

4x8 | No Obligation

Aaron Brockett | Romans 8:11-17

Good morning. How are we doing everybody? Good to see you. Hey, I want to welcome all of our guests and first-time visitors across all of our campuses.

We are one church gathering in one location. So, I want to say hello to our North campus, Downtown, online, West and those of you here at Northwest. It's really, really good to see you.

Our mission as a church is to remove unnecessary barriers that keep people from Jesus. And the reason why we say that so often is because mission and vision have a tendency to leak, we have a tendency to forget why we exist. So we say it a lot.

And the reason we say it the way we say it is because Jesus is the only One who can change anyone, and we want to get as many people to Jesus and let him do what only he can.

Then from that point forward really help you to grow. And the key word there is *help* because nobody can do your growth for you, but we can show you the way and give you some tools and cheer you on.

Largely, that's the heart behind Growth Track. It's a tool to help you take your next step in growth. It's not a perfect tool, it's just a tool. And there are four weeks of Growth Track that happen right after the service at all of our campuses. You do not have to take them in any particular order. We'd love to see you there.

Really, we're just trying to help you take your next step, because here's the point of our growth, or another word for that is discipleship, is to then help other people get to Jesus as well. That's the whole heart behind all of that. So, I'd encourage you to check it out.

If you have a Bible or a device with a Bible on it, go ahead and turn to Romans 8. We're going to pick this up in verse 5. If you missed it last week, we started a four-part series of messages on one of my favorite chapters in one of my favorite books of the Bible, Romans, chapter 8.

And last week I just encouraged our whole church family to be reading Romans 5 through 8 everyday during the course of this series. And it's been really cool, because I've had a number of you reach out to me—whether you texted me or DM'd me on social media or whatever.

Just a bunch of you have been saying, "Hey, I've been reading Romans 5 through 8." My favorite one is that a guy sent me a link to an audio file of Johnny Cash reading Romans 8, which is just awesome in all kinds of ways. But a number of you said, "Hey, this is the first time I've ever read Romans 5 through 8." Or, "This is the first time in a long time that I've read it."

Here's the word that I've just been hearing over and over and over again. It's so *clear*. What Paul is writing here is really deep stuff, it's really substantial, but it's clear at the same time, in the sense that you read it and you are able to kind of get your head around it.

I said this last week, Romans is just Paul at his best. He's gotten a solid 10 hours of sleep, he's got his coffee in him, and he's in a good mood. He's really at his best and he communicates some things that are so clear and so life changing.

And Romans, chapter 8 is kind of the pinnacle of that. I want you to just remember this—tuck this into your back pocket—he begins Romans 8 with “Therefore there is no condemnation for those who are in Jesus...” Here's how he ends it. He says, “There is no separation from the love of God that is revealed in Jesus.”

So he starts with there is no condemnation and he ends with there is no separation—man, that's just good. This is just Paul at his absolute best. Thank you to the three people who got that [clap] started.

Here's where I want to go today as we look at verse 5. Last week we looked at the first four verses and we said that there are these two things that are at war inside of each one of us—whether you realize it, whether you recognize it—that are going on or whether you even call it by these names.

I realize that not everybody here would say that he or she is a Christ follower. Maybe you are in different places in your spiritual journey. And yet I think that all of us would agree, to some degree, that there is a bit of a battle going on inside of each one of us. It's this battle over the version of who we are.

Have you ever noticed that there are different versions of who you are? Not only just in different seasons of life, or maybe you were at one time immature and now your growing in maturity. But even in the course of the same day.

There are times when I think to myself, maybe I have a conversation with someone or I walk out of a meeting or whatever and I go, “Man, that wasn't the best version of me.” I just didn't show up with my best. I had an attitude. I said some things like I don't know why I said it, but I said it. Or I thought that, and I don't know why I thought it.

I think all of us are kind of tracking with that. We all kind of know what it's like. It's more than a bad day. This is just like the worst presentation of who I am.

Well, Paul gives names to this. He said that it's the power of sin that is at work in our lives and the prompting of the Spirit who is in our lives. So the worst version of me is the one that continues to give in to the power of sin. The best version of me is the one that begins to listen to and is obedient to the prompting of the Spirit.

And at first, maybe that voice of the Spirit doesn't sound all that appealing to you. Maybe it seems a little bit counter intuitive. But after a while you begin—the more you listen to the Spirit, the more you begin to develop an ear for his voice. And you begin to trust that actually what he tells you and what he prompts you to do really can be trusted, it's really for your good.

So with that thought, Paul continues on from that in verse 5. He says, “Those who are,” and he uses this really strong word, he says, “Those who are **dominated** by the sinful nature think

about sinful things, but those who are,” and this is another pretty strong word, “...those who are **controlled** by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit.

“So **letting your sinful nature** control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace. For the sinful nature is always hostile to God. It never did obey God’s laws, and it never will. That’s why those who are still under the control of their sinful nature can never please God. But you,” if you’ve placed your trust in Jesus and you stepped across that line of faith, even with just the faith of a mustard seed, “...you are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you.”

Now, I want to pick this up in verse 11 because this is where the sermon is going to go today. This is so mind-blowing. He says, “The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead...” and I don’t know about you, but I’ve never necessarily connected those things for so much of my Christ following life.

He’s basically said that what gave Jesus the power to walk out of the grave was the Spirit of God. Now check this out. He goes that same, exact Spirit “**lives in you.**” That’s incredible.

And I know that not all of you are convinced of that yet, but turn to your neighbor and go, “Whoa,” right? Can you give it a good Joey Lawrence? “Whoa.” Most of you have no idea what I’m talking about. Google it.

That’s incredible. He says that the same Spirit that brought Jesus back from the dead, lives in you right now, “And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit,” he says it again, “**living within you.**” He really wants you to know that, the Spirit of God is living in you.

We underestimate the Holy Spirit all of the time. And I don’t know, maybe many of you didn’t grow up with a church background at all. Some of you did have a church background, and I don’t know what your church tradition or experience is, especially in things that relate to the Holy Spirit, what they modeled for you in that, what they taught you in that.

I grew up in a church tradition that was really, really solid but we didn’t really emphasize the Holy Spirit that much. And I know a number of you grew up in that very similar church tradition as well. We just didn’t quite fully know what to do with him.

In fact, our understanding of the Trinity was God the Father, God the Son, and the Holy Bible. And it was like we really didn’t know what to do with the Holy Spirit. We just sort of inched him right off of the couch. And yet he says the Holy Spirit is really powerful.

Now please understand this. One of the mistakes we can make as Christ followers—this is going to sound kind of strange to say, but I’m going to go ahead and say it—we can make too much of the Holy Spirit in the sense that the Holy Spirit is always pointing to Jesus and Jesus is always pointing to the Holy Spirit. We have to understand that dynamic.

But at the same time, we underestimate the power of the Holy Spirit. And for so long... I understood God the Father. I could get my head around that, God the Son, get my head around

that. The Holy Spirit I'm just like, "Well..." and I'm kind of ashamed to admit this, but I just kind of thought that the Holy Spirit was sort of the soft-spoken one of the Trinity.

He's sort of sitting in the back seat of my life going, "Hey, Aaron. Could you please not say that four letter word—but if you want to that's okay. I mean, it's fine." Or, "Hey, Aaron. Could you read your Bible a little bit more—but if you're busy, that's okay too." It's just like the Holy Spirit was kind of weak and just sort of like offering suggestions.

And here Paul says: No, no, no—we've underestimated the power of the Holy Spirit. He's powerful! He's there and he's living within you. And I think that for so many of us, the power of the Holy Spirit is largely untapped in our lives, but it's there. And all that you've got to do is tap into him.

When I was in college, I drove a Honda Civic that every now and then, when I would get in and turn the key nothing would happen. No lights—the engine wouldn't even begin to turn over. It was just dead.

I remember the first time that it happened I didn't know what was going on, but we got under the hood and we ended up finding—I don't even know what it's called, but there was this wire that was disconnected and basically it was as simple as taking the wire and reconnecting it. Like literally just plugging it in and then the car would come to life and it would turn over.

Here's what I opted to do. I opted not to fix it. I opted to just leave it loose. And, I kid you not, I would utilize this if I wanted to give other people the impression that I was a pretty good mechanic. I'm not even lying about this. I wish I was, but I'm not.

So, I would go on a date and before I would go up to the door to pick up the girl I would pop the hood real quick, I would unplug the car, shut the hood, go get her, come back, put the key in, turn it and nothing would happen. And she would kind of give me this concerned look. And I would literally do this, I would go, "Huh, well let me go take a look."

This is your pastor, alright? And actually not much has changed.

I would pop the hood. And the key to this, fellas, is you don't fix it too fast because she'll pick up on it. So you kind of rattle around in there, kind of shake the car a little bit and then you go, "Hey, try it now. Nothing? Alright, let me check the flex capacitor."

Then I finally plug it in after a few minutes, get some grease on my arms, come back and then she would be like, "Wow, you really know what you are doing." And I'm like, "Well, you know. I do what I can."

And there have been so many times in my life when I turn the key and nothing happens. Like, I'm trying to follow Jesus and nothing happens. I'm trying to work on my marriage, nothing happens. I'm trying to lean into that relationship and nothing happens.

And it's like all along the power of the Holy Spirit is there and Paul is just trying to remind us, because I think we need lots of reminding, he's right there and all we've got to do is plug in.

Over the last couple of weeks I've talked about what it requires of us to come to Jesus. And it's as simple and complex as a step of faith, it's the faith of a mustard seed—all of that stuff that I've talked about. And once you get to Jesus, then...

The Holy Spirit's role in all of this is that the Holy Spirit is prompting you, the Holy Spirit is compelling you, he draws you, he convicts you, he convinces you, he seals your salvation. Afterward he speaks to you, he guides you, and here Paul says that he even controls you.

I don't know about you, but when we read that passage—this is where some of us maybe pump the brakes a little bit, because that word *control* does not have a positive connotation in our society today.

More times than not, when we're talking about relationship and we say, "Well somebody is controlling me," that's a bad thing. Like, nobody should control you in a friendship, nobody should control you in a marriage, but here Paul throws this out and he says that you are either dominated by sin or you're controlled by the Spirit. If you're anything like me, you're going, "Is there a third option? Neither one of those two sound great."

And this is where we have to understand what controlled means. The idea of control is more of this idea that the Holy Spirit is living within you. Paul's already said that twice in the passage. Now the Holy Spirit is leading you, the Holy Spirit is guiding you, and the Holy Spirit wants what is best for you.

In fact, there's even this whole list of what we call the fruit of following after the Spirit found in Galatians: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. That's where the Holy Spirit is always leading you. So you can trust Him.

Several years ago my wife's father was getting his gliders license. And if you don't know what a glider is, it's a type of airplane that has no engine. And you might ask, "Well, why in the world would you ever go up in an airplane without an engine?" That's actually a very valid question.

A glider is connected to another plane by some sort of a rope or a cable, and it pulls you up in the air and then when you get, I don't know, 15 or 20,000 feet in the air it releases the rope and the glider catches thermal winds, because heat rises, and then you glide back down to earth.

And my father-in-law had his pilot's license, but he wanted to get his glider's license. So I went with him. He got it in Nevada, somewhere on the other side of Tahoe. And at the end of the day he asked if I would like to go up with his instructor for a flight.

I was like, "Thought you would never ask. That would be amazing." So we get inside this two-seater cockpit. I'm sitting in the front. The instructor is sitting directly behind me. We're covered with this glass case and we're connected to a prop plane via a cable.

So this plane pulls us up in the air, we get up so high, and then the instructor radios to me, "Hey, Aaron. You see that little lever down below?" He says, "Pull that and that will release the cable from the plane." I'm like, "Are you sure about this?"

So I pull it and then we're just gliding. And it's pretty surreal. There's no engine noise, there's nothing—just the sound of the wind. And I'm enjoying the ride until the instructor radios me again and he says, "Hey, you want to fly it? You want to give it a run?"

And I was like, "Well, that sounds incredible, but I've had no lessons whatsoever. The only experience I have is Microsoft flight simulator on the computer and you should probably know that every single time I play I crash, so this isn't looking good." And he was like, "No, no, no. I'll walk you through it. I'll guide you through it."

So, I'm looking at a whole bunch of panels. I couldn't make heads or tails of them. And he begins to explain to me what I'm looking at. He tells me just enough of what I need to know. And then there's the joy stick in front of me. So he says, "Put your hands on that." There were rudders at my feet. He says, "Put your feet on the rudders."

And then he began, step by step, telling me what I need to look at and what I need to do. And I did it. He told me to push a little bit on the right rudder and I pushed a little bit on the right rudder. He said to look at that dial, I'd look at that dial. He told me to move the joy stick, I moved the joy stick.

In a sense he was controlling my actions but not against my will. At any particular moment he could have said, "Hey, inch the joy stick right." No, "I'm gonna bank it to the left." You know? Send us into a barrel roll and we'd go screaming to our death. I could have done that. But I was like, "No, no, no." I didn't want to that. I was following his lead. I was listening to him.

Here's the thing. At one particular point in the flight it didn't matter what I did, no matter how closely I tried to follow his directions. It wasn't working out very well. And the plane started to kind of go a little catawampus and the nose was going up in the air. And every time I tried to try harder to fix it, I just made it worse.

We got to this place where we were just on the brink, I felt, of just dropping out of the sky. And all of a sudden, I feel the rudders move underneath my feet and I felt the joy stick move in my hand. And I realized he was actually connected to my controls. He was flying it from behind me.

All of a sudden, I got this image of sitting in my dad's lap when I was a little kid, "Look, I'm driving the car." But he was in control.

This is kind of the idea that the Holy Spirit wants to control you in the sense that he wants to keep you in flight. He wants to keep your marriage in the air. He wants to keep your finances in the air. He wants to keep your personal growth in the air. It's a very different way of understanding.

So with this understanding, Paul gives us the implication. And we know it's the implication because he uses this word. Look with me at verse 12. He says, "Therefore," and whenever you see that in the Bible it's always turning a corner to application. He says: I've laid down some truths for you. Now here's the application.

He says, "...dear brothers and sisters," notice the affection, "...dear brothers and sisters **you have no obligation to do what your sinful nature urges you to do.**"

And it's sort of an unusual way to phrase that. He uses the word obligation here and he says in a sense that if you're not listening to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, you're still obligated to your sin nature. And that word *obligation* carries with it this idea of being in debt to someone. So when you are in debt to someone, there is an obligation that comes with it.

A few weeks ago I filed my taxes. And I was told by my tax advisor last year, "If you set it up this way, you could expect a return." But I got an email that said I wasn't getting a return. I was actually owing some money to Uncle Sam. I was having a pretty good day until that email came in.

All of a sudden, the internal plans that I had for these finances had to be redirected because of this new obligation that I just learned that I had. That's what that does. It creates obligations. So I had to adjust my life to what I owed.

That's what the cycle of sin and shame does. That's what the power of sin does in our lives. And I don't know if I've ever, personally, called it that in my own life. You probably haven't either. But it is. It's an obligation.

So how does this show up? How does the obligation to my sin nature show up in my life? Let me give you the two primary ways it shows up. Here's the first one:

When you and I try to **add** anything to Jesus.

That creates a sense of obligation. Ephesians 2 says that you are saved by grace through faith and this isn't from your effort or behavior but it's the gift of God so that no one can boast. Yet, so much of the time, my human nature causes me to end up spelling the gospel message: M O R A L I S M, moralism.

This is most often what I end up seeing in the lives of Christ followers or in so many people within the church. We can tell you what the gospel message is, but that doesn't mean that we are really living it. We can tell you what grace is, but it doesn't really mean that we necessarily believe it, because we are still living with this sense of obligation that we still have to do something.

I know because I've heard from a number of you. You'll tell me about the legalistic church background that you grew up in and how because it was so legalistic and so harsh and so mean-spirited, you walked away. And what you walked away from wasn't the gospel of grace. What you walked away from was moralism.

moralism: belief + right behavior = acceptance from God

Moralism is taking belief and adding to it right behavior (whoever defines that) and then we hope that that will equal acceptance from God. And we're always on eggshells, always hoping that we've done enough. It is a type of obligation.

And to misunderstand grace puts you and me in the dangerous position where we will actually have to assume that any obligation that we have will either keep us secure as a child of God or get us kicked out.

That is such a life-draining way to approach God, because you'll never have the settled assurance that God loves you right where you are as you are. You'll only feel as loved as your last, best moment. You'll only feel as valued as your last, good feeling or the thing that you accomplished.

And all that does is weakens, then, your dependency upon the voice of the Holy Spirit in your life, because you think it's all based upon your actions.

And Jesus has done everything sufficient to accomplish your salvation and right standing with God. What that means is that there are no more obligations. You're not obligated to operate out of a feeling of debt toward God. When you do, you strip away all of the power of the Spirit in your life, which might explain right now why—maybe some of you have come to Jesus but it doesn't really feel like anything has changed.

I like how author Tim Keller puts it. He says, "You cannot add to Christ without inevitably subtracting from Christ."

One of the things my wife and I do is we love to find farm to table restaurants, local restaurants that are not chains. Any city that we may be traveling in, we'll open up TripAdvisor, Yelp, or whatever and we'll just kind of search for one. And we'll go and find those restaurants—you know the kind where the menu is always changing, it's all based upon the ingredients that the chef can get his hands on. We just love that.

One of the things that I've noticed when we started eating at these restaurants is that there usually are not very many condiments on the table. There's not even salt and pepper. And if the waiter or the waitress were to come and present you your farm-raised, organic pork chop—here's a little tip for you. Don't ask for Heinz 57, alright? Made that mistake.

He or she would be somewhat offended, because the chef has prepared this perfectly, it should flavor itself because it's made with fresh ingredients. So you're not going to drown that bad boy out with A 1 or ketchup because by doing that you would actually be subtracting from it.

See, you can't add anything to Jesus without taking away from the perfect work of Jesus on the cross, because when you do, in essence, you're saying that his life and his death and his resurrection are insufficient, "So I need to pour my own works and my own effort and my own behavior on to it."

And he's already bought your freedom. He's already paid your debt. There is no more obligation. I said this last week. Jesus didn't go to the cross expecting you to pay him back.

Now, let me mention something that you may not clap for. The other way in which we are obligated to our sin nature is when you and I try to subtract anything from obedience. See, that's the second aspect of this.

Many of us, maybe we got the grace part. We're like, "Oh, man. Saved by grace through faith, fantastic! I don't have to bring anything to the table, no effort of my own."

Well, here's a question? Do you have to do anything? And we oftentimes end up spelling grace this way: R E L A T I V I S M, relativism.

relativism: belief + good intentions = fulfillment regardless of what I do

And relativism is another form of obligation to our sin nature where we take belief and then we add with it some good intentions and then we expect that to bring fulfillment regardless of what we do.

This is oftentimes the other end of the pendulum that can swing whenever anyone or maybe an entire society tries moralism or religion and then get burned out by it or burned by it or just get tired of it. And we're not ready to let go of God entirely, so what we can do is that we can emphasize the parts of God that we really love, you know?

It's like, "Oh, man." We rightly declare that we are saved by grace through faith alone but then, and I've been guilty of this, we ignore, we neglect, or we rebel against the Spirit of God's intervention in our lives to make us more and more like Jesus.

In other words, the Holy Spirit has got a gag around his face and his wrists are zip-tied behind his back in the closet of your heart, because he's been telling you to obey and you're like, "I don't want to do that." He's been telling you to read Romans 5 through 8, but you don't want to do that.

He's been telling you to have that hard conversation, "Well, I don't want to do that because that's really, really scary." And the power is there, but we're not tapping into it because the power gets enacted through obedience.

See, in verse 13 Paul says, "But if through the power of the Spirit," notice this, "you **put to death** the deeds of your sinful nature, you will live." There is action in that sentence.

Now, please hear me. You don't need to earn anything for your salvation, but that doesn't mean that you don't exert some sort of effort in order to grow. And that might require that you do some things that are a little bit uncomfortable, feel a little bit unnatural or maybe feel a little bit counter intuitive or unpleasant at first.

See, the gospel message isn't opposed to **effort**. The gospel message is opposed to **earning**. And there is a difference between those two things.

And this is one of the biggest issues that I think we can get confused or get stuck on. And I can speak from first hand experience and lots and lots of observation. We give our lives to Jesus and maybe things didn't initially get better, maybe things got worse, "My marriage still fell apart," the friendship still ended, and the accusations still came. "I still got fired." The lawsuits still happened. The addiction came back bigger and badder than ever.

"The dark clouds of depression still enveloped me."

"My teenager still hates me. What's going on?"

Can I just simply ask you to consider this. What is the Spirit of God prompting you to do that requires some sort of intentional decision or action and have you done it?

See, here's the thing that I think that we get hung up on. Sometimes you and I, we don't recognize how the Spirit of God is at work in our lives because we keep wanting him to change

our circumstances and he's trying to change us. And if those two things come into conflict, he'll go with changing you every time.

There are so many things that I oftentimes might pray and most of my prayers are, "God, change my circumstances. Help me get out of this situation. Solve this for me."

And God's like: Man, I'm trying to shape you. I'm trying to change you, which might mean that I leave you in the middle of those painful circumstances so that you learn to walk with me through that, so that you learn to develop some character, so that you learn to trust, so that you come out on the other side of it looking a little bit more like Jesus and growing in maturity.

I can tell you this. There are very few things in my life that are worthwhile that have just been easy. It's always the hard work. It's always the intentional effort. Man, growing spiritually—that's hard work.

I'm not saying earning salvation is hard work, because that's not your work to do. I'm saying growing spiritually, looking more like Jesus, that's hard work. Acknowledging my weaknesses and then exerting the effort to work on them—man, that's hard work. That's uncomfortable.

Marriage—I don't care how compatible you are, I don't care how good looking the two of you are, I don't care if you've got pet names for each other like Pooky Bear and Love Pots—Love Pots is kind of weird, go with it if you will, if that works for you—I don't care...

Every now and then I'll hear somebody go, "Man, they've been married for 30 years and they are so in love and they are holding hands, it's just amazing that they are so compatible." I guarantee you, you give me a long tenured marriage where they love each other—that's two people who have put in some work. That's two people who have invested in and have the hard conversations.

Man, parenting—that requires really hard work. Can I get a good Amen from some exhausted parents? That's hard, hard work. It doesn't come naturally.

Getting a reign on my finances, because they're a mess right now, and learning to be generous with them—that's really, really hard work. It requires you to make decisions that are uncomfortable.

Refusing to hide my secrets and shame—that's not easy. It's really, really hard work.

Spiritual growth always involves being gradual—I can't emphasize that word enough, it's gradual, it's gradual, it's gradual. You may not recognize it in the moment, but you look back and you see how far you've come.

It's a gradual freeing from the domination of personal sin in my life while being, simultaneously, more attentive to the leading of the Spirit in my life.

And we kill sin through intentional decisions that we make. It's never easy.

So let me just try to break this down as practically as I can get it. This is the primary point of application right here, two spiritual postures you can have. You can either: lay low **or** you can lean in.

And every single one of us listening to this right now falls into one of those two categories, maybe multiple times throughout the day. When it comes to your spiritual growth you can lay low or you can lean in.

What do I mean by that?

Have you ever been in a conversation with somebody and you can tell that he is not fully with you? That's not fun, is it? You can tell that his eyes are glassed over, he is thinking about something else. He's thinking about lunch, he's thinking about what he wants to say whenever you take a pause or take a breath and he is not fully present with you. He is just sort of conversationally lazy. He is just sort of laying back.

Have you also had those conversations where somebody is leaning in? You can tell that he is listening closely, and he is full present.

One of my favorite moments in preaching a message is just the posture of you all. There are different postures throughout the message, and I can tell if maybe I'm losing you or I can tell if you're taking notes and I can tell if you're bored—it kind of gives it away when you are lying back not listening.

But here's one of my favorite postures. When I get to that part of the message when, all of a sudden, I'm connecting to your heart and you're leaning in, my favorite posture is a bit of leaning in and maybe your mouth is a bit gaped open because your tracking with what's being said.

Can I just simply ask you today are you leaning in or are you laying low? And in what areas of your life do you need to lean in right now? What areas of your life do you need to show up and be more fully present?

What I know right now is that there are some areas of your life that God is trying to do some things in you, he's trying to address some parts of you, he doesn't just want to do a work in you, he wants to do a work through you.

And the goal of grace isn't just about me. The goal of grace is becoming the version of me that God has always intended that I become.

The goal of grace is that he restores you to the person that he always wanted you to be. Because I can tell you this right now, the purpose of your life is to make an eternal difference in the lives of others.

I think maybe part of the reason why many of us don't want to lean in is because we're afraid of being disqualified by our own mistakes. But when we are disqualified from our mistakes we fall back on God's grace and he props us up again to keep going.

Let's pray together:

Father, we come to you right now and I just ask that you would show up in the room, that you would be fully present here as we respond to what it is that you've taught us.

I pray, God, right now that we could lean into your Spirit and into your direction in our lives. We trust that you will. We trust that as we seek to obey you that you will show us and guide us and lead us in the direction that you want us to travel.

Father, I pray that you would help us just to show up and lean in right now—to be fully present. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.