

Fighting Through Suffering

Jarrett Stephens

FIGHT - For What Matters Most | June 14, 2026 | James 1:2-4; 1 Peter 1:6-7; 2 Corinthians 4:7-18; 1 Peter 4:12-14; Romans 8:1; Romans 8:26-28; John 9:1-3; John 11:1-4

Prepared from the spoken message and lightly edited for readability. Scripture quotations and spoken phrasing are preserved as delivered.

That being said, I want to invite you to take God's Word and turn to 2 Corinthians chapter 4. There are going to be two anchor texts for us this morning: 2 Corinthians 4 and Romans chapter 8.

We're going to look at a lot of different Scripture references this morning. This is a topical message series, and this is a topical message, so we're going to look at a bunch of different Scripture references. All of the Scripture passages that we're going to look at will be on the screen for you.

If you're a guest, I encourage you to take notes if you're able. If you've got your phone, you can take notes. If you miss anything, just go online on Tuesday. Our team uploads the manuscript that I'm preaching from to our website, and anything you missed is right there for you.

All of these messages are part of a series, so if you missed a message or you've been traveling this summer, you can download our messages on our podcast and listen to them. I always tell people, if you're having a hard time going to sleep, just listen to me. Turn me on, all right? I will put you to sleep as you listen to God's Word.

We're in our FIGHT series. So far, we've covered some things that we need to be fighting for: fighting for our family, fighting for truth, fighting for the lost. Last week was fighting for the least. We've talked about fighting against some things, like fighting against temptation.

Today, we're talking about fighting through something, and it is the title of the message today: fighting through suffering.

This subject of suffering is relevant for every single person in the room. Suffering is universal, and it is unavoidable. It is a reality of life. I don't think I need to convince anyone in here that suffering comes in all different shapes, sizes, and degrees. It doesn't matter where you come from. It's no respecter of persons. It doesn't matter what your background is or how much you have or don't have. Simply because we live in a fallen world, every single one of us will suffer.

The Bible says in Matthew 5:45 that it rains on the just and the unjust. Jesus predicted that, as believers, we would experience tribulation:

In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.

— John 16:33

Why We Suffer

One of the hurdles that we have to jump over concerning suffering, if you will, is the question of why we suffer. We all know that we will suffer. What we have problems with is answering the why question behind it.

Why do we suffer?

That's what's really difficult to deal with, and that's what trips us up in our fight through suffering. The why can really derail our faith. We go through the furnace of affliction, and we wonder, "God, why? Why did You allow this break in this relationship that I really, really wanted? Why did I or my loved one get this report from the doctor that's not very favorable? Why can't we get pregnant and have children? Why was my job cut at this time in my career? Why is it so humid in Houston, Texas?"

All right, these are gut-wrenching, heart-wrenching questions that deal with the raw reality of life. If we're going to fight through suffering, we have to at least deal with why. "God, why? Why now? Why me? Why aren't You answering my prayer? Why aren't You coming through?"

Theologian John Stott writes, "The fact of suffering undoubtedly constitutes the single greatest challenge to the Christian faith, and has been in every generation. Its distribution and degree appear to be entirely random, and therefore unfair. Sensitive spirits ask if it can possibly be reconciled with God's justice and love."

We need to do our best to answer this question of why, even if the answers we come up with don't satisfy. Let's be honest. I've been a pastor now for 20-plus years, and with people I've walked with in suffering, even if they have a hint of the why, that doesn't mean they agree with it. It doesn't mean that it helps in any sort of way.

But let's try to tackle, from a big-picture perspective, what I'm calling the why of suffering. There are two tracks that the train of the why of suffering runs on. One is the glory of God, and the other is the faith of man.

The Glory of God

I want to tackle these tracks one at a time. Let's first look at God's glory.

There are two accounts we're going to look at very quickly, both of them in the Gospel of John. For the sake of time, we're going to have to run through them.

In the first account, Jesus and His disciples are walking past someone. The Bible says they walked past this man who had been blind from birth. The disciples ask this question: "Jesus, why has this man been blind from birth? Was it because of his sin or because of his parents' sin?"

The thought of the day, the belief of the day, was that if you had an illness, an ailment, or a handicap, it was because you did something wrong or someone close to you did something wrong. Listen to how Jesus answers this question in John chapter 9, verse 3:

It was not that this man sinned, or his parents, but that the works of God might be displayed in him.

— John 9:3

He goes on to heal this man, and this man gives glory to God before the Pharisees and testifies to the

goodness of God.

The ESV Study Bible has a study note attached to verse 3 that gives a little insight and commentary. It says, "This indicates that God in his mysterious and wise providence sometimes allows his children to go through hardship and suffering so that they can experience God's mercy and power in delivering them."

That's true. Sometimes God allows us to go through suffering. I want to remind you, as a child of God, that nothing touches the son or daughter of God without first filtering through His holy hands. No amount of suffering can touch you without God signing off on it.

Sometimes, as He does here in the Scripture, He heals you so that you can experience His mercy, power, and deliverance. But other times, He allows you to go through suffering, heartache, and trial, and He doesn't heal you - not on this side of eternity.

Two chapters over, in John chapter 11, we find the story of Lazarus. Lazarus was a person whom, according to the Scripture, Jesus loved. He had two sisters, Mary and Martha, and they lived in a little town called Bethany.

Bethany was where Jesus could go and, in a sense, let down His hair, if you will. He could put His feet up and just be Himself. He loved this family.

The Bible tells us that Lazarus became ill:

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha.

It was Mary who anointed the Lord with ointment and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was ill.

So the sisters sent to him, saying, "Lord, he whom you love is ill."

But when Jesus heard it, he said, "This illness does not lead to death. It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it."

— John 11:1-4

Very quickly, what does it say about your theology that someone Jesus loves is ill?

Don't listen to that theology out there that says if you love God and you're in a relationship with God, then you're never going to go through any pain. Don't listen to that theology that says you're always going to be healed of your diseases and, if you just have enough faith, everything is going to work out in the way that you desire.

That's not true. That's a false hope. That's a false gospel.

Here, the Scripture says that someone Jesus loves is ill, and he ends up dying. Jesus delays His trip back to Bethany for two days, and Lazarus dies. What did Jesus say in the second part of verse 4?

It is for the glory of God, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.

— John 11:4

In God's economy, I don't pretend to understand it. I can't wrap my mind around it. But it is a truth of God that, in God's economy, His glory is manifested and seen most in suffering.

Think about the cross. That's exhibit A. His greatest glory, resurrection unto life, came through His greatest suffering, pain, and crucifixion.

Peter adds something about suffering and glory. They're intimately tied to one another. No suffering, no glory. Listen to what Peter writes:

But rejoice insofar as you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

If you are insulted for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

— 1 Peter 4:13-14

There's something about suffering that welcomes the glory of God into your life. God's glory rests on you.

Notice what the Scripture says. It doesn't show up after the suffering ends. God's glory isn't waiting for you on the other side of the trial. God's glory rests on you in the middle of the dark night of the soul.

This is the first track that the train of the why of suffering runs on. It's for God's glory. As Christians, isn't this the root desire of our lives - the glory of God?

Again, I don't pretend to understand it. I certainly don't like going through it. But it is a truth that God's glory and our suffering go hand in hand.

When I was playing football in high school during those hot two-a-days in Louisiana, our coaches would say, "No pain, no gain." I hated hearing that. No pain, no gain.

For our purposes today, no suffering, no glory. It's just a truth of Scripture.

My Kelsey was registering for classes this past week. She just graduated, and she's headed to Baylor, so I'm going to have two at Baylor. I'm going to take the midnight shift at that Whataburger right up here at Louetta.

As she was registering for classes, she had to take prerequisites. We've all been there, right? When we register for classes, you can't take this class until you've taken that class.

Well, we want glory, don't we? We want God's glory. But the prerequisite for experiencing the glory of God in our lives is a class we all have to take, with no opting out. It's the class of suffering.

One track that the train of the why runs on is God's glory.

The Faith of Man

The other track is our faith.

Suffering does something for our faith. It purifies it. It strengthens it. It fortifies it. It refines it unlike anything else. Our faith is what is most important to the Lord.

Look, He is not after our happiness or our comfort. More than anything, He wants His glory and our faith to be matured. Suffering does that unlike anything else.

*Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds,
for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.
And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.*
— James 1:2-4

Listen to 1 Peter chapter 1, verses 6 and 7:

*In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,
so that the tested genuineness of your faith - more precious than gold that perishes though it is tested by fire
- may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*
— 1 Peter 1:6-7

God wants His glory and our faith refined, and suffering does it.

We know that suffering has a purifying effect. We know that going through tough times draws us near to the Lord. We don't like it, but we know it to be true.

If I took this microphone right here, walked up and down the aisles of this church, and asked each one of you, "When were you closest to God in your life?" I'd be willing to bet that 99 percent, if we were in church, would say, "I was closest to the Lord when I was going through this battle, when I had my back against the wall in this way, or when I was going through this crisis."

It's interesting when you read Paul. Paul was a brilliant man, schooled in the Old Testament. Thirteen of our 27 New Testament letters were penned by the apostle Paul. Much of what we understand about God, and certainly what we understand about suffering, comes from the hand of Paul.

We're going to look at 2 Corinthians 4 and Romans 8 here in just a moment. But when you read Paul talking about suffering, it's interesting. He doesn't talk about the why of suffering as much as he talks about what suffering produces, what it brings with it, and what it does for the believer.

What Suffering Brings

We've looked at the why of suffering. Let's talk about the what of suffering.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 4, starting in verse 7, we're going to see that suffering may take some things, but it also brings some things with it.

But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us.

*We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair;
persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.*

— 2 Corinthians 4:7-9

Suffering Brings Power

Suffering takes our strength, but look at what it brings with it. Suffering brings power. If you're taking notes, write it down.

When we're weak, He's strong. When we're suffering, we get God's power.

We may be crushed by what life is throwing our way. It's like a picture of an olive press crushing an olive so that the oil comes out. That may be how you feel right now. You're being crushed. But what the Scripture says is you're not out.

You may be thrown to the ground and struck down, but you're not destroyed. You've still got space to move around. Why? Because even when you're confined, God's power is in you.

I had an older brother - I have an older brother. We loved wrestling growing up. I still remember the first time I was ever introduced to wrestling. I'm talking about the Von Erichs. Can I get a witness? Anybody know the Von Erichs? Come on, man. Junkyard Dog! Golly, yes.

My dad was a deacon in our church, and I've always respected the relationship between deacons and pastors because of the first time my dad got a phone call from his pastor. His pastor asked my dad to go visiting with him, to go visit prospects who had visited the church.

Dad said, "Sure, I'll go visit with you."

The pastor picked him up, and they went down to the Shreveport Municipal Auditorium to visit and then went to the wrestling matches. I've always loved that story.

We were introduced to wrestling, and I wanted to be Kevin Von Erich. I would wrestle with no socks on, and I'd jump around. My brother was bigger than me, and we would wrestle.

We made a world championship belt with a bandana. We tucked an envelope over it and wrote "World Championship Wrestling." That's the belt we'd wrestle for.

My brother was bigger than me. I was quicker than him, so he would always try to pin me. If you've been in a wrestling match, it's one, two, three, and you're out. But when you get to that two, the dramatic thing about wrestling is that you can get out of it, right? You can live again.

This is what Paul is saying here. Look, you may be pinned down on the ground. That trial, that struggle, and that hardship may have you laid down on the mat, but you've got God's power on you. You will never be counted out.

It might get to two and a half, but because of God's power, you're going to get out of it.

Suffering brings with it God's power.

Suffering Brings Purpose

Secondly, suffering brings purpose. Look at verses 10 through 12 of 2 Corinthians chapter 4. This is beautiful:

Always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies.

For we who live are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.

So death is at work in us, but life in you.

— 2 Corinthians 4:10-12

Suffering may take strength. It may take comfort. We're given over to death. But look at what it brings with it: Jesus is manifested.

Suffering brings purpose. When we suffer, we are showing forth Christ. When we suffer and someone sees us suffering well, we are helping others in their suffering.

Isn't that what we're called to do? Second Corinthians 1:3-5 says that we're to comfort others with the comfort with which we've been comforted. When we go through suffering, it could be that God has you in the fire right now because there's somebody you're going to help who is going to go through that same fire.

Some of our best friends in the world, mine and Debbie's friends, are Connor and Mary Beth. Connor is going to be here in July, preaching for me on July the 12th.

I first met Connor back in Dallas. I was actually discipling his brother, and his brother came to me and said, "Look, my brother Connor owns a landscaping company, and he's wrestling with a call to ministry. Would you mind meeting with him?"

I met with Connor, and we just hit it off. It's one of those relationships - you all have these relationships - where there's an instant connection. You're like, "This is a family we're going to do life with for the rest of our lives."

And we did. We've gone on vacations together. We're very close with the Bales family. You're going to love them when they're here in July.

We had families at the same age and stage of life. We were having kids together. When their third child was to be born, they got a report that sweet Hannah was going to have a rare genetic disorder called Trisomy 16.

With this rare genetic disorder, the doctor told them that if they made it to birth, the baby would be lucky to live to be two years of age. I quote the doctor here. They told them that her condition was "incompatible with life."

They had Hannah, and we've watched them through the years take care of her. It's a beautiful expression of God's love and care in this sweet family as they walk with their child who has special needs.

Then they were getting ready to have another child. The doctor told them it would be scientifically impossible

to have another baby with that rare genetic disorder. There were 30 cases worldwide. "You're not going to have another one."

I'll never forget getting the call on October 31, 2012. Debbie and I went over to the Bales' house, and they proceeded to tell us that their baby, Libby, who was to come, had the same rare genetic disorder. From a chromosome standpoint, they are identical twins.

It broke their hearts.

We've watched this family love these girls and take care of these girls. In fact, here's a picture of the family. That's their oldest, Catherine, in the middle. She got married, and this is her wedding picture.

That's Hannah on the left side of the picture. She's 16, by the way. They said she wouldn't live to be two. She's 16 now.

Then you've got sweet Libby on the right. Debbie and I are her godparents. These are just the two most beautiful girls.

Talk about purpose in suffering. When he's here preaching, Connor is going to be sharing the message of his life called "Counted Worthy."

One of the reasons we upped our game with our special needs ministry and moved it to the very center of our church, off the main corridor, was so that families could easily get there and see that reaching these families is a priority for us. Part of the inspiration behind that is the Bales family and watching them care for Hannah and Libby.

They found a purpose in their suffering that's bigger than themselves. Look at what good it's done.

I was in the special needs suite this week, just walking in there, and I couldn't stay very long because I was so overcome with emotion, seeing how our team of volunteers is loving on these sweet families.

Suffering may take our security, comfort, and safety. But, man, it gives us God's power. It gives us a purpose that we never knew we had.

Suffering Brings Perspective

Third and finally, suffering brings perspective. Suffering gives us a perspective that we would never have if we didn't go through it. Look at verses 13 through 15:

Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, "I believed, and so I spoke," we also believe, and so we also speak,

knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence.

For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.

— 2 Corinthians 4:13-15

Suffering brings perspective.

Paul here quotes Psalm 116. It's a dark psalm. It's almost a near-death experience. As the psalmist is experiencing this suffering, he almost grits his teeth and says, "Even though I'm afflicted, I'm going to believe."

That suffering crystallized the psalmist's faith. It might be, "I may be at the brink of death, but God, I'm not going anywhere."

This is what Paul has learned. He's been beaten. He's been stoned. He's been shipwrecked. He's been left for dead. He says, "I'm not going anywhere."

It's almost a defiant faith.

As we stand firm in our faith and God sends us through the fires of persecution and suffering, what happens? People look at us. They experience ministry from us. Look at what the Bible says. It results in people increasing in thanksgiving to the glory of God.

When they see us suffer, suffer well, and use it as a ministry, and they see the purifying effects of our suffering, it results in God getting glory.

Again, this is what we're after. This is a perspective changer. How do we get to this point where we can say, "Lord, if my suffering brings You glory, and that's what I want most, then so be it. I'm not going anywhere. God, if my cancer brings You glory, I don't want it. I want to be healed from it. But if it brings You glory, God, so be it. I am Yours."

This is why Paul could write:

So we do not lose heart. Though our outer self is wasting away, our inner self is being renewed day by day.

For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen.

For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal.

— 2 Corinthians 4:16-18

How could he not lose heart while going through the suffering he was going through? His outer self was wasting away, but his inner self was being renewed day by day.

Paul had been through the fires of affliction. How did he endure it? He wasn't focusing on what he could see. He was focusing on what he couldn't see. Therefore, he didn't lose heart.

We've got the why of suffering. We can't explain it and don't understand it, but we go through suffering for the glory of God and for our faith.

We have the what of suffering. It brings with it God's power in our lives, a purpose bigger than ourselves, and a perspective that we couldn't have any other way.

How to Fight Through Suffering

Let's talk about how to fight through it.

I want to give you one statement on how to fight through suffering. I've probably said this before in a message. I've certainly said it at funerals. But if you want to fight through suffering, let me give you this statement:

Don't trade what you know for what you don't know.

If you want to fight through suffering, don't trade what you know for what you don't know.

Isn't this the temptation? A trial, trouble, hardship, or crisis comes in, and we lose our minds. We automatically start going to the worst-case scenario. What does that produce? Fear and panic.

We run to WebMD. Don't do that.

As a result, we start trading what we know for all these unknowns, for what we don't know. That's a bad trade. You're never going to fight through suffering by fixating on what you don't know.

You fight through suffering by concentrating on what you do know.

What do we know as it relates to suffering? Romans chapter 8 is going to give us what I call four certainties of suffering.

Again, Paul knew about suffering, and this is a theology of suffering. How did he fight through it? The same way we're going to fight through it.

God Is Not Condemning You

Number one, you've got to realize this truth: God is not condemning you.

You've got to fight to believe this because, when we suffer, this is what the enemy wants us to think. He wants us to think we're suffering because God is somehow judging us or condemning us. "That's why you're going through the suffering you're going through. You did something wrong."

Does that sound familiar from John chapter 9?

Look, we'll reap the consequences of decisions and bad choices we make, and some of them could be severe consequences. When you reap something, you reap more than you sow. Hebrews 12:5-6 is clear that God disciplines those He loves.

But our suffering isn't sent by a punitive God bringing judgment. Our sins were dealt with in a punitive way at Calvary. This is the beauty of the gospel.

As mentioned, God will use our suffering as a tool to refine our faith, but He doesn't send it as a tool to punish us for our sins. He sent Jesus for that.

If you're going through hardship and suffering, yes, look internally. Is there sin you need to confess? Are you out of fellowship with the Lord in any way? It could be that you're going through something because of the

consequences of your own decisions. So we repent and change course where necessary.

But for the believer, the vast majority of the suffering we go through hasn't touched us without first filtering through God's holy hands. It's simply the result of living in a fallen world.

God is not condemning you, and Romans 8:1 assures us of this:

There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

— Romans 8:1

There is now, present tense, in the midst of your suffering, no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

That's truth number one that you've got to fight for. It's a certainty. Don't trade what you know for what you don't know.

God Is Praying for You

Number two, God is praying for you. You've got to fight to rest in the fact that He's praying for you. This is an amazing thought.

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words.

And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

— Romans 8:26-27

We don't know exactly what this means, but let's just take it on the surface and say it means what it says. The Spirit of God, when we don't know what to pray for, prays for us.

When you're going through hardship and pain, and you don't even know, "God, I don't even know what to pray," the Bible promises that God is praying for you. Hebrews 7:25 says that Jesus lives to make intercession for you.

I've told you before in my testimony that I was sexually abused from the ages of eight to 12. I never told anybody until I was 19.

I remember the day I was coming forward to tell my parents for the very first time. I remember going into the prayer room at Bellaire Baptist Church in Bossier City, Louisiana.

I was 19 and scared to death. I couldn't believe I was about to share this deep, dark secret that I'd never told anybody in my life, and I was about to tell my parents.

I remember getting face-first on the floor, and I couldn't say a word. I don't know how long I lay there, but I just lay there in silence.

Now, looking back all those years later, I might not have said a word in that prayer room, but the Spirit of God, I promise you, according to His promise here in Romans 8, was praying for me.

It gives so much comfort to know that if you're in the midst of it and you don't even know what to pray, God's praying for you.

God Is Working on Your Behalf

Number three, God's working on your behalf. You've got to fight to trust this.

This is a Romans 8 certainty:

And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

— Romans 8:28

Whatever you're going through, He is working for your good. You don't have to wonder about this. You don't have to question this. It's a certainty from right here in Romans 8. He's working on your behalf.

I should say this right here because what's the temptation? When we suffer, we think God's forgotten us.

The Scripture says that suffering is for a little while. It's momentary. But when you're in the middle of it, it doesn't feel that way. You're asking, "When is this going to stop? When is this cloud going to lift?"

I think of Joseph in Genesis. I'm walking through it right now in a discipleship relationship with a guy. We're reading through Genesis, and we're almost done. So much of it is about Joseph.

For 13 years, he was in slavery and in prison. You don't think he asked why? You don't think he was wondering, "What in the world is going on?"

What does Genesis 50:20 say?

As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good.

— Genesis 50:20

He is working a plan. You can count on it.

You've got to trust that whatever it is you're going through, God is working a plan in your life. Trust it and keep walking by faith.

God Loves You

Fourth and finally, it's just very simple. We learned this in Vacation Bible School when we were kids, didn't we?

God loves me.

"Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so."

When we go through tough times, sometimes that's what we think: "God, do You even love me? Why would You allow me to go through this?"

Look at Romans 8:

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?

— Romans 8:35

Then there are all these words that equate to suffering: tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, danger, or sword.

No. Nothing.

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.

— Romans 8:37

Nothing can separate us from the love of God.

If you want to fight through suffering, don't trade what you know for what you don't know. That's how you can fight through suffering and keep your faith, all for the glory of God. Amen?

Invitation

Let's bow together in prayer. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed.

I want to give you an opportunity to respond to the teaching and preaching of God's Word. If you're here today and don't know Christ, this is where it starts. You've got to ask Jesus to forgive you of your sins and enter into a relationship with Him by faith.

This is why He came. He left heaven, and He came to earth to die on a cross for you so that your sins could be forgiven and you could be restored to a right relationship with God.

The Bible says:

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.

— Romans 10:13

If you're suffering right now, it could be that God brought you here to hear this message. You're doing suffering on your own. You can't find purpose in it if you don't have a relationship with Jesus.

I want to encourage you, if that's you, as soon as we stand up to sing, we have a time of invitation, and we ask you to come forward and just tell the pastor, "I'm trusting in Christ." We'll take it from there.

You say, "What happens if I come forward?"

We pray with you, celebrate your decision, and give you resources to help you grow in your faith. That's all we do.

Others of you may want to join the church. You come forward. We had a membership class today. We'll tell you about our next membership class, where you can join and be a part of this church.

Maybe you need to be baptized, like all those we witnessed today, to show the world what you believe and to

whom you belong.

I don't know. Maybe you need prayer. Our pastors are here. Maybe you're in the fire right now, and you just need prayer. You come forward. We'd love to pray with you.

Father, this is Your time of invitation. Where You've spoken into hearts, let us respond in a way that honors You. In Jesus' name, amen and amen.