the picture of the garden of Gethsemane a human being whose faith is being tried at a level that no one's faith has ever before or since been tried and you have the perfect consummation and expression of human faith. You have here Jesus presenting to God a heart, his heart fully. And the Scriptures invite us to see this. Remember, the heart is the inner man, it's our thinking, it's our wanting, it's our choosing, and you see the authors as they look at this inspired by the Holy Spirit recording for us what happened on that amazing night, we see a man, a human man presenting a human heart to God. Fully God, fully man but in his humanity, fully devoted to his Father.

Verse 32,

32 They came to a place named Gethsemane; and He said to His disciples, "Sit here until I have prayed." 33 And He took with Him Peter and James and John, and began to be very distressed and troubled. 34 And He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death; remain here and keep watch." 35 And He went a little beyond them, and fell to the ground and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by. 36 And He was saying, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will." 37 And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? 38 "Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." 39 Again He went away and prayed, saying the same words. 40 And again He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy; and they did not know what to answer Him. 41 And He came the third time, and said to them, "Are you still sleeping and resting? It is enough; the hour has come; behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. 42 Get up, let us be going; behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand!"

Behold the faith of the Son of God. Watch how he trusts his Father at the moment when his heart is the most deeply tried that any human heart has ever been. You heard the

words as you're reading through it, the affections of Jesus. He had a full human experience. His heart, the desires of his heart, he experience what we have in our desires, in our longings yet without sin.

Look at verse 33, he said to them, "I am very distressed and troubled." This word "distressed" translated "very distressed" means "to be utterly astonished." It means to be amazed. In fact the King James says, "sore amazed," it translates the Greek word here. Amazed to the point of being sore. When he says, "I am distressed," he is actually astonished by the circumstance. As the cross looms right before him, in his humanity he is overwhelmed and he says troubled. Very distressed and troubled. The word "troubled" means "to faint; to be depressed," and the word itself means "almost overwhelmed with sorrow or burden of mind." He's burdened, overburdened with what lies before him.

Then he goes on to say, verse 34, "My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death." The word "grieved" means "to be surrounded by grief." But he is grieved to the point of death. He's saying, "I'm so grieved, I'm so overwhelmed, I'm so astonished as I contemplate what's going to happen tomorrow that I could physically die right now. Please pray for me." And they won't even pray with him, his three closest friends. You see, the Father is letting him experience absolute abandonment. But it's right for him to ask them to pray. In his humanity, he's genuinely saying, "Pray for me. Keep watch and pray." You see a human heart overwhelmed with grief. Now listen, you see in that his grief is different than our grief. His grief is exactly what a human heart ought to be experiencing at that moment. His heart is perfectly calibrated to the Father. This is what's happening, his life, his heart is being continually calibrated to the heart of the Father. Every moment of his life, he's calibrating, he's forming it, conforming it to the will of God.

Think about what is grief? Remember we talked about grief, emotion, remember emotion is the outside of affection. What I want in the heart, this is one part of the heart, remember you think, you want, you choose, well, we're talking about the wanting part. The emotion is the outside, the expression of what you want in the heart because when you want something in the heart and you don't get it, the emotion is what comes out. You want something badly, you get very angry when you don't get it, or you're very happy when you get it. Do you see? Well, what is grief? Grief is the emotion of losing something of great value. Something that is precious to you when you lose that, you are grieved. And it is right for human beings who are godly to be grieved at moments in time. It is exactly the right thing for someone who loses a loved one to be grieved and mourn. To not be grieved and to not mourn would be sin which shows something is wrong in your heart. Jesus is deeply grieved to the point of death. He's grieved to the point of physically being too much for his physical body to endure, the weight of the grief that he feels, and that is exactly what he ought to feel.

What is he going to lose? What is he losing tomorrow? You say he's losing his life. He's going to experience unspeakable agony, physical agony on the cross; a way to die that was intended to maximize the agony and suffering of the victim. Hours and hours of agony. He's going to experience that. Is that why he's grieved to the point of death? I would say no. He is going to lose the presence and favor of his Father. For the first time

in all eternity, somehow there is going to be some sense of separation from the Father and he so values the presence of the Father that the grief of that being a reality that he's about to experience, overwhelms him. That's why he's grieved to the point of death and that is exactly what a human being ought to feel as they weigh what that is and how much more the eternal Son of God.

We see his heart, the affections of his heart being exactly the way they ought to be. By doing that, he is expressing true faith even in his affections. "I want what I should want. I'm wanting what the Father would want me to want. What is there that is more precious than being in the presence of the Father? Nothing." But then his thoughts. Look at his thoughts. We see how his heart is fully devoted to the Father in faith. We see him saying as he works through this, "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You." You see, he's capturing his thoughts. This moment is overwhelming emotionally and yet he's comforted by the truth that he knows to be true. The Father, first of all, Abba, he's talking to, a better translation would be Papa or Daddy. He's thinking about his intimate relationship with the Father that is calling him to the cross. He's remembering, "The one who is leading me here is my precious Daddy. I can trust him." Then even as he talks to his Father, he says, "All things are possible for You. There is nothing too hard for You." That's good theology. He's reminding himself of the truth of who God is. God can do anything.

So his thoughts are being conformed even in this moment, perfectly expressing what a human being ought to be and then it's not just his affections and his cognition, it's not just his wanting and his thinking that are right, but his choices and it is made so beautifully clear. Three times after praying in agony, he says, "yet not what I will, but what You will." He submits. In the most agonizing circumstance, he trusts the Father. He knows that the Father's way and the Father's will is best and that though this seems unimaginable to him, he knows that on the other side of this, the Father is right. He takes what the Father has said about reality and he believes that and he entrusts himself to that. In fact, Jeremy Pierre points this out in his book, "The Dynamic Heart in Daily Life," that Jesus fully perfectly displayed in the garden, he makes the point that Adam was in a garden, he was given one view of reality from God and he did not submit his heart in faith to God. Jesus in the garden, given the view of reality from the Father, submits. He says this,

"The faith that Jesus displays in the garden, the faith that Jesus displays in the garden expresses the dynamic functions of the heart. Most evident in these narratives is Jesus' emotional struggle. His great desire was to be spared from the shame of being forsaken by God. So great was this desire that Jesus repeated his prayer multiple times. He fell to his face. He sweat drops like blood. Yet within the emotional turmoil, Jesus' request was based upon an understanding of who God is. All things are possible for you, as well as a relational trust in him. Abba, Father. And in a remarkable intentional effort, Jesus chooses to submit his will to God's. This is faith. The writer of Hebrews calls his readers to a faith based entirely on the faithful life of Jesus who is the author and finisher of your faith. The dynamic faith that Jesus displayed in facing his death gives an example of perfect human faith."

What you have in the life and the ministry of Jesus and the way that the Father orchestrated the plan of his life was that he offers to God a perfect heart, a heart that is completely surrendered and submitted to the Father, tested to the fullest extent of any human heart. This is why, remember when the other Gospel accounts tell us he sweat drops like blood, that he just alluded to that, and Luke tells us that, and that's the condition, I forget, I don't remember the name of it, but it's about the blood being, you are so stressed that the capillaries near the skin begin to burst and so that blood flows out with the sweat. It's a known human condition. It happens when someone is under incredible anxiety. He has that kind of anxiety but again, without sin. Remember, Luke also tells us the angels had to strengthen him after this. Physically, the weight of because he knows like none of us could ever imagine, he fully knows what's before him. He fully understands the weight and magnitude of becoming sin. Overwhelmed by that, he submits. He trusts the Father and for the joy that is laid before him, he endures the cross, despising the shame. He trusts God.

Now, that's why he has become, he has been made perfect, and he has become the source of eternal salvation to everyone who believes. He offers not only a perfect record of righteousness, clean hands, he offers a perfect heart. He is the man who finally can enter in, the human being who can walk into the presence of God.

Psalm 24. I asked you to imagine that this is the scene every day for thousands of years since the fall. "Who can ascend the hill of the Lord and who can stand in His holy place? Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart? Are there any takers? Is anyone able to stand in the presence of the Lord day after day after day?" No answer. No one can stand in the presence of the Lord.

No one has clean hands and a pure heart, but then look at how the Psalm changes. Verse 7, the fulfillment after thousands of years of the sadness of no human being being able to be what he's supposed to be, to come into the presence of God. Verse 7, Psalm 24, after he says, "Who may ascend into the hill of the LORD? And who may stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart." Day after day that goes out and there is no opening of the gates. Today there is something new happening.

7 Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors,

It's time to open up the gates. It's time to open the doors. Why?

That the King of glory may come in! 8 Who is the King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, The LORD mighty in battle. 9 Lift up your heads, O gates, And lift them up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in! 10 Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts, He is the King of glory.

The man Christ Jesus is also Yahweh Sabaoth, the Lord of Armies. He has conquered. He has overcome and it wasn't a small thing for him to save you. It was an awesome amazing thing. Heaven and earth had to be moved so that you and I could be saved. He had to fulfill every single commandment of God, perfect obedience, and he had to offer a heart of perfect submission and surrender and that's exactly what he did. So great a Savior. So great a salvation. And when you repent and place your faith in him, his record of righteousness and his heart of purity is credited to you. You have it. It's given to you. In fact, that's the wonder of what happened in regeneration, is he takes his heart and puts it inside of us. Now we still have this messed up stuff all around it and so it's a battle now. I think that's what the Apostle Paul is talking about in 1 Corinthians 2 when he says we have the mind of Christ. You now have the ability to think like Jesus inside of you. You've still got all of the other gunk too, but you can by faith in looking to him and running to him and trusting in him the same way he trusted the Father, you can become more like him. This is the foundation.

So sanctification is not about ultimately about stopping. It is but it's not merely about stopping behaviors that we shouldn't do and doing the things that we ought to, sanctification at its root is faith. It is trusting in Jesus Christ and everything he is and everything he has done. It is always from first to last, he's the author and finisher of your faith and your faith, you are walking and he says, "Come and follow me." He leads you every step of the way. He empowers you by his Spirit. His word becomes a lamp to your feet and a light to your path.

What a glorious Savior. It was that hard for him to save us and he was willing to do it. How can you look at that kind of amazing God and not repent and run to him? I know that we have questions, we wonder why things have happened in our lives. You may be wondering today and doubting. You've been doubting God's goodness for a long time because that's how you came into this world, you and me both, doubting his goodness, but don't believe the lies anymore. Look at Christ, look at his goodness, realize that a God who would do that is completely good, completely trustworthy, and then no matter what he leads you through the rest of this life, you will find that it's always the best thing; that he is helping you to experience what he himself has experienced, surrendering to his Father, fullness of life, and he came to give that to you and me.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer.

Our Father, we just ask you to keep opening our eyes. We confess that we are blind. We don't see as we ought to see. We consider the things of your word, we are awed by it and yet we know that we need your help to understand it and to truly with all of our being surrender to you. Yet you are worthy. You are good. You are so much more wonderful than we would ever have been able to even conceive and your Son is so glorious. He is altogether lovely, everything about him. Lord, help those who are even today resisting you in this room to stop, to surrender; to surrender themselves to your love; to surrender themselves to your goodness; to taste and to see that the Lord is good. And Father, for those that belong to you who find ourselves wrestling, find ourselves distracted, capture our hearts. Don't let us waste opportunities to grow in our love for you and to obey you

and to serve you. Help us know there is nothing more delightful, nothing more wonderful than a life that is continually surrendering to Jesus Christ. Have your way in our hearts, Lord. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.