A PLACE OF CHANGE · SERMON TRANSCRIPT

THE ONE NOT DIAGNOSED.

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Know My Heart

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It says Nehemiah rebuilt Jerusalem walls in 52 days, but the rebuilding didn't begin with construction. No, I want to help somebody out. I just I want to help I want to help somebody out today. I' I've always tried to reverse engineer like God, how you get me from homeless?

How you get me from those abandoned buildings? We were doing baptism and I was just talking about where the Lord had brought me from and I was just in tears and I and and I and I and I I want to explain to people how you do it because what happens is our our job is not to let the Lord just bless us. We're supposed to be disciples. We're supposed to be fishermen of men.

And so we're supposed to duplicate. So when God does something for you, it's not about bragging. It's about trying to figure out what happened so you can teach it to somebody else. Amen.

Praise God. I'm not talking to anybody. Amen. And so we're supposed to be disciples.

We're supposed to tell each other the good news. And so when you figure out ain't that good news, then you start doing it. Praise God. Come on, y'all.

I told y'all I ain't really grew up in church like that. And so, and so when I started coming and I made a commitment, my mother was watching. And when I first gave my life to the Lord, my mom was like, "You fake." And I was like, "What? I'm fake.

I'm going to church." My mom was like, "Yeah, but you didn't forgive your father for I said,"Forgive?" She said, "Yeah, didn't your Bible say forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors?" Right? And so, and so, so my mother wasn't really impressed. But as the years went on, you see my mother in church now because my mother's like, "Oh, that's that thing is working for you." Amen. And so, and so God had to show me, son, through Pastor Tia's message, God was saying, "Son, yeah, the 52." Amen.

But we don't do external construction until we do internal instruction. Construction first. Okay. I I I didn't know I didn't think he was going to get excited about that, but I'm going to say it one more time.

We don't we we don't grow outwardly until we grow inwardly. So, just do me a huge favor. Stop praying and stop asking God for stuff because God is not going to bless you with

stuff. That's not how it works.

God is going to bless you and once you are blessed then stuff is going to be attracted to you. No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no. Don't don't don't worry about your credit. Like, you don't need to get your credit straight.

You that's not what you need to focus on. You need to focus on your heart. You need to focus on what got your credit messed up in the first place. Because if I magically give you a 800 credit score, it ain't going to take you but 6 months to get it back down to 500.

No, no, no, no, no. I'm just being honest. If I if we clean you from uh uh meth and but you don't we don't change your heart, the thing that made the meth come to you, then we clean you up, then you going to go somewhere else and get meth anyway. Uh y'all not hearing what I'm saying?

And so what I learned through pastor's message is that there was four months before there was 52 days. And the four months was about God saying, Nehemiah, if you let me fix you, everything you touch, touch is going to be fixed and quick. And so I just want to tell you 52 has nothing to do with days. It has everything to do with our heart.

And so it began it began with four months of what? Prayer, fasting, grieving. Okay. All right.

All right. All right. So, I was telling the candidates before they got baptized and I broke down and I and I told them I said there was a there was a there was a season in my life where I was crying a lot and I knew something was wrong cuz I don't cry. Y'all miss what I just said?

I'm from the city. I was taught that you don't cry. So I don't cry cuz the people that I looked up to and the people that taught me, the men in my community said, "Suck it up. Fix your face.

Get through this." And so I don't cry. And I was crying. And I said, "Something's wrong. I don't cry, but I'm crying.

I'm not trying to cry, but I'm crying." And I start asking God. So So it was in my marriage. I remember, you know, Dee and I would be having these conversations and she'd be like, "You need to do this and you need to do that and you ain't this and you that and you and

then I was like, "Okay, God, what is she saying?" And God was like, "Some of that stuff is the truth." And I was grieving and I was crying and I was mourning and I didn't know why I was grieving, mourning and crying. And it felt like a it felt like when I would go to a funeral, I think the funeral is the only place culturally where you're allowed to cry.

So like you can go to a funeral. I remember going to my cousin Dman's funeral. I remember crying. I remember how it happened and what happened is like some kind of way in our community.

If I if I cried about that, that was cool. It's like you all right. That's you lost your loved one. I I get it.

And I was crying like that and didn't know why I was crying like that. And God says you're crying like that because it is a funeral. You dying. No, no, no.

a part of your philosophical beliefs, a part of your culture, a part of what you were taught is dying and you're letting that go and letting my philosophy get inside of you. So that's why you crying because there is a death and you don't necessarily want to lose that person. Are y'all not I maybe I'm by myself today. Like you don't want to be weak with your wife.

Like you don't want to be Oh, y'all not hearing what I'm saying. Like you got to go outside and people going to know like you don't want to be weak. Like if you weak, she might try to take advantage. If you weak and God says, "Son, I need you to let all that go cuz all that stuff you were taught, look what the outcomes are.

I need to start doing it my way and it's going to hurt in the beginning." Oh, y'all y'all missed that part. It prayer, fasting, grieving. Many of you will never get the stuff you want because you are afraid to grieve. You don't want to let you want what's next, but you want to hold on to what is and that person is not equipped for you to get Okay.

All right. Okay. All right. All right.

So, here go. I'm going to give it to you again. So, cuz I'm teaching now. There needs to be in your solitude with God.

There needs to be some praying. There needs to be some fasting. There needs to be some grieving. And there needs to be some seeking.

So, so you and God need to talk for real. Just be real with God. Number two, the flesh. You going to have to let some fleshly stuff go.

Somebody called me this morning. Praise God. They called me like, "Pastor, how you feeling?" I was like, "I'm good. I'm calling to hype you up." I was like, "Praise God." You know what I'm saying?

Like this what they do professionally. I'm like, "Praise God. Hype me up." I was like, "You know what my playlist is?" They was like, "Uh, about that." I was like, "What you mean about that?" It was like, "Ah, my playlist ain't your playlist." I said, "Whoa, what you mean your play?" You calling hype me up? You trying to get me ready for church?

What you mean your prayer list or your playlist ain't my playlist? And it's like, well, some of my songs I said, "You trying to win?" Come on now. or you just trying to play the game. Cuz if you trying to win, we should have the same playlist.

We both call ourselves Christian. All of our music should be glorifying God. What we talking about? And so fasting, letting go of flesh and carnal things.

Grieving, meaning that you are in the soul and in the spirit, you letting go. So, I had a conversation with my son. Told Nate, me and my son was talking the other day. He was asking me for some stuff like, "Dad, you know," and I would be real.

I was like, "Bro, I'm I'm sorry. I can't give you that." And I prayed the next day and God was like, "Hey, I heard the conversation you had with your son. I You told him you couldn't give him that. What do you mean by that you can't give him that?" I was like, "Man, God can't give him that." like God, he's looking to me to affirm him.

I that I can't. And God said, "Why can't you give him that?" It was a certain term he wanted me to say. I was like, "Bro, I'm sorry, bro. I'm bro, we ain't grow up like that, bro.

I can't even." You know what I'm saying? Like my I said, "First of all, son, I want to apologize to you because my biological father wasn't in my life. So, I don't even know why you feel the need to for me to validate what you doing." Like, I don't I don't understand what you talking about. Like, my dad went in my life.

So, I never grew up doing nothing for my father. So I don't even know what you asking me to do. Like you ask like you want to do something then you want me as the father to say.

And then God said, "Okay, all right.

All right. Tell me that again, son. Cuz it's time to grieve." I said, "What do you mean by that?" He said, "Yeah, it's time. It's time to kill that version of you and it's time to let you go.

Your son is asking you to do what I did for my son." No, no, no, no, no. You're not doing what the word says. You're doing what your culture taught you. And because your dad wasn't in your life and you didn't and because you do what you do for me and you don't worry about nobody else.

That's not how it goes. I said to my son after he went through the process he was supposed to go through, well done, thou good and faith. You've been fa This is my son and who I am well pleased. So you need to be telling your son you're well pleased.

Just because your father wasn't there to tell you you're well pleased, that's not right. That's not me. That's not how it goes. So, you got to grieve because there's a part of you that's not like me.

And anytime I show you me and you're not me, you need to stop what you doing and do me because you are old things are gone. You are a new creature in Christ. Stop telling your son what you can't do. You can do all things.

So my son sent me um he works with a group of homeless kids, kids who are, you know, outcast, fatherless, downtrodden, the poor, the needy. And he called me, well, I'm sorry, he didn't call me, he sent Pics. And he had these kids with him and that he took them to the Texan game. And because of who he is and the gift that God has given him, uh, he had them with field passes.

And so these kids, they I'm listening to them. They, you know, they not church. That's why that's my zone. That's why the church I'm like, God, let the church, you know what I'm saying?

The church, praise God for them. Somebody got to do that work. But this the work we got to do. And them kids was cussing, but they was praising the Lord like, bro, bro, we can't believe we just saw Crosby like he sweated on us.

We can't believe we down here on the field. They super excited. They getting Oh man, you should see the security as they're coming in. The security is dapping them up and they got their special badges on them and you can see how they felt like they felt like ah like we at the game.

We not just at the game, we on they got their camera. One kid is a photographer. He taking pictures in the in the stadium, putting them up, posting on his whatever. He geek cuz he like I'm a photographer even though I'm homeless.

Even though I ain't my parents ain't with me. Even though I ain't got a job. Even though I am somebody. and they did the game and my son got him food and then he hit me with the post and picks and I sent him a message saying, "Yeah, God number one, God is proud of you because you're taking care of the downtrodders." Like, everybody want to be with the NFL players and everybody want to be but but you didn't.

Hallelujah. You created an opportunity for kids who never get an opportunity. I said, "Not only is God proud of you," I said, "I I hear you, God. As your dad, I'm proud of you." Oh, y'all not y'all not hearing what I'm saying?

Y'all not hearing what I'm saying. Out. You're looking to start outside. Outside is not where it start.

It starts on the inside. It starts with seeking God. And God, you're seeking God because you know you ain't right. That connects directly to David's prayer in Psalms 139 23 and 24.

David said, "Search me, oh God. 52 days." Listen to me. It's not over. I'm starting a secular challenge August 31st.

So, it's not over. But, but I want you to hear what I'm telling you. What God told me the 52 days was based on what pastor preached is that the 52 started with Nehemiah saying, "Search me, God." So, before we build, we got to ask God to search us. It's a dangerous.

I'm just being real. When I go to the airport, last thing I do want to be searched. Come on now. Last thing when the police pull me over, the last thing I want them to do is I I I dread hearing them say, "Get out the car." I dread hearing them say, "Can we search the vehicle?" It's like, "Uh oh, here we go, God." But David cries out, "Search me, oh God.

See if there be any wicked way in me." We don't stop there, though. He says, "And lead me." So before God rebuilds what's around you, my husband needed to be at church today. He need to hear this message. My wife, she missed a good one.

Ah, but you didn't. No, I'm going to say it slower so you can catch it. My wife should have been here for that one. No, she shouldn't have been.

God is supreme. He know you heard it. You should have been there. Amen.

Oh, my kids, if my kids would just go to church, if they would just get this in their system, you you you went to church. It's in your system. No, no, no. You're not hearing what I'm saying.

You're not uh hurry up and call so and so so they can watch it online. No, you at home watch it online. I'm not saying don't spread it, but I'm telling you if God turned it on for you, it was very intentional and deliberate. Watch it.

And when you're watching it, ask God to search you. It does not work when you tell God to search somebody else. I don't know how this thing works, but it never works when you tell God to search somebody else. Immediately when you tell God to search somebody else, you say flag on the plane.

That's a violation. I don't search nobody else for you. You I don't change nobody for you. The only person I change is you.

You should be saying me, oh God. And if there be any wicked way in me, tell me. And then David says, then lead me. And so he didn't just tell me, "Hey, you need to do a better job with your son." He's asking you for something that he's supposed to be asking you for, and you need to do it.

God didn't tell me that so that I could have information. I could have knowledge. God told me that so I could turn if my people which are called by my name would humble themselves. I humbled myself.

God, I don't even know why he asking me to do that, God. I don't even know what he wants, God. what he's asking me is foreign. I ain't never even had what he had.

I ain't I didn't have my biological father in my life. I didn't have a person who was there for me in my prime. I didn't have a person there for my driver's license. God, when I walked across the stage, my biological Why Why is he asking me to do something that I can't do?

Why is he asking me to do something that I haven't been equipped to do? Why is he asking me to do something that I don't have an example for? grieve God. Why don't talk to God?

Oh no, like just our father which art in heaven cuz then you can still keep your pride. Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done. I I know all the scriptures.

No, no, no, no, no, no. God said, "Come to me with a contrite heart and a broken spirit." God, my son wants something from me, and I don't want anything in our relationship to hinder it. I want to be the father he wants me to be. But God, I don't know what he talking about because I didn't have it.

And he says, "No, you may not have had it on the earthly level, but you have it on a heavenly level. I am an example. I told Jesus Christ, this is my son in whom I am well pleased. Every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess at the name of Jesus Christ.

I elevated my son. Elevate yours. just be honest with me and tell me you don't know what to do and then say help. And as soon as you help, boom.

I was texting like I was texting like I had a f my biological father in my life. I was talking to my son like I had Oh, y'all not hearing what I'm saying. I can do all things. You can do all things through Christ that strengthens you.

Before God builds what's around you, he often starts rebuilding what's in you. The 52 days were the visible trans. It was a visible transformation. The four months were the invisible preparation.

One more time. One more time. One more time. We We want to start with the house.

God said, "Let's start with the man." Before you rebuild the wall, let God search the heart because lasting internal change begins with internal uh transformation. Anybody want not change? Anybody want lasting change? Come on.

Anybody want lasting change? Can I just keep it 100 with y'all? I just I'm just saying on a real basic level. 2006 we put our first video out.

By 2007 2008 it went viral. By 2010 I was a household name. Here here's the last thing I want. The last thing I want is to be a household name.

2010 2020 and then they don't know me no more. No. No. I'm praying every day.

God won't stay relevant. He said, "Okay, good. Then if you want to stay relevant, you got to keep praying at in the morning." Amen. Now, if you want to stay relevant, you got to keep fasting and praying.

If you want to stay relevant, you got to let DD continue to crit I mean critique you. I'm working on my I'm still God's still working on me. See, he's still working on me. Critique.

I'm sorry. In the name of Jesus. In the name of Jesus. Amen.

Psalms 139:23-24. Search me. Sh. We're not leaving the 52 days.

We're not leaving the 52 days. We're not leaving the principles of 50 days. Pastor, what was it all about? What was all about was Nehemiah saying, "Search me, oh God." This is where it starts, my young people.

This is where it starts. Search me, oh Lord, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me into the everlasting way. All right.

So, I'm going to give you one thing. I'm going to let you get out of here. Okay. So, I messed up.

All right, I messed up. Somebody help me out. Somebody help me out. I got my phone on me, but I don't want to do that.

Somebody help me out. Jamie, if you could do it, that would be great. Oh, y'all God showed me this, y'all. I said, God, why is this so significant?

God, why is this searching thing so significant? God, what's what's like why do we even have to do this? What What's the problem, God? And God showed me in Genesis, right?

I think it's chapter 3. It may not be chapter 3, but in Genesis, uh uh uh uh man sinned. And and and when man sinned, God came to hold man accountable for sinning. And what happened was not the sin.

That's not what happened. It wasn't the sin. It was that they hid. Okay.

Come on. Come on. Come on. Come on.

Come on. Come on. I just got I just want to show y'all something real quick. But I got to We got to stop right here.

Young people, I'm going to help you out. What God showed me was the reason why God always starts with searching a asking us to ask him to search us is because what stopped the relationship was the hiding. I promise you I don't want to be deep. I promise you don't make me go there.

Don't make me yell and scream. I just want to be calm when I say this. God showed me, Eric, before we go to the searching, we have to figure out why we have to search in the first place. Why does man have to come to me and say, "Search me, oh God?" Because the very first time when man messed up and I approached man about messing up and I wanted to try to fix it, the first thing he did was hid.

Is it what? Okay, just show me. I just Which one? I know it's in here somewhere.

That's the whole thing. I got it. But just take me to where he just said. Yeah.

Well, just And they hid. Yep. Verse 10. Verse 10.

Okay. Where is that at? Go back. I don't see it.

Verse 10. And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden." I'm going to let you go. Listen to me very closely, please. I'm not trying to be deep.

Y'all got to hear me today. God showed me what messed man up was not that he hid. He heard the sound of I heard God. For the first time in our life, we heard God.

And we had always heard God. But when sin showed up, we heard God different. Yeah, we heard God differently. God didn't do nothing different.

Didn't nothing change in the garden. We had sinned. The garden was still there. Everything was still there.

Nothing changed. Go. Only thing that changed is because we sinned. Our perspective s changed.

No, no, no. It's not like we sinned and all of a sudden we heard boom thr and lightning. It wasn't like the earth got dark. Nothing changed.

God did what he always did. He came and walked among us in the garden. But this time when he came in because we did something we weren't supposed to do, it shifted the relationship. It's a lie.

When people say you sin and God going to do this and God going to do that according to the Bible, God never treated man different when he sinned. Man treated God different when he sinned. The devil is a lie. People are you going to hell?

Are you messed up? God ain't gonna bless you. Oh, you messed up. You in trouble with God.

God ain't never whipped nobody. Man whipped himself. That's why God says there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus. Because as soon as you hide from God, then you got to fool with the devil.

Catch what I just said? Make sure you catch what I just said. Make sure you catch me. It is the devil that's going to make you feel like I messed up.

And because I messed up, I cannot draw near to God. And as soon as you can't draw near to God, Satan now has you on his you on his ter you on his terms. And now he starts saying stupid stuff. And you start believing stupid stuff about your mother.

And you start believing dumb stuff about your father. And you start believing dumb stuff about your coach. And you start believing dumb stuff about your mentor. And you start talking crazy about your pastor.

And then your life starts to go in his direction. But you don't get it. God never hid from you. We hid from God.

And so God says, "The first thing we got to do if I'm going to bless you, we got to have a relationship. And the first thing we need to do in this relationship is you got to stop hiding and you got to allow me to search you." It's cuz some stuff that happened since you left the house. Oh, am I talking to anybody? I'm trying to tell you, when you leave the presence of God, when you leave, there's some stuff that happened to me when I was homeless that never happened when I was at home.

I told you my mom got married. My father who raised me, it's just some stuff that never happened to us. We lived on the corner block. Nothing certain things never happened to us.

Why? My father was 6'8. I don't know how to say this in this generation without, you know, offending somebody, but but but but he was a he was a man's man. And there were certain things that were happening on the block that weren't happening in our home.

There were things that was happening to other people's house that wasn't happening to our house. Why? Cuz we we had a man's man who was 6'8 and who could lay hands. And so people understood if you touch Eric or you touch Janiko or you touch Mallalerie, it's not that they can hurt you, but there's somebody behind them.

Now, I don't know if I'm supposed to say this publicly, but it's old news. My mother was at the job I told y'all and somebody violated my mom. And I just remember my father driving up to her job and getting out and telling me, "Stay in the car. Whatever you do, don't get out and I won't be getting back in the car with you.

Sit here for a while. Eventually, your mama gonna get off work and she's gonna come." And I'm thinking to myself, "This don't even make sense. You dropped me off. How is it that you my mama got got to wait hours for my mama?

That don't even make sense. All I know is that he went in himself and he came out with the police in handcuffs and put in the car. And I found out later some man touched my mama and he came up to the job and touched him. And let me tell y'all something.

My mother never got touched again. My mother never got harassed again. You're missing what I'm telling you. When I stayed at home, I was protected.

But when I left home at a very early age and I was running the streets at 53 by myself getting in trouble. There's a lot of stuff that happened to me. There was a lot of people that try to lay hands. There was a lot of trouble I got into.

I'm telling you, when they left daddy's house when we leave daddy's house, there's a lot of stuff that happens to us. I'm telling you, the first thing that has to happen is you got to stop hiding. You got to stop feeling bad for the stuff you've done. There are some of you young people right now and I'm going to tell you the way the devil's going to trap you, he's going to trap you because he going to say if your mother found out, you better not never let your mother find out you did that.

And guess the person that's telling you that, they're telling you that to eventually take you away from what your mother is teaching you. I just wanted to show you the first thing we did wrong was we hid. Watch this. Number one, God knows everything about you, so you have no reason to hide anything from him.

No, no, no, no, no. When Adam and Eve sin, it wasn't like God didn't know what they did. He knew exactly what they did. Here's the challenge, y'all.

What the devil wants us to do is only show up. And again, no disrespect. This is why I try my hardest to do religion over um relationship over religion because what religion does is allows you to hide your character. So, as long as you preaching the 27 doctrinal beliefs, you ain't got to deal with your real your pride and your arrogance and your sins.

As long as you talking about religion, baptism, you don't got to deal with, listen to me. I'm so grateful for my relationship with the Lord because the thing that I got was not doctrine. I got how ugly I was and how messed up I was. But if we're not careful, we'll we'll because we hide from God, we'll show up in front of man in our in our best.

But we'll never show up in front of man as who we really are. So So the first thing I need you to know, young people, do me a huge favor. You're not hiding anything from God. God knows everything about you.

And so there's no reason to run or hide from God. Watch what's significant about Psalms 139. It's essentially about living completely exposed before all knowing God, an all everpresent God, an all powerful God. To be completely exposed before God means nothing is covering you.

Adam and Eve were covered. Remember that they got covered. They weren't free anymore. God wasn't able to walk around them anymore.

They weren't they didn't have access to the spirit in the way they had access to the spirit before. And God is telling you, you don't have to hide from me because when you start hiding from me, you start covering. And I remember the day I blew up. It wasn't when I got my degree from Oakwood.

It wasn't my masters or my PhD. I remember the day I blew up. I was having prayer with God and I got away from those routine prayers and I started saying to God, "God, help me. I'm a liar." I can't tell y'all how ugly I felt.

And then God had to tell me, "Oh, I've been knew you was a liar. I was waiting for you to come and tell me you were one." And quiet as kept, "Your mama know you a liar. Your daddy know you're a liar. Your wife know you a liar.

You the only one trying to act like you're not a liar." And I and and and and I'm not talking about these little cute prayers. Amen. Amen. No disrespect to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, but if God was recruiting somebody else to write another chapter, there could be the book of Eric.

I promise you there could be. Why? because I had my own experiences with God. And I remember saying, "God, I'm a liar." And God said, "Good.

I'm glad you told me. What kind of liar are you?" And I had to get my brain to lie. And I was like, "Oo, I lie to stay out of trouble." Anytime I feel like when I was little I was going to get in trouble, I was like, I would lie. Ma, um, nope.

I don't know what happened to the And God said, "Why did you lie, son?" I said, "Because it was a 50-50 chance of getting out of trouble. That's why I lied." He said, "What do you mean by that?" I was like, "Yeah, they going, if they know the truth, my parents ain't the one that's going to be like, we honor you for telling the truth now. No whipping, no punishment. You told the truth.

They getting you regard. You tell the truth, they getting you." So, I'm like, God, what do I have to gain? What do I have to gain telling? I'm just being real.

I know some of y'all, you know, bonafide Christians. I'm just being real. God, what do I have to gain? So, I'm just going to lie so I can get out of trouble because if I tell them the truth, they going to hurt me.

And God is saying, your character is what you can get you can gain out of this. You're establishing a very nasty character and that character is going to attract certain things. I'm let me let me let let me tell you the day I start I started telling God the truth you talk about free y'all and then you talk about walking in an anointing like it was like the spirit of God just was fresh on me when I would tell the truth and then you know what happened when I started telling God the truth I ain't even care about telling man the truth oh the way you preach you just bro you man what can you do to But when you can't tell God the truth, you can't tell yourself the truth. You can't tell others the truth.

My my preaching went to another level on the internet. I blew up. I didn't blow up because I was uh uh repeating what somebody else was saying. I blew up because I was free.

I blew up because I wasn't worried about what other people thought about me. I wasn't worried about the opinions of man and man who going who don't know if he going to heaven or hell or not. He I freed man up from being my God. And I let God be my God again.

I was free from what they thought about my relationship with God, how I walk. You barely got a relationship with God. Why am I worried about your barely relationship with God when I got a personal relationship with God and God is the one that's going to tell me to go to the left or go to the right? And when I got man out my mind and I got man out my heart and I got man out my thoughts and I let God be my God, boom, God start blessing me.

He started blessing my ministry. All right, I'm going to read it one more time. To be completely exposed before God. So number one, God search me.

Why? So you can be completely exposed. What Adam and Eve were supposed to do was tell the truth. He got me.

He got me. Satan got me. How did he get you? He know I got to know.

Got to know what I got to know everything. So he knew like he knew that I have this obsession with knowing like knowing is my God. And so he tricked me. He said God is trying to keep something from you.

There's something you don't know. And what kind of God would he be to keep something from you? Yeah. The one that's trying to keep you from evil.

Yeah. You're right. You didn't know. And you probably didn't need to know.

But but instead, you know what she said? She said it was him. And then God was like, "Okay, good. All right.

She failed. All right, let me go to you now. What what tell me the truth." Well, is is the woman you And God said, "The one thing, saints, not going to church, not just getting baptized, not just reading your Bible, not just praying. The one thing that's going to free you and make you and God have a bomb relationship is when you tell God the truth about who you are.

When you really expose yourself, that's what's gonna take you to the next level. Not you acting like a Christian, but not opening up and telling God the truth. Watch this. God, watch this.

Watch this. To complete To completely be exposed before God means this. Nothing is covered. Nothing is concealed.

Nothing is disguised or protected from his examination. Now, I get why you wouldn't do it to people cuz people going to judge you. But God's not going to judge you. Oh, I'm sorry.

He is going to judge you, but he's going to judge you because he knows you're fearfully and wonderfully made. And he's not going to judge you to hurt you or condemn you. He's going to judge you because he's trying to bring the best out of you. Can I be real, y'all?

I told God I'm going be real. When when when God first removed me from the uh um the SDA church, when he first removed, I thought it was a mistake. I was like, "God," he said, "Be be honest with me. What?

because you're not telling me the truth. What's what's going on? I said, "Man, God, you you I think you might have aired on this one." He said, "Why would you say I aired on this

one?" I said, "You aired on this one because you put you put me in a situation. You told me to preach this.

I preached that and then you put me in a situation." You said, "I ain't put you in no situation. If you would have stayed there, you'd have been limited in that situation. I put you in a situation that you going to shine in. I put you in a situation where you gonna be free.

I put you in a situation where ain't nobody between you but me. I I put you in a I put you in the best situation you could be in. I Y'all see all these young people in this place? I put you in the best situation you I know I know you were fearfully and wonderfully made.

And so while you're capable of doing that, that limits you. While you're capable of doing that, the best Eric Thomas cannot be produced in that environment. Now you love that environment and you honor that environment and you're loyal. So in your mind you think that I did something wrong because I didn't follow your human script.

But if I followed your human script, think where you would be. I followed what I you were fearfully. I know how I made you. I know where you supposed to be.

I know who you supposed to be around. You thought because you were in that environment and somebody told you that I'll stop you if you try to you you you you you're looking at the letter they sent you that told you if you do what I tell you to do this what they going to do. Son, don't worry about a letter from man. You better be worried about what I told you to do.

And I told you Oh, but but but you can't get to that when you concealed and you covered up. Amen. I had to have a real conversation with God. God, I don't see what you doing.

I don't see the path. He said, "When was the last time you had to see When the last time I got to check in with you about my I got to check in with you about my plan?" No, you just follow me. You don't know the plan, son. I don't know if I told y'all this, but I don't do funerals.

It's not my thing. I don't do that's not my thing. People get mad at are you a pastor? I'm not doing that no more.

I'm not allowing y'all to tell me what to do. Like that's not my thing. I don't do funerals. That person that I love, they not here no more.

I'm not interested in going to the funeral. That's not my thing. I told somebody, my mother, my grandma passed. I didn't go to the funeral.

Me and my mom talked afterwards. I blessed my mom. That's her. But I didn't go to the funeral.

God says, "I need you to do Caleb's funeral." I said, "God, I don't do funerals." He said, "Oh, be careful now. I know we close, but be careful. I was like, "No, no, no. I'm not trying to be disrespectful.

That's TJ. She lost her son. He was 18. He's a teenager.

TJ lost his daughter. She was a teenager. It would only make sense. TJ God said, I'm going to say I'm going to tell you one more time.

Start working on the message, son. I'm tell you where you need to be. Listen to me. Not only did I go, not only was I supposed to go, let me tell y'all, God is so good, y'all.

God is so good. Me and the grandfather, we hug, we we just loved on each other. We was talking to each other as men. He like, "Man, I can't believe." I said, "Bro, I know what you feel like, bro.

Why did my boy call me out of nowhere?" Like, "E, I got 10 tickets to the Lions game. I heard you talking about that family that lost you. You think they might want to go to the game? We going to treat them.

We know we can't bring their son back, but we want to do something special for them." I called the mom. All they got all tinted. The whole family went, "Oh, y'all not hear what I'm saying." The superintendent of schools was there. The principal was there.

We already Nate already talking to them. He's like, "You need to come to the school next year. We need you to work for the school. We need you to help our Are y'all hear what I'm saying?" God says, "I know who's supposed to be there.

You supposed to be there. It got nothing to do with death. It's got everything to do with the life that's about to be produced afterwards. Son, I need you to get where I told you to be." But can I I just want to be honest.

That doesn't happen when you cover stuff up. When you conceal, when you disguise, when you protect yourself from being examined by God, here's what I want you to do from this point forward. If you will give God access. Number three, God, I'm I'm going to stop hiding.

Number one, I'm going to allow you to search me and examine me. And anything you find that's wrong, tell me and lead me. Here's the biggest one, y'all. You're going to give access.

You're going to give God access to every part of you. This is the one that's gonna change your whole life. Okay. So, my daughter just moved into an apartment and um and I'm on the lease.

I'm on a lease and the dude that's over the lease know me and I'm on the lease. He know that. The company know I'm on the lease. The apartment complex know I'm on a lease.

I get there a day before my daughter got there and the lady the young lady was like, "What's your name?" I told her, gave him my ID. She was like, "I'm so sorry. I can't let you in." And I said, "No, I'm on the lease." She says, "I know you own the lease." You say, "I don't have record that you on the lease. I only have Jada's name on the lease." So, the only way you going to get I'm talking about y'all, I got cleaning supply.

We got grow. We got everything. We about to get her bed set up. Uh we I mean, we excited.

And they like, "Have a seat. We going to have to make a call." She gets up and walks away to make the call. I'm like, why you got to walk away to make the call? Call in front of me.

Who you calling? I'm on a lease. How many times I got to tell y'all that? Why credit?

I'm on a lease. She said, "Uh, no, no, no, no." Come to find out, y'all, I'm so mad. Come to find out, she calling Jada. And finally gets a hold of Jada.

Listen to me. I'm not trying to be funny. I call Jada. Her mama call.

She would not answer. Finally, she answers the phone. And the lady says, "Now you have access, but you have limited access. We're going to take you to the elevator." I said, "I'm a grown man.

I'm on the leap. You don't take me to nothing. I pay for this. This my apartment." And it's like, "Sir, I apologize.

You are not on. We do not We see J. Y'all not hearing what I'm saying. There are those of you who have given God access, but not to your finances.

You've given God access, but not to your past. You giving God access but not to your trauma. Okay. All right.

Let me say it this way. Moving forward, nothing is to be covered. Nothing is to be concealed. Nothing is to be disguised.

Nothing is to be be protected from his examination. Let him do a full examination. Men, I know you know what I yall know y'all know what I'm talking about. Yeah.

A lot of y'all don't go because you got to do the and you don't want to do the you can have cancer. You're like, I don't care if I got cancer or not. He's not getting access. Y'all laughing.

I'm not laughing. I tell you the truth, a lot of grown men that don't take care of their health cuz they don't want the doctor to have access. But if you go in and see a doctor, you going to have to take off your clothes and put on the robe. And the robe ain't really the robe.

The robe is not really the robe is so they can have access. I mean, you really should just go in there. What they trying to be nice and put this on, but that's not really going to be on long cuz they will. And I remember the first time I had to do it.

And my wife said, "How you feel?" I said, "Violated." I got back in the car and she like, "Wait," I'm like, "I just sat there for a minute." I was like, "I've never been never had that happen to me before. But guess what he said? You good. We'll see you in 5 years.

Y'all not hear what I'm saying? Don't do me a favor. And I'm about to go. Men, do me a favor.

Don't get Okay, I'm sorry. God, I'm not asking you to see the version of me I present to everyone else. It's the last one. I'm not asking you to present everybody.

I'm giving you permission to examine the real me. My motives, my thoughts, my fears, my desires, my habits, my wounds, my pride, my intentions, my blind spots. Show me everything and anything in me that needs to be changed. I'm letting you go.

Play. I'm letting you go. Here go. The last one.

Come on, Jill. Get ready. I'm giving you the last one. This is the last one.

This last one. God, I'm asking you to see the version of me I pretend to be in front of everybody else. I don't want to pretend no more. I'm giving you permission to examine the real me.

This is where we get this where we get rid of religion. This where we go relationship. My motives. I'm just talking to my wife.

We talking about the church and the church whatever. And DD is saying, "Okay, so I know you made this decision, but why did you make that decision? We got to we Eric, we got to get this stuff fixed." Like, why did you make that decision? I'm going to show y'all why I made the decision.

Jamie, if you can show me that first slide. Listen to me. I'm being real with y'all. I Everybody talk about LeBron, everybody talk about Kobe and everybody talk about Michael Jordan.

Nobody talks about this guy. I think this one of the best players ever in the NBA. Like, don't nobody talk about Alli. I feel like Allan was one of the best that ever played the game.

I'm leaving y'all. I'm leaving. Y'all got to catch this. Y'all got to catch this.

I believe Allan Ivan should have won a championship. And I'm not even like a Sixer fan. I don't I'm not from Philly. I have no none in my heart that believes for Philly.

I just think he was one of the best that ever do it. But he he he had one of the best coaches. Okay, go stop right there. Okay, y'all got to catch this one.

Y'all got to catch this one. Here go the challenge. This dude was one of the best coaches that ever coached. I'mma tell you why.

But the first person he coached was Allan Iverson in some kind of way. They never won a championship. And they never won a championship because they had two different hearts. Go back.

Go back. Go back. I want to show y'all something. I want to go show y'all.

So y'all know this dude and his famous line is, "We talking about We talking about Come on. We talking about Don't miss it. Don't miss it. Don't miss it.

We getting ready for the appeal. Don't miss it. This guy should have won a championship next pick because the coach he had was a championship coach. Y'all probably don't even know who Larry Brown is.

He is the only coach in the NBA and in college to ever win one in the NBA and one. There is no other coach that has ever won in college and one in the NBA. He the only one to do it. He's the only one to do it.

What was the problem? The problem was you had one guy whose heart said practice and you had another guys who heart said practice. All right, I'm going to do it again so you can catch it. You had Allan Iverson who was the best of the best who said practice.

We talking about practice. And you had Larry Brown who said practice. I don't care nothing about the game. Practice.

No. Listen to what I'm saying. And the reason why I believe they never won a championship together is not because they couldn't win one together. They had two different hearts.

They had two different hearts. They both played the game of basketball. They both loved the game of basketball. They didn't approach it the same.

God is saying, "You want to be a Christian, but you want to play your way." You call yourself a believer, but you want to play your way. What? What are we talking about? Tithe.

We talking about tithe. What we talking about the Sabbath? We talking about I can't do nothing on the What we talking about? God said we talking about the Sabbath.

What we talking about going to church and and not just sitting and listening, but we talking about serving. We talking about serving. Yep. We talking about whole heart, whole mind.

Listen to what I'm telling you. I believe that Allan Iverson should have won a championship. Why? Because he had a coach that won in college.

He had a coach that won in the NBA. Meaning what? He had a coach that was capable of taking him there, but he couldn't coach him. Now, I'm not trying to be funny.

You know, Jamie, you know, I'm a Piston fan, but I'm going to tell you this. Ain't no one player on that team as gifted and talented as Allen Iverson was. I don't even know how we won with this team. I like this team was supposed to get swept by the Lakers and we pretty much swept the Lakers.

Why? We had Larry Brown and guess what? They bought into his philosophy. practice.

I was talking to a young man. He called me the other day. I said, "Bro, I can't be your coach no more. I'm sorry." He said, "You can't be my coach." I said, "I can't be your coach no more." He said, "Why?" I said, "We got two different philosophies.

You play the soft game." I grew up I grew up the hard game. You play the soft game. What do you mean I play the soft game? You You play the game when things ain't going your way, you whine and complain.

I play the game that they overcame by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony. I don't believe in complaining. I will bless the Lord at all time and his praise shall continuously be mine. I don't look at what I don't have.

I look at what God gave. We just play the game differently. I can do all things through Christ that strengthens me. I don't quit or give up or do I let the spirit of greater is he that is in me than he is in the world.

I said it ain't nothing wrong with you. You ain't a bad person. We just don't play the game the same way. And as I conclude, God is saying, "I got to search your heart." Cuz we don't play the game the same way.

You want my rewards, but you don't want to put in the work. We don't play the same way. They pay their tithe so everybody can see it. We don't play the game the same way.

They do prayers that sound phenomenal that hit the wall and come back down. We don't play the game the same way. They boast that they keep the Sabbath and all they talk about is they rules and regulate. We don't play the game the same way.

When I said my son, he was in a manger. When I said my son, his lawful to it's lawful to heal on the Sabbath day. We don't worship the Sabbath day. We worship the God of the Sabbath.

We play the game different. Jesus says to the Pharisees and Sadducees, he's saying, "Y'all doing it, but we don't play the game the same way. Y'all y'all y'all y'all honoring the law, but you don't have the spirit of the law. We don't play the same game.

Y'all making sure y'all elevate each other. I elevate the fatherless. I elevate the widow. I elevate the needy.

I elevate the poor. I elevate the down cat. We don't play the game the same way. Y'all want to be seen by men.

I want to be honored by my father. And so today, if you ready to play God's way, the first thing you going to have to do is let him see your game. No, no, no, no. I'm about to let you go.

Y'all better hear what I said. Number one, if God is going to be your coach, he's going to have to see how you play the game so he can tell you what you're doing wrong. And that's how I blew up. I showed God my life.

He said, "I seen this before, son. It's okay. I've seen it in your father and your grandfather. I've seen it in your great-grandfather.

I've seen it in your mother. I've seen it in your grandmother. I've seen it in your uncles. I've seen it in your cousins.

I've seen it in your aunts. I'm just so grateful that you came to me and just confessed that it's there. Now, I can help you fix it, son. And if that's you, you don't want to play church no more.

You want a relationship with the Lord. You want to play God's game the way he wants to you to play it so you could do what? Look at the these dudes won a championship. Again, I know y'all ain't all y'all ain't in the sports, but I'm just trying to tell you these they were underdogs.

They this team was a team. But guess what they did? They bought into coach's philosophy. Now, I do have to be honest and say this cuz I'mma have some historians watching.

After going to the championship twice, the Pistons did get rid of him because they said he was a little too. And they brought in Flip Saunders who they said was a players coach. And they never went back to the championship again. So, God is not interested in being a players coach per se.

He does have some rules and there's some things that he going to ask you to do. But if you do it, there are benefits that come with doing what the Lord told you to do. So if you're ready right now, you're coming quick. You're coming quick.

Come on. Come on. We got something to do. You're coming right now quick.

You're just coming to the altar. Quick, quick, quick. We got a baby dedication. Quick, quick, quick.

We're not going to waste a lot of time. Come. You're saying, "God, I want to stop playing it my way, coach. I want to play it your way so I can win." You're coming quick, quick, quick, quick, quick, quick.

Quick, quick, quick. Let us pray. Father, we come now. We are stubborn, Lord.

Gifted, fearfully, and wonderfully made, but stubborn nonetheless. Gifted, talented, cuz we are fearfully and wonderfully made, but arrogant to say the least, to least, Lord. We We are Yep. gifted and talented, but we're rebellious, egotistical.

Oh, Lord. Yep. We are fearfully and wonderfully made, but search us, Lord, and know us, Lord. We are manipulative.

We backbite and we gossip and we tear down and destroy. We We don't like to forgive and forget. Search us, Lord. We don't want to be walking around with a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.

We want your spirit. They said, "What manner of man is this? What authority does he walk into? The spirit.

And we want to get out of the flesh and walk in the spirit, Lord. So search us, cleanse us, clean us, make us new. And we will be so careful when you do, Lord, to give you all praise, honor, and glory. Hold us, Lord, because when we grieve and mourn, it's going to hurt.

When you do open heart surgery, it would be it's going to be painful. But you going to get rid of the cancer that does not know how to stay in one spot. Somehow the cancer spreads to our marriages and to our children and to our workplace and to our community and to our world and to our heart and to our mind. Search us Lord and cleanse us for out of the heart are the issues of man.

Fix our heart. Cleanse our heart. Clean us up, Lord. That's our prayer.

We know our evil. We know our ugly. And so, we no longer hide it from you. We give it to you because we're tired of the pain that comes with it, the destruction that comes with it, the devastation that comes with it.

And we want to be set free to be who you call us to be. So, forgive us for our sins and our shortcomings. Have mercy upon us according to thy tender mercies. Blot out our transgressions, Lord.

and make us a new in you. We pray as we ask for forgiveness of sin. In the name of the father, in the name of the son, in the name of the holy spirit we pray. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Go back to your seats free.