

# Wrestling With God

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[ 0 : 00 ] So open your Bibles to Mark chapter 14. So in the sermon schedule, I put Mark chapter 14, 32 to 65, and decided that's nuts.

! I can't cover that. So I'm going to cut it back a little bit shorter. And we're actually only going to focus on part of what I'm going to read today, because I really want to dig deep into what was going on at the Garden of Gethsemane.

Because it truly is the beginning of the end. It's Jesus recognizing that what He had been sent to do, what He had talked about with the disciples that was going to happen, now He knew it.

And we're going to talk about that and talk about His conversation with the Lord and what that means for us. So Mark 14, we're going to read verses 32 to 52.

They came to a place named Gethsemane, and He said to His disciples, sit here until I have prayed. And He took with Him Peter and James and John and began to be very distressed and troubled.

[ 1 : 17 ] And He said to them, my soul is deeply grieved to the point of death. Remain here and keep watch. And He went a little beyond them and fell to the ground and began to pray that if it were possible, the hour might pass Him by.

And He was saying, Abba, Father, that's Daddy. It's the most intimate term that's used between a Hebrew child and their father. Abba, Father, all things are possible for You.

Remove this cup from Me. Get not what I will, but what You will. And He came and found them sleeping and said to Peter, Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch for just an hour?

Keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation. The Spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Again, He went away and prayed, again saying the same words.

And again, He came and found them sleeping, for their eyes were very heavy, and they didn't know what to answer Him. And He came the third time and said to them, are you still sleeping and resting?

[ 2 : 21 ] It is enough. The hour has come. Behold, the Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners. Get up. Let us be going. Behold, the one who betrays Me is at hand.

Verse 43, immediately while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came up accompanied by a crowd with swords and clubs who were from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders. Now, He who was betraying Him, that was Judas, had given them a signal saying, whomever I kiss, He is the one.

Seize Him and lead Him away under guard. After coming, Judas immediately went to Him saying, Rabbi, and kissed Him. They laid hands on Him and seized Him. But one of those who stood by drew His sword and struck the slave of the high priest and cut off His ear.

And Jesus said to them, have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me as you would against a robber? Every day I was with you in this temple teaching and you do not seize Me.

But this has taken place to fulfill the Scriptures. And they all left Him and fled. A young man was following Him, wearing nothing but linen sheet over His naked body, and they seized Him.

[ 3 : 33 ] But He, the young man, pulled free of the linen sheet and escaped naked. Just a real quick note on that because I promised it several months ago, that Bible scholars believe that that is Mark's signature on the book of Mark.

Because it's such a kind of silly little anecdote in the midst of this very somber scene. So you've got this guy who was wrapped in a sheet because he must have been aroused and he's naked.

And in the midst of all of the hullabaloo and the chaos, somebody grabbed the sheet to catch him and off he went. Sheet is in the guy's hands and there goes Mark, the streak.

Now you've got to feel bad for poor Mark. Because that's the same Mark that went on the first missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas wasn't strong enough to go the distance and went home.

And later, Paul was opposed to him going on the second missionary journey to such a degree that Barnabas and Paul got into a fight. A literal, not fist fight, but a literal fight to such a degree that these two men, men who had been master and disciple, Barnabas to Saul, who became Paul, and then equals.

[ 5 : 00 ] And then later we saw that people looked to Paul instead of Barnabas. Those good friends parted company because of John Mark. Now what's cool is where the story ends is that John Mark is later referred to by Paul, bring Mark along with you because he's a valuable man.

I love him. So Mark realized eventually that Barnabas was right. That could be the story of a lot of our lives, couldn't it? We show up to the most important event of our lives, naked, wrapped in a sheet.

Then we run away in fear. Then we're not strong enough for what God calls us to do. But God continues to work. Keep that in mind. Remember that as we talk about what goes on here because the Garden of Gethsemane in part is a tale of failure.

So we're going to look at this from three perspectives. We're going to look at it from Jesus' perspective. We're going to look at the garden from the disciples' perspective, particularly Peter, James, and John. And then we're going to look at it from our perspective.

What does this mean for us? What does this mean for us? Now you've heard me say multiple times over the last eight months that Jesus didn't have a cheat code, meaning the fact that He was fully God did not mean that He had some... He had an easier route to the cross, that the temptations that He faced as a human man were somehow eliminated, that He had an antidote because He was God.

[ 6 : 37 ] Now what we've talked about is that Jesus, it talks about this in Philippians 2, Jesus set aside His Godhood, the rights that were His as a Son of God. He didn't cease to be God.

He just didn't use His assets, if you will. But Jesus chose to go through life as a man. He experienced life as each one of us does.

He needed the same tools to face the challenges of life that we use, that we should use. We need to be in the Word of God. We need to be in prayer. We need to be in communion with God. We need to be in communion with each other. So Jesus didn't have a cheat code. And what proves it is the Garden of Gethsemane. Because if He had a cheat code, why would He be afraid? He could just turn it off. I read recently in a mostly good book about what it means to have a relationship with each other, that joy is centered in our relationships with one another.

[ 7 : 42 ] And one of the things that this author said that I absolutely categorically disagree with was that there was never a break in fellowship between Jesus and the Father.

That is not true. That is absolutely false. The worst part of the cross, and Jesus knew it was coming, was that separation.

It said in the Psalms, quoting Jesus. I don't think Jesus was quoting David. I think David was quoting Jesus. Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me? In the Garden of Gethsemane, we see the reality of what is coming crashing in on Jesus Himself. He knows what's coming.

This is the beginning of the end. Let's look at what He was going through. So you remember Jesus instituted the Lord's Supper. He told them one of them was going to betray Him.

[ 8 : 42 ] Judas took off, and they went over to the Garden of Gethsemane. It was a short walk away. And of course, Peter said, not me. I'm not going to betray you. Got to say it.

He was a knucklehead. Peter denied it. So they came to a place called Gethsemane that Judas knew was a favorite place for Jesus to go. One of the things, just as a side note, it is good to have a place or several places where you meet God.

I'll give you an example. For years, I worked at a camp outside of Colorado Springs, Camp Elam. I mean, I started going there when I was 15 years old. And I discovered this spot. There was a bench outside of our pool shelter.

There was a fence around the swimming pool. And outside of this fence, there was a bench that faced due east. The whole camp was behind me to the west. And so I could sit out there during my quiet time and watch the sunrise.

Karen and I served at camp for probably 25 years in different capacities. I can guarantee you that at some point over those 25 years, I met God on that bench watching the sunrise.

[ 9 : 57 ] Very significant moments in my life happened at that bench. God revealed himself in new ways to me. I will never forget.

Sitting there reading Job 26. Job 26 talks about the thunder and the lightning and their power and how they cause fear in us.

And yet they're about the whisper of God's ways. And sitting there, communing with God, he spoke to me about how he whispers in my life.

Jesus had the Garden of Gethsemane. That was his special place to meet with God. There's something about the way our bodies are wired that when we go to a place that is familiar, that is comforting, it allows us to rest and to focus on what we should be focused on.

And for Jesus, that was the Garden of Gethsemane. I would encourage you to find places like that. Now, this time of year, you probably don't want to do it outside. But some of you are tough.

[ 11 : 05 ] But find places where you can go and where it's just you and the Lord meeting. So for Jesus, that was the Garden of Gethsemane. So he had the disciples. We know it was more than the twelve because Mark was there.

And we know it wasn't all of the twelve because Judas had already left. So it's a group of people who had committed to following Jesus. That's what we know for sure. It was the people who had been with him in the upper room.

And then he took Peter, James, and John, his best friends. His closest associates that he had been with since the beginning of his ministry said, you guys come with me.

And he took them separately. There's an important lesson there. If Jesus needed community, if Jesus needed friends, brothers and sisters, we need friends.

If you're facing your trials alone, you're foolish. Truly, you're foolish. I've met people who said, I'm just going to power through.

[ 12 : 10 ] I got this. No, you don't. We need to be surrounded by people who love us, who have our back that we can trust.

Or, hopefully we'll be like that. Because as we'll find out, Peter, James, and John didn't quite fit that bill. But we need people that we trust.

I've been reading a book called Why Brains Need Friends. The benefit to us of having people that we can rely on just physically close.

even though Peter, James, and John fell asleep, the fact that they were nearby eased Jesus' worry. He wasn't alone. You need friends like that.

You've got to find people like that. You have to be that friend at the same time. If you don't know somebody that you can call when you're at your worst, you need to find them.

[ 13 : 11 ] You need to pray that God will introduce you to those two or three friends that are that close to you. You are Peter, James, and John. So then in front of them, he began to be very distressed and troubled.

English just doesn't do the words justice. He was terrified. As I studied this this week, it dawned on me, I have never experienced anything close to this.

The closest I've been is probably watching Kara getting ready to deliver our first child. But I've never experienced it personally. That sense of impending doom that you know what's coming is going to be horrible.

Jesus was completely gripped with terror. I want you to stop and think about the implications of what I'm saying. Jesus, the Son of God, the one who had been prophesied all the way back to Genesis 3, was terrified.

He needed His friends. He was facing the worst imaginable death that humanity has ever developed and He was anticipating the first time in eternity.

[ 14 : 26 ] Think about that. The first time in eternity separation from His Father and rejection. Jesus was terrified. How terrified was He?

My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death. Can you imagine how His heart was pounding to say, I think I'm going to die?

Have you ever had that feeling where your heart is pounding? Where you can't catch your breath? That's what Jesus was experiencing in that moment. And He told His friends, He was vulnerable with His friends, I am afraid to death.

Remain here and keep watch. Keep watch. What do you mean by that? I think the idea, quite simply, is to watch over me.

Isn't that part of what friends do? We just watch over each other. We keep an eye so that we know when to step in and offer help.

[15:39] A glass of water. A hug. Lay hands and pray for somebody. Whatever the case may be. He was telling them, watch. You three are here to guard me.

And He went a little beyond them and fell to the ground. Again, this is the extreme of emotion. His legs failed Him. I imagine His heart pounding.

He's hyperventilating. He fell to His knees, fell to His face. He's terrified. It says in one of the other Gospels that as Jesus was praying, He was sweating blood.

There is a condition that happens only in the most extreme degrees of stress in some people where the capillaries around your sweat glands actually rupture and blood seeps in with the sweat and comes out of your pores.

It's only in the most extreme circumstances of stress. What I'm trying to convey to you is Jesus was at the end of His rope. He was terrified.

[16:49] He was under stress that we can't even imagine. My brother was in combat in Iraq. And he tells a story of being surrounded by enemy fire and the only way that they could get out of it was for he and his commanding officer to crawl under their Humvee and then they called an artillery barrage on their position.

And he said their fear shifted from being shot by bullets to being crushed by the Humvee because as the rounds detonated on the ground the Humvee lifted into the air and kept crashing down next to them.

That's the only thing I can think of that would equate with what Jesus was experiencing. That level of fear. That level of terror. And he was saying Daddy, Father all things are possible for you.

Remove this cup from me. Remove this cup. In the midst of his terror he turns to his father who loves him.

Please let me be released from this. You're God. Surely there's another way. Just open the door. Whatever it is I'll do it.

[18:06] Just don't make me go to the cross. But the most important words I would say the most important words in the Bible for each of us.

Not what I will but what you will. Not my will be done but yours. And even in the midst of this terror Jesus submitted himself to the Lord.

He said I will obey you. Where you lead I will follow. And what I want you to remember as we look at this and we look at it from Jesus' perspective is two words.

And I want you to drill them into your head. And repeat them to yourself over and over and over again. For me. For me.

For me. For me. For me. Jesus endured this for you and for me.

[19:13] This was the beginning of the end and it's going to get worse but this is the beginning of the end and he did it for you. That's the level of God's love for you.

Romans Romans 5 says God demonstrates his own love for us in this while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. You wonder if Jesus loves you?

Christ died for you. He died for you. And he went through this. There was no cheat code. He literally went through the valley of the shadow of death to rescue you and bring you into life.

This was done for you. And what did Jesus do that we need to learn from?

He maintained a vertical relationship with his father. Where did he turn? To God. We need to be people who pray in the worst of times. And he turned to his friends.

[20:21] We need to have those friends because we're going to face our own Garden of Gethsemane. Some of you already have. Some of you are in it. But Jesus went through this for us as a stepping stone to the cross.

But he also went through it so that we know how do we go through those times because they happen. Psalm 23 I already alluded to it.

Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death you are with me. we need to learn to follow Jesus' example when we face our own Garden of Gethsemane. So let's turn and talk about his friends.

Think about where they are. So we've developed a timeline over multiple weeks so I'm not going to go into depth. But we know that it's Wednesday night of Passion Week they saw Jesus do the triumphal entry sort of claim to be king but he was humble which is confusing.

We talked about the ongoing confusion that the disciples were enduring because they couldn't figure out are you the king are you the servant are you both what is going on I don't understand.

[ 21 : 35 ] And that's just kind of percolating and then they see him just battling you know swords are out metaphorically speaking and he's doing battle with the Pharisees and the Sadducees and the leaders and he's disarming them all.

He owns the day. He continues to teach them. He shows them where the Pharisees are wrong. He cleanses the temple. He commends the widow.

But then they go into the garden and I think this is where the confusion ends. They see their leader a man who was strong a man who stood up to the strongest opposition with his shoulders squared his eyes resolute in the direction he was going that's a leader they could follow and now all of a sudden they're seeing a man who is crushed under the burden of abject terror.

Leaders and followers have a relationship. The followers reflect the leaders. That's part of the explanation of the terror that the disciples felt was they were mirroring what they saw in Jesus. Now it came crashing home to them just as it was crashing home to Jesus. He's going to die. Our leader is going to die. What does that mean for us?

[ 23 : 03 ] And so they take on his terror they take on his fear and I think it's also laced with fear for their own lives. What's next for me? If Jesus dies I just left my career I left what I had Matthew left his job as a tax collector Simon the zealot is now hanging out with a tax collector so he can't go back to his cronies because he sold out Peter, James, and John and Andrew and Philip are fishermen they've left that career we're marked men people know that we've been with Jesus what's going on and in the extreme of their fear they lose sight of what Jesus asked them to do and they fall asleep they're overwhelmed it's been a busy week they've been taking on all sorts of new information for the last several weeks remember they walked from the Mount of Transfiguration all the way down to Jerusalem because

Jesus was teaching them remember we talked about that so they're assimilating all this information they're getting a new paradigm in their heads about what it means that Jesus is the king and the suffering servant and trying to wrap their heads around that they're understanding the implications and then they see Jesus fall on his face blood coming down his face and they fall asleep because they're just overwhelmed they're overwhelmed by what they're seeing so Jesus comes to them verse 37 he came and found them sleeping and said to Peter two of the accounts address Peter in particular and John this comment is given to all the disciples but I think it's very significant that here it's specifically to Peter and he came and found them sleeping and Simon are you asleep seriously dude all I did was ask you to watch are you asleep could you not keep watch for one hour it's a rhetorical question the answer is no keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak isn't interesting even in this horrible circumstance Jesus is extending grace he didn't kick Peter to the curb get out of here go sit with the other guys you're out I can't look at you right now he didn't do that he said Peter you've got to keep watching and praying you you're going to betray me you're going to deny me you need to pay attention you need to be on the alert keep watching and praying that you may not come into temptation the spirit is willing you may have that desire you just said that was your desire but the flesh is weak and when you're faced with fear panic kicks in you need to pray that you're ready I'm going tell you kind of a funny story because I can relate to Peter here I can't relate to Jesus in the extreme of his sorrow and fear but I can relate to the spirit being willing and the flesh being weak so

I was raised as a young man that part of my role as a man is to be a protector my responsibility is to stand between those I love and danger and if someone said John would you do that absolutely I will throw myself in front of the bullet so in 1998 I went on my first ever mission trip and there was a day that I went for a walk by myself and I went up this hill and I came around a bend on the trail and there was a chain link fence and inside the chain link fence there was a little monkey about this tall in a cage oh that's cool I like monkeys in cages behind fences that's kind of fun so I went back and got back to the rest of the group and I saw this monkey so fast forward a couple of days and we're getting ready to leave that particular location to go to another place where we're going to do some some ministry and two of the women that were on the team with me said we want to see the monkey before we go all right let's go so we head up the trail now what

I discovered several discoveries but what I discovered was that the trail forked and when I went up the first time I didn't know it forked and so I took the fork that took me outside the fence well this time I took the fork that took me inside the fence so we walk in I walk into this fenced area and there's a monkey outside the cage he's only this tall and my friends are behind me and this monkey goes oh forget about taking the bullet I ran over Elizabeth pushed Pam against the fence and shot down that trail like my tail was on fire the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak and what Jesus was saying to Peter you need to control that impulse that impulse to run that impulse to give up you need to get that under control and how do you get it under control you watch and you pray remember

[ 28 : 47 ] Jim Munson sermon a couple weeks ago out of Mark 13 the command that's repeated as Jesus is foretelling what the future holds for us as a church is be on the alert be on the alert be on the alert be on the alert he says it four times it's the same command we need to watch and pray and that's what Jesus is telling Peter you've got to watch and pray my brother you've got to steal yourself for when the time of crisis comes you're ready and we know from the story Peter failed but he repented as well and like like pastor Tim said a few weeks ago Peter was not disqualified because he repented but from the disciples perspective they were sad they were overwhelmed it was more than they could handle and when their master most needed them they weren't available they were asleep because Jesus went and prayed came back had this dialogue with them he left again came back again they're still asleep and he just left them to sleep and they came the third time verse 41 and said to them are you still sleeping and resting it's enough the hour has come behold the son of man is being betrayed into the hands of sinners get up let us be going behold the one who betrays me is at hand so let's talk about so with

Jesus we talked about him as our example of how we handle when we're in the garden of Gethsemane looking at the disciples and looking at what Jesus was going through from their perspective what we need!

to address is what are we like when our friend is in their garden of Gethsemane are we there are we available are we taking initiative to stand in the gap and love them well or do we tell them this is from James be warm and be filled and do nothing that's not enough oftentimes when we pray for somebody our prayers actually end up God says great prayer go be the fulfillment of it if we're praying for somebody's financial needs God says write them a check or if we're praying for somebody to be provided for food take them a meal or if we're praying for somebody to have peace go in my name Jesus says and stand with them so they can feel the peace radiating off of you like heat from a hot oven are we that kind of a friend or do we sleep it's easy to sleep

I can tell you from my years in ministry and having been on the receiving end of help more than once there's a shelf life to how much there's a shelf life to the attention span put it that way of a body of people so those who have chronic illness sadly often experience a case where the diagnosis comes and there's a surge of help people are pouring meals and financial help and doing all this good things good things but after two three four weeks we just other things become more urgent our attention shifts to other things and we're not there as much we forget that for our friend they're still in the garden of Gethsemane but for us life has moved on don't fall asleep continue to touch Jesus said stay awake watch we need to touch base with those we need to be looking around and thinking look at this prayer sheet that's in the bulletin and don't be limited to that but we need to be checking in with each other we need to be good friends who are thinking what do you need I'm going to give you one other practical thing and then we're going to look at the Garden of Gethsemane from our perspective I learned a long time ago that when you go to somebody in need and say what do you need you don't get a straight answer very very rarely and I've come to the conclusion there's two reasons one they don't want to be a burden which honestly I find annoying be a burden your opportunity is going to come where somebody else is a burden so you're not a burden we love you let us love you well but the first answer is I'm good I don't need any help and they're lying or they don't know people are going through their garden of Gethsemane they've never been there before Jesus had not been to this extreme before if they said to him what do you need I just need you to be near me oftentimes when we ask people what do you need they don't know so here's the solution don't ask tell what use your imagination

[ 34 : 01 ] God gave us these wonderful brains that allow us to think do if I was in their situation what would I need have I been through something that's similar maybe or the spirit may speak to and say actually you did have a similar circumstance enter into that think about what did people do

that really blessed you do that thing and then go to this is the tell part don't say how can I help you say you know I went through this thing and it was really helpful when someone came over and did my laundry can I do your laundry and they'll say that's kind of weird but I do need my laundry done okay thank you it's exercising our creativity make it a prayer exercise God how can I help this person and then offer something you'll get one of three responses the first one is that's a great idea when can

I get you on the calendar the other one will be no but the no but is I really don't need that but you know now they talk about I could use this would you be willing to do that and you say yes I'll be glad to do that for you whatever that is or they genuinely don't have a need and say you know what I love you I because I love you and I have some resources that I want to bless you with and they say no really we're good okay and accept it and maybe pray with them so think about that be a good friend don't be like the guys who fell asleep now they fell asleep understandably but they fell asleep now let's look at the garden from the perspective of Jesus I have mentioned multiple times over the months since I started here at Tri-State the idea of wrestling with

God this the garden of Gethsemane is one of the two best examples of what it means to wrestle with God one is Jacob where we get the phrase because Jesus wrestled with God and then this interaction between Jesus and the Father but I got to thinking about it this week Abraham wrestled with God where did you do that the angel of the Lord came and said I am going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah and Abraham said well but my nephew is down there I love my nephew and Abraham negotiated with God and got the means for Lot to be rescued from the city of Sodom and Gomorrah he wrestled with God Moses wrestled with God I love the end of Exodus 33 because Moses says God these are not my people they are your people and they are on my last nerve and if you're not going to go with me all the way to the end

I'm out I don't want anything to do with this show me your glory and God says okay you can't see me completely unveiled because you'll be completely undone but you can see my backside and God I love this in Exodus 33 God allowed his goodness all of his goodness to be displayed before Moses you kind of need that when you're wandering through the wilderness with an entire mob of people a giant mob of people millions of people who are just dumb and wayward and do their own thing so Moses wrestled with God Joshua wrestled with God this is an interesting one they conquered Jericho they went to Ai and got their butts kicked by this little town of nobodies twice and Joshua dramatically tears his robes and throws himself before

God and says what are we going to do if word gets out that we lost to Ai we're hopeless he's wrestling with God what's going on here and God says get up brush yourself off shut up and listen you consulted me when you went to Jericho you did not talk to me before you attacked Ai you assumed and you assumed wrong because there's sin in the camp and we need to deal with that so brush yourself off quit your complaining and let's solve the problem sometimes wrestling doesn't sometimes it's harsh David wrestled with God read the Psalms of lament he was very vocal hezekiah gets a diagnosis you're going to die he rolls over in his bed God I don't want to die and he gets 15 more years Jeremiah over and over and over again read through Jeremiah and he complains and he's unhappy and God why do you allow the wicked to prosper that was one of [ 39 : 08 ] David's favorites too why do you allow these things and God answered him God protected him God worked through Jeremiah and now here in the garden of Gethsemane Jesus in the midst of his terror in the midst of his fear says daddy please let me out of this release me from this but not my will but yours be done I have heard it said that in life we are either in crisis we are either emerging from a crisis we are in the calm before the storm which is the next crisis or we are in the middle of one that is where we all are crisis is part of life we live in a broken world we are finite beings life is hard in the Hopkins household we always said life is hard by a helmet you have got to be ready you have got to be ready for crisis in your life and the lives of people around you and what

I want to tell you is that you need to be willing to wrestle with God one of the great mistakes that we make in the contemporary church is we are not very honest with God we are not very direct we pray nice Sunday school prayers now I lay me down to sleep I don't know the whole thing I pray Lord my soul to keep that's sweet kind of a platitude does that work when you are facing terror like Jesus was first time ever I ever prayed we used to play baseball in the cul-de-sac of our street and as we grew our hits got further and further I was not a Christian yet and I swung and I watched the baseball arc towards a picture window of the house across the street and I fell to my I'm not

exaggerating I fell to my knees and said oh God because I thought I was going to die our neighbors and my parents were going to kill me and that ball hit the ledge below the window and bounced back into the yard no harm done that's the type of prayer that we need to be praying when we're in the extreme of danger and crisis oh

God sometimes that's all we can pray that's what Paul talked about in Romans 8 but we need to wrestle with God we need to ask God and have the boldness to say why why do I have to go through this why these circumstances why is this so hard why does my child have to go through this or my wife or my husband why why are you allowing your people to be slaughtered in Nigeria why is nobody standing up for them why we come before God he can handle it and ask the hard questions bring them before him lay them open Corrie Tenboom was a woman who survived the Nazi concentration camps she and her family were put there because they rescued!

protected Jews and she tells a story she says little Dutch woman standing before God saying God your word says and you're not doing it what are you doing that's wrestling with God our response needs to be as we listen to God as we stand in his presence as we wrestle with him not my will but yours be done but in the process of wrestling with him of going toe to toe I will not let go until you bless me you will be blessed may not be the way you want it but you'll be blessed Jacob was wounded he walked with a limp for the rest of his life after that encounter with God but he was also blessed because Jacob great great great great grandson was Jesus God blesses us but we need to wrestle with

God because in the wrestling as we face God with the extremes of difficulty of our lives he reveals himself he opens his word to us his spirit speaks to us we're vulnerable and if we're open he addresses us at our deepest need and he says to us you can trust me and our response needs to be not my will but yours be done let's pray together God thank you that we can trust you and how do we know that we can trust you because we can look to the cross you who freely gave us your son will also with him freely give us all things or nothing can separate us from your love absolutely nothing we're safe and secure we're held in your hands

[ 44 : 28 ] God help us to rest in that help us to be people who are not afraid to be vulnerable when we're afraid who turn to you who are willing to turn to our friends who will wrestle with you and Lord let us be good friends who keep watch who pray for each other who step into our very tangible needs God let that be the proof of who we are that level of love we pray in Jesus name amen