

Who Am I?

Overview

He knows our frailty and he compensates, he compensates for my frailty because he knows I'm breakable. Psalm 103 verse 13 and 14. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.

For he knows our frame, he's aware of the fact that I am dust. I'm going to read it again. As a father has compassion on his own children, so the Lord has compassion on those who respect him, love him.

The word is fear, but fear has so many degrees to it. Fear speaks of respect. I fear, I quake in his glorious presence.

He has compassion on those who believe in him. He has compassion on those who rely on him. Lean not on your own understanding, but in all your ways acknowledge him.

He has compassion on you if you lean upon him. Because you see, he knows your frame. He was there when you were in your womb, the psalmist said.

You were there, you were counting my members. You were watching every little finger grow. You were proud of me from the moment I was conceived.

You never took your eyes off of me. You know that I'm a weakling, but you compensate for me. You're very mindful of my frailty of the fact that I'm dust.

Moses asked a question when God presented to him a commission. This is what I want you to do. Exodus chapter 2, Exodus chapter 3, 4, sorry.

Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the backside of the desert and came to the mountain of God even to Horeb. And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. An angel appeared.

I've taught you before and you know it from times past. This is none other than Jesus himself. This is Jesus who appears.

He's called an angel here. He appears in the midst of a bush. And Moses looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, but it was not consumed.

Moses said, I will turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush and said, Moses, Moses. And he responded, I'm here.

And he said, draw closer and take off the shoes from your feet for the place whereupon you are standing is holy ground. Moreover, he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face for he was afraid.

There's that holy fear. He was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, I've surely seen the affliction of my people, which are in Egypt, and I've heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters.

I know their sorrows. And I've come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of the land to a good land and a large land, a land flowing with milk and honey to the place of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, and a lot of other sites. Now, therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel has come up before me.

And I've also seen the oppression where the Egyptians have oppressed them. Come now, therefore, I will send thee unto Pharaoh. Come on, Moses.

Follow me. Come. Come.

And I will show you, I will send you to Pharaoh, that you may bring forth my people, the children of Israel, out of Egypt. And Moses said unto God, Who am I that I should be chosen to go to Pharaoh? Who am I that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? God replied, Certainly I will be with you. And there shall be a token unto you that I have sent you.

When you go and have brought forth the people out of Egypt, you will serve God upon this mountain. And Moses replies, But when I come to the children of Israel, and I say unto them, The God of your fathers has sent me unto you, and they'll say to me, What is his name? Who are you? What shall I tell them is your name? And God replied to Moses, I am that I am. That doesn't make sense to us in English.

I always was, and I always will be. I am that I am. I'm the uncreated.

I am the uncaused cause. I'm the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the ending, the ancient of days. You just tell them, I am that I am.

So this question that Moses asks, Who am I? This question is common to so many people. Who am I? In this case, he's asking, What ingredients do I possess? Who am I that I should be chosen to? What skills do I have that I can carry this out? I'm just, I'm looking after a bunch of moth-eaten sheep. You want me to do, who am I? But the question comes in so many people today, and there might be this question lingering in people's heads and minds even today.

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It occurred to me, who am I? And I screamed alone in a prayer room when I was a teenager, and I said to God, I was all alone. I cried. I felt something tugging in my heart.

I've told you this before. And I cried out, Who am I? I'm a zero. I have nothing to offer you.

Who am I? Because, you see, I was in a struggle about who I was. When I went to high school, they gave us options in those days. You didn't have to be a brainiac.

They just wanted you to get in, learn something, and get out. I chose woodworking. Do you want to become a scientist? No.

I want to work with wood. Oh, and by the way, I want to learn wiring. I want to be able to wire a place and blow it up.

Oh, I want to be able to work with a machine shop. I want to work with steel. Oh, I want to be a draftsman.

I want to be able to build a house. I didn't know who I was. I didn't know who I wanted to be.

And I remember a teacher in a classroom getting struggling with me and said, What do you want to be when you grow up? Here I was, a 17-year-old, and a teacher saying, When are you going to grow up? Who are you? What? And I didn't know who I was. I didn't know who I was. And the day that I actually walked out of school and quit was the day in the electrical class when the teacher asked me, There will be a few who will catch on to this.

The rest of you, don't worry. He asked me, Mr. Forrest, This motor is turning a certain direction. If I wanted to turn the other way, what should I do? I said, Unplug it, turn the cord this way, and plug it back in.

There you are. I didn't know. It was a trick question.

How do you get the motor to go the other way? He assumed after two or three years of teaching me electric, I'd have something figured out. It was a simple question. And I should have got it because I was a simple time.

And I gave him a brilliant reply. As I closed my binder, I stood to my feet and I said, This is amazing, sir. We're both thinking the same thing at the same time.

I packed up my books. I put them on my arm. Mr. Zepp was his name.

What are you doing? I said, That should be obvious, sir. I'm going out that door. You can't go out that door.

And as I started walking toward it, I as much as said, Over your dead body, that can be done. I didn't know who I was. I didn't know what I wanted.

I was a confused fellow. And there are a lot of teenagers today who are being questioned, even about their gender. Are you sure that you want to do this? What used to be very, very clear is all foggy.

Young people are really, really disturbed today on what should I do? Which way should I go? And oftentimes there's nobody to give them any answers. So no wonder they turn to illicit drugs. No wonder they turn to alcohol.

No wonder they turn into the pleasures of the world. And they fall into an abyss because that does not satisfy. Like Luke 15, a young fellow.

Clearly he didn't know who he was. He was rich. His daddy was one of the richest people in the country.

And he went to him and he said, I want out of here. I've got to go and... These are my words. I put them in his mouth.

I've got to go and find myself. And he demanded his father's inheritance. You give me the portion you're going to give me when you die.

I can't wait until you die. I want my money now. And he got to a place where he could use his money to do anything that he wanted to.

And he woke up in a pig pen after he spent everything that he had. His friends deserted him when his money ran out. Who's surprised? We were watching a little commentary thing on television last night on YouTube.

And it was somebody whose life... They made millions and millions of dollars in the music industry. And they ended up destroyed. Totally destroyed.

Because with all that a person could ever ask for... And this is the story of so many popular Hollywood people. So many popular singers. They make millions of dollars.

They own this big bus. And they're traveling from town to town to town. But you find out that they're alcoholics.

Johnny Cash. Hi, my name's Johnny Cash. And the people would applaud.

The guy was stoned when he was standing there. Chris Christopherson, at the height of his career, wrote a song about getting up Sunday morning. Sunday morning.

It's coming down Sunday morning. He means that last night he was high on drugs. He was taking alcohol.

And on Sunday morning when people are going to church, little children are gathering in Sunday school classes. Everybody's having a great time. But he comes down.

He said, I woke up. And he said, I took a drink from last night's drink. And he said, it tasted so good, I had another drink of the same thing for dessert.

Then he said, I got out my cleanest, dirty shirt. And I stumbled down the street, walking down the street. And he said, oh, how I wish that I could be stoned now.

One of the richest, most popular singers of all time. He wrote wonderful songs. And he gave pleasure to people all around him.

But he did not know who he was until he was in a church and the preacher was Jimmy Snow. And he gave the appeal, who wants to give their life to Jesus? And I sat and I watched Chris Christopherson tell the story. He said, I sat there and thought, not me, not me.

And he said, the next thing I knew, I said, I was at the front of that church on my knees. I was crying like a baby. He actually teared up when he told the story.

He said, I was crying. What's happening to me? And he wrote a song, Who Am I? Who am I that you would die for me? Jesus met him at the junction in his life. He suddenly found out who he was.

He became an avid Christian, a wonderful fellow. I love his music. I've watched, I've worked with men over the years who came into a midlife crisis.

I won't tell you some of the story. I literally stopped a man who was in midlife crisis. He bought himself a hatchet and a fishing knife and he was gonna kill somebody.

And I did everything that I could to get in his way. I knew the day he was gonna do it. And I raced through Toronto on Steeles Avenue.

I was driving 110 miles an hour on Steeles. What for? I needed the police to come with me. I knew if I called and said, come and help me, they wouldn't have done it.

I got their attention. All of a sudden, I found myself standing in the parking lot of a church. I got my feet spread like this, my hands.

And these guys, they're frisking me looking for a gun. What are you doing? I said, I need your help. They said, you need to go to jail.

I said, a man's gonna commit a terrible wicked act this morning. Come with me. And they said to me, when you see blood, give us a call.

That man, I went to his birthday. April and I went to his birthday a few weeks ago in Toronto. He turned 90 years of age.

And when he saw me walking, he threw his arms around me because he remembers. He remembers when God rescued him in his midlife crisis. Men move through a midlife crisis.

And at that point, they suddenly become confused. In the middle of their life, they become confused. Who am I? Marriages are destroyed because we lose our compass.

We lose our way. Who am I? Who am I? I need to know who am I. And when Moses asked that question, who am I, he was trying to get God's attention away. He was trying to stall out.

He didn't want to do this. He felt inadequate, inadequate. And so he was trying to say, Lord, you got to figure something out because I'm not your guy.

Who am I? And the Lord never told him who he was. He said, don't worry about it. I'm with you.

When that conversation was over, you could say, so what did you learn? He said, he would have said, well, he didn't tell me who I was. I asked. He didn't help me with that.

But wait. The story goes on in this dialogue back and forth. And the Lord said, here's what I want you to do.

I want you to go to Pharaoh's house. And then I want you to go to my people and tell them you're going to lead them. And Moses said, remember, he said, who am I? And then Moses says, who are you? And it's wonderful because when the Lord answered him as to who is the Lord, it answered the question, the first question, who am I? If you're asking who am I, you're asking the wrong question, Bunky.

When you know who he is, when you know who he is, then you'll sense your identity. Not what a scientist would tell you. Oh, the lights came on.

I'm a poliwog. Well, I once was a poliwog. But then I turned into a bullfrog with my tail tucked in.

But then I found myself swinging from a great oak tree because I was then a chimpanzee. But now I have my doctorate. I'm now the smartest man in the world.

That's who I am. Scientists are committing suicide. Scientists are committing suicide.

They know the universe. They can tell you all these things, but they don't know who they are. Because, you see, they're asking the wrong question.

Who am I? The question was set aside until Moses asked, they're asking who you are. Who are you? I am that I am. I'm the uncaused cause.

I'm the alpha and the omega. I'm the beginning and the ending. And when you know him, that's the beginning of your understanding of who you are.

Now the Lord added one more thing. When I go to Pharaoh's courts, he's powerful and he's got all these magicians. How am I going to survive in the court? And the Lord said, what is in your hand? So I brought one of my prizes that I bought with a few Kenyan shingles.

No, shillings. Shingles. Maybe it was shingles.

Sunday morning, I'm coming down. This is a rungu. This is what the Maasai tribe uses.

They can whip this thing and hit you right square in the forehead. They are incredible. They practice all day.

This is not a dart for a game. This is a weapon. This is their rod.

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He leads me beside green pastures. Thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.

When you've got your rod, shepherd, and when you've got your staff, I know I'm safe. The staff is a long pole, right, and it's got a hook on it, and that's for rescuing the sheep or for guiding them. But this is to protect the sheep, to fight off the wolf, whatever, the badger, whatever would come and try and kill the sheep.

And it's also, yeah, this is a weapon. This is the rod. Every Maasai warrior has to have one.

And if you want to be a man in the Maasai tribe, you've got to use one of these to kill a lion. Are you ready to go out there and have at it? And if you come back half-clawed to death, every woman in your village wants to marry you because by all the blood dripping off of your body, you're truly a man. Fellas, just be happy you don't have to prove yourself that way.

What's that in your hand, Moses? Well, it's my weapon. It's the rod. And the Lord said, that'll do.

That'll do. You know, Moses probably could have said, well, if I knew you were going to need a rod, I would have picked a better one. I would have picked one with a little bit of gold and a little bit of tapestry and maybe some goose down hanging.

Like, I would have been, no, no, no, that stick that you have in your hand, that rod that you have, that'll do. And that rod became known not as the rod of Moses. You read it.

It became known as the rod of God. So God compensated for Moses' feeling of inadequacy, the emptiness, the challenge that he had. As the Lord said, I want you to do this.

I'm inadequate. And the Lord said, don't forget who I am and look what's in your hand. You're going to end up with a powerful weapon.

It was that that he held out over the Red Sea and it parted and they were able to go through. It became the rod of God. What's in your hand becomes an instrument that God can use.

What's that in your hand? I was thinking as I prepared this message, I was thinking about one of my favorite friends who's going through some difficult times right now physically and maybe some other ways as well. I don't know. His name is Maury Blair.

Maury is my bud. We got to know each other in college. And who recognizes that name? And so if you recognize his name, you've heard his story.

His story is that his mother and father, they broke up. They lived in Paris, Ontario. They broke up and this was – Maury wasn't even born yet.

His mom and his dad broke up while she was pregnant. And after he was born, she took up with another man who became the stepfather of Maury. And that lady had more children.

His story is in a book called Child of Woe and it's actually on YouTube. You can go and look at – you can look it up. It's called Child of Woe.

It's his story dramatized. He told me this story sitting in the Bible college in my bedroom at the college. He told me the story of what that man did to him.

There's wording that he told me in that quiet place that I would not use in the pulpit today, what that man called Maury. Maury was not allowed to eat supper at the supper table with his siblings. One of his siblings would take a plate for Maury, put food on it, and carry it upstairs to Maury's bedroom.

And the way the house was heated was through grates in the floor. And as Maury looked down through the grate in the floor, there was the kitchen table. And Maury from a young age on up till I don't know how old, Maury would sit with his dinner plate and pretend he was at the dinner table.

And then he would listen for if that man was going to get tanked up on his liquor that night because if that man got liquored up, he would come up and beat Maury within an inch of death. Maury would run away and the police would go and fetch him because the stepfather would say, My beloved son, I'm just worried sick. He looks like this.

And they would bring Maury back. The policeman would bring him to the door and the dad would act, Oh, you found my Maury. And after the policeman left, you can about guess what that man did to Maury.

It was a horrendous life. Doctors, psychologists have interviewed him on both sides of the border, Canada and U.S. And they've said, You should have ended up in prison. The kind of things that you suffered warps your mind, destroys your sense of esteem, and you turn to drugs, you turn to this.

You should be a very, very, very angry man because of what you went through. Maury, as a young teenager, mid maybe 16, 17, maybe 18 years of age, he was lost in his mind and in his heart. And he went down and he found a pump house, as I recall, along a river bank of the Grand River just outside Paris.

He crawled inside. It was a private pump, I guess, feeding a house. And there he cried out to God.

He was at the end of his rope. He did not know who he was. His family had disengaged him.

He was just a lost man. Finding Christ, he ended up at college, Bible college. And he's in my room and he said, You know what, David? I don't know if I've fully dealt with my anger.

He said, I don't know family life. How can I be a decent pastor? I can't model for them how to be a family. And his wife, Bev, could clearly tell you, Maury didn't know how to treat me as a woman, as a wife.

He didn't know how to be a father, but she said, I helped him. And together, Maury got his life together. Maury was a lost soul in so many ways.

And he sat in that room with me and said, Why am I here? I know God's called me, but how can I fit in? And I said, Maury, Maury, Maury. I spent last summer in the city of Montreal in the streets. I was working with Teen Challenge there.

I said, We were out on the streets. And I said, When I tried to talk to a young person about you need Jesus, I said, I had a young girl speak to me at 3 o'clock in the morning, sitting on the curb. I said, She was messed up.

She was hooked up on drugs. Who knows how she was supporting her habit? And she looked at me and said, Oh, Mr. Goody-two-shoes, did your father ever rape you when you were 12 years of age? Did he ever take advantage of you like that? Have you ever experienced this? Have you ever experienced? Don't you tell me about your God. I said, Maury, she couldn't have said that to you because you have been in the pit of hell.

You could say, Honey, I know how you feel. Maury went down to Montreal. I got my buddy to take him down to Montreal, introduce him there to the teen ministry.

And Maury became engaged in Teen Challenge. Maury led people to the Lord in the streets in Vancouver, in Toronto. And then, Maury, do you know his story? Child of Woe is in something like 25 languages.

It's gone around the world. He gets letters from people in Europe and say, I read your story and it touched me. You've given me hope.

In every church that I was in, not here, of course, I would invite Maury to come to our city, and I'd line up appointments for him at the local high schools. I would say to the principal, You've got to turn this guy loose because you've got girls in your school that are being raped by their own fathers, and Maury can touch their hearts. I never had a principal say no.

So I would take Maury. He would go in. They'd assemble all the kids, and he'd talk to them about how he was mistreated, whatever he told them his story.

He said, If you need somebody to talk to, they've given me a room down the hall. He said the young people would come. They would line up in the hall to speak to Maury.

He ministered to them. He prayed with them, and I have met people who have said, He led me to Jesus. I was a withered, lost soul.

I tell you there are people who say, I don't know who I am, but when you meet Jesus, it makes all the difference in the world. He makes up for your weaknesses. He discounts all of your mistakes.

He wipes the record clean, and then he destroys the very book that the record was kept. You shall know his truth, and his truth will set you free. And you say, Who am I? You begin with, Who are you? Who are you, Lord? Who are you? I want to hasten to tell you a story about a man that I only knew for a few days.

I don't even know if he's still alive. His name, Melvin. If you've been going to this church for a while, you've heard pieces of his story before.

I was visiting this church in a town called Longview, Washington, just south of Tacoma. I was visiting this big Assemblies of God church. I was their guest there for about four or five days, and the lead pastor said, Dave, you've got to have a visit with Melvin.

I set it up. Go down, and so I went to his office and met Melvin, and he had a desk. He was sitting behind it.

He pulled open the drawer, and he pulled out a big button. You might remember these buttons from years ago. I think they're still used, and by times, if you want to run a political campaign, you put a little slogan on it, and you pin it on your... He had a button, and he gave it to me, and he said, While I tell you my story, I want you to wear the button.

Okay? I put the button on. I felt a little weird because it was a white button, and on it was a slogan, and the slogan was earth-shaking. Their slogan was incredible.

It said, I color my elephants gray. He said, I want you to keep that button to remember my story. I got rid of it maybe a couple of years ago.

I color my elephants gray. It faded, and it was just a blank button, so I said, I can't use it anymore, but I used to carry it in my grip when I was preaching here and there. I'd put it up on my shirt at the beginning of my message, and I'd say, I'm going to tell you the button after, and people never heard of it.

They just watched and looked at the button. I color my elephants gray. This is his story.

His mother and his father did not want him. He was an unwanted pregnancy, so when he was born, he was turned over to, let's call it in the U.S. I don't know what they call it in the U.S. of A., but here they would call it the children's aid or something like that, and he was never fully adopted out anywhere, so he was consistently being moved from one home to another. He would be in a home for a month or two months.

Then he would be moved, and then he would be moved again. Then he would be moved again. He lost track of how many homes that he lived in until a certain age.

He said, every once in a while, there would be a lady show up at my door. It was always the same lady. Her hair was always done up in a bun, and she always wore combat boots, I guess, stilettos with a thick heel.

I don't know. He said she was kind of like a matronly type, and he said, when I saw her in the house, I knew I'm moving again. He said, I was in a different bedroom.

I was living by different rules in every house. Where I was raised, if you were finished putting the jam on your knife onto your toast, you weren't allowed to lick the jam off that knife no matter where that knife was going to end up. In my house, you keep the knife out of your mouth.

You never go into the candy dish without getting permission. What are you doing with your shoes on in the house? You get your shoes off. You know better than that.

Leave them at the door. So he said, in one house, shoes were allowed. Leave your shoes on.

In another house, take your shoes off. You got out of bed one morning, first morning in the house, the lady of the house came and said, where were you born? Where were you raised? You make your own bed. But the last house he was in, he was making his bed, and the lady said, why are you doing my work? I make my own beds.

He said, no matter what I did, it was wrong. He said, sometimes I ended up in a house, and he said, there were other children. There were other boys.

And he said, they didn't like the fact that I was in their house because I was getting extra attention, so they would beat me up because I was a foreigner in their house. He said, it was a very young age, five, six years of age. He said, I'm in a classroom, one of many classrooms, right? And the teacher handed out all these pieces of paper with African animals and gave them all a little box of fresh crayons.

And so one had a giraffe and one had an ostrich and zebra, and as he looked down at his desk, there was an outline of an elephant. And the teacher said, now you choose the crayons that you think are the right colors. Let's see how close you can come to what does a zebra look like, et cetera, et cetera.

Well, he said, I sat there looking at the box of crayons, and he said, I was nervous. I wanted to get something right. And he said, I pulled out a gray crayon.

That's it. And so he said, I tried very hard to stay within the lines. He said, eventually this teacher came down through the rows of chairs, stopped, and looked over Melvin's picture.

She went to the front of the class, sat down at her table, and she called out, Melvin, stand up, please. Melvin said he stood up, and he said, I almost peed my pants. He said, I was afraid.

I've done something wrong. What have I done now? She said, Melvin, would you bring me your picture here? I see that you're finished. So he carried up his picture.

He was scared to death of this teacher. He must have had some very bad experiences with teachers. She said, this is your artwork? Yes.

She said, hold it up nice and high so everybody can see. He held up his picture, and she said, look, everybody. Melvin colored his elephant gray.

Everybody give him an applause. And he said, everybody in the class was told, applause for Melvin. He colored his elephant gray.

She took him over to a little pin-up board on the side, and she opened up a little box with stars. Do you remember the little stars? Did you ever see that? Open it up. There were red ones and blue ones and green ones and gold ones.

She said, Melvin, you pick your favorite color, whatever color star you want, you pick it. She put his picture up on the wall, and she said, now you put your star wherever you want on your elephant. And he put, and she said, and he says, we all were looking there at Melvin's picture.

And Melvin leaned across his desk and said these words to me. David, that was the first time in my life, I believe, that was the first time anybody ever said, that's so good, Melvin. What a good boy.

What a good boy. There are so many children who have been abused and hurt. They're probably in this town.

They're in every city. They're in all kinds of institutions where they put them away, incorrigibles, lost, hurt. I never understood and I never knew till my mom was near death.

She apologized to me. David, I'm so sorry I was brutal with you. I used to beat you so hard.

I said, Mom, I've forgotten all that. I put it away. But, David, I can't put it away.

I'm guilty. And she said, I don't know why I treated you and Donnie so harsh. We didn't have to do anything really bad.

She'd pull out whatever she could get her hands on, wooden spoons. No matter how good they made yardsticks in those days, they were no match for my rear end. My mother would beat me until my rear end was as red as your shirt.

I never understood her anger, her trial, her tribulation, until Maury Blair visited our church. And this is what he said. Because I was abused, I was a candidate to become an abuser.

People who are abused become abusive. If you were ever abused, have you dealt with that? Do you know who you are? If you abuse others emotionally, do you hurt people with your words? There are abusive people in the churches. I've had to deal with them at times because they did not deal with their past.

When Maury said those words, an abused person is a candidate for becoming an abuser. Nobody, surely, I think, I don't think April even noticed, my head dropped and I started to heave in tears. That's my mom.

That's my mom. Because my mother told me about what her father did to her. He treated her like she was a woman.

At the age of 12, he was penetrating her. And when she didn't cooperate, he beat her. And then he brought a woman to live in the house.

And that woman hated my mom, hated her. And she would beat her. And she would say, you ever tell the teachers I'll kill you? Until a teacher saw the bruises on her little body, took her to the side, and asked her, Marion, where are these bruises? And very hesitantly, she said, Viney did it, Viney did it.

And my mother was rescued from that house and put into the care of a lady that I came to know as my Aunt Jean. But my Aunt Jean's love and care for my mom did not deal with the hurt and the anger. And my mom took it out on me.

I said, Mom, it's all forgiven, please, please. It's okay. I said, the beatings must have had some good.

I said, I've had some people tell me they like me. My mom used to sing in the church. She sang in the choir.

My dad was the bookkeeper for the church. My mom and dad were highly, highly respected in our church. I had no idea what was going on in our house by times.

Who am I? Who are you? Do you know who you are? If you're disfigured in your emotions, you're twisted and you're torn up like a plowed field, that's where you need to go. The cross upon which he died was not a symbol. It was a punishing rack for my sin.

There's room at the cross for me. And there's room at the cross for you. Siegfried, would you come? I had no plans of this.

Would you come? There's room at the cross for you. I didn't plan to end this way. I love every one of you, the people that I know.

There's visitors here today. I hope I haven't thrown you off with my much ranting. Do you know how much I love you as a pastor? But I do not have strings to control you.

Neither do you want that. And this is not a cult. You're a free person to come, to go.

But I love you so much. If you're living with torment, any kind whatsoever. We had a lady at our altar not here in another church.

April found her. She was a deacon's wife. Very special, special lady.

She was living with guilt because two uncles had tampered with her as a youngster. She felt guilty. She was guilty of nothing, but she was tormented.

She wondered, what did I do to bring those men to do such a deed? She looked like the most balanced, the healthiest lady in the church. But she was filled with torment. Saw her again not so long ago at an aged-old birthday party.

And there she was, beautiful as ever. There's room at the cross for you. There's room at the cross for you.

Though millions have come, there's still room for one. Oh, there's room at the cross for you. There's room at the cross for you.

There's room at the cross for you. Though millions have come, there's still for one more. Oh, there's room.

Could we just bow our heads for a moment? I don't want to crowd you. I don't want to hurt you, and I don't want to interfere, and I certainly don't want to invade your space. But maybe something that I said this morning touched a nerve.

As heads are bowed, this is a very, very private moment. I have two questions. The first one is this.

Have you been to the cross? Do you know Jesus? If you haven't, I've got wonderful news for you. That song was for you. There's room at the cross for you.

It's absolutely essential that every person surrenders their heart and their life to Jesus. And in that moment, the word of God speaks of the Lord writing your name down in a memory book. It's called the Book of Life.

It's in heaven. Your name is there. If you don't know that your name is there, I want to pray a prayer with you, and nobody else is going to know this.

The Lord knows. I'll see. No one's looking around.

Who would raise a hand just now and just say, David, I appreciate this. You can pray for me. You just lift up your hand.

Is there anyone here? Just say, David, I'm not sure my name's in that book. Is there anyone? God bless you. God bless you.

Heavenly Father, I want to pray just for this one just now. I thank you, Jesus, for your care, your love. You were abused, but you're not an abuser.

You died in my place. You died in our place. You took the punishment for our failures and our sin.

So, Lord, for this one who has raised a hand and said, I need Jesus, Lord, I pray that this will be a reckoning moment that will change this person's life from this day on, that you will do a glorious thing in their heart and in their spirit. Lord Jesus, I ask you that they would pray that as they pray this prayer, you'll work that miracle. I'm inviting everyone in this house to make somebody feel comfortable by praying out loud so they can pray this prayer out loud.

It's essential. Could you all say this prayer with me for this person's sake? Dear Lord Jesus, I come to you now admitting my personal failures. I know that I have sinned against you.

I know that you died on the cross for me. Come into my person right now. Wash me and make me clean and write my name in the book of life.

Thanks, Jesus, for loving me and rescuing me. Amen.