

Unstuck: #2 That Wall” – 1 Samuel 19-22

Dr. Matthew Cassidy – 1/22/2012

Video Clip – Canadian commercial

Two adults on an office escalator that stops. They do not attempt to walk up, but stay put as if they cannot move forward. Then an escalator repairman shows up on a separate lower level of the escalator but his section of the escalator also stops.

Man: Oh, that’s not good.

Woman: I don’t need this. We are already late.

Man: Somebody will come. [shouting] Anybody out there?

Woman: Do you have a phone?

Man: No, sorry. – Somebody? Hello? There are two people stuck on an escalator and we need help now. Would somebody please do something?

Woman: Help!! [echoes]

Man: [laughing] I don’t believe this. You have got to be kidding me.

Woman: I am going to cry.

Man: Well, there is nothing else left to do, is there.

Escalator repairman gets on lower, separate section of escalator.

Man: Hello.

Repairman: Don’t worry about it; I will fix it in a second.

Man & Woman (laughing in relief)

Man: He says he will fix it. That is more like it. He says he can fix it.

Lower escalator stops suddenly and repairman looks up to Man & Woman. Fades out.

* * *

How many times can you watch that and still enjoy it? I have seen it so many times and I could watch it again. I came back second hour just to see that video.

We are talking about being Unstuck in our series because it is very common for people in their journey with God to get stuck. It is actually more frequent than not.

God Has a Destination For Us

I would say one of the major reasons, maybe even the primary reason, that people get stuck is because they don't know where God is bringing them. They don't know the final destination point; so it is pretty easy to get lost if you don't know where you are going – i.e. the Cheshire Cat (Alice in Wonderland). If you don't know what God's ambition is for your life then you can think the circumstances that He is putting you through are some sort of cruelty or maybe even an act of penance for some reason. Or, you feel like He is not even there because you don't know the end place.

It is not as though He has not told us but maybe we were not paying attention. He says it throughout the Word but the Bible is never more efficient with its words than right here. This is where He is taking us.

Romans 8:29 For those God foreknew He also
predestined to be *conformed to the likeness of His Son*,
that He might be the firstborn among many brothers.

So, before the world began and He had you and I and billions of people in mind, He foreknew them to be conformed to the image of His Son. That is where He is taking us. He is going to take us to that image. He is going to do whatever it takes to get us there.

[Shows slide of desert dunes and individual on top of one dune.]

Wherever you are in your journey, I can assure you that this is a place you are going to walk through; it is a desert. He put His Son through a desert. Jesus went to the wilderness. If it was good enough for Jesus, it is going to be good enough for you. It is good enough for all the saints. It is a well-worn path. It just keeps getting covered over by the sand. But we all have to go through a desert many times. We are calling it the *wall* or the *dark night of the soul*.

Stages of the Life of Faith

Last week we looked at the stages of faith and we are going to review that again, focusing in on the *wall* today. Those stages of the faith are from an effective book in communicating what saints for 4000 years have had to endure in their journey with God to be conformed to the image of Christ. The name of that book is *The Critical Journey: Stages in the Life of Faith*, [Janet O. Hagberg & Robert O. Guelich]. That book was narrowed down into one chapter, Chapter 6, of a book we have re-titled "Unstuck" which is for sale out in the courtyard; we ordered another 200 so we can get those into as many hands as possible. We are hoping every Life Group is studying this together. Last week we looked at

Chapter 6 and we will look at that information deeper this week and start at Chapter 1 of Unstuck next week.

To appreciate Unstuck, you have to start reading at Chapter 6, which is what we are looking at today. It is the stages of these mile markers in every faith walk, in every journey.

Stage One: Life-Changing Awareness of God. It usually starts off in a life changing awareness of God. It is highly emotional and there is a sense of awe in God's love. There is a joy which seems to be overwhelming and unquenchable. It is a time of happiness. Sometimes you are naïve enough to think the sun is rising and setting for your good pleasure.

It is easy to get stuck in this stage. You can get stuck in every stage but in this one especially if your faith becomes overly saturated with a collision of emotions. If that is the case, if it is nothing more than emotional, then it is not long before you have a wave of emotions that is not positive and you are very volatile.

Stage Two: Discipleship. So the Bible says and it is quite common that people go to the next stage, understanding what you believe and why you believe it. That is called the discipleship phase, a learning stage. You get connected with other people and learn things that others can instill in your life. You find yourself being part of a new family.

At Grace, two foundational classes we have, one is called "Foundations" and the other is called "Discovery". You will hear about those during the announcements. If you have not been to those, you should seriously consider it. If you are doing ministry in your neighborhood or on your church row here at Grace and a person you know needs to go to one of those classes, go there with them. It is a great way to do ministry, to help them in this discipleship phase.

You can get stuck at Stage Two, and a lot of people do, especially if they tend to be cerebral and like information. What happens is that you get notebooks filled with ink *about* God. You know what the Bible says but you don't know what it means. You know *about* God but you don't *know* God. So it is important to go to the next stage.

Stage Three: The Active Life. This stage is where you are serving. It is a very fun stage because you are starting to express your gifts that God has given you. They are called spiritual gifts. What is special in the spiritual context is that you will do something and God somehow turbo-charges it. You will see results that you have never seen in any other context because you are doing it in the context of the church and serving God's people or doing God's will somewhere.

Honestly, in this cycle of faith, this is where most churches spend all their time, exclusively. They just keep getting people doing these first three stages.

When you get stuck at this third stage, what usually happens is you get tired. You feel like you are being used. It is disenchanting for you. While a lot of people who were very involved in their church when they were younger, they aren't involved any more because they got stuck here.

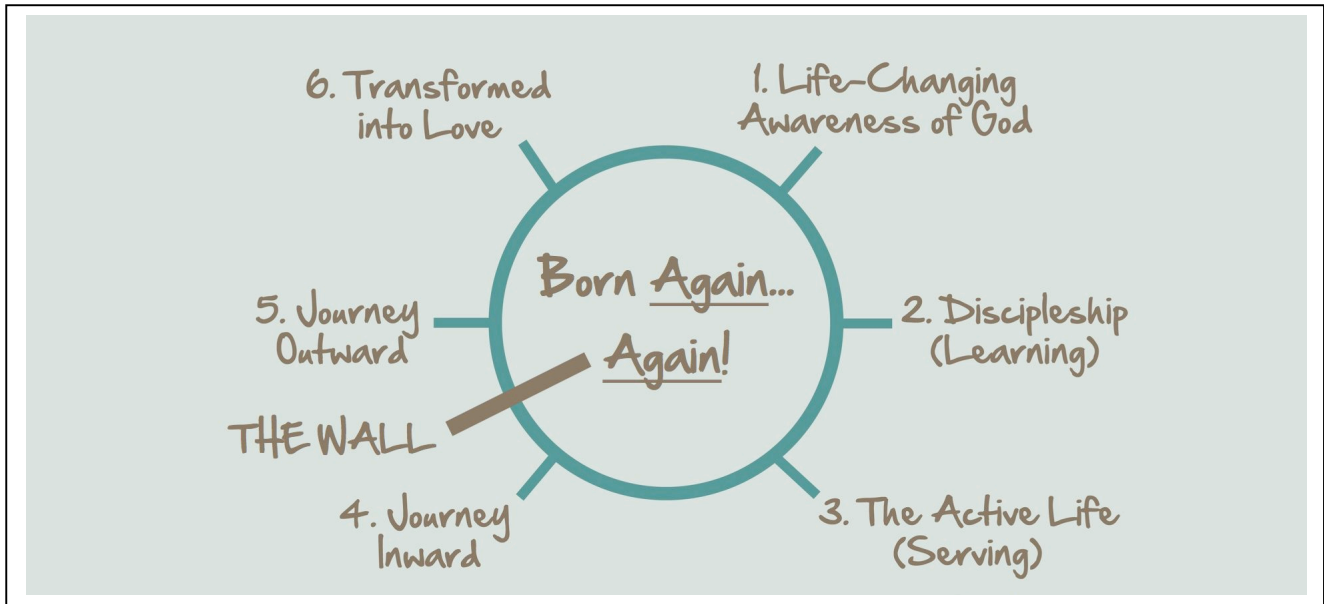
Stage Four: The Journey Inward. What happens if you are there for any period of time and you choose to stay there, God brings you inward. He says: *Let's start thinking about things, talking about things. Let's figure out what is truly motivating you.* – That is a pretty scary stage to be in. Sometimes circumstances jolt you into thinking deeper about the true things and maybe blind spots in your life that you are just now becoming aware of. Maybe the magic of an innocent faith is lost and prayers are not being answered like they used to be answered. Bible verses aren't as easy to understand like they once were. This is when you start having serious doubts and contemplating what you are going to do next. Often, you feel very alone. What happens after Stage Four and this journey inward, you don't go to Stage Five; you hit this wall.

The Wall: A lot of authors call it *the dark night of the soul* because of the writings of St. John of the Cross. He wrote about being in this place or levels of this place where things were not making sense any more. He became more and more desperate. We will look at this in just a few minutes. It is when we come face to face with God and He wants to talk to us as grown ups. You don't want to get stuck too long at this wall because you could be there the rest of your life.

Stage Five: The Journey Outward. If you are able to make it through the wall by God's mercy and your surrender to Him, then you get to this fifth stage where it is a journey outward again. But it is unlike Stage Three in that there is nothing in it for you – and you enjoy that. It is a fun stage because there is an inner stillness in you now that was not there before. You are genuinely grounded and you have a deeper love for other people. You are not expecting them to change in order for you to enjoy them more.

Stage Six: Transformed by Love. That leads to the last stage which is being transformed to a place of absolute love. We are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ. This love is so purified and casts out all fear. So you become a very courageous person. It is not a sentimental love but a real one. You are doing things and saying things that you could not do otherwise. It is a fabulous place to be and that is where God wants to bring you. It is a grown up faith where you are trusting God and not in people or in your own attributes and strengths.

I would like to say that if you go through those six stages then you are done. You are in the likeness of Jesus and – there – by 27 ½ or 33 years you could do that. But the people who are laughing have realized it is more of a loop and you are born again / again.



Sometimes we fall into an old pattern or maybe, finally with some other stuff cleared away, we can see a pattern that has been there all along but we were not able to recognize it. So you go through the loop again, spending more time at that wall. Hopefully, your reservations in the *wall* are not as long each time you go through.

The Wall

Let's talk about the *wall* today because it is especially important for us. I wanted to drill down on this because understanding this aspect of *the dark night of the soul* can be one of the most helpful things in your journey with Christ. Since so few churches talk about it, and since so few in the context of mentors or guides even tell you about it, we need to talk about it here so you are not surprised when it happens. You will know the symptoms and what to look for and won't feel so absolutely alone.

First of all, I want to make sure that we distinguish the wall from other parts of our journey together. So in your notes:

The "Wall" is

Sifting, not Discipline

Refining, not Punishment

Broadside, not Consequence

The wall is sifting, not discipline. Discipline is when we are living with the consequences of our own choices. The *wall* is when you go to a place and feel like God is spanking you but you did not do

anything wrong. If you are living out the consequences for a particular vice [passion, vanity ...] that is a lesson in itself. There is sorrow and misery there and those are good things so that you are not a repeat offender; but that is not the wall.

The wall is a refining process, not punishment. There are costs for being a perfectionist or being compulsive. The wall is not the cost. There are other costs for that.

You feel like you are being broadsided, coming out of nowhere. You are looking up into the heavens saying – *What exactly did I do wrong?* – And I am not talking about when you are protecting yourself from yourself. But it is a real analysis of what motivates you, the whole passive aggressive thing and all of that is filtered through and you still cannot find anything else. It is not consequences but when you are right with God.

Still there is this onslaught of darkness and loneliness comes upon you. It is not loneliness just from other people but loneliness from God's Spirit himself. That is what it looks like and is defined.

David Hits the Wall

I thought it would be helpful to pick a person. We could pick anyone. Maybe for your homework, you could look at another saint. But there is one saint who is especially obvious and that is the life of David when David hits the wall. We love David. I chose him because his story is familiar to a lot of people. Even if you are not familiar with your Bibles, you know the figure of speech -- it is said all the time; *it is a David and Goliath story.*

You have this young shepherd boy who is a squirrely, smelly little boy who even his father forgot about him. Samuel, the prophet and priest at the time, the person in charge of the spiritual condition of Israel, comes into this man's family and says: *God wants to anoint one of your sons to be the next king.* The runt of the litter is this David and he is chosen by God. We so love underdogs here in the United States, don't we? So we are rooting for this guy already. Next thing you know, he is standing, looking up into the sky to see the face of Goliath. David talks the trash right back to that giant and he kills Goliath – David and Goliath. We can't wait to see what happens next because David would be the greatest king in Israel's history. That is the story of David.

But somewhere between that giant killing and David's inauguration is a part of David's life that a lot of us don't know about and we are confused. It is David's sifting; he is dismembered by God. There are ten or fifteen years where David is on the run from the current king who is running the place, Saul. King Saul is literally insanely jealous towards this young man who has God's hand upon him.

I want you to see in just three short chapters how God is going to kick out every post, every stabilizing factor, every crutch that David has. It is God's doing *through* Saul. It is not because David did wrong but because David does right. I want you to see that it is the desert that was prescribed for David by God before he was ever born because it is God's will that David be conformed to the image of His Son, Jesus the Christ. That is the king God wants David to be.

In your bulletin, I wrote down the outline of the six stabilizing posts of David's life. I want you to consider looking at these details. I am going to tell you the story. I am going to show you how the turn about is so insane and scary in that in two verses in Chapter 19:8, 9. Listen to how things are going.

1. **David's Status** (1 Samuel 19:1-11)

1 Samuel 19:8 Once more war broke out, and David went out and fought the Philistines. He struck them with such force that they fled before him.

That is a good thing to do.

:9 But an evil spirit from the Lord came upon Saul as he was sitting in his house with his spear in his hand.

David was now back at the palace, playing his harp and Saul threw the spear at him to kill him. So in one verse, David is out killing all the bad guys. In the next verse, he is dodging a spear thrown by Saul. The point being, David was doing right and he is now losing his status. Everything he had in the hero worship that Israel had brought to him and his working in the palace is gone. He will never be back there again.

2. **David's Wife** (19:11-17) So David runs from Saul to his wife. Saul pursues him and sends a special forces team in there to kill David while he sleeps. His wife forces David out a window and down the side of a wall. His wife, Michal, blames the whole thing on David and he will not be able to have her company ever again – not because he did wrong but because God is grinding him.

3. **David's Mentor** (19:18-24) The next thing that happens to David is that he runs from his wife to his mentor. This is Samuel and I mentioned him before. He is the prophet and the priest of the day. Samuel is a man of great wisdom and insight. He speaks for God. He is the first memory of David's hope and dream. This is where David runs. You remember, I told you last week, I described as we went through with more detail of the stages. I said: The wall is the place where dreams go to die. – So David goes back to Samuel to maybe resuscitate that dream. Saul hunts him down there again. He sends three waves of soldiers to try to kill David. David has to run from Samuel, his advisor and mentor and idol, and he will never see Samuel again in his life -- not for what David is doing wrong but because he is a man after God's own heart.

This is how God treats the people He loves. It gets worse.

4. **David's Friend** (20:1-42) I want you to see the descending thing that is happening in verses 19 and 20. Now the whole of Chapter 20, look at all the verses 1 – 42, is David's best and dearest friend named Jonathan. If you read about Jonathan and David in the Bible, it is quite literally the definition of true friendship. In the series of how they are connected with one another, words are used that we aspire to in our relationships. There is vulnerability, a transparency, an honesty, guarding each other's backs. It is the descriptive term of what we could have. There are even words that go beyond description. David's relationship with Jonathan was far beyond anything a man could have with a woman.

So for 43 verses, it is described as these guys letting go because Saul is not going to allow this relationship to continue. Saul tears these two men apart. They hold each other and cry on each other's shoulders and they have to "go in peace" and David will never see Jonathan again. The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord. David has done nothing wrong. Every time you turn around, somebody is defending David to Saul. Saul is out to kill him.

5. **David's Faith** (21:1-9) David ends up running to what would be a modern day monastery at a place called Nob, where all the priests were. David runs to them and he has now lost his faith. He is looking into the eyes of the head priest, Ahimelech, and just lying.

Ahimelech asks: What are you doing, David? You are all by yourself.

David says: I am on a special mission from Saul.

Ahimelech says: Really? You have no weapons.

David: Right, I came here for a weapon.

Ahimelech: You have no food.

David: Right, I came here for food.

He lies. David has to run from that monastery because Saul finds out that he is there and sends troops to get him. When they come and David has already left, Saul orders the killing of every single priest at Nob. That is how crazy Saul is; that is how against God that Saul is; that is how committed to killing David that Saul is.

6. **Self Respect** (21:10-15) As you watch these planks fall and now there is not much left of David as we know him, finally he ends up running to a place where Saul won't get him. In Chapter 21, David goes to Gath, (Goliath of Gath), the fortified city where Goliath, the man he killed, the giant's hometown. The only way David can make sense of surviving in this environment is to pretend that he is insane. So David is clawing the city gates like a cat and slobbering all over his beard. He thinks if he can look crazy enough, people will leave him alone. It works but king Achish wants nothing to do with him. The point is this – what has happened to David the giant killer? This is not the David that we root for or we hear

stories about him in Sunday School. I don't think there are any flannel boards with David slobbering on the gates. What happened to our hero?

David is getting pulverized by God because that is what God does. God has to take us apart to put us together. There are a lot of parts that don't make it into the rebuild.

Things move along and there is a new David now. Saul is finally dealt with; he is killed. He actually commits suicide in a cowardly way.

David in II Samuel 1 is doing the eulogy of the man who hunted him for 15 years, the man who took away his wife, his friend, his mentor, his family, his peace, his well being, his sanity. David gets the last word. – Mic check. I want everyone to hear this. I have a little something to say about Saul. – Here is what he says:

2 Samuel 1:23 “Saul and Jonathan – in life they were loved and gracious, and in death they were not parted. They were swifter than eagles; they were stronger than lions.

:24 “O daughters of Israel, weep for Saul, who clothed you in scarlet and finery, who adorned your garments with ornaments of gold.

:25 “How the mighty have fallen in battle!” Mourn for Saul.

That is how David responds because he is not the David that killed a giant. He is this new David.

This passage has always perplexed me. Three or four years ago, I was in a class and one of the translators of three of our English translations was the professor. It was a survey of the Old Testament. But when we got to the United Kingdom Period and we were making the transition into David being king, I stopped the class. It was embarrassing but I said: Why did David say that? Why did he praise Saul?

The professor said: Well because he loved Saul.

I said: Well then, why did he love Saul?

The professor said: Because he was a man after God's own heart.

You can't love like that as a child or as an adolescent. You can only love like that after you have been through a desert and a lot has been burned off. That is what David was able to do because he did what God called him to do and God called him into a desert – because it is through desert life that we are conformed to the image of God. It is in the dark night of the soul – it is in the wall that we camp and we stay there and let Him do His magic on us.

Look, here is the wall.

The “Wall”

The wall is about dismantling our immature programs for happiness which can't possibly work in adult life. [Ketting]

We are trading up from childhood to adulthood and God is trying to take away our pacifiers and our little blankets and our car seats, where we find safety and comfort and a degree of innocence in some respects. He says: No, it is time to get out there and do things the right way.

In a list of quotes I have learned to hate over the years because they are probably true, here is one for you. “When God has an impossible job, He takes an impossible man and crushes him.” [Allen Redpath] If that is true, and I believe it is, look at it in David’s life.

You can see how that is the pattern in the life of Abraham, Moses, Elijah, Nehemiah, Jeremiah, Samuel’s mother, Paul, Martin Luther, C. S. Lewis, and Corrie Ten Boom. God had impossible missions and so He took impossible people and He crushed them and put them through a desert and sat them there until their ego is burned off and the pillars were cut out from underneath them and their crutches were thrown away --- and then there was just God and them.

Here is what it feels like. You feel remote, immobilized, unsuccessful, hurt, ashamed, or reprehensible. I put those on the screen as a physician for your soul. Have you felt those emotions, not because you are living out the consequences of your choices but because you feel like you are doing right. You could talk to three of your best friends who know you inside and out and they would tell you – You are right with God. Have you felt those emotions? Some other people have. I stole that from a book; somebody else wrote that list; I didn’t write those. [Hagberg and Guelich]

The wall is a time of questioning, doubting, anger, anger towards God sometimes, loneliness, uncertainty, pain, loss, and grief. [Hagberg and Guelich] – Do those symptoms sound familiar? Then you might be suffering from the dark night of the soul.

Here is the point. God said He was up to this.

Philippians 2:13 It is God who is at work within you to will and to work for His good pleasure.

All those emotions, all those symptoms, all those feelings, it is God. He is doing that. He is part of it. So even the feeling of the absence of God, this verse says that those feelings are evidence of His presence.

Between services and this whole week, people who have been through the wall a few times say: Gosh, I wish someone would have told me that five years ago, ten years ago, thirty years ago.

I remember hearing a sermon before I entered my first wall in 1981 and it was the survey of David’s life that we just went through in those three chapters. I was so grateful that I was not alone. I wish I had known more and I wish I had listened better. But for you who have been there, you know and you

want the word to get out that this is part of the Christian life and it is okay. It is God who is at work within you, to will and to work for His good pleasure. It is what He is up to.

It is easy to get lustful and envious towards the good old innocent days.

Kendall Payne, a folksinger that I like to listen to, writes this about growing up. [“Scratch” lyrics]

It’s a big girl world now

Full of big girl things

And every day I wish I was small.

She is singing: Oh gosh, I remember when things were easier. I remember the first three stages. I wish – I wish.

But we can’t stay that way. That is not right. And that is not what God is up to. You don’t want to get stuck pretending, trying to think it will just go away if you ignore it. That is not what happens.

Results

But on the other side of the wall, after the filtration and after the grinding and after the burning off of ego, you have a new intellect, emotion, and will. You are seeing things.

-Intellectually, you are able to have words attached to you like discernment, a deep word, and wisdom.

-You are able to listen with greater understanding of what is being said.

-Your will is conformed now to the point where you can do sacrificial things and it is no sacrifice because there is not much left of you to be concerned about that sort of thing.

-Obedience comes naturally; it kind of flows; of course, what else would I do?

-Sloth is gone in your life. You are pursuing things instead of just waking up late in your spiritual life.

-Your emotions – it is hard for me to use any other word but this deep sense of love towards yourself and acceptance of that, and towards other people and not trying to change them and control them.

-Your acceptance of who God is, not who you want Him to be.

-Joy in circumstances, good or bad.

-And you are not pursuing God so that He can bless you. You are just pursuing God.

You want to be on the other side of the wall. You don’t want to be a child your whole life. God is not going to let you and you throw a fight if you want.

Application – Don't

Here is a quick application on the don't side. Here are some descriptive terms of what will get you stalled in *the dark night of your soul* for a long time:

Strong egos, self-deprecation, guilt and shame, intellectualizing [that is when you are using big words to rationalize what you are doing], high achieving, doctrinal rigidity and the difficulty to be uncertain, vulnerable and to not equate our will with God's will. We cannot remain in control.

The last line there is advice: you cannot remain in control.

So, as long as you hold on to those things, you will stay in the desert. But if you relinquish a right to your life, this is what happens.

Application - Do

This is what you do. Let's just stop and think about this. If this is your fate [a desert experience], if you are going to be in that desert, and you are going to follow the paths of Jesus [it is good enough for Him and it will be good enough for you], and all these other saints, you would be hard pressed to find a saint in the Bible or even in church history who did not walk through a desert for a long time. If that is your fate, wouldn't it be good to just plan ahead, to bring a compass so that you won't be 100 feet or one dune away from being on the other side of the wall but you just get lost. If you could raise your intelligence to a squirrel, then you would pack your pecans and your acorns away in the fall to prepare for the winter. If you were as smart as a tri-athlete or a marathoner, you would carbohydrate your body going into the race so you would not hit the wall too soon. If you read the Bible and look for patterns and see other authors putting the spiritual life into patterns and they say: Hey, there is a desert coming – actually, I'm sorry, there are multiple deserts coming so get a compass.

What is a compass? The first one sounds a little contrary to what we have said already. That is, the compass is the Bible itself. When you hit the wall, the Bible is not something that makes as much sense as it used to. It is something that has dried up a little bit (in your experience). Here is the reason I mention the Bible because I think every single book I read and in multiple articles I read, the single element that seemed to overlap in every story was that men and women, in their despair, when they heard God's voice, it was God's Word. When they heard God's voice, it was God's Word. So how do you put away your pecans for the desert time (the desert metaphor)?

You study the Bible now.

You memorize passages about His nature and His promises. Here is why. When you are there, at the wall, you are going to want the God who has promised things to be the One speaking to you.

You have to understand the context of those promises to understand them in the context that you are in.

All of these saints that I read about, they all said – Then what happened and then what happened? When did the dawn break? – When I heard God’s voice in my head in His Word.

He has written the script, friends. He has a favorite book to quote and it is the Bible. So if we are lackadaisical or rip-shod about our Bible understand and knowledge, I am telling you, I don’t know how you are going to get out. You have no compass. So save up now in the harvest season because when the drought comes and there is a test about how deep your roots go, you are going to want to know where the Old Testament is. You are going to want to know about the book of Romans and what it means and promises. You are going to want to know what Jesus says about the abundant life.

The second thing that was common to all these saints was that they had a guide. Most of them had a guide. They had somebody who would speak to them or just listen to them. Guides who have been through the wall multiple times don’t talk as much as other people. They listen. So, our whole church here, honest to goodness, and it is a complicated structural system that we have here, but the whole church is structured around this guide system, this mentoring model. In our small groups, called Life Groups, in our midweek Bible studies, our adult Sunday School classes called Adult Communities, MOPS (Mothers of Preschool Schoolers) and Men’s Fraternity and so many different aspects of what we do here is to give you a guide with people who know the Bible who hopefully have been through the *wall* and *the dark night of the soul* several times. Take advantage of it. Be patient. These men and women listen more than they talk. When you are at the wall, you are probably just going to want somebody else to hold your hand and pray because you might have given up on that too.

It is a delicate relationship. If I had any money for lunch, I would go without lunch and I would buy lunch for one of these men or women. I would invest later. Then I would ring their phone someday and say: *Hey, you know how I bought you lunch a lot? I want you to meet me somewhere and I want you to pray for me because I am lost and I am going to need some help.*

Guys, don’t be afraid of this. Be afraid of being complacent on the near side of the wall. Expect this and don’t hate yourself and double-clutch on whether or not you are in God’s will when you are there. That is certainly one of the major things I want you to leave with today. This is part of our life with Christ together. He never said it was going to be easy. He just said it was going to be easier than any other life.

You are going to love what He does with you. You are going to love what you look like when you

look like Jesus.

It is to that end that we will pray.

Dear heavenly Father,

Wow, they never told us this when we were buying the ticket. We are grateful that You are a God who loves us enough not to leave us alone and that You would give us this pattern so that it could not be mistaken.

So, Lord, for people who are in this dark place right now, I ask that You let them hear the voice from your Spirit that says: *It is well with your soul. This is part of it and I am here with you.* I ask that You help them understand that confusion and doubt is part of it and that there is a brightness on the other side.

So many people are new to this, Lord, and I pray for them that they would not be afraid of what is coming and that they would almost look forward to that day and that they would not be unprepared.

Those at Grace Covenant who have been on the other side of this wall a few times, I ask, Lord, that they would not just bask in it but they would come back and spend time with people in the desert, letting them know that they are prayed for and they are cared for. Let us be guides to people through this wanted land.

So, Lord, we are grateful and we praise You for being a God who is and not the God we want. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen.