



MY DOVE

Part 6 of The Peasant Princess

Pastor Mark Driscoll | Song of Songs 6:2-10 | October 26, 2008

You're listening to the Peasant Princess Sermon Series, where Pastor Mark Driscoll takes us through the poetic book Song of Songs. For more audio and video content, please visit marshillchurch.org.

Well, howdy, Mars Hill. Here we go again. Song of Songs Chapter 6, Verses 2 through 10. If you've got a Bible, feel free to go there. If you're new, my name's Mark. It is good to have you with us. My wife, Grace, will be joining me on stage in a bit, at the end of the sermon to answer some of your questions. I'm going to go ahead and pray. We're going to get right to work today.

We'll have principles that really affect all relationships, and if you are married you can make a particular application for that relationship as well. We'll start in prayer. Father God, we come to you, acknowledging, confessing, that we are sinners and that we sin against one another, and that we hurt one another. And that, as a result, our relationships suffer. God, it is my prayer as we study the Scriptures today that you would help us to see not only our sin but the hope of Jesus, that you would send us the Holy Spirit so that we might live out of the Gospel, and that, Lord God, we might live in unity and hope and in love and in relationship with you and with one another, and so, Holy Spirit, we're asking for this grace and we're asking for it tonight in Jesus' name. Amen.

Catch you up on the story, if you're new. Song of Songs is a series of snapshots of a married couple's life together: the good and the bad. Last week we got a snapshot of the bad. She sinned against him. He was out late, perhaps working; came home to find that the bedroom door was locked, that she was in bed alone, and that she was going to punish him by being unavailable to him, and unwilling to be with him. Not dissuaded, he knocked on the door. That didn't work. He tried to pick the lock. That didn't work. He hung out for a little while. That didn't work. She made a few lame excuses and went back to sleep. Like to — many men do, he just left. Sort of embarrassed, probably frustrated; scratching his head; trying to figure out what he should do with this woman that he loves who rejects him. She woke up, sometime later, probably late in the evening.

The dew was all right on the ground, so it was past midnight. She opened the door to realize he had gone. She looked around the palace — their home. He was not in sight. She was panicked, uncertain of where he had gone to. She went back to sleep, dozed off, and had a nightmare. She then woke up in the morning, went to her friends and said, "I've done something terrible. I've sinned against my husband and now I can't find him." This week we see their reconciliation. We see them kiss and make up, as it were, Chapter 6, Verse 2. Those of you who are saying — and I know in this service many are — you may say, "Really? Married couples fight?" Oh, yes, and the question is: what will you do with it? Because what happens: too many people will make too many provisions for everything but sin. So many couples, they fall in love. They schedule their wedding.

They know when they're going to get married and what they're going to wear. They know where they're going to have their wedding; where they're going to have their reception; where they're going to go on their honeymoon. They filled out their registry. They know what their place settings and the bed coverings will look like, and if you ask them, "Do you also have a plan for sin?" usually they don't. "No. We have the napkins nailed down, but sin we've conveniently overlooked." When you marry, you will sin against one another. Whether or not you are able to deal with sin will determine whether or not you will continue to have a marriage. This week we look at how they dealt with her sin. She speaks first. Chapter 6, Verse 2: "My beloved has gone down to his garden, to the beds of spices, to graze in the gardens and to gather lilies." She finally finds him.

Walked away, left, "Ah, he's down in the garden." My assumption is that this is probably on their property, a place that was sort of his place to go: his place to pray and to collect his thoughts, and to journal and to clear his head. He was in that place. So as she went looking for him around the palace and the grounds, she found him in his garden, in his silence and solitude spot, hopefully getting time with God and praying about how he should respond to his wife in the middle of their marital spat. Not only does she pursue him — and you need to know this, that when we sin, we should pursue others for reconciliation. We shouldn't pull back and expect people to pursue us. If we have offended them, then we need to pursue them. We need to initiate reconciliation and apology, and she does that. She goes looking for him.

And then she speaks wonderful words that are exceedingly important. "I am my beloved's and my beloved his mine. He grazes among the lilies." I think this is her way of apologizing. She looks at him; finds him. He's probably sitting there, dejected, rejected. She says, "I belong to you. You belong to me. We're a couple. I'm supposed to take care of you; you're supposed to take care of me. I didn't do that. I'm supposed to respect you. You're supposed to love me. I didn't respect you, so I know I've made it hard for you to love me." This is her way of declaring, "I belong to you and I sinned against you, and you belong to me and I've turned you away from me; done a terrible thing." This is her confessing her sin: her acknowledgement of her failure. Well, then he needs to respond.

So she has pursued him. She has initiated with him. She has spoken to him. Now he has to respond. How many of you men, at this point, would say anything but a compliment? He compliments her. "You are beautiful as Tirzah, my love, lovely as Jerusalem; awesome as an army with banners." Tirzah was a beautiful oasis city. Jerusalem was the capitol city. I think it's fair to say that they probably spent most of their time living in Jerusalem and vacationing in Tirzah. These are their favorite places. When you are married for a while, you travel a little bit. You find your favorite places: the places that you build your memories; the places that you build your intimacy; the places that you long to be together in. Grace and I have some of those places.

And what he says to her is, "You're home." Love living in Jerusalem. I love vacationing in Tirzah, but what I really want to do is be with you. Many women may not understand this, but, for a man, the home is not their home. The wife is their home. For a lot of women, they nest, have kids, settle in — my wife is a nester. We're settled in. For her, home is a house. For me, home is a wife. I don't care where we're at. As long as she's with me, I'm home. This is his way of saying, "I need to be with you. I love living in Jerusalem. I love vacationing in Tirzah, but I'm just not right unless you're close by. When we're separated; when you reject me; when you deject me; when you turn me away, I'm miserable. I need you. I want to be with you." And the next line, if you've been married for any length of time makes perfect sense.

"Turn away your eyes from me, for they overwhelm me." What is she doing? She's looking him in the eye. This changes everything. If you want to know how to speed up a marital conflict, look your spouse in the eye, right? That's why you don't resolve conflict in any relationship, especially a marital relationship, on the phone, through e-mail, God forbid a text message. You're not going to make any progress. If you want to make progress, you need to physically be together and look one another in the eye, and what he tells her is this. "Don't look me in the eye. I'm angry. I'm trying to have a fight with you, and I can't if you're looking me in the eye." How many of you are married and you know what this is? They look sad. "Oh, you look sad." They look cute. "You're like, you know, you kind of look cute, dang it." They look sorry.

You know, I see the lip trembling. "Oh, man, stop looking so cute and hurt. I can't be ticked. You're so cute I — knock it off." You know, that's the conversation they're having. Grace will do that. She's got this little smirk and this little twinkle in her eye, and this little — cute little smirk, and when she does that, I can't be angry. I've tried for 20 years and I can't remain angry. I'm like, "Knock it off." "Oh, come here." I'm like, "No. You're gonna pull me in, and then I'm gonna be happy. I can't let that happen." So couples that don't look one another in the eye, couples who don't speak to one another while looking one another in the eye, they're in a bad place. They eyes give you away. You can see the sorrow, the fear, the hope, the love, the forgiveness. It's all in the eyes. He then goes on to proceed and give her a series of compliments.

"Your hair is like a flock of goats leaping down the slopes of Gilead," — long black hair, cascading down her head and shoulders and neck. "Your teeth are like a flock of ewes that have come up from the washing, all of them bear twins. Not one among them has lost its young." She has all her teeth and they are white: good dental work, very nice. "Your cheeks are like the halves of a pomegranate behind your veil." She's got rosy coloring in her cheeks. "There are 60 queens and 80 concubines and virgins without number. My dove, my perfect one, is the only one." Some would say that at this point he all right was unfaithful, and that is a reference to his personal harem that we dealt with out of I Kings a few weeks ago. I don't believe that is the case.

I believe he is remaining faithful to her at this point, and his heart, we're told in I Kings, wandered from God when he was older — I Kings 11 we looked at — in his old age. I believe what he's saying here is this. "I'm the King of Israel. I can have any woman, theoretically, that I'm interested in. Be interested in me." All right, at this point, here's his resume: richest man in the world; smartest man in the world; most powerful man in the world. Those men have options. He's looking at her saying, "I'm not smart enough to pick a lock, apparently, but I'm smart enough to rule a kingdom. I'm wealthy and I'm powerful." What he says is, "You know there's a lot of other women. There's a lot of other women who would be glad to receive me. They wouldn't lock the door."

But he says, "I choose to be with you. I'm not with you because I have to be. I'm with you because I want to be. I'm not with you under duress. I'm with you in delight. Yeah, there's a lot of other women, but you are the woman for me." I'll tell you this all complete and full honesty. I'm drawn to Grace in a way I've never been drawn to any other woman in my whole life. Just am. I am compelled to her. I just am. God put deep in my heart, at the age of 17, this absolute affection for this woman like I've never experienced before or since. I am drawn to her, compelled to her. That's what he's saying. "There are lots of women, and I'm sure they're nice and I'm sure they're great, and I'm sure they'd be amazing wives, but at the end of the day, you're perfect for me. You and I, we need to be together, and I can't live without you."

That's what he's telling her. My dove, my perfect one, is the only one. I want to be with you. Don't reject me. The only one of her mother, pure to her who bore her; she's the only daughter in her family. You'll meet her brothers in Chapter 8. Says, "Your mom loves you," not only that. The young women saw her and called her blessed. All the women in the kingdom know you're amazing. The queens and the concubines also, and they praised her. He said, "I'm not alone in believing that you are amazing." This is a series of amazing compliments from a man who just got rejected by, sinned against, by his wife. "Who is this who looks down like the dawn, beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun, awesome as an army with banners?"

Now some of you will hear those comments that he gives her. You'll say, "Well, those are familiar. Didn't he all right say those earlier in the book? Didn't we study that a few weeks ago?" These comments, in large part, are repetitious from earlier portions of the book. When they were dating, he would say these exact things. On their wedding night, he did say these exact things, and the question is: well, why does he say them again? Here's why. Early on in a relationship when you're in love, you speak sweetly to one another. You're playful. You have fun. You have nicknames, and then you get married, and then you have a good couple battles. And all of a sudden it's not "sweetie-pie," and "I love your hair," and, "Oh, don't look me in the eye, you're so cute." You get cold, hard-hearted, curt, distant.

By reiterating what he told her when they were dating and what he told her when they were married, he is saying, "My heart has not changed. I still love you. I still want to be with you. I'm still attracted to you. I still desire you. I still delight in you. Yeah, we're in a very rough patch of our marriage right

now, but I want to get through it, and I want to be with you.” That’s what he’s saying. Now all of that to say that this is a descriptive text, and I’m going to do a big of theological work with you. There are descriptive texts in the Bible that describe something that happened. This is an example. There was a sin — a wife against a husband — and then reconciliation. There are also in the Bible no descriptive texts that tell us what happened, but prescriptive texts which tell us what we should and should not do.

So what I want to do is I want to take this descriptive text, establish it as an exemplary occasion of repentance and reconciliation between a couple that had sinned, and then I want to build around it a Biblical theology looking at the prescriptive text that tell us what we are to do in our relationships when we sin or are sinned against. And I want to give these to you as tools for all of your relationships, and then they’ll have particular application for marital relationships, but certainly are not limited to that. Some of what I’ll share with you in the ensuing portion of the sermon you have heard if you have been here for a while. I share it again for a few reasons. It’s all in Death by Love. I wrote it all up, but I’m going to revisit some of that for a few reasons: Number 1: some of you have heard it and still aren’t doing it, so we’ll cover it again.

Number 2: the Bible uses the word “remind” a lot in the New Testament, and Paul keeps reminding his people about sin and Jesus, so I need to remind you of sin and Jesus today, as well, and, Number 3, I think it’s important to give this to you because a few thousand of you are new. In the last month and a half, since we began this series, 2,000-plus new people have come to Mars Hill. They’ve never heard some of our basic foundational, fundamental teaching on sin and Jesus. So I’ll start by telling you this. This will shock you. Sinners sin. Okay, they do. Who’s the sinner? Everyone except for Jesus. Are you a sinner? Yes. If you marry, will you marry a sinner? Yes. Does one sinner plus one sinner equal no sin? No. Does one sinner plus one sinner equal less sin? No. One sinner plus one sinner equals sin.

Now the weird thing is, couples get married and they don’t know that. They’ll say things like, “I can’t believe you said that.” If you go to Mars Hill, you should never, ever say that. You should say, “Oh, they told me this was going to happen.” Couples get shocked when they’re sinned against. Number 2: sin requires a sacrifice, atonement. A penalty must be paid. Number 3: that sacrifice will either be Jesus or the person in the marriage. Jesus is God who died for sin to pay the penalty for sin. He was the atoning sacrifice for sin, and if sin is placed on Jesus and he dies, guess what? You don’t need to kill your spouse, theoretically and actually. If you don’t understand the functional work of Jesus in the marriage, when sin happens, you’re going to crucify your spouse. Now you may do it verbally by assaulting them with your words. You may physically harm them.

You may sexually, emotionally, financially harm them. One way or another, you’re going to make them pay. They sinned. They’re going to atone for their sin. They hurt you. You’ll hurt them. All it is, is a misunderstanding of the Gospel. What I find so curious, we live in this age of chronological snobbery — that’s what C.S. Lewis calls it — where people look at the believe and say, “It’s so primitive that they would think there would need to be a sacrifice for sin.” We do, as well. We do, as well. Economy does bad. Some politician needs to get fired. Company goes bad. Some CEO needs to get fired. Some sports team loses, coach, quarterback, point guard, somebody has to get fired. Somebody needs to be sacrificed. We do it all the time. You want to be free to have sex, well, then we just slaughter the kid.

That’s the way it goes. The child has to be sacrificed. You get married. You sin against one another. You don’t understand Jesus. You can’t work it out. What needs to happen? Well, you hurt me. I hurt you. We sacrifice the marriage. We crucify the marriage and we just go our separate ways. Not saying there’s never a Biblical occasion for divorce, but I’m saying that the majority of cases are not Biblical. The question is: who’s going to pay the price? What will be the sacrifice? Will you suffer? Will your spouse suffer? Will your marriage suffer? Sin leads to death. Someone — something has to die. That’s why we love Jesus so much. He’s the one who died so that we might live. Now as we get into this issue as well, let me define for you sin, as many of you are here and don’t even know what sin is.

Sin is thought, word, deed, motive. Thought: what you think. Word: what you say. Deed: what you do. Motive: why you say and do what you do. God looks on the heart. He knows all. Additionally sin is omission and commission. Omission is where you don’t do what you’re supposed to do. Commission is where you do something you’re not supposed to do. Most people only think of sin as commission — doing a bad thing — not omission — failing to do a good thing. So the husband who doesn’t love his wife, as long as he doesn’t hit her, might say, “Well, I haven’t done anything wrong.” Yes, you have. It’s sin of omission. You’ve not loved her. Not loved her. Understanding sin in that broad sense, you just come to realize we are all guilty. When they Bible says that we’re all sinners, the Bible is 100-percent correct.

Thought, word, deed, motive, omission, commission: we’re all sinners. Now the question is: what do we sinners do? Some of you are like, “What? I thought we were going to talk about sex.” We’ll get there later on, but, today, we’re just going to talk about sin and you and Jesus, because you know what? Sin happens in marriage, and if you don’t understand sin, you won’t have a marriage. You just won’t. So let me explain this. You will sin. The question is: what will you do when you sin? Now immediately some of you say, “That’s right. I’m married to a very sinful person. Tell them what to do.” We’ll get to them in a minute. We’re talking about you. Classic blame-shifting is, “I’m glad I brought you. You need help and he will help.” All right? We’ll get to them. I know they’re terrible. I can see them. They are horrible people.

We’ll get to them in a moment. Let’s talk about you. What do you do when you sin? What should you do when you sin? Well, you’re supposed to repent. That’s the Christian answer. Repent. We’ll talk about this. All of a Christian’s life is repentant. Martin Luther nailed them to the Wittenberg door, which was the launching of the Protestant Reformation. He had 95 theses, criticism of the church, things that needed to change so that it could be back to the Biblical expectations, and he began the 95 theses with this statement. “All of a Christian’s life is one of repentance.” See, fish swim. Birds fly. Christians repent. That’s how we know you’re a Christian. That’s how we know. Christians repent. So what does it mean to repent? Well, I believe there are five steps to it. I’ll share them with you in succession.

I don’t think that most Christians even understand repentance. I believe it is widely misunderstood and it is widely ignored. Number 1: it begins with conviction. Now some people misunderstand conviction as depression. I’ve had people come up to me and say, “Being a Christian, it’s not working.” I

had a new Christian tell me this. "What do you mean it's not working?" "I just feel bad." "Did you do something bad?" "Yes." "Well, if you are bad and did bad and you feel bad, I see a pattern." I see a consistent pattern. A bad person does a bad thing and has a bad feeling. What we call that is not depression. There is legitimate clinical depression. What we call your experience is conviction. You are bad, did bad. So you feel bad. That's conviction. That's conviction.

People come in and say, "I need to get over my depression." "No, you need to repent of your sin so that you can be free of your conviction." The Bible says that conviction comes to us in two ways. Romans 2, I believe it's in verse 15 — it is. The Bible says that "Because we're image bearers of God, God made us in his image and likeness, male and female, with a conscience." It's a moral rudder: helps us figure out right and wrong. It's not perfect because we are sinners and self-deceived and we do suppress our conscience, but even the non-Christian knows: this is right, this, wrong. There's some sense of morality about us. In addition, for the Christian, Jesus says, in John 16, "I will send the Holy Spirit, and he will convict you of sin."

So everyone has a conscience, and for the Christian, they also have the additional ministry of God the Holy Spirit, who convicts us of sin, and, as a Christian, you know what this feels like. "I shouldn't have said that. I shouldn't have done that. I should have said this. I should have done that. My motive, thought, word, deed, omission, commission, I get it. That was wrong. I'm in the wrong." Conviction. The next step is confession. This is where you agree with God. You go to God and say, "God, I sinned against you." This is what the Psalmist does. He says, "Against you only, Lord God, have I sinned." God, here's what I've done. I've sinned against you. You go to the person that you've sinned against, and you tell them, "I've sinned against you. I was wrong." And confession means you talk about it with others.

James says it this way — Jesus' brother, in the New Testament epistle bearing his name, "Confess your sins one to another." Talk about it, talk about it. That's why I'm concerned for some of you who are totally solo. You don't get in the community group to have people to talk to. You don't pursue mature Christian friends. You've been addicted or abused. You don't get in a redemption group. You're not talking about sin. Sin you've committed, sin that's been committed against you. You're not talking about it. You need to have people to talk to, but be careful who you talk to. Grace and I made an agreement many years ago. She made a list of gals. I made a list of guys that we would like to talk to when we needed counselor accountability. She approved of the list of guys. I approved of the list of gals.

So I know if we're working through something, she's going to go to Godly mature women for counsel. She knows that I'll go to Godly mature men for counsel. We mutually agree on who we'll talk to. Otherwise what happens is the wife ends up talking to all her divorced friends, and the counsel is not so great. It's, "I have a good attorney. Would you like his number? I think you can get 60 percent of everything he owns." Bad advice; true story; bad advice. The guy hangs out with all his single buddies, divorcees, or guys that are running around on their wives, and he gets bad counsel, or, worse still, bring your family into the middle of your marital conflict. That'll fix it. That's a good holiday as well. Makes everyone comfortable, right? So who are you going to talk to about your issues? Maybe it's a Biblical counselor. It's a pastor. You feel conviction.

You need to talk to God and Christian mature people, and your spouse, if you're married, about what it is that is going on. Some of you are very tricky. Paul says, in his letter to the Corinthians, that some people practice worldly sorrow. Worldly sorrow looks like conviction and confession, but it never moves to repentance. See, Paul is saying that even non-Christians can say, "I did bad. I feel bad." What happens with some of you, some of you are tricky, because you'll feel conviction and you'll have confession, but you never repent. All you have is worldly sorrow. What you'll say, "I did bad. I feel bad." Everyone then will embrace you. "Well, we love you. We forgive you. Everything's okay." And then you do it again, and everybody's confused. Well, I thought you understood what you did was wrong?

"Yeah, it was. I did it again, and I did it again, and I did it again. And I did it again." And when confronted, you look sorry. You cry. You're emotional. You're heartbroken. You're devastated. I'm so sorry. I did bad. I feel bad. It's this loop, unrepentant, loop of worldly sorrow. If you're married to someone like that, it's very confusing, because you'll trust them and they'll betray you and they'll apologize, and you'll trust them and they'll betray you, and they'll apologize. And you'll trust them and they'll betray you, and that is the vicious unchanging, unrepentant loop of worldly sorrow, and it looks a lot like conviction and confession. The difference between worldly sorrow and true confession is that true confession leads to repentance, and these are big Bible words that are scattered throughout the Scriptures that many Christians use and don't define.

Repentance is the foundation of Christianity. The Christian church, in the New Testament era, was launched in Acts Chapter 2, Verse 38, by a sermon that Peter preached, and he started with this: "Repent of your sins to Jesus." And Christianity came into existence as we know it. Christianity began with a sermon on repentance. What is repentance? Where does repentance begin? The proliferation of modern psychology and counseling leads many to think that repentance is behavior modification, behavior change. It's not. God's desire is not that you would just have a change of behavior. He wants to go deeper than that. Repentance truly starts in the mind. You think differently about sin and God and what you're doing and failing to do. That's why Romans 12 says, "Do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world."

How everybody thinks and just does their life. "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Then you can discern what god's perfect, acceptable, pleasing will is for you. So how do you have a renewed mind? You're going to need to get a lot of time in Scripture. You need to read your Bible. Study your Bible. What? To renew your mind. You may not understand your sin. You might not understand what to do with your sin. You may not understand anything about sin. You need a change of mind that comes through Scripture, and that includes Bible teaching, Podcasts, lectures, Community Group, classes, Sunday service, renewing your mind with Scripture. The beginning of repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change of heart.

You say, "You know what? I've been doing that? That's wrong. I've been thinking bad. That's a lie. That's not Biblical. I've been excusing that, and that's a sin. I need to stop." It's a change of heart that leads to a change of behavior. The key is not to focus on the behavior. The key is to focus on the mind. Once the mind changes, the heart changes, the behavior changes: that's repentance. That's repentance. That leads to restitution. Restitution is not

penance where you're trying to earn forgiveness, but acknowledging that you've done damage, and inasmuch as possible, you want to try and make amends. You've been stealing time, money, emotion. You want to try and pay back what you've stolen.

Zaccheus is a great example. He's a man in the New Testament. He ripped people off for a living, met Jesus and said, "I'm going to pay everybody back." I'll tell you what this looks like relationally. Give you one example. I know who a daddy who grew up beating his daughter, very physically violent. Got saved, met Jesus, was repentant, and multiple days a week takes her out to lunch. It's his way of saying, "There was a lot of days I should have been loving you and spending time with you, and I've stolen those good memories and hours from you, and, as much as I can, I want to give them back. So I'm going to do triple time, because I'm really sorry." That's an example of restitution.

I saw it in a counseling time, with a husband and a wife. He worked hard, was the financial provider. She stayed home, watched the kids, and they had enough to live on, but she really had an excessive standard of living desire. So she just started taking out credit cards in her name without telling him. She gets in way over her head: tens of thousands of dollars of debt. He had no idea. They're sort of teetering on this verge of bankruptcy: can't pay all their debts, even the minimum on the credit cards. We met — she got caught. This is what happens when you don't repent. You get caught. That betrays trust, ruins a relationship. She apologizes. She doesn't — she feels conviction. She confesses. "Here's all the credit cards. Here's all the debt." She repents. "I see it's a sin. I see I lied. I see I was being greedy, a lover of money. Biblically, I see it."

She said, "Well, I'm glad that's over." I said, "It's not over. You still have an enormous debt. You need to make restitution." She said, "Well, I can't make restitution. I don't make any money." I said, "Well, then, you're going to have to sell your new car and drive an old car. You're going to need to take back to the store whatever it is you can return. You're going to need to make some lifestyle adjustments and live within your means, live under your means, as an act of helping to pay off that enormous debt that you've accrued. You need to pay that back." Lastly, the result is reconciliation. Once this process has been undertaken, you can reconcile. We saw this exemplified, typified, in Song of Songs 6. She was convicted. She went to him and confessed, "I belong to you. You belong to me. I've sinned against you." Repentance. Will you take me back?

Can we work this out? I'm not going to be like this. Restitution, you'll see, in a couple weeks, what that looks like. It's fairly exciting, and then, Number 5: reconciliation. They come back together. They're looking one another in the eye. They're back together as a couple. Reconciliation is the result of all of this. Paul says it this way in II Corinthians 5:18. That, "Through Jesus death he paid the penalty, gave the sacrifice to take away sin, we can be reconciled to God." Only through Jesus can you have a relationship with God. Said, not only that, he has entrusted to us, quote, "A ministry of reconciliation, a ministry of reconciliation." Because sin comes between people and God; sin comes between people and people. Jesus dies to take away sin so that people could be reconciled to go, reconciled to one another.

Having loving, intimate, trusting relationship, back into a restored condition; now all of this as well — let me be careful with this. I know some of your hearts, and you're really hurt, and some of you are automatically going to have resistance to me. Say, "You don't understand what I've been through. You don't understand how bad it hurts. You don't understand what they've done." I want you to be careful not to practice religious repentance. Religious repentance is where you only are keenly aware of the sin of someone else, and your only repentance is to repent of their sin, not your own. Jesus speaks of this in a parable in the New Testament, where he says, "Two guys go to the temple and one prays, 'God, thank you, that I'm not like that guy.'"

Some of you will come here, hear this sermon on repentance and say, "Yes, my spouse is terrible. They don't repent well." And you will, in your mind, start repenting of their sin. They're mean. They're nasty. They're angry. They're unloving. They're unkind. They're unpleasants. They're unattractive. They're ungrateful. They're unhelpful. They're unfruitful. Be careful that you don't give your enemy a foothold by only taking these principles and applying them to your spouse, conveniently overlooking the plank in your own eye. Trust me. I love you. I want good for you, and when I teach on repentance, almost invariably, it shifts to how other people need to repent to you. We'll get there in a minute.

First, let's ask the question: what do you need to repent of to those you are in relationship with, particularly the person, if you are married, that you are in covenant relationship with? We'll get to their sin in a minute. Let's deal with yours first. You need to repent of your sin, and not practice religious repentance, confessing their sin, ignoring your own. Secondly, when you are sinned against, what should you do? The answer, according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, is you need to forgive, and again, immediately some of you become defensive. "You don't know what they said. You don't know what they did. You don't know how bad they hurt me. Don't tell me to just forgive them." As your pastor, open your heart a little bit. Give me an opportunity. In the short amount of time we've got left, give me a shot to explain this to you.

If you don't forgive them, you are choosing the path of bitterness. There's forgiveness and un-forgiveness. Un-forgiveness is the path of bitterness. Now, bitter people tend to have a good reason. How do I know this? I have been a bitter person, and I had a good reason. When you ask a bitter person, "Are you bitter?" They usually don't say, "Yes, I'm bitter." So you have to look for clues. I'll give you some clues. Do you continually replay a past hurt over and over? There may be days, weeks, months, years, of your life you don't remember, but that moment, you remember that, and it is painful. Number 2: is there someone you try to avoid? I don't want to talk to them. They call. I'm not answering it. I'm not wanting to be with them in a marriage. This could be two beds, two lives, two bank accounts: we're going to avoid each other.

You go to that room. I go to this room. We're separated. I'm trying to avoid you. You've hurt me. I don't trust you. I can't be close to you. You're not safe. I'm bitter. I'm unforgiving. You're unrepentant. I'm unforgiving. Number 3: is there someone you quickly go to anger with? Who gets the short fuse? I've been around couples and I've seen some have very long fuses, very patient, kind, tolerant, except for with their spouse. The wick is burned to nothing. They say or do anything, and it blows up. People that are married to bitter people then, have to be perfect. They're always dancing on proverbial egg shells. "Oh my, gosh, if I don't say or do everything right, you are gonna blow. I can't please you." This is stressful. Number 4: is there someone you verbally malign? You talk trash about them.

You speak ill of them, your bitterness, un-forgiveness, just leaks out, and this is most brutal when there are children in the home. “Your mother is a blank. Your father is a blank.” And the kids get thrown in the crossfire and everything gets shot in the battle of bitterness, and those of you who are bitter — or I should say, when you become bitter, because I think that everyone is bitter at some point. Let me explain this to you. Your bitterness is probably legitimate, at least the cause of it. What you perceive to be the cause of it. When I deal with bitter people, I will say, “You are bitter.” And they will say, “Of course, I am. Don’t you know what they did?”

And I’ve heard things like, “They yell at me.” “They commit adultery on me.” “He won’t stop looking at pornography.” “He raises his voice.” “She’s quarrelsome, nag.” “Of course, I’m bitter. They’ve destroyed me.” And what oftentimes happens is that the person who sins against them says things like, “You’re overreacting. You’re blowing this out of proportion. You’re making this into a bigger deal than it is.” For those who have sinned against someone, and that person is now bitter, let me take from you the right to ever say that, because bitterness does not emanate from the magnitude of the offense, but rather the proximity of the offender. What I mean is this. It’s not whether or not it was a big deal. It’s whether or not the person who did it is deeply loved.

A total stranger, for example, could break into your home, steal all your possessions, and you’d be frustrated, but not bitter, because it’s not personal. Your parents, your children, your friends, your spouse: in particular, the one person you’re in covenant relationship with, they may say or do something that isn’t a big deal, but because you’ve opened your heart and your life to them, because you’re in covenant with them, because you’ve trusted them. Because you’ve become vulnerable to them, because you’ve taken a risk with them, their betrayal — and that’s what sin feels like — is a big deal. It does great, deep, profound damage, and then if the person who has been sinned against chooses not to forgive, they will become bitter.

And if the person who has sinned against them chooses to be unrepentant, now you have a marriage in which there is an unrepentant person with an unforgiving person. That’s death. That’s death, and the marriage will be crucified. Your bitterness may be very real. The cause may be very real. The pain may be very real. The betrayal may be very real, but the bitterness is still a sin, and it doesn’t just affect you. Hebrews 12 says that “A root of bitterness grows up to defile many.” It pulls in the kids, the family, the friends, the church. Everybody’s in, and they’re all stained. They’re all stained by the filth of bitterness. When you are sinned against, forgive. I’ll give you the one verse that I come to most frequently. Ephesians 4:31 through 32, I have used this hundreds of times in my counseling with people. “Let all bitterness” — there it is — un-forgiveness.

You sin against me. I choose not to forgive you. “And wrath and anger and clamor and slander, be put away from you, along with all malice.” Let’s deal with that: bitterness. You’re sinned against. They don’t repent, and/or you don’t forgive them. That leads to wrath. You’re hurt, frustrated. You feel betrayed and rejected. Anger: you’re now there. Blood pressure goes up. Defensive posture kicks in. Fight-or-flight ensues. I’m going to kill you. I’m going to run from you. Either way, you’re not safe, we can’t be close. Clamor. Now you’re fighting. You’re saying nasty things. You’re doing nasty things. Now it’s a fight. You’re engaged. There’s conflict. Slander: now you start talking to other people. “You’ll never guess what he said. You’ll never guess what she did. You’ll never guess what I have to put up with.” Other people are invited in.

Not in the way of confession, where you say your sin and you’re looking for help from Godly people to help you repent. You’re doing religious repentance, and you’re repenting of all of their sin, trying to get permission, in their eyes, to assuage your conscience. So that you can sin and still be considered holy in the sight of others. It’s sick. It’s common. It’s why some people come to church. They want us to legitimize their bitterness, and the conduct that ensues from it. “Along with all malice.” This is where you decide, it’s a lose/lose. You hurt me. I hurt you. Malice — it takes a while for many to get to malice, but let me tell you what it looks like.

I dealt with a married couple not long ago. He was unavailable, unpleasant, unhelpful, unloving. So she went out and got a boyfriend — married couple. Started dating and sleeping with another guy. Husband finds out. “What are you doing, cheating on me? Committing adultery?” She says, “Well, you’ve not taken care of me. I feel like I deserve it. You owed me.” He runs out, commits adultery on her. She says, “What are you doing committing adultery on me?” He said, “Well, you committed adultery on me. I committed adultery on you. You owed me one.” That’s malice. It’s insanity.

One example, I’ll give you — a friend of mine, he’s a pastor. They’ve got a case of church discipline in their church where the husband was displeased with his wife for very minor things. So, to punish her, in malice, he made her, along — in the presence of the children at the dinner table, eat out of the dog dish at dinner. It’s malice. People who are in malice are unconscionable. What they say and do is unbelievable, and some of you say, “That’s horrifying. I would never make my wife eat out of the dog dish in front of the children. I would never commit adultery on my spouse.” But in varying ways, you need to know that when you’re bitter, you’ll get there.

If you don’t repent and forgive, invariably you’ve chosen to walk with Satan instead of Jesus, and un-forgiveness and bitterness leads to malice, and malice leads to sin. And you are capable of anything if you walk away from Jesus. This is the vicious loop of bitterness. See — and bitter people sometimes they hold on to their bitterness. “I have a right to be angry. I have a right to hurt you. You hurt me; I’ll hurt you.” The answer is: how does Jesus factor into all of this? That’s verse 32: “Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God, in Christ,” — there’s Jesus — “Forgave you.” What he says is this. “The forgiveness of a sinner is not contingent upon their repentance. It’s contingent upon Jesus’ character.” No one has been sinned against more than God. Everyone has sinned against God, and God has sinned against no one.

In the history of the world, there is no victim of sin to the degree that God is, but aren’t you glad that God didn’t look down at us all and say, “Well, I’m going to malice. I’m going to wake up every day, get up early, and invent new ways to mess with you. You’ll live a long life, and it’s going to be terrible. Every day, I’m going to get you. One way or another, you’re going to pay me back.” Our God is not a God of malice. Our God is a God of forgiveness. He sees us in our sin, rebellion and folly, while we’re still his enemies, he comes — his name is Jesus Christ — God comes down from heaven to the earth as a man. “And he is tempted,” Hebrews 4:15 says, “In every way as we are, yet without sin.” I am sure there are occasions that

Jesus was tempted to be bitter; for example, Judas Iscariot.

Your friend for three years that you feed while he's ripping you off, and then stabs you in the back and hands you over to be executed, and what does Jesus do? He chooses to forgive people. He doesn't succumb to the sinful, demonic temptation of bitterness. He doesn't succumb to it. He doesn't sin. He does go to the cross, and there he does the unthinkable. God dies in our place for our sins. God goes there and takes our sin upon him. He takes it upon himself and he suffers and dies, and he is the sacrifice, so that we could be reconciled to him and one another, and, from the cross, do you remember one of Jesus' final words? "Father, forgive them." Jesus is crying out for the forgiveness of his murderers. He dies. Three days later he arises and he ascends into heaven, and Jesus, today, you know what he's doing? Well, he's tenderhearted, and he's forgiving.

He puts up with people like you and me. He's patient. He's loving. He's gracious. He's merciful. He's kind, and here's the truth about Jesus. There's not one person here — there's not one person in the world who would come to Jesus and say, "I repent of my sin, forgive me," that Jesus would say no to and turn away. There's no one. Jesus is tenderhearted and forgiving of anyone who repents. What Paul is saying is we are hypocrites if we receive Jesus' grace and don't share it. Receive Jesus' mercy. Don't share it. Receive Jesus' forgiveness and don't share it. When you're sinned against, forgive. Why? Because that's what Jesus does with us, and, as we forgive others, we're sharing something of the love of Jesus with them. It's a Gospel issue. It's a Gospel issue, and I know.

I love you guys, and I know attendance is up, and the online downloads are up, and everybody is like, "Wahoo, sex." Great, get married, but sin is going to be the issue. Sin is going to be the issue. If you don't know how to deal with sin, you're going to kill each other, one way or another. Now in saying this, I'll close with a few comments. Bring my lovely wife up. Here's what forgiveness is not. I'll give you seven things forgiveness is not; seven things that forgiveness is, quickly. Forgiveness is not approving. "Well, what you did, it's not a sin. It's okay." It's not approving. It's saying, "Actually, what you did is so bad, God died for it. So it's a bigger deal than you were thinking, and you thought it was a big deal." It's not approving. It's not excusing. "Oh, that's your personality."

We come up with these crazy psychological categories. "Oh, you're violent. It's personality." Some of you guys have been told — you have anger issues. Paul just told us, we don't have anger issues. We have bitterness issues. Dudes who have short wicks, it's because they're unforgiving of their dad, their spouse, they're angry at somebody. They're unforgiving of somebody. They're bitter against somebody. It's no excuses. "Oh, you had a rough upbringing. Oh, you're a middle child. Oh, you're first-born." All of you are really stubborn. We have these crazy — you need to repent of your first-bornness; of your Irishness; of your Italianness; of your extrovertedness. You need to repent of your personality. Repent of your E and your N and your T and your J, Repent of all of it.

Number 3: it's not denying it. "Oh, you didn't sin against me. It's okay."

It's not denying it. Number: it's not overlooking it. "Oh, well, I'll just choose not to pay attention. I'll just choose to look the other way." That's not it. It's not forgetting. I had one guy — a complete fool — committed adultery on his wife. A year later, he was going on a business trip, and she had a bit of anxiety, because she was worried that he wouldn't be faithful, and he said, "Well, Christians are supposed to forget." No, Jesus doesn't come with a side of amnesia. You still remember things. It doesn't work like that. "Oh, you beat me? I don't even remember that." No, we remember; we just choose it — to not hold it against someone. It's not diminishing. "Oh, it wasn't a big deal. Oh, it didn't really matter. Oh, you know, it didn't really hurt." No, it's not diminishing, and it's not pretending.

Some of you grew up in Christian fakery homes. You pretend. "Everything's fine. We're great. We're the Christian family. We get along great. We have verses for everything. How could we help you?" It's not pretending. What you did is wrong. You need to repent of it, and the way I'm responding is wrong. I'm bitter. So you need to repent, and I need to forgive. That's what we need to do. Seven things that forgiveness is: loving, in spite of what they've said and done; in spite of, because that's how God loves us. "While we were yet his enemies, Christ died for us." Number 2: it's choosing not to punish. If Jesus died for your sin, I can't punish you. That would be unjust.

Number 3: it's choosing not to keep a record of wrongs. It's not keeping every sin you've ever committed against me in a big pile like rocks, and every time I feel like I want to pick one up and throw it, I feel free. Number 4: it's choosing to give mercy; one sinner, giving another sinner mercy. Number 5: it's not a one-time event. You don't just forgive someone and move on. Sometimes that issue comes back. That hurt comes back. Sometimes you've got to get up every morning and start the day with forgiveness. I forgive you. I forgive you. I forgive you. It hurts like crazy. I forgive you again today. Number 6: it's not necessarily reconciliation. Just because you forgive someone doesn't mean, if they've committed a crime, you can't send them to jail. You can. Just because they've sinned against you doesn't mean you automatically need to take them back.

I remember one guy. He was very violent with his wife and his kids. Told his wife he was sorry, and said, "Can I move home now?" Not yet. We're not reconciling. You need help. We need to see fruit in keeping with repentance. We want to see that you're really changed, not just worldly sorrow, and that'll take time. Number 7: it's not a restoration of full trust. Trust is built over time. The guy who's looking at porn all the time; the gal who has an emotional affair; someone who commits adultery; lives a duplicitous life; doesn't walk in the light; once it's all found out, they repent and/or are caught, trust needs to be rebuilt, and that takes time. Three dangerous questions I give you in closing for those of you who are married. Number 1: where's your sin? In specific, where is your sexual sin? What have you never talked to God about?

Never talked to your spouse about? Never got with a pastor, a Biblical counselor in a redemption group. Where's your sin that you've never repented of? Particularly your sexual sin. I know there are guys here, major porn issues. I know there are gals here, porn issues, adultery issues, fornication issues. I'm well aware of it. In this church we have women committing adultery on their husbands. It seems to be that season. Where is your sin?

Number 2: where is your bitterness? Who have you never forgiven? Is it your spouse? Is there any un-forgiveness you hold against them? Is that an

open opportunity for Satan to destroy you? That's the rest of the context of Ephesians 4. Number 3: what does repentance and forgiveness look like for you?

I'll close with this illustration from Intimacy Ignited. There was a husband committed adultery on his wife. He ran off with another woman. He came to repentance, told her the whole story, and she chose to forgive him. He chose to repent. She chose to forgive him. I'm not saying this is not hard. Repentance and forgiveness is exceedingly hard. Bitterness is somehow a groove in the human soul, because we're depraved, that seems to flow most naturally. It's hard, painful work to repent when you sin, and forgive when you've been sinned against. She chose to forgive her adulterating husband, and she took anointing oil — James speaks of this in James 5, it accompanies prayer. This is what repentance and forgiveness look like for them. She anointed her husband's forehead, and said, "I forgive you for thinking about that woman."

She anointed her husband's ears, and said, "I forgive you for listening to that woman." She anointed her husband's mouth, and said, "I forgive you for speaking to that woman and kissing her." She anointed her husband's hands, and said, "I forgive you for touching that woman." She anointed her husband's feet, and said, "I forgive you for walking toward that woman." She anointed him elsewhere, and said, "And I forgive you for sleeping with that woman." Where is your sin? Where is your bitterness? What does forgiveness and repentance look like in your marriage? What does it look like? I'll bring out Gracie to take a few questions. "Hey, sweetie." Maybe if the guys in the booth could throw the first one on the screen, we'll take a few.

Ballard: "I am a Christian, I feel convicted all the time. How do I tell the difference between conviction and accusation?" That's a good spiritual warfare question. Romans 8:1 says: "There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ." So there's a difference between conviction and condemnation. Revelation 12:10 is probably where you pull that word out of. It says that "Satan is the accuser of the children of God, that he accuses them day and night." And here's what happens. God works one way and Satan tries to pretend that he is working on God's behalf; couple of differences. When God convicts us, it's not condemnation and hopelessness. It's deep despair, saying, "I've got to get through this, because this is not with God intends for me." Condemnation and accusation, it's devastating.

Conviction, actually, rightly understood, is pretty hopeful. God showed me something because he wants to root it out of my life, so I can mature and go on. It's not devastating in that way. Number 2: conviction tends to be very specific from God the Holy Spirit. He tells you exactly what you have done wrong. Accusation from the enemy is very vague. You go, "I don't know what I said. I don't know what I did. I just feel bad. I told God I'm sorry, but I'm not sure for what." It's very hard to get your hands on accusation, because it tends to be vague and general, whereas conviction from God tends to be specific. God sort of points out something very specific in your life, says, "This needs to change." The Holy Spirit just makes you feel guilty — not the Holy Spirit, but Satan, rather, makes you feel guilty. You feel condemned. You feel bad. You feel ashamed.

You're not sure why. You're not sure what to repent. "Well, what did I do? What did I say? I don't know. I can't think of it." You're digging, and introverting, and obsessing, trying to figure out what it is. Maybe it's not there. Additionally, conviction always leads to Jesus. Man, I need Jesus. I need Jesus to forgive me. He needs to change my heart; needs to change my mind; needs to change my life. I can't believe how good he is, how much he's saved me from. I can't believe how patient he is with me. Where would I be without Jesus? I'm a sinner. I'm a wreck. I really love Jesus. I'm grateful for him. Accusation, condemnation, it never gets to Jesus. It's always about you. You're not good enough. You're not smart enough. You didn't try hard enough. You didn't pray sincere enough. It never gets to Jesus.

And you can even tell whether it first- or second-person accusation. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin. Satan accuses us, and people who have demonic accusations, sometimes they hear it in the second person. "You're horrible. You're unforgiveable. You're not a Christian. You didn't pray it right. You didn't say it correctly. You know, you are never going to change. You, you, you, you, you." That's demonic accusation and condemnation, demonic accusation and condemnation. Holy Spirit convicts us. Points out something in our life, directs us toward Jesus, so that we can repent, and so that the Holy Spirit can help us to change. There's no devastation in it. There can be pain in that, but it's not devastating. It's actually hopeful. The other is just absolutely condemning. Those are some of the differences.

Take the next one, guys. "I understand that you want me to forgive people who have sinned against me, but I do not feel they deserve it. Help me through this." You want to take that one, babe?

Grace Driscoll: _____.

Do you understand the question, sweetheart?

Grace Driscoll: Yeah, I think so.

Do people deserve to be forgiven?

Grace Driscoll: It — I guess — yeah, I understand, I just ~~my first thought is pride. I guess, who are we to determine who deserves to be forgiven or not? God chose to forgive all of us and none of us are deserving of forgiveness, but that's why he sent Jesus to die on the cross, so~~

Mark Driscoll: Clarification. Do we all get forgiven?

Grace Driscoll: What do you mean?

Mark Driscoll: Well, not everybody goes to heaven.

Grace Driscoll: Oh, okay, I see what you are saying.

Mark Driscoll: Okay. So — yeah, the point is that God is willing to forgive anyone who repents. We need to be willing to forgive everyone, to entrust them to God's judgment. See, forgiving someone is not saying you deserve it. You don't deserve it. Otherwise it wouldn't be forgiveness, right? If they deserve it, it's not forgiveness. It's not grace and mercy if they deserve it. They don't deserve it. That's why we call it grace and mercy and forgiveness. In the same way, you and I — we have no right to stand before God and say, "I know I killed Jesus, but I feel like I deserve to be forgiven." God would say, "No, no, no, I forgive you in grace. I forgive you in mercy. I forgive you in love. You didn't earn any of that. You sinned against me. I came down to help, and you killed me. You don't deserve it."

Christianity is about not just undeserving, but ill-deserving sinners getting gifts they have no right to, because of the pure, unmerited favor of God. So when we give grace, we give mercy. We give forgiveness to someone. We're not saying that they don't deserve condemnation. What we're saying is, "I'm not in the position of judge to determine your eternal fate. One day you'll stand before Jesus." John 5, he says that he will just all people. "And ultimately, I leave you to the judgment of Jesus." And either they will be forgiven, because their faith is in him, or they'll be condemned by him, but either way, you're entrusting them to Jesus' judgment.

And like Gracie says, you're being humble, and not proud, and you're saying, "I'm not Jesus. I don't get to sit on a throne and judge people, whether or not they go to heaven or hell or whether or not they deserve it or don't deserve it." I forgive, and I leave them to Jesus, and I let Jesus to deal with them. I've sinned against you a lot. You forgave me.

Grace Driscoll: And I've sinned against you, and you've forgiven me.

Why do you forgive me?

Grace Driscoll: Because God asks me to, and because I know that if I don't forgive you, I'll become bitter, and our marriage and the people around us will get results — bad results from that also. It's a selfish thing for me to not forgive and to think that, somehow, I should be forgiven but you shouldn't.

So do I deserve to be forgiven?

Grace Driscoll: By —

By you.

Grace Driscoll: — by me? No. What do you mean? I don't understand the question.

Well, if I don't deserve —

Grace Driscoll: None of us deserve to be forgiven.

— that's what I'm talking about.

Grace Driscoll: Yeah.

But why would you forgive me if I don't deserve it?

Grace Driscoll: Because I love Jesus, and he forgave us. Is that _____?

That's it. Yeah. See, that's a Christian answer. I am trying to treat you like Jesus treats me. I don't deserve it. You don't deserve it. He gives mercy. I give mercy. He gives grace. I give grace. It's a Christian answer. You did good, and I, apparently, was not very clear.

Grace Driscoll: Well, this just sounded like they were trying to be the judge of who gets to be forgiven and who doesn't.

Mark Driscoll: I agree. Next one — we'll do one more. Shoreline: "I was abused as a teenager by a family member, and I've forgiven them, but they've never asked for forgiveness of me. How do I — how to reconcile. They're," — okay, why don't you take that one, and I'll try not to say much and make it more confusing. They were abused. They've forgiven the family member, but the family member's never apologized. What does reconciliation look like?

Grace Driscoll: It — there's a lot of factors there. We don't always reconcile with our abuser. There are occasions where God allows that to happen, and the person repents, and you can have a reconciled relationship with them, but you — you've done the right thing by forgiving them, absolutely. You've given them no more grounds to hold any power over you as an abuser, but we don't always reconcile with those people because they may not be repentant and they could be dangerous to us. So we need to be wise in who we reconcile with. It doesn't mean that we don't forgive. It just means that we may not be able to have them in our life because of safety.

Mark Driscoll: Yeah, and with that, too, if they've committed a crime, you can call the cops and send them to jail and still forgive them. If they abused you, reconciliation requires them getting help; demonstrating fruit of repentance that you see that they've actually changed and that they're safe and trustworthy, like Gracie was saying. If not, you don't talk to them. You don't hang out with them. You don't pretend everything's fine with them. If they're a relative, they're not babysitting your kids. You don't need to hang out with them on the holidays. Forgiveness doesn't look like reconciliation. Reconciliation takes two people. Forgiveness just takes one. You can forgive someone, but until they repent, you're not reconciled, and, with something like that, you may never be reconciled. They may never repent to the degree that you find them to be safe, and you know what?

That's tragic, and we're very sorry, but Christians do, in the foolish misunderstanding of reconciliation is, "You did something bad. I'm going to forgive you, and we're still going to hang out. Even though you abused me, you raped me. You molested me. You stole from me. You lied to me." That's not reconciliation. That's enabling. That's enabling. That's allowing someone else to sin, and that's not a loving thing to do at all. So, yeah, I'm sorry I butchered the one question. I apologize.

Grace Driscoll: I forgive you

Thank you. I was trying to help, and it didn't go so well. We'll hand it over to the campus pastors at this point. Maybe you could transition our time in prayer, and they could take it to the close. Let's pray.

Grace Driscoll: Dear Lord, thank you that you forgive us. That there's no sin too great for you to forgive, but that you also allow us to be convicted and go through the repentance process, so that we can be free from the bondage of that sin. Lord, I pray that we would desire that. That we would not want to continue to use our sin against others, or walk in un-repentance, but that we would desire to be free and love others, and love you and be able to receive your forgiveness for those things that we've done wrong, in Jesus' name.