**GROWN UP FAITH – Week 4**

**Kevin Myers:** Welcome to Grown Up Faith, and we all have questions. And we ask questions of, "How could a loving God send people to a place like hell?" Those are just jumping into weighty questions. Isn't one way to God narrow minded? What does it mean to be forgiven? So, we're asking some pretty honest questions in this Grown Up Faith series, where God is training our minds and he's connecting our hearts and he's aligning our wills to hear, so we can grow up in this relationship of faith.

So, let me ask you: Have you ever had someone pay your way for anything? Whether it's a cup of coffee, a meal or anything, raise your hand. Just across the campus, has anybody ever done that for you? By the way, we were at Teds, Montana, you know the whole bison place, we were there a while ago, and we got all done with dinner with the family, it was a nice meal, nice time together. And I said, "Hey can you grab the check for us?" And the waitress said, "No need, it's already been covered." And aren't those wonderful moment? You're like, "Thank you very much. And who is it?" You're looking around, and you're trying to figure it out, "Oh they already left. Oh, that was so kind." Now honestly, we could've paid for it, we went there, and we intended to. So, we could've paid for it, but the fact that somebody else did was incredibly kind.

Now have you ever had someone pay your way when you couldn't? Maybe that's happened. You don't have to raise your hand, but I'll do it. You ever had someone pay your way when you couldn't? When I was in middle school, it was probably a couple years, a year or two after my parent's divorce, and we were in a financially difficult place. Maybe some of you've heard me tell of those stories. And I went to Walt Disney. I saw the ocean for my first time, and that is spectacular if you can remember that. And I was in Michigan, so to go all the way down to Florida, how would that even be possible? Except that a family that befriended our family said to me, "Listen, our family's going to go down to Florida, we're going to have a vacation, we're going to go to Walt Disney, we're going to go to the beach, we would love for you to experience Disney. Kevin, why don't you come with our family, and all expenses are paid, whatever you need the whole trip, we want you to experience Disney."

Dude, I experienced Disney on someone else's dime, it was amazing. Wouldn't you say yes? How many of you would say yes? I would go, absolutely. I'm in. Let me keep asking you stuff. Have you ever had someone pay your way when you could never pay them back? By the way, if we were raising hands, if you've ever been a child, you'd just raise your hand, because that's what you owe momma and daddy. Okay somebody did that for you. But we'll move on. I want you to see this picture on the screen. This is five-year-old Vincent. You see him sitting in a hospital bed. He's smiling, he's good. But why? Why is he in the hospital bed? CNN told the story this past summer.

Vincent and his family and a group of relatives were all walking in Sequoia National Park having a great time, beautiful weather, goofing around kind of along the river, and it was a raging white-water kind of river, and he slipped on the rocks and went down into the river. Now this is terrifying, cause there's no way for him to get out of that. Everybody knew he was going to die, and immediately 22-year-old Victor jumped in the water. By the way, Victor couldn't even swim, but he couldn't let Vincent go on his own. He had to try and rescue him. Vincent latched onto Victor and wrapped around his head, and they went under several times. The parents of course are running along and jumping on the edge of the water and trying to rescue their boy, and with his last breath and effort, Victor pushed him, lunged him toward his father on the side, and his father barely got his hand. And then Victor, the 22-year-old went under the water again, and never resurfaced. Two hours later, they picked up his body way down the river.

When you see that picture of the five-year-old, he's there because someone jumped in the river and rescued him. They gave their life. Vincent will grow up and continue over the years to discover what it really cost for him to be here. That's quite amazing. See, because little Vincent couldn't rescue himself. And that, if you're not catching on yet, spiritually, eternally speaking, that's what Jesus did for us. Jesus jumped in the water when we could not rescue our self, he gave his life on the cross, he paid our way, a debt we could never pay in order to, if you will give us new life. We ought to be pretty excited about what Jesus did for our sake, and that's the conversation we're having today.

By the way, when people say, "How can a loving God send people to hell?" He never would. You can go to hell if you want, but you have to crawl over Jesus to get there, because God loves you so much. He sent Jesus, who jumped in the river to pay the way so that we could be restored to God. That's an amazing, amazing big picture. See, you get the big picture, and everything starts to make sense. Remember we've been going through this. The bible is one, how many? One big story. Say it with me, the bible is what? One big story of two halves: The old testament and the new testament. There are five major events in the old testament, five major events in the new testament, they are a mere image, a what church? Mere image one or the other. And it all turns on the person of Jesus Christ. Old testament points to him, new testament builds. And where everything begins it ends, God is very much on purpose.

Recall the five major events as we're walking through it in this Grown Up Faith series, God unrighteous people in paradise. Satan and sin enter. The world is judged and destroyed. A one world government. And now in the midst of all that, God begins something new, a plan of redemption, and old covenant he establishes with Abraham. The promise of a great nation, a great land, and a coming great messiah, all the prophecy, and it points to Jesus. And now Jesus has come. Let's talk about that, because we pick that up from where we left off last week, and there are some things that we've learned along the way, so I'm going to remind you of where we were last week. Remember this: were you here, if you weren't you missed it. Go back online. If you were, here we go.

In the garden of Eden, God poured into us life. We kind of called this Adam and Eve. It's not a great portrait, but you get the idea. And so, God gave them life in the garden of Eden. Life was awesome. We were pure and holy in great relationship with God. We had all good. And then Satan and sin entered and tempted us, and part of the problem with that temptation is we said, "Yes," and when we said yes, it's kind of like bringing rat poison into your life. And we said that all got stirred in, and all of a sudden, we're contaminated, and we're clouded, and things are no longer clear, and now we're in serious trouble, and God said, "Well with all of that, of course we've become unholy," and that separates us from God. Remember that last week? We kind of came over here and God put an angel, and cherubim with a flaming sword. This was the flaming sword. You're thinking, "Do you still have the flash paper?" No, I did that. We don't have to do that again. Some of you are already disappointed.

And here we are. Now we've sinned and we're separated from God. And then when we make little babies which we said a little complicated more than this, but original sin transfers. And so now we live in sin, and God established with Abraham an old covenant. And in that he said, "I will make you a great nation through you, I'll give you great land, and through you will come a great messiah. So, let's talk about the messiah. Grab your bible and turn to Matthew chapter one across the campuses. If you're on a mobile device, Matthew chapter one starting at verse 18, we're going to talk about Jesus the messiah. Worship center bible is page 966. Either underneath your chair, you grabbed it on the way in, let's go everybody get here, if you're online, get to a bible, get to Matthew 1:18. We're going to learn about the messiah Jesus, because now everything is pointed to him, everything is going to turn. Verse 18, this is how the birth of Jesus the messiah the who everybody?

**Audience:** Messiah

**Kevin Myers** Came about. His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the holy spirit, not pregnant by a person, by the holy spirit, God's involved in this. Verse 19: because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife because what is conceived in her is from who? The holy spirit." This is a God thing. She will give birth to a son, you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins." In other words, he's going to jump in the river and rescue us. That's what the cross is.

Verse 22. All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet. See this is prophecy. Now hundreds of years before, verse 23, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Emanuel, which means God with us. Watch this: All the rest of us are born in sin. In what? Sin. Our parents have original sin. It comes together in our lives, we have sin. But Jesus was born a virgin. What does that mean? That really important for you to understand. This is theologically significant because Jesus was not born of a regular, if you will, mom and dad, Adam and Eve in that sense. He was born of a virgin, which means he was without original sin. So, he was holy and pure. That makes him distinct from us. In fact, he never did sin. And there was prophecy that foretold this.

In fact, in the book, "Grown Up Faith" which many of you are studying in your small group reading on your own. I wrote about this. And I just gave details, I'm not going to read it all, but Jesus said he was the messiah, things you need to know. He claimed to be the messiah. So, we didn't just say, "Oh we wonder," no he said, "I am the messiah, I'm God in human flesh, I'm fulfilling prophecy." So, we go on and summarize some of those prophecies in this chapter. The messiah would be born in Bethlehem is one of them. The messiah would be born a virgin. The messiah would be sold for 30 pieces of silver. The messiah would be afflicted yet not open his mouth. The messiah's garments would be divided by casting lots. All these prophecies foretold. Now that's just five of the prophecies, so I go to write in this chapter, I could keep going. Scholars recognize 60 prophecies about the messiah that Jesus himself fulfilled. It can mess with your mind because the probability of one person fulfilling just a fraction of that number is astronomically low.

In fact, back in the 1960s, a couple of authors astronomer and physics mathematician, they wrote about this and figured out the odds and included it in their book entitled "Science Speaks." They determined the probability of only eight of those prophecies being fulfilled by one person, and it would be 1 to 10 in the 17th power. Now we have a difficult time getting a handle on that size of large number, 100 quadrillion. I don't understand the number, who does? So, here's what the authors did: They wrote that if you took 100 quadrillion silver dollars and dumped them all over the state of Texas, they would cover the entire state of Texas two feet deep. Have you ever gone across Texas? I did years ago with a family with a camper. That was forever, that was not vacation, it was supposed to be.

Now imagine taking one of those silver dollars and marking it. Ready? Take one of all of those, and you mark it. And then you put it somewhere in the state of Texas, and you stir the whole pile so that it's not on top, or maybe it is, you don't know. Everybody got it so far? Tell your neighbor, "I got it." Tell your neighbor, "I got it." You got it? Okay. Now blindfold a friend, drop them off in some random spot in Texas, and tell them to walk anywhere he wants for as long as he wants within that state to dig through as many silver dollars as much as he wants, and then whenever he's ready, to choose one silver dollar without looking at it, and the odds of him getting that silver dollar are equal to the odds of one person fulfilling only eight of the prophecies. Come on. Blows your mind.

In fact, we just go on in that chapter and describe Jesus said he was God. In fact, Jesus said he was the only way to God, John 14 I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the father except by me. And we think, "Isn't that narrow-minded?" But what God was doing is answering our questions. Our what? Questions. Remember, as we've been talking, we have 10000 questions, but they all boil down to how many, church? How many? 10, say it with me, how many? 10 big questions. And how you answer those 10 is your world view, it's how you answer all the 10000 questions in life. Let's look at them again. We've been walking through these questions. Is life an accident or am I here on purpose? Why do bad things happen to good people? Can I really trust God? Why can't I make my own rules? Why can't God just accept me as I am?

And then: Isn't one way to God narrow-minded? And what does it mean to be forgiven? All good questions. But we're going to stop with those two. Isn't one way to God narrow-minded? Huh. Because it seems like it is, there has to be more than one way to God, isn't there? See, for many of us we think, "Well you know what? We need to bring god down to our level." In fact, if you look on the screen, we'll fill in the blank for you. God sent Jesus down, if you will, to raise us up, to bring us up. God came down to bring us up. And Jesus paid the way to make us holy. See, our ideas often, "Well you know what? We're fine, we'll just bring God over here and he'll join us." But God can't be contaminated, God can't come over here. So, God sent Jesus down in order to bring us up and to move us from unholy to holy. But how are we going to clean this up? Because the standard doesn't change.

We left off last week with Leviticus 11:44, God said, "Be holy as I am holy." How do we get from unholy to holy? Because we don't measure up, we're over here, and so God's solution in the old testament was the tabernacle. And we laid out that tabernacle. We reminded our self what God is doing. If you recall, we've said it, put it on the screen already, that there is this old covenant that God made with Abraham, and it was all pointing to Jesus. But it's a mere image of a new, a what? New covenant that God is making now with us, and it all turn on Jesus, and it was fulfilled through the layout of the tabernacle. And we walked through the tabernacle last week. It is the movement from unholy, how we get from here outside if you will, through the gate, through the slaughtering table, through the sacrificial altar, the bronze altar, the laver and into the tabernacle, which eventually became the temple.

This is the holy place, and this is the holy of holies. How do we get from unholy to holy, and Jesus walked this path? It was walked again and again by the priest with sacrifice here offered up to God to cover our sin debt. Without the shedding of blood, there's no forgiveness of sin. Once you understand the tabernacle, you realize that Jesus walked that very path in order to write a new covenant that once and for all, we can be forgiven of our sin. He paid our way. So, we walk the tabernacle again, only explained it with Jesus who paid our way. For the next nine minutes, I want you to be absorbed in what Jesus did in walking the tabernacle, the temple to make us holy.

Welcome to the tabernacle, where God desires to dwell with his people. But how can a holy God dwell with unholy people? When we have all sinned, and sin makes us unholy, sin separates us from God. Sin leads to death. So how does a holy God dwell with unholy people? And yet that's the heart of God. So here we are, now in the new testament, where the tabernacle is the same pattern for the temple. And you can't make any sense of the new testament, and you can't make any sense of the life of Jesus and what he did for us apart from understanding the tabernacle, the pattern of the tabernacle, the movement from unholy to holy. And how could God restore us? John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his one and only son, that whoever believes in him would not perish but have eternal life." God was making it possible for us to move from unholy to holy, and Jesus walked the path of the tabernacle, the temple.

In fact, if you remember, go all the way back in the new testament to Hebrews, and in Hebrews chapter 9, it tells us in verse 22 that without the shedding of blood, there is no forgiveness of sin. That was true then, it's true now. And then it goes on to say, and by God's will we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all. So, to no surprise, just as in the old testament, I would have to come with the lamb to the front of the gate. And so, when you hear of Jesus coming to the crowd at the beginning of his ministry, and in John 1:29, John the Baptist says, He saw Jesus coming toward him and he spoke, "Look. The lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world."

Now that doesn't even make sense unless you understand the tabernacle, unless you understand the temple, that Jesus, well Jesus was literally the lamb of God, and Jesus had to be spotless. So, Hebrews says that he was tempted in every way as we were. And yet was without sin. He was the lamb from God to take away the sin of the world. Not just Israel, but all of us. And so, Jesus was, if you will, he was taken into the gate. And for all practical purposes, what Jesus did for us is he served as the lamb who went to the slaughtering table. In essence, that's what the cross serves as. See, Jesus was our permanent substitutionary atoning sacrifice. Once and for all, when Jesus gave his life, it was covered. This doesn't have to be repeated. So, whenever I sin, I'm covered by the permanent sacrifice of Jesus.

Matthew chapter 27 describes his sacrifice. It was not only permanent, but substitutionary. In fact, Isaiah 53 wrote this in prophecy. Surely, he took up our pain and bore our suffering. He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities. The punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all like sheep have gone astray, each one of us has turned our own way, and the Lord has laid on him the sin of us all. See, Jesus was our substitute. He took our guilt on himself. He was our atoning sacrifice. He paid our sin penalty once and for all so that we would not have to. And this sacrifice we're reading about was at the slaughtering table, but very much at the bronze altar.

When scripture describes him being beaten and bleeding, nailed to the cross and broken, finally giving up his life. In fact, Matthew 27:50 reads: And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit. Now listen to this: At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split. When the centurion had seen all that had occurred in the earthquake, then he was terrified in exclaimed, "Surely this was the son of God." See, at the moment of his death, something significant happened in the tabernacle, if you will the temple. The curtain was torn. That which was unholy has now had the price paid so that we can have a pathway to holy. So, it ushers in to the holy place, and into the holy of holies.

And so, the curtain was torn. And when it says the curtain was tore from top to bottom, it means the veil, the curtain between the holy place and the holy of holies. Now we have access to the living God. They were not consumed by fire because the death of Jesus Christ tore down the veil. Now he is with us. But scripture goes further than that. In 1 Corinthians 6 says: Do you not know that you are the temple of the holy spirit? What does that mean? It means there was once a place called the holy of holy's where God resided in the ark of the covenant, but now you are the holy of holies. Now God resides in you. That's what Jesus made possible. So, you've been made holy. Now you're the holy of holy's, and he is in you and with you in a profound way.

I mean this should blow our minds, because now God is not merely in a place, like a tabernacle or a temple, now God is in us, and everywhere we go he's with us. And yes, we get to do ministry with God. Things like represented by the table of showbread, communion. We celebrate communion and Jesus giving his life and the bread representing his body and the cup representing his blood, remembering what it cost for us to be made holy. And things like the lamp stand that reminds us that we have the word of God, which guides us as light unto our feet and our path. We have the holy spirit who is now in us reminding us that we have the name of Jesus Christ and we offer up prayers, and these prayers matter to God. We're doing life with God.

See, we're no longer under the old covenant. This is a new covenant through Jesus. Let me read for you from Hebrews 9:15. For this reason Christ is the mediator of a new covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance—now that he has died as a ransom to set them free from the sins committed under the first covenant. Jesus said I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the father except by me and thank God he made a way. We are under a new covenant, a new day, and we have a new eternity. See, that's God's big picture for a bigger life.

Come on, I don't know how you cannot get fired up about the truth. I do, my whole life has been transformed because of who Jesus is, and what he did for me. He paid my way, which I could never pay. He jumped in the river to rescue me and rescue you. That's not narrow-minded, that's open-hearted. That is supernatural hero kind of stuff. And when someone tells you, "Hey here's my plan to get to heaven, and it doesn't include someone paying the price for sin which is death," well then that's a false religion. There's only one who could. Remember? There's only one who could. Jesus had to be holy so that his death and sacrifice would not atone for his sins because he had none. All that's left is for you and me to die for our own sin, but he did this for us. He's the only one that could. He's the only one that did because he's the only way for us to get back to God the father, to move from unholy to holy, and he extends forgiveness. What? Forgiveness. Say it again, what is it? Forgiveness.

Now what does it mean to be forgiven? You can look on the screen, fill in the blanks. Forgiven and free from sin, shame and death. Free from sin which is the root of it. Our shame that comes, that horrible feeling like I hate who I'm becoming, I hate that I'm wasting my life, I hate it when I verbally vomit over somebody. It's that feeling after pornography or adultery or sexual sin. It's that shame that goes with you in life, and you know you don't like who you're becoming, but you are kind of stuck in this downward spiral of sin, shame and then death meaning it just keeps cycling down death to the best of relationships and a dead-end life. And you're like, "What do I do about this?" And what does the world say you should do? All the world says, celebrate it, cheers, be who you are, this is who I naturally am, well yes, it is, but it is sin contained, it's contaminated. You weren't made for this. It's a horrible way to do life. Nobody likes the fallout of this. What do you mean celebrate it?

Jesus taught it this way: He said, if your light, that is if your ability to see is darkness, how great is your darkness. He came as the light to help you see what is cloudy and unclear. But the world says celebrate it. You know what else the world says? Hide it. What do they say? You know what? I can take care of that. Put it all in a better looking up. There you go. Look at me, don't I look awesome. We just try and pretty up the outside. Well it's still nasty on the inside. Now Jesus was talking to the religious leaders and say, "You guys are spending all your time cleaning the outside of the cup, when you need to clean the inside because the inside is what's killing you." Because this is still true.

And then the world says, "Improve it." That's when you do the good works. We did this last week, but remember, "There we go. Did me a few good works. Mix it up. I'm better than I ever was. Don't I look good? I'm going to get you some of that. Drink up." No, I'm not going to do it. And you know what God says? Don't celebrate it, don't hide it, don't improve it, confess it. Do what? Confess it. You see, what Jesus did on the cross right here, is Jesus made possible for you and me to be made holy. Look at John 1:9, 1 John 1:9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to what? Forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If that's not clear, look at 2 Corinthians chapter 5. Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, they are a what? New creation. Everybody say that with me across all the campuses even online. They are a what? New creation.

The old has gone, the new is here. All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ. We implore you on Christ's behalf. Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. You know what's going on right now? Jesus on the cross died to cover our sin debt. Therefore, we who have sinned can pour out our sin at the cross, and Jesus covers us, he just pours in us and makes us all new, because on the cross he emptied himself so that you and I might be made new so that God can pour into us and who we were created to be in God, we now become the temple of the holy spirit, that's how you get over here, and you become holy and restored and walk with God, and that is the best thing you have ever seen in your life.

That is the great news, that is the good news, thank God he made that possible for us. And so, it's by, if you will, the cross right here, it is by the cross of Jesus Christ that we are transformed from the inside out. That's what he does for us. Doesn't that blow your mind? This isn't religion, this is Jesus jumping in the river and rescuing us, covering our sin and making us new in him. Now what are you going to do with that? He said in Revelation 3:20, behold I stand at the door and knock. If anyone would open the door, I'll come in. I'll forgive you, I'll restore, listen, I'll forgive your sin, I'll forgive your shame. You don't have to carry that shame. It's forgiven, it's cleansed. You will never die eternally. You'll spend eternity with heaven as your home, and he'll walk with you here and now.

Why wouldn't you open the door? Listen, why aren't we telling everybody? How can we even hold this? Jesus, I stand at the door. What's a door for? A door is designed to do one of two things: Either to keep someone out or let someone in, that's all a door does. And you can keep Jesus out. God doesn't send people to hell, you just won't open the door. It's not narrow-minded, it's open-hearted, and you can be forgiven. What more do you want God to do? But you have to open the door. And when you open the door, he comes in and you're forgiven and you have fellowship with God, and you walk with God and he transforms you from the inside out. It's just so good. When you finally get the big picture what on earth God is doing, you get a bigger life. And you're only a prayer away. A what away? A prayer away because Jesus did all this for you.

First time I ever delivered that line, you are a prayer away, it's with someone who became my friend, Ernie Johnson. I bring him up because he and I got to travel a couple of days this past week together, and it was a big month for him in that he got inducted into the Atlanta Sports Hall of Fame in the last month and inducted in the Georgia Sports Hall of Fame in the last month. And then we spent a couple of days, flew up to Indiana Wesleyan University and they inducted him as a world changer, meaning someone who has a national audience but has carried it with such a faithfulness to God, that God is the one getting the glory and the credit, and in the midst of thousands of students and a lot of conversation, it kept coming up.

"Ernie remember that moment when the presidency was transitioning in our country a couple of years ago, and you spoke on national television. And in the midst of that, you stepped in to something like politics, and you stepped into religion," but it wasn't a political thing. In fact, I listened to Ernie share this with several students across the campus. It wasn't political, it was sharing my heart because God settled something in Ernie's soul some 20 years ago. If you remember seeing him do that on TNT as he hosts the NBA on TNT, it was just a couple of minutes, but here's about 30 seconds of it, and you'll see the courageous weight of it in the moment.

**Ernie Johnson**: I know you're not supposed to talk about politics and religion, but we're already talking about politics, so I'm going to go the R direction too. I never know from one election to the next who's going to be in the oval office; but I always know who's on the throne, and I'm on this earth because God created me, and that's who I answer to. I'm a Christian, I follow this guy named Jesus, you might have heard of him. And the greatest commandment he gave me was to love others. And scripture also tells us to pray for our leaders, and that's what I'm going to do.

**Kevin Myers** Now if you heard EJ deliver that whole thing, it went viral and millions and millions, 15+ million at a very short period of time and beyond listened. But what was Ernie saying? That there was a moment in time, in fact it was December 10th, 1997. We were sitting together over lunch, and we had the conversation about, "Ernie this is what Jesus has done. He stands at your heart's door and he knocks. EJ at some moment, it's only information until you open the door and then it's transformation. But you have to open the door, and you're a prayer away." This whole thing about hall of fame, sports hall of fame here in Georgia and world changer and all that, none of that's a big deal when you sit and talk with him apart from the big deal is the big picture that God transformed Ernie from the inside out, and he had his day where he said yes.

He's only a prayer away, and so are you. God is as close as your prayer of confession. Now listen across the campuses: They're going to start to set up a thing like this table or a campus pastor's going to come up and they're going to set up for a moment, because we're not going to leave this here without a chance for you to respond just like Ernie did that day. It's just a little cup symbolic of what God will do in you, and a little cross that's just a reminder, a marker that says, "The cross of Christ transforms me from the inside out." As they're setting that up right now across the campuses, what does that prayer look like? We're going to put it up on the screen, we're going to read the prayer together, all of us. In fact, I'm going to ask across the campuses and online for you to join in reading this prayer with me. And for some of you, this is your prayer, this is your day just like Ernie had his, you have yours.

So, we're going to say the prayer together, everybody's going to read it aloud, but for some of you, you're going to say yes to that prayer today, this is your day. So, let's read it. Here's what it means. You ready? Everybody join with me in reading the prayer. Thank you, Jesus, for loving me so much that you died on the cross for me. Today I know that you are knocking on my heart's door, and I am asking you to come into my life. So, I open my heart's door. I ask you to come in and live with me, to forgive my sins, to be my savior and my friend. From this day forward, I'm going to live with you, love you and follow you. Thank you for forgiving me of every sin and making me a new person. Amen!

So, here's what we're going to do: For some of you, this is your day. You are the one, Ernie was the one that day. There are more people than we know across the campuses even online right now. You might be quite religious, you might have grown up with this stuff, but you've never surrendered and confessed and said yes to Jesus. You think you have a cooperative agreement with him on your terms, it's not how it works. He made a way, he jumped in the river, he rescued you. This might be the first time it ever made sense, this might be the 20th time, but you've not confessed, you've not surrendered, you've not had your spiritual birthday where you say yes to him.