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August 12, 2007
"Faith Unfolded: 'Fallen Humanity'"
Rev. Jim Wood

Good morning, Church. My name is Jim Wood and I trust and believe in Jesus as my Lord and Savior. It is my hope and prayer that as we are together today that something of the transforming power of God will descend upon us through His Spirit and we'll be filled with His love and His grace.

We completed last week our ten-week series on the Ten Commandments. A number of people have been asking about that, and we will have those available in text form, most of them are on the website in text form now, but we will have all of them together available for you by next week. It is our goal as well to get all of them as an MP3 file on the webpage this week as well.

We are moving into a new series what we traditionally call in the Presbyterian or the Reformed tradition as "five-point Calvinism." We used to call them fundamentals, but now that the word "fundamental" has been abused and taken away from us we just want to call them the five main points, sort of the principles of the Reformed tradition. They are normally known with the acronym "T-U-L-I-P" but we are working through them with the exact same things with a little bit different wording "F-A-I-T-H." We're calling it "F-A-I-T-H Unfolded." I would encourage you if you have some friends, bring them. It's a great opportunity for us even though we are united together as the ecumenical body of Christ, it's also important for us to know what distinguishes us. These are not principles that other traditions really wouldn't believe, but it's the emphasis that we place upon them that makes us distinct in our particular theological tradition.

Today we are looking at the first principle which is known as "Fallen Humanity" or in the old acronym "Total Depravity." Lucy Gates wondered why in the world we were going to parade all of these beautiful children around here on the Sunday that we were talking about total depravity and fallen humanity. I'm not going to explain that. If that doesn't make sense to you, that's just your fault (laughter). It doesn't make sense to me either.

We are looking at one of the greatest stories of all time in the 3rd Chapter of Genesis. It's the passage that we in our tradition, really throughout all of the Christian church, call that passage that talks about "original sin." The thing that's interesting about it is that the word "sin," this is Adam and Eve eating of the fruit of the tree and being removed from the garden, never appears in this passage. It never shows up. It's not until Cain and Abel, the story later in Genesis, that the word "sin" actually appears. It's also interesting that as important and as powerful as this story is, it is never again referred to directly in all of the Old Testament – there's a passage in Ezekiel that kind of makes a little bit of a reference, but it's never brought back in the Old Testament. In the Inter-Testamental period, that time between the writing of the last book of the Old Testament and the first book of the New Testament, or the incarnation of God in Jesus Christ, this passage becomes foundational for understanding the human condition. It is a passage that we'll see in Romans that Paul uses as the bulwark, the foundational principle, of all that he believed. It's a

wonderful story. Let's listen to it as a story and then see one thing we might be able to pull out of it.

Old Testament Reading – Genesis 3

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other wild animal that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God say, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden'?"

The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden;

but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the middle of the garden, nor shall you touch it, or you shall die.'"

But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not die; for God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate; and she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate.

Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves.

They heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden at the time of the evening breeze, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden

But the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, "Where are you?"

He said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."

He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"

The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit from the tree, and I ate."

Then the LORD God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent tricked me, and I ate."

The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you among all animals and among all wild creatures; upon your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”

To the woman he said, “I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.”

And to the man he said, “Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You shall not eat of it,’ cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life,

thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field.

By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return.”

The man named his wife Eve, because she was the mother of all living.

And the LORD God made garments of skins for the man and for his wife, and clothed them.

Then the LORD God said, “See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” –

therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken.

He drove out the man; and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim, and a sword flaming and turning to guard the way to the tree of life.

Now in the New Testament, in the 5th chapter of the Book of Romans, Paul builds on this understanding of the first Adam and the new Adam in Jesus Christ.

Listen for the word of our Lord again.

New Testament Reading – Romans 5:18 – 6:14

Therefore just as one man’s trespass led to condemnation for all, so one man’s act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all.

For just as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.

But law came in, with the result that the trespass multiplied; but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,

so that, just as sin exercised dominion in death, so grace might also exercise dominion through justification leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

What then are we to say? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may abound?

By no means! How can we who died to sin go on living in it?

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

Therefore we have been buried with him by baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.

For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

We know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin.

For whoever has died is freed from sin.

But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him.

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him.

The death he died, he died to sin, once for all; but the life he lives, he lives to God.

So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

Therefore, do not let sin exercise dominion in your mortal bodies, to make you obey their passions.

No longer present your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and present your members to God as instruments of righteousness.

For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

I've been at a season in my life where I have been trying to say in the next year or two, really what are the things as I think about closing out life, that I really want to do, or be, or experience. I'm coming to realize that there are some things that I really want to do and be and experience that are controlled by overwhelming fear, fear that I have that's keeping me from doing what I want to do. I actually have right now at my point in life two sort of dominant fears. They are all kind of grounded by who I am, and if you know me well, you know I like to be in control. I like to control my environment. I'm not going to sit where I can't see the front door at a restaurant, I'm like to know where I'm going to sit at the table, I like to be in control of my environment. There is one thing right now in particular that I'd like to experience, but because I am not able to relinquish control, I haven't been able. Sheryl has her scuba certification and she has done a lot of open water dives over the years. One of our sons Adam just recently got his. I love doing stuff, I love being out there, going out and doing things, and I've always wanted to do it, but I am scared to death of having my head under the water for more than about a second and a half. I don't even think I could be baptized as a Baptist (laughter). I'd need to write a letter and get a doctor's excuse, "Please excuse Jim. Just sprinkle him" (laughter).

I'm scared to death. This is true. One of the things I thought I would do is wear this mask and snorkel. When you put this mask on, it closes up your nose and you are required to breathe through your mouth. It scares me even to start to breathe through this on dry land. True story. I decided for about a month I was going to try to wear this during dinner (laughter), and have a routine and have an experience of being able to do it. I would put the thing on and would sit there and it only lasted part of one night because no one could understand anything you're saying and then you really start to lose weight because you can only pour a little bit of stuff down the snorkel (laughter), so it didn't work. My second fear, by the way and I don't want to go into it today (maybe I'll save it for later, this gets a little bizarre), but I have flipper fear as well (laughter). I think it has to do with something that happened to me in childhood but I'm not going to talk about that.

I am as serious as I can be about the fear of being able to breathe through this mask, even on dry land, and how much it is controlling what I want to do. This notion of fear I think is what dominates your life and my life. I think what keeps us from accomplishing or being or experiencing the things that we think we are called to accomplish or be or experience has very little to do with how well you can do it or how predisposed you are to it. I think it is controlled almost always by fear.

Today's passage in Genesis is a great story. I love it; there is so much great stuff in it. It's a story really of firsts, if you think about it. We call it the passage of "original sin," the first sin; even though I said earlier the word "sin" is not used. It really is an understanding. A little aside here, I think it really interesting and powerful that the word "sin" isn't used for this reason. If the word "sin" was used the way it was written would have to placed in there somewhere "When they ate of the fruit they sinned, or when they realized they were naked and hid they sinned, or when they started the conversation with the serpent they sinned." It's not there because you see sin is not a series of acts, it's a movement. It's a process. They got themselves into trouble when they started to talk to the serpent. Did you notice in the passage, that it said that the serpent was more crafty than any other creature that God had made? Do you know that also means in the second chapter of Genesis? Go back and read it. In the second chapter of Genesis, God gives the man dominion over every creature by giving him the authority to name them. When he names them, he gives them dominion. God gave Adam and Eve dominion over the serpent in the second chapter and now the serpent is starting to gain control over them. It's really an interesting notion

when you start to look at it. What gets you and me in trouble the most? The things that we actually have control over, but we start to let it take control over us.

It's amazing when you look at this passage – it's a series of firsts. The first reference to a meal really; they ate of the fruit. You don't find any eating earlier. It's the first passage where a woman is given a name. You notice in the second chapter, Adam, the man, doesn't have dominion over the woman, but as a result of the fall, then as a result of sin, he's given that. Then it is not a privilege, he is given the incredible, incredible negative responsibility of having to name her, to symbolize his control or his authority over her as a result of sin. Let me stop right there. Women, by the way, the believers of Christ, there's a new Adam. No man ever has dominion over you – never does a man have dominion over you in the new life. We get the first clothing. We get really interesting clothing; we get PETA clothing at first, it's all natural (laughter). It's fig leaves; must have been really big fig leaves, but I'm not going to go there (laughter). Then you get the movie star clothing, you get the fur. With that clothing you get the first sacrifice. Because of your sin and my sin God had to kill something in order to cover us. It's a series of firsts.

This is what I want to spend some time with today. It's the first fear in all the Bible. In the garden before there's no fear. Nothing to be afraid of. Everything is right. People are in right relationship with God, they're in right relationship with the Creation, and everything is going well. Here when they eat of the fruit and they realize that they are naked, what does the text say? It said they hid themselves. God's walking out in the garden. God does this in the evenings and in a powerful way He goes for a walk in the evening breeze and takes in all that He had created. He comes across the man and the woman all the time, we surmise, and begins to talk to them and today He's walking along and He notices that they are not there. "The Lord God called to the man and he said to him, 'Where are you?' The man said, 'I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself.'" The first fear. The first of all fears that come in is when the man realizes that he has done something that separates him, that his own self-consciousness comes in and he becomes fearful of the very God that created him and loved him and called him into a life of grace and wholeness. You and I, everyone of us, this is where the notion of original sin comes, you and I, everyone of us, know what that is – everyone of us at some point in our life, or if you are like me at some points in our hour, fall away and we become afraid, afraid of the presence of God.

This fear that starts to control our lives is not just a personal fear; it's a communal fear as well. You start to see that as you see the consequences of what happens with Adam and Eve and how they are going to have to live their lives and how their descendants are going to have to live. I saw it when I was in Kenya in a variety of ways. One of the programs that we did in Kenya and we are going to do again this year with our teams that are going in November is a circumcision program. There is a 60% reduction in HIV/AIDS for circumcised males. The Kikuyu tribe circumcises their young men as they enter into manhood so at the age of 14 or 15 going into what is the equivalent of our ninth grade. We created a program for 220 young boys at the time who became young men in the process. We did the circumcision but we also ran them through a number of seminars on what it was to be a Godly man. It was great teaching, great response from the kids. It was a powerful experience. We did four cycles of 60 and we ended each cycle, each seventh day on Saturday we would have a big graduation for them. This is the biggest thing in any man's life in their culture; it's bigger than anything else. It's the most important rite of passage in all of a man's life in the Kikuyu tribe.

We would have this big graduation, bring in speakers, I'd talk a little bit, we'd have music, and we'd have all of this kind of stuff, and hundreds of people would come. We would bring the young men up and we would put them on a three-legged stool which was very important symbolism in their tribe. We would put them on the stool and the priest and I would give them a tie that was donated by people from our congregation, a Bible, a certificate and a plaque. We would have the family come up and lay hands on them as they did it. It was a powerful thing. It was amazing - until this little boy David came up (see picture below*). David came up and the announcer had him come forward and then the announcer said, "David's family." "David's family." "David's family." Nobody in David's family came for the most important day in his entire life. He was there completely alone. The service was in the morning, graduation took place around 11, and his family did not show up to pick him up. He sat out on the steps by himself until 6:00 that night before his family bothered to come pick him up.

David came up and you could tell that he was horrified. He was scared to death. So, I walked up to David and whispered in his ear, "David, I'm going to be your Dad today. Is that okay?" He said, "Okay, Pastor." The picture below shows me standing there as David's Dad, while our speaker, a wonderful African woman, and one of our leaders is providing him with his stuff. David has on a fake smile. Let me ask you this. When David has children and he sends his son off for a program on the most important day of that son's life, is it more likely or less likely that David will be there? The statistics are clear; it is so much more likely that David will not be there when his son graduates because his father wasn't there for him.

I decided to go look for David when I recently returned to Kenya. I found the village where he lived. Adam was out that day so I had the day to beat around. I walked to the village and I knocked on the door of the shack that David lives in. So help me, his dad was too drunk to stand up. David saw me and I said, "David, come out." I said, "David, do you remember me? Do you know who I am?" He said, "Yeah, you're the Pastor." I said, "Yeah, David, but do you remember who I am as well?" He looked at me. I said, "David, I'm your Dad. I want to tell you I love you today. I want to tell you that I came all the way here and one of the things I wanted to do was to see you and I wanted to see how you were doing." I don't know what difference that's going to make in that little boy's life, but if somebody doesn't stand in the place of an absent father, his fallen humanity has already been sealed.

This fallen humanity that we have; this fear that we have that controls our life is not just an internal thing, it's a communal thing. I'm going to get political for a moment. I hope I don't do it so much that it really scalds you, but I'm going to for a moment today. Please forgive me. When we as a nation have prisons that hold suspected terrorists and we as a nation refuse to abide by international principles for prisoners of war and when we as a nation refuse to allow people to come and see, to even acknowledge certain names of prisoners who have been held for years, what's going on there? Does it mean that we are a bad nation? I don't think so. I think it means this - that we are a nation still girded in fear. We are worried. We are scared to death of terrorism. We are scared to death of a repeat. We are scared to death of what might come. We will take any steps necessary to protect ourselves, even to forfeit internationally-based civil human rights. It's fear that starts to control us. I am advocate of taking of and protecting ourselves, please don't misunderstand me. But, what I am saying is this fear that we have that brings about our fallen nature is not just an individual thing, it's not just a personal thing, it's a communal thing.

Here's another one. This morning I read on-line that two South Korean Christian missionaries who have been held captive by the Taliban for weeks now were released. They were released

because they were so sick. The Taliban have already murdered two of the South Korean Christian missionaries and there are 19 more that are still being held. Why in the world is that not dominating the press? More importantly, why in the world do we as the body of Christ not have that lifted up as the number one prayer for us every day while they are being held captive? Do you know why? This is Jim speaking. I'm on a roll now; I've gone from preaching to meddling. You know why, I think? Because we are scared to death of talking about Islam. We are scared to death as Christians, or as non-Islamic people, to speak anything condemning, even about Jihadists because we don't want to offend, or insult, or attack an entire religion. Can you imagine if there were 19 Muslim or Jewish or Buddhist or Janist or whatever believers were being held captive by Christians, what do you think the spin would be on that?

Here's the thing. Here's the thing. What would be the greatest need if they were being held captive by Christians? To have those people talk about how bad it was? No, it is to have the Christian church to say "Other Christians, this is reprehensible. I don't care what you want to cloak it in, any religious talk or theological reflection, this is just plain evil." Until we develop relationships with the good Muslims and encourage them to condemn their own for evil, evil will control and we will live in fear. This fear that we have that leads to a fallen humanity is communal as much as it is personal. This is the thing we've got to understand. It's who the world is. It's who we are.

Before we let the darkness overcome us or as Winston Churchill might say something like, "Before we let the black dog have the last howl," let's see the light in this, because there is a lot of light in what I've been saying. The light comes in the Reformed tradition emphasis on fallen humanity or what we traditionally have called "totally depravity." The Reformed tradition, the Presbyterian tradition, has said this: The understanding of total depravity or fallen humanity is the brightest contribution we have to offer. Why is that? It's because we say that once we recognize this is who we are then we have a chance to solve it, but if we don't recognize it, then we are stuck. There is a car that I assume belongs to someone who lives near Colley, I see it there a lot, either that or they go to the Colley Cantina an awful lot. The car has a bumper sticker that says, "Born good enough the first time." I'm really glad for that person. I really am, that they were born good enough the first time. I wasn't. I wasn't. I don't think any of us here were. I don't think any of us have been able to solve all our problems by ourselves. I don't think any of us have been able to say that I learn enough, I get the right tools, and I'm in good shape. There's something else in this. What we offer in our tradition is that once we recognize that we are all fallen, that we are all totally depraved, that we've all fallen short of the glory of God, that we've all sinned, then we've got a starting point. Without that it's just about fixing yourself, it's just about being a better person; it's just about solving it.

I'm an advocate of counseling. I've been on both sides, in the chair and on the couch for many years and I'm still on both sides - in the chair and on the couch. I'm a strong, staunch advocate of counseling. If you've come in and talked to me more than two or three times, you know that because I've probably asked you to consider it. I'm an advocate of it, but let me say this, if I think that counseling is going to solve my life, that it's going to solve all my problems and everything is going to be okay just because of counseling, I am in trouble. What it does is it helps me. It helps me realize what really is going on, it helps me sort it out. The only way I'm going to get better with that help is by coming to recognize who I am and what I ultimately need.

This is the thing for us today. Where do we start? This passage is a passage of firsts. There's another first in it. I think it's really cool. I read a lot of commentaries on this. I don't think I saw any commentaries say this, but I'm sure somebody else has. Do you what is the first question in

the Bible? The very first question in the Bible is in this passage today - the very first question. God says, "Where are you?" "Where are you?" He's walking along in the garden and He's saying, "Where are you?" The man says, "I was afraid. I hid." I believe God does the same thing for you and me today. I believe he's asking you and me today, "Where are you?" "Where are you?"

There are some answers you can give. The first answer is you can hide. It's all in the Bible; it's all been tried. You can hide. How do you hide? "I'm fine. I'm doing good." I used to have someone I was in relationship with that when we had group prayer we'd be talking about what prayer concerns we had and we'd all share our concerns, generally pretty vulnerable, and every time it would get to this person she would say, "I'm fine. I'm okay. I'm good. In fact, I'm really so fine, I think Jim's got a lot more need than I do, so I'm going to give my extra one to him." I'm serious. I used to think, "How sad." Frances Dille taught me this. If you say you are "fine," you know what that means. You're fouled up, insecure, neurotic, and emotionally disturbed (laughter). If you say you are "good," you are goofy, obsessed, obsessive-compulsive, and demented (laughter). I like "fine" better. When you are fine you are fouled up, insecure, neurotic, and emotionally disturbed, so be careful when you tell somebody you are fine. You can hide; you can keep trying to do that.

Or, you can become a little bit more sophisticated theologically and instead of just hiding, you can start to answer the question. You can say, "It's all women's fault. If we didn't have this women's lib thing, we'd be okay." "Somebody else made me do it. Somebody else made me do it" "Or, I did it, but it really wasn't me, it was what you brought into my life anyway. You gave me the serpent. You gave me the woman." We can start to blame; we can put that off on other people. Any time you have ever done that in your life you have forfeited the opportunity for healing in your life. That's not to say that you can't understand that you are like you are because of things that have been done to you, but when you leave it there you are lost.

What do we say? When God comes today and God says "Where are you?" what's the answer? I think there is one. I think it's there, but before we talk about it I want to share a short story with you. I've really been debating about whether I should share this or not because it's true and it's about me and it's about a dream. I want to start by saying I love you all, and I really do honor and appreciate all of you, but please, please don't e-mail me and give me an interpretation of my dream (laughter). I don't need it because this one I've got this one figured out, especially if you have a Freudian interpretation. Just leave that at the door; don't share it with me or tell me about it. About ten days ago I was asleep in the middle of the night and I woke up because of a dream I had. As I told you, I have a real need to control. I have a need to be in control of my life, I have a need to control my environment, I have a need to control. In this dream I had none. This is what was going on. I was in a line with a lot of people. People were going through a door and I started to realize that nobody came back from going through the door. I realized very quickly that it was a door of death, people were not coming back. There were people in front of me and behind. Some of you were in line with me. If any of you would like to know if you were in line with me and whether you were in front of me or behind me, if you come to me later after the service I will tell you (laughter). I might not tell you what order you were in, but I'll let you know if you were in line with me.

In my life I can tell you two things, the one thing and another one of the main things that I most want to be in my life and do. The first is I want to die a good death. It's what the medieval world called the *ars moriendi*, the art of dying. What I mean by that is I don't want to be controlled by the fear of death and I really don't feel like I have been. I've never had any fear in any mission

experience. I've been in Guatemala where the counter-insurgents were fighting the army and we were on a flat bed truck and they were almost shooting over us. I've never had any fear in any of those things. I've always felt that for all my stuff, I can die a good death. I can die. I can do that. The second thing is as much as I want to be a good pastor, what is so much more important for me is to be a good father.

Here in this dream, I'm standing in the line, the door is there, people aren't coming back from the door, everybody's kind of standing quietly and walking in quietly. All of a sudden I look back and I see one of my sons, my oldest, riding on a horse watching everything that's going on, watching everybody. I'm ready, I'm calm, and I'm peaceful. I think I've got control of this one, no fear. I'm ready to go until the door opens. What I saw inside wasn't what I expected. There was electricity and buckets of water and an executioner that had the most horrible, horrific, grin and smile that I've ever seen in my life and he comes out to take me, just smiling. Immediately I was overcome with such a fear that I broke into a deep sweat, and I began to kick and claw and try to run away. I tried to come up with excuses in my mind or appeals that I could make in my mind. All the while one of my sons riding on a horse is watching everything I was doing. I woke up at 2:00 in the morning. I didn't go to sleep until 11:00 the next night because I was overcome with fear and failure.

I used to think that fear was something that should be overcome if you just did it long enough. I used to think that it was something that needed to be overcome, that it was a bad thing. I've got to tell you in that experience for me that fear was probably the richest blessing that ever came into my life in the last number of years, because it reminded me again, "Jim, you can never do this. There is nothing in you that can ever do this. Jim, you're never no matter how much you think you are in control, no matter how prayed up you are, you're never going to be able to do this. It's not in you. You're not man enough to die that well. All the while, Jim, I want you to know that your children are going to be watching you be a failure. They're going to be seeing in you what you keep talking about and what you keep thinking and what you keep saying, but they are never going to see you live it out." Why was that so powerful for me? Because it's the reality that that's truth. When we step in and we say, "Lord, I'm afraid," then comes the answer. Paul offers it in this passage today.

It's so powerful for me when I look at what Paul does. He says, "If we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.... our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be destroyed, and we might no longer be enslaved to sin. For whoever has died is freed from sin. ... if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." What Paul says is "Jim, you can't do it. Nobody can. It's only when Christ does it in you. None of you will step into your life or your death, none of you will step into the things that you so desperately want to do and be and be known for - none of us can do it." It is only when we get out of the way, when we realize "I'm fallen. I'm not just fallen, God, I'm depraved and I need You."

So here's the thing, when God asks you today "Where are you?" how about this? "God, I'm honest today. I'm afraid. That's where I am. I'm afraid. I've been trying to be in control, I've been trying to run it, I've been trying to figure it out, I've been trying to sort it out, I've been trying to be good enough, I've been trying to say I'm fine, but I'm just afraid." If you said just that today without a "but" to it, I believe you have begun the most important journey of your entire life. You've begun to recognize that it's not about you. Not about you. It's about

someone else who can do it through you. Come back next week and see what we can do about that.

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