
Hey, so at all of our campuses and those online, can we once again just celebrate our moms today? We love and appreciate you so much. You do so much for us. And I just want to wish my wife a Happy Mother's Day. We have four amazing kids at home, and it's mostly due to her. She does an amazing job raising all five of us. I also want to say Happy Mother's Day to my mom. She is watching from Missouri, Happy Mother's Day to you.

And I also just want to acknowledge the fact that I realize a day like today, while we celebrate it, it can be hard for many of us for a number of different reasons. I just want to acknowledge that. I just want you to know we're thinking about you, and praying for you. I woke up first thing this morning, and just prayed that God would grant you peace and comfort throughout this day.

I'm really glad we can be together today. I know here in Indiana it's really rainy outside, but not in here. We're starting a new series of messages today that I've been looking forward to for a while.

I really do believe that God is going to speak through this series. And when we look back on it, when it's over, we're going to realize, and I think this is at least true for me, that we needed this series even though we didn't know we needed it. So, if you have a Bible or a Bible app, go ahead and find 1 Samuel 15. Because that's where we're going to end up today.

I need to set the table for this series, so to speak, and where we are going, before we get into that passage. We're calling this four-week series of messages *Achilles*. And, if you are familiar with Greek mythology, or if you saw Brad Pitt in the movie *Troy*, then you know Achilles was the most dominant warrior for the Greeks.

He was unbeatable, really. You could hit him anywhere on his body, and he could withstand it. But there was one place where he had a weakness. As legend had it, when he was a small boy his mom was dipping him into this water that gave him super-natural ability. But when she did that, she was holding him by his heel. So, his heel didn't make it all the way into the water.

It kind of reminds me of this one time I was baptizing this teenage girl who was deathly afraid of water, and I didn't know it. So, I'm trying to get her under, and she is fighting me. And I didn't get her all the way under, and I brought her up and everything was wet except for her bangs. They were sticking straight up into the air.

It was really awkward. In that moment, what do you do? Do you take her down again? Do you double dip? What do you do? So, I told her, "I don't think you're going to need those in heaven."

It's kind of what happened with Achilles. His heel didn't make it under the water. As he grows older, he is just dominant. But there is this one small piece of real estate on his body that is his weakness. You strike him there, and it would be his ultimate demise.

And that's exactly what happened during the Trojan war. There was a warrior by the name of Paris, who launches this single arrow. It strikes Achilles on his heel. And it just completely takes him down and destroys him.

Now, you're also likely aware of the fact that the term Achilles is used to refer to this tendon that runs along the backside of our heel. And an Achilles injury can be incredibly painful and incredibly difficult to rehab from.

Now, I've never ruptured my Achilles, but I've known plenty of men my age who have. And I know it can be a really devastating injury to try to come back from, and especially if you are a professional athlete. This can almost be career ending.

Some of you might remember in 2013 Kobe Bryant ruptured his Achilles tendon. It took him out for eight months, as he was rehabbing it. In 2019, Kevin Durant ruptured his in game 5 against the Toronto Raptors. And many would say, of any professional athlete at that level, if they rupture their Achilles tendon the odds aren't good they are going to come back and perform at the same level as they did before.

So, whether it comes to Greek mythology or to an actual Achilles injury, the term Achilles heel is often used as a metaphor to describe maybe vulnerability, or a weakness of some kind in our character. Just like the Greek mythology or the injury, who would have thought something so small could bring somebody down?

So, when it comes to our character, and that's what I want us to think about in this series, I want you to sort of do an inventory of your character. You might have any number of strong character traits. And I know you do.

Maybe as you kind of review your character, you would say, "I'm pretty good. I'm reliable. I'm loyal." You've got all these character traits. But here is the thing we oftentimes fail to focus on.

Do we say, "Where can I be taken down? What's maybe the small, understated thing I'm not paying enough attention to? Maybe it's the thing that if I don't get a handle on it, it could bring my marriage down. It could bring my relationships down. It could ruin my career or my reputation."

It might actually be that thing that distances you from God. And the thing is, it happens all the time. Have you ever been shocked to hear about people who made a bad decision, maybe they got caught; they had a double life going on? They had something exposed, and it eventually came to the surface.

You're like, "What in the world happened?" And if you really knew the full story, you would recognize that it was their Achilles heel. There was this part of their character that was going unchecked for far too long, and it eventually caught up to them.

Now, here's the deal, it's easy to sort of sit in judgment on other people when that happens, but we're all vulnerable. Every single one of us has an Achilles heel, so-to-speak, that we maybe keep an eye on, need to keep in check. And at the time we think, "Well, it's small. It doesn't seem like that big of a deal." But it could take us down.

And did you know that God's Word not only tells us what this Achilles heel is, but it warns us over and over and over again to keep an eye on it. And it manifests itself in different ways in all of our lives. But the root of it is the same.

Now, before I tell you what it is, let me just give you a few descriptions of what our Achilles heel does in our lives, and just see if you know what we're talking about. It is the thing that will keep you from celebrating the success of others. It's the thing that will keep you from admitting that you struggle, and you're not ever going to let people see the real you. It's the thing that keeps you from asking questions because you think you already know.

It will keep you from admitting you're wrong, even when you know you are wrong. It will cause you to write somebody off and hold a grudge because they offended you, and maybe they don't even know they offended you. It's the thing that causes you to maybe shade the truth when it comes to your past, or to talk too much about yourself, or to exaggerate your accomplishments.

It will do this. You'll be in a room with somebody, and they'll start talking really good about you and it's not entirely true, but you don't stop them. Because you just kind of enjoy the praise. It's the thing that will cause you to look better than you really are. It's the thing that will cause you to act one way around one group of people, and another way around another group of people because you really care a lot about what others think about you.

Any of you know what we're talking about?

Pride

Pride is our Achilles heel. Now, the thing about pride is that it manifests itself in all of our lives in different ways, but the root of it is the same. And, it can so easily take us down and out. Here are a couple of things God says about pride:

"Pride goes before destruction, and haughtiness before a fall." Proverbs 16:18 (NLT)

So, before something is destroyed, before something falls, what you'll find is pride. God has something much stronger to say about it in chapter 8:

"I hate pride and arrogance..." Proverbs 8:13 (NLT)

So, it turns out God hates something after all, it's just not what the obnoxious guy on the street corner with a megaphone told us He hated. You see, God doesn't hate anyone. But He hates the pride that is in everyone. And it's in all of us. It is sneaky, and it is sinister, and we oftentimes don't recognize it as pride. But God hates it.

I don't know, maybe when you hear that, when you read that verse and you hear that phrase, it might surprise you a little bit. "Out of all the things God could hate, pride? Really? Seems a little overstated."

"Like, I could understand God hating things like lying, murder, abuse, and racism. Those are really bad things, we can all agree God should hate those. But pride, really? What is so bad about pride?"

What's wrong with pride?

When you were growing up, did you ever know the cocky kid on the playground or the team? It was annoying, but you didn't necessarily see it as a sin or character flaw. But God's Word says He hates pride in our lives. Why?

If you look at any marriage that doesn't make it, you trace back to the root of it and what you'll see is there could be a variety of issues going on. But at the root of those issues you'll find pride.

If you look at friendships that end and part ways in really destructive ways, if you trace it back far enough you will find there was pride there.

Pride actually holds us back from having an accurate understanding of who we are, whether you think too highly of yourself or too lowly of yourself. And it will actually block you from living out God's purposes and plans for your life. Pride will keep you from asking for help when you really need it.

Pride will keep you from acknowledging God in your life. In fact, if there is anybody here or anybody listening to this, and you generally believe in God, but have not taken the step of faith to follow after Jesus and you've just sort of been straddling the fence for a long time, can I just very lovingly say, "That's pride." Pride will keep you from God, and it is our Achilles heel. If we don't get a handle on it, call it for what it is, sooner or later it will ultimately bring us down.

Now at this point, you might have a couple of questions. And one of the questions, as I've already alluded to, is you might be sitting there going, "Really, what's wrong with pride?" And maybe you have even thought pride was a good thing, because you've equated pride with self-confidence. Listen, those are not the same.

And maybe some of you are like, "Why shouldn't I believe in myself. If I don't believe in myself, who else will?" And, this is where I think a definition might be really helpful for us:

Pride is having an excessively high opinion or preoccupation with your own importance, achievements, status, or position.

Now, that can go the other way. What this can look like, a preoccupation with self, is this can actually look like humility. This can actually be one of those things where you're not really honest about your gifts and ability, and what it is you can do. These are our insecurities. And insecurities are still rooted in a preoccupation with self.

Now here is a question I have for you. Do any of you know this person? Do any of you work for this person? Do any of you pay rent to this person? Are any of you related by marriage to this person? Sure, we all know this person.

In fact, here is the thing about a message or a message series on pride. You've probably already done it. Oh, we're talking about pride in this series? I know who I'm sending this series to. I hope so-and-so is here, because they really need to hear this. I'm going to share this later on today.

We all know this person, but here is the more penetrating question. Are you this person? And unless you are really self-aware and brutally honest, chances are not too many hands are going

up on that one. Here's the thing about pride. We can easily spot it in others, but we oftentimes very rarely see it in ourselves.

The reason why is because pride is blinding. There's this little verse in the Old Testament book of Obadiah. It says this:

"You have been deceived by your own pride..." Obadiah 1:3 (NLT)

Pride can be deceptive. In other words, what keeps you and me from seeing the pride in our lives is the pride in our lives. And if you say, "I don't think I have a problem with pride," it's likely pride that's causing you to say that.

C.S. Lewis, in his great book *Mere Christianity*—and if you've never read it, I highly recommend it—he says this.

"There is one vice of which no man in the world is free. A vice which everyone in the world loathes when they see it in someone else, and of which hardly any people, ever imagine that they are guilty of themselves. That is pride."

Defensive:

Pride, what it does in our lives, it makes me defensive. When I'm defensive, that's pride. Like, when my wife comes in and says, "Would you please give the dog a bath?" And I say, "What's that supposed to mean? I give the dog a bath as many times as anybody else does," That's pride.

Stubborn:

Pride keeps a spouse from saying they might have overreacted. Pride keeps a best friend from saying they might have been wrong. Pride keeps a coworker from saying it was their fault. Pride keeps a husband from saying, "You're right. I think we might be lost."

Self-conscience

Somebody once defined vanity as not being able to walk by your reflection without looking at yourself. So, when you see a group picture that gets texted to you and you're in it, you find yourself and make sure you're looking good.

Discontent

It makes it really hard for me to celebrate when a friend is building my dream house or driving the car I've always wanted. Pride makes me feel better about my marriage when somebody else is struggling. Pride secretly celebrates when you go back to your high school reunion and you see that cool crowd that always excluded you, and now they are overweight and balding. And you enjoy it.

Critical

Pride makes it really difficult for me to have an opinion without thinking it's the only opinion. Or sharing it in a way that isn't damaging or short-sighted. Pride says, "I'm going to let somebody know they aren't doing things the way I think they should be done."

Pride will alienate a son-in-law because you don't think he is good enough for your daughter. Pride will alienate a daughter-in-law because she doesn't parent your grandkids the way you want her to.

It happens in church all the time. We do it either way, where we see somebody from a distance and we make a judgment about who we think they are by what they are wearing or not wearing, what they drive or don't drive.

It causes us to walk into a worship service and maybe we've got more the mentality of a judge on the television show *The Voice* than a spirit of worship. So, we walk in critiquing everything, "I don't know much about music, I've never led worship, but I've got plenty of ideas for how to do it better." Hits a little too close to home.

Pride leads me to believe my opinion and my preferences are clearly the most reasonable. Why doesn't everyone else see it this way?

Argumentative

So, if somebody posts something I don't like, I'm going to argue with them about it instead of just scrolling on.

Pride only breeds quarrels. Proverbs 13:10 (WEB)

So, if you see people getting into an argument, the root of that is pride. Pride motivates me to win a disagreement, even when I'm wrong or they have a good point.

Self-absorbed

It's just the belief that my tastes and preferences are the right ones. And we find it difficult to keep those to ourselves. Philippians 2, which is a passage we'll read at length in just a little bit, says this:

"Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others."
Philippians 2:4 (NIV)

You know what prides says to that? "How am I going to get my interests promoted then?"

I wrestle with pride. It camouflages itself. I don't know about you, but I can so easily justify it away.

Several years ago, I was speaking at a conference. There were five may session speakers, and I was one of the five. After it was all over, they emailed out one of those recap videos. You know the ones where it's like all the highlights from the conference, in like a four or five-minute clip. And immediately, there is this little clip from one of the main session speakers, this really powerful principle or statement he made.

Do you want to know where my thought went? Immediately, when I saw that first speaker, I thought, "I wonder which clip of mine they are going to use in the recap video. And how did they narrow it down, because I had so many good points?" That's what I thought. I'm just being real with you.

So, I'm watching the video, and I'm counting down. There is the second speaker. There is the third speaker. There is the fourth. Okay, I'm the only one left. I've got to tell you, the video ended and I was the only speaker they didn't include in the recap video. And I was so offended.

So, you want to know what I did? I stopped right there, and I prayed for God to bless those other speakers. No, I didn't do that.

I went home and I complained to my wife about it. I actually think the specific term she used was, "You're bellyaching." That's what she said. So, I'm just like, "Don't they know how hard I worked on that message? I can't believe they cut me out of it. See if I ever speak at their stupid conference again." I never had to worry about that, because they never asked me back.

And, I'll never forget. She looked at me across the island in our kitchen. Fellows, you know the look. It's like the look of the Holy Spirit. And she literally said, "Why does this bother you so much? What's going on?" And it really hit me. I had to stop and think about it. After a few minutes, I was like, "Whose side are you on anyway?" I just couldn't let it go.

That's the thing about pride. It's sneaky. And it will creep up on you. And very rarely do we think we have a problem with it. We can easily justify the way we feel. And usually, when it comes to pride, and I know this is true for me, I'm usually the last person in the room to know it.

Isn't it true? Everyone else may see the pride in your life, but you don't. And if you want to know if you struggle with pride, here is what you do. I don't know if you'll be courageous enough to take me up on this. You just find two or three people in your life who love you and you trust, and you just ask them. And buckle up.

Just say, "Do you see any pride in my life?" Or say this, "You have permission to lovingly, but directly, call pride out in my life. Because I'll be the last one to see it."

And it's actually an act of love if somebody who really cares for you and knows you well has permission to call out the pride in your life. Here is the reason why. At the root of almost every single issue you and I struggle with, and you just fill in the blank, you trace it back and you'll find some sort of pride.

Hubris

The word hubris is a Greek term that describes a person who is so full of themselves that they lose all touch with reality. We'll talk a little bit more about this in the coming weeks. We can even say we are so full of ourselves, whether we think too highly of ourselves or too lowly, that there is no room for God this week. There is no room for God to do work.

Instead, what God's Word tell us to do is put things in a right-size perspective. There is another word that simply means the soil of the ground.

Humus

This is kind of the idea of being made low to the ground. That's what God's Word says about us, "From the dust of the earth we are created, to the dust of the earth we will return." It's this idea that, in the grand scheme of things, I'm just going to put things in proper perspective.

So, there are two things you hold in tension. You are created intentionally by God. And He has a plan and purpose for your life, and your life has infinite value. There is nobody else like you.

And yet, at the exact same time, this is a really, really big universe, and there are lots and lots of people on the planet. This life you live is not a movie with everybody else as a supporting cast and characters. You're holding these two things in tension. Where you recognize how small you are, and how valuable you are at the exact same time.

And this might lead to another question you might be thinking. At least it crossed my mind, as I was putting this series together and you're watching it right now. Why are we talking about pride now when we've all been through so much this past year?

Now that's a really good question. Because I know there are a lot of people who are emotionally exhausted. There is a lot of depression, a lot of anxiety, a lot of fear. We've been through so much this past year.

You might think, "I don't really know that a message series on pride is at the top of the list of the problems I really have in my life right now. Honestly, I'm struggling with my own self-worth and insecurity. So, why are we talking about pride?"

I just want to bring up the fact that pride, most of the time, isn't just about you thinking more of yourself than you should. Pride is just thinking too much about yourself. And both of those paths lead to the exact same thing.

What God wants you to do, He wants you to stop thinking so much about what others think of you or what you imagine they think of you. God wants you to stop focusing so much on yourself. And He actually wants you to begin to hear what it is He has to say to you and about you so that you can add value and make a difference in this world.

And so, I want to look at 1 Samuel 15 because there is a great example of this very thing going down. And in 1 Samuel 15 we discover a king who appears to be really, really full of himself, and he loses all touch with reality. But he doesn't start off that way. He actually stated off thinking too lowly of himself. You see, the problem was the same.

What's happening in 1 Samuel 15, if you don't know the context, is the people of God are transitioning from an era of the judges to an era of the kings. And so, God's got to appoint a king. He uses this guy named Samuel to appoint a talented young man, who is about 30 years old at the time, named Saul.

And when we meet Saul, he is so insecure and non-assuming that when Samuel tells him, "Hey listen, God has chosen you to be king." Instead of like receiving that with humility and being sort of like, "Wow, I can't believe God would choose me for this position, now let me leverage it for the good of others," instead, here was his response in chapter 9:

"I think you made a mistake. I'm from the smallest tribe in Israel, and my clan is the least of the clans."

Do you know what that is? It is insecurity and false humility. It's not the same thing. God had already said, "No, I've chosen you for this." And he's like, "No, I think you've made a mistake."

And in chapter 10, in his inauguration as king, they couldn't even find him. He was hiding in some baggage. So, Saul begins his leadership with this inaccurate view or understanding of himself. Because of that, it's going to lead him to a very, very dark place.

You can actually go back and read the narrative for yourself, but if I can give you the more condensed version of this. As he becomes king, God asks Saul to do something very specific and Saul disregards what God commanded him to do out of fear of the people and insecurity that he wouldn't have enough.

God had said, "When you go and attack the Amalekites, I don't want you to leave any of the livestock." And Saul kept some back for himself. So, he kept the sheep, cattle, calves, and the lambs, and everything that was good.

As a result of this, look at what it says in verse 11. God says this:

"I am sorry that I ever made Saul king, for he has not been loyal to me and has refused to obey my command.' Samuel was so deeply moved when he heard this that he cried out to the Lord all night."

So, Samuel is brokenhearted over Saul's pride. He goes to confront him about it, because that's what good friends do.

"Early the next morning Samuel went to find Saul. Someone told him, 'Saul went to the town of Carmel to set up a monument to himself...'"

Now you stop right there and go, "Wow, how did that happen? This guy goes from, 'I think you made a mistake, I'm from the smallest clan, and hiding in the baggage on inauguration day to now he is building a monument to himself?"

And that shows where the root of pride goes whether you think too highly of yourself, or think too lowly of yourself. Erecting a monument in your honor was what pagan kings did to declare their own deity. Saul has been completely blinded by his own arrogance. So, look at what it says in verse 13:

"When Samuel finally found him, Saul greeted him cheerfully. 'May the LORD bless you,' he said. 'I have carried out the LORD's command!' Then what is all the bleating of sheep and goats and the lowing of cattle I hear?' Samuel demanded. 'It's true that the army spared the best of the sheep, goats, and cattle,' Saul admitted. 'But they are going to sacrifice them to the LORD your God.'"

It's filled with all these half-truths. He's trying to manage his image. In verse 24, it says this:

"Then Saul admitted to Samuel, 'Yes, I have sinned. I have disobeyed your instructions and the LORD's command, for I was afraid of the people and did what they demanded.'"

That's it. That's the evidence of his insecurity, the evidence of his pride. This was his Achilles heel. He cared too much what others thought, rather than what God said about him. And you know what? Me too.

And this is likely evident in your life as well. Oftentimes, we just care too much what other people think or what they say of us, rather than who God says we are. If you want to have a right-sized perspective of your identity, your gifts, the worth you bring to this world, you listen more to what God says about you than what others think about you, or what you imagine they think about you.

So it says this in verse 30:

"Then Saul pleaded again, 'I know I have sinned. But please, at least honor me before the elders of my people and before Israel by coming back with me so that I may worship the LORD your God.'"

What's he doing here? He's trying to manage his image. He's trying to save some face. He just didn't get it. And if you go on and finish reading the Book of 1 Samuel, we see that this once-talented king, who God chose for this position, self-destructs to the point where he even dabbles in the occult and he ultimately commits suicide at the end of his life. It was his Achilles heel that brought him down.

Here's the thing. My guess is that most of us listening to this right now, when it comes to pride, our problem isn't that we think we are God's gift to the world. Chances are our problem is we give in to our insecurities a bit too much. All I want us to see is those things are rooted to the same thing and will ultimately lead to the same place. Listen, having insecurities is normal. We all have them. It's what we do with those insecurities that matters.

The antidote to pride is humility.

But, we need to understand what humility is. Humility isn't this sort of self-deprecation, like, "Aw shucks, I'm such a loser." That's not humility. Humility is understanding very clearly who God says you are and what He has made you to be. James 4:10 says this:

"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

You humble yourself before God, then He will lift you up. But when I fall into the trap of wanting to lift myself up, that's when I can be taken down. And maybe you've heard this phrase before, C.S. Lewis was also the one who said it.

"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, but thinking of yourself less."

And Jesus was the perfect example and demonstration of that. Because Jesus was God in the flesh. If anybody had bragging rights, it would have been Jesus. And He did some incredible miracles, and changed peoples' lives. You don't see any insecurity in Jesus, but you also don't see any arrogance in Jesus. He managed that tension well.

And He did it because He knew who He was. "God the Father has sent Me. And I know why I've come." And he actually leveraged his gifts and strengths for the good of other people. You can just read this all through the gospels. He was adding value to people's lives, both in the immediate and in the long-term.

So, when Jesus would do this incredible miracle, what you would see was a perfect demonstration of humility. One time, Jesus healed a blind man by spitting in the dirt and making some mud, then smearing it on the guy's eyes. It's one of my favorite examples because I'm thinking, "He didn't have to do that. He could have just healed the guy's eyes." No, Jesus hocked a luge in the dirt and made some mud. That is awesome.

Afterwards, He is not self-deprecating, like, "Anyone could have done that. It's beginner's luck." Jesus didn't do that. He knew exactly who He was and what He had done. That's what He's calling you and me to. That's why you spend daily time in God's Word, so you can hear very clearly what God says about you and who you are. Because, if you've got your ears tuned to everything else, all the noise going on in the world, you'll lose your identity faster than anything.

Our ultimate example of humility, our ultimate example of exposing our Achilles heel and making sure that isn't the thing that takes us down is Jesus Himself. I want to finish by reading this incredible example of Jesus' humility that we are to model in our lives. This is from Philippians 2:1-11:

"Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

"In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.

"And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

Imagine if we could live that out, how different the world would be right now. We're looking not just to our own interests, but also to the interests of others. This is the reason we are still talking about this man 2,000 years later. He was God in the flesh, and He laid it down. One of my favorite passages, this was like hanging above the doorway at my college. I read it every day when I went to class.

He has come to serve, not to be served.

You know what? That's the antidote to our Achilles heel as well, to take the focus off ourselves, whether you think too highly of yourself, or chances are most likely because you think too lowly of yourself. It's to get your eyes off yourself and on to God. "God, who have you created me to be? Who have you called me to be? Who have you said that I am?"

Then, with that understanding, you seek to make a difference in the lives of others. You're a difference maker. And the only way you can make a difference is when you have a right-sized understanding of your identity, your value, and your worth. And the only way you find that is from your heavenly Father.

Appropriate humility is knowing who God made me to be and the difference He is calling me to make in the lives of others.

And I want to encourage you to come back for week two of this, because we're going to unpack this a little bit more with three promises that pride makes that it can never deliver, as we seek to understand our Achilles heel and prevent it from taking us down.

Father, as we begin to walk through this subject matter, I pray You would use this content in a powerful way. That in all of our lives, mine included, that we would recognize that we needed this maybe even more than we realized we needed it.

Because we just don't hear this message very much in the society in which we live. We're either encouraged to think too much of ourselves, or because of the criticism of others, we may think too lowly of ourselves.

God, I just pray that we could hear very, very clearly from You as to who You say we are, who we now are in Jesus, so that we can be confident, not arrogant. We can be servants, not having a lowly understanding of who we are, but having a right-sized understanding of who we are and recognizing that each and every one of us has a plan and purpose that You've ordained for us to have to add value to this world and the lives of others. That's how Your Kingdom comes, as we seek to be Your representatives to others.

So, Father, I pray that right now You'll be pleased with our worship as we conclude here today. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.