

Getting Back on Track

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[0:00] Father, thank you. You are the reason that we are here.! It is to your pleasure and your glory that we aim.

! It is your Spirit who must do the work.! It is your Word which has the power. So Lord, now, as we talk about this example of repentance that we see from the book of Haggai, again, Father, I pray that this would be in no way a crushing burden to anybody, but that it would be life, life-giving to be called to and shown an example of what biblical repentance looks like.

Teach and instruct each of our hearts to know that we need. Depend upon you, Lord Jesus. May you get the glory. We pray in your name. Amen. Amen. That's a perfect, perfect introduction to this message.

That's exactly my heart. I trust I'm not the only one who feels that my heart is prone to wander. Very frequently find myself not in line with God's Word and His will.

So the question is not if I will sin. The question is when I find myself off track.

[1:32] When God convicts me. When God uses His Word. Put something on my heart. Some way that I'm not looking like Jesus. What do we do? How do we get back on track when God convicts us of sin?

Earlier this week, Carolyn and I were having a conversation, just talking through some of our priorities in life right now. And in the middle of that conversation, I was convicted that I had been genuinely leading in a very selfish way.

I was orienting all of our time, all of our evenings towards what I need and what I want in the season. And not at all paying attention to what she needs and what her interests are in the season. And as we were having this conversation, I'm starting to feel this conviction that I've not loved her well. And my heart went through all the five stages of grief in a moment. When I feel that conviction, there's parts of my heart that want to respond to that conviction.

Hopefully that didn't disclose my conviction. Okay. Nope, it did. I'll deal with that in a second. But yeah, so in that moment, when I'm feeling that conviction, I feel my heart pulled in all these different ways that are not healthy.

[2:45] Part of my heart wants to respond to that conviction with avoidance. Just end the conversation. I don't want to talk about this anymore. I just want to watch my World Cup. Let's not talk about it.

Part of my heart wants to respond with defensiveness and justifying myself. Telling her, this is a busy season. I don't have time to do all these other things or whatever.

Part of my heart wants to do maybe the worst thing I could do, which is to say, well, if you, or whatever, which has gone well exactly zero times in human history.

And the main part of my heart and the way that I did respond in the moment was to respond in self-pity. Right? Oh, man. I'm just the worst husband.

I don't love you well. Oh, you must hate me and all that. And that's actually a defense mechanism. That can feel a little bit humble because I'm acknowledging I did something wrong. But what that's actually doing is that's me changing from I sinned against you to I'm the victim and I need your comfort.

[3:47] And so that self-pity, all of those, self-pity, avoidance, justifying blame, all of those are wrong ways to respond to conviction.

But I want to point out, isn't it interesting that whenever we feel conviction, we have to do something with it. That conviction that we feel, that guilt, is real.

It's not just something, a social construct or whatever that we make up. We have to deal with that when it comes up in our hearts. So the question is simply, are we going to respond in an unbiblical

way, like one of those, self-pity, avoidance, blame?

Or are we going to respond in the way that God tells us in Scripture, outlines for us, the only way to respond to conviction, which is with repentance. So that's what we're going to see in our text here. In a second, once I unlock my computer, is we're going to see a narrative example, a story from the Old Testament of the Israelites repenting.

[4:50] We get to see a narrative picture of what repentance looks like, and then hopefully draw some examples as to how then it looks for us in the New Covenant, who know Jesus, what does it look like for us to get back on track when God convicts us of sin.

So I invite you to open up your Bibles with me to the book of Haggai, chapter 1. Haggai is a very small book towards the end of your Old Testament. Sometimes I find it easiest to find that book by opening up to Matthew, and then flipping backwards past Malachi, flip backwards past Zechariah, and you should hit it.

If you hit Zephaniah, you've gone too far. Or alternatively, it will be up here on the screen. So I invite you to stand with me as you are able. As I read, we're mainly going to be focused on verses 12 to 15.

I'm going to go backwards a little bit for some of the context. So beginning in verse 7. Why declares the Lord of hosts?

Because of my house that lies in ruins, while each of you busies himself with his own house.

Therefore the heavens above you have withheld the dew, and the earth has withheld its produce, and I have called for a drought on the land and on the hills, on the grain and the new wine, the oil, on what the ground brings forth, on man and beast and on all their labors.

[6:33] Then Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, and Joshua, the son of Jehoshadak, the high priest, with all the remnant of the people, obeyed the voice of the Lord their God and the words of Haggai the prophet, as the Lord their God had sent him.

And the people feared the Lord. Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's message. I am with you, declares the Lord.

And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, the son of Jehoshadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people.

And they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts their God on the 24th day of the month, and the sixth month on the second year of Darius the king. Let me pray.

Oh, Father, God, again, as we read through this passage, as we see the Israelites turning from their disobedience and just pursuing their own house, their own interest, towards now obeying you and building their house as they go through that process of turning and repenting.

[7:41] Or may you instruct us, equip our hearts, give us truths, paradigms, realities of what repentance is, that we may, when we find ourselves off track, know how, in your grace and by your spirit, to get back on track.

We pray this in your great and holy name. Amen. You may be seated. So first of all, I just want to give the roadmap for what we were willing we'll cover today.

So I want to start by giving a little bit of a context refresher. We ended last week on a bit of a cliff. And so I want to refresh all that we talked about last week for a little bit.

And then we're really going to dig into verses 12 through 15. And you may be confused by the bread and meat language. I'll explain that in just a little bit. But that's kind of the roadmap. But starting with a little reminder of the context.

What is this book saying? What's Haggai about? For those of you who weren't with us last week, I want to give just a quick review on how and where Haggai fits in the biblical narrative.

[8:43] So Haggai, or Israel, if you may know, in the Old Testament, Israel is God's covenant people. That means God had made an agreement with them. I will be your God and you will be my people.

And there's commandments and things that go along with that. And part of that agreement that God had made with Israel was some warnings of blessings and curses. Specifically, if Israel disobey, if they continue to disobey, then God warned them that he would send a foreign country that would come in, take them captive, bring them out to a different country and enslave them.

And he warned them of this in hundreds and hundreds of years in advance. And so Israel goes on for centuries of disobedience after disobedience, continuing to disobey and disobey.

And God is gracious and merciful, but then eventually he does exactly what he says he would do. And he sends them into exile. He brings the nation of Babylon, they come to Jerusalem, and they level the city.

They take the people captive and make them slaves in another country. And most of all, most tragic of all, they destroy the temple.

[9:58] The temple is where God's presence was. The temple was the center of everything in the old covenant system, in the Old Testament. And so for the temple to be destroyed was the ultimate sign of God saying, I'm not with you.

And it was the lowest point in the Old Testament when Israel is in exile in Babylon. And they're there for 70 years. And then eventually God raises up a new country, Persia.

They take over Babylon and they set the Israelites free. And they say, go back to Jerusalem and rebuild your temple. So the Israelites, after the 70 years of being enslaved, they get to go back to their homeland and they get to start rebuilding the temple.

And things are going well for them, only for a little bit. And we read, and again talked a lot about this last week, they started to face discouragements and they started to face opposition.

And in response to their discouragements from within and opposition from without, they stop working on the temple. They stop obeying God. They begin to drift from obedience and drift into just pursuing their own thing.

[11:07] They start doing whatever they want to do instead of what God wants them to do. And so that's when God sends Haggai to these people. He sends Haggai to this drifting people.

He could have just sent them back into judgment, but in his mercy, he sends Haggai and calls them back to faithfulness. He addresses the Israelites for saying, now is not a good time for me to obey.

It's hard right now. I'm discouraged. I don't really want to do what God wants me to do right now.

And so they stop. And God sends Haggai who comes in with this message and says, very graciously, you're saying that now is not a good time to do what I want you to do, but is it then a good time for you to do just what you want to do?

And the Israelites had gotten their priorities flipped upside down. They were pursuing their own things, what they wanted to do, and not at all caring for what God would have for them to do. And so God sends Haggai to correct that.

And it says in verse 8, this is then, he gives the imperative, go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the Lord.

[12:18] That is, God says to them, obey in your actions, but also more than that, he reorients their heart towards being centered on God, his pleasure, and his glory instead of just themselves.

And there's this call to obedience. And this is where we ended last week. We ended up a little bit on this cliffhanger. So how do the Israelites respond? What do they do?

And that's what we're going to see in our passage today, is the Israelites repenting. So I'm using that word a lot and I recognize that's a very Christianese word, repentance.

So I want to define, what does repentance mean biblically? And it just means turning back or changing one's mind. So my definition for it is here at the bottom. Repentance means turning away from sin and turning back towards God and his ways.

And that's what we see Israel do here in verses 12 to 15. We see them no longer just pursuing, doing their own thing, building their own house. They turn away from that.

[13:19] They seek God's glory, his pleasure, and they obey in what he has called them to do. That's what we're going to see in verses 12 to 15. And as we jump into this section, I want to explain, that's some of the context refresher.

Now I want to talk about all this bread and meat stuff that I put up on our roadmap. What do I mean by this? The biblical term for, or the term that biblical scholars and stuff use is the word chiasm.

Some of you may know, I was thankful, Pastor Bill used that, he was talking about a chiasm in Ephesians just a few weeks ago. So hopefully this idea won't be brand new to most of us. I prefer the term sandwich because I have a little brain.

But the idea behind a chiasm or a sandwich is pretty simple. What's the idea behind a sandwich?

You have bread, meat, and bread. Pretty simple. That's why I like that language because that reflects what we see in a lot of biblical texts where you have two pieces of bread that are somehow related to one another and in between them is a different idea that's meant to be the focal.

We see this a lot in especially the Old Testament. This idea of the chiasm, the sandwich, bread, meat, bread. And I see it pretty clearly in our passage here because in verse 12 we see one narrative of the people obeying God and then in verses 14 and 15 we see a second narrative of the same actions.

[14:45] So these two are clearly related. Those are the pieces of bread in our sandwich and the meat in the middle is that section in verse 13 where the Lord promises to be with his people.

So I say all this because this is the structure of the text and I want this to be our outline for how we can talk or how I want to walk through this text. So we'll start with the first piece of bread in verse 12.

Verse 12 says this, So going back to this, in understanding those two pieces of bread, I label this one repentance from man's perspective.

This shows just what the people did. This shows their perspective on what happened. They obeyed the voice of the Lord and they went and did it. So this is kind of like the man's perspective.

When we find ourselves off track and we're wanting to know what do I do to get back on track, this is a picture of what we do. And there's two parts to it.

[16:07] First of all, there's an external component to our repentance. In this text, underlined, they obeyed. The people obeyed God. They heard the command from verse 8 that we saw earlier of go up to the hills, cut down the wood and build the house.

We see here, they obey. They go do that. They go up to the hills and they start building the house of the Lord. But more than that, there's also an internal component of their repentance that they feared the Lord.

And I think that this is a good little rubric for us. When we find ourselves off track, I do think that this provides a helpful little paradigm for us that in repentance, there are both internal and external components.

Any repentance that is just internal, that's just, oh, I hate this, I hate that I've done this, I don't want to do this anymore, but takes no concrete steps towards change, is deficient.

It's lacking something. That's not the fullness of repentance. And similarly, if all that you do is external changes, but there's nothing in your heart that hates the sin, that wants to please God, that wants to do its pleasing in God's sight, if that is missing in your repentance, then that's also deficient and lacking something.

[17:37] The fullness of repentance has both this external component and the internal component of the people fearing the Lord. And now, I want to give some practical examples as to what this looks like in a second, but first, I want to make a qualification in what I'm saying and what I'm not saying.

When I say that repentance has both internal and external components to it, I don't want you to hear me saying that repentance means I will never do that sin again.

Thank you for laughing. Because that's kind of ridiculous. Exactly. Exactly. That is, if our idea of repentance is that I will never do this thing again, whether it be with lust or alcohol or gossip or whatever, if my idea is I've only actually repented if I never do the sin again, then we're going to be crushed because that's not how it works.

It takes time. Repentance takes time. Changing our lives and God working in us to sanctify us and to remove the power of sin in our lives takes time.

Sometimes a very long time. I'm pretty young, only 27, but I know from my own life already that it doesn't happen right away.

[19:01] My sin has stuck around a lot longer than I wish it would. But I'm comforted in that. I'm not alone in that. The Apostle Paul himself shows us and models that repentance doesn't mean my life is perfect and I never do the sin again.

He talks in Romans 7 in the context of battling against sin. And look at the language that he uses. He says, For the good, or sorry, for I do not do the good that I want, but the evil I do not want is what I did one time and never did again.

It's a reality. It's what I keep on doing. And then he goes back and says again, Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God. He repents. He acknowledges this is not good.

I don't want to do this anymore. But there is this reality that sometimes changing, repenting, take time to see the fruit. So I just wanted to make that, I wanted to make that qualification really fast to make sure that nobody would leave this place thinking that, Josiah is saying that there needs to be

an external component, so I need to never do this thing, this sin ever again.

Don't hear me saying that. But, what I do think that this text and other places in Scripture model for us is that true repentance has both an internal and external component.

[20 : 27] So we see this other places in Scripture. 1 John 1.9 gives us an example which we just read in our pastoral prayer time. Confession to God is part of this.

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. And we also see in Scripture external parts, things that we do with our bodies outside of us to remove provision so that we don't do that sin anymore.

We take action. We do make these steps. We see that in Romans 13 where Paul exhorts us to put on the Lord Jesus and make no provision for the flesh to gratify its desires.

And so I want to just give a few practical, what does it look like to repent with both of these internal and external components? I'll use an example that has been common in my life which is addiction.

What do you do with an addiction? There is both an internal and an external part to fighting that.

And again, it was a long fight fighting addiction.

[21 : 35] But let's say it's lust. Internally, then when there is a fall, repent. go to God and say, God, I hate that sin. I don't want to do that anymore.

I want to be pure. I want to be fully free from this. But if it ends there, then something's missing.

Because Scripture calls us to do, to make no provision for that sin, to gratify its desires anymore.

So then, the next step in your repentance is to do whatever it takes to cut that out of your life. I don't know what that looks like for whatever it may be that you're wrestling with. Let me use a different example.

Let me use the example of, maybe it's not necessarily an addiction or a long-term thing. Maybe it's just one time you blew up at a co-worker. You yelled at him and completely red in the face, cursed him out.

And you're sitting there 15 minutes later thinking, oh, that's a terrible witness. What have I just done? What do you do in that moment? What does repentance look like for that scenario?

[22 : 40] And again, it starts with that internal going to God and saying, Lord, man, I do not have control over my tongue like I want. Have mercy on me. Help me to tame this fire in my mouth, this tongue that I use to destroy.

Help me to love building people up rather than to love tearing people down. Help me in that. And then there's the additional steps of then going to your co-worker and saying, hey man, I'm really sorry.

I blew up on you. And that's the fullness of repentance. We see that in the example of Zacchaeus in scripture, right? Zacchaeus. It's kind of an uncomfortable passage for us when we read about Zacchaeus because Jesus comes to him and he says, look at all that I've done.

I've repaid all that I've done. I've given, if I was dishonest with anybody, I paid them back threefold.

And Jesus doesn't respond with, why are you boasting about your works?

He says, salvation has come to this house because Zacchaeus is an example of that fullness of repentance that includes both the internal confession and the external action.

[23 : 47] And so, that's the first piece that I want us to look at. The repentance in its fullness. Or maybe I'll just use one last example. Something else that I've been convicted of recently is gossip.

I hate to admit it, but I like to, when I'm with people, I like to talk about people that aren't there. And that's not good. That is something that the Lord explicitly tells us not to do.

And so, there is, it begins with that internal God, have mercy on me. And then I trust in Jesus' righteousness alone. Jesus died for that sin. His blood cleanses me. That is enough.

That is what, my trust is not in that I'll become a better person or I'll do the right things. My trust is that Jesus took that sin of my gossip on himself, on the cross, and he forgives me completely.

But now, I go, and I bring the fullness of that repentance, and I might go to those people who I, gossip is never a one-man thing, is it? So I might go to those people who I tend to gossip with and say, hey man, I've been convicted.

[24 : 49] Recently, I've been talking a lot of bad stuff about people that, it's just unhelpful and unnecessary. Will you keep me accountable? If I start saying those kinds of things, will you just kind of help keep me on track?

And that's then the fullness of repentance. Beginning with that most important internal confession, trusting in Jesus alone to be your righteousness, and then, from that place of being justified and

forgiven through him alone, then we take these external steps to kill the sin in our lives.

That's the first picture of repentance in our passages, and the second one comes in verses 14 to 15. This one is less so on just, here's what the people saw and did.

Now we get kind of a divine view of the same actions. It says this in verses 14 and 15. And the Lord stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua, the son of Jehoshadak, the high priest, and the spirit of all the remnant of the people, and they came and worked on the house of the Lord of hosts, their God, on the 24th day of the month, and the sixth month, and the second year of the king of Darius.

So central to this angle of the same actions is the Lord stirring up their spirits. Right? That's kind of what we see here.

[26:11] The Lord is the one actively stirring up in their spirits so that they eventually work on the house of the Lord. So I just want to break down that idea. The Lord stirred up their spirits and talk about each one of those and what do they need.

So beginning with the Lord. What does it mean that the Lord is the one who stirs up our spirits? And I find this to be an incredibly encouraging thing because sometimes I don't want to repent.

I don't want to obey. whatever the sin is in my life I'm really drawn to it and I really don't want to give it up. There's part of my heart that really clings to it and the reality is I can't stir myself up to hate the sin.

I can't stir myself up to change. But part of the encouragement from this passage is that the Lord can. He is the one who can work within us when I'm just sitting there I see the obedience in front of me and I'm thinking Lord I don't want that.

I can go to him and say Lord stir me up to want that. I remember I met with a youth student who I was discipling for a year and a half every time we'd get together he'd say I don't want God but I want to want God.

[27:31] And so we prayed for a year and a half Lord just cause him to want to want you and then as we prayed that then he said I want God and then we would pray and say okay Lord he wants you work in his life cause him to see the work that you've done on the cross and confess his sins and trust in you alone to be his righteousness and then he did and by God's grace he's walking with the Lord but the Lord is the one who alone can stir up our hearts when we're not up to it and so secondly what does it mean that he stirs up our hearts I think we kind of get it but I just want to break it out a little bit more what does it mean for him to stir up our heart and the word for stirred up is a word picture think about if you have a glass of water and at the bottom there's a bunch of this sediment a bunch of stuff that's just kind of sitting there stagnant at the bottom the idea is then somebody puts in a spoon and stirs up the glass and all that sediment gets moving they move from being and the idea behind the

Lord stirring us up has to do with desire motivation even just self-control the Lord stirs us up we all have those times right where we're feeling stagnant don't want to obey God don't want whatever it might be just feeling spiritually stuck and then that's what it means that the Lord can stir us up out of that being stuck he can stir us up towards obedience and repentance and then lastly what does it mean that the Lord stirs up our spirit this is pretty simple this just means that the Lord works in our inner man it's not like the Israelites as they were building the temple that they're being forced to move the bricks and they're like no no no I don't they're not being forced against their will to do this they're not being physically made to do these actions instead the Lord is working in their spirits he's working within them building the desire building the motivation building the self control to go and to do these different things and so again I want to ask the question what does this side look like I want to use another example from Carolyn and I's life recently where this was a few months ago didn't involve anybody in this room I promise it was a day didn't sleep well at night went to work horrible day at work just one of those days that you grit your teeth and just do one foot in front of the other really hard not fun met with somebody for lunch that was kind of a dud and and then I got off from work I have to do my school work I have about half an hour to fill in to do this assignment so I'm cramming it in Carolyn comes to the office picks me up and we're driving over to some dinner plans with some people that we don't know and I don't want to know I'm very okay with texting them I'm not up to it guys like I'm sorry guys we have to cancel last second I'm feeling sick I want to go home and watch some Star Wars or something like that but I know in my heart that's not right I know in my heart that's not what the

Lord would have for me so what do I do in that moment what do I do do I just say well I'm not feeling it I'm done just gonna go home or whatever I and this is where this truth is so encouraging that the Lord can stir up my spirit to want that and so that's what we did the entire drive as we're going from the office to our friend's house and then even literally up to the door and as I'm about to knock on the door the whole time I'm praying God stir me up I don't want to love this person I know I should love that's why we're here my first thing my two great priorities are to love you and love my neighbor and I want nothing to do with this neighbor that's wrong help me God forgive me of that I trust in you Lord Jesus you've forgiven me for my lack of love but now stir me up to love this person stir me up to care for these people stir me up to want to know them and by God's grace he did and then it wasn't immediate it took two minutes into being there but then eventually I noticed God's filled me with love I really care for these people and I want to get to know them so I just invite you whenever you feel that your heart is just in that stagnant place I don't want to do this pray to the God who can stir up your heart towards obedience he's more powerful than me so those are the two angles that we see in our text of what repentance and obedience can look like man's perspective aiming at the internal and the external from God's sovereignty perspective God stir me up and he motivates us to do it and if you're like me you may be wondering I've wrestled a lot in my life and I know others in this room have too how do those two go together the my responsibility side and the God sovereignty doing something inside me side is it me who pursues my sanctification or is it God who does the sanctification in me to make me look more like [32:47] Jesus and the answer of course is yes it's both somewhat unsatisfying both but it is a biblical and wonderful both I bring up this verse because it shows how the two go together and it also shows all those components that we've talked about from Haggai where is it therefore my beloved as you have always obeyed so now not only in my presence but much more in my absence work out your own salvation that's do stuff external pursue this obedience but with fear and trembling the internal fear of God behind it for it is God who works in you who stirs you up both to will and to work for his good pleasure. This verse puts all of it together. So when we find ourselves off track, all of these things are fair game. Pursue all of them. And then the last thing is to talk about, so again, if you remember, we're talking about the sandwich. Those are the two pieces of bread. They're related to each other. They're talking about similar things from different perspectives. Now I want to talk about the meat. This is the most important part of the text. This is what God is emphasizing with the sandwich. I can use that language. The most important part of this text is verse 13.

Then Haggai, the messenger of the Lord, spoke to the people with the Lord's message. I am with you, declares the Lord. So my question is, why is this the center? So God is promising his presence. God will be with his people. Why is that at the center? Why is that what God is emphasizing in this passage on repentance? And I think there's two different answers to that. The first is simply that if you don't know Jesus, if God's Holy Spirit is not indwelling in your heart, none of that other stuff matters at all. There must be for it to, um, Lord help me to say this well.

The first step is not clean up your life. The first step, according to God and scripture is not figure out these different things in your life and try to clean up your life and make your life look better. The first step in the, in the walk of repentance is knowing God, coming to know him, union with him, coming to him in confession, saying, God have mercy on me. I don't have it all together.

I'm a sinner. Have mercy on me. I need your forgiveness. And then you look to Jesus who went to the cross to take the fullness of the punishment that we deserve. And you trust in him alone to be your righteousness so that when you stand before God, you don't say, yes, Lord, you did a little bit and I did a little bit. And now together we kind of accomplish this thing called salvation. You go to him and say, Lord Jesus, I need you to do it all. You are my righteousness. You are my everything. You are my Lord who I will strive to obey all my life. You are my savior who saves me from my sin and the wrath that I deserve. You are my friend who I go to in every trial and every burden and pour my heart out to. You are my treasure whom I value more than anything else in all the world. That's where it begins. And if it doesn't begin there, then the other things don't matter.

[36:29] That's the first reason why I think God's promise. I will be with you. I am with you is the focal point in the emphasis of this text. But I think there's also a second, possibly a second reason why God puts this at the center, which is this. The only lasting motivator for change in my life is a lifestyle of abiding in Jesus. If I just, without that regular time of being with Jesus, being with God, pouring my heart out to him and abiding in him, I can't do any of the other stuff. And if you think

that's just me, Jesus said the same thing. He said, abide in me and I in you as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine. Neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine. You are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit. For apart from me, you can do some things. Nothing. Nothing. And so the emphasis in this section of Haggai is that God's presence with his people is the catalyst for change. And so my primary burden as I come up here today and my desire for each and every one of you is not that you would feel the burden to go home and have to clean up your life. Though if God is calling you to repentance, do it. I'd say the most important thing to pursue is this, because this is the thing out of which everything else will flow. Pursue your abide. If you're abiding in Christ is weak right now, then it may not be a surprise that the conviction and the repentance in your life is similarly weak. And so I just, I don't know how to say this with enough heart.

Abide in Jesus. It is the foundation. It is the centerpiece. It is the height. It is the everything of the Christian life is abiding in Christ. So if you're going to take anything away from this, Josiah said this at church, say, Josiah said go home and abide in Jesus. Amen. So one last, just to wrap this all together, what do we do when we find ourselves convicted of sin?

I look at God's word. I look at my life and the two aren't aligned. What do I do? Well, first, on the human responsibility side, I repent. I go to God. I confess my sin and I say, God, this isn't how it should be. Help me. And maybe there are action steps that the Lord might put on my heart, things that I can do to pursue that obedience. But I go to him and then from a God's sovereignty side, I say, Lord, stir me up. Make me want this more and more. And more than anything, I pursue drawing near to Jesus through abiding in him so that we may bear much fruit. Let me pray.

Father, again, Lord, I pray that nobody would leave this with a wrong motive. Lord, it is true biblically. I don't want to wrap or go around that, dance around that. That obedience is what we're called to. Obedience is good. Obedience is freedom. We want that. But Lord, may nobody leave under law.

Law is not the path to obedience. Gospel is the path to obedience. May it begin with each one of us abiding in you, trusting in you to be our righteousness. Being born again, if we haven't already, and then pursuing our communion with you. And then out of that, may you convict us of our sin where needed. And Lord, may you empower us and stir us up to walk in the ways that would be pleasing in your sight. We entrust our whole lives to you. Thank you for the foundational truths of the gospel. We thank you that you are with us in our whole battle against sin. And you will perfect us someday, which we look forward to. In your name, Lord Jesus, we love you and trust you. Amen.

[40:41] Amen. If you'd like to stand, go ahead. If you'd like to dance, if you'd like to shout, go for it.

Thank you. What a fellowship What a joy divine Leaning on the everlasting arms What a blessedness What a peace in mind Leaning on the everlasting arms Leaning, leaning Safe and secure From all the longers Leaning, leaning Leaning on the everlasting arms
Oh, how sweet