

## Matthew 27:32-56

### Title: IT IS FINISHED!

Reading and preaching from the Christian Standard Bible today, which is wonderful translation if you haven't spent any time with it yet. Christian Standard Bible. The CSB

*Pray here?*

We're going to be looking at verses 32-56 today, but we're going to take it section by section as the scene develops. But to get a little context let's back up to verse 27.

**27** Then the governor's soldiers took Jesus into the governor's residence and gathered the whole company around him. **28** They stripped him and dressed him in a scarlet robe. **29** They twisted together a crown of thorns, put it on his head, and placed a staff in his right hand. And they knelt down before him and mocked him: "Hail, King of the Jews!" **30** Then they spat on him, took the staff, and kept hitting him on the head. **31** After they had mocked him, they stripped him of the robe, put his own clothes on him, and led him away to crucify him.

If you have a Bible, put a finger here in Matthew 27 and turn with me over to Psalm 22.

The title of this sermon is: **IT IS FINISHED!**

#### Intro:

- It's taken us, as a church, a year and a half to finish studying the book of Matthew, which is a long time. But for the disciples, which Matthew who is recording this, was one of, and for the rest of the followers of Jesus, this was the end of a **three year** journey — a journey that Jesus invited people to follow him.
- I want us to imagine for a minute that for the three years leading up to this moment, those who followed Jesus had been following him kind down a corridor.
- And all along the way, Jesus pauses at different doors and opens them up as he teaches his followers what God is like, and about the Kingdom of God.
- And He teaches them about God as their Father, and how we ought to relate to God as our Father.
- And he says things like, "I came from my Father. And I am going back to my Father."
- And he talks about roads and paths that lead somewhere. There is obviously a destination for Jesus.
- And so he continues to invite people on this path down this corridor. But now we are here, at the cross — at what is very obviously the end, and where there are seemingly no more doors.
- As we saw last week with Billy, we have followed Jesus to the cross, as Jesus told us we would.

- And for any normal person, this would be the end. But in the Kingdom of God, DEATH leads to life.
- In the Kingdom of God, if you want to find your life, you must first lose it.
- It is at the cross that we give up our life to find it.
- And here we are, and it's like we've followed Jesus down this long corridor and now we are at what appears to be a dead end.
- But this is not an end of the path for Jesus. This IS the path. The whole journey that his followers have been on with him. This isn't the end of that journey. That whole journey was leading to this.
- But they don't know that. All they can see is a cross. All they can see is what looks like the end of the road.
- And it's like, "Ok, well, I guess this is it. That was a fun couple of years with Jesus, but I guess this is the end.
- But Jesus turns around and says, "Watch this." as he opens a door that we didn't even know existed." And as he hold it open for us He says, "Come on in. Everything I've told you about is right here. Every thing I've done and said was leading to this moment right here."
- We saw last week with Billy what following Jesus in the way of the cross looks like, but the cross isn't the end. This corridor doesn't JUST leading to the cross, although that is certainly a mandatory part of it. But it leads to what was on the OTHER SIDE of the cross. Namely relationship with God.
- This is what all of humanity was created for — relationship with God. Everything Jesus did was leading to this moment. THAT is what today is about in our text.
- And THAT is why Jesus endured the cross. It was for THAT joy that He endured the cross. It was for the joy of us coming into intimate, life changing relationship with Him.
- So as we look at this text today, remember that this is where we are heading.
- And remember that this is ALL part of the plan.
- In fact, it is so much a part of the plan that it was prophesied about some 1000 years before. 700 years before crucifixion was even invented, King David, under the power of the Holy Spirit wrote about this day in Psalm 22.
- And Psalm 22 became of beloved Psalm in Israel. Every Jew in the country would've know Psalm.
- And what we will see today, is that this whole Psalm begins to play out before our very eyes. Jesus declaring his Messiahship as even the smallest details of this Psalm are fulfilled.
- So, before we read our passage today, let's try to put ourselves in the shoes of a first century Jew there in Jerusalem that day. And let's read some excerpts from Psalm 22.
- David writing this messianic Psalm in the first person, starts off in Psalm 22 verse 1:
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*(Dom's section below.)*

"My God, my God, why have you abandoned me? My God, I cry by day, but you do not answer, by night, yet I have no rest... I am a worm and not a man, scorned by mankind and despised by people. Everyone who sees me mocks me; they sneer and shake their heads: "He relies on the Lord; let him save him; let the Lord rescue him, since he takes pleasure in him."... Many bulls surround me; strong ones of Bashan encircle me. They open their mouths

against me— lions, mauling and roaring. I am poured out like water, and all my bones are disjointed; my heart is like wax, melting within me. My strength is dried up like baked clay; my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You put me into the dust of death. For dogs have surrounded me; a gang of evildoers has closed in on me; they pierced my hands and my feet. They divided my garments among themselves, and they cast lots for my clothing.” (Psalm 22)

1000 years before Jesus started inviting anyone to follow him down this corridor, the path was already laid out. God had put this into motion long before this moment, and even long before David penned these words. This was the plan before the beginning.

Back to Matthew 27, picking it up where we left off (Matt. 27:32)

**32 As they were going out, they found a Cyrenian man named Simon. They forced him to carry his cross.**

- Now, Matthew doesn't tell us much about this Simon except that he was from Cyrene which is in northern Africa and was 900 miles and a several week journey away, and he is no doubt there for Passover as there were many Jews who lived in Cyrene.
- But in Mark's gospel he tells us that this Simon of Cyrene was the father of Alexander and Rufus, who the book of Romans tells us became prominent Roman church members several years from now.
- At this point Simon the Cyrenian most likely has no clue who Jesus is.
- But at some point after this, this Simon will continue the journey that started right here in following Jesus, and salvation will come to his household and his kids become a key part of the church in Rome.
- Simon from Cyrene has no clue, but this moment on the road to Golgotha right here is about to change his whole life.
- **Sometimes, what seems like just an unnecessary cross to bear, is actually the beginning of something beautiful.**
- Simon thinks he's here just because the soldiers commanded him to carry the cross for Jesus, but actually, God has a bigger plan for Simon and his family, and though he doesn't know it, he isn't being forced; he is being INVITED by God to follow Jesus down this same corridor that many others have followed him down.
- And every step is one step closer to what is on the other side what appears to be the end, namely the cross and death. But there is something more for Simon and for everyone on this path.

**33 [and] when they came to a place called Golgotha (which means Place of the Skull),  
34 they gave him wine mixed with gall to drink. But when he tasted it, he refused to drink it.**

- This was bitter wine mixed with gall, which was usually given, as a sort of pain reliever to those who were being crucified, to help numb the pain of what they were about to endure.
- But Jesus refuses to drink it. Jesus wouldn't take anything that would cloud his faculties or blunt the pain of dying.
- **Jesus chose to suffer every element of woe in the bitter cup of agony on the cross.**

**35** After crucifying him, they divided his clothes by casting lots. **36** Then they sat down and were guarding him there. **37** Above his head they put up the charge against him in writing: This Is Jesus, the King of the Jews. **38** Then two criminals were crucified with him, one on the right and one on the left. **39** Those who passed by were yelling insults at him, shaking their heads **40** and saying, "You who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself! If you are the Son of God, come down from the cross!" **41** In the same way the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him and said, **42** "He saved others, but he cannot save himself! He is the King of Israel! Let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him. **43** He trusts in God; let God rescue him now—if he takes pleasure in him! For he said, 'I am the Son of God.'" **44** In the same way even the criminals who were crucified with him taunted him.

- Every moment of this scene right here was foretold in Psalm 22. 1000 years before this moment, King David, described this whole scene in detail.
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- And every moment is a moment closer to the end of the corridor where Jesus will open up that door into a realm no one even knew existed.
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- **It continues on in v. 45**

**45** From noon until three in the afternoon darkness came over the whole land. **46** About three in the afternoon Jesus cried out with a loud voice, "Eli, Eli, lemá **sabachtháni?**" that is, "My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?" **47** When some of those standing there heard this, they said, "He's calling for Elijah." **48** Immediately one of them ran and got a sponge, filled it with sour wine, put it on a stick, and offered him a drink. **49** But the rest said, "Let's see if Elijah comes to save him."

**"My God, my God, why have you abandoned me."**

- Do you remember how our Psalm 22 began? It began with these exact words. **Psalm 22:1** "My God, My God, why have you abandoned me."
- Jesus who was without sin, 2 Cor 5 says became for us.
- At this moment, there on the cross, Jesus takes on the sin of the whole world, and in turn endures everything that we deserved for our sin including this abandonment from God that shouts out about.

- And it is, verbatim, the first words of this beloved Psalm that we read from. Verbatim, Jesus cries out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.”
- But hold on. It says that he “cried out with a loud voice”
- Do realize that it was virtually impossible to breathe while being crucified, much less speak, much less cry out with a loud voice.
- But Jesus pushes up against the nail in his feet and pulls up on the spikes in his wrists just to get enough air in his lungs to shout because he’s got something to say. Actually two more things to say. But first right here. Jesus is making a declaration.
- He cries out, “My God my God, why have you abandoned me...”
- And as he did, every Jew within in ear shot would have begun to tune in to what was happening.
  - Remember, this was a song that Israel had sung for a thousand years.
  - This was a well known, well loved Psalm.
- Every Jew in Israel would have known this Psalm. And Jesus doesn’t just shout out some random part of the Psalm. He shouts out the first words of the Psalm, as if to start it off for the people.
- It would be like us quoting Psalm 23, “The Lord is my shepherd I shall not...”
- **That** is what this moment is about. Jesus right here is like the greatest worship leader of all time. **He is starting the song for the people.**
- It’s like if I sang, “Then sings my soul my...”
- **Jesus is starting the song for the people.** And as he does, every single Jew in nearby would have begun to fill in the rest.
  - Wait a minute
    - (“My God my God....that’s Psalm 22 “)
    - (“I am a worm (the scarlet die; the color of blood, crushed to bring out the beauty. Wait he’s being crushed.)
    - (Wait a minute, we’re mocking him with same exact words of Psalm 22.)
    - Wait a minute Psalm 22? Psalm 22 is about HIM. Wait a minute, King David was writing about Jesus? Why would he write about ... wait a minute, David was writing about the messiah... wait a minute Jesus is the mess...)
- This wasn’t just about Jesus being abandoned by God. If that’s all this was about, then why why go through the trouble and pain of shouting it out for everyone to hear? Why not just whisper.
- It’s because this moment wasn’t for God to hear. This moment was for the to hear. This moment was for Israel to hear. God KNEW what was happening. This moment was for the people to realize what was happening.
- And this moment wasn’t cry for help. This moment was cry of declaration. Jesus was saying, “Everything you’ve read. Every song you’ve sung. It was all pointing to me. I am He. I am the one you’ve been waiting for.”
- **Long before King David penned it, God was writing this song; and here Jesus is bringing it to life; and we will be singing it for all of eternity, as we proclaim forever what Jesus did that day on the cross.**

*The passage continues on in v. 50...*

**50 But Jesus cried out again with a loud voice and gave up his spirit.**

“Stop right there.”

- That's it. The work is done. Everything has been leading to this moment. And it is done.
- John gives us a detail about this moment that Matthew doesn't include. He tells us that when Jesus cried out, he didn't just yell **nothing**. He yelled a very specific **something**...
- He once again pushes up against the nail in his feet and pulls up on the spikes in his wrists to allow himself to inhale, and with one last exhale and a shout of victory loud enough for heaven and hell both to hear, he cries out, “**Tetelestai**”, which means “**It is finished**”.

And you know what's awesome about this word “tetelestai” (Translated “it is finished”)? It's not just the words, but the **tense** of the words. In the Greek language the verb tenses are the most important and most communicative part of the language. And when Jesus cried out “It is finished” he said it in the **perfect tense**.

**Perfect tense** = combination of aorist and present tenses.

The **aorist tense** means: Something happened at a particular time in history and was completed.

The **present tense** means that is happening now and forever.

**“It is finished” in the perfect tense means that “it is finished” as in it is done and will never need to be visited again, AND it will continue to be finished forever.**

IT. IS. FINISHED.

**WHAT IS FINISHED?**

- **Redemption** is finished.
- **Prophecy** concerning the Messiah has come to pass.
- **The Old Covenant of the law** is abolished.
- **Rituals** to cover sin and make ourselves right with God are no longer needed.
- **Work** is done.
- **The Penalty** of sin is paid in full.
- **The Weight** of sin has been lifted.
- The **Payment** for our sin has been payed for.
- **Condemnation** is finished.
- **Death** is destroyed.
- **Chains** of sin are broken.
- **Slavery** to to sin is done.
- The **Cycle** of generational sin is broken.
- **Labels** are torn down.
- **The need to prove yourself** is done.
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- Because Jesus performed perfectly on the cross you are free to NOT have to be perform perfect. Or to even try! You don't have to try prove yourself to anyone or to yourself. Jesus proved himself, and you are in him. Walk in that. REST in that.

**Everything that needed to be done for us to pass from spiritual death to life, and to come into relationship with God, HAS BEEN FINISHED AND WILL FOREVER BE FINISHED.**

And this is where we rest church. We rest in the completed work of Jesus that was completed 2000 years ago **and** is completed forever.

- So Jesus cries out with a loud voice, "It is finished".
- Imagine this scene. It said back in verse 45 that darkness had fallen over the land for three hours straight.
- It's the afternoon. It's not supposed to be dark.
- So, If you're standing there, you're definitely getting the sense that something is going on.
- Then Jesus yells out the first words of Psalm 22, and the Jews are starting to trip out, "Oh my gosh. This is happening right now. Wait a minute. I know this Psalm. This is playing out just like David wrote."
- All attention is on Jesus, and then He cries out, "It is finished." The weight of sin - it is lifted. The penalty of sin — it is lifted. Judgment UPON sin, is poured out on Jesus.
- You know how we talked about being at the end of that corridor where it seemed like there was nothing more?
- Well Jesus is about to kick down a door that we didn't even know existed.
- **Everyone is looking to the cross and then notice the shift.**

**51** Suddenly, the curtain of the sanctuary was torn in two from top to bottom, the earth quaked, and the rocks were split. **52** The tombs were also opened and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised. **53** And they came out of the tombs after his resurrection, entered the holy city, and appeared to many.

- Did you see the shift? Jesus cries out "It is finished" and dies, and the focus of the whole scene changes.
- Even Matthew who is recording this moves the attention of the readers.
- In a moment, everyone who is there's attention shifts from the **suffering** of the cross to the **implications** of the cross.
- It shifts from Jesus **dying on** the cross, to the EVERYTHING changing as a **result** of his dying on cross.
- This is it right here. This is where everything changes. for us. Don't miss the shift here AWAY from the cross. The cross is not the end. The cross is the beginning. Don't miss this.
- Some of you are still sitting at the cross feeling bad about your sin, or feeling like you haven't been performing well enough to get up and live.

- But Jesus already did it. It is finished. Stop living like it's not finished.
- We **DO** need to come to foot of the cross.. We **DO** need to know that Jesus bore all of our sin and shame there. That IS essential.
- **Jesus didn't stay on the cross. He didn't stay there. And neither should you.**
- **When Jesus gave up his spirit it was like he busted open that door at the end of the corridor.**
- **And on the other side of the corridor, we start to see everything change as the veil in the temple is torn from top to bottom.**
  - (The CSB translated it "curtain". That's a great translation too.)
- **The veil is torn in two.**
- **We're talking a massive 4 inch thick beautiful, heavy curtain, that was intended to keep everyone except the high priest out — it is torn in two.**
- **And notice HOW it is torn — (v. 51) "FROM TOP TO BOTTOM."**
  - Matthew makes sure to include this detail for us to make sure that we know that no man went in there and cut this thing. The historian Josephus wrote that the veil was so thick that if you tied to horses to either side and had them run in opposite directions, that you couldn't tear the veil.
  - This was GOD reaching down from heaven and tearing this veil in two FROM TOP TO BOTTOM.
- **The Veil — that which represented separation from God was torn apart.** That which reminded the people every day that there was no intimacy without sacrifice —that there was no relationship without ritual. That has been broken.
- And Hebrews tells us that Jesus IS the veil. Jesus IS the ritual. Jesus IS the High priest.
- **What is finished? Separation from God is finished!**
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- And then it is says (end v.51) ("**Rocks were split**):
- We're talking boulders here. Not pebbles. Huge rocks were split open.
- **Rocks — that which was used to weigh things down, barricades things up, and close things off, were broken when Jesus died.**
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- **And then (v.52) the tombs were also opened and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised.**
- **Graves:** That which housed death was broken.
- The Bible says that Death is the great enemy. But every enemy, even the great enemy of death is defeated in Jesus.
- He shouts out with a triumphant cry of victory of his enemies, and he goes forth like a Warrior, the prophet Isaiah wrote.
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- Even **The earth quaked.**
- **The earth — the foundation of everything was shook.**
- That which EVERYTHING is built on, shook.
- Do you see what's happening here? God is changing everything.
- And Everything is the seen is echoing what is happening in the unseen.

- The whole earth began to echo in the physical, what God was doing in the spiritual. God was breaking chains of spiritual bondage. Breaking chains of sin. Breaking chains of idolatry. Chains of addiction. Breaking demonic chains and strongholds.
- And at that very God starts breaking chains, rocks begin to breaking open.
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- And people's foundations began to shift. Foundations of false identity were being shook. That which people had built their entire lives upon. Lies about ourselves; lies about who God is; foundations that we had built everything upon, and lenses that we saw everything through were being shook, as the earth, the began to shake.
- **The cross is the great earthquake of human history. It shakes the foundations of every we believe and know.**
- The earth is the physical foundation of everything and it starts to quake. God is echoing in the physical what He is doing in the spiritual.
- As Jesus dies on the cross people who were spiritually dead in their sins and trespasses began to pass from spiritual death into life. People started getting born again. Chained up slaves to sin, start getting free. Chains up addicts start being set free. Dead people start coming to life as literally dead people start **literally (physically)** rising from the dead.
- We tend to gloss over this because there is so much going on here. But wait a minute! WHAT???! I mean, it was crazy when Jesus rose Lazarus from the dead, but that was one dude! This is not just one dude. This is MANY people.
- Can you even imagine this scene. It's the middle of the day, and the the whole sky goes black. Kinda freaky. Then at the moment Jesus yells out "IT IS FINISHED", the earth starts shaking, super freaky.
- Then people no doubt are in the temple worshipping and they hear from inside the holy of holies the sound of this massive veil tearing and falling. Scary
- The rocks start splitting in half, which probably means rocks rolling down hills. Freaky.
- **Then people who have been dead, still wrapped in their grave clothes, start waking up and coming out of their graves!!!!**
- **When Jesus died on the cross, the entire physical landscape of Jerusalem changed in a moment. This is what God does through Jesus. He changes the entire landscape of everything that we knew to be reality.**
- If your life still seems pretty much the same as before you knew Jesus, then there is something wrong. Something is keeping you from knowing God for who he really is.
- Something is preventing you from the power of God breaking through in your life. I
- t could be doubt, or habitual sin, or some kind of wall of self preservation that you have up to protect yourself from people, but it's also insulated yourself from the power of God in your life.
- It could be a number of things, but if the landscape of your life hasn't changed, and your entire perspective on life hasn't changed, then we need to pray through that.
- Today that needs to change. Today, you need to let go and get free. (*get prayer during 2nd set*)
- Because:
- **This is what happens when Jesus shows up.**
- Things that appear to big and strong like rocks and veils, are broken and torn down.

- Things that appeared to be dead (and actually are dead), are risen to life.
  - Even that which is as final as DEATH, Jesus says, nope, “You too. You are defeated.”
  - Those things that seem like they are final and with no possibility of repair, Jesus says, “Nope. You too.” You too are under my control. You too do whatever I command you to do.
  - Every impossible situation. Every seemingly final thing. It can be changed in a moment when Jesus speaks to it commands it to be so.
  - That which seems to be permanent and final, Jesus says, “NOPE. You don’t get the final word. I do.” This is what God does guys.
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- Can you imagine this scene? Everything is shifting. It was like, God was saying, “Listen, I know you can’t see what I see. But, I am watching EVERYTHING being to change right now.
- I am watching a perfectly orchestrated plan culminate right here and now.
- I am seeing thousands of years of foreshadowing all coming to a head right here.
- **So let me echo for you in the natural what is actually happening in the spiritual.** You can’t see this.
- But what I see is **millions of spiritually dead people coming to life.**
- I am watching **millions of lost people come home.**
- I am seeing **millions of people who thought they were just whatever society told them they were finding their identity in me.**
- And I know you can’t see any of this of this happening because it’s all in the spiritual, so let me show you what it’s like.
- **It’s like this!** (Dead people start rising from their graves.
- **It’s like this!** Rocks start falling apart!
- **It’s like this!** Old foundations start crumbling!
- **It’s like this!** Walls of separations start being torn down.
- Almost everything Jesus taught us about the things that were unseen, he taught us by using physical illustration (Vines, Bread, Water Wells, Wine, Mountains, Lakes, Boats, the list goes on.)
- Jesus told Parables so that we could understand the truth about the things we couldn’t physically see. This scene was His last great parable, as all of creation echoed, that day, what was happening in the unseen.
- This is the where everything changes. The door at the end of the corridor has been opened, and everything is changing.

And then our passage ends with this:

**54** When the centurion and those with him, who were keeping watch over Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they were terrified and said, “Truly this man was the Son of God!” **55** Many women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and looked after him were there, watching from a distance. **56** Among them were Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee’s sons.

- A centurion means the officer who commanded the guard. "Centum". It means "100". This officer commanded 100 guards. "The centurion and those with". This officer and those under his authority who were there attending to the crucifixion of Jesus, after all of this, realize, "Everything that he said about himself to the authorities; the snarling that he heard from those gathered around saying, "This man said he was the son of God". It's all true. **"Truly this man was the son of God"**.
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- But this wasn't everyone. So many still wouldn't believe because of the hardness of their hearts. So many in the crowd that day, were blinded to what was actually happening. So many that day didn't respond.
- There's two camps here. And everyone of us in one camp or the other. Which one are you in?
- How do you respond to Jesus? Do you join in with those mocking him and making him just some man. Or will you see Jesus for who he is and recognize as being the son of God.
- Today is the day to choose.
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- Jesus changed everything that day.

**I know I'm out of time here, but give me 2 minutes. I want to ask 4 quick questions.**

### **What needs to change in your life today?**

- **Is there a veil of separation the needs to be torn down?**
- The veil reminded the people that they were separated, but it also reminded them that of the performance and ritual that had to be done by the high priest in order for sins to be covered. Are you living with this kind of veil up. It needs to be torn down today? What is keeping you from intimacy, let it be torn down in Jesus name.
- **What rocks need to be broken and shattered?**
- Are there rocks that you have stacked up like walls? Rocks are great for making walls out in order protect whatever is inside. The problem is when we put up these walls to protect ourselves from maybe dangerous people or situations, those same walls are up toward God.
- Dam walls are great for controlling water flow, but Dams also kill much of the wildlife behind them.
- Tight sealed homes are great for saving money on electric bills, but they also become the breeding ground for bacteria and toxins.
- Today those rock walls need to be torn down.
- **Is there something dead that needs to be risen?**
- Has hope died? A relationship? A passion? A calling.
- Is there a situation that seems to far gone like it can't be brought back to life?
- Come to Jesus and ask him to raise that up like those people rose that day. That's what he does.
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- Is God wanting to shake up your foundation and give you a new one?
- Have you built your relationship with God on the foundation of you seeing him as the grand rule keeper, keeping a tally of all of your wrongs — pouring out blessing when you make good decisions, and holding it back when you make bad ones?
- That's not who God is.
- Do you think God is disappointed with you? He's not. Mad at you? He's not. Waiting for you to perform well, or change the world? He's not.
- That foundation that you've been building on needs to be shaken up today. God wants to give you a new foundation to build on where it is based on the performance of Jesus, not you.