



Scott Turansky, Senior Pastor
January 14, 2018

2 CORINTHIANS 5:1-10

2 Corinthians Series

Okay. Let's switch gears now and settle our hearts before the Lord as we anticipate what He might do for us.

[PRAYER] Lord, I just appreciate the updates I heard from some folks this morning about their lives and what's going on. Boy, there's a lot of pressure going on here today in several people's lives. So I ask that you would impart your grace to match their situation. Give them what they need in a special way. Lord, we know that you touch each of us through your word, so as we look at it now, we ask that you would give us that extra measure of strength that we need. Teach us. Conform our thinking to your thinking instead of the world's thinking. Help us to wash away all of the stuff that we experience in the course of the week that is contrary to what you would have for us, and give us a greater understanding of yourself, who you are, and what you want for us today. In Jesus' name, amen.

We're looking at the book of 2 Corinthians and we're talking about the power of God. Sometimes that power of God demonstrates itself in some big ways in our lives, but many times it takes place in the small areas of our lives, the simple things that can irritate us and challenge us, but we have this inner strength that helps us a lot.

Last week we looked at this whole idea of stress. We looked at four different kinds of stress. We looked at a general stress that's the kind of stress that we experience every day that can either make us stronger or we can move to the second kind of stress, which is we accumulate it. When we accumulate stress then it can cause us to respond more readily to situations or in a greater way than the situation warrants. We talked about surprise stress. So if you're already accumulating a lot of stress and then you have the surprise stress, well then that of course just throws you over the loop and then you're stuck because now you have this huge reaction from things that you might have been able to handle otherwise. And then we talked about posttraumatic stress that is living within a stressful situation or experiencing some stressful event can cause triggers in your life that fire at different times that make life even incapacitating for some.

As we talked last week, we talked about how we're jars of clay and we're hard pressed. These are the words we saw: *hard pressed, perplexed, persecuted, struck down*. This is from the end of 2 Corinthians 4. But, he says, we're *not crushed, not in despair, not abandoned, and not destroyed*. What he's saying in the passage is there is a place within us as believers that can't be pressed any more. It's the place where that energy comes, where the strength comes for our lives and we need to find it there. He describes that as the life of Jesus. What does that look like? So

we spent our time last week trying to explore the solution to stress in our lives by trying to understand what this life of Jesus looks like and how to apply it and understand it in our own lives.

So today you can open your Bibles with me to 2 Corinthians 5, which we'll read in just a moment. As we come to the next chapter in 2 Corinthians 5 we're going to learn how. How do you maximize this container, this reservoir of spiritual strength and resource that we all need? How do you maximize that in order to get the most from it?

In order to understand this, I've outlined the passage this way. We're going to read 2 Corinthians 5:1-10 in a moment, but I want you to see the outline first before we stand and read God's word. The reason I want you to see the outline is so that as we read it you can see how it flows in the passage. I believe the key phrase in the verses 1-10 is the phrase in verse 7, which reads this way: *Walk by faith and not by sight*. We're going to talk about what that means, what it looks like. How do we do that?

Then there are three motivations that we see in the passage. We're going to start with the first one in verse 1 and then one in verse 5 and then in verse 10. The first motivation is we live in a tent, but heaven is coming. The second one is the Holy Spirit is our guarantee. And the third one is an award ceremony is coming that's more valuable than current rewards. So that's the outline of where we're headed today. Let's walk through this together.

I'd like you to stand with me and let me read this passage to you. You can read it out of your own Bible if you brought one. If you don't have a Bible, we give them out free at the informational table. Please pick one up. It's an opportunity for you to look at God's word on a regular basis. But I'm going to read verses 1-10 of 2 Corinthians 5.

It reads this way: For we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, because when we are clothed, we will not be found naked. For while we are in this tent, we groan and are burdened, because we do not wish to be unclothed but to be clothed instead with our heavenly dwelling, so that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life. Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.

Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. Verse 7 (key verse) – For we live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.

You may be seated. Let's take this passage apart.

I want to go back to that key statement first. Let's talk about these words. In the NIV as I just read them it says *we live by faith and not by sight*. Here the translation reads *we walk by faith*

and not by sight. Let me just clarify that. The word *live* is in the New International Version to help us understand what the word means. When we say we walk, it's kind of an illustration, but the idea is that's kind of how we live. We walk. But the word is actually the word *walk*. We walk, we take steps in our lives by faith. So we're walking, we're putting one foot in front of the other. We've got these footprints in our lives that we're walking along and those steps that we take are very important. They are the steps that you literally take when you get up in the morning and walk to the bathroom or walk into the living room or walk into the kitchen or walk out of the door and walk to work. Those are the literal walking that we're talking about.

But it means much more than that. It means how to live. The way we walk in our lives, the way we live every day, the way we handle ourselves when we meet that person, the way we handle the pressures of life. When we do that, he's saying here's a way to walk, a way to respond to people that are irritating, a way to deal with our finances, a way to address the physical problems that we're experiencing, the way to deal with a crisis that's just come into our lives.

It says *we walk by faith*. That actually is a contrast here between two kinds of walking. There's walking by faith and walking by sight. So the faith is where we're going to spend some time learning about, but it's contrasted with sight, so we'll talk about that as well. If you're going to walk by faith that means that this faith has to be nurtured and growing inside of you.

I want to just pause for a moment and ask you the question – What are you doing to nurture your faith? How is that faith growing so you have something to walk by? If you're going to be led in life by faith and not by sight, then that faith has to be growing inside of your heart. If you're going to do that, if you're going to grow by faith and you're going to understand what that means, then we're going to do it through God's word. That's what Romans 10:17 says. So faith comes from where? It *comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ*. So as we look at God's word, it does something to us.

I would encourage you to have some form of getting God's word into your life. What does that look like for you? Maybe you have a systematic plan where you're reading through the Bible. Or maybe you are reading through a devotional book. There's lots of ways to get the word of God into your heart today. I don't know if you're familiar with the *Daily Bread*, but that's a devotional book that you can pick up. In fact Paul Jurik hands them out. He buys 400 at a time and he gives them out to all of his work people. He told us that before. And he has some at the information table...or he has had some. I don't know if they're there today. But he often gives some to us so we can take them.

If you're looking for a devotional, you might pick up the *Daily Bread*. So to encourage you along that way and to encourage you to look at God's word regularly, I'm going to take you into the *Daily Bread* for a moment. I found that *Daily Bread* that deals with our verse. I had to go back a few years to find it. But let me show you what it looks like. This is the *Daily Bread*. It might be a good way for you to get connected to God's word yourself.

Let's read it. This is the reading for today if you were on this day as you open the *Daily Bread*. It says – “Read: 2 Corinthians 5:1-11.” That's the passage we're looking at today. If you're looking at the Bible in a year then you're going to read Psalm 16-18, 1 Corinthians 7:1-19. *We walk by*

faith, not by sight. That's the verse being talked about in this particular devotional, 2 Corinthians 5:7.

“Constructed to give people the illusion of walking on air, ‘The Walk of Faith’ is a platform of laminated glass at the top of a 385-foot tower in Blackpool, England. An *Associated Press* photo showed a woman at the edge of the invisible walkway, fists clenched against her face, trying to summon up the courage to take a step. She had been told the platform was safe, but she was still afraid.

Sometimes we feel that way about our own circumstances. Perhaps a serious health problem has caused us to question the power and the presence of God.

It's encouraging to know that Paul's familiar words, *we walk by faith, not by sight* (2 Corinthians 5:7), occur in his discussion *about being absent from the body...and present from the Lord* (which we'll also see in the passage in verse 8). He also used a powerful metaphor calling our body an earthly house that's being destroyed, yet he said we have a heavenly building made by God. He spoke of groaning in our earthly frailty and longing for our heavenly home. He concluded that no matter what circumstances we face, we should make it our goal to please the Lord (verse 9).

Our walk of faith can be challenging and sometimes scary. But because God is powerful and present, we can step out in confidence today.

The Lord wants us to walk by faith,
Because our eyes can be deceived;
And even though our path may fade,
God's Word can always be believed.
—Sper”

And here's the concluding statement: “It is better to walk by faith than to go it alone by sight.”

Now wouldn't it be great every day if you started with something like that? A devotional, whether it's the *Daily Bread* or it's one of the other things that are out there. You can get them very easily today. You can have them emailed to you. If you have email, they'll send you the daily devotion for today. You can even tell Alexa to read a passage in the Bible.

My mom has the Alexa. I was helping her program it. “Read John 4.” Alexa just starts reading John 4. You know what Alexa is, right? It's the echo thing you put in your house and you tell it what to do and it's great. It's a great little thing. I don't sell them, but it's a lot of fun for my mom to use it in all kinds of ways. But it can help you read the Bible.

You can get something that will read it audibly to you as you're on your way to work and you're driving in the car. I'm just suggesting if you're going to walk by faith, you have to have some faith that's growing. When we understand the power of God's word to increase our faith, then it makes us want to be more connected to it. I'd encourage you to look at God's word more often in order to get that idea.

Now let's talk about what it means to walk by faith. What does it mean to walk by faith? I was just trying to think this week. What does that mean? When you're walking, this idea of walking along, and if you're going to walk by faith and not by sight, what does that look like? What is he saying here? What's the difference between faith and sight when we're walking? I would suggest one – we don't take our cues from what we see.

I think some people are so tied into only the things they see that they find themselves all upset about stuff or they're just dealing with the very things they see. God is saying, let's raise up a little higher. There's something bigger going on here than what we see. God might be doing something very different than what you see in the front. There's a backstage here that we need to consider. When we walk by faith we look at life differently. We don't just look at what we see. We know there's a bigger thing going on.

Some of you are counselors, like I am, and when you counsel someone and they come with a presenting problem, we listen to that problem because that's what's bothering them. But often we as counselors are saying okay, what's the real problem here? What is going on underneath the surface here that needs to be addressed? Because sometimes the person coming in for counseling doesn't even know themselves. So we say well maybe it's because of this other thing going on over here. And they go, "Oh wow. That's just what I needed." And that's why they go to a counselor to get more insight to see what's behind the initial thing that they're concerned about. But a wise counselor doesn't say, "Oh that's your problem here, well let me give you this. Let me help you with this." We look behind the scenes because we want to know what the deeper issue is. We don't take our cues from what we see.

Number two – we don't evaluate life based on externals. Just because someone looks a particular way or the situation looks a particular way, that isn't how we evaluate life. We're looking at some deeper issues. We're trying to look at it from God's perspective because we are walking by faith and not by sight. What is God doing in this particular situation? Maybe He is trying to do a work inside of my heart and it's not really about the person I'm mad at.

And thirdly, we don't invest our feelings in surface things. When we start doing that, we become reactionary and we start reacting to every little thing that's going on. But when we walk by faith, there's something deeper going on here. There's something more important than the surface thing that we can look at.

What does it mean to walk by faith and not by sight? It means that we're thinking differently about life. We're taking our cues from another resource. In the same way that a person learns the alphabet before they learn how to read, I think as Christians we learn how to walk by faith and that starts us in this pilgrimage we call the Christian life. When we talk about walking by faith, it is true that we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior by faith. That's your entry point. But it doesn't stop there. It continues on. I need to learn this more. I need to learn how to walk by faith more in my life and as I do, I'm going to grow deeper in my own personal faith. It's going to do things for me. It's going to help me with my own emotions, it's going to help me be wiser, I think, in dealing with situations and people. It's going to do a number of things for me to walk by faith and not by sight.

It's a very practical idea here. I'm just trying to put my hands and feet to it so we can get it. What does it mean to walk by faith? Those are three ideas.

I would suggest that Paul in the book of Colossians gives us another verse to help us understand this idea even a little bit more. It's the same idea, but different words. He says – *Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.*

I love the picture. This is a picture from an airplane above the clouds. We had some pretty nasty weather this week. Lots of rain coming down. I don't know about you, but sometimes there's something...I don't want to say oppressive...but you know you don't feel as cheery when the clouds are all around. But when the sun comes out, even if it's cold out, there's something nice about that. The reality is though that the clouds that produce that rain and that turmoil are so high. If you get into an airplane and three minutes after you get into that airplane you're above the clouds, the sun is shining.

So what Paul is saying to the Colossians is, *set your mind on things above.* That's where your mind needs to be. Above the clouds. *Walk by faith, and not by sight.* It does something to us that gives us a different perspective about life and the situations that are going on in us.

Now I suggest there are three motivations in this passage that give us kind of how-tos. How are you going to do this? What are you going to think about in order to walk by faith and not by sight? I find that the Bible gives us a lot of routes to where we're going to go.

One of those situations, for example, is forgiveness. If you find yourself needing to forgive and get rid of kind of the anger that's eating at you, I've identified five different routes to forgiveness that I just think they're there because this one will help one person, this one will help another person. We're all different people. Different things connect to us. I don't know which one of those three will help you, but there are three suggested in this passage, all having to do with our mortality. The fact that life is short, that there's an afterlife, that we're all going to die at some point. So keep that in mind. Because when we're walking by faith and not by sight, there's a motivator there for us to think more broadly about life as we know it.

The first motivation is the tent idea, which we read about, for we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an internal house in heaven not built by human hands. So this tent idea is helpful.

I don't know how many of you have been camping. But I would suggest that if you have been camping, most of you really haven't been camping. Because in New Jersey when you go camping, the next campground is fifty feet away. There are places for you to plug in, there are porta-potties there. There's running water that you can find. That's not camping. But for some, the idea of camping is you're just unplugging your phone. So maybe that is camping for some people.

But I learned how to camp from my wife. My family growing up didn't go tent camping. We went to campgrounds and so on. When I met my wife I learned how to camp. One time we went

to Timothy Lake. Now we went with some other folks. When you go camping this way, you take everything with you on your back that you're going to carry and hike in with. All of your food, your tent, everything you're carrying in with you. And when you hike, you're not going to a place that's already set. You're trying to find it. So we hiked about a half-mile around Timothy Lake. Parked our car, hiked all our stuff in maybe about half a mile.

We get there and the first thing you do when you're camping is you look for a clearing. That clearing has to be big enough to put your tent and where you're going to be. So you set up your tent and then the next thing you do is you have to set up your little tree about fifteen feet away. You set up what you think may be a private place by some bushes and that's where you dig your pit and that's your latrine area. Then you've got to go hang some rope that you brought and you've got to hang your food up so that the bears and the raccoons and the other animals don't get it. Then you've got to find a place where you're going to build your fire (probably looking for the wind – you don't want the wind blowing the smoke into your tent), and you find some rocks and build a place where your fire is going to be. You have some water, so you can go down and get some water out of the lake (that's what you're going to use to cook with, wash with, drink, and so on) and you boil it in order to drink it. And then you're living out there for a period of time. That is camping.

The beautiful thing about that kind of camping is it's not about electronics. It's about relationships. It's not about all the things you do. I've gone camping in New Jersey. You look over at those people over there, they've got a TV plugged in over there. That's not camping.

Now this illustration of a tent is described in 2 Corinthians for us to give us an understanding that if you're in a tent, you don't decorate it, put things on the wall. You don't make it look like where you're going to live for a long period of time because it's temporary. You wouldn't want to go camping the way I just described for very long. A week is long enough because you run out of food. Remember you had to bring all your food in. Unless you're going to start killing stuff, you've got that food that you brought in that you're going to eat. You're in this tent for a short period of time.

Paul is saying here that the tent that we live in, our body, is short term. So if you spend time decorating it all up and spend time all about the temporal is the idea (not about your body). Some people need to be fixed up more than others and that's fine. The point is it's the temporal. It's temporary. If you think that this world is temporary and there's another world, it helps me just to think some of the set things that are going on around here aren't that important. Why am I getting so upset about this thing and that thing and the other thing? Maybe I could walk by faith better if I recognized that I'm just passing through this world. This is temporary where I am and I want to make an impact on other people.

But the lasting things are the relationships. The things that are going to stand forever are God's word, the relationships that we have with people, our relationships with God. Those are the permanent things. Those are the things that are valuable. So we have a contrast between the tent and this house that God is providing for us that we can enjoy. So I would suggest that's one motivation, and that motivation may actually provide confidence.

I don't know if you saw this, but twice in these verses, in verses 6 and 8... We're skipping verse 7 for the moment. That's our key verse that deals with walk by faith and not by sight. But the verses before and after talk about confidence, used twice. What do we have confidence in? *Therefore we are always confident and know that as long as we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord. We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.* The idea is that our spirit lives within this tent and when we pass away, that spirit goes to be with Christ if we have accepted Christ into our lives. So that transfer takes place and there's something much better than where we are now. Motivation number one – the tent idea.

Motivation number two is the deposit idea or the guarantee. The verse in 2 Corinthians 5:5 says – *Now the one who has fashioned us for this very purpose is God, who has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.* A deposit and guarantee. Those two words are important here. He's a deposit and a guarantee. He's a deposit in the sense that you get a piece of it now and more is coming.

I hope that you have an experiential relationship with God. I hope that you experience God in the course of your life. It's not just about reading a book or attending a church. It's about God at work in your life.

Of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, it seems that the Holy Spirit is the one that guides that experience in us a little bit more than the others. Because Jesus says, "When I go away from you, I'm going to send back to you the Comforter, Counselor (that word there), and He's going to walk alongside of you. He's going to guide you into all truth." So the Holy Spirit is the one who is responsible for the gifts that we have spiritually. He illumines the scriptures for us. So there's this experiential part of our relationship with God that ties into the Holy Spirit.

Now if you get that, if you're experiencing that, I just love it when I see the Holy Spirit working and I go, "Yes. Oh that's why I'm here. Oh Lord, you taught me something today. And I experienced that." That's the deposit. So when I see that deposit, I say, "Wow, if that's the deposit, I can hardly wait for the whole package." Because some day I'm going to see Christ face-to-face. Some day I'm going to be in the presence of the Father. So if I'm thinking about walking by faith, then I need to know the Spirit walking through me, with me in this life is really important as a deposit and a guarantee. A guarantee provides the confidence.

My cell phone was damaged and I needed to buy another one. So I went onto eBay. I like shopping on eBay, but it's always kind of...when you shop on eBay. But I bought my iPhone off of eBay and saved \$200. I felt confident doing that because I bought it from a site that says "thirty day guarantee." Well great. Then I can take it and if it doesn't work, I can send it back. It didn't work, so I sent it back. Then I bought another one on eBay that had another guarantee, so I ended up saving myself \$200 on my phone. I felt confidence doing that because of the guarantee that was offered.

If you purchase something, if you see the words "money back guarantee" or "sixty day guarantee" or "one year warranty" it gives you a greater sense of confidence, doesn't it, in order to enter into that purchase. Now the Holy Spirit is our guarantee. He's guaranteeing something.

So when that stamp is there, that good housekeeping seal of approval is there, you go, “Yes, I want that.” If that guarantee is stamped on there, you go, “Okay, I can have confidence in this.”

So now we can walk by faith and not by sight with the sense of confidence. I can walk through this life. It’s okay. I know where I’m going. I can walk in step with the Holy Spirit.

Actually I was sharing with my wife the other day the sermon. She wanted to know what I was going to be preaching. She always asks me that. She wants a preview. So I was sharing with her a little bit. She says, “My favorite verse about the Holy Spirit is this one.” So I went and looked it up and put it up here for you. *Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.* It comes from Galatians 5:25. The reference isn’t there, but that’s where you’ll find it, Galatians 5:25. *Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.*

Here’s why she likes it. She likes it because it implies by the passage of scripture it’s already on the move. The Spirit is on the move in our world doing things. What we’re trying to do is get connected to that so we can get in step with what the Holy Spirit is doing. Because when we’re walking by sight, sometimes we find ourselves all over the place. But if somehow we can walk by faith, we can get in step with the Holy Spirit, then there’s this motivation, motivation number two, to walk by faith and not by sight. I want to choose to live that faith-filled life that’s going to give me a lot of benefits that I can use to deal with the challenges that I face. And even the challenges that you face, you will find some benefit with those.

The third motivation is the awards ceremony. We read in the last verse of our passage – *For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each of us may receive what is due us for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad.*

There are several judgments referred to in the Bible. There’s the great white throne judgment and there’s the judgment about separating the sheep from the goats. There’s a judgment that deals with deciding if you’re a Christian or not, if you’re going to heaven or hell. That judgment is very important one. The determining factor is do you have Jesus living inside of your heart. Very important judgment. That’s not what this one is talking about, but let me go there for a moment.

You will face that judgment. Every one of us will face that judgment where it will be determined whether we have Jesus representing us at the throne of God or not. If you’ve accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, that is your ticket into heaven. Very important that you understand that judgment is coming. So if you’ve never accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you want to do that right away. You never know when that end time will come.

But Paul is speaking in this passage about a different judgment. In fact the word *judgment* there might be a little bit misleading to us who view a courtroom as Judge Judy there pounding the gavel or whatever. That’s not what we’re talking about in this judgment. When we’re talking about this judgment, it is one that’s evaluating our actions. What we’ve done while we’ve been in the body, this tent that we have. How have we handled ourselves?

There’s some kind of a basis for rewards that are given at that point, crowns that are given. You will be sitting there at the feet of Jesus and you don’t have any crowns to throw out here. You’re

sill in heaven, but then there's still the "beep, beep, beep, beep" and you've got his big dump truck backing up from somebody who's got all these crowns that are being placed at the feet of Jesus. There's something going on there in the judgment that he's talking about and imaging for us so that we can understand there's this investment that's going on.

When you walk by faith and not by sight, something is happening inside. Something is happening in your relationship with the Lord that provides motivation for you to take the steps. The steps, the actions, the initiative in your life. When you start taking steps in your life to do the right thing or you do the generous thing or whatever, you're walking by faith and not by sight. There's something that happens spiritually in the midst of that. Many people don't understand it. Right? You do something kind and people don't understand it.

A couple of weeks ago, I'm driving along Route 1 and there's a guy in the left-hand lane who I think is going to turn left. We don't do that in New Jersey. But that was not the case. The guy had run out of gas. So he put on his emergency lights. I pulled in front of him into the intersection to block traffic and I got out of my car and helped him push his vehicle off to the side road.

Then I got my car out of there and I said to him, "Hey, do you need a ride somewhere?" "Yeah, that would be great."

I said, "Look, I can take you wherever you need to go, and if you've got a gas can or something." So I drove him to his home (which was like five minutes away) and he pulls out his wallet to give me something. I said, "No, you don't have to give me anything."

He said, "You're just doing this for nothing?"

I said, "Yeah, pay it forward. Give it to somebody else. Care for somebody else."

So I know that when I do that kind of thing I'm not doing it to get some kind of an earthly reward. I'm doing it because that's who I am as a Christian. That's what God has called me to do is to give to other people – whether it's somebody I don't even know or even people I do know that I work with, live with, interact with that I need to be thinking about. Because there's a way to live by faith and not by sight.

This is what the Christian life is all about. See, when you get saved then you start learning how to walk. Just like when you get born, you eventually learn how to walk. When you get born again you learn how to walk. You walk by faith. It's a learning process. We all need to learn it. We learn it by getting ourselves connected with God's word, and as we do He teaches us more how to walk effectively.

There are a lot of Bible verses that describe this process that we find ourselves in. I like this one. Again it takes the illustration of walking or a path. It says – *Trust in the Lord with all of your heart and lean not on your own understanding*. In other words walk by faith and not by sight, is what he's saying in that verse. Walk by faith, not by sight. Not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him and He will make your paths straight. He'll make your walking easier. I want my walking to be easier.

We live in a complicated world. There are all kinds of challenges that we face every day. I empathize. I can't even understand some of the pain that some of you experience. I hear the stories of what's going on in your life. It's really hard. I don't want to say, "Oh I understand," because I don't. I don't know how to live in your world. But I do know this: God understands. God loves you. God wants to comfort you, empower you, strengthen you, whether you've made mistakes in the past or you're experiencing some kind of a tragedy or you're under a lot of pressure or stress as we're talking about in this whole passage. God has answers and He wants to provide them for us. Part of that means we need to learn how to walk differently. Walk by faith and not by sight.

Would you stand with me and let's pray together.

[PRAYER] Lord, you have this ability to pinpoint specific areas in our lives that need to be turned over to you. So I pray that you would not only point out those things, but give us the motivations that we need to move in a direction that you want us to move. Teach us what that means through your word and just guide us. Lord, I do pray that you would bring comfort in the lives of people today and conviction where that's necessary, direction and guidance. I just thank you for a church, a fellowship where we can get together, and connect with each other, and care and share our particular challenges, and find encouragement from each other. I just thank you for that privilege to be connected to others. Thank you for what you're doing, Lord. We ask that you would continue to do that deeper work in our lives. Teach us what it means to walk by faith and not by sight. In Jesus' name, amen.

As we sing, let the Lord speak to your life and let Him do something in your life. If you'd like prayer, feel free to come up while we pray and we'll be happy to pray for you. But it's a really a time of reflection for you. Let the Lord speak to you during these moments and tell you what He wants you to do this week and how He wants to be committed to Him. We're available to pray for you if you'd like to come up as well. Let's sing together.