

Steps toward Maturity: Part 1

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[0 : 0 0] We're in the book of James. There's an outline in your program and if you did not get a program! Raise your hand. We'll find some extra, okay, right over here on the left, we've got one because there's an outline, okay, right down here in front, Wes needs one and any, okay, right here in the middle. So we've, I'll just give the ushers a moment to get the bulletins and then raise your hand in a moment and we'll get them to you. Okay, raise your hand if you've, if you need a bulletin, okay. Right here, right here, right over there, okay, we'll get that taken care of. You know, as I looked at the outline this morning, I sent this to Evelyn. Evelyn puts this in the bulletin and

I think she takes care of all the bulletins, so thank her for that. Over in that section right over there's one. Anybody else over here? And I got to looking at the outline and I forgot to give Evelyn something and so I'll give it to her next week. It's, it's similar to what I did in Galatians.

I, I've got kind of a, a summary of looking at the whole book. Galatians is, Galatians covers a lot of ground but one of the highlights of Galatians is identity in Christ and a lot of times we think of identity of Christ as a resting spot. I rest in the Lord and, and that is very true but there are other times where it's, I stand in the Lord. You know, because of the authority of God I stand and, you know, I don't know necessarily you'll flex our muscles but more of an outwardly look to that and, and that's both very good for Galatians. James is a book of action. James is moving. If you kind of could look at Galatians as kind of a standing, resting, really nailing down who we are in Christ, James is the flip side of that and thus, I don't want to say confusion but there seems to be a little tension in James between resting and moving. Now you may not use those terms. Faith and works are probably the, the, the common terms but resting and action, if you think of it in those terms, it might help you to see that they're really complementary and not conflicting with one another.

And so James is the book of action and the, the title that I've given it is Steps Toward Maturity. We really, it's funny though that now that I said all of that, the title that I gave to Galatians was Moving Forward with God. Really it was preparing to move forward. You, you, you, sometimes we just need to pause, sometimes we need to reevaluate, sometimes we need to reaffirm, recommit, and so that's what Galatians was. Okay, it's time to move forward with God, a new chapter for the church. And so here's some things we need to nail down so that we can move forward. James here then is Steps to Maturity.

Moving forward with God is action. And so as you look at the book of James, it's about doing.

James 1 22 could be the key verse for the whole book. That really describes the whole book.

James 1 22, do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves, do what it says. James is about doing.

[4 : 1 6] Now obviously you've got to do it with the right attitude and you can't do it before you understand who you are. But James, that's the perspective it takes. And so that's why it seems to bump in to maybe some of the other books that obviously the focus is on faith. Five chapters in James.

With this idea of moving, I, and I, as I've prayed and as I've looked through the, the five chapters here, I see a picture of a body, a body in motion. And so these are the things you could write them down this morning, but I'll give this to Evelyn next week because there's room on the back. She'll, she'll put them on the back next week. But chapter one, this idea of a body, I'm going to come up with a part of the body for each chapter that visualizing things like that sometimes helps me, helps me remember. Chapter one, the key verse, and I'll give a key verse and then a body part for each chapter.

In chapter one, it's, I've already mentioned James 1, 22. Do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves, do what it says. And so if there's a body part for chapter one, what do you think it would be?

You know, you probably could go a couple of different ways. I use ear. Now it says, do not merely listen. It doesn't say don't listen. Obviously, really you, if, if you really dissected that out, I, I'm not the, you know, best, you know, grammar person and English and everything.

But if you're really dissecting that really do not merely listen is really saying, listen, listen, but don't just listen. And so the body part for chapter one is the ear chapter two.

[6 : 14] The key verse I would say is James two, 26 as the body without the spirit is dead. So faith without deeds is dead. What body part do you think would go with chapter two?

It's a trick question, Wes. Actually, the body part is the entire body. Chapter two is the entire body because it says as the body without the spirit is dead. So faith without needs is dead. And so the body part for chapter two is the whole body. Chapter three, I see the key verse in chapter three as verse 17, but the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all, pure, then peace loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.

Now, the body part for chapter three is, is not really in verse 17. You'd have to read the whole chapter. But chapter three talks about likewise, the tongue is a small body part, but obviously then it can go and have so much power. And so the body part for chapter three is the tongue. Chapter four, the key verse, I would say is verse seven. Submit yourselves then to God, resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

The body part that I would say for chapter four are the hands. And I say this because we need to wash our hands. There, there needs to be a purity. There needs to be a drawing to the Lord. And so in, you know, many different symbols for drawing to the Lord, but one of them is coming to the Lord with a pure heart and with clean hands. Now, you don't bring that to the Lord. You, you come to the Lord and he, he makes those things happen. And that then they are key to that relationship and that fellowship. So I would use hand as just a, a, an illustrative reminder of chapter four. And then chapter five, key verse, I would say is in verse 16. Therefore confess your sins to each other, pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. Okay. Now the body part for chapter five is in this verse. What do you think the body part would be for chapter five? Anybody want to guess? Wes, you want to take another? I would,

[9 : 11] I heard something. Head. Well, that, you know, bowing your head. That's, that's good. I said knee. And I mean, you know, these just things like knee, you bend your knee in prayer. And it says here, the, the prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. So, you know, just a little thing that helped me kind of see James is about movement and this body in motion and these different body parts for each chapter.

Well, let me read through James. It's, it's not, you know, it's not a long book and, and the chapters are, are not terribly long, but let me read through chapter one and then make a couple of notes that you've got the outline for there in your program. James, of course, James, who is James? There's a, there's a couple of James in the Bible. This is not the brother of John. This is not James, the apostle.

This is James, the half brother of Jesus. And so he says, James, I, now, you know, the, the Bible tells us that early on his brothers, they weren't quite sure what to make of Jesus. Matter of fact, there probably was some resistance initially, but at this point, here's James, the half brother of Jesus. Now, do you know what a relic is? What's a relic? I, again, I guess it depends on the circumstance, but we're in church. I look around, you know, if we, if we brought one of our, you know, friends from another denomination and, and they came in here, they'd say, you don't have any relics. Well, Baptists are not known for relics, but we have our own relics. You know, you, you might say, well, the, you know, Baptist relic is a microphone or a pulpit like that, but a relic really comes, you know, from that religious terminology of some kind of object that has meaning to it and that is used, you know, superstitiously or used for good luck or anything. That's a relic. Now, today we think, well, you go to some ancient site or where they're digging for something, a pyramid in Egypt or something, and there are going to be all kinds of relics. It could be artwork. It could be pottery. I mean, it could just be, you know, tools that they used back then. Those are relics. And again, that, that terminology, but primarily a relic is a religious relic used, I'll just say superstitiously, to connect and worship.

Well, if anybody could have used, and of course we have Paul. Paul came out and said, listen, if there's anybody, well, he, he, maybe he, I'm not doubting the Lord and the inspiration of Paul, but he could have said, you know, there's probably only one other person that might have more of a

claim of being somebody than me. And it would be Paul. I mean, it would be James, the half brother, the half brother of Jesus Christ. But James was very careful. He identified himself as a servant of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Now he doesn't use, he doesn't refer to Jesus in the rest of the book.

I don't know if I were James, and of course James was writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. But if I were writing the book and, you know, just kind of left up to my own devices, I'd probably throw that in a little more. Oh yeah, you know, one day Jesus and I were down by the river fishing and he told me this story or, oh, you know, one day Jesus and I were doing this and man, and he did this miracle or something. I probably would have thrown in a few of my half brother Jesus stories. Only reference in the entire book to Jesus Christ. Right here at the beginning, just kind of setting the stage. I'm James. Now the Hebrew is Jacob. And usually names in the Bible are transliterated. And so it's unusual that James is called James in the, we have the book of James. [13:47] We really should have the book of Jacob. Now, some have said, you know, King James had a lot to do with the English translation of the Bible at that time. Maybe he just asked the translators, you know what, use James. I mean, it wasn't necessarily wrong. That was one translation of Jacob, but it wasn't the transliteration of it. And maybe he kind of nudged and said, oh, go ahead and use James there. But anyway, Jacob in the Old Testament, that's the Hebrew word. And James is what we have here. A servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. To the 12 tribes scattered. The Greek word there is the dispersion.

And again, that's a transliteration of the Greek. Dispersed out. And the dispersion is a classical term used for the throwing out and the scattering out of the Jews from the promised land to all over the Mediterranean. They did not enjoy that. They were taken in captivity here and there. They were released from captivity. Primarily at this time, the Jews were scattered just because of commerce. They had scattered all over the Mediterranean, though a little bit later, as there was persecution in the church, that also scattered the Christians of the Jews. But primarily commercialization had scattered the Jews all over the Mediterranean. And so here he's writing to the 12 tribes. Every tribe was identified. There wasn't a lost tribe. All 12 tribes scattered among the nations. Greetings. Consider it pure joy, brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. Now it's interesting here that beginning this book of steps to maturity, one of the first things James mentions is suffering and trials of many kinds. Now some have said that James James has more of a flavor of the poetic books of songs and proverbs and Solomon because there's, it's hard to really outline James. Romans, Romans is probably the easiest book to outline.

Of course, it's a letter and this too here is a letter. But you know, Paul, he had this doctrine that he wanted to lay out. And so he kind of marches through this part, this part, leading up to it, the main point, concluding after that. The book of James is a little more scattered. You know, he'll talk about this and then he'll kind of throw in this and kind of throw in that. More of like Proverbs would be. Proverbs, it's very difficult to outline Proverbs. You know, it just talks about everything, everything under the sun.

But anyway, trying to lead the people to maturity, one of the first things he says is, you're going to have to deal with difficult times. And how does he say deal with difficult times?

[17:26] What's the, what's the most critical thing about dealing with adversity? Obviously, we're going to say, well, Jesus, but it's the attitude.

Attitude is the most important thing in dealing with adversity. And how do you have a good attitude? You have your focus on the Lord.

You understand that God is in control. It may not seem that way. And I, I, I speak from experience. Easiest way to have a bad attitude is to feel like you have to control everything and it is out of control.

You know, that's the worst spot to be in. I'm in control and it's out of control. Now, you know, the second worst thing is it's out of control, but you know, it's really not my problem. I don't like being in situations that are out of control, but if I'm not the one supposed to be in control, it's not quite as bad.

But when I'm supposed to be in control, or at least when I think that I'm supposed to be in control, and usually when I think I need to be in control are those times when I'm questioning my value and who I am and my identity and I'm just reaching, I'm grasping for straws, man.

[18 : 50] I'm, I'm trying to keep this thing together. And the only way I can keep it together is everything goes in the right order, at the right spot. And then when it doesn't, and it's out of control, it's hard for me to have the right perspective.

But when my eyes are on Christ, when I understand my identities in Christ, like we talked about in Galatians, the joy is there for me to experience, to have the right attitude.

Because you know, much of the time, the circumstances are not necessarily going to get better.

There are not many promises in the Bible.

There are some. There are not many promises in the Bible that the circumstance is going to get better. The promise is that in the midst of that circumstance, there can be peace.

There can be joy. There is the presence of God to walk with you through that. And that is the victory.

[20 : 15] And so, James throws out right from the beginning, if we're going to talk about maturing in our faith, if we're going to talk about moving with God, steps toward maturity, right off the bat, we need to understand there are going to be trials, and we need to be thankful for God in the midst.

Not necessarily thankful for the trial, thankful for God in the midst of the trial. This perseverance, there's something about perseverance. In the Oklahoma City paper this morning, I read this article about shaming in the lunch line at our public schools.

Now, Mary's a third-grade teacher. She knows all about this. But there's a crisis in our land today. I don't want to make light of it. I'll just say this. Some kids don't bring their money to pay for lunch.

And the school will keep a tab. But eventually, it's time to pay the tab. And so if it gets to a certain point, and your lunch fund isn't paid up, or it's too much in arrears, you get a cold cheese sandwich instead of the hot tray.

And so the concern is, some of these kids are walking off with the cold sandwich, and the others have the hot food tray. They're going to be shamed, and there's going to be problems with that.

[21 : 43] And you know what? I'll gladly contribute to take care of some of those accounts, to bring those kids up to date. But on the other hand, and I just read this book called Irresistible.

It's about the addictiveness of technology. And it's really not so much that technology is addictive.

It's that technology puts into hyperdrive the addictive behaviors that are just out there in life.

And one of the things that's mentioned in this book is that as they design these video games, or any kind of games, even Facebook, you don't want it to be super good all the time.

Because if it's super good all the time, what happens? You get bored. You know, if you can defeat every level just like that, you get bored.

And so they design the algorithm, the formula, that if you start winning too much, it'll just throw some more difficulty in on you. It'll knock you down a peg or two.

[23 : 00] And then you've got to kind of work back up. And they've figured out through all of this research and experimentation, there's a sweet spot in there. You win some, but you lose some.

Now, you don't lose all the time. That's kind of the opposite. You lose all the time, guess what? You don't necessarily, you get frustrated and you quit. But there's a sweet spot in there that if you win some, and then you lose some, and you win some more, and then you lose a little bit.

And basically, you know what they're saying? Adversity is good for your development. You can look at some of the best athletes.

You can look at some of the smartest people. You can look at some of the people that have, you know, if you want to call it, succeeded so much in life.

They have faced adversity and overcome it. James is saying, if you want to grow as a Christian, you have to face adversity.

[24 : 08] It's just the way God made us. But he also gives us what we need to overcome adversity and to grow. And what was the term, Mary?

The struggle muscles? You've got to exercise your struggle muscles to grow and develop.

Continuing, verse 5.

If any of you lacks wisdom, now this is another way to deal with adversity. Ask God for wisdom. Ask him who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.

But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea blown and tossed by the wind. That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord.

He is double-minded, unstable in all he does. Verse 9. The brother in humble, he kind of shifts gears here. The brother in humble circumstances ought to take pride in his high position.

[25 : 13] Now, wait a minute, what? But the one who is rich should take pride in his low position, because he will pass away like a wildflower. For the sun rises with scorching heat and withers the plant.

Its blossom fails and its beauty is destroyed. In the same way, the rich man will fade away even while he goes about his business. I think that's another way of saying the last shall be first, and the first shall be last.

Verse 12. Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial, because when he has stood the test, he'll receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

When tempted, now he shifts gears again here. When tempted, no one should say, God is tempting me. For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone.

But each one is tempted when by his own evil desire he is dragged away and enticed. Then, after desire is conceived, it gives birth to sin, and sin, when it is full grown, gives birth to death.

[26 : 23] Reminds me of Romans 3.23. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. In Romans 6.23, For the wages of sin, death.

But the gift of God is eternal life, Jesus Christ our Lord. Verse 16. Do not be deceived, my dear brothers, for every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.

He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we might be a kind of first fruits of all he has created. 19. He shifts again.

My dear brothers, take note of this. Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to become angry, for man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

This is really why I said the ear for chapter one. Quick to hear, slow to speak. If we could memorize that, put that on your bathroom mirror, put it on your dash, quick to listen, slow to speak.

[27 : 50] It'd keep me out of a lot of trouble. Maybe it would keep you out of some as well. All of you wives out there want to raise your hands if that would keep your husbands out of trouble?

No. Surely don't raise that hand there. Verse, oh, verse 20. For man's anger does not bring about, that hit me just a couple of weeks ago, right between the eyes.

Sometimes you've heard that phrase, righteous indignation. I don't know where that came from. I don't think that matches up with verse 20. Man's anger does not bring about the righteous life that God desires.

Verse 21. Therefore get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent, and humbly accept the word planted in you which can save you. Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves.

Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror, and after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.

[29 : 00] But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it, he will be blessed in what he does.

If anyone considers himself religious and yet does not keep a tight rein on his tongue, he deceives himself, and his religion is worthless.

You know, this verse 26, just as you could pair that with verses 19 and 20. Verse 27, Religion that our Father, that God our Father accepts is pure and faultless, is this, to look after orphans and widows and their distress, and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

Well, there's chapter one. Powerful, short chapter in a short book. I want to just make a couple of notes that your outline is there. Two things.

Number one, don't listen to Satan. That seems very simple.

[30 : 17] That cover a lot of ground. Don't listen to Satan. Now, when I make that statement, you know what that assumes? Satan is speaking. And if you don't think Satan is speaking, you're in trouble right there.

Satan is speaking to us every minute of every day. And it could, now I don't want to put the devil behind every rock like that, but I'm telling you, you know, whether it's on TV, whether it's people we talk to, whether it's that voice we hear in our own minds, Satan is speaking lies and deception and destruction to us each and every day.

and we need to recognize that. And we need not listen. Now, obviously, you can't completely tune out that voice, but there are ways to deal with that.

Verse 13, well, really, verses 2 through 18. Don't be deceived. Basically, God is good, Satan is bad. That's pretty simple, isn't it? God is good, Satan is bad. Verse 13 says, when tempted, no one should say, God is tempting me, for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone. [31 : 49] Well, let's look at some temptations in the Bible. The temptation of Jesus. Matthew 4, verses 1 through 11. You know, this God is tempting me, it just depends on what argument, what path you want to walk down.

If God is sovereign, everything happens under the will of God. So does it mean God causes all that to happen? Well, that's above my pay grade. But what James is saying here is, don't blame God for your own troubles, for what you've got yourself into.

Now, let me rephrase that. Obviously, things happen to us that have nothing to do with any decisions we've made. We can be driving down the road, somebody runs a red light and crashes into us.

There's nothing we did about that. We're walking along and we go to the doctor one day, doctor says, I've got some bad news for you and there's something wrong in our lives, in our bodies. For the most part, we've had nothing to do with that. But there are many things we do step one, step two, step three, and boom, we run into the wall.

[33 : 06] And it's exactly because we took step one, we took step two, and we took step three. That's what I think James is trying to say. Don't blame God for what you've got yourself into.

The temptation of Jesus, Matthew 4, verse 1. Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert to be tempted by the devil. After fasting 40 days and 40 nights, he was hungry.

The tempter came to him and said, if you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread. How many of you love bread?

Feeds the world. You know, sometimes I can take it or leave it, but man, there are sometimes, especially if it, I married, I really like the hard, tough outside.

Brown, the browner the better. I don't like burned, but man, I like it really brown. And, you know, it tastes so good.

[34 : 13] Jesus was hungry. I remember a few times being hungry. Those crackers look pretty good when you're hungry, don't they? Those crackers that you wouldn't even pay attention to most of the time, they look pretty good.

And so Jesus was hungry and the devil said, well, make these stones into bread. And Jesus answered, it is written, man does not live by bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Well, right there gives us the template. How do we respond to the temptations from the devil? With the word of God, with the truth. When Satan comes with the lie, we answer it with the truth.

How do you do that? Well, obviously, you need to know the truth to be able to match it up against the lies of Satan. You need to know the truth so then the lies of Satan just kind of pop out.

Like, wow, yeah, that is crazy because I know the truth. Verse 5, then the devil took him to the holy city and had him stand on the highest point in the temple.

[35 : 22] If you are the son of God, he said, throw yourself down for it is written, he will command the angels concerning you and they will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against the stone.

Jesus answered him and said, well, it's also written, do not put the Lord your God to test. And again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor.

All this I will give you if you will bow down and worship me. And Jesus said to him, away from me, Satan, for it is written, worship the Lord your God and serve him only.

Then the devil left him and the angels came and attended him. Now we need to, as we interpret the Bible, we need to understand, you know, this is a descriptive passage.

The Sermon on the Mount would be an instructive passage. This is where Jesus is teaching. Here it's simply recording what happened.

[36 : 31] And so instructive teaching is always clear and a better foundation to build a doctrine on than a descriptive passage.

Because things don't always happen the same way when we're just describing how God has worked over the years. But you can pull some truth from the descriptive.

As you see God working, there are some tendencies he has. There are some ways that he has that do repeat.

And so as we look at the temptation of Jesus, we can say, you know what? How did Jesus fight temptation? He recognized that he was hearing the voice of Satan and that Satan was taking the truth sometimes and twisting it.

Other times he would just flat out going against the truth. But he recognized the lie of Satan and he recognized that even though it might get him some short-term gain, in the long run it was going to create problems and he fought it with the truth of God.

[37 : 46] 1 Corinthians 10.13 tells us, there's no temptation taking you but such as is common to man. But God is faithful who will not suffer to be tempted above that which you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape that you may be able to bear it.

That's the prompt. That's instruction right there. There is no temptation. You can spend all day wondering whether that temptation came from God or the devil or your best friend.

That's not really what you need to worry about. You need to worry about you are in the midst of a temptation and you need to get out of the temptation and God will provide.

It's better not to get in it in the first place but if you catch yourself in a temptation look for the door to get out. God has promised to provide.

And then Hebrews chapter 4 gives us this truth. Hebrews 4.14-16 Seeing then that we have a great high priest that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.

[39 : 02] For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched by the feeling of our infirmities but was in all points tempted as we were yet without sin.

Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy to obtain mercy and you can look at that obtain mercy for the things we've already wrestled with and then to find grace to help in time of need.

Mercy is kind of looking backward. Grace is looking forward. I need mercy for the sin I just committed. I need grace to face the trials and the challenges I'm looking forward to.

James 1 verses 14 and 15 we should not say that God is tempting us but verse 15 we need to understand that it after the desire has conceived it gives birth to sin and sin when it is full grown gives birth to death.

I believe I've got that on your outline there. Desire enticement death sin death. A lot of times we worry about the sin and we should but you know what we should worry about most is the death.

[40 : 30] Sin brings death death. And it may just be the fellowship but it will affect the fellowship.

You know we can hold as fast and firm as we want to to the perseverance of the saints. We can hold as fast and as strong as we want to to the grace of God.

we can hold as fast as we want to to the mercy of God but I'm telling you sin brings death.

And I've not reached that point yet where I don't sin. and if I go out this afternoon or if I this evening if I sin there's going to be a nick to my fellowship with God.

There's going to be a cut to my fellowship with God. There's going to be a pain to my fellowship with God and it needs to be addressed and the quicker we can address it the quicker we will the quicker we'll understand our relationship with God and the stronger our fellowship will be with Him.

[41 : 59] Sin brings death and maybe and I'm I can hear myself as I'm speaking I'm speaking to myself as much as I'm speaking to you.

Maybe if we focused a little more of the consequences of sin than just trying to avoid the sin that would sober us that would strengthen our resolve that would make us appreciate the presence and the love of God that much greater so that we can overcome temptation.

and then number two not only don't listen to God listen to God and do maybe you had obey already anybody already write in obey there there's one in every crowd obey would be as well because doing and obeying that's what it's not just doing activity it's obeying but keeping in the theme of the book of doing listen to God and do verses 19 through 27 the theme of the book is to do verse 22 do not merely listen to the word and so deceive yourselves do what it says let me close with this there's something that you're wrestling with individually a decision that you need to make or just something that you don't have clarity on I believe

God is the author of clarity and I take that by reversing out where it says he's not the author of confusion if you're not the author of confusion it's because you're the author of clarity there's some confusion in your mind how do you deal with that you back up to the point to where there was clarity

what was the last thing that you know as clear as clear can be that God wanted you to do that you didn't do that was the exit ramp that you took that you need to get back on for clarity with God he may have been asking you to serve he may have been asking you to forgive someone he may have been asking you to give he may have been asking you to go somehow he was asking you to step out and do something that you were very uncomfortable with that's one of the reasons I love the ministry I'm involved with

Oklahoma jail and prison ministries our statement is transforming people on both sides of the bars most people think we're going in and we're sharing the gospel with these inmates and that is very very important but it's also the people going in their lives are being transformed and you know why because they are having to step over so many layers of discomfort to go down to the county jail and visit face to face with somebody that for the most part has got a totally different life than they have and so maybe God has been asking you to do something that you've just been uncomfortable doing you need to say yes you need to do to bring back that clarity and strength of God in your life you