



CHANGING FROM THE CENTER

Where Are You Hiding?

⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, ¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light become night around me,"

¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you.

One way to understand this passage is to celebrate the closeness, consistency, and care of God.

One way to understand this passage is to celebrate the closeness, consistency, and care of God.

But, this passage could also be used to tell you, "No matter where you try to run to escape, no matter where you try to hide, God will always find you!"

The word of the Lord came to Jonah... "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me." But Jonah ran away... he sailed for Tarshish to flee from the Lord.

⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?" ¹⁰ He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

Why are they hiding themselves from each other, and collectively hiding from God? Because, for the first time, they have wandered from the good ways of God.

When we sense brokenness, our instinct is to hide.
From each other. From God.

When we sense brokenness, our instinct is to hide.
From each other. From God.

But, what is God's response after their "fall" from
grace? God is walking around in the garden, looking
for them!!!

⁵ This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. ⁶ If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. ⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

"We often work with Christian leaders in many different organizational environments. Unfortunately, we've seen a lot of leaders fall. In nearly every case, these leaders had developed a strong habit of hiding... They settled for looking transformed rather than being transformed."

(from *What Does Your Soul Want?*)

“Many of us struggle with being vulnerable. We live in a world that exploits vulnerability. But in the presence of God, we need not put up protective barriers. We can open ourselves to God fully. Whatever is in our hearts and minds is perfectly safe to raise in the light of God’s loving presence.

Whatever is broken can be restored in the light.
Whatever is soiled can be cleansed in the light.
Whatever is bent can be made straight in the light.
This is... an honest, open way of living our lives,
shortcomings and all, in the presence of God."

(from What Does Your Soul Love?)

CHANGING FROM THE CENTER



CHANGING FROM THE CENTER



While vulnerability does assume lowering defenses, it's a sign of trust, openness, and availability.

While vulnerability does assume lowering defenses, it's a sign of trust, openness, and availability.

Vulnerability builds over time.

While vulnerability does assume lowering defenses, it's a sign of trust, openness, and availability.

Vulnerability builds over time.

Being vulnerable is never risk-free, but it is worth the risk for the benefits!

“Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, empathy, and creativity. It is the source of hope, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper and more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path.”

(Brené Brown in *Daring Greatly*)

“Did you ever imagine that what we call ‘vulnerability’ might just be the key to ongoing growth? In my experience, healthily vulnerable people use every occasion to expand, change, and grow. Yet it is a risky position to live undefended, in a kind of constant openness to the other—because it means others could sometimes actually wound us.

Indeed, *vulnera* comes from the Latin for 'to wound.' But only if we take this risk do we also allow the opposite possibility: the other might also gift us, free us, and even love us."

(Richard Rohr)

"Spiritual friends are those with whom we have an intimate relationship, sharing our highs, our lows, our fears, our dreams, our wrestling places. We do not judge each other. We listen. We talk. We encourage. We add insight if it strikes. We ask questions. We share beneath the surface. We engage our souls."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

"Sometimes, opening the doors and windows of my soul looks like confession. I've done or said what I wish I hadn't. I didn't do or say what I wish I had. Confession is telling it like it actually is and how God already sees it. It's agreeing with God rather than pretending or putting on a mask."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

² Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

“Our shortcomings and line-crossings are real. But God doesn’t want to hold our shortcomings or our line-crossings against us. God would much rather blot these things out, wash them away, and breathe fresh wind into our thoughts and intentions.”

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

"Confession isn't about lingering in the place of guilt and shame in the presence of an offended God. It is acknowledging the real causes of guilt in the presence of a God whose bias is toward mercy and grace. We have a loving and compassionate God. And confession frees us to continue our transforming journey."

(from *What Does Your Soul Love?*)

¹ Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions.

² Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

³ For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me.

⁴ Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge...

¹⁰ Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

¹¹ Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me.

¹² Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me...

¹⁷ My sacrifice, O God, is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart you, God, will not despise.



CHANGING FROM THE CENTER

Where Are You Hiding?