

42nd Annual

Thanksgiving Prayer Breakfast

Rough Transcript

Special Guest Speaker **Eric Koeser** – Co-Founder, Diversified Concept Development.

Alex Glover:

All right. We have a phenomenal speaker for you guys this morning, Eric Koeser. Eric is a husband to his college sweetheart, Jen, father of three incredible children, and an active member of Lakeside Church in Oakland. Professionally, a diversified entrepreneur. The Lord has given him the opportunity to develop over 350 million in revenue through multiple businesses and concepts over the past 17 years.

Eric started his first company at the age of 25, based off their US-patented hand tool, and began his career in franchising and concept development in 2009 with Kilwins Chocolates and Ice cream. He was recruited in 2011 to be a multi-unit area developer, rolling out BurgerFi in the Orlando market in Seminole and Lake counties. Was co-developer of the innovated preschool concept, Amazing Explorers Academy in 2015.

He started HUMBL, plant-based eats as co-founder with celebrity chef, Matthew Kenney in 2018, and has been the co-founder and managing principal of Ethnos Development, a real-estate consulting and development firm that helps churches monetize idle assets into sustainable economic engines since 2014. Eric serves on the board of advisors for several nonprofits, Christian ministries, including his role as VP of strategy on the executive committee for the Better Man Event. Servant leadership and business as ministry are his guiding principles. Everybody give a round of applause for Eric Koeser.

Eric Koeser:

All right. Sounds like it's on. We're good. Morning, guys.

I was in prayer when Brett asked me to come and speak. I've actually sat at these tables many a times over the last 10 or 12 years. I've heard a great previous speakers in the past, like Stephen Baldwin and Wayne Huizenga Jr., and good mentor of mine, business partner, Ed Kobel. I'm like, "Brett, I'm not your guy." Like, "No one's going to show up." He's like, "No, no, no, the guys come every Friday. The guys will be there. So you're our guy."

The reason why I mention that is really when I was in prayer, what I felt like the Father gave me was my story, your story for His glory. See, there's really no difference between you and I. I'm up here today. 10, 12 years ago, I was sitting at that same with you guys. Through it all, God has used every circumstance, every opportunity along the way, every difficulty, every challenge, to ultimately get me to where I am today, but also where He's taking me in the future.

I'm going to take a short amount of time. I'm just going to share my story of what God's done in my life, where I came from, where I am today, where I hope He's taking me in the future. I think at the end of the day, each one of us has got a testimony. When you really think about, and you read through the gospels and then most of the New Testament, they spread the entire story of Christ, which we call Christianity through testimony. It was like, "Man, you won't believe what Jesus did when He spit on the dirt and took some mud and He rubbed it on the guy's eyes, and he was healed."

It was the story. They were unbelievable stories that no one would believe if they hadn't seen it with their own two eyes. But the reality is, is God's still in the miracle business. He's doing it in your life. He's doing it in your marriage. He's doing it with your kids on a daily basis. But we have to be bold as men and be willing to share the trials and the tribulations and what God's doing in those miracles that are happening, in the unseen and in the seen, and be willing to say and share that with other men and other people so God can get the glory, because God is still in the miracle business.

I got one amen, that's good. I go to a talk-back church. Really my story starts out similar to a lot of people. I think the term self-made is foolish, now being a believer, because God does it all and He's the creator. But I started out very, very humble beginnings, trailer park kid. Grew up in the other side of the tracks, if you will. I'm a kid from the hood. Ironically, look growing up in that environment, I had an alcoholic father, and some of the challenges that come with living in a house that's filled with substance and a toxic environment, literally, toxic environment.

So didn't really have a great relationship with my dad. I got daddy issues. Anybody else got daddy issues? You all do. You all need to raise your hand. We've all got daddy issues. We're just not willing to admit it. I was with my counselor on Wednesday. I'm a very transparent guy. I fell into the wrong crowd like most of us did. I got arrested for a double felony when I was 13 years old. We had this really cool game we used to play and we would roll into Nordstrom's or Saks Fifth Av., we used to call it, the bologna sandwich.

Back in the day, they didn't have the RFID tags. It was before they had the attendant at the changing room. We'd walk up and there'd be three pairs of jeans or four pairs of jeans, and we'd do the old bologna sandwich trick. We push one in, grab two, stick it under our arm. Really had three pairs of jeans, but you only saw two. Then you go in the changing room, we put a pair of Girbauds, Z. Cavaricci's back in the day. Come on. You know what they're like. Come on.

Even back then they were like 250 bucks. Talk about inflation almost 20 years later. And then, we rolled around with a crew called the Hit Squad. Grew up in north Jersey, Jersey City. My grandfather was from the Bronx. He was a steam fitter from the Bronx. My dad was a local 274 pipefitter from Jersey City. Interestingly enough, we'd get twenty-five bucks on the street with Jelani, who used to run our little crew and steal three pairs of jeans a day, couple of days a week in the course of the summer.

I was making 250 bucks, 300 bucks a week in the summer at 13. My mom was cleaning houses as a maid, maybe working five days a week, busting her butt 10, 12 hours a day for 250 bucks. Unbeknownst to my parents, I had a bag full of money under my bunk bed. That's just where I think I get the drive. I always said that I wanted to be a millionaire before I turned 30. I didn't grow up in a faith-based household. Quite the opposite.

But having been arrested at 13 and living in a three-family row house in Jersey City, my grandparents lived downstairs. We lived in the middle apartment and we had another family that lived in the apartment above us. My grandmother was Irish Catholic and my grandfather was German Protestant. It was like Irish car bombs in my house, all the time. But my grandmother petitioned a priest at a church that we never went to. She knew of a program that the Archdiocese of Newark had for troubled boys.

I get arrested, double felony. We're doing our thing. We had no idea. They had like a 21 Jump Street undercover crew at the mall. They had caught on to the fact that we were hitting all these high-end retailers, Bloomingdale's, Saks Fifth Av. My entire summer, going into my eighth grade year, we just made bank. We made money. But my summer going on to my freshman year, they had caught on, and we had no idea. It was like the second week of summer and we're walking out of the food court.

We had this whole routine we would do. We'd always go to the food court, eat, whatever. So it wasn't a big scene. Then we'd split up and wander out. While we're walking through the food court, and it's like, "Freeze." Hit the ground. Well, I used to carry a little metal pipe that I got out of my dad's work van,

wrapped it in duct tape. I used to carry it like a thug would carry something like... But I was never a knife or a gun guy.

I drop, hit the ground. I've got over \$500 worth of stolen goods on, because I had two pairs of Girbauds and a pair of Z. Cavariccis. And I had a concealed weapon, which is a metal pipe wrapped in duct tape. And so, anyway, it should have been a knife or a gun. It'd be a cooler story. So I get arrested for a double felony and per usual, my dad wasn't around. But my grandfather came and picked me up from the police station. My mom and dad were both at work.

Probably part of the issue was there was zero supervision, and we were just free to roam and do whatever we wanted. My grandfather was probably the biggest influence in my life and more of a father figure than my own dad. His initials were E.L.K, and I named my two boys after my grandfather, which is an interesting story and I just share that as a tidbit on a sidebar. But my grandmother and my grandfather picked me up. My grandmother petitions the Archdiocese of Newark and I get included in this opportunity to enroll in the program.

I'm sharing probably four or five things with you today that are God pillars in my life. Even though I didn't know God at the time, I can reflect now in hindsight this 2020. But I could see it through the lens of Christ and through the Holy Spirit. I can see that God was working in my life even then. This is the worst case scenario for me. My father is literally going to beat the, out of me. I don't want to go home. I'm with my grandparents, the whole nine. They end up getting me into this program.

I end up going into an all-boys Catholic school. Probably one of the most elite private schools in north Jersey, an hour and a half away from my house. I rode a bus for an hour and a half each way. I'm on the corner of 5:30 in the morning, catching the bus to school. I'd say St. Joseph's Regional is probably like a Monteverde, for those of you that are here that are local.

I get arrested, huge devastation. I'm no longer going to be hanging with my friends. Huge culture shock. I'm now riding a bus up into like suburbia. The school's like five miles from BMWs at the time, North America headquarters. One of the greatest pieces of advice I got from my grandfather was, "Hey, you're going to be rolling around with some kids whose parents are doctors, and lawyers, and businessmen. He said, "You need to be a sponge for knowledge," because I was going to be around a totally different class of people.

I'm really thankful to the Lord because at St Joe's I got an introduction to faith. It was literally forced into me. It was beat into us, catechism classes and all that. How many Catholics in the house, or reformed Catholics? Yeah. Yeah. That was my introduction to religion, which helped shape probably a lot of my story too as well. But what's fascinating about that experience is I actually got most changed in four years. I came in there like this hood rat and I left a Division I recruit, National Honor Society, 3.8 GPA. Just incredibly thankful for that opportunity. My eyes were open.

My identity, we used to be caught up in the fact that I was Eazy-E. I can tag that up. It might be somewhere around town here if you... I had this identity in my friends and in that lifestyle. Then I go to St Joe's and I become this jock, this jock academic guy. In my senior year, we were eighth in the nation in football. We were number one in the state, and we were playing at Giants Stadium against Delbarton High School, 1995, December 2nd, 1995.

Three days before my 18th birthday, we're running a 26 sweep with Cooper Rego who went on to play at Notre Dame and spent some time in the NFL. I'm crack blocking on the outside linebacker, put my feet in the turf, locking in. Henry Polio was our fullback. Went on to play at Iowa. Spent some time playing middle linebacker for the Carolina Panthers. Clips me, boom, Joe Theismann break, tibia and fibula. There's 14,000 people in the stands, it's live on TV and you hear like a two by four snap.

I get carted off. It's a cool thing because I was a Jet fan at time. But they actually carted me off on the Jet cart. I did the... Yeah. Three days before my 18th birthday, tibia, fibia, tibia, fibia, fibula. Any doctors in

the house? Metal rod, four screws, and I spend the next 48 days on my back, including my 18th birthday, in a hospital bed with my mom wiping my butt, which is a fascinating way to spend your 18th birthday.

I fell into a series of depression, Percocets, the whole nine. I had gotten away from all that. I was a straight edge guy. My dad was an alcoholic, so I was like, "I don't want to get involved in all that." But Percocets, start smoking weed, the whole nine, incredibly depressed. My whole identity was flushed down the toilet. Second major thing that happened in my life. Again, complete life changing.

At the time, knowing about God, because of the ruler, all boys Catholic school, the ruler, and literally I'm going to be this D-I recruit. I'm going to be this college athlete. I was a dual sport all-state athlete, baseball and football. Over 13 offers D-I, D-I-AA. Spent one of my five official visits at Auburn for baseball, one at Yale, UPenn, and I break my leg in Giants Stadium, the biggest game of my life. I'm like, "What the heck?"

Severely depressed, as I mentioned, and just spiral out of control, "What am I going to do? Who am I? What's my life going to look like now? I thought I was on this completely different path. I thought I was going to be big time. Miss my senior year. I was co-captain my senior year of baseball. That was a huge devastation for me. But I had to make a decision. I'm a senior. What am I going to do? Am I going to go to school? I toyed with the idea of culinary school. I always liked to cook. My grandmother instilled that in me. It was super fun, Sunday dinners.

Anybody have a grandma that made Sunday dinner that you could not miss. Yeah. You ever have to clean your bowl with the bread. Oh yeah. That's good gravy right there. What am I going to do? Well, I want to be a millionaire before I turn 30, because I'm never going to be poor again. I've been around all these millionaires, all these kids. I mean, rich kids, Monteverde kids. Some of you all send your kids to Monteverde. It's no offense. But these kids are driving BMWs in high school and I'm like, "Are you kidding me?"

That's what I want to be. I want to be driving the BMW. I decided to go to business school and I had a number of different options. But I chose a Northeastern University in Boston. I wanted to be in a big city. I'm a city boy. I got in through academics, into the college of business at Northeastern. I'm on orientation and it's July of 1996. I meet my roommate. When you go to orientation, you get a roommate. You check in on a Wednesday and you're there through Sunday.

I get this like total doofball. Kid's name was Adam. Somebody that I would never be friends with. I'll never forget it. Adam had these little, little tiny ears and they folded over like this. I'm like, "Oh gosh, I've got to spend the next five days with this kid." I'm like, "This is awful." God works in mysterious ways. We're on the last night of the cruise, I sneak off campus. I've got a fake ID. I almost revert back to that mentality of being a street kid where I'm always looking for an angle. I'm always looking for an angle. I'm always trying to make money.

I sneak off campus, totally against the rules. I could have got thrown out of school before I even got into school. Sneak off campus, fake ID. Get two bottles of Absolut Citron, like four bottles of Powerade. Mix them up, put them in the backpack. We're going to have a party on the cruise, the Starlight cruise that goes around Boston Harbor the last night. We get on the bus. There's three buses. There's like maybe 1,500 kids there for orientation. And I'm with Adam.

I'm stuck with this kid, fricking chained to him the whole time. Ironically enough, I almost got him thrown out of school too. But we get on the boat and I'm smoking cigarettes. We're drinking Citron. Our boat, we're having the party boat. We're on the top deck. Adam goes to the bathroom. He comes back and he sees this smoking hot blonde chick. She's wearing the shorts with overalls, back in the day. I'm like, "How does this dork know that hot chick?" He comes back over, I'm like, "Dude, you've got introduce me to that chick. Dude, I need to know her," whatever, because that's the kind of chick that I get, not you, bro, come on.

He introduces me to Jen. They went to the same high school in Connecticut in a little tiny, tiny town called Shelton, Connecticut. She's on one of three boats. She went to high school with this kid that I can't stand, that I've been with for the whole time. At one of three orientations over the course of the summer, there was an orientation in June, in July, and in August. And she's on the same boat. There was three boats each with 500 kids on them.

Now, I'm a mathematical, God bless you, statistical junkie. What are the odds that I get that kid, he went to high school with her, same orientation weekend, we're on the same boat. Fast forward two months later, it's fall, moving day. I'm in Spear Hall. It's two 14 story towers. I'm on the west building. Out of the east building walks Jen. I'm like, "Hey, remember me, cool guy from the boat." She's like, "No." I'm like, "Adam's roommate." She's like, "Oh yeah." Adam became the thing that ultimately my now wife remembers.

Only God, because I'm the DB that was like... I am a DreamBuilder, but I'm the douche that's literally like, "I can't believe I've got to spend..." And it ends up being my introduction to my wife. Now, the reason why that's significant, that's the third major thing that happened. I get arrested at 13. I break my leg. I meet Jen. Well, fast forward, she ignores me for three years. I was the campus drug dealer, whatever. I'm always hustling, doing whatever I've got to do and paying my way through college.

She would never talk to me because of my reputation and who I was and what I was doing. At the end of the day, what it came down to was a God thing, an absolute miracle. Something happened in her heart. If I don't meet Jen, I'm not standing here today. It's my wife and her father, Dennis, that ultimately lead me to the Lord. It's a really powerful testimony, obviously, for me and my family because I'm a first-generation believer. I'm a first-generation college kid, First-generation believer.

Speed up the story a little bit because Pat really wants me to talk about business as ministry and what we do with all this stuff. I moved to Florida in '05. Got married in '03. My father-in-law and my mother-in-law gave me a copy of the Purpose-Driven Life, Christmas of '03, the Christmas after we got married in October. It sat on my shelf for two years. My Uncle L.D. had this idea, this widget he came up with in his garage. He was a master carpenter. He's like, "Eric," because I was the college kid. He's like, "I got this idea."

I'm like, "Okay, Uncle L.D." He's like, "I call it the pin knocker." I'm like, "Okay." I ended up calling it the Hinge Helper, branding it the Hinge Helper. Ended up getting a US patent, overseas manufacturing, the whole nine. I'm running the entire business out of the front of our house. I'd seen on TV commercial, and I'm going to share this one major last point and then I'm going to get into business as ministry.

But, ultimately, what ended up happening was we ended up selling the patent rights and the manufacturing rights to a publicly traded company out of West Valley City, Utah for \$22 million. February of '07, started the company in '05. Two years later, I sell it for 22 million. I took a \$250,000 HELOC, home equity line of credit out of our house, to fund the business. I am 29, and remember, I'm being a millionaire before I turn 30. I'm 29 and I sell it for 22 million. Now I'm like, "Boom," paid.

The first royalty check, there were going to be about \$500,000 royalty checks every quarter, over about a 10-year time period. It's now March of '07. The first check doesn't come. I'm like, "All right." Get on a horn with my lawyer, send a letter. Three months later, the second royalty check doesn't come. It's now like July of '07. Well, the majority of that 22 million was based on a purchase order with Walmart. It was an 1,800 store distribution was the first trial.

Sales criteria, performance criteria was 10 units per store per week, 1,800 stores, 18,000 units per week, 72,000 units per month. Do the math. It adds up really, really quick. So where's my money? Second lawyer letter goes out. By time the third royalty check hadn't come out, it was now fall of '07. Unbeknownst to most of the modern world, the entire mortgage banking system, the entire banking system in the United States was collapsing. Who is the largest consumer of debt? Walmart.

Walmart had two of the largest lines of credit in the entire commercial banking world. Walmart knew that those lines were squeezing. Their access to credit was diminishing. They didn't issue our purchase order. The company who had the rights and who had all their products on shelves at Walmart didn't inform me that the purchase order never got issued. So there's all types of breach of contract and this, that, and the other thing. But at the end of the day, the 22 million evaporates, never happens. And God breaks me into 22 million pieces.

I had received Christ reading *The Purpose-Driven Life* in August of '05 and I'm figuring it out. I'm getting plugged into all these men's groups and the whole nine. I'm on fire. But then in '07, when the S hits the fan and the whole world's on fire and everything's burning down, I've got nothing, and I had leveraged our house. My wife is nine months pregnant with our first child and the sheriff knocks on the door with foreclosure docs. I'm like, "Lord."

Brings me to my knees, like He does each and every one of us at that moment. I rededicate my life. I cry out to the Lord. It was a Holy Ghost moment. It was fire. I don't even remember what happened or what I said, but at that point, I feel like God touched my life in a super profound way. And it was at my lowest moment. I committed to God from that point forward that everything I did, I would do for His honor and His glory. I said, "If you ever gave me the opportunity to start another business, we're going to dedicate it to you. And everything we're going to do in that business is going to be for you and for your glory."

I guess what I really want to leave you with today, as far as business as ministry, is you have to be intentional. Whenever we open a BurgerFi, whenever we open a preschool, whenever we do anything that we're going to do, we dedicate the business, we dedicate the ground, we dedicate the building to the Lord. We anoint it with oil. We cover the walls in scripture. We bring out all of our small groups and we literally dedicate the space to the Lord. It becomes holy ground for the Father.

Then we're super intentional about how we minister to our staff. Had a very good mentor of mine, Randy Alligood. He wrote one piece of verbiage into our employee handbook that says, "I acknowledge that I'm coming to work for a faith-based business managed using biblical principles." And then there's a bunch of other legal verbiage, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and then they sign it. Gets torn out of the handbook, goes in their file.

Now, for their entire career working for one of our businesses, we can now share the gospel. We use a principle called transformational leadership, which my boy, Scotty Moore, helped introduce us to a gentleman named Ford Taylor out of Cincinnati, transformational leadership. Every employee signs of social covenant, we're not going to gossip. It outlines how we're going to treat each other. If you say something to me about him and I'm neither a part of the problem or the solution, you have 24 hours to reconcile with him, okay? If you don't, we're going to sit down the three of us and we're going to hash it out.

You'd be amazed how quick you eliminate gossip in your culture and how your business flourishes. We've got some of the highest retention rates in the entire BurgerFi brand. BurgerFi went public in December of this past year, of 2020, publicly traded company. We've got two of the highest performing stores in the entire brand, out of 180 plus locations globally. I'm not saying that we're blessed and highly favored, but we're blessed and highly favored, because we literally are very intentional about how we minister.

I've got some crazy, crazy testimonies and I'll share one with you. A girl that worked for us, we'll call her Ciara. Worked for us about six months. She was going to school part-time. She had a young baby. Scheduling conflicts didn't work out. She hadn't worked for us for about six months. It had been a year since she started with us, worked six months, and then hadn't been with us six months. You all tracking? Her little brother comes out one morning before school. His eyes are rolled back in his head. He's foaming at the mouth and he pees himself. And it's about seven 30 in the morning.

She calls my operating partner at the time, Daryl Baer, and says, "Hey, I know you all are religious. Can you pray for my brother?" And she explains what I just explained to you. Daryl's an ex Darden guy, and ex Bloomin'Brands guy. He's opened 120 restaurants. He's the restaurant guy. He doesn't know what to do. I don't know what to do. I'm not formally trained. I've got zero training. You've heard who I am. I'm just like the rest of you guys.

But he calls me. We had a chaplain on staff. We're very intentional. I've got people I pay full time. They're chaplains. They're pastors. They're on staff. They're salaried. All they do every day is minister to staff. We've got over 600 employees across the portfolio and we preach in every one of our locations. We call Michael, Michael's like, "What hospital is he at?" Like, "What hospital is he at? We're just going to pray for him. We're going to do it on the phone. We're going to pray." He's like, "No, we're going." I'm like, "We're going? But that's what all you pastors do. You guys do hospital visits? I'm not a pastor." We show up and the Holy Spirit gives Michael a word that Ciara and her mom, and he's in pediatric ICU at Florida Hospital downtown, off Princeton. I've never done this before. Daryl's never done this before. We've got to put on the white suits and the whole nine, whatnot. But before we do, the Holy Spirit gives Michael a word and He's like, "They don't know me. They don't know me, Michael."

So he leads Ciara and her mom to the Lord in the room, staring at their little brother, waiting for the pediatric neurosurgeon to show up to perform brain surgery. It turned out he was having an aneurysm and the whole nine, nine years old. Boom, they get rocked right there. We've got the suits on. We're getting ready to go in. We're going to pray, the whole nine. We get in the room and the Holy Spirit drops. We're praying.

Michael says the craziest thing I've ever heard anybody say in my life. He goes, "The Father just showed me he's going to walk out of here in 10 days." I opened my eyes and I'm like, "He did not just tell this momma that her boy, who's in a medically induced coma, with a brain bleed is walking out of here in exactly 10 days." I'm like, "No way." We walk out. Daryl takes off his suit. He's sweating. He's dripping, literally. He's pouring. We get in the elevator, he's like, "Michael, I can't believe you said that to them"

Boy walks out of the hospital in 12 days after we were there. This girl who only worked for us for six months, didn't know the Lord, called us in a state of emergency in her life because we were the only religious people she had ever met. The only people she had ever heard talk about Jesus was her boss, Daryl. I didn't even know her. And she calls him and we go to the hospital. Her and her mother gets saved and her brother gets prayed over and healed. That is what can happen if you're intentional about ministering to your employees.

It's not rocket science. We don't have it figured out. For the first time in my life, I went to an event in Birmingham, Alabama, two weeks ago called the Lion's Den. I walk in and I get introduced to a business as ministry is this huge global organization that's been around for 20 years and has 40,000 people around the globe that are using your business as ministry. We've been doing that for 12 years because God told us our businesses were churches and we were obedient.

I started off by saying I'm no different than you. I was sitting here for years, having a yummy breakfast and listened to some giants of the faith share their testimony and talk about what God's doing in their life, and that you all have a story. My story, you heard a little bit about it, left out a lot, but I thought it was important because I think it relates to a lot of us. I mean, how many of us had a parent who struggled with substance?

How many of us were born on the wrong side of the tracks? How many of us went to a super privileged high school or grew up on the right side of the tracks in a great home with great parents? How many of us never knew the Lord, but had a radical experience at some point in your life? God touched your life in a powerful way. We're all the same. There's no difference. But it's what you do with your story and how

you impact those that are around you every day, in a grocery store. How many times have you all heard that?

I'm talking about intentional ministry with the people that are around you. Your highest sphere of influence are the people you work with every day. There's not a pastor in this room who wouldn't love to have each one of us for eight hours, eight hours a week. They're lucky if they get us for an hour and a half, if we ain't... I go to a talk-back church because they don't let you sleep, like...

But what's funny is, think about it. I mean, that is a ripe ripe field. The harvest is plenty, the workers are few. My challenge to you is, regardless of what you're doing, what position you have, the people that you're around every day are the ones that you have the greatest opportunity to influence. All you have to do is be conscious of that opportunity and be willing to do it. I appreciate you guys.

I'm going to take an opportunity right now. I'm going to ask all of you guys to stand up. I'm going to ask everybody to bow their heads. I think, for those of us in this room right now that have daddy issues, I want you to be honest with yourself right now. There's a hurt that you have in your life that was caused by your biological father. There's a hurt in your life. There's words that were said, there's abuse physically, emotionally, verbally, that happened from your dad. You have unresolved issues with your biological father.

There's somebody in this room right now. There's multiple men in this room, I guarantee it, that have daddy issues. If that's you, with every eye closed, I want you to raise your hand just for a second. Raise your hand for a second, if you've got forgiveness that you need to pour out on your earthly father. Awesome, awesome. Praise God. We're going to pray for that here in a second. We're going to heal that heart. We're going to heal that wound, because it's the blood of Jesus, the blood of Jesus that will heal that and take that away.

For anybody in this room this morning who was like me, who grew up in a messed up household, who didn't know the Lord, who's got church wounds, or who's never met Jesus... Is there somebody here this morning that wants to take this opportunity to say, "Hey, I want to be a better man. I want to be a better dad. I want to be a better father. Want to be a better brother, better son, better boss? In order for me to be better, I need Jesus."

If there's anybody in here that wants to know Jesus this morning, we're going to say a quick prayer too. You can shoot your hand up real quick if you want to say, "Hey, I want to rededicate my life. I want to meet Jesus for the first time." Awesome. Great. Love it. Praise Jesus. All right. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus, thank you for every man that's here this morning. Thank you, Father God, Holy Spirit for dropping in here this morning and softening these men's hearts and these ears. Thank you for each and every story that's here this morning, Father, God. We all have a story. You've knit us in our mother's womb. You know every hair on her head. You know the good, the bad, the ugly. You know the past, the present, and the future, Father God.

We thank you Jesus for each and every story in this room, because each and every story in this room is for your glory, Father God. So we just pray for every wounded heart, Lord, every scab, every wound, Father, that was ever caused by an earthly father. We rebuke that wound, Lord, in the holy and powerful name of Jesus Christ. If that wound is there barrier, if any one of these men has a barrier to you, their spiritual father, because of something caused by the earthy father, we rebuke that in the powerful name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, Father.

We ask, Lord God, that for those men in here that are just now for the first time calling you into their lives, I'm going to ask every single man in the room, every eye closed, every man, I want you to repeat this simple prayer for the guy next to you who just raised his hand, so that we all know that we need to pray this prayer on a daily basis. Let's pray. Father God. Thank you, Jesus, for what you've done. Thank you, Father God, for your sacrifice. Thank you for your presence, Holy Spirit. That will heal any wound

that I have. That will guide me. Every day as I choose to follow you. Thank you, Jesus, for the opportunity. To spend eternity with you. For praying this simple prayer. We love you, Jesus. It's in your name we pray. Amen.

Thank you, guys. Love you all.