

# Being Honest About Suffering

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place, Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Neamathite.
- They made an appointment together to come to show him sympathy and comfort him. And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him. And they raised their voices and wept, and they tore their robes and sprinkled dust on their heads toward heaven.
- And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word to him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.
- After this, Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. And Job said, Let it not rejoice among the days of the year.
- Let it not come into the number of the months. Behold, let that night be barren. Let no joyful cry enter it. Let those curse it who curse the day, who are ready to rouse up Leviathan.
- [ 1 : 38 ]     Let the stars of its dawn be dark. Let it hope for light, but have none, nor see the eyelids of the morning, because it did not shut the doors of my mother's womb, nor hide trouble from my eyes.
- Let it not die at birth. Let it not die at birth. Let it not die at birth, come out from the womb and expire. Why did the knees receive me? Or why the breasts that I should nurse?
- For then I would have lain down and been quiet. I would have slept. Then I would have been at rest. With kings and counselors of the earth who rebuilt ruins for themselves.
- Or with princes who had gold, who filled their houses with silver. Or why was I not as a hidden stillborn child, as infants who never see the light?
- There the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest. There the prisoners are at ease together. They hear not the voice of the taskmaster.
- [ 2 : 39 ]     The small and the great are there, and the slave is free from his master. Why is light given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter in soul, who long for death, but it comes not, and dig for it more than for hidden treasures, who rejoice exceedingly and are glad when they find the grave?
- Why is light given to a man whose way is hidden, whom God has hedged in? For my sighing comes instead of my bread, and my groanings are poured out like water.
- For the thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me. I am not at ease, nor am I quiet. I have no rest, but trouble comes.
- This is the word of God. Great. Thank you, Claire. Well, good morning, everybody. If you're new to Watermark, my name is Kevin, and it's great to have you with us.
- Let me pray for us briefly as we look at this passage. So, Heavenly Father, this morning, as we come to this extremely difficult passage in your word, a passage which is very challenging, we pray, God, that you will speak to us.

[ 3 : 52 ] As we've said so many times, we are not interested in hearing the thoughts or opinion of man. Who cares what I think? God, we want to hear what you have to say. God, your words bring life into the darkness and bring hope into hopelessness.

And so, God, won't you speak to us? You know, Lord, where the hearts of each one of us are at. You know our pain and our distress. You know our joys and our celebrations. God, you know what keeps us awake at night, our tossing and turning.

God, won't you speak to us this morning, we pray. In your good and your gracious name. Amen. Well, we're once again looking at the book of Job.

And it's a book that questions and challenges us at every turn. It's a book that artists love and poets love and preachers hate.

Preachers love to avoid it. Because it's a book that deals with so much of the deep wrestling of the soul. And it's one of the reasons why the church needs artists and poets.

[ 4 : 57 ] Because there are many things about the Christian faith that artists and poets can sometimes express better than preachers and pastors. Now, if you're new to Watermark or you weren't here last week, the book of Job starts off.

And chapter 1 and 2 are extremely challenging. There's this righteous man. He's good. He's upright. He's blameless. He's the best kind of man that you could picture. And yet he suffers terribly.

Everything he has was taken from him. His wealth. His servants. His cattle. And ultimately his children. And he's brought to absolute misery. And he doesn't ever find out why.

He doesn't do it because of anything he's done wrong. It's something purely that God is doing. And Job questions and his questions are never answered. And as we said last week that the book of Job is not just about sufferings.

Though suffering, of course, is a very big part of it. The book of Job is designed to make us stumble over our own limitations and finitude. And so it's designed to bring us to the end of ourselves.

[ 6 : 07 ] And when we think, God, your ways don't make any sense. What are you doing with the world? It's designed to show us that we don't have all the answers to life.

And that we can't make life work on its own. Job brings us the place where our logic and our understanding are shown to be insufficient. To face the limitations and the finitude of our knowledge and our wisdom.

And then it asks us the question, will you still trust God? Will you allow God to still be God? Even when his ways don't make sense.

Now today we're looking at the end of chapter 2 and the whole of chapter 3. And so we're going to see a couple of things in this passage. And so I hope you've got a Bible or a bulletin with you. We're going to look at a lot of scripture.

And so have it open in front of you today. And so we're going to look at a couple of things. The first one is this. The ministry of suffering presence. The ministry of suffering presence.

[ 7 : 07 ] Look at the end of chapter 2 with me. Let me just read it again. Verse 11 to 13. It says, When Job's three friends heard of all this evil that had come upon him, they came each from his own place.

Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuite, and Zophar the Namathite. They made an appointment together to come and show him sympathy and comfort. And when they saw him from a distance, they did not recognize him.

They raised their voices. They wept aloud. They tore their robes and they sprinkled dust on their heads from the heavens. And they sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights.

Now we're going to learn a lot more about Job's friends in the coming weeks.

Much of the book of Job actually consists about the dialogue and the conversations that happen between Job and his friends. But here they are. They've heard about Job. They come from afar.

[ 8 : 05 ] We don't know where exactly these towns are. But they've traveled from afar. And they've come to be with him. They hear through the grapevine that he's suffering. They somehow contact each other and say, We need to go and be with our friend.

And so they travel from afar and they come to be with him. And look at what verse 11 says. They come to show him sympathy and comfort. They come to share in his grief.

They come to ease some of his pain and his difficulty. And here's a great example of what friendship should be like. The proverb says, A friend loves at all times.

A brother is born for adversity. Many of us have companions and acquaintances. But friends, who are those that are there for you in the midst of suffering?

Do you have friends like this? Like Job's friends? It's worth asking in a busy city like Hong Kong, where we are very good at networking, building friendships for the purpose of our jobs and our careers.

[ 9 : 08 ] Do we have friends like this? That really know us? That can sit with us? Who can be with us in a time of adversity? But here we have what some authors have called the ministry of suffering presence.

They come to Job and they don't say a whole lot. In fact, they don't say anything. They don't come and give him advice. They don't come and tell him what to do. They simply come and they suffer with him.

They sit with him. They don't fix his problems. They simply come and let their presence be a form of ministry in his pain. And look at how they share in his grief when they see him.

They raise their voices, but they don't say anything. They just weep with him. Verse 13 says, They sat with him on the ground seven days and seven nights, and no one spoke a word for him, for they saw that his suffering was very great.

They don't pull out their camping chairs. They don't pull out their rugs or their cushions. They come from afar, but they don't book into the Marriott down the road. They join him in the ashy, but in the rubbish dump.

[ 10 : 16 ] And they sit with him in the dust and the ashes, and they remain silent. They're just there to let their presence minister to him.

So friends, in a world of Twitter advice and social media soundbites and YouTube instructions and keep calm and carry on wisdom, do we as a church know how to bring the ministry of suffering silence, of suffering presence to one another?

Do we know how to weep with those who weep, to mourn with those who mourn, to cry and lament and agonize and hurt with those who cry and lament and agonize and hurt themselves?

Being part of a church family means knowing how to enter into the grief and the suffering of those of our family. And can I confess, I'm not very good at this. I like to be with someone for a little bit, and then I've got a thousand things to do, and I quickly want to move on.

I am not a very good friend to those that are suffering. I need to get better at this. And friends, Job's friends aren't perfect. We're going to see in the next few weeks, there are times when they speak too much.

[ 11 : 25 ] And we think, can't you just stay silent? Can't you go back to how you were in chapter two? But at times, they have done what they should have done. They keep silence. Here we have the ministry of Job's friends in a most wonderful way.

The ministry of suffering silence. And so friends, maybe I can ask you this morning, how's your heart? What's the condition of your heart? Do you, like Job, find yourself sitting in the ash heap of despair?

Proverbs says that a man may have many companions, but there is a friend that sits closer than a brother. Do you have that kind of friend? Have you opened yourself up to be vulnerable enough to let somebody else in?

And friends, maybe do you know how to be that friend to others that are suffering? Part of being a church family is that we know how to be these kinds of friends. Job two tells us about the ministry of suffering presence.

But just when we think that things in Job are picking up, well, we get to chapter three and things go crashing down again. Because in chapter three, we see the pain of suffering alone.

[ 12 : 33 ] Like the natural cycle of grief, there is silence. There are tears. There is pain. There is bargaining. There is anger. There is despair.

And in Job three, we have all of it. Job chapter three has been described as one of the darkest chapters in the entire book of Job. One of the darkest chapters in the entire Bible.

I'm not sure when Claire was reading it, if you were picking up on all the imagery. But as you read it and think about it, it just gets darker and darker all the time. And here we have, having watched the inexplicable sufferings of Job in chapter one and two, here we get to sit with him in his sufferings, in the airship, and listen to his heart.

And so let's read it together and grab it in front of you. I hope you've got it in front of you. Let's just work through it a little bit. In chapters three, verse three to ten, Job curses the day that he was born.

And he looks back on the day of his birth, the night that he was conceived, and he says, why did that day have to happen? Look at what he says here. Verse three. Let the day perish on which I was born, and the night that said, a man is conceived.

[ 13 : 45 ] So he's picturing his dad at the birth, and his dad is so happy because a boy has been born, and he is saying, what is a day of joy for my dad is a day of misery for me.

Verse four. Let that day be darkness. May God above not seek it, nor light shine upon it. Let gloom and deep darkness claim it. Let the clouds dwell upon it, and darkness terrify, and let the blackness of the day terrify it.

Job's talking about creation language. Remember how God says, into the darkness, let there be light. But now he's talking about it in reverse. Rather than saying, let there be light, Job is saying, let there be darkness.

I wish the day that I was born was covered in darkness and didn't exist. I wish God could uncreate the day of my creation. Verse six. That night, the night he was conceived, let thick darkness seize it.

Let it not rejoice amongst the days of the year. Let it not come into the number of the months. He's saying, let that night be like the 29th of February on a non-leap year, right?

[ 14 : 52 ] A day that we just pass over and pretends doesn't exist. I wish the day that I was born was like that day, says Job. Let those who curse it curse the day that I was born.

Those who are ready to rouse up Leviathan. Leviathan is this mythical Canaanite creature, seven heads. This sea monster that just brings chaos on the world and brings destruction.

And he's saying, I wish the myth of Leviathan was true for the day that I was born. I wish Leviathan really was aroused and could swallow up my conception and my birth. Verse 10.

Because it did not shut in the days of my mother's womb, nor hide trouble from my eyes. Verse 10. Friends, Job's looking at the day that he was born, the night that he was conceived, and he's wishing he could erase it from history.

And notice, contrary to what Satan said in chapter 1 and what his wife wishes he had done in chapter 2, he doesn't curse God, but oh, he comes so close.

[ 15 : 54 ] Right? He comes pretty close to cursing God. Job's saying, I wish I could go back in time and turn back the clocks and erase the day that I was brought about, the day that brought my existence.

And look what he says in verse 11 onwards. Job's lament goes from cursing to questioning. Six times he says, why? Why, Lord, do I keep on living? Why did this happen to me?

Why can't I just die? Why? The reason Job asked this question is because in his mind, to die would be better than to carry on living. Look at verse 11.

Why did I not die at my birth? Come out from the womb and expire. Why did the knees receive me or the breasts that nursed me? For then I would have lain down and been quiet.

I would have slept. I would have been at rest. Verse 16. Why was I not born as stillborn as infants who never see the light? There the wicked cease from trouble.

[ 16 : 54 ] There the weary are at rest. Job is saying, I wish I'd never been born. And if I was born, I wish that I had died in my earliest days. And finally, verse 20 to 26.

Job longs for the day of his death. He says, I wish it would come quickly to put me out of my misery. Verse 20. Why is light given to him who is in misery and life to the bitter in soul?

Who long for death but it does not come? Who dig for it more than hidden treasure? Who rejoice exceedingly and are glad when they find the grave? And that's an astounding thing for the Bible to say, right?

Job says, I rejoice at the prospect of the day of my death like a treasure hunter rejoices when he finds treasure. Verse 25. For the thing that I fear comes upon me.

What I dread befalls me. For most people what we fear is the day of our death. For Job what he fears is the rising of the sun and another day where he has to live. I am not at ease.

[ 17 : 52 ] I am not quiet. I have not rested. Trouble keeps coming my way. Friends, it's a dark, dark passage of Scripture in the Bible.

Have you ever felt like this? Have you ever felt such utter despair that you know not what to do with it? Makes me think of the words of the Apostle Paul in the New Testament where he writes and he says, Brothers, we want you to know what happened to us, the affliction we experienced in Asia.

For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we had felt we received the sentence of death. And though we are told at the end of chapter 2 that his friends are with him, his friends make no mention in chapter 3.

And while actually his friends are with him, it feels that Job is all alone. And that's how suffering feels, right? You can be surrounded by people with you. And yet when you're in the depth of despair, you can feel utterly alone.

Friends, the message of Job chapter 3 is that even the most faithful, God-fearing, righteous men and women, those who God affirms as blameless and God-fearing and good and righteous, are not immune from profound suffering and darkness and despair.

[ 19 : 12 ] Because in this chapter it shows us that a man, even a man such as Job, a man who's blameless and righteous and God-fearing, is not exempt from the anguish and the despair that comes with profound loss and hardship.

And again and again, the book of Job wants to challenge us that though you may follow God, don't think that that leads only to health and wealth and blessing and prosperity.

Job is not a perfect man, but he is a good man. He's a righteous man. He's a God-fearing man. And yet he suffers so terribly that he gets plunged into the depths of despair.

And friends, the point of Job chapter 3 is to correct any ideas we may have at the end of chapter 2, that Christians should just be stoic, unemotional, chin-up, carrying-on kinds of people.

If all you have is Job chapter 1 and 2, friends, you can easily feel judged and condemned. Because how does Job end chapter 1 and 2? Remember, this profound suffering comes upon him, and what does it say?

[ 20 : 15 ] Why? Job worshipped, and he said, The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord. And you can think, if I'm a good Christian, then I better be stoic, unemotional, chin-up, carry-on like Job.

And Job chapter 3 wants to show us that you can be God-fearing and faithful, and yet still plunge into the depths of despair. That it's not unchristian to go through difficulty and darkness.

No, friends, Job wants to correct that. Mark Frohgop, that's how you'd say his name in South Africa. In America, you'd probably say Rogop or something.

Says, lament is a prayer that is birthed in pain and agony and leads to trust. Friends, do you know how to lament? Do you know how to struggle?

Well, it's difficult to see it here, but because in Job chapter 3, it seems like all Job does is throw angry phrases up at God. But as we continue to read the rest of Job, we'll see that Job still hangs on to God.

[ 21 : 20 ] And he cries out in despair, but he cries to God. For instance, chapter 19, he says, Job chapter 13, Job 23, Friends, the book of Job shows us that worship in chapter 1, agony and despair in chapter 2 and 3, and trust in the rest of Job are not mutually exclusive, but are able to live together.

And one of the great dangers of the Christian life is that with the temptation just to fake it, either to God himself or to the Christian community. And you feel like you've got to just come to church and you've got to put on that cheesy Christian smile and pretend that life is all fine, and you've got to act all chipper, and you've got to be good to God and happy.

And friends, don't buy the temptation. Be real. Be real with God. Be real with one another. Be real with the one who knows you better than you know yourself and loves you still.

And so in his book, Dark Clouds of Deep Mercy, Mark Frohgop says this. Let me read this quote to us. He says, prayerful lament, that honest cry, the candid expression of grief from a hurting heart, wrestling with the paradox of pain on the one hand and the promise of God's goodness.

Prayerful lament is better than silence. Many people are afraid of lament. We find it too honest, too open, too risky. But there's something far worse, silent despair or fake resolution.

[ 23 : 10 ] Friends, despair lives under the hopeless resignation that God doesn't care, he does not hear, nothing is ever going to change. Silent, hopeless despair eats away and kills our souls.

And so throughout the Bible, God calls us to bring our grief, to bring our pain, to bring our feelings of despair to him. As we read earlier, the Apostle Paul, he writes, he says, we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself.

We felt that we had been given the sentence of death. Yet, that was to make us rely not on ourselves, but on God who raises the dead. He delivered us from such a deadly peril, and he will deliver us.

On him we have set our hopes. Friends, let me ask you this morning, if you're not a Christian this morning, where is your hope? Upon which do you bank your hope?

What gives you the hope for a new day when darkness comes your way? Friends, if you are youth this morning in high school, where is your hope? When darkness comes your way, what are you going to bank your life upon?

[ 24 : 21 ] Where is your hope? Again, Mark Prochropp says, lament is how you live between the poles of a hard life and trusting in God. It's bringing our sorrow to God.

Without it, we don't know how to process pain. Now, before we get to our third and final point, let me, friends, just say something about the very difficult subject of death by suicide.

And I know that even just mentioning that is very difficult for some. For some of us, maybe we've lost loved ones, family members in that way. Some of us ourselves have grappled and thought and had these thoughts.

And the reason I bring that up is because when we read Job 3, it seems that Job is grappling with suicidal ideation and thoughts. It seems like he longs for the day when he no longer needs to live on this earth.

Friends, for some people, living in such despair and such feelings of guilt, maybe such intensity of pain by a tragic situation in our life, means the temptation to think that life is not worth living and that maybe to die would be better than to carry on living.

[ 25 : 41 ] Friends, can I say those feelings feel so real and yet suicidal ideation and temptation is built on a network of falsehoods, built on a network of things that are not true.

And so for some of us, maybe that have thought that or have loved ones that have had these thoughts, the feeling is so real. We feel sometimes that there's no way out of the pain or the guilt that we feel or the despair that we feel.

Friends, some people may feel that nobody understands me. Nobody knows what it's like to go through what I've gone through. Friends, some people may feel that failure will define us and define our future and that there is no other option.

Friends, some people may feel that the way we feel now is the way that we will always feel and there's never an option for hope or joy in front of us.

Friends, those feelings feel so real but can I say they're not the ultimate truth. They are built on falsehoods. And we see this again in the book of Job.

[ 26 : 56 ] Here Job, notice the way that he describes death. He's got a skewed version of death. And the way that Job describes death here is not the way that the Bible describes death.

Job in his pain seems to see death as a release, as a way of rest, a way of getting away from hardship and that if he were to die, everything would be okay.

Friends, that's not the way the Bible describes death. The Bible says that if you are in Christ, yes, we will be more alive than we are now. Death removes the veil that hides the reality.

But friends, if you're not a Christian, don't believe the trite sayings about being in a better place or on a bunch of clouds in the sky.

Friends, if you're not a Christian, death is agony. It is not rest. It is not peace. You will come face to face with the God who made you to know him and love him, the God that you may have rejected.

[ 27 : 57 ] And so friends, God in his word has given us promise after promise, truth after truth to counter the falsehoods that we feel in the midst of suffering and despair, to give us hope even as it feels hopeless, in a world that feels hopeless.

Friends, your life is precious. It's precious to God and it's precious to those around you. And so I wanna say that those feelings as real as they feel are not the whole truth.

There is a God who loves you and your future can consist of real hope because there's a living God who knows you and made you and came so that you might know him.

Friends, part of the problem that Job faces is that he feels so alone and suffering does that. And even if you're surrounded by people who love you, you can feel so alone.

Friends, I can ask you, if you're struggling, don't struggle alone.

There are people in this church who love you and will lay down their lives for you. Friends, there are Christian counselors in this church that we will love to point you to that'll help you walk and talk and process. Talk to the elders.

[ 29 : 06 ] Don't suffer alone. Friends, part of the reason why Job chapter three is in the Bible is because God has put it here to show us that despair and darkness and agony is not the final part of Job's story and it's not the final point of your story.

That though these are painful and despairing moments, God knows and he understands. Wouldn't it be so bad if the Bible didn't talk about these things? If the Bible was always just chipper and good and wonderful?

God puts us in the Bible to know that he understands how we feel. But it's not the end of the story. So how does the story end? Well, we've spoken about the ministry of suffering, silence, and suffering, presence, the misery of suffering alone, thirdly and finally, the ministry of the suffering Savior.

In the first section of our passage, we saw the ministry of suffering presence, friends who come to be with us. And yet sometimes even the very best friends are not enough. Last week, we saw how Job's suffering anticipates in some ways the sufferings of Jesus Christ upon the cross.

Friends, Job suffered alone and in ignorance. He's unaware of the conversation that's happening in heaven between God and the Satan. Jesus suffered, but Jesus suffered not in ignorance, he suffered intentionally and deliberately.

[ 30 : 29 ] Jesus suffers also because of a conversation that happens in heaven, not between God and Satan, but between God the Father and Christ and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is part of the conversation that leads him to earth.

Jesus suffered not in ignorance, but intentionally because he came with a plan to bring hope to our broken world. Friends, Job wished that his life was over because he saw no hope in front of him.

Jesus came and gave up his life. He died, but he rose again so that even in our deepest despair and agony, we can live with hope. So friends, I want to say to us, if all we have before us in the Bible is Job, what hope do we have?

But God didn't just give us Job, he gave us Jesus. That in our darkness we might have hope. Friends, Job 3 is full of why questions. Why must I live?

Why was I born? Why do I have to put up with this? Why, why, why? The evangelists, the gospel writers tell us that as Jesus hangs on the cross, there's a why question that comes from his mouth.



[ 31 : 33 ] My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Jesus didn't ask that question in ignorance because he didn't know the answer. He knew the answer. Jesus was part of the conversation that put him on the cross.

Jesus bursts out this cry, why, my God, have you forsaken me? Because he's quoting Psalm 22. In agony and in darkness of despair, he quotes Psalm 22. Psalm 22 is a psalm of lament that starts in agony and ends in hope.

Let me read some of it to us. My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Verse 1. Why are you so far from saving me from the words of my groaning? I cry by day but you do not answer.

By night but I find no rest. But Psalm 22 doesn't end there. It ends with great hope. Verse 22. I will tell of your name to my brothers and sisters.

In the midst of the congregation I will praise you. God has not despised the affliction of the afflicted. He has not hidden his face from him when he cried to him. The afflicted shall eat and they shall be satisfied.

[ 32 : 39 ] Those who seek him shall praise the Lord. Friends, as we continue to read the book of Job, we see that that's Job's story too. It starts in despair and it ends in hope.

As we read in Job chapter 19, I know that my Redeemer lives and he will one day walk upon the earth. Many, many, hundreds, thousands of years later, Job's Redeemer, Jesus Christ, did walk upon the earth.

Jesus, the true friend that sticks closer than a brother. Jesus, the true Redeemer who came to die and rise again to turn back the curse and the brokenness of this world.

And friends, because Jesus lived as he did and died as he did, we can look at death and suffering and despair differently. Friends, if you're a Christian this morning, you have the Redeemer's spirit inside of you.

And so even as we go through the most severe trials, he has not abandoned us. If you're a Christian this morning, you need never suffer alone because the spirit of the living Lord Jesus Christ resides in you and comforts you and prays with you and prays for you and assures you of God's love and assures you of God's presence.

[ 33 : 50 ] Friends, while Jesus' death doesn't take away all the questions, what it does do is it means we can trust him. And so Jesus overcame the hopelessness of the cross because he is God and death and evil have no hold on him.

Friends, now we too can overcome our hopelessness because Jesus is God and we can hold on to him. And so don't try and beat despair on your own. Don't hold on to it on your own.

Friends, can you look to Jesus, the man of sorrows who suffered for us? Let me close with these words from my friend Douglas O'Donnell.

He says, Job thought that he was forsaken by God but he was not. God's silence did not mean his forsakenness. Jesus, however, was forsaken.

He was forsaken that we might not suffer eternal silence and separation from God. Why is not the ultimate question of the book of Job but Jesus' why have you forsaken me is the ultimate and the most foundational question in the Bible.

[ 34 : 56 ] Without Jesus' death on the cross we absolutely are hopeless having no hope of eternal life, eternal joy, eternal fellowship with the wise and just and loving God.

So as we read this distressing poem of Job chapter 3, let us thank God for Job's honesty but oh let us also thank God for the gospel for our great redeemer who in his death redeemed us saving us from sin, Satan, death, and came to give us life.

Friends, let's pray together. Father God, if we had written the Bible we would not have included such a chapter as Job chapter 3.

We would have included chapters like Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd, he leads me beside still waters. But God, thank you that even those chapters include verses like you lead us through the valley of the shadow of death.

But you lead us, you don't abandon us. Father, we are not unaware of the fact that in this room many of us, God, either have or currently are walking what feels like the valley of the shadow of death.

[ 36 : 08 ] God, I pray that the living God and the spirit of the living Christ will come and minister to our needs. Lord, deep from sorrows we cry, but we cry out to you.

Won't you come and be with us like you came, Jesus, to walk upon the earth? Won't you come and walk with us today and tomorrow and the next day?

And God, lift our eyes again, I pray, and help us to lament, to cry from deep within us but to cry to you. Jesus, this morning we get on our knees and we say, we need you.

Lord, we need you. Every hour, God, we need you. Come and have your way, we pray. Amen.